CATEGORICAL EXEMPTION/CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION DETERMINATION FORM

01-HUM-0-CR
Dist-Co-Rte. (or Local Agency) P.M./P.M. E.A./Project No. BRLO-5904 (113)
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.)

Big Rock Gulch Bridge Replacement. See Continuation Sheet.

CEQA COMPLIANCE (for State Projects only)
Based on an examination of this proposal and supporting information, the following statements are true and exceptions do not apply (See 14 CCR 15300 et seq.):

- This project falls within exempt class 3, 4, 5, 6 and/or 11, and 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.

CALTRANS CEQA DETERMINATION (Check one)

☐ Exempt by Statute. (PRC 21080[b]; 14 CCR 15260 et seq.)

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

☐ Categorically Exempt. Class . (PRC 21084; 14 CCR 15300 et seq.)

☐ Categorically Exempt. General Rule 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 (CCR 15061[b][3]).

N/A
Print Name: Environmental Branch Chief

Print Name: Project Manager/DLA Engineer

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 environmental assessment or environmental impact statement 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 June 07, 2013, 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)(_3 _)
  ☒ 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 CE under 23 USC 327.

Brandon Larsen
Print Name: Environmental Branch Chief

Suzanne Theiss
Print Name: Project Manager/DLA Engineer

Date of Categorical Exclusion Checklist completion: 3/4/14 Date of ECR or equivalent:

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

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Big Rock Gulch Bridge Replacement
Project [BRLO-5904(113)]
(County of Humboldt Public Works)

**Project Description**

The proposed project is replacement of an existing concrete bridge with a new, single-span, cast in place, pre-stressed concrete slab or box girder bridge. The new bridge will include two standard travel lane widths of 12-ft and adjacent shoulder/bike lanes of 6-ft. This work will also include the preparation of traffic control plans, construction plans and specifications utilizing Caltrans Standards, detailed cost estimates, and bid documents utilizing standard County construction contract provisions. The design will also contain identification of any utilities that may need to be relocated as a result of the new crossing. Currently, a single span cast-in-place pre-stressed concrete slab is desirable due to the ease of superstructure construction. Pre-stressing would allow for longer spans for the shallow superstructure depth that matches the existing bridge. This structure depth should not impinge on the channel hydraulic water surface elevation and allows for longer spans relative to the reinforced concrete slab option. Also, a shallow superstructure will limit changes to the roadway profile and reduce approach fills. A slab bridge type construction represents one of the most economical superstructure types to construct. The single span alternative will eliminate the need for supports within the channel and will decrease the environmental impacts.

**General Construction Details**

Construction will basically be done in two phases with the first involving demolition of the existing bridge and the second phase being construction of the new bridge. Activities will also involve construction of the temporary detour and water quality protection of Big Rock Gulch and the Klamath River immediately downstream.

**Traffic Control**

It will be necessary to partially close Red Cap Road and have a single-lane detour at the bridge construction site. The single-lane detour will most likely be adjacent to the existing bridge and will contain "Stop, Proceed When Clear" signage. It is also possible that there will be traffic controlling workers onsite during construction activities. The detour will result in temporary, minor traffic delays.

**Erosion and Sediment Control**

The project will require the contractor to submit a Water Pollution Control Plan (WPCP) or Stormwater Pollution Protection Plan (SWPPP) for approval before construction begins. Adequate implementation of BMPs, monitoring, and reporting methodologies will be required. As a general rule, to minimize erosion, sediment, and pollutant contribution to Big Rock Gulch and subsequently the Klamath River, best management practices such as the following measures will be part of the WPCP or SWPPP.

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Continuation Sheet

- Construction will be done during summer months when the chance of precipitation is lowest.
- Construction equipment will be cleaned and inspected prior to use. Equipment maintenance and fueling will be done at designated staging areas.
- On-site stockpiles will be isolated with silt fence, filter fabric, and/or straw bales/fiber rolls.
- Silt fence or fiber rolls will be placed below the project areas to contain loose rolling rocks and sediment. Silt fence/fiber rolls will be kept in place and maintained during the entire project. Any sediment caught by the fence or rolls will be removed before the fence/rolls are pulled.
- Ground disturbed by construction work will be revegetated with fast-growing native grasses and sterile hybrids and mulched when work is complete.
- The site will be monitored by Public Works personnel during winter rains and any evidence of erosion (rilling, gullies, etc.) will be repaired immediately. In addition, areas where revegetation is not successful will be reseeded and re-mulched to ensure vegetative ground cover.

Environmental Analysis

An Archaeological Survey Report (ASR) and a Historic Property Survey Report (HPSR) was prepared in January 2014 and it was determined that no cultural resources or historical properties will be affected by the project. Caltrans has determined a Finding of No Adverse Effect with Standard Conditions-ESA. Avoidance and mitigations measures will be in place under the Environmentally Sensitive Area (ESA) Action Plan.

The proposed projects will have no effect on listed species and therefore consultation with USFWS or NMFS was not needed. Since Coho salmon do not utilize Big Rock Gulch, or any streams along the project, a Biological Assessment/Essential Fish Habitat Assessment (BA/EFHA) was not prepared.

Since the project takes place within the channel of Big Rock Gulch, jurisdictional waters will be affected by the project. However, these potential impacts will be temporary in nature and will be addressed in the permitting phase of the project. No jurisdictional wetlands are present within the project area. The project site does not lie within the 100 year flood plain.

