Mariposa 41 Culvert Replacement

On State Route 41 near Fish Camp in Mariposa County

06-MPA-41-D1.84/D1.84

EA 06-1C260 Project ID 0621000039

State Clearinghouse Number 2023050069

Initial Study with Negative Declaration

Volume 1 of 2

Prepared by the

State of California Department of Transportation

October 2023

Caltrans

General Information About This Document

Document prepared by: Cesar Madrigal, Environmental Scientist

[The following text has been added since the draft environmental document was circulated.] The Initial Study circulated to the public for 31 days between May 17, 2023, and June 16, 2023. Comments received during this period are included in Appendix B. Elsewhere, language has been added throughout the document to indicate where a change has been made since the circulation of the draft environmental document. Minor editorial changes and clarifications have not been so indicated.

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State Clearinghouse Number 2023050069
06-MPA-41-D1.84/D1.84
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Replace an existing culvert on State Route 41
near Fish Camp at post mile D1.84 in Mariposa County

INITIAL STUDY
with Negative Declaration

Submitted Pursuant to: (State) Division 13, California Public Resources Code

THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA
Department of Transportation

Responsible Agency: California Transportation Commission

Philip Vallejo

Philip Vallejo
Deputy District Director
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California Department of Transportation
CEQA Lead Agency

8/31/2023

Date

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Negative Declaration

Pursuant to: Division 13, Public Resources Code

State Clearinghouse Number: 2023050069

District-County-Route-Post Mile: 06-MPA-41-D1.84/D1.84

EA/Project Number: 06-1C260/0621000039

Project Description

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) proposes to remove an existing 18-inch corrugated steel culvert at post mile D1.84 on State Route 41 in Mariposa County near Fish Camp and replace it with a larger 24-inch corrugated steel culvert.

Determination

An Initial Study has been prepared by Caltrans, District 6. On the basis of this study, it is determined that the proposed action will not have a significant effect on the environment for the following reasons:

The project will have no effect on aesthetics, agriculture and forest resources, air quality, cultural resources, energy, geology and soils, paleontology, hazards and hazardous materials, hydrology and water quality, land use and planning, mineral resources, noise, population and housing, public services, recreation, transportation, tribal cultural resources, utilities and services systems, and wildfires.

In addition, the project will have less than significant effects to greenhouse gas emissions, biological resources or waters and wetlands.

No mitigation will be needed for the project.

Philip Vallejo

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Deputy District Director
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8/31/2023

Date

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Chapter 1 Proposed Project

1.1 Introduction

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) proposes to replace an existing culvert on State Route 41 at post mile D1.84 in Mariposa County near Fish Camp.

State Route 41 is a major highway running north and south, connecting the Central Coast with the San Joaquin Valley and the Sierra Nevada. The project is in the unincorporated rural area of Mariposa County just north of Fish Camp.

The preliminary estimated cost of the project is $200,000. The project will be funded from the 2023 Minor B State Highway Operation and Protection Program in the 2023/2024 fiscal year.

Construction is scheduled to begin in October 2024 and will take about 10 working days to complete.

1.2 Purpose and Need

1.2.1 Purpose

The purpose of the project is to improve water flow and prevent water from overflowing onto the roadway.

1.2.2 Need

The existing culvert is not functioning as designed because it has perforations, heavy rust, joint separations, and damaged end treatments. It is clogged with sediment and debris.

1.3 Project Description

The project will replace the existing 36-inch corrugated steel culvert with a larger 36 to 40-inch corrugated steel culvert. An “open cut” replacement method is the preferred construction option because the culvert is relatively shallow. The Traffic Management Plan for this project will require at least one through traffic lane, not less than 12 feet in width to be used by both directions of travel. See Figure 1-1 for the project vicinity map and Figure 1-2 for the project location map.

