

# **Cold Spring Canyon Bridge Suicide Barrier**

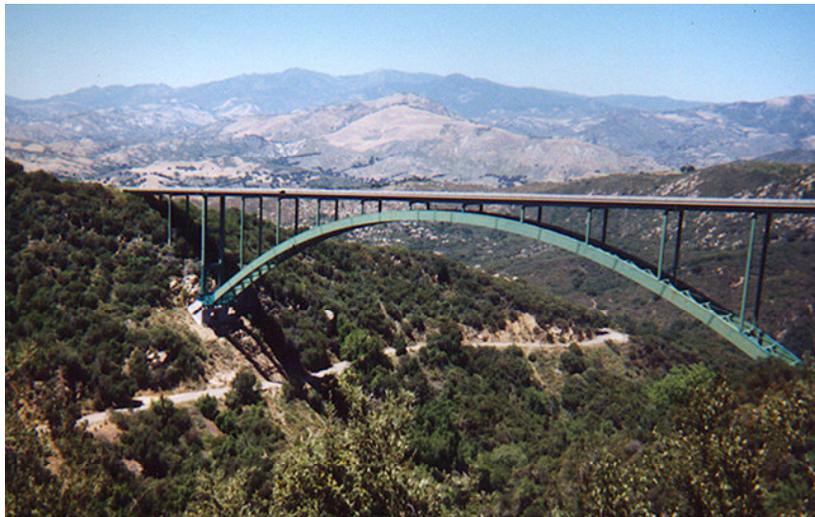
On State Route 154 at Cold Spring Canyon Bridge

05-SB-154-PM 22.9/23.1

05-0P9100

SCH# 2008011060

## **Final Environmental Impact Report/ Environmental Assessment and Section 4(f) Evaluation with Finding of No Significant Impact**



Prepared by the  
State of California Department of Transportation

The environmental review, consultation, and any other action required in accordance with applicable federal laws for this project is being, or has been, carried out by the California Department of Transportation under its assumption of responsibility pursuant to 23 U.S. Code 327.

**June 2009**



## **General Information About This Document**

### ***What's in this document?***

This document contains a Final Environmental Impact Report and Finding of No Significant Impact, which examine the environmental effects of a proposed project on State Route 154 at Cold Spring Canyon Bridge in Santa Barbara County.

The Draft Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Assessment was circulated to the public from May 9, 2008 to June 24, 2008. Two public hearings were held. The first was held Monday, June 9, 2008, from 5:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. in the City of Santa Barbara Library, Faulkner Gallery, 40 East Anapamu Street in Santa Barbara. The second was held on Tuesday, June 10, 2008, from 5:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. in the Solvang Veterans Memorial Building, Legion Wing, 1745 Mission Drive in Solvang. Comments received during the public comment period were taken into consideration in the selection of the preferred alternative. Comments received and responses to comments are shown in the Comments and Responses section of this document, which has been added since the draft was circulated. Elsewhere in the document, a vertical line in the margin indicates changes or additions made since the draft document was circulated.

### ***What happens after this?***

The proposed project has completed environmental compliance after the circulation of this document. When funding is approved, the California Department of Transportation, as assigned by the Federal Highway Administration, can design and construct all or part of the project.

For individuals with sensory disabilities, this document is available in Braille, large print, on audiocassette, or computer disk. To obtain a copy in one of these alternate formats, please call or write to Caltrans, Attn: Matt Fowler, Central Coast Environmental Analysis, 50 Higuera Street, San Luis Obispo, CA 93401; (805) 542-4603 Voice, or use the California Relay Service TTY number, 1-800-735-2929.

Construct a suicide barrier on the Cold Spring Canyon Bridge  
on State Route 154 from post miles 22.9 to 23.1

**FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT/  
ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT  
and Programmatic Section 4(f) Evaluation**

Submitted Pursuant to: (State) Division 13, California Public Resources Code  
(Federal) 42 U.S. Code 4332(2)(C), 23 U.S. Code 327, and 49 U.S. Code 303

THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA  
Department of Transportation

6/22/09  
Date of Approval

  
Richard Krumholz  
District 5 Director  
California Department of Transportation

**California Department of Transportation  
Finding of No Significant Impact**

FOR

Construct a suicide barrier on the Cold Spring  
Canyon Bridge on State Route 154 from post miles 22.9 to 23.1

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) has determined that the Grid/Mesh Alternative will have no significant impact on the human environment. This Finding of No Significant Impact is based on the attached Environmental Assessment, which has been independently evaluated by Caltrans and determined to adequately and accurately discuss the need, environmental issues, and impacts of the proposed project and appropriate mitigation measures. It provides sufficient evidence and analysis for determining that an Environmental Impact Statement is not required. Caltrans takes full responsibility for the accuracy, scope, and content of the attached Environmental Assessment and incorporated technical reports.

