

CATEGORICAL EXEMPTION/CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION DETERMINATION FORM

05-MON-01 Dist.-Co.-Rte. (or Local Agency)	43.1 P.M./P.M.	05-1H490 E.A/Project No.	0516000081 Federal-Aid Project No. (Local Project)/Project No.
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PROJECT DESCRIPTION: (Briefly describe project including need, purpose, location, limits, right-of-way requirements, and activities involved in this box. Use *Continuation Sheet*, if necessary.)

Caltrans is proposing to upgrade the existing bridge rails on the Castro Canyon Bridge, located on SR-1 in the Big Sur region of Monterey County. The project is located about 35 miles south from Carmel-by-the-Sea. The existing bridge rails are made of wooden beams that are no longer compliant with current Caltrans Design and Safety standards. The new bridge rails will conform to current Caltrans design and safety standards. (continued on next page).

CALTRANS CEQA DETERMINATION (Check one)

- Not Applicable – Caltrans is not the CEQA Lead Agency** **Not Applicable – Caltrans has prepared an Initial Study or Environmental Impact Report under CEQA**

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

- Exempt by Statute.** (PRC 21080[b]; 14 CCR 15260 et seq.)
 Categorically Exempt. Class 3 (PRC 21084; 14 CCR 15300 et seq.)

Based on an examination of this proposal and supporting information, the following statements are true and exceptions do not apply:

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

- Common Sense Exemption.** [This project does not fall within an exempt class, but it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the activity may have a significant effect on the environment (14 CCR 15061[b][3].)]

Matt Fowler

Print Name: Senior Environmental Planner or Environmental Branch Chief



Signature

9/29/20

Date

Aaron Henkel

Print Name: Project Manager



Signature

4/29/2020

Date

NEPA COMPLIANCE

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

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

CALTRANS NEPA DETERMINATION (Check one)

- 23 USC 326:** The State has determined that this project has no significant impacts on the environment as defined by NEPA, and that there are no unusual circumstances as described in 23 CFR 771.117(b). As such, the project is categorically excluded from the requirements to prepare an EA or EIS under the National Environmental Policy Act. The State has been assigned, and hereby certifies that it has carried out the responsibility to make this determination pursuant to Chapter 3 of Title 23, United States Code, Section 326 and a Memorandum of Understanding dated May 31, 2016, executed between the FHWA and the State. The State has determined that the project is a Categorical Exclusion under:

- 23 CFR 771.117(c): activity (c)(22)**
 23 CFR 771.117(d): activity (d)()
 Activity ___ listed in Appendix A of the MOU between FHWA and the State

- 23 USC 327:** Based on an examination of this proposal and supporting information, the State has determined that the project is a Categorical Exclusion under 23 USC 327. The environmental review, consultation, and any other actions required by applicable Federal environmental laws for this project are being, or have been, carried out by Caltrans pursuant to 23 USC 327 and the Memorandum of Understanding dated December 23, 2016 and executed by FHWA and Caltrans.

Matt Fowler

Print Name: Senior Environmental Planner or Environmental Branch Chief



Signature

9/29/20

Date

Aaron Henkel

Print Name: Project Manager/DLA Engineer



Signature

4/29/2020

Date

Date of Categorical Exclusion Checklist completion:

Date of ECR or equivalent :

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

CATEGORICAL EXEMPTION/CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION DETERMINATION FORM
Continuation Sheet

Continued from page 1:

The new bridge rails will be a "see through" design, constructed of concrete and metal components. A bicycle railing will also be installed on top of the new bridge rail. The new bridge rail design would be taller and wider than the existing bridge rail. As part of the bridge rail upgrade, the overhang on the western and eastern side of the existing bridge deck would be extended by one foot to accommodate the new wider bridge rail. The existing bridge overhang will be extended for the entire length of the bridge. As a result of overhand extension on the existing bridge, the existing crib wall on the southwestern corner of the existing bridge will need to be modified to match the new bridge overhang width and to accommodate the new wider bridge rails. The overall width of the existing bridge after the new bridge overhangs and bridge rails are installed would be approximately 32 feet. The length of the bridge will remain 240 feet. The bridge deck will remain unpaved concrete.

The existing bridge approach and departure railings will also be upgraded with new Midwest Guardrail System that would meet current Caltrans Highway Design Manual and current Caltrans safety standards. The project will also upgrade existing crash cushion on the bridge to meet current Caltrans Highway Design Manual and current Caltrans safety standards. The project will only upgrade existing railings and will not install new railings. All upgraded railing components would be aesthetically treated.

The project will require re-striping of lanes and shoulders. The northbound and southbound lanes will remain 12 feet wide. The southbound shoulder will remain 1 foot wide and the northbound shoulder will remain 3 feet wide.

