



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

Project Information

Project Name (if applicable): SR-57/0M9701 Geotechnical Borings

DIST-CO-RTE:12-ORA-57

PM/PM: 11.5/12.5

EA:0M9701

Federal-Aid Project Number: NA

Project Description: The purpose of this geotechnical investigation (drilling operation) is to sample soils in order to inform preliminary design and address permitting requirements for construction of the Northbound SR-57 Widening Project, between post miles 11.5/12.5 in the cities of Anaheim and Orange in Orange County, CA. Drilling operations are limited to State’s existing Right of Way (R/W) *and within Orange County Flood Control District (OCFCD) property, in Santa Ana River (SAR) bottom -near and under- Caltrans bridge #55-0400.* Thus, some boring locations occur within jurisdictional waters of the U.S. and waters of the State. Caltrans has a highway easement over the Santa Ana River/OCFCD property at this location. *A section of the Santa Ana Regional Recreational Trail (Trail) is situated within OCFCD, along the SAR, in the study area. The Trail has been identified as a Section 4f resource. Analysis indicates there will be no temporary impacts to Trail or Trail users because the Trail will remain open and accessible during and throughout drilling operations.* The investigation will utilize soil borings, as well as cone penetration borings. Borings will be a maximum of eight inches in diameter. Borings in river bottom (OCFCD property) will be approximately 110-120 feet deep. Borings in State’s existing R/W will be approximately 140 feet deep.

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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 C 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

Smita Deshpande

Smita Deshpande

June 27, 2023

Print Name

Signature

Date

Project Manager

Farid Nowshiravan

Farid Nowshiravan

June 28, 2023

Print Name

Signature

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)(7)

23 CFR 771.117(d): activity (d)()

Activity 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

Smita Deshpande Print Name, Smita Deshpande Signature, June 27, 2023 Date

Project Manager/ DLA Engineer

Farid Nowshiravan Print Name, Farid Nowshiravan Signature, June 28, 2023 Date

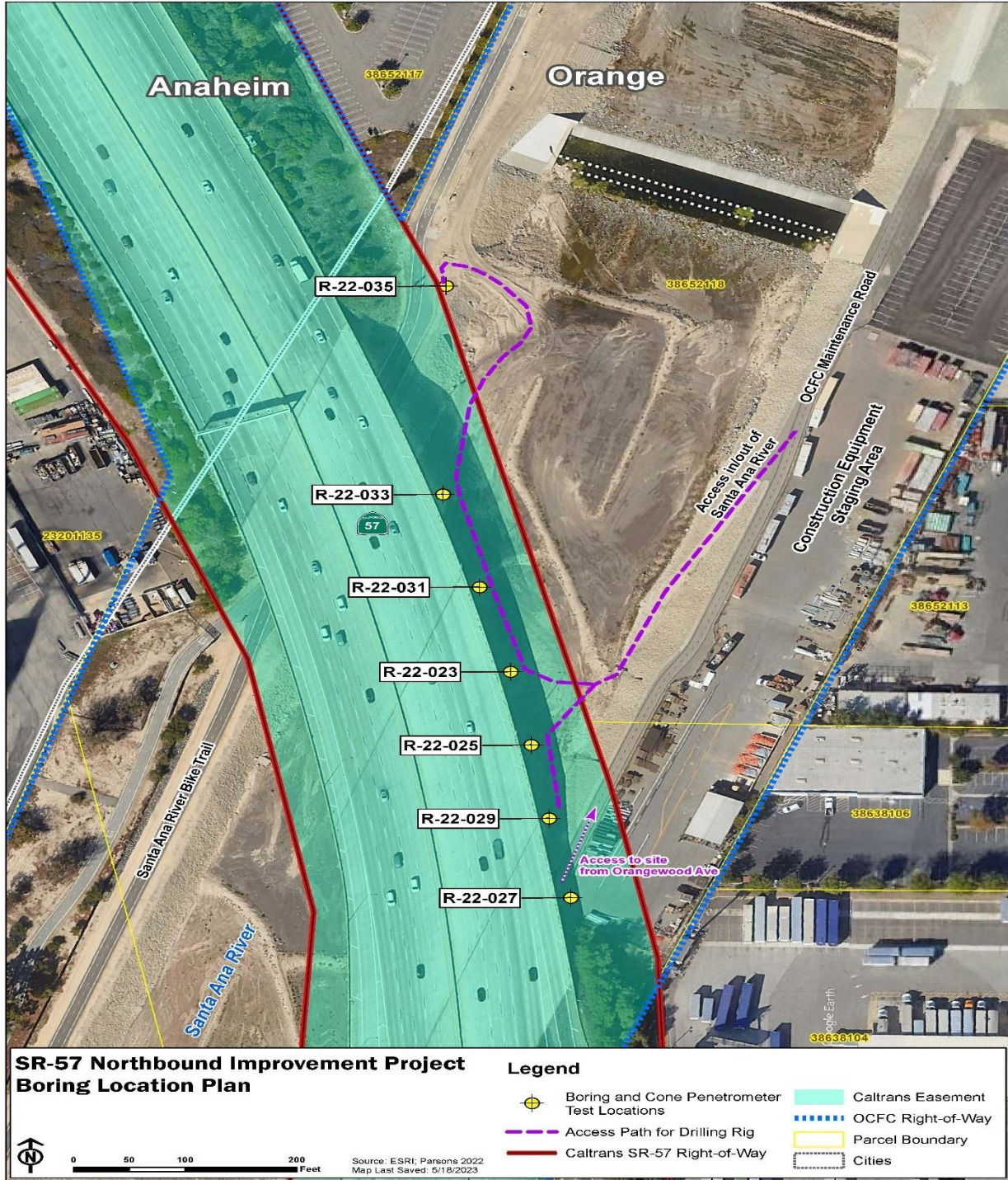
Date of Categorical Exclusion Checklist completion (if applicable): 6/20/23
Date of Environmental Commitment Record or equivalent: 6/20/23