Figure 1-1 Project Vicinity Map

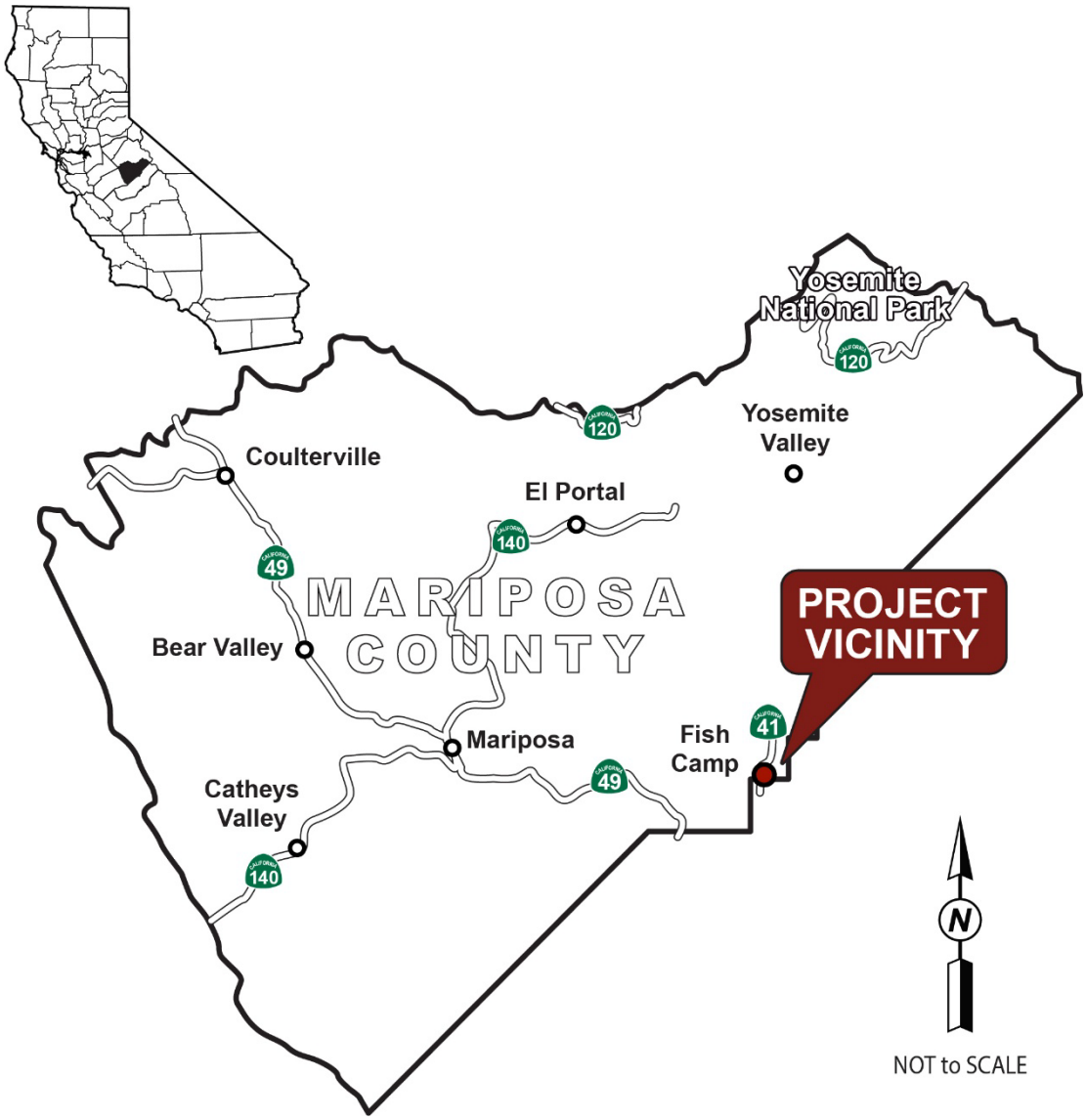
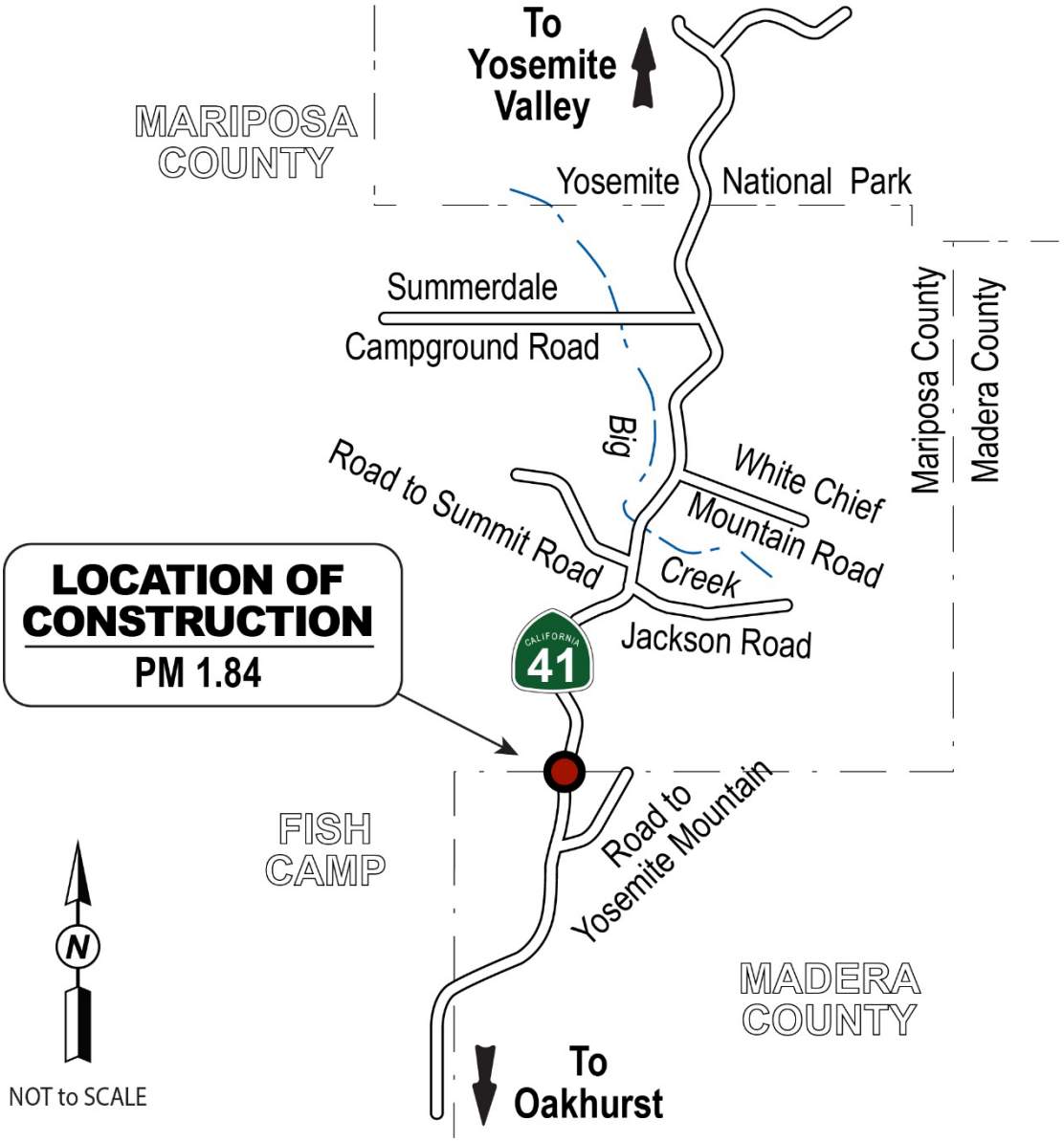


