

Memorandum

To: CHAIR AND COMMISSIONERS

CTC Meeting: December 6, 2012

Reference No.: 2.2b. (1)
Action

From: BIMLA G. RHINEHART
Executive Director

Subject: **DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT/ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT FOR THE REDWOOD PARKWAY-FAIRGROUNDS DRIVE IMPROVEMENT PROJECT**

ISSUE:

Should the Commission, as a Responsible Agency, provide comments in response to the Draft Environmental Impact Report/Draft Environmental Impact Assessment (DEIR/DEIA) for the Redwood Parkway-Fairgrounds Drive Improvement Project located in Solano County?

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that the Commission make no comments regarding the environmental issues addressed in the REIR/SEA. However, staff recommends that a letter be sent to the California Department of Transportation (Department) and the Solano Transportation Authority (STA) that states:

- The Commission has no comments with respect to the project's purpose and need, the alternatives studied, the impacts to be evaluated, and the evaluation methods used.
- The Commission recommends that the Department, the STA identify and secure the necessary funding to complete the project.
- If, in the future, funds or other actions under the purview of the Commission are anticipated, notification should be provided to the Commission as a Responsible Agency.

BACKGROUND:

The proposed project is located in the City of Vallejo in Solano County. The project consists of modifications to the existing Interstate 80 (I-80)/Redwood Parkway interchange, realignment of Fairgrounds Drive, widening of Fairgrounds Drive between Redwood Street and State Route (SR) 37, widening of the westbound exit ramp from SR 37 to Fairgrounds Drive, and improvements to the SR 37/Fairgrounds Drive interchange intersections.

The alternatives evaluated in the DEIR/DEIS include the Build Alternative and the No-Build Alternative.

Memorandum

To: CHAIR AND COMMISSIONERS

CTC Meeting: December 6, 2012

Reference No.: 2.2b. (1)
Action

From: BIMLA G. RHINEHART
Executive Director

Subject: **RECIRCULATION OF DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT AND SUPPLEMENTAL ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT FOR THE 197/199 SAFE STAA ACCESS PROJECT**

ISSUE:

Should the Commission, as a Responsible Agency, provide comments in response to the recirculation of the Draft Environmental Impact Report/Supplemental Environmental Assessment (RDEIR/SEA) for the 1977/199 Safe STAA Access Project located in Del Norte County?

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that the Commission make no comments regarding the environmental issues addressed in the REIR/SEA. However, staff recommends that a letter be sent to the California Department of Transportation District 1 North Region Environmental Office (Department) that states:

- The Commission has no comments with respect to the project's purpose and need, the alternatives studied, the impacts to be evaluated, and the evaluation methods used.
- If, in the future, funds or other actions under the purview of the Commission are anticipated, notification should be provided to the Commission as a Responsible Agency.

BACKGROUND:

The Department, as assigned by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) is the designated lead agency for this project. The Department published a DEIR/EA for review and comment in June 2010. Based on strong public interest in the project's potential impacts on trees and tree root systems, in particular large old redwoods, the Department conducted additional analysis and is re-circulating relevant portions of the original environmental document as the RDEIR/SEA.

The proposed project is located in Del Norte County on State Route (SR) 197 and US 199, east of US 101. The project consists of roadway widening, shoulder widening, roadway curve improvements, bridge replacement and culvert replacements. segmented into four smaller projects. In addition to the proposed project and the no-build scenario, alternatives for consideration in the DEIR include two-foot shoulders, four-foot shoulders, or two-foot shoulders in spot locations; upstream bridge replacement, downstream bridge replacement, or bridge preservation; and cut slope or retaining wall installation.

Memorandum

To: CHAIR AND COMMISSIONERS

CTC Meeting: December 6, 2012

Reference No.: 2.2b. (1)
Action

From: BIMLA G. RHINEHART
Executive Director

Subject: **DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT/ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT FOR THE TULARE EXPRESSWAY PROJECT**

ISSUE:

Should the Commission, as a Responsible Agency, provide comments in response to the Draft Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Assessment (DEIR/EA) for the Tulare Expressway Project located in Tulare County?

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that the Commission make no comments regarding the environmental issues addressed in the DEIR/EA. However, staff recommends that a letter be sent to the California Department of Transportation (Department) that states:

- The Commission has no comments with respect to the project's purpose and need, the alternatives studied, the impacts to be evaluated, and the evaluation methods used.
- The Commission recommends that the Department and its partners identify and secure the necessary funding to complete the project.
- If, in the future, funds or other actions under the purview of the Commission are anticipated, notification should be provided to the Commission as a Responsible Agency.

BACKGROUND:

The proposed project will realign State Route (SR) 65 and construct a two-lane expressway in Tulare County from Hermosa Street in Lindsay to Avenue 300 on SR 245 northeast of Exeter. The proposed project also includes frontage roads, railroad overhead crossings, new bridges, controlled access and utility relocations.

The alternatives evaluated in the DEIR/EA include two Build Alternatives and a No-Build Alternative.

Memorandum

To: CHAIR AND COMMISSIONERS
CALIFORNIA TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

CTC Meeting: December 5-6, 2012

Reference No.: 2.2b.(1)
Action Item

From: NORMA ORTEGA
Chief Financial Officer

Prepared by: Jay Norvell
Division Chief
Environmental Analysis

Subject: **COMMENTS ON DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORTS**

RECOMMENDATION:

The Department of Transportation (Department) recommends that the California Transportation Commission (Commission) review and comment at the December 2012 Commission meeting on the following Draft Environmental Impact Reports (DEIR):

ISSUE:

04-Sol-80, PM 4.0/4.9; 04-Sol-37, PM 10.6/11.2; Redwood Parkway – Fairgrounds Drive Improvement Project

This project in Solano County will modify the existing Interstate 80/Redwood Parkway interchange to a tight diamond configuration, realign Fairgrounds Drive to a tee intersection north of the Interstate 80 westbound ramps, widen Fairgrounds Drive between Redwood Street and State Route 37, widen the westbound exit ramp from State Route 37 to Fairgrounds Drive, and improve the intersections at the State Route 37/Fairgrounds Drive Interchange. The project is not yet funded; however, the project is expected to be fully funded with local funds. The total estimated cost for capital and support is \$46,400,000. Depending on the availability of funding, construction is estimated to begin in Fiscal Year 2012-13.

Alternatives considered for the proposed project include:

- No Build Alternative.
- Build Alternative. Will modify the existing Interstate 80/Redwood Parkway interchange to a tight diamond configuration, realign Fairgrounds Drive to a tee intersection north of the Interstate 80 westbound ramps, widen Fairgrounds Drive between Redwood Street and State Route 37, widen the westbound exit ramp from State Route 37 to Fairgrounds Drive, and improve the intersections at the State Route 37/Fairgrounds Drive Interchange.

The decision to prepare an EIR was made due to analysis results indicating unavoidable significant environmental impacts. Impacts include:

- Paleontological resources
- Biological resources

- Residential relocations
- Impacts to Waters of the U.S.
- Visual resources

The following measures would be incorporated to minimize impacts of the project:

- Incorporate design characteristics and aesthetic treatments to minimize visual impacts.
- Preparation of a paleontological monitoring program.
- Conduct nesting bird surveys prior to construction.
- Compensatory mitigation for jurisdictional water features.
- Caltrans Relocation Assistance Program.

Attachment 1

ISSUE:

01-DN-197 PM 4.5, PM 3.2/4.0; 01-DN-199, PM 20.5/20.9, 23.92/24.08, 5.55/25.65, 22.7/23.0, and 26.3/26.5; 197/199 Safe STAA Access Project

This project in Del Norte County will improve spot locations on State Route 197 and U.S. 199 in Del Norte County so that two Surface Transportation Assistance Act (STAA) trucks passing in opposite directions can be accommodated. The proposed work consists of roadway widening, shoulder widening, roadway curve improvements, bridge replacements and culvert replacements. The project will bring State Route 197 and U.S. 199 into compliance with federal and state legislations regarding access for STAA trucks.

The overall 197/199 Safe STAA Access Project consists of four smaller projects as follows:

Ruby 1 (EA 48110) is fully funded in the State Highway Operation and Protection Program Minor A Program. The total estimated cost is \$2,499,000. Construction is estimated to begin in Fiscal Year 2013-14.

Ruby 2 (EA 45490) is fully funded in the State Highway Operation and Protection Program Minor A Program. The total estimated cost is \$3,400,000. Construction is estimated to begin in Fiscal Year 2014-15.

Patrick Creek Narrows (PPNO 1047) will improve U.S. 199 from Post Mile 20.5 to Post Mile 25.5. The project is programmed in the 2012 State Transportation Improvement Program. The total estimated cost for capital and support is \$21,302,000. Construction is estimated to begin in Fiscal Year 2012-13.

The Narrows and Washington Curve (PPNO 1073) will improve U.S. 199 from Post Mile 22.7 to Post Mile 26.5. The project is programmed in the 2012 State Highway Operation and Protection Program. The total estimated cost for capital and support is \$6,750,000. Construction is estimated to begin in Fiscal Year 2015-16.

For the four projects contained in the DEIR there are a total 12 build alternatives being proposed as well as the no build alternative. Alternative details are contained within the attached DEIR Executive Summary.

The decision to prepare an EIR was made due to analysis results indicating unavoidable significant environmental impacts. Impacts include:

- Biological resources in the form of permanent removal of natural communities.
- Impacts to Waters of the U.S.
- Visual resources.

The following measures would be incorporated to minimize impacts of the project:

- Incorporate design characteristics and aesthetic treatments to minimize visual impacts.
- Pre-construction botanical surveys.
- Replanting of natural areas disturbed by the project.
- Compensatory mitigation for jurisdictional water features.

