



**CEQA EXEMPTION / NEPA CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION
DETERMINATION FORM (rev. 05/2020)**

<u>Project Information</u>	
DIST-CO-RTE: 01-MEN-271	PM/PM: Various
EA: 01-0J480	Federal-Aid Project Number: N/A
<u>Project Description</u>	
Men-271 Culvert Replacements Project. Please see continuation sheet for project description and details.	

Caltrans CEQA Determination (Check one)

- Not Applicable** – Caltrans is not the CEQA Lead Agency
- Not Applicable** – Caltrans has prepared an IS or EIR under CEQA

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

- Exempt by Statute.** (PRC 21080[b]; 14 CCR 15260 et seq.)
- Categorically Exempt. Class 15301.** (PRC 21084; 14 CCR 15300 et seq.)
 - No exceptions apply that would bar the use of a categorical exemption (PRC 21084 and 14 CCR 15300.2). See the [SER Chapter 34](#) for exceptions.
- Covered by the 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].)

Senior Environmental Planner or Environmental Branch Chief

Darrell Cardiff		10/02/2020
Print Name	Signature	Date

Project Manager

Sherry Constancio		10/06/2020
Print Name	Signature	Date



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Caltrans NEPA Determination (Check one)

Caltrans 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). See SER Chapter 30 for unusual circumstances. As such, the project is categorically excluded from the requirements to prepare an EA or EIS under NEPA and is included under the following:

[] 23 USC 326: Caltrans has been assigned, and hereby certifies that it has carried out the responsibility to make this determination pursuant to 23 USC 326 and the Memorandum of Understanding dated April 18, 2019, executed between FHWA and Caltrans. Caltrans has determined that the project is a Categorical Exclusion under:

- [] 23 CFR 771.117(c): activity (c)(Enter activity number)
[] 23 CFR 771.117(d): activity (d)(Enter activity number)
[] Activity Enter activity number listed in Appendix A of the MOU between FHWA and Caltrans

[] 23 USC 327: Based on an examination of this proposal and supporting information, Caltrans 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. Senior Environmental Planner or Environmental Branch Chief

Signature lines for Project Manager/DQA Engineer with 'Not Applicable' watermark and labels for Print Name, Signature, and Date.

Date of Categorical Exclusion Checklist completion: N/A
Date of Environmental Commitment Record or equivalent: 9/29/2020

Briefly list environmental commitments on continuation sheet if needed (i.e., not necessary if included on an attached ECR). Reference additional information, as appropriate (e.g., additional studies and design conditions).



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Continuation sheet:

**Men-271 Culvert Replacements
EA: 01-0J480
California Department of Transportation (District 1)**

Project Description

Caltrans Maintenance proposes to replace or repair seven drainage systems identified by the Culvert Inspection Program as deteriorated and beyond their useful service life. Without such repair or replacement, the roadway could be subject to washout, requiring more extensive roadway reconstruction. In the seven drainage systems, eight culverts are identified for repair or replacement.

Culverts will be replaced as close to the existing alignment (horizontal/vertical) as possible. Seven of the eight pre-existing culverts will be removed and one will be abandoned in place. All work will be done from the roadway and there are ample shoulder and turnout areas available throughout the project limits for temporary material and equipment storage. Staging will occur and construction area message signs will be placed at non-vegetated gravel turnouts or shoulders. One drainage system contains jurisdictional Waters of the U.S., and the other six drainage systems convey roadside runoff only. The culverts are located on Route 271 in Mendocino County in various locations from Postmile 2.93 to Postmile 18.26 in both the Leggett and Piercy 7.5" USGS quads. Table 1 outlines the proposed work for each culvert included in the project scope. The project is State funded only.