The National Park Service concurred on November 14, 2013 that the project will not have a long-term, significant impact on the Klamath River's designation as a Wild and Scenic River.

Review of the project site and project plans indicate that the project would not result in substantial adverse impacts to the visual environment. The removal of mature trees is not anticipated. Mitigation measures are in place to make the new bridge both aesthetically pleasing and culturally respectful. Other than a temporary increase in ambient noise from heavy equipment working during construction hours there are no long term sound impacts associated with the project. Upon project completion, noise levels will return to pre-construction ambient levels.
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Environmental Commitments

- The project will be constructed during the summer/early fall months which will help minimize the release of fine sediment to points downstream and into the Klamath River.
- Disturbance or removal of vegetation will not exceed the minimum necessary to complete the project.
- The “area of disturbance” will be restricted to only those areas necessary to complete the project.
- Equipment parking, maintenance, and fueling will occur at designated upland staging areas only, with all staging locations adequately offset from any active stream channels.
- All (light/heavy) equipment entering the stream channel will be inspected and cleaned at an offsite location prior to being transported to the work site.
- Light equipment (i.e., generators, welders, and pumps) as well as heavy equipment including water drafting trucks parked within riparian areas will use drip pans or other devices (i.e., absorbent blankets, sheet barriers, or other materials) as needed to prevent contaminates from reaching the watercourse.
- Channel access route(s) and areas designated for equipment staging, maintenance, and fueling will be groomed, bermed, and treated with straw mulched and seeded if necessary to minimize the potential for the release of fine sediment to the river or nearby upland area(s). Erosion control criteria will consist of at least 2 to 4 inches of straw mulch and 100 lbs/acre equivalent barley seed in those instances when reseeding is applicable. No annual, or Italian, ryegrass (Lolium multiflorum) shall be used.
- Equipment will be inspected for leaks before each shift, throughout the work shift, and at end of shift each day.
- All fueling, lubing, and equipment maintenance will be performed in an environmentally responsible manner.
- Maintenance involving the removal/repair of hydraulic cylinders/hoses or of reservoirs containing hazardous products will be performed over impervious fabric resistant to TPH.
- Proper spill kits will be kept onsite through the duration of each project. In the event of a spill, CDFW will be notified and consulted regarding clean-up procedures.
- All activities related to fueling, lubing, and maintenance will be performed in the designated staging area unless equipment has been immobilized due to a mechanical failure. In those instances, every effort will be made to safeguard against and control the release of contaminants.
- The functional condition of fuel transfer pumps, hose assemblies, and emergency shutoff switches will be evaluated prior to fueling operations. Personnel tasked with fueling will remain near the fuel pump’s emergency shutoff switch during fueling events. Topping off of fuel tanks will not occur.
- All construction debris associated with the project(s) will be removed from the site and disposed of appropriately.
- The project will be constructed during the summer and into early fall, a time when most young of the year have likely fledged.
- Pre-construction surveys for nesting raptors shall be conducted by a qualified biologist to ensure that no nests will be disturbed during project implementation. At least one survey should be conducted no more than 15 days prior to the initiation of construction activities. During this survey, the biologist should inspect all trees immediately adjacent to the impact areas for raptor nests. If an active raptor nest is found close enough (i.e.,
within 50 ft) to the construction area to be disturbed by these activities, the biologist (in consultation with the CDFW) will determine the extent of a construction-free buffer zone to be established around the nest.

- If all necessary approvals have been obtained, potential nesting substrate (e.g., shrubs and trees) that will be removed by the project should be removed before the onset of the nesting season (March 1 through September 1), if practicable. This will help preclude nesting and substantially decrease the likelihood of direct impacts.

- Grading and other construction activities will be scheduled to avoid the nesting season to the extent possible. The nesting season for these species extends from March through August. If construction occurs outside of the breeding season, no further mitigation is necessary. If the breeding season cannot be completely avoided, the following mitigations will be implemented.

- A qualified biologist will conduct a minimum of one pre-construction survey for songbirds within the Area of Potential Impact (API) and a 50-ft buffer around the subject API. The surveys should be conducted no more than 15 days prior to the initiation of construction in any given area. The pre-construction survey should be used to ensure that no nests of these species within or immediately adjacent to the API would be disturbed during project implementation. If an active nest is found, the biologist will either determine the extent of a construction-free buffer zone to be established around the nest or postpone the project until the young have fledged.

- If vegetation is to be removed by the project and all necessary approvals have been obtained, potential nesting substrate (e.g., shrubs and trees) that will be removed by the project should be removed before the onset of the nesting season, if feasible. This will help preclude nesting and substantially decrease the likelihood of direct impacts.

- An agreement to stop work during the tribal ceremonies will be placed into the contracts for the bridge construction.

- The Environmentally Sensitive Area (ESA) must be staked out prior to the start of construction.

- An ESA Action Plan will be in place and no excavation or subsurface ground disturbance shall occur within the ESA. (See ESA Action Plan for more details).

- Due to the Finding of No Adverse Effect with Standard Conditions, archaeological and tribal monitoring is required for all ground disturbing activities.

- If previously unidentified cultural materials are unearthed during construction, it is Caltrans policy that work be halted in that area until a qualified archaeologist can assess the significance of the find. Additional archaeological survey’s will be required if project limits are extended beyond the present survey limits.

**Permits**

- 404 Nationwide Permit from the Army Corps of Engineers
- 401 Permit from the Regional Water Quality Control Board
- 1600 Permit from the Department of Fish and Wildlife

June 7, 2013