

## California Department of Transportation

OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT 10 Planning  
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January 15, 2025

Ms. Madeleine Flandreau  
Planner III  
Calaveras County Planning Department  
891 Mountain Ranch Road  
San Andreas, CA 95249

**CAL-12-PM 6.903 Initial Study  
2024-013 Horse Ranch -  
Smith-Covey**

Dear Ms. Flandreau,

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) appreciates the opportunity to review and comment on the Horse Ranch Project Initial Study (IS) that proposes a private/commercial equestrian facility on a Rural Residential parcel. The equine facility is used in part for and by the owner of the property and their private invited clients or guests. A percentage of every horse living full-time on the subject parcel is owned by the landowner. The facility proposes boarding, training, riding, lessons, clinics with at-risk youth, and birthday parties for up to 75 people. The facility will be run by the landowners, volunteers, and employees. Approximately 2-5 teenaged volunteers will be on site daily, with 1-6 adult volunteers/employees acting as chaperones. The horses will be kept in paddocks with moveable fencing for periodic rotations. The application indicates that no construction or grading will occur.

The project parcel is located at 2911 Patriot Way in the community of Valley Springs, within Assessor Parcel Number (APN) 048-009-052.

### **Caltrans has the following comments:**

#### **Environmental**

If there are any construction related activities that will encroach into Caltrans Right of Way (ROW) as a result of the project, the project proponent must apply for an Encroachment Permit with the Caltrans District 10 Encroachment Permit Office. All California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) documentation, including the Final Initial Study (IS) with supporting technical studies, must be submitted with the Encroachment Permit Application. These studies will include an analysis of potential impacts to any cultural sites, historic properties, biological resources, hazardous waste/materials, scenic highways, and/or other environmental resources within Caltrans Right of Way, at the project site(s).

The IS references previous investigations/studies that were completed for a different project that was proposed on this property years ago. For example, the IS refers to a Biological Resources Assessment that was conducted in 2008 and a Cultural Resources Investigation that was conducted in 2005. The IS uses the conclusions of the previous efforts to make conclusions regarding environmental impacts of the current proposed project. If any construction related activities encroach into Caltrans ROW as a result of this project, Caltrans will need to see current environmental studies/surveys/investigations (that are specific to the current project proposal).

### **Traffic Operations**

We have no comments at this time. We are looking forward to seeing the layout of the limit line and stop sign installations on Patriot Way along with the State Right-of-Way (ROW) lines during Encroachment Permit process. An Encroachment Permit will be required for any work done within the State ROW.

### **Hydrology**

The application indicates no construction or grading on page 22 of the Initial Study Environmental Checklist. Therefore, we have no comments at this point.

### **Encroachment Permits**

If any project activities encroach into Caltrans ROW, the project proponent must submit an application for an Encroachment Permit to the Caltrans District 10 Encroachment Permit Office. Appropriate environmental studies must be submitted with this application. For more information, please visit the Caltrans Website at:

<https://dot.ca.gov/programs/traffic-operations/ep/applications>

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Shiferaw Jemberie (209) 986-9635 (email: [Shiferaw.jemberie@dot.ca.gov](mailto:Shiferaw.jemberie@dot.ca.gov)) or me at (209) 483-7234 (email: [Gregoria.Ponce@dot.ca.gov](mailto:Gregoria.Ponce@dot.ca.gov)).

Sincerely,

*Gregoria Ponce*

Gregoria Ponce'  
Acting Deputy District Director of Planning,  
Local Assistance & Environmental Support

cc: Peter Maurer - Planning Director, Calaveras County Planning Department