



Project Name: State Route 39 (SR-39/San Gabriel Canyon Road) Reopening Project
DIST-CO-RTE-PM: 07-LA-39-PM 40.0/44.4
EA: EA: 07-34770
EFIS ID: 0718000117
SCH#: 2022120019

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION FINDINGS

FOR

STATE ROUTE 39 (SR-39/SAN GABRIEL CANYON ROAD) REOPENING PROJECT

The following information is presented to comply with State CEQA Guidelines (Title 14 California Code of Regulations, Division 6, Chapter 3, Section 15091) and the Department of Transportation and California Transportation Commission Environmental Regulations (Title 21, California Code of Regulations, Division 2, Chapter 11, Section 1501 et seq.). Reference is made to the Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR) for the project, which is the basic source for the information.

The following effects have been identified in the EIR as resulting from the project. Effects found not to be significant have not been included.

Biological Environment – Sensitive Species

Adverse Environmental Effects:

Nelson's bighorn sheep is present in the project area and could be impacted either directly through human/vehicle-induced mortality or changes in movement patterns, or indirectly through loss of habitat. Any loss of an individual bighorn sheep before the goals described in its recovery plan are met should be considered a potentially significant impact. Any loss of habitat within the project area should be considered a loss of bighorn sheep habitat and would also be a potentially significant impact. Although features have been incorporated into the project to minimize these impacts, they cannot be completely avoided. With implementation of the measures below, the impacts to Nelson's bighorn sheep would be less than significant with mitigation incorporated.

Habitat for the state and federally endangered southwestern willow flycatcher is located downslope from SR-39 and could potentially be impacted if debris is allowed to flow downhill. Appropriate BMPs have been incorporated into the project design and

additional avoidance and minimization measures identified below will be implemented to reduce potential impacts to a level that is less than significant.

Findings:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project, which avoid or substantially lessen the significant environmental effect as identified in the final EIR.

Statement of Facts:

With implementation of the measures below, the impacts to Nelson's bighorn sheep and southwestern willow flycatcher would be less than significant.

- Temporarily impacted areas would be replanted with native plant species that are typical of the plants within each natural community. Details of the planting plan would be provided in a separate document and would be coordinated with the ANF. Replanting would occur on temporarily impacted areas within Caltrans' Right-of-Way.
- Silt fencing and berms would be installed to reduce the potential for run-off of sediment during the construction phase.
- Included as part of the proposed project design, the speed limit would be reduced to 30 miles per hour along the straight portions of the highway to further reduce the potential for wildlife collisions. Signage indicating wildlife crossings would also be installed to remind drivers of the potential hazard.
- Pre-construction surveys for sensitive animal species within the project area must be conducted by a qualified biologist prior to construction. Any individuals observed within the project limits will be relocated to nearby suitable habitat (within the Angeles National Forest), prior to construction.
- Biological monitoring shall occur during construction and habitat enhancements to ensure that wildlife, including sensitive animal species, are not adversely impacted to a significant degree.
- To mitigate impacts to bighorn sheep habitat and any short-term direct impacts resulting from vehicle collisions, if they occur, Caltrans would contribute funds to USFS for the implementation of the strategic plan to improve habitat quality and bighorn sheep population monitoring in the vicinity of the proposed project site.

- Temporarily impacted areas would be replanted with native plant species that are typical of the plants within the surrounding plant community. Approved plant palettes would be coordinated with USFS biologists.
- In compliance with the EO on Invasive Species (EO 13112) and guidance from the FHWA, the landscaping and erosion control included in the project would not use species listed as invasive. None of the species on the California list of invasive species is used by Caltrans for erosion control or landscaping.
- All equipment and materials would be inspected for the presence of invasive species and cleaned, if necessary. In particularly sensitive areas, extra precautions would be taken if invasive species are found in or next to the construction areas. These include the inspection and cleaning of construction equipment and eradication strategies to be implemented should an invasion occur.

Biological Environment – State or Federally Protected Wetlands

Adverse Environmental Effects:

Ten (10) drainages have been identified that cross the proposed project location and a jurisdictional determination has been conducted to identify the areas that are under USACE and CDFW jurisdiction. Impacts to jurisdictional resources are potentially significant. Prior to the start of construction, all required permits and agreements shall be obtained from the USACE, Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB), and CDFW. Areas that would be temporarily impacted would be replanted after the construction phase is completed. A mitigation and monitoring plan would be prepared that addresses planting procedures, location, success criteria and maintenance. Mitigation for areas that would be permanently impacted would be achieved by purchasing similar habitat within the region of the project at a ratio of 5:1, or as required by the permits. This land would be transferred to an organization that is approved by CDFW and USFS for management in perpetuity.