Attachment 2

ISSUE:

06-Tul-65, PM 29.5/R38.3; 06-Tul-245, PM 0.0/0.5; Tulare Expressway Project

This project in Tulare County will realign State Route 65 and construct a two-lane expressway on a four-lane right of way from Hermosa Street in Lindsay to Avenue 300 on State Route 245 northeast of Exeter. The project is not fully funded. The project is programmed in the 2012 State Transportation Improvement Program. The total estimated cost for capital and support is \$102,711,000. Construction is estimated to begin in Fiscal Year 2018-19.

Alternatives considered for the proposed project include:

- No Build Alternative.
- Build Alternative 1- Proposed project would parallel the east and west side of existing Spruce Avenue depending on location.
- Build Alternative 2- Proposed project would parallel the west side of existing Spruce Avenue.

The decision to prepare an EIR was made due to analysis results indicating unavoidable significant environmental impacts. Impacts include:

- Farmland
- Commercial and residential relocations
- Biological resources

The following measures would be incorporated to minimize impacts of the project:

- Best management practices to minimize impacts to jurisdictional Waters of the U.S.
- Establishment of environmentally sensitive areas 130 feet from any existing elderberry shrubs.
- Conduct pre-construction surveys for the San Joaquin kit fox and the Swainson's hawk.
- Compensatory mitigation for jurisdictional water features.
- Compensation for any disturbed agricultural land at 1.1 acre to 1 acre ratio.
- Caltrans Relocation Assistance Program.

Attachment 3

Summary

The Solano Transportation Authority (STA), Solano County, and the City of Vallejo, in cooperation with the California Department of Transportation (Department), propose to modify the existing Interstate 80 (I-80)/Redwood Parkway interchange to a tight diamond configuration, realign Fairgrounds Drive to a tee intersection north of the I-80 westbound ramps, widen Fairgrounds Drive between Redwood Street and State Route 37 (SR 37), widen the westbound exit ramp from SR 37 to Fairgrounds Drive, and improve the intersections at the SR 37/Fairgrounds Drive Interchange. Current transportation issues in this area include poor circulation during peak commute periods, long delays at intersections, short acceleration and deceleration areas, and limited sight distance. In addition, the existing capacity of the roadways in this area would not accommodate the projected future traffic volumes. **Figure 1-1** depicts the project location and **Figures 1-2a** through **1-2c** depicts the proposed Build Alternative improvements.

JOINT CEQA/NEPA DOCUMENT

The project is subject to Federal and State environmental review requirements because the STA proposes the use of federal funds from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and requires a FHWA approval action. Project documentation, therefore, has been prepared in compliance with both the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). STA is the project proponent and the lead agency under CEQA. FHWA's responsibility for environmental review, consultation, and any other action required in accordance with applicable Federal laws for this project is being, or has been, carried out by the Department under its assumption of responsibility pursuant to Section 6005 of SAFETEA-LU codified at 23 U.S.C. 327(a)(2)(A). Effective July 1, 2007, FHWA has assigned, and the Department has assumed, all the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) Secretary's responsibilities under NEPA. The assignment applies to all projects on the State Highway System (SHS) and all Local Assistance Projects off the SHS within the State of California, with the exception of the responsibilities concerning certain categorical exclusions, which were assigned to the Department under the June 7, 2007 Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), projects excluded by definition and specific project exclusions.

Some impacts determined to be significant under CEQA may not lead to a determination of significance under NEPA. Because NEPA is concerned with the significance of the project as a whole, it is quite often the case that a "lower level" document is prepared for NEPA. One of the most commonly seen joint document types is an Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Assessment (EIR/EA).

Following receipt of comments from the public and reviewing agencies, a final environmental document will be prepared. STA and the Department may undertake additional environmental and/or engineering studies to address comments. The final environmental document will include responses to comments received on the Draft EIR/EA and will identify the preferred alternative. If the decision is made to approve the Build Alternative, a Notice of Determination will be published for compliance with CEQA, and the Department will decide whether to issue a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) or require an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for compliance with NEPA. A Notice of Availability (NOA) of the FONSI will be sent to the affected units of Federal, State, and local government, and to the State Clearinghouse in compliance with Executive Order 12372.

OVERVIEW OF THE PROJECT AREA

The proposed improvements are located within an existing urban context, with a mixture of commercial, office, residential, and recreation facility developments. Beginning at the southernmost portion of the project study area, the I-80/Redwood Parkway interchange and Redwood Parkway/Fairground Drive intersection are surrounded by a mixture of commercial and residential development. The area along Fairgrounds Drive, between Valle Vista Avenue and Coach Lane is developed with multi-family homes and medical office buildings, as well as vacant lands. The area between Coach Lane and SR 37 along Fairgrounds Drive is primarily developed with recreational facilities. Six Flags Discovery Kingdom Amusement Park (Six Flags) and associated surface parking areas are located to west of Fairgrounds Drive. Lake Chabot is also on the west side of Fairgrounds Drive. The Solano County Fairgrounds and associated surface parking areas are located to the east, along with a Courtyard Marriot hotel and fast-food restaurants. The area to the north of SR 37, along Fairgrounds Drive, is comprised of single-family homes, a gas station, and Best Western Inn hotel.

Rindler Creek enters the project study area at the intersection of Coach Lane and Fairgrounds Drive, from under I-80 and then follows the outer boundary of the County Fairgrounds property. The creek flows northwest along Fairgrounds Drive before crossing beneath the road via a series of culverts. The creek forms some backwater channels between the road embankment and the embankment for the Six Flags Amusement Park, and then flows into Lake Chabot.

Related Projects

The revitalization of the 149-acre Solano County Fairgrounds property, located on the east side of Fairgrounds Drive, between Coach Lane and SR 37 is planned for future redevelopment. Future land uses include features such as a public entertainment zone and the fair of the future zone. The public entertainment zone would provide an active gathering place that would be home to a waterside pedestrian trail, restaurants, public art, main street shops, terraced seating, and water-related activities. The fair zone continues the 60-year tradition of the annual Solano County Fair and would house a world class

exhibition hall, organic demonstration farm, children's discovery island, and flexible sports fields and other multi-use facilities.

The analyses of the potential effects of the proposed Build Alternative reflect the local land use and road improvements planned to be in place by 2035.

PURPOSE AND NEED

Current transportation issues within the project corridor include poor circulation during peak commute periods, long delays at intersections, short acceleration and deceleration areas, and limited sight distance. In addition, the existing capacity of the roadways in this area will not accommodate projected future traffic volumes planned for in the project vicinity.

The purpose of the project is to address these issues by:

- Relieving existing congestion and improving traffic flow on the local roadway network for approved redevelopment and planned land uses in the area;
- Improving the existing interchanges and intersection operations; and
- Improving the safety of the local roadway network by reducing congestion.

PROPOSED ACTION

The types of interchange improvements that would be possible at the existing Fairgrounds Drive/SR 37 and the Redwood Parkway/I-80 interchange are limited because these areas are physically constrained by the existing residential and commercial development. With the exception of the Build Alternative, other interchange configurations would require the reconstruction of the existing overcrossing structures and have severe right-of-way impacts combined with extremely high construction costs. Similarly, along the Fairgrounds Drive right-of-way, no other alignment alternatives were possible because of the steep grades and developed land uses and/or water features on either side of the roadway.

Because of these constraints, no other design alternatives were carried forward beyond initial design screenings. The alternatives evaluated in this environmental document include the Build Alternative and the No-Build (No Action) Alternative.

Build Alternative

Figures 1-2a through **1-2c** illustrate the improvements proposed under the Build Alternative, which would include the following major elements:

- Modification of the Redwood Parkway/I-80 Interchange
- Relocation of the Fairgrounds Drive/Redwood Street Intersection

- Moorland Street Cul-de-sacs
- Widening of Fairgrounds Drive
- Modifications to the Fairgrounds Drive/SR 37 interchange
- Signal Modifications

The total length of the project corridor is approximately 1.5 miles, and extends from the Fairgrounds Drive/ SR 37 interchange (postmile 4.0-4.9) to the Redwood Parkway/Interstate 80 (I-80) interchange (postmile 10.6-11.2).

No-Build (No Action) Alternative

The No-Build Alternative is being evaluated in accordance with NEPA and CEQA requirements, and serves as the baseline comparison to the Build Alternative. Under the No-Build Alternative, Fairgrounds Drive would maintain its existing configuration. No realignment of the Fairgrounds Drive/Redwood Street intersection would occur. There would be no improvements to the SR 37/Fairgrounds Drive or I-80/Redwood Parkway/Admiral Callaghan Lane interchanges.

Traffic volumes within the project corridor would increase under the No-Build Alternative. As there are no improvements proposed to the existing local roadway network, the No-Build Alternative would not achieve the project purpose of increasing the local roadway network capacity to accommodate existing and approved redevelopment and growth in the area. In addition, the increased traffic volumes without capacity improvements would worsen the congestion and slow traffic flow on the local roadway network. Without the realignment of the Fairgrounds Drive/Redwood Street intersection, the No-Build Alternative would not improve the current safety issues related to limited sight distance in this area. In addition, without modifying the I-80 eastbound ramps to a tight diamond configuration, short acceleration and deceleration lanes would remain, resulting in nonstandard merge and diverge distances.

Project Impacts

Table S-1 summarizes the adverse effects of the Build Alternative in comparison with the No-Build Alternative. The proposed avoidance, minimization, and/or mitigation measures to reduce the effects of the Build Alternative are also presented. For a complete description of potential adverse effects and recommended measures, please refer to the specific sections within **Chapter 2.0, Affected Environment, Environmental Consequences, and Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures**.

