



Mitigated Negative Declaration

Pursuant to: Division 13, Public Resources Code

State Clearinghouse Number: 2023100271

District-County-Route-Post Mile: 05-SCR-17-PM 1.0-11.3

EA/Project Number: EA 05-1K670 and Project Number 0518000233

Project Description

[Since the draft environmental document was circulated, the post mile limits for the project have been reduced to 1.0 to 11.3 to better reflect the limits of work. The original post mile limits were 0.0 to 12.5.]

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) proposes to repair or replace 13 drainage culverts along State Route 17 in Santa Cruz County between post miles 1.0 and 11.3. Multiple culvert structures within the project limits are in various states of disrepair and, if not addressed, could lead to failure or damage to the highway. The project will repair or replace culverts that have deteriorated due to age and will not construct new culverts at new locations. Also, improvements to drainage systems will help minimize the discharge of sediment into the San Lorenzo River watershed. Excessive sedimentation due to anthropogenic watershed disturbances has led to a decline in the health of San Lorenzo River watershed ecosystems and interfered with beneficial uses of the river. As a result, a regulatory order called a sedimentation/siltation Total Maximum Daily Load imposed by the Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board requires that Caltrans minimize sediment loading to the receiving waters of the San Lorenzo River watershed. This can be accomplished in part via the rehabilitation of deteriorated culverts as part of this project.

Determination

Caltrans has prepared an Initial Study for this project and, following public review, has determined from this study that the proposed project would not have a significant effect on the environment for the following reasons:

- The project will have no effect on Land Use and Planning, Mineral Resources, Population and Housing, Public Services, Recreation, and Tribal Cultural Resources.
- The project will have less than significant effects on Agriculture and Forest Resources, Aesthetics, Air Quality, Cultural Resources, Energy, Geology and Soils, Greenhouse Gas Emissions, Hazards and Hazardous Materials, Hydrology

and Water Quality, Noise, Transportation, Utilities and Service Systems, and Wildfire.

With the following mitigation measures incorporated, the project will have less than significant effects on Biological Resources:

- Mitigation measures intended to protect jurisdictional areas include requirements for replanting all trees removed from jurisdictional areas at a 3-to-1 ratio, restoration of areas temporarily impacted at a 1-to-1 acreage ratio, and restoration of permanently impacted jurisdictional areas at a 3-to-1 acreage ratio.

Avoidance and minimization measures are also included in the project to reduce project impacts on biological resources to less than significant levels, including implementation of work windows, exclusion zones, biological monitors, and environmentally sensitive area fencing in addition to further measures detailed in Section 2.3 Biological Resources.

With the following mitigation measure incorporated, the project will have less than significant effects on Paleontological Resources:

- A Paleontological Mitigation Plan will be developed and implemented to address any potential paleontological discoveries during original ground disturbance involving sensitive geologic formations at post mile locations 8.2 and 10.61.



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California Department of Transportation

1/22/24

Date