

Summary Form for Electronic Document Submittal

Form F

Lead agencies may include 15 hardcopies of this document when submitting electronic copies of Environmental Impact Reports, Negative Declarations, Mitigated Negative Declarations, or Notices of Preparation to the State Clearinghouse (SCH). The SCH also accepts other summaries, such as EIR Executive Summaries prepared pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15123. Please include one copy of the Notice of Completion Form (NOC) with your submission and attach the summary to each electronic copy of the document.

SCH #: 2019109027

Project Title: West Branch Cherokee Creek Bridge Replacement

Lead Agency: Caltrans

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Project Location: 3 Miles Northeast of Copperopolis Calaveras
City *County*

Project Description (Proposed actions, location, and/or consequences).

The proposed project would demolish the current West Branch Cherokee Creek bridge (Bridge #30-0036, Cherokee Bridge) and replace it with a new structure. The existing bridge is more than 80 years old, with a soffit elevation of 1,422.7 feet above mean sea level. The bridge structure is currently capable of accommodating 800 cubic feet per second (cfs) of water flow. The guardrails do not meet current Caltrans standards and, although the structure currently has 12-foot-wide lanes, there are no shoulders along this area.

The proposed bridge design would increase the soffit elevation by 4 feet (to 1,426.7 feet above mean sea level). This would require that the bridge span (length) increase to 31 feet and that the roadway on either end be elevated to match the bridge elevation. The new structure would pass 1,800 cubic feet per second of water flow and provide 2 feet of freeboard (distance from water surface to bottom of bridge soffit), allowing water-borne debris to pass through and prevent the bridge from failing.

Identify the project's significant or potentially significant effects and briefly describe any proposed mitigation measures that would reduce or avoid that effect.

Two special status wild-life species were determined to have the potential to occur in the project area, based on a review of the California Natural Diversity Database: California red-legged frog (*Rana draytonii*) – Federally threatened (FT), State species of special concern (SSC) and Foothill yellow-legged frog (*Rana boylei*) – State candidate for listing, State species of special concern (SSC), though neither species was discovered during species surveys. This is likely because a number of natural predator species do exist within the immediate project area. Informal consultation with US Fish and Wildlife determined that the project **may affect, but is not likely to adversely affect** California red-legged frog. The project will have both temporary and permanent impacts on habitat suitable for both species. These impacts would be minimized by the establishment and observance of ESAs, the requirement that workers participate in environmental awareness training, the execution of pre-construction surveys for both the two species of frog and for nesting migratory birds and raptors, and the avoidance of construction activities during nesting season if possible. If construction must take place during nesting season (February 1- September 30), bird and nest avoidance guidelines would be followed. Construction monitoring by an approved biologist during dewatering, vegetation clearing, silt fence install and ground disturbance, would be required. In addition, species exclusion fencing, intake screens on pumps, and wildlife escape ramps would be employed. Because there would be impacts to riparian habitat, Caltrans proposes 0.041 credit of riparian restoration and 0.040 credit of riparian enhancement would be purchased from a CDFW-approved mitigation bank.

If applicable, describe any of the project's areas of controversy known to the Lead Agency, including issues raised by agencies and the public.

None known

Provide a list of the responsible or trustee agencies for the project.

California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW)
Regional Water Quality Control Board
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
U.S. Army Corp of Engineers