Table S-1 Project Impacts

Environmental Topic	No Build Alternative	Build Alternative	Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures
Land Use			
Division of an established community	None expected	None expected	None
Compatibility with land use plans	Low	High consistency	None
Compatibility with habitat conservation plan	Not applicable	Not applicable	None
Growth			
No Effect			
Farmlands/Timberlands			
No Effect			
Community Impacts			
Displacement of existing housing	None	19 residential parcels potentially affected	Caltrans Relocation Assistance Program
Displacement of significant number of people	None expected	Unknown	Caltrans Relocation Assistance Program
Disproportionately affect environmental justice communities	No	No	None
Utilities/Emergency Services			
No Effect			
Traffic and Transportation			
Conflict with applicable plans, ordinances, policies, or programs	None	None	None
Increase congestion	Yes	Will reduce congestion	None
Increase hazards as a result of a design feature	None	None	None

Environmental Topic	No Build Alternative	Build Alternative	Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures
Visual Resources			
Adverse effect on scenic views/damage scenic resources	Same as Build Alternative	No scenic resources in project area	None
Degradation of existing visual character or quality	None expected	Potential visual quality lost	Roadway design would adhere to City of Vallejo Standard Specifications All landscaping removed by project would be replaced
Create a new source of light or glare	None expected	Temporary due to construction	Caltrans light and glare screening measures
Cultural Resources			
Create an adverse change in the significance of a historical resource	None expected	No historical resources in project vicinity	None
Create an adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource	None expected	No archaeological resources in project vicinity.	An Archaeological Monitoring and Discovery Plan has been prepared that specifies the appropriate construction monitoring locations and protocols recommended for an area near the known redeposit of archaeological materials outside of the project's area of potential effect (APE).
Disturbance to human remains	None expected	None expected	If human remains discovered, activity will stop (State Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5). If the remains are thought to be Native American, the Native American Heritage Commission will be contacted (Public Resources Code Section 5097.98).
Hydrology and Floodplain			
Within a 100-year floodplain	Same as Build Alternative	Small portion of Fairgrounds Drive, north of Coach Lane	None

Environmental Topic	No Build Alternative	Build Alternative	Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures
Expose people/structures to a significant risk of loss	Unknown	None expected	None
Water Quality and Storm Water Runoff			
Result in substantial drainage pattern alteration	None	None expected	None
Violation of water quality standards	None	Temporarily during construction	Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan
Change to groundwater supply or groundwater recharge	None	None	None
Substantially degrade water quality	None	Possible operation impacts	Design Pollution Prevention and Treatment Best Management BMPs.
Geology			
Expected Likelihood of seismic related issues, including ground shaking and liquefaction	Same as Build Alternative	High potential for ground shaking, liquefaction potential varies	Caltrans seismic design standards
Expose people or structures to potential adverse effects	None expected	Worker safety	Occupational Safety and Health Act Section 5(a)(1)
Paleontology			
Unearth previously unidentified paleontological resources (i.e., fossil remains and sites)	None expected	Potential due to excavation and construction activities	Preparation and implementation of a Department-approved paleontological monitoring and mitigation program. See Mitigation Measure PAL-1
Hazardous Materials			
Create a hazard to the environment	None expected	Potential due to excavation and construction activities	Additional subsurface sampling, Soil Management Plan, and Caltrans Variance Follow regulations requiring abatement of asbestos-containing materials and lead-based paint.

Environmental Topic	No Build Alternative	Build Alternative	Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures
Create a hazard to the public	None expected	None expected	Additional subsurface sampling, Soil Management Plan, and Caltrans Variance Follow regulations requiring abatement of asbestos-containing materials and lead-based paint.
Location on a site that is included on a list of hazardous materials sites	Same as Build Alternative	Varies throughout project area, sites on several lists	Additional subsurface sampling, Soil Management Plan, and Caltrans Variance Follow regulations requiring abatement of asbestos-containing materials and lead-based paint.
Noise			
Exposure of the public to excessive noise levels, including groundborne noise levels	None	Some temporary noise effects, no permanent ambient noise increase with mitigation	Noise abatement measures, sound walls
A substantial increase in permanent noise levels	None expected	Potential permanent noise level increases ranging from 0 to 6 dBA (varies throughout project area)	Potential noise abatement measures
A substantial increase in temporary noise levels	None	Due to construction activities	Restricted construction hours, equipment mufflers, equipment placed away from sensitive receptors, "quiet" air compressors, no unnecessary idling, equipment must conform to Standard Specifications
Energy			
No Effect			

Environmental Topic	No Build Alternative	Build Alternative	Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures
Biological Resources			
Effects to sensitive or special status species	None	Western pond turtle, potential effect to bird habitat	Limit construction zone, limit artificial lighting, dispose of food-related trash, no firearms on site, no pets on site, conduct nesting bird surveys prior to construction and butterfly survey, biological monitor present during Rindler Creek relocation
Effects to habitat or sensitive natural communities	None	Wetlands/riparian woodlands effected due to realignment of Rindler Creek	Compensatory mitigation for jurisdictional water features. See Mitigation Measure BIO-1.
Conflict with local policies/plans	None	None	None

COORDINATION WITH PUBLIC AND OTHER AGENCIES

Notice of Preparation and Scoping

“Scoping” is the process of determining the scope, focus, and content of an environmental document. The scoping process allows agencies and other interested parties to provide input on the proposed project, range of alternatives, topics being evaluated, environmental effects, methods of assessment, and mitigation measures being considered.

Scoping for this project included the use of several channels of communication, including the Notice of Preparation (NOP), mailers, internet, and newspaper ads. In addition, a public open house scoping meeting was held on January 26, 2011 to inform the public and agencies of the project and scoping process. The NOP was issued to the State Clearinghouse on January 11, 2011. A mailer, which provided information on the project and details of the scoping meeting, was distributed to approximately 2,000 stakeholders in the project vicinity. Stakeholders include property owners within 500 feet of the project, elected officials and public agencies, special interest organizations, and neighborhood groups. The list of stakeholders was developed with the aid of the City of Vallejo Planning Department, the Solano 360 project stakeholder list, and local parcel data. This information was also posted on January 11, 2011 to the STA website: www.sta.ca.gov. The project information on the website was available both in English and Spanish and provided project location maps.

An e-mail address (fairgroundsdriveproject@gmail.com) was created as an additional method for the public to comment on the Build Alternative.

A display advertisement announcing the scoping period and the public open house scoping meeting ran in the Vallejo Times-Herald and Cronicas (the local Spanish-language newspaper) on Tuesday, January 11, 2011.

There were eight written comments submitted at the January 26 scoping meeting. Two comment sheets were mailed to STA and six e-mails were received via fairgroundsdriveproject@gmail.com. One comment letter was received from the California Department of Fish and Game, one letter was received from the Governor’s Office of Planning and Research, and one comment letter was received from the California Transportation Commission. Key issues raised during the scoping period are addressed in **Chapter 2.0, Affected Environment, Environmental Consequences, and Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures**, of this environmental document.

A public meeting was held on January 18, 2012 to provide information and answer questions about the Build Alternative. Invitation letters were sent to property owners whose residence or business may potentially be directly impact by the project. Thirteen property owners and residents signed in at the meeting and one written comment was received.

Necessary Permits and Approvals

Table S-2 identifies the permits/approvals that would be required for project construction.

Table S-2 Permits and Approvals

Agency	Permit/Approval	Status
United States Army Corps of Engineers	Section 404 Permit – Nationwide	Issued during the Final Design Phase
United States Fish and Wildlife Service	Concurrence with “no effect” determination	Issued during the Final Design Phase
California Department of Fish and Game	1602 Agreement	Issued during the Final Design Phase
California Water Resources Board	NPDES Permit	Issued during the Final Design Phase
Regional Water Quality Control Board	Section 401 Certification	Issued during the Final Design Phase

Temporary construction easements may be required from the City of Valley and Solano County to accommodate work outside State-owned right-of-way.

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Executive Summary

This Recirculated Draft Environmental Impact Report / Supplemental Draft Environmental Assessment (RDEIR/SDEA) for the proposed 197/199 Safe STAA Access Project provides new information relevant to the proposed project that was not included in the Draft EIR/EA that was circulated for public review and comment in July and August 2010.

The California Department of Transportation (Department) published a Draft Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Assessment pursuant to CEQA and NEPA for the 197/199 Safe STAA Access Project in June 29, 2010 and accepted comments until August 23, 2010. Since the close of the public review period the Department has evaluated the comments received on the Draft EIR/EA and modified the document as necessary. Based in part on the strong public interest in the project's potential effects on trees and tree root systems, in particular those of large old redwood trees, and also in response to many public comments submitted in response to the DEIR/EA, the Department conducted additional analysis of the project's potential effects on trees and tree root systems, incorporated the results into the environmental document and is recirculating relevant portions pursuant to CEQA Guidelines section 15088.5(a) and CFR 1502.9(c)(1)(ii) under NEPA, contained primarily in Chapter 2.3 Biological Environment, to provide the public an opportunity to comment on the analysis and new information. As described below, the RDEIR/SDEA concludes that the Project will not result in significant impacts to trees and tree root systems, including the roots of large old redwoods.

The Department contracted with a Certified Arborist and a Registered Professional Forester to review the scientific literature, develop a methodology and use it to assess root impacts and other potential impacts to trees within and adjacent to the project footprint that would not be removed during construction. The specialists developed a methodology and assessed effects at the Ruby 1, Ruby 2 (Two-foot Widening in Spot Locations Alternative), Patrick Creek Narrows Location 2 (Downstream Bridge Replacement), and Washington Curve (Cut Slope Alternative) project locations. The specialists produced a report detailing the potential effects, analysis methods and results.

The report concluded that no large old redwoods (>36 inches diameter at breast height [dbh]) within or adjacent to the proposed project footprints at Ruby 1 and Ruby 2: Two-Foot Widening in Spot Locations Alternative would be significantly affected by the analyzed project alternatives. Some trees adjacent to Patrick Creek Location 2 and at the top of the cut at Washington Curve may have moderate effects due to the project; these effects are summarized in this document and detailed in the specialist report. None of the additional effects to trees were determined to be significant under CEQA or NEPA.