Table 1: Culvert Locations and Proposed work

DS#	County	Route	P.M.	Existing Dia. (in.)	Existing Pipe Type	Existing Pipe Removal Length	Proposed Construction
1	MEN	271	2.93	18	CSP	50	Remove existing culvert; Install new 24" CSP and Grate Opening Drainage Inlet (GO DI). Place AC apron and dike adjacent to new GO DI; remain within existing horizontal and vertical alignment.
2	MEN	271	3.03	24	CSP	100	Remove existing culvert and downdrain; place new 24" CSP and downdrain w/anchor assembly; place rock dissipator at outlet; slightly raise inlet to be above deep depression and loose rubble spilling from the adjacent bank; remain within existing horizontal alignment.
3	MEN	271	4.3	24	CSP	65	Remove existing culvert; place new 24" CSP; tie into existing inlet headwall; repair existing concrete end treatment at outlet; remain within existing horizontal and vertical alignment.
4	MEN	271	7.04	24	CSP	350	Remove existing culvert and GMP inlet; place new 24" pipe and GMP inlet; remain within existing horizontal and vertical alignment.



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5	MEN	271	7.11	24	CSP	60	Remove existing culvert and GMP inlet; place new 24" CSP and GO DI; place AC apron and dike adjacent to new GO DI; slightly raise outlet to be above ponding silt elevation; remain within existing horizontal alignment.
6	MEN	271	7.25	24	CSP	130	Remove existing culvert; place new 36" CSP; tie into existing headwall; place new junction box within CT R/W at transition to privately owned culvert; remain within existing horizontal and vertical alignment.
7	MEN	271	16.91	18	CSP	70	Remove existing culvert and GMP inlet; place new 24" CSP and GO DI; place AC apron and dike adjacent to new GO DI; place rock dissipater at outlet, remain within existing horizontal and vertical alignment.
8	MEN	271	18.26	24	CSP	See Description	Remove 20' of exposed section of existing downdrain at outlet; abandon 70' of the existing culvert, remaining 9' of the downdrain, and DI; place new 24" CSP and downdrain w/ anchor assembly; place inlet headwall at existing ditch flowline elevation; place rock dissipater at outlet; shift horizontal alignment in order to maintain a 6-foot minimum clearance between existing utility pole and guy.

The project is expected to begin in the Summer of 2022 and estimated to occur over approximately 30 working days. Night work is not anticipated. If some activities are required during the night, the contractor would comply with Caltrans Standard Specifications and the Environmental Commitment Record. The project is expected to utilize a variety of equipment including excavators, backhoe, dump trucks, cement mixer or slurry truck, compactor, vibratory plate, asphalt pavement spreaders, rollers, loaders, pavement saws, and paint rigs.

Traffic Control

Traffic control will be maintained by the contractor in accordance with the Caltrans Traffic Management Plan (TMP) and the Standard Plans. The TMP includes requirements related to lane closures, flagging, notification, and coordination with other projects. The proposed project will have one-lane reversing closures with delays up to 15 minutes.

Environmental Commitments

- Sediment and Erosion Control – The contractor will implement all applicable measures within the contract including Caltrans’s 2018 Standard Specifications and Plans.
- Use SSP 7-1.02K(6)(j)(iii) for earth materials containing lead
- Use SSP 14-11.14 for treated wood waste



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- Erosion Control – Use wood mulch as permanent erosion control on disturbed areas
- Staging and storage of equipment and materials will occur on paved roads and non-vegetated turnouts only.
- September 1 to February 15: tree and vegetation removal would occur outside of the bird breeding season. If vegetation removal cannot be done in this window, then surveys by a qualified biologist would be required within one week prior to the removal of any vegetation.
- A qualified biologist will perform amphibian surveys within 24 hours prior to construction at site locations not completely dry, and if needed, would relocate any special-status species to suitable habitat outside of the ground-disturbance area.
- All culvert replacement work will occur between June 15 to October 15 of any year.
- No night work will occur from Postmile 15.5 to 19.0 from February 1 to August 31.
- Noise level requirements
 - February 1 through August 5: Do not perform work that generates noise levels above 90 dBA LMax or 20 or more decibels above ambient sound levels
 - August 6 through September 15: Work that generates noise levels above 90dBA LMax is restricted to the time period from 2 hours after sunrise to 2 hours before sunset.
 - September 16 through January 31: Comply with section 14-8 – Noise & Vibration.
 - Measure the noise level at 50 feet from the source of the noise generating activity. Backup alarms are excluded from the noise requirements.

