



**CEQA CATEGORICAL EXEMPTION / NEPA CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION
DETERMINATION FORM (rev. 04/2022)**

Project Information

Project Name (if applicable): SIS 97 DO Whitney Creek 2022

DIST-CO-RTE: 02-SIS-97

PM/PM: 6/35

EA: 02-4J400

Federal-Aid Project Number: 0223000020

Project Description

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), using state funding only, has completed repairs related to damage caused by the 2022 Whitney Creek mudflow. This emergency repair work was located in Siskiyou County on State Route (SR) 97 from post mile (PM) 6 to 35.

Continued on page 3.

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

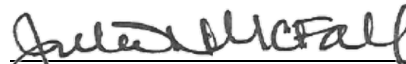
Based on an examination of this proposal and supporting information, the project is:

- Exempt by Statute.** (PRC 21080[b]; 14 CCR 15260 et seq.)
- Categorically Exempt. Class 1c.** (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

Julie McFall

Print Name


 Signature

5/3/23

Date

Project Manager

Javed Iqbal

Print Name


 Signature

5-4-2023

Date



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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)(5)- Transfer of Federal Lands
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

Julie McFall

Print Name

Handwritten signature of Julie McFall

Signature

5/3/23

Date

Project Manager/ DLA Engineer

Javed Iqbal

Print Name

Handwritten signature of Javed Iqbal

Signature

5-4-2023

Date

Date of Categorical Exclusion Checklist completion (if applicable): 2/27/2023

Date of Environmental Commitment Record or equivalent: 2/27/2023

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:

Additional work: The project area was burned in the 2021 Lava/Tennant Fires, creating a vulnerable environment that was susceptible to mudflows. Heavy rains combined with summer glacial melt from Mount Shasta resulted in a mudflow that filled the 20' arch culvert, located at PM 9.52, and overtopped the highway. Project work included: removal of soil/debris from drainage courses and Highway 97 ditches and shoulders; and clearing culverts of bed-load material.

Purpose: The purpose of this project was to remove hazards, replaced damaged assets, and repair facilities to Caltrans standards in order to restore public safety.

Need: The project was needed because many culverts and drainages were blocked during the Whitney Creek mudflow event.

Right-of-Way

The Whitney Creek culvert, on US 97 at PM 9.52, has had reoccurring culvert blockages due to mudflows. Caltrans has an existing right of way agreement with the U.S. Forest Service that extends approximately 1,000 feet upstream and downstream from the culvert location. Emergency work for the Whitney Creek mudflow stayed within the previously agreed upon 1,000 feet.

During the mudflow event the channel changed alignment multiple times. To prepare for future mudflows Caltrans and the U.S. Forest Service agreed to extend the existing Department of Transportation Easement (DOTE) to a total of 14.35 acres of land to be used for future work and disposal needs. This expanded area is located on the downstream side of SR 97 and extends from PM 9.4-9.6.

Staging/Stockpiling

Staging and stockpiling took place on paved or graveled pullouts within the construction zone, within Caltrans right of way.

Disposal/Borrow Sites

A disposal site was needed for the Whitney Creek mudflow. Excess material was relocated adjacent to Whitney Creek within the existing, pre-expansion, DOTE.

Coordination/Consultation

To identify potential cultural resources, Caltrans staff conducted a review of internal and external agency resource records and databases. Additionally, a field review of the project area was completed by cultural staff. Once review was completed it was determined emergency work had no potential to affect cultural resources.

Biological Resources

To identify potential biological resources, Caltrans staff conducted a review of internal and external agency resource records and databases. Additionally, field reviews of the



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project area were completed. Once review was completed it was determined emergency work had no potential to affect biological resources.

Permits

A 1610 Notification of Emergency Work permit from the California Department of Fish and Wildlife was completed.