This document contains the revised Chapter 2.3.1 Biological Environment Natural Communities which contains information on large old redwood and Douglas-fir trees. This document also contains the revised Section 2.3.3 Biological Environment – Plant Species, because Siskiyou iris (*Iris bracheata*) a new California Rare Plant Rank (CRPR) 3.3 was detected and analyzed. Supporting sections (References) and Appendices (E, K, N, and R) are included for reference and/or because information has changed reflecting the changes in Section 2.3.1 and 2.3.3. The Department will be responding to comments on these revised sections only, in accordance with

CEQA Guidelines 15088(f)(2), and requests that reviewers limit their comments to only subjects relevant to these revised sections.

The Department is proposing to construct improvements at spot locations on State Route 197 (SR 197) and U.S. Highway 199 (US 199) in Del Norte County to be able to reclassify the routes as part of the Federal Surface Transportation Assistance Act (STAA) truck route network and to comply with federal and state legislation and regional programs, plans, and policies to allow STAA access. The proposed project is made up of five previously identified, separately proposed projects. These five projects were referred to as Ruby 1, Ruby 2, Patrick Creek Narrows (Locations 1, 2, and 3), the Narrows, and Washington Curve and include a total of seven locations. Since circulation of the original Draft Environmental Document in 2010, the Narrows and Washington Curve have been combined into one project. The proposed project for CEQA and NEPA review in this document combines these four projects into one (due to shared purpose and need) and makes use of the names of the original five projects to identify the location of each improvement currently proposed. All seven project locations currently have roadway geometries that can result in STAA trucks and other long-wheelbase vehicles offtracking across the double yellow line and entering the oncoming traffic lane. Additionally, the limited sight distances at all seven project locations do not allow enough time for drivers to adequately react to roadway conditions ahead and make timely decisions to avoid unexpected conditions ahead.

Overview of Project Area

The proposed project is located in Del Norte County on SR 197 and US 199, east of US 101. The project vicinity and locations are shown in Figure 1-1. Within the project limits, SR 197 and US 199 are rugged, two-lane conventional highways with tight curves and steep cut-slopes providing narrow traffic lanes with narrow shoulders, if shoulders exist.

SR 197 is the designated route for the movement of extralegal¹ truck loads between US 101 and the SR 197/US 199 intersection because it avoids traversing Jedediah Smith Redwoods State Park (located along the westernmost segment of US 199 between US 101 and the SR 197/US 199 intersection) and therefore minimizes impacts on the park and associated environmental resources. SR 197, also known as North Bank Road, is a curvilinear two-lane highway built in the 1930s. It is an important link between US 199 and US 101. SR 197 primarily serves regional and interregional traffic, providing access to homes and public recreational facilities along the Smith River, including Ruby Van Deventer County Park, which provides river access.

Within the project limits, US 199 traverses the canyon of the Middle Fork Smith River. US 199 within the project limits was built in the early 1920s. Highway attributes that characterize this area include cliffs, rocky outcrops, dramatic views of the Middle Fork Smith River, and a tightly curved alignment. US 199 links US 101 north of Crescent City to Interstate 5 in Grants Pass, Oregon.

¹ An *extralegal load* is defined in CVC Section 320.5 as a single unit or an assembled item that, because of its design, cannot be reasonably reduced or dismantled in size or weight so that it can be legally transported as a load without a permit as required by CVC Section 35780. This code section does not apply to loads on passenger cars. Section 35780 requires permits for variances such as size and weight.

Purpose and Need

The purpose of the proposed project is to improve spot locations on SR 197 and US 199 in Del Norte County so that two STAA trucks passing in opposite directions can be accommodated. By making improvements to accommodate STAA trucks, the prohibition for STAA vehicles would be removed, the SR 197/US 199 route would be consistent with federal and state legislation and regional programs, plans, and policies, and the safety and operation of US 199 and SR 197 would be enhanced. This would improve goods movement, and also enhance safety on the routes for automobiles, trucks, and other large vehicles such as motor-homes, buses, and vehicles pulling trailers.

The need for the proposed project is compliance with federal and state legislation and regional programs, plans, and policies to allow STAA access. Additionally, the project is needed because spot locations on SR 197 and US 199 currently have sub-standard curves; absence of, or substandard, shoulders along the traveled way; and narrow lanes, which restrict STAA truck access in the SR 197/US 199 corridor. In 1982, the federal government passed the STAA, which indicates that states must allow STAA trucks reasonable access to terminals. Specifically, the Federal STAA requires that "States must allow commercial motor vehicles that do not exceed federal maximum width and minimum length limits applicable to the National Network to have reasonable access between the National Network and terminals and facilities for food, fuel, repairs, and rest. Terminals are defined as any location where freight originates, terminates, or is handled in the transportation process²." In summary, if there is a highway that connects two interstate routes, states must provide STAA trucks with reasonable access to terminals. US Route 101 and Interstate Route 5 are interstate routes that allow STAA trucks and that are connected by SR 197 and US 199. SR 197 and the California portion of US 199 do not allow STAA access (while the Oregon portion of US 199 does). The Federal STAA contributes to the need for the proposed project.

In support of the Federal STAA, California passed Assembly Bill (AB) 866 in 1983 to implement the STAA provisions. The 2008 Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP)³ and 2007 and 2011 Regional Transportation Plans (RTPs)⁴ support and request improvement of the 197/199 corridor to allow STAA truck access. The 1999 Route Concept Reports for SR 197 and US 199 concluded that the routes should be widened and realigned to safely accommodate STAA trucks. This federal and state legislation and the regional programs, plans, and policies are discussed in further detail elsewhere in the DEIR/EA: see Section 1.2 regarding State Assembly Bill 866 (1983), see Section 2.1.1.2 for the RTIP, Section 2.1.5.1 for the RTP, and Section 1.2 for the Route Concept Reports.

US 199 serves as Del Norte County's most direct transportation link to the interstate highway system (I-5 in Grants Pass, Oregon). The Del Norte County Local Transportation Commission considers US 199 to be the route that contributes the most to goods movement and mobility in

² U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration, Office of Freight Management and Operations. 2004. Federal Size Regulations for Commercial Motor Vehicles. Access from the internet at http://ops.fhwa.dot.gov/freight/publications/size_regs_final_rpt/size_regs_final_rpt.pdf on 1/20/12.

³ 2008 RTIP accessed at http://www.dnlc.org/planningdocs/RTIP_2008.pdf on 1/26/12

⁴ 2007 RTP accessed at http://dnlc.org/planningdocs/RTP_2007.pdf on 1/26/12; 2011 RTP accessed at http://www.dnlc.org/planningdocs/RTP_2011_Final_061611.pdf accessed on 1/26/12

support of the county's economy. SR 197 is the designated route for the movement of extralegal loads⁵ between US 101 and US 199 (California Department of Transportation 1999a); therefore, it is a secondary component of this transportation link. According to the Route Concept Report for Route 197, SR 197 is the existing designated route for the movement of extralegal truck loads between US 101 and the SR 197/US 199 intersection. The SR 197–US 199 corridor is important for the goods movement because Del Norte County has neither a railway nor a deep-water shipping port. Most heavy-freight trucks leaving Del Norte County are hauling export goods bound for distribution hubs and population centers via the most expeditious route.

Alternative access to the interstate highway system is much less direct. Currently, STAA trucks that travel north on US 101 through Del Norte County to I-5 in Grants Pass must travel approximately 247 miles and more than 5 hours. Conversely, with STAA truck access on US 199, a one-way journey to I-5 in Grants Pass would be approximately 90 miles and less than 2 hours (Fehr & Peers 2010). To use US 199 to reach the interstate highway system presently, STAA truck cargo being transported from US 101 must be unloaded and transferred to shorter trucks before entering the SR 197–US 199 corridor; for trailers shorter than 48 feet, tractors can be swapped before entering the corridor.

Proposed Project

A summary of the proposed project is described below by project site. Alternatives are described where alternatives are proposed. Figures of the project sites and alternatives from the original DEIR/EA (some updated) are included in this Document for reference. More detailed descriptions can be found in the original Draft Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Assessment.

Ruby 1 (SR 197: PM 4.5)

One build alternative is being considered at this project location. To improve the roadway, the curve of the road would be lengthened and shoulders would be increased from their existing 0- to 1-foot widths. On the southbound side, the new shoulder width would vary from 0 to 4 feet. Four-foot shoulders are proposed on the northbound side. To match the new roadway width, one existing culvert would be extended, one would be replaced, and a new drainage inlet would be installed. This alignment was designed specifically to avoid removal of large old redwoods and minimize root impacts.

Ruby 2 (SR 197: PM 3.2 to 4.0)

Three build alternatives are being considered at this project location: Four-Foot Shoulders, Two-Foot Shoulders, and Two-Foot Widening in Spot Locations. Each alternative would

⁵ An *extralegal load* is defined in California Vehicle Code Section 320.5 as a single unit or an assembled item that, because of its design, cannot be reasonably reduced or dismantled in size or weight so that it can be legally transported as a load without a permit as required by California Vehicle Code Section 35780. This code section does not apply to loads on passenger cars. Section 35780 requires permits for variances such as size and weight.

improve the existing road curve, roadbed elevation, and roadway width. To match the new roadway width, four culverts would be extended or replaced. The approaches to eight private roads and one public road would be upgraded to match the modified roadway. The differences in the three alternatives are described briefly below.

Four-Foot Shoulders Alternative

This alternative would increase the shoulder widths to 4 feet on both sides of the roadway.

Two-Foot Shoulders Alternative

This alternative would increase the shoulder widths to 2 feet on both sides of the roadway.

Two-Foot Widening in Spot Locations Alternative

This alternative would increase the shoulder widths to 2 feet in spot locations. This alternative was designed specifically to avoid removal of large old redwoods and minimize root impacts. This is currently the preferred alternative for this location, because it has the least impacts to large old redwoods.

