



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

Project Information

Project Name (if applicable): Modesto Collision Severity Reduction

DIST-CO-RTE: 10-STA-099

PM/PM: 18.5 2 – 20.9

EA: 10-1H350 **Federal-Aid Project Number:** 1018000039

Project Description

The project proposes to reduce collision severity on SR 99 by reconstructing three on-ramps to include ramp metering and widening one off-ramp to include a dedicated left-turn lane.

Caltrans CEQA Determination (Check one)

- 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 1(c).** (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

Laura Cook		11/17/2023
Print Name	Signature	Date

Project Manager

Mimi Huie		08/23/2024
Print Name	Signature	Date



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Caltrans NEPA Determination (Check one)

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)(27)
23 CFR 771.117(d): activity (d)(Enter activity number)
Activity Enter activity number 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

Laura Cook
Print Name
Signature: Laura M. Cook
Date: 11/17/2023

Project Manager/ DLA Engineer

Mimi Huie
Print Name
Signature: Mimi Huie
Date: 8/23/2024

Date of Categorical Exclusion Checklist completion (if applicable): Enter date
Date of Environmental Commitment Record or equivalent: Enter date

Briefly list environmental commitments on continuation sheet if needed (i.e., not necessary if included on an attached ECR). Reference additional information, as appropriate (e.g., additional studies and design conditions).



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Continuation sheet:

Purpose and Need:

The purpose of the project is to reduce the number and severity of collisions at the merge and diverge areas by managing traffic flow.

This project is needed because rear-end and sideswipe collisions have been identified related to vehicles merging and diverging from the freeway.

Description of work:

The project proposes to reduce collision severity on SR 99 by reconstructing three on-ramps to include ramp metering and widening one off-ramp to include a dedicated left-turn lane. Continued growth in residential, commercial, and industrial development in and around the City of Modesto has resulted in increased congestion on SR 99 at the Carpenter Road/Briggsmore Avenue and Standiford Avenue/Beckwith Road interchanges.

General:

The project is Categorical Exempt under the California Environmental Quality Act and Categorical Excluded under the National Environmental Policy Act unless: (1) the scope of the project changes to include additional activities or areas; or (2) there is unforeseen discovery of sensitive or cultural resources. Environmental reevaluation will be required if either of these conditions are met.

Air:

The Build/No Build AADT and Truck AADT for the project are the same for Existing, Open to Traffic, and Design Years for all three on-ramps. The yearly volume increases for AADT and Truck AADT can be attributed to anticipated population growth. The project will not bring additional traffic; it will allow traffic to flow at peak efficiency and bring the existing older features into compliance with current standards. Completion of the project will address the project's purpose and need. Operational efficiency will result and allow for smoother traffic flow and relieve congestion caused by the existing ramp configurations. Operational CO₂ emissions do not need to be estimated because the project is not capacity increasing.

Biology:

Based on the scope and description of the proposed project, no state or federally listed species; designated critical habitat; state or federally recognized sensitive habitats, or potential waters of the U.S. associated with this geographic region will be impacted or affected by the proposed project as long as the



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description of the proposed project as described in "Project Description" remains unchanged. This project will have no effect since there are no watercourses within the project area. Additionally, Army Corps of Engineer, California Department of Fish and Wildlife, U.S Fish and Wildlife Service, or Regional Water Quality Board permits will not be required for the proposed project.

Cultural:

Caltrans, pursuant to Section 106 PA Stipulation IX.A, has determined a Finding of No Historic Properties Affected is appropriate for this undertaking because there are no historic properties within the APE.

Hazardous Waste:

There are 8 closed LUST sites within 1000 feet of the project area. All sites are outside of State Right of Way and well outside of the project footprint. All sites have been appropriately remediated and received No Further Action Required (NFAR) letters from the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board. Therefore, the potential to encounter contaminated soil is considered minimal.

Noise:

Based on the project description, the project would not introduce any potential for long term traffic noise impacts under the requirements for a Type I or Type II traffic noise project under 23CFR772. Therefore, the project falls under the category of Type III noise projects. As discussed above, 23CFR772 requires that noise impacts be evaluated for all Type I and Type II projects. Type III projects do not require noise analysis, so no noise analysis has been conducted; however, during construction, the project would comply with Caltrans Standard Specification section 14-8 "Noise control" regarding construction noise.

Paleontology:

The project is underlain by the Pleistocene Modesto Formation. The formation is categorized as a high potential paleontological resource. Ground disturbing activities in the project area will impact this resource. However, correspondence from the Caltrans design and hydraulics branches determined that the storage capacity of the existing retention basins is enough to accommodate additional runoff from ramp widening. As a result, the basins will not require deepening and any construction-related impacts to the paleontological resource will be minimal and localized to fill slope keyways.



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Water:

By incorporating proper and accepted engineering practices and BMPs, the proposed project will not have significant impacts on water quality during construction or its operation. Because of the proposed project, it is our opinion that no further investigation concerning water quality is needed to proceed with the project. If the scope of work changes, please request an additional investigation for this project.

Environmental Justice:

Since this project is a rehabilitation of existing facilities, including safety measure to reduce collision severity, and by research using the Environmental Justice Screening and Mapping Tool (Ver. 2020), Caltrans has determined no minority or low-income populations would be affected by the proposed project have been identified as determined above. Therefore, this project is not subject to the provisions of Executive Order 12898.