

California Department of Transportation

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Governor's Office of Planning & Research



October 23 2023

STATE CLEARINGHOUSE

October 23, 2023

**10-MER-165-Various-PM Various
San Luis and Merced National Wildlife Refuges
Grasslands Wildlife Management Area
SCH#2023090161**

Mark Pelz
US Fish and Wildlife Service
2800 Cottage Way W-1832
Sacramento, CA 95825

Dear Mr. Pelz:

The California Department of Transportation appreciates the opportunity to review Draft Comprehensive Conservation Plan and Environmental Assessment for San Luis and Merced National Wildlife Refuges and the Grasslands Wildlife Management Area. The assessment includes the placement of several deer-crossing signs on SR 165. The Department has the following comments:

1. An Encroachment Permit will be required for any work done within the Department's right of way. This work is subject to the California Environmental Quality Act. Therefore, environmental studies may be required as part of the encroachment permits application. A qualified professional must conduct any such studies undertaken to satisfy the Department's environmental review responsibilities. These studies may include an analysis of potential impacts to any cultural sites, historic properties, biological resources, hazardous waste locations, scenic highways, and/or other environmental resources within Caltrans Right of Way, at the project site(s). Ground-disturbing activities to the site prior to completion and/or approval of required environmental documents may affect the Department's ability to issue a permit for the project. Furthermore, if engineering plans or drawings will be part of your permit application, they should be prepared in standard units.

If you have any questions, please contact me at (209) 483-2582 or Nicholas Fung at (209) 986-1552.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Nicholas Fung'.

FOR

Tom Dumas
Chief, Office of Metropolitan Planning