A Section 1602 Streambed Alteration Agreement from CDFW, a Section 404 permit from USACE, and a Section 401 permit from the RWQCB would be required prior to project initiation.

Findings:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project, which avoid or substantially lessen the significant environmental effect as identified in the final EIR.

Statement of Facts:

With implementation of the measures below, the impacts to state and federal wetlands would be less than significant with mitigation incorporated.

- Impacted vegetated areas would be replanted with native plant species that are typical of the plants within each natural community.
- A mitigation and monitoring plan would be prepared that addresses planting procedures, location, success criteria and maintenance.
- Mitigation for areas that would be permanently impacted would be achieved by purchasing similar habitat within the region of the project site at a rate of 5:1. This land would be transferred to an organization that is approved by CDFW and USFS for management in perpetuity.

Mandatory Findings of Significance

Adverse Environmental Effects:

As discussed above, the proposed project has the potential to adversely impact the Nelson's bighorn sheep through direct mortality or indirectly through loss of habitat. Habitat for the southwestern willow flycatcher might also be impacted.

In addition, the preferred alternative (Alt. 2) would result in 2.9 acres of permanent impacts and 4.5 acres of temporary impacts to natural, terrestrial plant communities. Also, 10 drainages cross the proposed project location, resulting in an additional 0.340 acres of aquatic habitat that would be permanently impacted and another 0.340 acres that would be temporarily impacted. The size of the impact would be small, especially considering the large amount of habitat available adjacent to the project area.

Together, these effects could potentially adversely affect the southwestern willow flycatcher or cause the population on Nelson's bighorn sheep to drop below self-sustaining levels.

Findings:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project, which avoid or substantially lessen the significant environmental effect as identified in the final EIR.

Statement of Facts:

The project includes measures to address potential impacts to terrestrial and aquatic habitat as well as direct and indirect impacts to Nelson's bighorn sheep. Temporarily impacted habitat would be restored onsite while permanent impacts to aquatic habitat would be offset as required by resource agency permits. Measures to minimize direct impacts to bighorn sheep would be implemented and Caltrans would help fund mitigation to offset impacts to bighorn sheep habitat and any short-term direct impacts resulting from vehicle collisions, if they occur.

Overall, significant impacts are avoidable with the inclusion of project features designed to minimize impacts and appropriate mitigation measures that would compensate for impacts that could not be avoided.

Gloria Roberts



02/20/2025

District Director (or designee)

Signature

Date




SR-39 Reopening CEQA Findings

Final Audit Report

2025-02-20

Created:	2025-02-20
By:	Karl Price (s110664@dot.ca.gov)
Status:	Signed
Transaction ID:	CBJCHBCAABAA3vSv-9O_jBVkCqi6fOA2VGkIRgPutmtm

"SR-39 Reopening CEQA Findings" History

-  Document created by Karl Price (s110664@dot.ca.gov)
2025-02-20 - 6:05:12 PM GMT- IP address: 149.136.33.251
-  Document emailed to Kelly Ewing-Toledo (kelly.ewing-toledo@dot.ca.gov) for approval
2025-02-20 - 6:11:16 PM GMT
-  Email viewed by Kelly Ewing-Toledo (kelly.ewing-toledo@dot.ca.gov)
2025-02-20 - 7:26:29 PM GMT- IP address: 149.136.33.251
-  Document approved by Kelly Ewing-Toledo (kelly.ewing-toledo@dot.ca.gov)
Approval Date: 2025-02-20 - 8:56:22 PM GMT - Time Source: server- IP address: 149.136.33.251
-  Document emailed to Gloria Roberts (gloria.roberts@dot.ca.gov) for signature
2025-02-20 - 8:56:23 PM GMT
-  Email viewed by Gloria Roberts (gloria.roberts@dot.ca.gov)
2025-02-20 - 9:47:24 PM GMT- IP address: 104.28.85.113
-  Document e-signed by Gloria Roberts (gloria.roberts@dot.ca.gov)
Signature Date: 2025-02-20 - 9:48:25 PM GMT - Time Source: server- IP address: 174.236.100.8
-  Agreement completed.
2025-02-20 - 9:48:25 PM GMT



Powered by
Adobe
Acrobat Sign