

State of California
Department of Fish and Wildlife



Memorandum

Date: August 21, 2020

To: Ms. Lindsay Vivian
California Department of Transportation, District 4
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Governor's Office of Planning & Research

Aug 24 2020

STATE CLEARINGHOUSE

DocuSigned by:

Stacy Sherman for

From: Mr. Gregg Erickson, Regional Manager

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California Department of Fish and Wildlife-Bay Delta Region, 2825 Cordelia Road, Suite 100, Fairfield, CA 94534

Subject: State Route – 29 Bridge Rail Replacement Project, Initial Study/Negative Declaration, SCH No. 2020070443, Napa County

The California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) has reviewed the proposed Initial Study and Negative Declaration (IS/ND) for the proposed State Route – 29 Bridge Rail Replacement Project (Project) pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and CEQA Guidelines.¹ Pursuant to our jurisdiction, CDFW is submitting comments on the IS/ND as a means to inform the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) as the Lead Agency, of our concerns regarding potentially significant impacts to sensitive resources associated with the proposed Project.

PROJECT LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION SUMMARY

Caltrans proposes to improve existing bridge rails at three individual bridges on State Route (SR)-29 in Napa County from post-mile (PM) 16.48 to PM 19.04 at Dry Creek Bridge (PM 16.48), Perfume Creek Bridge (PM 17.81) and California Drive Undercrossing Bridge at PM 19.04. The existing bridge rails on Dry Creek Bridge would be replaced with concrete barrier type 836 (modified for bike railing) in both directions. The northbound side of the bridge will require an extension of 5 feet 3 inches in width by either the cantilever method or the use of cast-in-drilled-hole (CIDH) piles, and the southbound side will require the installation of carbon fiber reinforced polymer. In addition, the retaining walls at abutments 1 and 3 would be reconstructed and CIDH piles would be added at the footing of Pier 2. A concrete block and Midwest Guardrail System (MGS) would also be installed along the approach sections of the bridge in both directions. Other work would include removing and repairing concrete.

The existing bridge rails on Perfume Creek Bridge will be replaced with concrete barrier type 836 (modified for bike railing) in both directions. The southbound side will require an extension of the existing concrete double box culvert by 4 feet 4 inches and the

¹ CEQA is codified in the California Public Resources Code in section 21000 et seq. The "CEQA Guidelines" are found in Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations, commencing with section 15000.

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construction of a new wing wall. The southbound shoulder will be widened to match the new width of the box culvert. A concrete block and MGS will be installed along the approach and departure sections of the bridge for the northbound direction and only the approach end for the southbound direction. The existing bridge rails on California Drive Undercrossing Bridge will be replaced with concrete barrier type 836 (modified for bike railing) in both directions. The northbound side of the bridge will be widened by 5 feet 4 inches and the southbound side will be widened by 2 feet 11 inches. The southbound side will require the installation of carbon fiber reinforced polymer. In addition, the top 3 feet of the existing retaining wall will be removed and new wing/closure walls will be constructed at the bridge piers and abutments using CIDH piles. A concrete block and MGS will also be installed for the bridge at the approach end in both directions. Other construction work will include repairing soffit lights, changing vertical clearance warning signs, and painting missing bridge identification signs.

The Biological Study Area (BSA) includes the area surveyed to identify, evaluate, and quantify the natural resource potentially affected by the Project. A BSA was established for each bridge location, consisting of the entire Project footprint surrounded by a buffer distance of 50 feet to account for the direct and indirect effects that could result from Project activities. The BSA contains four types of vegetation including Riparian, Ruderal, Developed Land/Agriculture, and Landscape/Ornamental. The BSA was also found to support 0.25 acre of other waters of the U.S. but did not contain any wetlands.

CDFW ROLE

CDFW is a Trustee Agency with responsibility under CEQA §15386 for commenting on projects that could impact fish, plant and wildlife resources. CDFW is also considered a Responsible Agency if a project would require discretionary approval, such as permits issued under the California Endangered Species Act, the Native Plant Protection Act, the Lake and Streambed Alteration (LSA) Program and other provisions of the Fish and Game Code that afford protection to the State's fish and wildlife trust resources.

LAKE AND STREAMBED ALTERATION AGREEMENT

Please be advised that the proposed Project may be subject to LSA Notification for impacts to drainage systems that connect to tributaries of main stem creeks and tributaries that occur within the Project BSA. CDFW requires an LSA Notification, pursuant to Fish and Game Code section 1600 et. seq., for or any activity that may substantially divert or obstruct the natural flow; change or use material from the bed, channel, or bank including associated riparian or wetland resources; or deposit or dispose of material where it may pass into a river, lake or stream. Work within ephemeral streams, washes, watercourses with a subsurface flow, and floodplains are subject to notification requirements.

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CALIFORNIA ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT

The proposed Project has the potential to impact California freshwater shrimp (*Syncaris pacifica*), a species designated as endangered pursuant to CESA. Please be advised that a CESA Incidental Take Permit (ITP) must be obtained if the Project has the potential to result in take of species of plants or animals listed under CESA, either during construction or over the life of the Project. Under CESA, take is defined as “to hunt, pursue, catch, capture, or kill, or attempt to hunt, pursue, catch, capture or kill.” Issuance of an ITP is subject to CEQA documentation. If the Project will impact CESA-listed species, early consultation is encouraged, as significant modification to the Project and mitigation measures may be required in order to obtain a CESA Permit.

COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

CDFW acting as a Responsible Agency, has discretionary approval under CESA through issuance of an ITP and an LSA Agreement as well as other provisions of the Fish and Game Code that afford protection to the State’s fish and wildlife trust resources. CDFW would like to thank you for preparing the IS/ND and including the appropriate avoidance and mitigation measures imposed as conditions of Project approval by the lead agency, the California Department of Transportation, that will ensure all Project-related impacts are mitigated to below a level of significance under CEQA. Provided, the lead agency implements and adheres to the Project as described in the IS/ND and implements the avoidance and minimization measures related to the Biological Resources section of the Negative Declaration pursuant to CEQA, CDFW has no further comment in regards to the Project noted herein.

CONCLUSION

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments and recommendations regarding those activities involved in the Project that may affect California’s fish and wildlife. Likewise, we appreciate the opportunity to provide comments regarding those aspects of the Project that CDFW, by law, may be required to carry out or approve through the exercise of its own regulatory authority under the Fish and Game Code.

Questions regarding this letter or further coordination should be directed to Mr. Robert Stanley, Senior Environmental Scientist (Specialist), at (707) 428-2093 or Robert.Stanley@wildlife.ca.gov; or Mr. Craig Weightman, Environmental Program Manager, at (707) 944-5577 or Craig.Weightman@wildlife.ca.gov.

cc: State Clearinghouse #2020070443