The environmental review, consultation, and any other action required in accordance with applicable federal laws for this project is being, or has been, carried out by Caltrans under its assumption of responsibility pursuant to 23 U.S. Code 327.

Date

6/22/09



Richard Krumholz  
District Director  
California Department of Transportation

## Summary

Effective July 1, 2007, Caltrans has been assigned environmental review and consultation responsibilities under the National Environmental Policy Act pursuant to 23 U.S. Code 327.

### **Overview of Project Area**

Cold Spring Canyon Bridge is on State Route 154 in Santa Barbara County. It is a large, dramatic structure spanning a distance of more than 1,200 feet and towering more than 400 feet above Cold Spring Canyon.

### **Purpose and Need**

The purpose of the proposed project is to:

1. Reduce the number of suicides at the Cold Spring Canyon Bridge resulting from individuals jumping off the bridge.
2. Reduce the exposure to risks for emergency personnel such as law enforcement officers or search and rescue teams when attempting to prevent persons from jumping off of the bridge, and reduce the number of recoveries that need to be performed following a suicide jump from the bridge.

The project is needed because as of June 3, 2009, at least 47 people have committed suicide by jumping from this bridge since it was built in 1963 (per revised Coroner's statistics). In the last 25 years (June 4, 1984, through June 3, 2009), at least 33 deaths from suicide have occurred, according to data from the Santa Barbara County Sheriff's Department. Suicides have occurred when individuals have jumped off the bridge. Individuals with suicidal intent have easy access to this means of harming themselves because the top of the existing safety rail is 3 feet, 7 inches from the roadway and 2 feet, 7 inches above the concrete curb. Individuals contemplating suicide can walk onto the narrow bridge and jump without impediment because the existing bridge rail is so low.

Because of suicides, the Cold Spring Canyon Bridge has the highest concentration of fatalities for any spot location on the state highway system in Caltrans District 5 (Santa Barbara, San Luis Obispo, Monterey, Santa Cruz, and San Benito counties). Because of these suicides, there are also serious risks involved when law enforcement, emergency personnel, and search and rescue teams respond to an

incident at the bridge. During an occurrence, State Route 154 may be closed or traffic reduced to one lane.

### ***Proposed Action***

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) proposes to install a physical suicide barrier on the Cold Spring Canyon Bridge near San Marcos Pass in Santa Barbara County.

### ***Background***

Originally, the proposed project was to have been built under Caltrans' Safety Improvement Program. However, at the request of the California Transportation Commission, Caltrans investigated alternate funding sources other than the State Highway Operation and Protection Program (SHOPP). As a result, it has been determined that the funding to construct the barriers will now come from the local portion of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (Recovery Act) funds.

Santa Barbara County Sheriff-Coroner records indicate that all of the fatalities associated with the Cold Spring Canyon Bridge have been the result of individuals jumping from the bridge. A multidisciplinary task force consisting of the California Highway Patrol, Santa Barbara County Sheriff's office, emergency services, Santa Barbara County Association of Governments, Caltrans, and experts in the field of suicidology was formed to investigate what could be done to reduce the number of persons jumping from the bridge. The task force recommended that installing a physical barrier would be an effective improvement to reduce suicides on this state highway.

### ***Alternatives***

Two build alternatives—the Grid/Mesh Alternative and the Vertical Alternative—as well as the No-Build Alternative were considered. The Grid/Mesh Alternative would use welded wire in a square grid pattern, spaced approximately 1 to 2 inches apart. The Vertical Alternative would place vertical steel rods/pickets spaced a maximum of 6 to 8 inches apart between the posts. The No-Build Alternative would leave the bridge as it is.