Figure 1-2 Project Location Map



1.4 Project Alternatives

Two alternatives are being considered for the project: a Build Alternative and a No-Build Alternative.

1.4.1 Build Alternative

The Build Alternative will replace the existing deteriorating culvert within the project limits.

The existing culvert is an 36-inch corrugated steel pipe. The existing culvert will be replaced with a larger 36 to 40-inch corrugated steel culvert through an open cut replacement method. No night work is planned for the project. Tree removal is not anticipated during construction of the project.

Table 1-1 lists the culvert location by post mile, the material of the existing culvert, the culvert diameter in inches, and the proposed improvement for the project.

Table 1-1 Culvert to be Replaced

Location	Post Mile	Culvert Material	Existing Diameter (inches)	Proposed Improvement
1	D1.84	Corrugated steel pipe	36	Replace

This project contains a number of standardized project measures that are used on most, if not all, Caltrans projects and were not developed in response to any specific environmental impact resulting from the proposed project. These measures are listed later in this chapter under “Standard Measures and Best Management Practices Included in All Build Alternatives.”

1.4.2 No-Build (No-Action) Alternative

The No-Build Alternative will leave the culvert along this stretch of State Route 41 as it is. The culvert will continue to deteriorate, causing potential flood damage and pavement failure. The No-Build Alternative will not meet the purpose and need of the project.

1.5 Identification of a Preferred Alternative

The Build Alternative was selected as the preferred alternative because it will preserve the operational integrity of the highway system. Repairing and replacing the culvert is necessary to maintain the highway in good operating condition. The Build Alternative is the only alternative that meets the purpose and need of the project.

1.6 Standard Measures and Best Management Practices Included in All Build Alternatives

The project may include, but will not be limited to, the following Caltrans Standard Special Provisions:

- 7-1.02K(6)(J)(III) Earth Material Containing Lead.

- 10-5 Dust Control: Prevent and alleviate dust through general specifications for controlling dust resulting from the work.

- 13-1 Water Pollution Control Plan: To be prepared if the project disturbs less than 1 acre of soil.

- 14-6.03 Species Protection: Pertains to protecting regulated species and their habitat that occur within or near the job site. Upon discovery of a regulated species, notify the resident engineer.

- 14-8.02 Noise Control: Control and monitor noise resulting from work activities. Do not exceed 86 decibels (dBA) from the job site from 9:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m. Equip an internal combustion engine with the manufacturer-recommended muffler. Do not operate an internal combustion engine on the job site without the appropriate muffler.

- 14-9.02 Air Pollution Control: Comply with air pollution control rules, regulations, ordinances, and statutes that apply to work performed under the contract, including those provided in Government Code Section 11017 (Public Contract Code Section 10231). Do not dispose of material by burning.

1.7 Permits and Approvals Needed

The following permits, licenses, agreements, and certifications are required for project construction:

Agency	Permit/Approval	Status
California Department of Fish and Wildlife	1602 Lake and Streambed Alteration Agreement	Will be obtained prior to construction.
Regional Water Quality Control Board	Clean Water Act, Section 401 Water Quality Certification	Will be obtained prior to construction.