Patrick Creek Narrows Location 1 (US 199: PM 20.5 to 20.7)

One build alternative is being considered at this project location. The existing roadway curves would be improved and the roadway would be widened to accommodate two 12-foot-wide lanes and 4-foot shoulders throughout the majority of the location, transitioning to 1- to 4-foot wide shoulders at both ends of the location. To accommodate the widening and broader roadway curves, an approximately 190-foot-long, 5-foot-tall retaining wall is proposed along the river side of the road above a portion of the existing steep rock-armored riverbank. Two 18-inch culverts at PM 20.57 and 20.58 would be replaced with 24-inch culverts.

Patrick Creek Narrows Location 2 (US 199: PM 23.9 to 24.3)

Three alternatives for improvements are being considered at this project location: the Upstream Bridge Replacement, Downstream Bridge Replacement, and Bridge Preservation with Upslope Retaining Wall Alternatives. The alternatives would realign and widen the existing 11- to 12-foot lanes to 12 feet and would increase the shoulders to a width of 8 feet, transitioning to 2 to 8 foot shoulders at both ends of the project. A cut slope of 0.75:1 is anticipated. Because of the fractured nature of the bedrock, rock fall may be expected after construction. Therefore, a permanent rock-fall mitigation system may be needed. This could consist of a wire-mesh drape or incorporate a rock-fall catchment area at roadway level. One culvert within the limits within this project location would be replaced to match the new roadway width. The differences in the three alternatives are described briefly below. A sand trap would be installed along the inboard ditch. A new cross culvert will be added to carry the flow across the roadway.

Upstream Bridge Replacement Alternative

This alternative would replace the existing Middle Fork Smith River Bridge with a bridge upstream from its current location. In addition a retaining wall/rock bolting⁶ or rock net drapery would be constructed on the cut slope side of the highway. The retaining wall/rock bolting area would be approximately 400 feet long and up to 100 feet high.

Downstream Bridge Replacement Alternative

This alternative would replace the existing bridge with a bridge downstream from the current location. In addition to the retaining wall discussed above under the common features, an additional retaining wall or viaduct would be constructed downstream from the new bridge extending for approximately 240 feet and transition directly into the proposed new bridge approach. The approach structure could also be a combination of both the retaining wall and a sidehill viaduct, which would be a total length of approximately 345 feet. This is currently the preferred alternative for this location.

Bridge Preservation with Upslope Retaining Wall Alternative

This alternative would retain the existing bridge but realign the roadway on either end of the bridge to allow large trucks to cross. In addition to the retaining wall discussed above under the common features an additional retaining wall/rock bolting or rock net drapery would be constructed on the cut slope side of the highway, measuring approximately 300 feet long and up to 100 feet high.

Patrick Creek Narrows Location 3 (US 199: PM 25.55 to 25.65)

One build alternative is being considered for this project location. This alternative would increase the shoulder width to at least 8 feet on both sides of the road and eliminate the current "S" curve. To support the wider roadway, an approximately 180-foot-long wall up to an approximate height of 15 feet is proposed on the river side. Two 18" culverts within the limits of this project location at PM 25.55 and 25.69 would be replaced with 24" culverts." Drainage inlets would be installed at the inlets for the culverts at PM 25.55, 25.61, and 25.69.

The Narrows (US 199: PM 22.7 to 23.0)

One build alternative is being considered for this project location. This alternative would increase lane widths to 12 feet and provide 2-foot shoulders. Widening would be accomplished by excavating into the existing cut slope. A 1-foot-wide paved drainage ditch would be added at the shoulder of the road for a total paved width of approximately 29 feet. One new culvert and drain inlet would be constructed. Also, an existing culvert and drain inlet would be replaced to match the new edge of pavement. In addition to roadway widening, isolated outcrops of overhanging or loose rock above the excavation limits would be stabilized with rock bolting or other means.

⁶ The purpose of rock bolting is to pin two planes of rock together by bolting the slipping plane to a solid rock plane. Rock bolts secure permanent steel bars that are grouted, tensioned, and locked into place with a metal faceplate on the final cut slope.

Washington Curve (US 199: PM 26.3 to 26.5)

Two build alternatives are being considered at this project location: the Cut Slope and the Retaining Wall Alternatives. The features common to both build alternatives include the following. These alternatives would improve the compound curve at this project location and increase widths to a minimum of 12 foot lanes and 4 foot shoulders. The differences in the two alternatives are described briefly below.

Cut Slope Alternative

A new slope would be excavated on the cut slope side of the roadway. This is currently the preferred alternative for this location.

Retaining Wall Alternative

This alternative would construct a retaining wall along the cut slope of the roadway to provide additional roadway width.

CEQA/NEPA Environmental Document

The proposed project is a joint project by the Department and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), and is subject to state and federal environmental review requirements. Therefore, project documentation has been prepared in compliance with both the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). The Department is the lead agency under CEQA. In addition, FHWA's responsibility for environmental review, consultation, and any other action required in accordance with applicable Federal laws for this project is being, or has been, carried out by the Department under its assumption of responsibility pursuant to 23 U.S. Code 327.

Some impacts determined to be significant under CEQA may not lead to a determination of significance under NEPA. Because NEPA is concerned with the significance of the project as a whole, it is quite often the case that a "lower level" document is prepared for NEPA. One of the most commonly seen joint document types is an Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Assessment (EIR/EA).

Following receipt of public comments on the Recirculated Draft EIR/ Supplemental EA and circulation of the Final EIR/EA, the Department will be required to take actions regarding the environmental document. The Department will determine whether to certify that the EIR and issue Findings and a Statement of Overriding Considerations under CEQA and to issue a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) or require an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) under NEPA.

Project Impacts

Table S-1 summarizes the potential project effects after measures to avoid and minimize environmental harm are implemented. These effects have not changed since the DEIR/EA with the new information. For every project site and alternative in the table, each potential effect is categorized as having either "no impact," if it would not affect a given environmental topic; "no

Table S-1. Continued

Environmental Topic	Potential Effect	SR 197 Sites and Build Alternatives										US 199 Sites and Build Alternatives									
		Ruby 2					Ruby 1					Patrick Creek Narrows Location 2					Patrick Creek Narrows Location 3				
		Four-Foot Shoulders	Two-Foot Shoulders	Two-Foot Shoulders in Spot Locations	Patrick Creek Narrows Location 1	Upstream Bridge Replacement	Downstream Bridge Replacement	Bridge Preservation with Upslope Retaining Wall	The Narrows	Cut Slope	Washington Curve Retaining Wall	Patrick Creek Narrows Location 1	Upstream Bridge Replacement	Downstream Bridge Replacement	Bridge Preservation with Upslope Retaining Wall	The Narrows	Cut Slope	Washington Curve Retaining Wall	No Build (No Action) Alternative		
Geology/Soils/Seismic/Topography	Potential for Erosion, Landslide, and Rock Fall	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts		
	Potential for Construction-Related Soil Erosion and Sedimentation	No impacts	No impacts	No impacts	No impacts	No impacts	No impacts	No impacts	No impacts	No impacts	No impacts	No impacts	No impacts	No impacts	No impacts	No impacts	No impacts	No impacts	No impacts		
	Potential Impacts on Worker Safety during Blasting Operations	No blasting	No blasting	No blasting	No blasting	No blasting	No blasting	No blasting	No blasting	No blasting	No blasting	No blasting	No blasting	No blasting	No blasting	No blasting	No blasting	No blasting	No blasting	No blasting	
	Potential Impacts on Worker Safety from Rock Fall during Construction of Cut Slopes	No impacts	No impacts	No impacts	No impacts	No impacts	No impacts	No impacts	No impacts	No impacts	No impacts	No impacts	No impacts	No impacts	No impacts	No impacts	No impacts	No impacts	No impacts	No impacts	
Hazardous Waste/Materials	Potential for Debris to Enter River During Bridge Demolition	No impacts	No impacts	No impacts	No impacts	No impacts	No impacts	No impacts	No impacts	No impacts	No impacts	No impacts	No impacts	No impacts	No impacts	No impacts	No impacts	No impacts	No impacts		
	Potential for Hazardous Material Spills During Construction	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts		
	Potential for Exposure to Aerially-Deposited Lead	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts		
	Potential for Release of Hazardous Waste/Materials Associated with Construction, Traffic, or Roadway Maintenance	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts		
Air Quality	Potential for Release of Hazardous Waste/Materials Associated with Removal or Modification of Facilities or Structures	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts		
	Potential Impacts Associated With Naturally-Occurring Asbestos	No impacts	No impacts	No impacts	No impacts	No impacts	No impacts	No impacts	No impacts	No impacts	No impacts	No impacts	No impacts	No impacts	No impacts	No impacts	No impacts	No impacts	No impacts		
	Temporary Increase in Ozone Precursor (ROG and NOx), CO, and PM10 Emissions during Grading and Construction Activities	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts		
	Release of Naturally-Occurring Asbestos Fibers into the Air During Grading and Construction Activities	No impacts	No impacts	No impacts	No impacts	No impacts	No impacts	No impacts	No impacts	No impacts	No impacts	No impacts	No impacts	No impacts	No impacts	No impacts	No impacts	No impacts	No impacts		
Noise and Vibration	Potential Disturbance from Construction Noise Levels (Non-Blasting)	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts		
	Potential for Disturbance to Nearby Noise-Sensitive Land Uses from Controlled Blasting Activities	No blasting	No blasting	No blasting	No blasting	No blasting	No blasting	No blasting	No blasting	No blasting	No blasting	No blasting	No blasting	No blasting	No blasting	No blasting	No blasting	No blasting	No blasting		
	Permanent removal of natural communities at a given project location	No adverse impacts	Adverse impact greater than Two-Foot Shoulders in Spot Locations Alternative	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts		
	Temporary disturbance and effects on natural communities.	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts		
Natural Communities (See Section 2.3.1 for detailed comparisons of effects by alternative)	Permanent removal of redwood trees with a dbh of 36 inches or more	No impacts	Adverse impact greater than Two-Foot Shoulders in Spot Locations Alternative	No impacts	No impacts	No impacts	No impacts	No impacts	No impacts	No impacts	No impacts	No impacts	No impacts	No impacts	No impacts	No impacts	No impacts	No impacts			
	Permanent removal of trees other than redwoods	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts	No adverse impacts			
	Temporary Restrict the Passage of Fish, including Anadromous Fish	No impacts	No impacts	No impacts	No impacts	No impacts	No impacts	No impacts	No impacts	No impacts	No impacts	No impacts	No impacts	No impacts	No impacts	No impacts	No impacts	No impacts			
		No impacts	No impacts	No impacts	No impacts	No impacts	No impacts	No impacts	No impacts	No impacts	No impacts	No impacts	No impacts	No impacts	No impacts	No impacts	No impacts	No impacts			