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Continuation sheet:

An encroachment permit from OCFCD is required. Additionally, Caltrans has consulted with the Official with Jurisdiction (Orange County Parks), regarding Trail. During drilling operations, the Trail will remain open and available to users. It is noted a single boring (#R-22-035) is adjacent to Trail. Refer to figure below depicting proposed borings in OCFCD property, in SAR bottom.





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Borings will be drilled using truck and/or track mounted hollow stem auger and/or rotary wash drill rigs. Borings will include sampling every 5 feet to collect blow count data and soil samples for laboratory analysis. The borings will result in a total excavation of approximately 12 cubic yards of soil. All impacts associated with the proposed geotechnical fieldwork will be temporary. Once the samples at each boring location have been removed, all drilling equipment will be removed, and the borehole will be backfilled with the excavated material to return the riverbed back to its original elevation. Likewise, all associated vehicle tracks or ruts in the riverbed will be smoothed out to restore the ground surface of the riverbed back to prework conditions. Drill rigs will be staged at the drilling locations only during working hours. The equipment will be demobilized off the site upon completion of daily work. No borings will occur on Trail or OCFCD maintenance road.

Other proposed borings (not depicted in figure) occur entirely within State’s existing R/W, on SR-57 within project post mile range.

Estimated Disturbed Soil Area (DSA) for drilling operations - totals 12 cubic yards – substantially less than one acre. A Traffic Management Plan (TMP) is required. Some drilling operations may be performed during dark hours (night hours). Environmental permits are anticipated.

The drilling operations (project) will *not* add vehicle capacity and no increase in operational GHG emissions are expected. Construction related GHG emissions (for drilling operations) were estimated using CAL-CET 2021 tool Version 1.0. Please refer to table below for details:

Summary of Project Emissions and Consumption									
TOG	ROG	CO	NOx	PM10	PM2.5	CO2	CH4	N2O	BC
1.277	1.182	5.789	7.733	19.281	2.437	2008	0.044	0.103	0.117
1.869	1.731	12.109	11.609	128.634	12.927	4073	0.071	0.251	0.200
0.070	0.065	0.318	0.425	1.060	0.134	110	0.002	0.006	0.006

HFC	Diesel Fuel	Gasoline Fuel	Electricity
0.120	62	23	0.961
0.390	95	69	3.896
0.007	6,789	2,544	105.701

Standard specifications built into the project related to reducing construction-related pollutants will aid in reduction of GHG emissions.

Each Caltrans project includes, standardized features located at:
<http://www.dot.ca.gov/des/oe/construction-contract-standards.html>

Standardized features (such as Best Management Practices (BMPs) are those features that are generally applied to all Caltrans projects. These standardized or pre-existing features allow little discretion regarding their implementation and are not specific to the circumstances of a particular project.

No significant environmental consequences are anticipated with the proposed project. In addition to the measures related to construction noise, air pollution control, water pollution control, erosion, cultural resources, biological resources, and any subsequent requirements as given in the Caltrans Standard Specifications, the following conditions are required:

- An Environmental Commitment Record (ECR) has been prepared and will be implemented throughout drilling operations (project).



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- This project must conform to the Caltrans Statewide NPDES Storm Water Permit (Order No. 2022-033DWQ, NPDES No. CAS000003) for storm water and non-storm water discharges from Caltrans properties, facilities, and operations.
- Contractor will prepare a Water Pollution Control Program and identify potential water quality impacts associated with soil borings. This includes the identification of potential sources of pollutants that may be associated with the use of drilling equipment and materials used while conducting soil borings. In addition, the drilling operation must include Best Management Practices (BMPS) to avoid and minimize impacts from the potential sources identified in the operation such as, spill prevention control, waste control, materials pollution control and non-storm water runoff.
- An encroachment permit from Orange County Flood Control District (for borings within Santa Ana River) is required.
- No borings will occur on OCFCD Maintenance Road.
- No borings will occur on/at/within nearby property with railroad tracks.
- A TMP is required and will be coordinated *-in advance of drilling operations -* with Cities of Anaheim and Orange, Emergency Responders, OCFCD, and Orange County Parks (Official with Jurisdiction for Trail), and Amtrak/Metro Link.
- All Resource and Regulatory Agency permit conditions will be followed and implemented during and throughout project.

Technical reviews, studies, memos, consultations, and emails that support this CE/CE, include:

- Cultural Review/Section 106 Screened Undertaking Memo, Sinopoli, 6/14/23
- Paleo. Review (no concerns)/e-mail, Sinopoli, 6/14/23
- Water Quality Memo, Salas, 6/9/23
- Hydraulics/Floodplain Review & e-mail, Dinh, 6/7/2023
- Community Impact Memo, Dove, 6/20/23
- Env. Eng. (Hazardous Waste) review & e-mail, Aurasteh, 6/12/23
- Biological Review/NEMO, Sato & Phung, 06/14/23
- Construction-related GHG calculations, Dove, 6/20/23
- AQ Conformity Checklist, Dove, 6/20/23