

# Notice of Exemption

## Appendix E

**To:** Office of Planning and Research  
P.O. Box 3044, Room 113  
Sacramento, CA 95812-3044

County Clerk

County of: Humboldt/Trinity

**From:** (Public Agency): CA Department of Transportation  
North Region Environmental  
1656 Union Street, Eureka, CA 95501

(Address)

Project Title: HUM (TRI) 299 Snowstorm Damage

Project Applicant: CA Department of Transportation

Project Location - Specific:

**State Route 299 Humboldt County PM 10.0-43.0, Trinity County PM 0.0-10.0**

Project Location - City: N/A Project Location - County: Humboldt/Trinity

Description of Nature, Purpose and Beneficiaries of Project:

California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) issued a Director's Order for emergency work pertaining to damage caused by a series of winter storms from December 10 – 21 2021 that brought record breaking rain, snowfall and winds. A State of CA emergency proclamation was issued for these storms on 12/30/2021. The scope of work includes hazardous trees removal, guardrail repairs, sign repairs, fencing repairs, drainage system repairs, roadside drainage repairs and other repairs to roadway items as required. A certified arborist will be onsite to assess the trees and determine which ones will be removed. A drainage culvert downtrain at post mile 20.58 on HUM 299 was also damaged during this storm and will be addressed as part of this project. The existing downtrain will be removed and replaced with rock slope protection (RSP). This project is needed to prevent and mitigate the loss or impairment of life, health, property, and essential services. The purpose of this project is to keep the roadway safely open to the public and repair the location to pre damage conditions.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: CA Department of Transportation

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: CA Department of Transportation

Exempt Status: **(check one):**

- Ministerial (Sec. 21080(b)(1); 15268);
- Declared Emergency (Sec. 21080(b)(3); 15269(a));
- Emergency Project (Sec. 21080(b)(4); 15269(b)(c));
- Categorical Exemption. State type and section number: \_\_\_\_\_
- Statutory Exemptions. State code number: \_\_\_\_\_

Reasons why project is exempt:

The project is exempt because it will not have a significant effect on the environment due to unusual circumstances, it does not damage a scenic resource, it is not on the "Cortese List", there will not be significant adverse impacts on endangered, rare, or threatened species or their habitat, and it does not cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of historical resources.

Lead Agency

Contact Person: Laurel Osborn Area Code/Telephone/Extension: 707-492-4064

**If filed by applicant:**

1. Attach certified document of exemption finding.
2. Has a Notice of Exemption been filed by the public agency approving the project? ■ Yes No

Signature: Laurel Osborn Date: 5/1/23 Title: Env Scientist

Signed by Lead Agency Signed by Applicant

Authority cited: Sections 21083 and 21110, Public Resources Code.  
Reference: Sections 21108, 21152, and 21152.1, Public Resources Code.

Date Received for filing at OPR: \_\_\_\_\_



**CEQA EXEMPTION / NEPA CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION  
DETERMINATION FORM (rev. 06/2022)**

**Project Information**

**Project Name (if applicable):** HUM 299 Snow Damage

**DIST-CO-RTE:** 01-HUM/TRI-299

**PM/PM:** 10.0/0.0-43.0/10.0

**EA:** 01-0L910

**Federal-Aid Project Number:** N/A

**Project Description**

The California Department of Transportation issued a Director's Order to initiate an emergency snow damage project. On December 26, 2021, a large, cold storm front impacted Humboldt County which resulted in unusually heavy snowfall. The storm closed Route 299 and Route 96 in both directions for multiple days due to extremely hazardous conditions from the heavy snow load on roadside trees. Trees in the area were dry, weakened by drought conditions, and the storm delivered unusually high snow fall which resulted in widespread tree damage and tree fall. A State of Emergency was issued by Gavin Newsom on December 30, 2021.

**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** Enter class. (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**

Dominic Vitali		5/1/2023
Print Name	Signature	Date

**Project Manager**

Trevor Goff		05/01/2023
Print Name	Signature	Date



CEQA EXEMPTION / NEPA CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION DETERMINATION FORM

Caltrans NEPA Determination (Check one)

Not Applicable

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, 2022, 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 4 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 May 27, 2022, and executed by FHWA and Caltrans.

Senior Environmental Planner or Environmental Branch Chief

Dominic Vitali
Print Name
Signature
Date
5/1/2023

Project Manager/ DLA Engineer

Trevor Goff
Print Name
Signature
Date
05/01/2023

Date of Categorical Exclusion Checklist completion (if applicable): N/A
Date of Environmental Commitment Record or equivalent: 3/6/23

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).



## CEQA EXEMPTION / NEPA CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION DETERMINATION FORM

### **Continuation sheet:**

The scope of work includes hazardous trees removal, guardrail repairs, sign repairs, fencing repairs, drainage system repairs, roadside drainage repairs and other repairs to roadway items as required. A certified arborist will be onsite to assess the trees and determine which ones will be removed. A drainage culvert downdrain at post mile 20.58 on HUM 299 was also damaged during this storm and will be addressed as part of this project. The existing downdrain will be removed and replaced with rock slope protection (RSP).

Air, biological, cultural, hazardous waste, and visual reviews have been completed. There will not be any impacts to sensitive natural resources as a result of the project.

The following measures will be included:

- A contractor-supplied biologist will perform nesting bird surveys one week (or less) prior to tree removal (if tree removal will occur between February 1 and September 15).
- Work on the drainage at post mile 20.58 will occur between June 15 and October 15.
- A tribal monitor will be required at certain locations.

**Permits:** No permits were required for the emergency tree removal work. A North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board General Order, US Army Corps of Engineers 404 non-reporting nationwide 3 permit, and a CA Department of Fish and Wildlife permit will be required for the culvert downdrain work at PM 20.58.