

CATEGORICAL EXEMPTION/CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION DETERMINATION FORM

05-SLO-0-CR **BRLS-5949(131)**
 Dist.-Co.-Rte. (or Local Agency) P.M./P.M. E.A/Project No. Federal-Aid Project No. (Local Project)/Project No.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: (Briefly describe project including need, purpose, location, limits, right-of-way requirements, and activities involved in this box. Use *Continuation Sheet, if necessary.*)

The County of San Luis Obispo, with assistance from the Federal Highway Administration, proposes to replace the El Camino Real Bridge over Santa Margarita Creek (bridge 49C-0310). The new bridge will be a 3-span, 140-foot-long, cast-in-place, pre-stressed concrete slab bridge with three lanes including a new center turn-lane. The bridge will be supported by four sets of columns and piles—two sets on the creek banks and two sets within the channel. Rock slope protection will be placed around the abutments. A temporary access road will enter the creek channel, and water diversion, and temporary road widening will be required. The roadway approaches will be realigned and intersections reconstructed. Utility relocation will also be required. One lane of traffic will be open during construction. (cont. p.2)

CALTRANS CEQA DETERMINATION (Check one)

Not Applicable – Caltrans is not the CEQA Lead Agency **Not Applicable – Caltrans has prepared an Initial Study or Environmental Impact Report under CEQA**

Based on an examination of this proposal, supporting information, and the above statements, the project is:

Exempt by Statute. (PRC 21080[b]; 14 CCR 15260 et seq.)
 Categorically Exempt. Class . (PRC 21084; 14 CCR 15300 et seq.)

Based on an examination of this proposal and supporting information, the following statements are true and exceptions do not apply:

- If this project falls within exempt class 3, 4, 5, 6 or 11, it does not impact an environmental resource of hazardous or critical concern where designated, precisely mapped, and officially adopted pursuant to law.
- There will not be a significant cumulative effect by this project and successive projects of the same type in the same place, over time.
- There is not a reasonable possibility that the project will have a significant effect on the environment due to unusual circumstances.
- This project does not damage a scenic resource within an officially designated state scenic highway.
- This project is not located on a site included on any list compiled pursuant to Govt. Code § 65962.5 ("Cortese List").
- This project does not cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource.

Exempt by General Rule. [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].)]

Print Name: Senior Environmental Planner or Environmental Branch Chief

Print Name: Project Manager

Signature

Date

Signature

Date

NEPA COMPLIANCE

In accordance with 23 CFR 771.117, and based on an examination of this proposal and supporting information, the State has determined that this project:

- does not individually or cumulatively have a significant impact on the environment as defined by NEPA, and is excluded from the requirements to prepare an Environmental Assessment (EA) or Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), and
- has considered unusual circumstances pursuant to 23 CFR 771.117(b).

CALTRANS NEPA DETERMINATION (Check one)


23 USC 326: The State 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). As such, the project is categorically excluded from the requirements to prepare an EA or EIS under the National Environmental Policy Act. The State has been assigned, and hereby certifies that it has carried out the responsibility to make this determination pursuant to Chapter 3 of Title 23, United States Code, Section 326 and a Memorandum of Understanding dated May 31, 2016, executed between the FHWA and the State. The State has determined that the project is a Categorical Exclusion under:

- 23 CFR 771.117(c): activity (c)(___)
- 23 CFR 771.117(d): activity (d)(13)
- Activity ___ listed in Appendix A of the MOU between FHWA and the State

23 USC 327: Based on an examination of this proposal and supporting information, the State 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 December 23, 2016 and executed by FHWA and Caltrans.

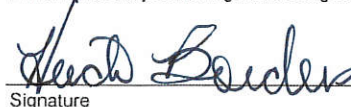
Randy LaVack

Print Name: Senior Environmental Planner or Environmental Branch Chief

 9-12-18
 Signature Date

Heidi Borders

Print Name: Project Manager/DLA Engineer

 9/19/18
 Signature Date

Date of Categorical Exclusion Checklist completion: 9/12/18

Date of ECR or equivalent : 9/12/18

Briefly list environmental commitments on continuation sheet. Reference additional information, as appropriate (e.g., CE checklist, additional studies and design conditions).

CATEGORICAL EXEMPTION/CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION DETERMINATION FORM
Continuation Sheet

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Continued from page 1:

The project has been reviewed to ensure compliance with federal environmental regulations. The project as proposed will not have an adverse impact on environmental resources. Several studies have been prepared in support of this Categorical Exclusion Determination. The following summarizes the results of the studies and how the project complies with applicable regulations:

Section 7

A Natural Environment Study (NES) and Biological Assessment (BA) were prepared for the project. Consultation with the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) resulted in a September 12, 2018 Biological Opinion (BO) that the project is likely to adversely affect threatened SCCC steelhead. Avoidance and minimization measures from the BO, NES and BA will be implemented.

Consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) resulted in a May 22, 2018 Biological Opinion that the project may adversely affect the California red-legged frog and meets the *suitability criteria for use of Caltrans' Programmatic Biological Opinion (PBO) for projects that are likely to result in adverse effects to the California red-legged frog, but would not affect the long-term viability of the population in the action area.* Avoidance and minimization measures from the PBO and from the NES and BA will be implemented.

The USFWS also determined that the project may affect but not likely to adversely affect the least Bell's vireo and the southwestern willow flycatcher. All terms and conditions in the biological opinion must be implemented, including during construction, restoration, and post-construction monitoring.

Section 106

No historic properties were identified with the project area as a result of archaeological field survey. Caltrans made a finding of No Historic Properties Affected under the Caltrans Programmatic Agreement for Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act.

Hazardous Materials

An Initial Site Assessment (ISA) was prepared for the project, revealing the potential for pesticides and lead in the soil, LBP (lead-based paint) and ACM (asbestos containing material) in the bridge, and potential ACM in pipelines that may require disruption. The Recommendations in the ISA will be implemented.

The project as proposed meets the criteria for a Categorical Exclusion. Prior to finalization of the construction contract the County must provide a detailed Environmental Commitments Records that includes all the avoidance, minimization, and mitigation measures proposed in the approved environmental studies and permits, and in this NEPA Determination.