

Notice of Exemption

Appendix E

To: Office of Planning and Research
P.O. Box 3044, Room 113
Sacramento, CA 95812-3044

From: (Public Agency) California Department of Transportation
703 B Street
Marysville, CA 95901

(Address)

County Clerk
County of: Lake

Project Title: Lake 175, 20 & 29 Middle-Mile Broadband Network Project (EA: 01-0L90U)

Project Applicant: California Department of Transportation

Project Location—Specific:
LAK-20 PM 0.0/10.9, PM 12.0-31.59; LAK-29 PM 31.05-52.53; LAK-175 PM 8.25-28.04

Project Location—City: Lakeport; Unincorporated areas Project Location—County: Lake

Description of Nature, Purpose and Beneficiaries of Project:
The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), in coordination with the California Department of Technology, proposes to install broadband infrastructure, including conduit, fiber optic cable, vaults, and markers on State Route (SR) 20, SR 29, and SR 175 in Lake County.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: Caltrans

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: Caltrans

- Exempt Status: **(check one)**
- Ministerial (Sec. 21080(b)(1); 15268)
 - Declared Emergency (Sec. 21080(b)(3); 15269(a))
 - Emergency Project (Sec. 21080(b)(4); 15269(b)(c))
 - Categorical Exemption. State type and section number: _____
 - Statutory Exemptions. State code number: Public Resources Code Section 21080.51

Reasons why project is exempt:
Installation of broadband infrastructure is exempt by statute pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21080.51.

Lead Agency _____ Area Code/Telephone/
Contact Person: Shawn Duffy Extension: (530) 812-4313

- If filed by applicant:**
1. Attach certified document of exemption finding.
 2. Has a Notice of Exemption been filed by the public agency approving the project? Yes No

Signature: *Shawn P. Duffy* Date: 6/19/2024 Title: Branch Chief

Signed by:
 Lead Agency Signed by Applicant

Authority cited: Sections 21083 and 21110, Public Resources Code. Date received for filing at OPR: _____
Reference: Sections 21108, 21152, and 21152.1, Public Resources Code.



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

Project Information

Project Name (if applicable): Lake 175, 20, & 29 Middle-Mile Broadband Network Project

DIST-CO-RTE: 01-LAK-VAR

PM/PM: VAR/VAR

EA: 01-0L90U

Federal-Aid Project Number: N/A

Project Description

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), in coordination with the California Department of Technology, proposes to install broadband infrastructure, including conduit, fiber optic cable, vaults, and markers in Lake County on State Route (SR) 20 from postmile (PM) 0.00 to PM 10.9, and PM 12.0 to PM 31.59, on SR 29 from PM 31.05 to PM 52.53, and SR 175 from PM 8.25 to PM 28.04. The portion of SR 20 from PM 10.9 to PM 12.0 would be delivered under project 01-0L909.

(Continued on page 3)

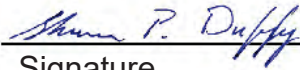
Caltrans CEQA Determination

- 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 21080.51.)
- 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

Shawn Duffy		6/10/2024
Print Name	Signature	Date

Project Manager

Brian Finck		June 10, 2024
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)(Enter activity number)
23 CFR 771.117(d): activity (d)(Enter activity number)
Activity 6 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

Shawn Duffy
Print Name
Signature
Date
6/10/2024

Project Manager/ DLA Engineer

Brian Finck
Print Name
Signature
Date
June 10, 2024

Date of Categorical Exclusion Checklist completion (if applicable): 5/30/2024
Date of Environmental Commitment Record or equivalent: 5/1/2024



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Continuation sheet:

Project Description (cont.)

Purpose

This Middle-Mile Broadband Network project will install the broadband infrastructure along the State Highway System and Interstate System necessary to connect to a third-party operated Last Mile Broadband Network which will bring internet connectivity to homes, businesses, and community institutions.

Need

In July 2021, California Governor Gavin Newsom signed into law Senate Bill (SB) 156 to create an open-access middle-mile network to bring equitable high-speed broadband service to all Californians. The lack of available middle-mile broadband infrastructure has been a major issue in connecting California's unserved and underserved communities. The statewide open-access middle-mile network included in SB 156 is a foundational investment to ensure every Californian has access to broadband internet service that meets the connectivity needs of today, and well into the future. This project intends to support these communities in providing critical statewide broadband infrastructure to enhance access to and increase the affordability of high-speed internet for all Californians.