adverse impact,” if it would not have a significant, harmful effect on an environmental topic; or “adverse,” if it could have a significant effect on an environmental topic. Note that the term “adverse” may have a different threshold or definition, depending on whether the impact is being considered under federal or state laws. For example, a finding of May Affect, Likely to Adversely Affect for a federally listed species could be proposed for a variety of impact types, including harassment, under the federal Endangered Species Act (ESA). That finding may or may not be determined to be significant, depending on whether anticipated impacts are temporary/permanent and the kind and level of impact (e.g., harassment only, versus killing, and the anticipated number of individuals or population(s) that might be affected). Conversely, harassment is not considered under the California ESA, so harassment would not be considered adverse or significant. Details of each environmental topic, potential effect, and associated avoidance, minimization, and/or mitigation measures are discussed in Chapter 2.

Coordination with Other Public Agencies

Table S-2 describes the permits, reviews, and approvals required for project construction. This information is reiterated in Table 1-5 in Chapter 1.

Table S-2. Permits and Approvals

Agency	Permit/Approval	Status
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)	Endangered Species Act (ESA) Section 7 consultation for threatened and endangered species	Ongoing
National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS)	ESA Section 7 consultation for threatened and endangered species	Ongoing
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers	Clean Water Act (CWA) Section 404 authorization for fill of waters of the United States	Ongoing
U.S. Department of Agriculture Forest Service	Coordination based on Forest Service sensitive and Northwest Forest Plan species, tree removal permit, scenic byway and Wild and Scenic River concurrence for the Middle Fork Smith River (US 199), Section 4(f) coordination and concurrence, and coordination for conducting work within the Department’s right-of-way easement held by the Forest Service	Ongoing
Del Norte County Parks Department	Temporary easement in Ruby Van Deventer County Park for driveway improvements	Ongoing
California Department of Fish and Game	California Fish and Game Code Section 1602 streambed alteration agreement and California Wild and Scenic Rivers coordination through the Section 1602 application process (Smith River coordination via 1602 agreements for SR 197 locations, and Middle Fork Smith River coordination via 1602 agreements for US 199 locations)	Ongoing
National Park Service	Wild and Scenic River concurrence for the Smith River	Completed
North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board	CWA Section 401 water quality certification and coverage under the Department’s National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permit (Order 00-06-DWQ)	Ongoing
North Coast Unified Air Quality Management District	Formal notification submitted a minimum of 14 days before construction, permit for compliance with national emission standards for hazardous air pollutants, acceptance of dust control plan, and acceptance of lead compliance plan	Not yet initiated

Tulare Expressway

On State Route 65 in Lindsay from Hermosa Street to south of
Avenue 300 on State Route 245

06-TUL-65-PM 29.5/R38.3

06-TUL-245-PM 0.0/0.5

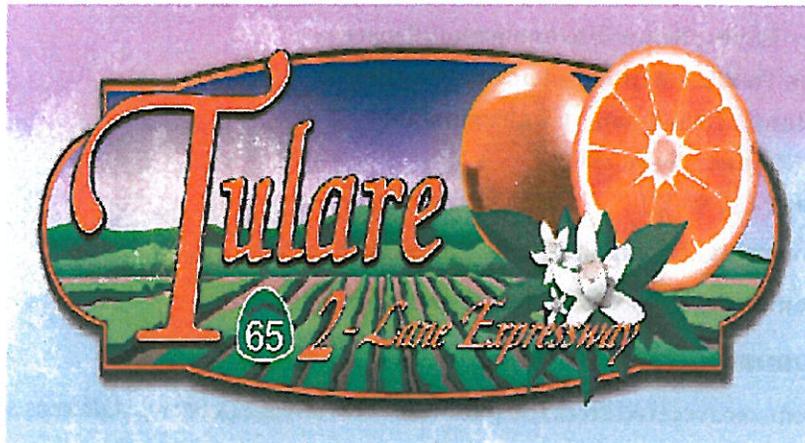
Project EA 06-430800

Project ID 06-0000-0426

SCH# 2003111011

Draft Environmental Impact Report/ Environmental Assessment

Executive Summary



Prepared by the
State of California Department of Transportation

The environmental review, consultation, and any other action required in accordance with applicable federal laws for this project is being, or has been, carried out by the California Department of Transportation under its assumption of responsibility pursuant to 23 U.S. Code 327.

September 2012



General Information About This Document

What's in this document?

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), as assigned by the Federal Highway Administration, has prepared this draft environmental impact report/environmental assessment that examines the potential environmental impacts of alternatives being considered for the proposed project in Tulare 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, potential impacts from each of the alternatives, and proposed avoidance, minimization, and/or mitigation measures.

What should you do?

- Please read this document. Additional copies of this document as well as the technical studies are available for review at the Caltrans District 6 office, 1352 W. Olive Avenue, Fresno, CA 93728; Tulare County Public Library, Exeter Branch Library, 230 E. Chestnut Avenue, Exeter, CA 93221; and the Tulare County Public Library, Lindsay Branch Library, 157 N. Mirage Street, Lindsay, CA 93247. The document can also be accessed electronically at the following website: <http://www.dot.ca.gov/dist6/factsheets/index.htm>
- Attend the public information meeting or public hearing on October 9, 2012.
- We welcome your comments. If you have any concerns about the proposed project, please attend the public information meeting or send your written comments to Caltrans by the deadline. Submit comments via U.S. mail to Caltrans at the following address:
Kelly Hobbs, Senior Environmental Planner
Sierra Pacific Environmental Analysis Branch
California Department of Transportation
855 M Street, Suite 200
Fresno, CA 93721
- Submit comments via email to: kelly_hobbs@dot.ca.gov.
- Submit comments by the deadline: November 13, 2012.

What happens next?

After comments are received from the public and reviewing agencies, Caltrans, as assigned by the Federal Highway Administration, may 1) give environmental approval to the proposed project, 2) do additional environmental studies, or 3) abandon the project. If the project is given environmental approval and funding is appropriated, Caltrans could design and build all or part of the project.

Printing this document: To save paper, this document has been set up for two-sided printing (to print the front and back of a page). Blank pages occur where needed throughout the document to maintain proper layout of the chapters and appendices.

For individuals with sensory disabilities, this document is available in Braille, in large print, on audiocassette, or on computer disk. To obtain a copy in one of these alternate formats, please call or write to Caltrans, Attn: Kelly Hobbs, Sierra Pacific Environmental Analysis Branch, California Department of Transportation, 855 M Street, Suite 200, Fresno, CA 93721; (559) 445-5286 Voice, or use the California Relay Service TTY number, (559) 488-4066 or 711.

SCH# 2003110011
06-TUL-65-PM 29.5/R38.3
06-TUL-245-PM 0.0/0.5
Project ID 06-0000-426

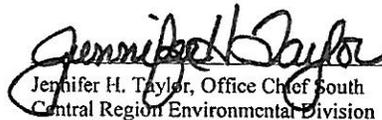
Realign State Route 65 (post miles 29.5 to R38.3) and construct a two-lane expressway on a four-lane right-of-way from Hermosa Street in Lindsay to Avenue 300 on State Route 245 (post miles 0.0 to 0.5) northeast of Exeter

**DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT
/ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT**

Submitted Pursuant to: (State) Division 13, California Public Resources Code
(Federal) 42 U.S. Code 4332(2)(C) and 23 U.S. Code 327, and 49 U.S. Code 303

THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA
Department of Transportation

9/17/12
Date of Approval


Jennifer H. Taylor, Office Chief South
Central Region Environmental Division
California Department of Transportation
National Environmental Policy Act Lead Agency

9/18/12
Date of Approval


Christine Cox-Kovacevich, Chief
Central Region Environmental Division
California Department of Transportation
California Environmental Quality Act Lead Agency



Summary

Effective July 1, 2007, the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) has been assigned environmental review and consultation responsibilities under the National Environmental Policy Act pursuant to 23 U.S. Code 327. Caltrans is also the lead agency for this project under the California Environmental Quality Act.

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), in cooperation with the Tulare County Association of Governments, proposes to realign State Route 65 in Tulare County from Hermosa Street in Lindsay to State Route 198 northeast of Exeter. The total length of the project would be about 9.3 miles, including about 0.5 mile of transition improvements on State Route 245. The project proposes construction of a two-lane expressway that can be expanded to a four-lane expressway as funding becomes available and traffic volumes increase. The proposed project includes frontage roads, railroad overhead crossings, new bridges, controlled access, and utility relocations.

Two build alternatives and a No-Build Alternative are being considered. Both build alternatives would bypass the city of Exeter and realign State Route 65 to the east, closer to Spruce Avenue (Road 204). Both new alignments would parallel Spruce Avenue (Road 204); segments of Spruce Avenue (Road 204) would become frontage road.

