



CEQA EXEMPTION / NEPA CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION
DETERMINATION FORM (rev. 05/2020)

Project Information

DIST-CO-RTE: 02-TRI-36

PM/PM: 0.00/R29.00

EA: 2J140

Federal-Aid Project Number: 02 2100 0032

Project Description

On August 16, 2020, the Governor signed a Proclamation of a State of Emergency due to an extreme heat event, and a weather event, which resulted in widespread lightning strikes that sparked fires throughout the state. At the time of the emergency proclamation, there were hundreds of fires burning across the state. One of those fires, The August Complex, consisted of many separate wildfires that merged into the largest fire in California’s history at over 1.2 million acres burned. The north end of the August Fire Complex burned approximately 10 miles of Highway 36 in Trinity County, destroying homes, property, and critical highway infrastructure. The unprecedented scale of the fire caused catastrophic destruction of property.

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

Julie McFall		7/17/23
Print Name	Signature	Date

Project Manager

Clint Burkenpas		7/18/2023
Print Name	Signature	Date



CEQA EXEMPTION / NEPA CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION DETERMINATION FORM

Caltrans NEPA Determination (Check one)

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:

[X] 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, 2019, executed between FHWA and Caltrans. Caltrans has determined that the project is a Categorical Exclusion under:

[X] 23 CFR 771.117(c): activity (c)(9ii)

[] 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 December 23, 2016 and executed by FHWA and Caltrans.

Senior Environmental Planner or Environmental Branch Chief

Julie McFall

Print Name

Julie McFall (handwritten signature)

Signature

7/17/23

Date

Project Manager/ DLA Engineer

Clint Burkenpas

Print Name

Clint Burkenpas (handwritten signature)

Signature

7/18/2023

Date

Date of Categorical Exclusion Checklist completion: 6/21/23

Date of Environmental Commitment Record or equivalent: 6/22/23



CEQA EXEMPTION / NEPA CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION DETERMINATION FORM

Continuation sheet:

State Route 36 (Post Miles 0.00-R29.0) were identified as being impacted by the August Fire Complex. Caltrans assessed the damage within the post mile limits. A contract was awarded through an Emergency Director's Order to implement emergency repairs within the area affected by fire including but not limited to the following improvements:

- Hazard tree removal.
- Replacement of metal beam guardrail.
- Culvert repair, replacement, modification.
- Retaining wall repair, replacement, modification.
- Pavement repair and replacement.
- Rock scaling.
- Deployment of erosion control materials (mulch, hydro-seed, straw waddles).
- Sign replacement.
- Other miscellaneous work deemed necessary to maintain highway safety.

Hazard tree removal and metal beam guardrail were the first orders of business. Drainage work was completed on assets that had been damaged by the fire.

Cleanup efforts for this emergency lasted into 2021. The August Fire created unstable landscapes that resulted in numerous rockslides. On July 8, 2021, material composing of large boulders compromised the installed containment system and was deposited in Rattlesnake Creek.

Rattlesnake Creek is a perennial stream that is home to various fish and aquatic species. It is included in the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) Coho recovery plan and supports various anadromous fish runs.

An assessment of the slope leading down to Rattlesnake Creek, and the size, volume, and linear distribution of the large rock material in Rattlesnake Creek was conducted on July 17, 2021.

The additional slide repair work consisted of:

- Removal of approximately 6 – 10 trees on the east side of the slope.
- A bench was cut approximately 70 - 80 ft up the slope for approximately 250 ft on the eastern side of slope.
- Drapery netting was hung from the bench for approximately 150 - 175 ft, in the middle section of the slope centered on PM 20.7
- Continue bench at approximately 70 - 80 ft up the slope for another approximately 200 ft on the western side of the slope after the middle drapery portion.
- Approximately 50,000 – 60,000 cy of material was removed from the slope. Starting 15 ft from the edge of pavement approximately 40,000 – 50,000 cy of the material was disposed on the eastern side of the slide slope at a 2:1 slope. The remaining material was taken to PM 19.45 for stockpile use on this and



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- other projects as well as for maintenance use.
- A CSP riser was added to the existing DI.

Right of Way

Acquisitions of TCEs were not needed for this project due to work being confined to Caltrans ROW.

Staging/Stockpiling

Staging and Stockpiling took place on paved or graveled pullouts within Caltrans right of way.

Disposal/Borrow Sites

Three disposal sites were used for this project cleanup (PM 17.2, PM 20.7, PM 21.8) Two alternative sites were proposed PM 21.45 and PM 22.15. These proposed sites were not used because the US Forest Service did not clear them for disposal. No borrow sites were required for this project.

Consultation/Coordination

Caltrans performed a review of resource records and databases, and consultation and coordination with applicable agencies, tribes, and individuals. Identified cultural and biological resources are being monitored to aid in their avoidance. Weekly reporting of monitoring efforts were being forwarded to the applicable agencies.

Permits

Emergency permits for in-stream work were acquired from the California Department of Fish and Game, the State Regional Water Quality Control Board, and the Army Corps of Engineers.