



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

**Project Information**

**Project Name (if applicable):** Mendocino 20 Middle-Mile Broadband Network Project

**DIST-CO-RTE:** 01-MEN-20

**PM/PM:** 1.46/R33.15

**EA:** 01-0M401

**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 consisting of conduit, fiber optic cable, vaults, and markers on State Route 20 between post mile (PM) 1.46 and PM R33.15 in Mendocino County.

(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**

Dotrik Wilson

*Dotrik Wilson*

1/6/2025

Print Name

Signature

Date

**Project Manager**

Brian Finck

*Brian Finck*

January 7, 2025

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

Dotrik Wilson	<i>Dotrik Wilson</i>	1/6/2025
Print Name	Signature	Date

### Project Manager/ DLA Engineer

Brian Finck	<i>Brian Finck</i>	January 7, 2025
Print Name	Signature	Date

**Date of Categorical Exclusion Checklist completion (if applicable):** 12/20/24

**Date of Environmental Commitment Record or equivalent:** 1/2/2025



## CEQA EXEMPTION / NEPA CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION DETERMINATION FORM

### **Continuation sheet:**

#### **Project Description (cont.)**

##### Purpose:

This Middle-Mile Broadband Network project would 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 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 would include the following:

- Placement of temporary traffic control devices and signage.
- Removal of minor vegetation and trees.
- Installation of underground two-inch diameter conduit.
- Installation of underground fiber optic cable.
- Installation of 30-inch-wide by 48-inch-long by 36-inch-deep pull vaults spaced approximately every 2,400 feet along the fiber optic conduit path.
- Installation of 48-inch-wide by 48-inch-long by 48-inch-deep splice vaults spaced approximately every 12,000 feet along the fiber optic conduit path.
- Installation of metallic disk markers approximately every 500 feet along conduit path in paved areas.
- Installation of flexible post delineators at:
  - All splice and pull vault locations.
  - 500 feet intervals along conduit path in unpaved areas where vaults are greater than 500 feet apart.
  - Horizontal curves in the beginning, middle, and end of the curve.
- Placement of slurry backfill, cold planning of asphalt, and application of hot mix asphalt overlay.
- Application of temporary and permanent erosion control.

The following methods would be used to facilitate conduit installation: trenching, trench in pavement, and horizontal directional drilling (HDD). In addition, broadband conduit would cross five structures by attaching to the bridge overhang, as well as one railroad crossing by HDD under the railroad right of way.



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### **Right of Way/Staging**

All work and staging would occur within the Caltrans right of way. Potential staging areas would be at the following locations.

- PM 4.3 - Approximately 6,285 square feet flat area.
- PM 6.1 - Approximately 1,288 square feet flat area.
- PM 9.9 - Approximately 8,190 square feet flat area.
- PM 19.9 - Approximately 6,970 square feet flat area.
- PM 20.3 - Approximately 8,135 square feet flat area.
- PM 20.6 - Approximately 3,174 square feet flat area.
- PM 20.9 - Approximately 2,450 square feet flat area.
- PM 21.2 - Approximately 1,836 square feet flat area.
- PM 21.25 - Approximately 2,556 square feet flat area.
- PM 21.5 - Approximately 9,827 square feet flat area.
- PM 22.4 - Approximately 2,860 square feet flat area.
- PM 22.79 - Approximately 6,190 square feet flat area.
- PM 23.3 - Approximately 3,627 square feet flat area.
- PM 24.0 - Approximately 3,862 square feet flat area.
- PM 24.29 - Approximately 10,916 square feet flat area.
- PM 25.6 - Approximately 4,776 square feet flat area.
- PM 25.8 - Approximately 7,246 square feet flat area.
- PM 27.0 - Approximately 6,693 square feet flat area.
- PM 27.1 - Approximately 4,246 square feet flat area.
- PM 27.12 - Approximately 3,464 square feet flat area.
- PM 28.0 - Approximately 5,174 square feet flat area.

### **Disposal/Borrow**

Surplus excavated material would be hauled offsite for disposal. No material borrow is needed.

### **Consultation/Coordination**

Consultation was conducted with numerous Native American Tribes. No issues have currently been identified. Sherwood Valley Band of Pomo Indians would monitor during construction activities.

### **Permits/Approvals**

The following approval would be required for the project.

- United States Fish and Wildlife Service Programmatic Biological and Conference Opinion and Programmatic Letter of Concurrence for the California Statewide Middle-Mile Broadband Network (No. 2022-0076259-S7-002-R001).