The project would be built in four phases as funding becomes available. The phases would begin and end at the same general locations:

- Phase 1—Hermosa Street to Avenue 244
- Phase 2—Avenue 244 to Avenue 268 (Myer Avenue)
- Phase 3—Avenue 268 (Myer Avenue) to Avenue 280 (Rocky Hill Drive)
- Phase 4—Avenue 280 (Rocky Hill Drive) to south of Avenue 300 on State Route 245

Under a Memorandum of Agreement with Tulare County, Road 244, Road 268, and Road 280 would be used as a temporary connection between the new alignment and existing State Route 65 until the subsequent phases would be constructed.

The California Highway Commission, now the California Transportation Commission, adopted a proposed state highway between Avenue 288 (Hermosa Street) in Lindsay and Avenue 384, 10 miles north of Avenue 376 (the old State Route 131) on January 25, 1962. Therefore, no new route adoption would be required for the project because the proposed alternatives are within the alignments of the route adoption. Although the

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existing route adoption predated the California Environmental Quality Act and the National Environmental Policy Act, this environmental document addresses both statutes.

The proposed project would be funded from the State Transportation Improvement Program/Regional Transportation Improvement Program (Program Code 075.600) with Phase 1 construction scheduled in fiscal year 2018/19. It is included in Tulare County's 2011 Regional Transportation Improvement Project as a financially constrained project and as a four-lane phased project with construction of the first phase beginning in 2019. The State Route 65/Spruce Avenue (Road 204) widening to four lanes between State Route 137 and State Route 198 is listed as a Measure R project in the Tulare County Expenditure Plan.

Overview of Project Area

State Route 65 is a north-south component of the Tulare County road system and was adopted into the California Highway System in 1933. It is also classified as a National Highway System route that connects State Route 99 in Kern County to State Route 198 east of Visalia in Tulare County. Along the way, as State Route 65 parallels the Sierra Nevada foothills to the east, it links the cities of Porterville, Lindsay, Exeter, Woodlake, Visalia, as well as the communities of Ducor and Terra Bella.

From its beginning at State Route 99 in Kern County, State Route 65 follows a general north-northeast alignment until reaching the project area. After passing Hermosa Avenue in Lindsay, the route turns to west and merges with east-west State Route 137 for about 1.5 miles before turning north again. From State Route 137, existing State Route 65 travels north until ending at State Route 198. State Route 65 north of State Route 137 is also known as Kaweah Avenue or Road 196.

Currently, this segment of State Route 65 passes through the city of Exeter. The proposed realignment would bypass the city and move the route east to parallel the Spruce Avenue (Road 204) alignment. The proposed realignment would cross the Friant-Kern Canal on existing Spruce Avenue (Road 204) and connect with State Route 245 (Road 204) north of State Route 198.

The project corridor parallels the Sierra Nevada foothills east of Exeter where the surrounding landscape is primarily dominated by agriculture. Residences and retail businesses, however, can be found at the beginning of the project in Lindsay and are also scattered along Spruce Avenue (Road 204). Also along Spruce Avenue (Road 204) is the community of Tooleville, several large agriculture-related businesses, a federal wastewater treatment plant, farmhouses, the Friant-Kern Canal, and two railroads.

Purpose and Need

The following is the purpose of the proposed project:

- Provide route continuity
- Increase the capacity for interregional traffic
- Improve safety
- Meet forecasted traffic volume

The project is needed to provide a continuous expressway throughout the corridor to support an uninterrupted flow of traffic. State Route 65 south of Hermosa Street in Lindsay is classified as an expressway. The route ends at State Route 198, also classified as an expressway. An expressway is a highway with controlled access (no driveways connect with the highway and the number of intersections is limited).

Existing State Route 65 does not currently provide direct access to State Route 245 (Road 204) for traffic wishing to continue northbound. State Route 245 extends north of State Route 198 on the Spruce Avenue (Road 204) alignment. Currently, northbound traffic must turn east at the intersection of State Route 65 and State Route 198, travel for about 1 mile to the intersection of State Route 245 (Road 204) and State Route 198, enter a left-hand turn lane and wait for the signal allowing a left-hand turn.

The existing State Route 65 alignment passes through the eastern portion of the city of Exeter, resulting in traffic flow interruptions as local traffic enters and leaves the highway at driveways and intersections. Spruce Avenue (Road 204) is often used as an alternative to State Route 65 to bypass traffic flow interruptions in Exeter. This has resulted in a higher than average accident rate on Spruce Avenue (State Route 245/Road 204) than similar roadways in the state.

The efficient transportation of goods is critical to the economic health of the region; trucks make up 14 percent of the corridor traffic. The existing State Route 65 roadway is deteriorating due to age and heavy use. Future levels of service are projected to degrade (break down or decay) with the existing two-lane configuration.

This project is compatible with the concepts of the San Joaquin Valley Blueprint (SJV B), which was initiated in 2005 by eight Regional Transportation Planning Agencies as a planning process used to guide growth in the San Joaquin Valley over the next 50 years. Traffic volumes within the project area are anticipated to increase with the Valley's growth. In 2007, the average annual daily traffic (AADT) was 17,500 vehicles. In the future, the average daily traffic is predicted to increase to 23,300 vehicles by the year

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2015 and 34,500 vehicles by the year 2035 (Caltrans Updated Traffic Operational Analysis, 2009).

Proposed Action

The project proposes to realign State Route 65 in Tulare County from Hermosa Street (post mile 29.5) in the city of Lindsay to State Route 245 northeast of the city of Exeter or about one-half mile (post mile 0.5) north of State Route 198 (post mile R38.6). The total length of the project would be about 9.3 miles with construction of a two-lane expressway (8.8 miles built on four-lane right-of-way) that would include frontage roads, railroad overhead crossings, new bridges, controlled access, and utility relocations. The project would also have about 0.5 mile of transition improvements on State Route 245 starting at State Route 198.

In accordance with Caltrans standards for expressways, the proposed project would include the minimum 0.5-mile distance between access points. According to the Caltrans Highway Design Manual, an expressway is an arterial highway with at least partial access control (intersections) and may or may not be divided by a median or have grade separations at intersections. Limited or restricted access to the expressway means the elimination of driveways and access easements.

Frontage roads would be developed to maintain access to properties that would be affected by these standards. A frontage road is a local street (or auxiliary road) on the side of an arterial highway for service to abutting property and adjacent areas and for control of access (Caltrans Highway Design Manual).

Alternatives

Two build alternatives (Alternative 1 and Alternative 2) and a No-Build Alternative are under consideration. Both build alternatives, follow a new alignment that mostly parallels Spruce Avenue (Road 204) east of the city of Exeter, would bypass the city by building a two-lane expressway on a four-lane right-of-way. Both build alternatives would include the following:

- Improve local road intersections
- Require utility and residential relocations
- Require frontage roads for property access
- Require cul-de-sacs (dead-ends or turnarounds)
- Limit access to the expressway

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- Cross over Lewis Creek, the Friant-Kern Canal, and the San Joaquin Valley Railroads, requiring the construction of overhead crossings and bridge structures
- A new bridge would be constructed over the Friant-Kern Canal to the west of the existing Bridge #46C-0182, which will remain in place

The following are the primary differences between the two build alternatives: Alternative 1, for most of its length, would parallel the east and west side of existing Spruce Avenue (Road 204), depending on location; Alternative 2, for most of its length, would parallel the west side of existing Spruce Avenue (Road 204). The total project cost estimate for Alternative 1 is \$94,534,000; Alternative 2 is \$96,857,000. The project, however, would be built in four phases as funding becomes available.

The No-Build Alternative would keep State Route 65 in its existing condition. Routine maintenance projects would continue.

Joint California Environmental Quality Act/National Environmental Policy Act Document

The proposed project is a joint project by the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) and the Federal Highway Administration and is subject to state and federal environmental review requirements. Project documentation, therefore, has been prepared in compliance with both the California Environmental Quality Act and the National Environmental Policy Act. Caltrans is the lead agency under the California Environmental Quality Act. In addition, the Federal Highway Administration's responsibility for environmental review, consultation, and any other action required in accordance with applicable federal laws for this project is being, or has been, carried out by Caltrans under its assumption of responsibility as stated in 23 U.S. Code 327.

Impacts determined significant under the California Environmental Quality Act may not lead to a determination of significance under the National Environmental Policy Act. Because the National Environmental Policy Act is concerned with the significance of the project as a whole, it is quite often the case that a "lower level" document is prepared for the National Environmental Policy Act. One of the most commonly seen joint document types is an environmental impact report/environmental assessment.

Following receipt of public comments on the draft environmental impact report/environmental assessment and circulation of the final environmental impact report/environmental assessment, Caltrans will be required to take actions regarding the environmental document and will determine whether to certify the environmental impact

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report and issue findings and a Statement of Overriding Considerations under the California Environmental Quality Act. Caltrans will also decide whether to issue a Finding of No Significant Impact or require an environmental impact statement under the National Environmental Policy Act.

