

Notice of Exemption

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

From: California Department of Transportation- District 3
703 B Street
Marysville, CA 95901

Project Title: State Route 32 Middle-Mile Broadband Project (EA: 03-3J410)

Project Applicant: California Department of Transportation- District 3

Project Location - Specific: State Route 32 between post miles R10.16 to 32.84 in Butte County.

Project Location - City: Near Chico Project Location - County: Butte

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 linear broadband infrastructure, consisting of conduit, fiber optic cable, vaults, maintenance vehicle pullouts, and markers on State Route 32 between post miles R10.16 to 32.84 in Butte County.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: Caltrans- District 3

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: Caltrans- District 3

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 Contact Person: Dotrik Wilson

Phone number: (530) 821-3054

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: *Dotrik Wilson* Date: 1/8/25 Title: Branch Chief

Signed by Lead Agency Signed by Applicant

Date Received for filing at OPR: _____

Authority cited: Sections 21083 and 21110, Public Resources Code.

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): State Route 32 Middle-Mile Broadband Network Project

DIST-CO-RTE: 03-BUT-32

PM/PM: 10.16/32.84

EA: 03-3J410

Project Description

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), in coordination with the California Department of Technology, proposes to install broadband infrastructure consisting of conduit, fiber optic cable, vaults, maintenance vehicle pullouts and markers on State Route 32 between post miles (PM) 10.16 to 32.84 in Butte County.

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 21080.51.)
- Categorically Exempt. 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

Dotrik Wilson	<i>Dotrik Wilson</i>	11/13/2024
Print Name	Signature	Date

Project Manager

Alex Biaheza	<i>Aliaksandr Biaheza</i>	11/13/2024
Print Name	Signature	Date



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Caltrans NEPA Determination (Check one)

[X] 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

N/A

Print Name

Signature

Date

Project Manager/ DLA Engineer

N/A

Print Name

Signature

Date

Date of Categorical Exclusion Checklist completion (if applicable): NA

Date of Environmental Commitment Record or equivalent: 5/30/2024

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

This Middle-Mile Broadband Network project would install the broadband infrastructure along the State Highway System (SHS) and Interstate System necessary to connect to a third-party operated Last Mile Broadband Network which would 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 includes the following:

- Placement of temporary traffic control devices and signage.
- Removal of minor vegetation and trees.
- Installation of one (1) two-inch diameter high-density polyethylene conduit.
- Installation of one (1) fiber optic cable.
- Installation of forty-one (41) approximately 30-inch-wide by 48-inch-long by 36-inch-deep pull vaults.
- Installation of eleven (11) approximately 48-inch-wide by 48-inch-long by 48-inch-deep splice vaults.
- Installation of six (6) approximately 12-foot-wide by 85-foot-long by 1.3-foot-deep maintenance vehicle pullouts at the following locations.
 - PM 10.16R eastbound direction.
 - PM 12.44 eastbound direction.
 - PM 14.64 eastbound direction.
 - PM 26.04 westbound direction.
 - PM 28.34 eastbound direction.
 - PM 32.84 eastbound direction.
- Installation of metallic disk markers approximately every 500 feet along conduit path in paved areas.
- Installation of flexible post delineators approximately every 500 feet along conduit path in unpaved areas as well as at each pull vault and splice vault.
- Placement of slurry backfill, cold planning approximately 0.25-inches-deep, and placement of an approximately 48-inch-wide hot mix asphalt overlay.
- Application of temporary and permanent erosion control.



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To facilitate conduit installation three different installation methods including trenching, trench in pavement, and horizontal directional drilling would be used. Broadband conduit would cross one structure by attaching to the bridge superstructure and/or railing.

Right of Way/Staging

All work and staging would occur within the Caltrans right of way or existing easements. Approximate locations for potential staging are as follows:

- PM 11.24- Approximately 30-feet-wide by 200-feet-long existing gravel area.
- PM 13.18- Approximately 30-feet-wide by 50-feet-long existing gravel area.
- PM 13.62- Approximately 50-feet-wide by 500-feet-long existing gravel area.
- PM R15.50- Approximately 50-feet-wide by 200-feet-long existing asphalt, gravel, and native soil area.
- PM R15.81- Approximately 25-feet-wide by 200-feet-long existing asphalt and gravel area.
- PM R16.40- Approximately 30-feet-wide by 200-feet-long existing gravel area.
- PM R17.80- Approximately 70-feet-wide by 300-feet-long existing gravel area.
- PM R18.29- Approximately 50-feet-wide by 180-feet-long existing gravel area.
- PM R20.74- Approximately 40-feet-wide by 70-feet-long existing gravel area.
- PM R20.98- Approximately 40-feet-wide by 170-feet-long existing gravel area.
- PM R21.38- Approximately 80-feet-wide by 200-feet-long existing gravel area.
- PM 25.50- Approximately 30-feet-wide by 200-feet-long existing gravel area.
- PM 27.40- Approximately 16-feet-wide by 180-feet-long existing paved area.
- PM 32.40- Approximately 30-feet-wide by 350-feet-long existing gravel area.

Disposal/Borrow

Surplus excavated material would be hauled to a landfill and none would be disposed on site. No material borrow site is needed.

Consultation/Coordination

Consultation was initiated with the following Native American Tribes; Estom Yumeka Maidu Tribe of the Enterprise Rancheria, Greenville Rancheria of Maidu Indians, Konkow Valley Band of Maidu, Mechoopda Indian Tribe of Chico Rancheria, Mooretown Rancheria of Maidu Indians, Berry Creek Rancheria of Maidu Indians, United Auburn Indian Community of Auburn Rancheria, Washoe Tribe of Nevada and California, Nevada City Rancheria of Nisenan Tribe and T'si Akim Maidu. No issues have currently been identified.

Permits/Approvals

No environmental permits or approvals would be required. The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and National Telecommunication and Information Administration would issue their own NEPA decision for project approval. In addition, the BLM would issue a grant of right of way for the broadband installation located on federal lands within the existing Caltrans easement.