



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

**Project Information**

**Project Name (if applicable):** Almanor West Rehab/Lake Almanor Broadband

**DIST-CO-RTE:** 02-PLU-89

**PM/PM:** 38.5

**EA:** 02-3H690/3J550

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

**Project Description**

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) proposes to conduct a geotechnical design investigation in Plumas County on State Route (SR) 89 PM 38.5. The purpose of the investigation is to help characterize the site geologic conditions (soil type and groundwater behavior) and to provide the subsurface information required for the design of a retaining wall at this project location. (See Continuation sheet below).

**Caltrans CEQA Determination**

- 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 6.** (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**

Mundeep Purewal

*Mundeep Purewal*

8/24/23

Print Name

Signature

Date

**Project Manager**

Michael Feakes

*Michael Feakes*

8/24/2023

Print Name

Signature

Date



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Caltrans NEPA Determination

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)(24)

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

Mundeep Purewal (Print Name), Mundeep Purewal (Signature), 8/24/23 (Date)

Project Manager/ DLA Engineer

Michael Feakes (Print Name), (Signature), (Date)

Date of Categorical Exclusion Checklist completion (if applicable): 08/23/2023
Date of Environmental Commitment Record or equivalent: 08/23/2023



## CEQA EXEMPTION / NEPA CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION DETERMINATION FORM

### Continuation sheet:

#### **PROJECT DESCRIPTION CONTINUED**

Seismic refraction data acquisition is performed by laying out a cable along a line, which typically varies between about 48 and 360 feet in length. 24 Geophones are inserted into the ground alongside the cable at equal intervals. These geophones are attached to the cable via specially designed “take-outs.” Each geophone is connected to the ground via a 3/8-inch diameter metal prong that is pushed by foot about 1.5 to 2 inches into the ground. The cable is attached to a seismograph box that performs multiple functions via its internal software and processors. Shock waves are applied to the earth at certain intervals along the line and the geophones record the resultant shock waves. The data provides information regarding the subsurface geological layering and density of the rock.

The shock waves are created by either 1) placing a 6-inch by 6-inch metal plate on the ground and striking it with a sledge hammer, or by 2) creating a 1.5 inch diameter hole by pounding a bar into the ground and then inserting a special tool called a Betsy gun that holds a blank shotgun shell in its end that is detonated by a firing pin that runs through the shaft of the Betsy gun. This shotgun shell is not considered blasting and does not require any special permits. The shotgun shell source is not ‘explosively loud’, as some people unfamiliar with this investigative method might be inclined to think. Because the shotgun shell hole is backfilled and tamped, it is more like a muffled thump. Sometimes the clang of the hammer on the plate is louder than the Betsy gun (shotgun shell) approach. Explosives will not be used on this job.

#### **STAGING / RIGHT-OF-WAY**

All work will be performed within Caltrans Right-of-Way.

#### **DISPOSAL / BORROW**

No disposal or borrow sites are necessary.

#### **CONSULTATION / COORDINATION**

No consultation or coordination was necessary.

#### **PERMITS**

No permits are required.