The proposed project will upgrade two existing down drains on the northwest and southwest corner of the bridge, along the southbound lane. The existing down drains are showing signs of corrosion and deformation. The existing down drain pipes are 9 inches in diameter and would be upgraded to 24-inch diameter drainage pipes. The inlet for the northwest down drain will be relocated further north to accommodate the bridge rail upgrade work. Relocating the inlet for the northwest down drain will require removal of the existing 20-foot drain pipe and the installation of a 60-foot drain pipe. The outlet location of the northwest down drain will remain the same. Rock slope protection will be added to the outlet of the southwest down drain to improve drainage condition. The inlets for both down drains will be replaced to match the larger diameter drainage pipes and will require minor paving adjustments to match the existing paved surface. Drainage upgrades will include installation of asphalt dikes.

The project will require temporary and permanent utility relocations. On the edge of the northbound lane, there are two utility poles that are in conflict with the bridge rail upgrade work. Within the project limits, utility lines crosses above the highway. It is anticipated that some permanent utility relocations will be placed underground or attached on the new bridge rails and overhangs.

It is anticipated that a retaining wall will be constructed just east of the southern bridge abutment to prevent upslope debris from resting directly on bridge structure. The retaining wall would be constructed within existing State right of way. The dimensions of the retaining wall would be approximately 20 feet long, 10 feet high and 10 feet wide. The top of the retaining wall would be lower than the existing bridge deck. Aesthetic treatments will be applied to the retaining wall.

All project related activities would occur within existing State right of way. It is anticipated that construction storage and staging sites would be located on paved or pre-disturbed areas within existing State right of way. The project will not require temporary construction easement. The project will require temporary access route for worker foot traffic to access underneath bridge and access drainage outlets.

The project will require temporary lane closures and one-way traffic management during construction. Within the project limits, public access on SR-1 will be maintained during construction. The project will maintain public access for Deetjen's Big Sur Inn during construction.

Environmental Measures & Commitments:

Visual/Aesthetics Resources

1. All metal components of new or replaced roadside elements, including but not limited to approach rails, guardrail, bridge rail, end treatments and crash cushions shall be colored or darkened to match surrounding visual character.
2. Crash cushion will be designed to be the minimum size allowable for their intended function.
3. Existing guardrails within the project limits not modified along the southbound road shall be darkened.
4. New bridge rail and end blocks will be consisted with the rusting and rural visual character of the site and the Big Sur Coast. Aesthetic treatments of bridge rails and end blocks will be developed with input from Caltrans Landscape Architect and the appropriate Big Sur Community group(s).
5. No trees will be removed as part of the project.

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Biological Resources

1. To preserve as much existing habitat as feasible, fencing and/or flagging will be installed around Environmentally Sensitive Areas within the project limits. Environmentally Sensitive Areas will be identified within the project's design plans.
2. Areas disturbed by construction activities will be reseeded with appropriate native seed mix, to enhance and restore existing habitat.
3. Any woody debris found in the project area will be stockpiled and dispersed back into the project areas to retain any large cover that existed before project construction.
4. The project will implement all avoidance and minimization measures from the Programmatic Biological Opinion for California red-legged frog.
5. If feasible, all vegetation removal and tree trimming shall be scheduled to occur between October 1 and January 31, outside of the typical bird nesting season. If is not feasible to conduct vegetation removal and tree trimming work outside of the bird nesting season, a nesting bird survey shall be conducted by a qualified biologist no more than 14 days prior to the start of proposed work. If an active nest is found, a qualified biologist shall determine an appropriate Environmental Sensitive Area buffer or monitoring strategy based on the habits and needs of the species. The Environmental Sensitive Area buffer shall be avoided, and monitoring strategy implemented until a qualified biologist has determined that juveniles have fledged.
6. A Caltrans biologist or qualified representative will provide a bridge worker training and/or information material to be used in identifying California condors, protocols for responding to their presence within the project site if they arrive and notification procedures.
7. If California condors are observed within the construction area, all work shall cease within 250 feet from the animal until the animal leaves the areas on their own accord. The Caltrans Resident Engineer and Biologist will be notified immediately. The Biologist will call Ventana Wildlife Society to notify them and see what appropriate steps may be taken.

Noise Generation

1. Construction activities will be limited to normally acceptable hours, Monday through Friday.
2. The public will be notified in advance of the construction schedule when upcoming construction activities are likely to produce adverse levels of noise.
3. When in operation, stationary construction equipment will be placed away from sensitive noise receptors. Especially loud pieces of stationary equipment shall be shielded from sensitive noise receptors.
4. Each internal combustion engine used on the job shall be equipped with mufflers recommended by the manufacture.
5. Heavily trafficked construction staging, and storage areas shall be placed at locations that would be least disruptive to surrounding sensitive noise receptors.