### ***Joint California Environmental Quality Act/National Environmental Policy Act Document***

The proposed project is a joint project by Caltrans and the Federal Highway Administration and is subject to state and federal environmental review requirements.

Project documentation, therefore, has been prepared in compliance with both the California Environmental Quality Act and the National Environmental Policy Act. Caltrans is the lead agency under the California Environmental Quality Act. In addition, the Federal Highway Administration's responsibility for environmental review, consultation, and any other action required in accordance with applicable federal laws for this project is being, or has been, carried out by Caltrans under its assumption of responsibility pursuant to 23 U.S. Code 327.

Some impacts determined to be significant under the California Environmental Quality Act may not lead to a determination of significance under the National Environmental Policy Act. Because the National Environmental Policy Act is concerned with the significance of the project as a whole, it is quite often the case that a "lower level" document is prepared for the National Environmental Policy Act. One of the most commonly seen joint document types is an Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Assessment.

### ***Project Impacts***

**Visual/Aesthetic Resources:** The project would be incompatible with the natural character of the surrounding landscape and would distract from the existing architectural style of the bridge. Both alternatives would result in some combination of view blockage (opacity) and visual intrusion due to the intervening barrier elements and architecture. Because of the expected high level of viewer sensitivity associated with the bridge and State Route 154 (a Designated State Scenic Highway) and the magnitude of the visual change, the project would result in substantial adverse impacts to the visual environment. The grid/mesh barrier would be the less noticeable of the two alternatives because the mesh itself would tend to recede and visually blend with the background.

**Cultural Resources:** Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act requires Caltrans to look at the kinds of effects a proposed project may have on *historic properties* in the project vicinity. Historic properties are properties that are either listed or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. The effects evaluation must be done following a set of guidelines, the *Criteria of Adverse Effect*, as defined in the Code of Federal Regulations (36 Code of Federal Regulations 800.5). For the Cold Spring Canyon Bridge Suicide Barrier project, the only historic property present is the bridge itself.

## Summary

The criteria state that a proposed project has an adverse effect on a historic property whenever the project alters—either directly or indirectly—any of the characteristics that qualify the property for listing in the National Register in a way that diminishes the property’s *integrity*. The integrity of a historic property as a whole is evaluated by looking at seven different aspects: integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

The proposed project would cause a direct adverse effect on the Cold Spring Canyon Bridge because it introduces a visual element that diminishes the property’s historic integrity of design, feeling, and association.

The California Department of Transportation consulted with the State Historic Preservation Officer and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation in compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. A Memorandum of Agreement to address the adverse effects of the project was signed by the State Historic Preservation Officer, the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, and the California Department of Transportation in March 2009 (see Appendix E).

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## **List of Abbreviated Terms**

Caltrans  
EIR/EA  
SHPO

California Department of Transportation  
Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Assessment  
State Historic Preservation Officer

# Chapter 1 Proposed Project

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## 1.1 Introduction

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) proposes to install a physical suicide barrier (barrier) on each side of the Cold Spring Canyon Bridge, on State Route 154 near San Marcos Pass in Santa Barbara County (see Figures 1-1, 1-2, and 2-1 through 2-10).

## 1.2 Purpose and Need

The Purpose and Need Section of this document discusses the reasons for the proposed project and provides structure for the development of alternatives. In the alternative selection process, the alternatives are evaluated and compared on how well they meet the Purpose and Need, as well as the potential environmental and economic costs.

### 1.2.1 Purpose

The purpose of the proposed project is to:

1. Reduce the number of suicides at the Cold Spring Canyon Bridge resulting from individuals jumping off the bridge.
2. Reduce the exposure to risks for emergency personnel such as law enforcement officers or search and rescue teams when attempting to prevent persons from jumping off of the bridge, and reduce the number of recoveries that need to be performed following a suicide jump from the bridge.

### 1.2.2 Need

#### ***Reduce the number of suicides***

Since the bridge was built in 1963, at least 47 people have committed suicide at this location, as of June 3, 2009, by jumping from this bridge. In the past 25 years, at least 33 deaths from suicide have occurred (June 4, 1984, through June 3, 2009). The top of the existing safety rails is 3 feet, 7 inches from the roadway and 2 feet, 7 inches above the concrete curb. Individuals contemplating suicide can walk onto the narrow bridge and jump without impediment because the existing bridge rails are so low.