Chapter 2 CEQA Evaluation

2.1 CEQA Environmental Checklist

This checklist identifies physical, biological, social, and economic factors that might be affected by the proposed project. Potential impact determinations include Significant and Unavoidable Impact, Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated, Less Than Significant Impact, and No Impact. In many cases, background studies performed in connection with a project will indicate that there are no impacts to a particular resource. A "No Impact" answer reflects this determination. The questions in this checklist are intended to encourage the thoughtful assessment of impacts and do not represent thresholds of significance.

Project features, which can include both design elements of the project and standardized measures that are applied to all or most Caltrans projects such as Best Management Practices and measures included in the Standard Plans and Specifications or as Standard Special Provisions, are considered to be an integral part of the project and have been considered prior to any significance determinations documented below.

"No Impact" determinations in each section are based on the scope, description, and location of the proposed project as well as the appropriate technical report (bound separately in Volume 2), and no further discussion is included in this document.

2.1.1 Aesthetics

During the scoping phase of the project, it was determined, based on the type of project, that a Scenic Resources Evaluation did not need to be prepared; therefore, the following determinations have been made:

Except as provided in Public Resources Code Section 21099:

Question—Would the project:	CEQA Significance Determinations for Aesthetics
a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?	**No Impact**
b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?	**No Impact**

Question—Would the project:	CEQA Significance Determinations for Aesthetics
c) In non-urbanized areas, substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings? (Public views are those that are experienced from a publicly accessible vantage point.) If the project is in an urbanized area, would the project conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality?	**No Impact**
d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?	**No Impact**

2.1.2 Agriculture and Forest Resources

In determining whether impacts to agricultural resources are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to the California Agricultural Land Evaluation and Site Assessment Model (1997) prepared by the California Department of Conservation as an optional model to use in assessing impacts on agriculture and farmland. In determining whether impacts to forest resources, including timberland, are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to information compiled by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection regarding the state's inventory of forest land, including the Forest and Range Assessment Project and the Forest Legacy Assessment Project; and the forest carbon measurement methodology provided in Forest Protocols adopted by the California Air Resources Board.

Considering that the project will not acquire any new right-of-way, the following determinations have been made:

Question—Would the project:	CEQA Significance Determinations for Agriculture and Forest Resources
a) Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?	**No Impact**

Question—Would the project:	CEQA Significance Determinations for Agriculture and Forest Resources
b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?	**No Impact**
c) Conflict with existing zoning, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code Section 12220(g)), timberland (as defined by Public Resources Code Section 4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code Section 51104(g))?	**No Impact**
d) Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?	**No Impact**
e) Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of farmland to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?	**No Impact**

2.1.3 Air Quality

Where available, the significance criteria established by the applicable air quality management district or air pollution control district may be relied upon to make the following determinations.

Considering the information in the Air Quality Memorandum dated October 2022, the following significance determinations have been made:

Question—Would the project:	CEQA Significance Determinations for Air Quality
a) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?	**No Impact**
b) Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard?	**No Impact**
c) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?	**No Impact**

Question—Would the project:	CEQA Significance Determinations for Air Quality
d) Result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people?	**No Impact**

2.1.4 Biological Resources

Considering the information in the Natural Environment Study dated February 2022, the following significance determinations have been made:

Question—Would the project:	CEQA Significance Determinations for Biological Resources
a) Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special-status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, or National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Fisheries?	**Less Than Significant Impact**
b) Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?	**Less Than Significant Impact**
c) Have a substantial adverse effect on state or federally protected wetlands (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?	**Less than Significant Impact**
d) Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?	**No Impact**
e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?	**No Impact**

Question—Would the project:	CEQA Significance Determinations for Biological Resources
f) Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?	**No Impact**

Affected Environment

For details of biological studies, please refer to the Natural Environment Study in Volume 2 (also available upon request – see the last page of this document).

Special-Status Plant Species

Plants are of special concern based on federal, state, or local laws regulating their development, limited distributions, and/or the presence of habitat required by the special-status plants occurring onsite. Four rare plant species—Small's southern clarkia, Jepson's dodder, Mountain's lady slipper, and Gray's monkeyflower—were found to have historic records of occurrence or potentially suitable habitat within the Biological Study Area. Two occurrences of the Clarkia genus species were found in the Biological Study Area during the botanical surveys conducted throughout the growing season. The other three special-status plant species were not present within the action area but could potentially be present there (the area that will be directly affected by the project, plus adjacent areas that may be indirectly affected).

Small's Southern Clarkia

Small's southern clarkia is an annual herb commonly found in lower montane coniferous forests. During reconnaissance surveys, two occurrences of a Clarkia genus species were found, one on each side of State Route 41 at the culvert location. However, it was not determined if the observed species were Small's southern clarkia. According to the Natural Environment Study, the Small's southern clarkia blooming season had passed, therefore making it difficult to correctly identify which species of the Clarkia genus was found onsite.