Scope of Work

Work would include the following:

- Installation of one two-inch diameter high-density polyethylene conduit.
- Installation of one fiber optic cable.
- Installation of approximately 30-inch-wide by 48-inch-long by 36-inch-deep pull vaults spaced every 2,400 feet
- Installation of approximately 48-inch-wide by 48-inch-long by 48-inch-deep splice vaults spaced every 12,500 feet.
- Installation of metallic disk markers approximately every 500 feet along conduit path in paved areas.
- Installation of flexible post delineators for unpaved areas approximately every 500 feet where vaults are greater than 500 feet apart, and for horizontal curves in the beginning of the curve, middle of the curve, and end of the curve.
- Placement of slurry backfill, cold planing approximately 0.25-inch-deep, and placement of an approximately 48-inch-wide hot mix asphalt overlay.
- Placement of temporary control devices and signage.
- Application of temporary and permanent erosion control.
- Removal of minor vegetation and trees.

To facilitate conduit installation four different installation methods including trenching, trench in pavement, plowing, and horizontal directional drilling would be used. Broadband conduit would cross structures by attaching to the bridge superstructure and/or railing or by horizontal directional drilling under large box culvert structure.



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Right of Way/Staging

All work and staging would occur within the Caltrans right of way. Staging would occur at the following approximate locations:

SR 20:

- PM 1.52 - Approximately 80-feet-wide by 100-feet-long existing gravel area.
- PM 5.7 - Approximately 600-feet-wide by 40-feet-long existing gravel area.

SR 29:

- PM 34.188 - Approximately 50-feet-wide by 200-feet-long existing gravel area.
- PM 35.667 - Approximately 50-feet-wide by 430-feet-long existing gravel area.
- PM 48.629 - Approximately 50-feet-wide by 430-feet-long existing gravel area.
- PM 49.287 - Approximately 65-feet-wide by 450-feet-long existing gravel area.
- PM 51.104 - Approximately 25-feet-wide by 220-feet-long existing gravel area.
- PM 51.412 - Approximately 20-feet-wide by 160-feet-long existing gravel area.

SR 175:

- PM 9.51 - Approximately 50-feet-wide by 120-feet-long existing gravel area.
- PM 17.31 - Approximately 50-feet-wide by 140-feet-long existing gravel area.
- PM 19.60 - Approximately 25-feet-wide by 190-feet-long existing gravel area.
- PM 21.24 - Approximately 100-feet-wide by 70-feet-long existing gravel area.
- PM 21.30 - Approximately 55-feet-wide by 100-feet-long existing gravel area.
- PM 21.49 - Approximately 50-feet-wide by 110-feet-long existing gravel area.
- PM 21.85 - Approximately 30-feet-wide by 100-feet-long existing gravel area.
- PM 22.13 - Approximately 30-feet-wide by 160-feet-long existing gravel area.
- PM 22.53 - Approximately 30-feet-wide by 75-feet-long existing gravel area.
- PM 24.97 - Approximately 35-feet-wide by 195-feet-long existing gravel area.
- PM 26.13 - Approximately 35-feet-wide by 135-feet-long existing gravel area.

Disposal/Borrow

Surplus excavated material containing naturally occurring asbestos would be placed on SR 29 at approximately PM 40.1. All other surplus excavated material would be transported to a landfill. No material borrow site is needed.

Consultation/Coordination

Consultation was conducted with numerous Native American Tribes. Listed below are the Native American Tribes and Groups that were contacted. No issues have currently been identified. Habematolel Pomo of Upper Lake, Robinson Rancheria Band of Pomo Indians, Scotts Valley Band of Pomo Indians, Big Valley Band of Pomo Indians, and Middletown Rancheria would monitor during construction.

Native American Tribes and Groups contacted for work on SR 20:

- Habematolel Pomo of Upper Lake
- Robinson Rancheria Band of Pomo Indians



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- Elem Indian Colony

Native American Tribes and Groups contacted for work on SR 29:

- Koi Nation of Northern California
- Habemotolel Pomo of Upper Lake
- Robinson Rancheria Band of Pomo Indians
- Elem Indian Colony
- Big Valley Band of Pomo Indians
- Mishewal-Wappo Tribe of Alexander Valley
- Scotts Valley Band of Pomo Indians

Native American Tribes and Groups contacted for work on SR 175:

- Big Valley Band of Pomo Indians
- Middletown Rancheria
- Mishewal-Wappo Tribe of Alexander Valley
- Scotts Valley Band of Pomo Indians

Permits/Approvals

No environmental permits or approvals are required.