Environmental Analysis

Aesthetic/Visual

A Visual Impact Assessment level questionnaire was completed on June 9, 2020. The project will result in minimal negative visual changes to the environment and impacts will be less-than-significant.

Air Quality/Noise/Greenhouse Gas

An environmental document assessment for air quality, noise, and greenhouse gas (GHGs) impacts was conducted on May 11, 2020. According to the assessment, the project is a Type III project that will not cause an increase in operational or long-term impacts on air quality, noise, or GHGs, but will have construction related (short-term) impacts. Generation of short-term construction related noise, and the generation of short-term construction air emissions of fugitive dust and exhaust from construction equipment are to be controlled and reduced through the use of the 2018 standard specifications (e.g. Section 14-9). Additionally, the project will not generate operational GHG emissions, nor contribute to a cumulatively considerable impact, and would implement GHG reduction or avoidance measures (standard BMPs) where feasible to reduce construction GHG emissions. Therefore, project impacts are compliant with all applicable plans and will be less-than-significant.



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Biological Resources

A Biological Resources Evaluation Memo was completed by Caltrans on September 30, 2020. Designated critical habitat exists for Northern Spotted Owl (NSO) adjacent to PM 16.91 and 18.26 and should be regarded as occupied. Additionally, special status amphibians may be present at existing culvert location, and sensitive plants may potentially be present adjacent to the project. Avoidance measures will be implemented to avoid take of NSO, and avoid impacts to amphibians and sensitive plants. Specific avoidance measures will be implemented pending final botanical survey results that may include but not limited to the use of high visibility ESA fencing to separate construction activities from sensitive and listed plant populations.

With implementation of avoidance measures, the project will have no take of any species federally or state listed, candidate, (or proposed for listing). The project will not impact any designated critical habitat or essential fish habitat. Impacts are considered less-than-significant.

Wetlands and Jurisdictional Waters

A US Army Corps of Engineer (USACE) jurisdictional waterway occurs at PM 7.25, where a spring drainage goes through the cross culvert. This location has the presence of both facultative and obligate wetland plant species such as *Juncus effusus*, *Mentha pulegium* and *Cyperus eragrostis*, as well as channel features that can be defined as bed and bank. No listed species or species of sensitive concern were identified during field reviews at this site. This drainage connects to an adjacent properties' culvert at the Caltrans Right-of-Way which ultimately carries water 600 yards (0.34 miles) to the South Fork Eel River. The work at PM 7.25 will be coordinated with USACE, the North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board (NRWQCB), and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) to determine the need for permits and conditions. No mitigation is required for culvert replacement at this location. The coordination with regulatory agencies, and implementation of any conditions outlined in the permits will ensure that project impacts will be less-than-significant.

Cultural Resources

A screening memo was completed by Caltrans on September 2, 2020. Based on the scope of the construction activities, these undertakings have no potential to affect historic properties.

Hazardous Waste

An Initial Site Assessment was completed July 20, 2020. Based on the review, minor hazardous waste/materials will be encountered within project limits. These issues are routine construction issues that will be managed in the construction contract through standard BMPs and the inclusion of any Special Standard Provisions (SSPs). As a result, the project will not have any impacts related to hazardous waste and will be less-than-significant.



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Other Environmental Resources

All work will be conducted within Caltrans's right of way. Implementation of Standard BMPs and standard measures will ensure there are no impacts to environmental resources. Finally, the project qualifies for a categorical exemption under CEQA Guidelines Section 15301 - Existing Facilities (1)(c) and will not have any exceptions or significant impacts removing the project from the exemption.

Permits

- USACE – Maintenance Exemption from 404 Nationwide Permit
- NCRWQCB - Report of Waste Discharge
- CDFW - 1602 Lakebed and Stream Alteration Permit
- NRWQCB - National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System - Construction General Permit