Jepson's Dodder

Jepson's dodder is an annual parasitic vine that occurs in the Sierra Nevada upper coniferous forests, typically along streambanks. Due to the disturbed nature of the area along State Route 41 and human activity, the Jepson's Dodder is unlikely to occur within the action area.

Mountain's Lady Slipper

Mountain's lady slipper is a perennial rhizomatous herb that occurs in the Sierra Nevada coniferous trees. No Mountain's lady slippers were found during field visits and are not anticipated to occur within the action area.

Gray's Monkeyflower

Gray's monkeyflower is an annual herb native to California that occurs mostly in coniferous forests typically with mesic soils or habitat. No Gray's monkeyflowers were found during field visits and are not anticipated to occur within the action area.

Special-Status Animal Species

Animals are of special concern based on federal, state, or local laws regulating their development, limited distributions, and/or the habitat requirements of special-status animals occurring onsite. Three animal species—Pacific fisher, North American porcupine and Sierra Pygmy grasshopper—were found to have records of occurrence or potentially suitable habitat within the Biological Study Area.

Pacific Fisher

The Pacific fisher is a light to darkish brown tree-dwelling mammal of the weasel family and generally occurs in coniferous forests and areas with high canopy closure.

The California Natural Diversity Database showed one occurrence from 1971 that was 1 mile north of the action area. Given the age of that occurrence and the limited footprint of the project, this species is not expected to occur within the action area.

North American Porcupine

The North American porcupine is a rodent characterized by its coat with long sharp quills and is found in a wide variety of habitats in the Pacific Northwest, including montane conifer forests and wet meadow habitats.

The California Natural Diversity Database showed one occurrence from 1952 about 2 miles southeast of Fish Camp and approximately 1.8 miles east of the action area. Given the age of that occurrence and no porcupines being found during surveys, this species is not expected to occur within the action area.

Sierra Pygmy Grasshopper

The Sierra pygmy grasshopper is a dusty brown insect invertebrate similar to a cricket or grasshopper and is known to occur in Madera and Mariposa counties in lower montane coniferous forest areas.

The California Natural Diversity Database showed one occurrence in 1956 at Sugar Pine, approximately 1.5 miles southeast of the action area. Given the age of that occurrence and no pygmy grasshoppers being found during surveys, this species is not expected to occur within the action area.

Migratory Birds

Migratory birds are protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act, which prohibits the take of migratory birds without the authorization of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The mature trees and areas with dense vegetation adjacent to the project provide potentially suitable habitat for migratory birds.

The California Natural Diversity Database has no occurrence observations of special-status or migratory birds within the action area. No migratory birds or signs of them were observed during biological surveys.

Waters and Wetlands

The action area falls within the U.S. Geological Survey-designated Big Creek Watershed boundary. One potential aquatic resource type was found in the action area: ephemeral drainage. Based on the biological survey, the drainage size was estimated to be about 0.000166 acre on the inlet side and 0.001389 acre on the outlet side within the action area.

Environmental Consequences

Special-Status Plant Species

Minor vegetation removal and trimming are anticipated to allow access to the culvert inlet and outlet but will not require compensatory offsite mitigation. The project has potential to affect the clarkia species on the outlet side, considering the plant sits directly on top of the outlet opening and will likely need to be removed during the culvert replacement. The clarkia species on the inlet side will likely not be affected because it can be avoided during project work.

Soil disturbance is expected to occur when excavation of the culvert trench begins. Heavy equipment may go into the off-pavement areas next to the road to excavate the culvert, potentially resulting in trampling and soil compaction. Pruning, vegetation clearing, and soil disturbance will be localized and low intensity. No permanent impacts are anticipated on any special-status plant species due to project actions, and the project impact area is expected to return to its previous vegetated state within one or two seasons after construction.

Special-Status Animal Species and Migratory Birds

No impacts are expected to these species, their habitat, or nests: Pacific fisher, North American porcupine, Sierra pygmy grasshopper, and migratory birds.

No direct impacts to special-status animal species are anticipated from the project. Work will be confined mostly to the paved road surface, compacted shoulder areas, and very small areas around the inlet and outlet of the existing culvert. No special-status species are known to be currently occupying areas within or right next to the proposed worksite. Since no tree removal is expected, the project is not expected to impact migratory birds or

their habitats, either directly or permanently. The most likely impacts will be from construction-related disturbances resulting from noise, vibration, vehicle activity, and the presence of work crews that could cause animals to be displaced from the work area.

Waters and Wetlands

No wetlands are present within the project footprint. Work at the existing culvert will be performed during no-flow conditions when possible. Culvert replacement work will have very minor, temporary impacts to waterways that will not involve fill or result in alterations to flow or carrying capacity. Culvert replacement work will result in impacts to waterways due to soil disturbance and the excavation of the culvert trench. No proposed actions will result in diminished streamflow or altered flow patterns.