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S.1 Summary of Major Potential Impacts from Alternatives

Potential Impact		Alternative 1	Alternative 2	No-Build Alternative
Land Use Is the project consistent with the General Plans of these cities?	Exeter	Discussed in the Tulare County General Plan and the Regional Transportation Plan	Discussed in the Tulare County General Plan and the Regional Transportation Plan	An expressway would not be built.
	Lindsay	Discussed in the Tulare County General Plan and the Regional Transportation Plan	Discussed in the Tulare County General Plan and the Regional Transportation Plan	An expressway would not be built.
	Tulare County	Discussed in the Tulare County General Plan and the Regional Transportation Plan	Discussed in the Tulare County General Plan and the Regional Transportation Plan	An expressway would not be built.
Growth Would the project induce growth?		Would not induce growth because there are no new access points proposed	Would not induce growth because there are no new access points proposed	No change
Farmlands How many acres of farmland will be converted?	Total Acreage (rounded)	320 acres	321 acres	0
	Prime and Unique (rounded)	63 acres	63 acres	0
	Williamson Act (rounded)	149 acres	168 acres	0
Community Character and Cohesion		Would promote community cohesion by removing regional traffic through Exeter	Would promote community cohesion by removing regional traffic through Exeter	State Route 65 currently divides the city of Exeter.
Relocation Will the project displace any of the following?	Business	Potentially relocates 1 business	Potentially relocates one business	No business relocations
	Housing	Potentially relocates 13 single-family residences, 1 mobile home, and 2 tenant occupied mobile homes	Potentially relocates up to 11 single-family residences, 3 mobile home and 1 tenant occupied mobile home	No residential relocations
	Utility Service	Relocates telephone and power lines, high-pressure gas lines, irrigation lines, waterline fire hydrants, and fiber optics along Spruce Avenue (Road 204)	Requires new telephone poles, power poles and irrigation lines	No utility service relocations

Summary

Potential Impact		Alternative 1	Alternative 2	No-Build Alternative
Environmental Justice		Would not cause a disproportionately high and adverse effect on any minority or low-income populations	Would not cause a disproportionately high and adverse effect on any minority or low-income populations	No change
Traffic and Transportation/ Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities		Would have to incorporate planned bicycle paths on Rocky Hill Drive Would improve existing levels of service and continuity of the highway	Would have to incorporate planned bicycle paths on Rocky Hill Drive Would improve existing levels of service and continuity of the highway	Traffic delays and average travel speed would continue to worsen.
Visual/Aesthetics		Would not affect the overall rural character of the landscape even though the physical changes, (overhead railroad crossings; canal bridges; existing farmland and orchard removal) would be substantial	Would not affect the overall rural character of the landscape even though the physical changes, (overhead railroad crossings; canal bridges; existing farmland and orchard removal) would be substantial	No change to resources
Cultural Resources	Archaeology	Based on preliminary studies, it appears to have no effect on any recorded archaeology sites; however, due to the sensitivity of cultural resources in the area, further studies are required before construction begins.	Based on preliminary studies, it appears to have no effect on any recorded archaeology sites; however, due to the sensitivity of cultural resources in the area, further studies are required before construction begins.	No change to resources
	Historic Architecture	Would have no visual impact to historic structures Would construct a new bridge over the Friant-Kern Canal, which is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places, but would not require replacement of the historic canal bridge on Spruce Avenue/Road 204	Would have an indirect visual impact to two historic structures Would construct a new bridge over the Friant-Kern Canal, which is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places, but would not require replacement of the historic canal bridge on Spruce Avenue/Road 204.	No change to resources
Water Quality and Storm Water Runoff		Would disturb 205.77 acres of soil during construction, resulting in temporary impacts, and creates 76.26 acres of impervious surface area; best management plans and a Storm Water Pollution Plan would be necessary	Would disturb 186.74 acres of soil during construction, resulting in temporary impacts, and creates 76.26 acres of impervious surface area; best management plans and a Storm Water Pollution Plan would be necessary	No change to resources

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Potential Impact	Alternative 1	Alternative 2	No-Build Alternative
Paleontology	Based on preliminary studies, the uppermost few feet of sediment are unlikely to yield significant vertebrate fossils; however, any excavation deeper than 6 feet could encounter scientifically significant vertebrate fossils	Based on preliminary studies, the uppermost few feet of sediment are unlikely to yield significant vertebrate fossils; however, any excavation deeper than 6 feet could encounter scientifically significant vertebrate fossils	No change to resources
Hazardous Waste/Materials	Further investigation is needed to determine the effects of above- and underground storage tanks on six parcels	Further investigation is needed to determine the effects of above- and underground storage tanks on two parcels	No land would be acquired.
Air Quality	The Environmental Protection Agency provided concurrence that this is not a project of air quality conformity concern as a whole; concurrence will be requested for phased a project after the comment period.	The Environmental Protection Agency provided concurrence that this is not a project of air quality conformity concern as a whole; concurrence will be requested for phased a project after the comment period	Could lead to increases in mobile-source pollutants as congestion increases.
Noise and Vibration	Noise levels would not approach or exceed the noise abatement criteria of 67 decibels for any identified receptors.	Although noise levels may approach or exceed the noise abatement criteria of 67 decibels for some identified receptors—due to the rural and isolated nature of the receptors—abatement was determined unreasonable and unfeasible.	No noise and vibration impacts
Wetlands and other Waters	Permanent impacts: 0.11 acre	Permanent impacts: 0.15 acre	No change to resources
Threatened and Endangered Species	Impacts to potential foraging habitat of the San Joaquin kit fox: 240.20 acres of temporary impacts; 132.93 acres of permanent impacts.	Impacts to potential foraging habitat of the San Joaquin kit fox: 249.93 acres of temporary impacts; 120.55 acres of permanent impacts.	No change to resources

Permits and Approvals

Table S.2 provides the permits and agreements required for the proposed Tulare Expressway Project.

S.2 Coordination with Other Agencies

Agency	Permit/Approval	Status
United States Fish and Wildlife Service	Section 7 Biological Opinion for Threatened and Endangered Species	Biological Assessment submitted after the preferred alternative is identified; Biological Opinion must be received before final environmental document is approved
California Department of Fish and Game	Section 1602 Streambed Alteration Agreement, 2080.1 for a consistency determination with the Biological Opinion issued by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	Application for a 1602 permit submitted during Project Specifications and Estimates phase of the project
United States Army Corps of Engineers	Section 404 Nationwide Permit for permanent impacts to Waters of the United States.	Application for Section 404 permit submitted during Project Specifications and Estimates phase of the project
San Joaquin Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board	Section 401 Certification for a Water Discharge Permit.	Application for a Section 401 permit submitted during Project Specifications and Estimates phase of the project
State Water Resource Control Board	Section 402 National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System	Application for a Section 402 permit to be submitted during Project Specifications and Estimates phase of the project
San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District	Dust Control Plan	Caltrans Standard Specifications pertaining to dust control plan would be in the construction contracts
San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District	Notification would be required before demolition of any bridges or structures.	Notification would be made during construction phase of the project

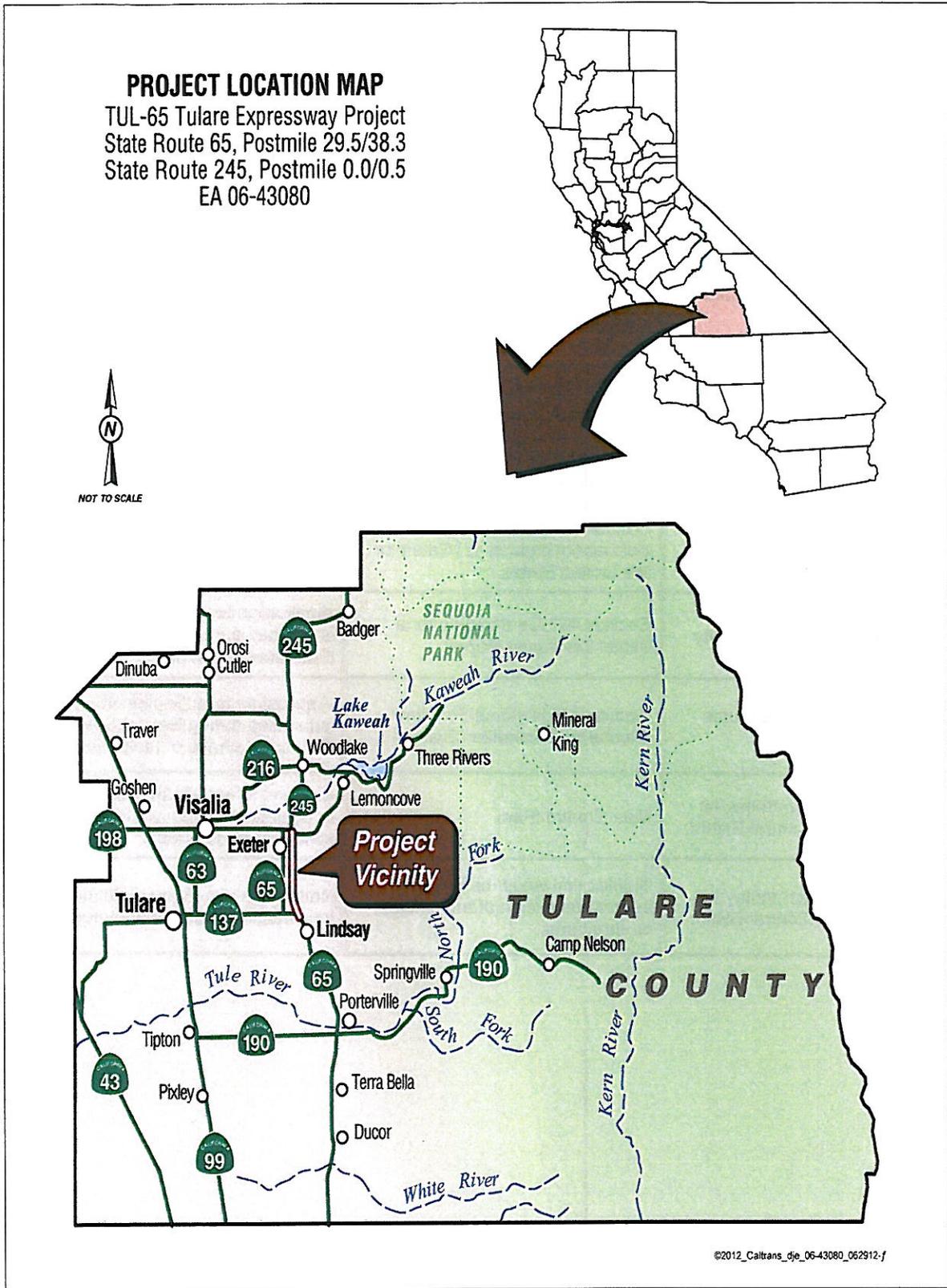


Figure 1-1 Vicinity Map