

Notice of Determination**- 1 -****To:**

Office of Planning and Research
 For U.S. Mail:
 P.O. Box 3044
 Sacramento, CA 95812-3044

Street Address:

1400 Tenth Street
 Sacramento, CA 95814

From:

California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW)
 Bay Delta Region
 2825 Cordelia Road, Suite 100, Fairfield, CA 94534
 Contact: Robert Stanley, Senior Environmental Scientist
 Phone: (707) 339-6534

California Department of Transportation
 111 Grand Avenue, MS 8B, Oakland, CA 94612
 Contact: Brian Gassner
 Phone: (510) 286-6025

SUBJECT: Filing of Notice of Determination pursuant to Public Resources Code § 21108

State Clearinghouse Number: 2020050579

Project Title: Interstate 680 Southbound Express Lane Project (EA 04-0Q300) [California Endangered Species Act (CESA) Incidental Take Permit No. 2081-2021-019-03 (ITP)]

Project Location: The Interstate 680 Southbound Express Lane Project (Project) is located along eight miles of Interstate (I-680) in Alameda and Contra Costa County (Figure 1). The Project along I-680 runs from Post Mile (PM) 10.6 to PM 21.4 in Alameda County and from PM 0 to 0.5 in Contra Costa County. The Project falls within the Dublin, Niles and La Costa Valley United States Geological Survey (USGS) 7.5-minute topographic quadrangles.

Project Description: The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) in cooperation with the Alameda County Transportation Commission (ACTC) proposes to construct a High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV)/express lane on southbound I-680 from Koopman Road in Alameda County to north of Alcosta Boulevard in Contra Costa County. The Project will include improvements in the median for southbound transportation facilities and a future northbound HOV/express lane, as well as southbound pavement rehabilitation within the Project limits. The Project will consist of the following primary components; addition of a new HOV/express lane in the southbound direction of I-680 from 0.8 mile north of Koopman Road to Alcosta Boulevard, installation of electronic tolling equipment and signage, widening/reconstruction of pavement in the median to accommodate the HOV/express lane, rehabilitation of existing pavement and new and replacement concrete barriers, retaining walls, and guard rails.

The Biological Study Area (BSA) is approximately 602.04 acres and includes the section of I-680 between PM 10.6 to PM 21.4 in Alameda County and between PM 0.0 to 0.5 in Contra Costa County. The Project is expected to impact 15 acres of suitable habitat for Covered Species within the I-680 corridor. Direct impacts from ground disturbance to California tiger salamander (CTS) suitable habitat include the permanent loss of 5.40 acres, temporary loss of 3.70 acres (2.79 acres from short term temporary impacts, 0.91 acres from extended temporary impacts). Indirect impacts are expected to 5.90 acres of California tiger salamander suitable habitat from additional artificial light source installations. Direct impacts to Alameda whipsnake (AWS) suitable habitat include the permanent loss of 5.40 acres and the temporary loss 3.70 acres within the I-680 corridor. All direct impacts to AWS suitable habitat are concurrent with and overlap CTS suitable habitat.

The Project is expected to result in incidental take of the Covered Species, as defined by Fish and Game Code in the form of pursue; destruction of burrows and dens that the Covered Species inhabit; being crushed under moving vehicles and equipment; disturbance in the vicinity of dens or burrows; desiccation or predation along fence lines and other barriers to movement; and habitat alteration and decreased survivorship resulting from the installation of additional light sources, resulting in increased light pollution to Covered Species habitat. Take may also occur in the form of pursue, catch, capture, or attempt to do so from capture and relocation attempts. Relocation could result in mortality, injury, and/or disease transmission to Covered Species, both designated as a threatened species under CESA. The ITP referenced above as issued by CDFW authorizes incidental take of species listed under CESA that may occur as a result of Project implementation.

This is to advise that CDFW, acting as [the lead agency / a responsible agency] approved the above-described project on 10/6/2021 and made the following determinations regarding the above described project:

1. The project [will / will not] have a significant effect on the environment (This determination is limited to effects within CDFW's permitting jurisdiction as a responsible agency).
2. [An environmental impact report / A negative declaration] was prepared by the lead agency for the original project.

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- 3. Additional mitigation measures [were / were not] made a condition of CDFW’s approval of the project.
- 4. A mitigation reporting or monitoring plan [was / was not] adopted by CDFW for this project.
- 5. A Statement of Overriding Considerations [was / was not] adopted by CDFW for this project.
- 6. Findings [were / were not] made by CDFW pursuant to Public Resources Code § 21081(a). CDFW did, however, adopt findings to document its compliance with CEQA.
- 7. Compliance with the environmental filing fee requirement at Fish and Game Code § 711.4 (check one):
 - Payment is submitted with this notice.
 - A copy of a receipt showing prior payment was submitted to CDFW.

Responsible Agency statement: The Environmental Impact Report prepared by the lead agency for the Project is available to the general public at the office location listed above for the lead agency. CDFW’s administrative record of proceedings related to the incidental take permit is available to the public for review at CDFW’s regional office.

DocuSigned by:

Stephanie Fong
 Signature _____ Date: 10/6/2021
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Stephanie Fong, *Acting Regional Manager*

Date Received for filing at OPR: _____