The existing culvert is expected to fall under the jurisdiction of the California Department of Fish and Wildlife and the Regional Water Quality Control Board.

Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures

To ensure special-status or sensitive plant species have not come into the project area or in case they were undetectable during initial surveys, the following avoidance and minimization measures are proposed:

- Pre-construction botanical surveys will be performed at the action area during the flowering season before construction begins.
- For any flowering populations discovered within a work site, immediately prior to any soil disturbance, the location of each population will be noted on a work site plan. The plants will then be excavated along with enough surrounding soil to ensure the root structure remains intact. The plants and soil will be placed in a safe location near the work site and kept moist. Upon completion of the work, the plants will be carefully replaced within or as close to their original location as possible.
- For work sites where construction begins after the flowering period, if special-status plant populations are discovered in the work site, the topsoil will be removed and stored safely near the work area and replaced after construction is finished to maintain the existing seed bank and ensure the continued growth of that population.

The following avoidance and minimization measures are proposed for animal species:

- Pre-construction surveys for special-status species will be conducted prior to groundbreaking.
- Worker Environmental Awareness Training will be performed by a qualified biologist for all work personnel to inform them of the special-

status species potentially within the work area, protective measures, reporting procedures, and consequences of violating environmental laws and permit requirements.

The following avoidance and minimization measure is proposed for the Pacific fisher (*Pekania Pennanti)*:

- Work will be conducted outside of the fisher denning season (March 1 to June 30) if possible.

The following avoidance and minimization measures are proposed for migratory birds:

- Pre-construction surveys for migratory birds will be required if construction occurs into the avian nesting season (February 1 to September 31). If work runs into the nesting season and nesting birds are found within the action area, the project may require an Environmentally Sensitive Area buffer or a biological monitor depending on the scope of the work and the species affected.

- A 500-foot buffer for raptors and a 100-foot buffer for all other migratory birds will be required if said species are observed within the action area. Surveys for migratory birds and raptors will be completed prior to construction by a qualified biologist.

Waters and Wetlands

The project will obtain a 401 Water Quality Certification and/or Waste Discharge Requirements from the Regional Water Quality Control Board. Compensatory mitigation in the form of an in-lieu fee credit purchase may be required as conditions of the permit.

The project will obtain a 1602 Lake and Streambed Alteration Agreement from the California Department of Fish and Wildlife because the permit is required for impacts to natural channels, including ephemeral drainages.

The following avoidance and minimization efforts will be implemented:

- A Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan will be made specifically for the project to reduce impacts to aquatic resources such as waterways.

- Best Management Practices specifically developed for the project will be followed by the contractor. These may include:

    a. Spill Prevention Plan with measures to minimize the risk of fluids or other materials used during construction (e.g., oils, transmission, hydraulic fluids, cement, and fuel) from entering aquatic resources and upland habitat.

b. Installation of measures to ensure water quality is protected.

c. Installation of temporary erosion control features.

- Temporary silt fencing will be installed within the Project Impact Area to protect adjacent waterways from construction-related disturbances.

2.1.5 Cultural Resources

Considering the information in the Cultural Compliance Screening Memorandum dated September 2021, the following significance determinations have been made:

Question—Would the project:	CEQA Significance Determinations for Cultural Resources
a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to Section 15064.5?	**No Impact**
b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to Section 15064.5?	**No Impact**
c) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of dedicated cemeteries?	**No Impact**

2.1.6 Energy

Construction activities will cause a temporary increase in energy consumption, but not significantly. Considering the information, the reasons provided, and guidance from the Caltrans Standard Environmental Reference Chapter 13-Energy, the following significance determinations have been made:

Question—Would the project:	CEQA Significance Determinations for Energy
a) Result in potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources during project construction or operation?	**No Impact**
b) Conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency?	**No Impact**

2.1.7 Geology and Soils

Considering the information in the California Department of Conservation Earthquake and Landslide Zone Map dated December 2022, Alquist-Priolo Fault Hazard Zones Geospatial Maps dated April 2022, Water Quality Memorandum and Paleontological Identification Report both dated October 2022, the following significance determinations have been made:

Question—Would the project:	CEQA Significance Determinations for Geology and Soils
a) Directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving: i) Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42.	**No Impact**
ii) Strong seismic ground shaking?	**No Impact**
iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?	**No Impact**
iv) Landslides?	**No Impact**
b) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?	**No Impact**
c) Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in onsite or offsite landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse?	**No Impact**
d) Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial risks to life or property?	**No Impact**
e) Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of wastewater?	**No Impact**
f) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?	**No Impact**

2.1.8 Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Considering the information in the Climate Change technical report dated January 2023, the following significance determinations have been made:

Question—Would the project:	CEQA Significance Determinations for Greenhouse Gas Emissions
a) Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?	**Less Than Significant Impact**
b) Conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?	**Less Than Significant Impact**

Affected Environment

The project will replace one culvert on State Route 41. Within the project limits, State Route 41 is a conventional two-lane highway heading north, toward the southern side of Fish Camp along with additional different recreational campground destinations nearby.

Environmental Consequences

This project will not add capacity to the highway. There will be no increase in operational emissions because the project will replace one existing culvert. With implementation of construction greenhouse gas reduction measures, impacts will be less than significant.

Construction greenhouse gas emissions for the project were calculated using the Caltrans Construction Emissions Tool (CAL-CET 2021) v1.0. Project construction is expected to generate about 9 tons of carbon dioxide during the 10 working days required for construction of the project.

While some construction greenhouse gas emissions will be unavoidable, implementing standard conditions or Best Management Practices designed to reduce or eliminate emissions as part of the project will reduce impacts to less than significant.

Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures

The following measures will also be implemented to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and potential climate change impacts from the project:

- For improved fuel efficiency from construction equipment:
    - Maintain equipment in proper tune and working condition.
    - Use right-sized equipment for the job.

  - Use equipment with new technologies.

- Limit idling to 5 minutes for delivery and dump trucks and other diesel-powered equipment (with some exceptions)

2.1.9 Hazards and Hazardous Materials

Considering the information in the Initial Site Assessment dated October 2022, the following significance determinations have been made:

Question—Would the project:	CEQA Significance Determinations for Hazards and Hazardous Materials
a) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?	**No Impact**
b) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?	**No Impact**
c) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?	**No Impact**
d) Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?	**No Impact**
e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing or working in the project area?	**No Impact**
f) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	**No Impact**

Question—Would the project:	CEQA Significance Determinations for Hazards and Hazardous Materials
g) Expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires?	**No Impact**

2.1.10 Hydrology and Water Quality

Considering the information in the Water Compliance Memorandum dated October 2022, the following significance determinations have been made:

Question—Would the project:	CEQA Significance Determinations for Hydrology and Water Quality
a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface water or groundwater quality?	**No Impact**
b) Substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin?	**No Impact**
c) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner which would: (i) result in substantial erosion or siltation onsite or offsite;	**No Impact**
(ii) substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding onsite or offsite;	**No Impact**
(iii) create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff; or	**No Impact**
(iv) impede or redirect flood flows?	**No Impact**
d) In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk release of pollutants due to project inundation?	**No Impact**

Question—Would the project:	CEQA Significance Determinations for Hydrology and Water Quality
e) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan?	**No Impact**

2.1.11 Land Use and Planning

Considering that the project will involve only the replacement of one existing culvert and the project improvements will not affect the land use of properties next to the highway, the following significance determinations have been made:

Question—Would the project:	CEQA Significance Determinations for Land Use and Planning
a) Physically divide an established community?	**No Impact**
b) Cause a significant environmental impact due to a conflict with any land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?	**No Impact**

2.1.12 Mineral Resources

Considering the information found in the U.S. Mineral Deposit Database dated November 2022 at the U.S. Geological Survey website, the following significance determinations have been made:

Question—Would the project:	CEQA Significance Determinations for Mineral Resources
a) Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state?	**No Impact**
b) Result in the loss of availability of a locally important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan or other land use plan?	**No Impact**

2.1.13 Noise

Considering the information in the Noise Compliance Study dated October 2022, the following significance determinations have been made:

Question—Would the project result in:	CEQA Significance Determinations for Noise
a) Generation of a substantial temporary or permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the project in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?	**No Impact**
b) Generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?	**No Impact**
c) For a project located within the vicinity of a private airstrip or an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?	**No Impact**

2.1.14 Population and Housing

Considering that the project will not add capacity to the highway or acquire any new right-of-way, the following determinations have been made:

Question—Would the project:	CEQA Significance Determinations for Population and Housing
a) Induce substantial unplanned population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)?	**No Impact**
b) Displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?	**No Impact**

2.1.15 Public Services

Considering that the project will not affect any government facilities or trigger the need for new facilities or government services, the following determinations have been made:

Question:	CEQA Significance Determinations for Public Services
a) Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for any of the public services: Fire protection?	**No Impact**
Police protection?	**No Impact**
Schools?	**No Impact**
Parks?	**No Impact**
Other public facilities?	**No Impact**

2.1.16 Recreation

Considering that the project will not affect parks or recreational facilities or trigger the need for more recreational facilities to be constructed, the following determinations have been made:

Question—Would the project:	CEQA Significance Determinations for Recreation
a) Would the project increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?	**No Impact**
b) Does the project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?	**No Impact**

2.1.17 Transportation

Considering that the project will replace one culvert and not add capacity to the highway or reconfigure the roadway, the following determinations have been made:

Question—Would the project:	CEQA Significance Determinations for Transportation
a) Conflict with a program, plan, ordinance, or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle and pedestrian facilities?	**No Impact**
b) Conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3, subdivision (b)?	**No Impact**
c) Substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?	**No Impact**
d) Result in inadequate emergency access?	**No Impact**

2.1.18 Tribal Cultural Resources

Considering the information in the Cultural Compliance Screening Memo dated September 2021, the following significance determinations have been made:

Will the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in Public Resources Code Section 21074 as either a site, feature, place, cultural landscape that is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American tribe, and that is:

Question:	CEQA Significance Determinations for Tribal Cultural Resources
a) Listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, or in a local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code Section 5020.1(k), or	**No Impact**
b) A resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1. In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.	**No Impact**

2.1.19 Utilities and Service Systems

Considering that the project is replacing an existing culvert and it will not trigger the need for utilities and service systems, the following significance determinations have been made:

Question—Would the project:	CEQA Significance Determinations for Utilities and Service Systems
a) Require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment or storm water drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects?	**No Impact**
b) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry and multiple dry years?	**No Impact**
c) Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider which serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments?	**No Impact**
d) Generate solid waste in excess of state or local standards, or in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure, or otherwise impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals?	**No Impact**
e) Comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste?	**No Impact**

2.1.20 Wildfire

Considering the information in California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection's Fire Hazard Severity Zone Maps and information in the Climate Change technical report dated January 2023, the following significance determinations have been made:

Question—Would the project:	CEQA Significance Determinations for Wildfire
a) Substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	**No Impact**
b) Due to slope, prevailing winds, and other factors, exacerbate wildfire risks, and thereby expose project occupants to pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire?	**No Impact**
c) Require the installation or maintenance of associated infrastructure (such as roads, fuel breaks, emergency water sources, power lines or other utilities) that may exacerbate fire risk or that may result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment?	**No Impact**
d) Expose people or structures to significant risks, including downslope or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes?	**No Impact**

2.1.21 Mandatory Findings of Significance

Question:	CEQA Significance Determinations for Mandatory Findings of Significance
a) Does the project have the potential to substantially degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, substantially reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?	**No Impact**

Question:	CEQA Significance Determinations for Mandatory Findings of Significance
b) Does the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? (“Cumulatively considerable” means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects.)	**No Impact**
c) Does the project have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?	**No Impact**

Appendix A Title VI Policy Statement

CALIFORNIA STATE TRANSPORTATION AGENCY GAVIN NEWSOM, GOVERNOR

California Department of Transportation

OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR
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September 2022

NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY STATEMENT

The California Department of Transportation, under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, ensures "*No person in the United States shall, on the ground of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance.*"

Caltrans will make every effort to ensure nondiscrimination in all of its services, programs and activities, whether they are federally funded or not, and that services and benefits are fairly distributed to all people, regardless of race, color, or national origin. In addition, Caltrans will facilitate meaningful participation in the transportation planning process in a non-discriminatory manner.

Related federal statutes, remedies, and state law further those protections to include sex, disability, religion, sexual orientation, and age.

For information or guidance on how to file a complaint, or obtain more information regarding Title VI, please contact the Title VI Branch Manager at (916) 639-6392 or visit the following web page: https://dot.ca.gov/programs/civil-rights/title-vi.

To obtain this information in an alternate format such as Braille or in a language other than English, please contact the California Department of Transportation, Office of Civil Rights, at PO Box 942874, MS-79, Sacramento, CA 94274-0001; (916) 879-6768 (TTY 711); or at Title.VI@dot.ca.gov.

TONY TAVARES
Director

"Provide a safe and reliable transportation network that serves all people and respects the environment"

Appendix B Comments Letters and Responses

[Appendix B has been added since the draft environmental document was circulated.] A public notice was posted in the Bassett Memorial Library stating the public comment period from May 17, 2023, to June 16, 2023, and offering the public an opportunity to request a public hearing. There was no request for a public hearing, and no comments were received during the circulation of the draft environmental document.

List of Technical Studies Bound Separately (Volume 2)

Air Quality Memorandum, October 2022

Noise Study Memorandum, October 2022

Water Quality Memorandum, October 2022

Natural Environment Study (Minimal Impacts), February 2022

Cultural Compliance Screening Memorandum, September 2021

Hazardous Waste Initial Site Assessment, October 2022

Paleontological Identification Report, October 2022

Climate Change Technical Report, January 2023

To obtain a copy of Volume 2 or the Initial Study, please send your request to:

Javier Almaguer, Senior Environmental Scientist
District 6 Environmental Division
California Department of Transportation
2015 East Shields Avenue, Suite 100, Fresno, California 93726

Or send your request via email to: javier.almaguer@dot.ca.gov
Or call: 559-287-9320

Please provide the following information in your request:

Project title: Mariposa 41 Culvert Replacement

General location information: On State Route 41 near Fish Camp at post mile D1.84 in Mariposa County

District number-county code-route-post mile: 06-MPA-41-D1.84

EA 06-1C260/Project ID 0621000039