Because of suicides, the Cold Spring Canyon Bridge has the highest concentration of fatalities for any spot in Caltrans District 5, which includes the Central Coast counties of Monterey, San Benito, Santa Cruz, San Luis Obispo, and Santa Barbara.

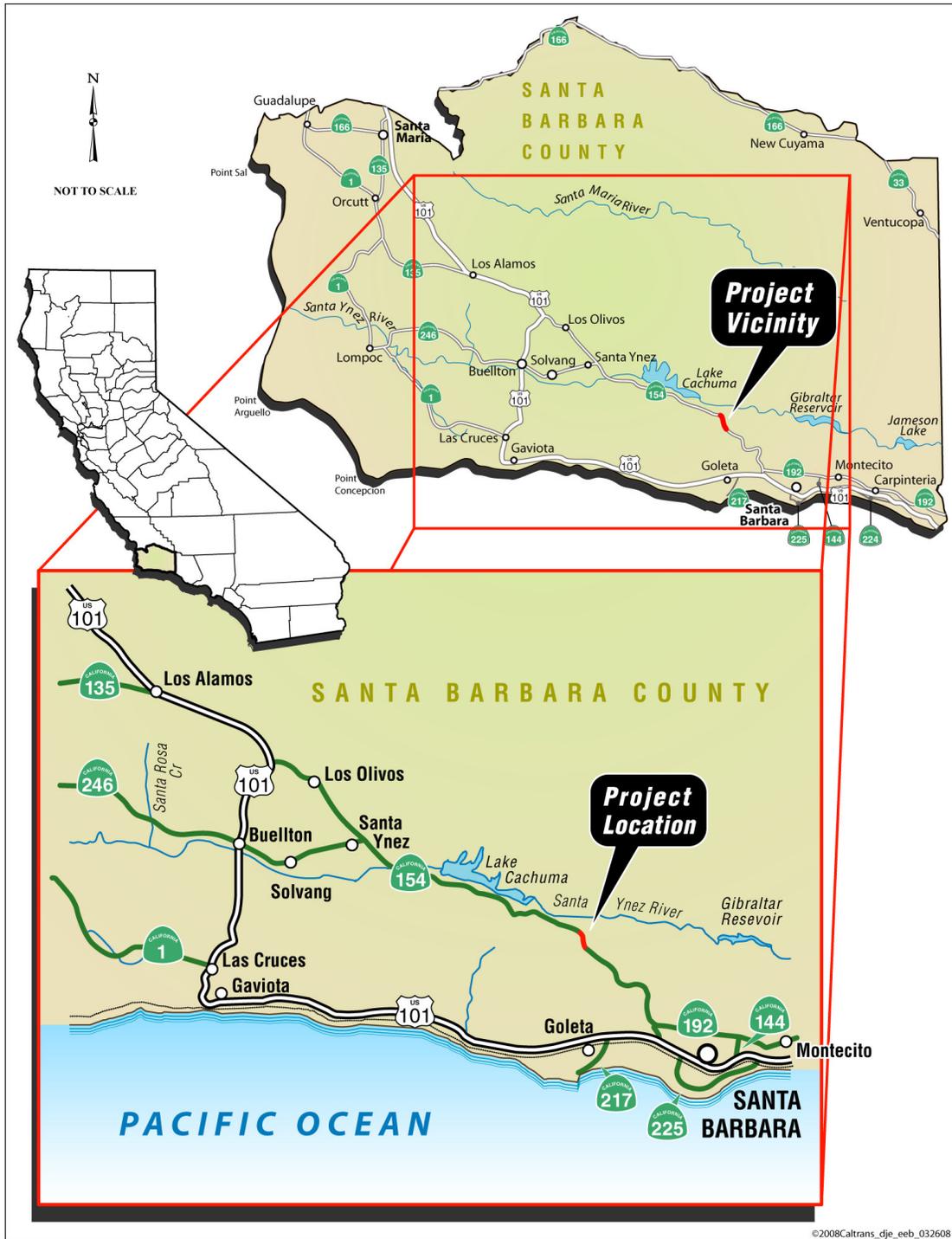


Figure 1-1 Project Vicinity and Location Map

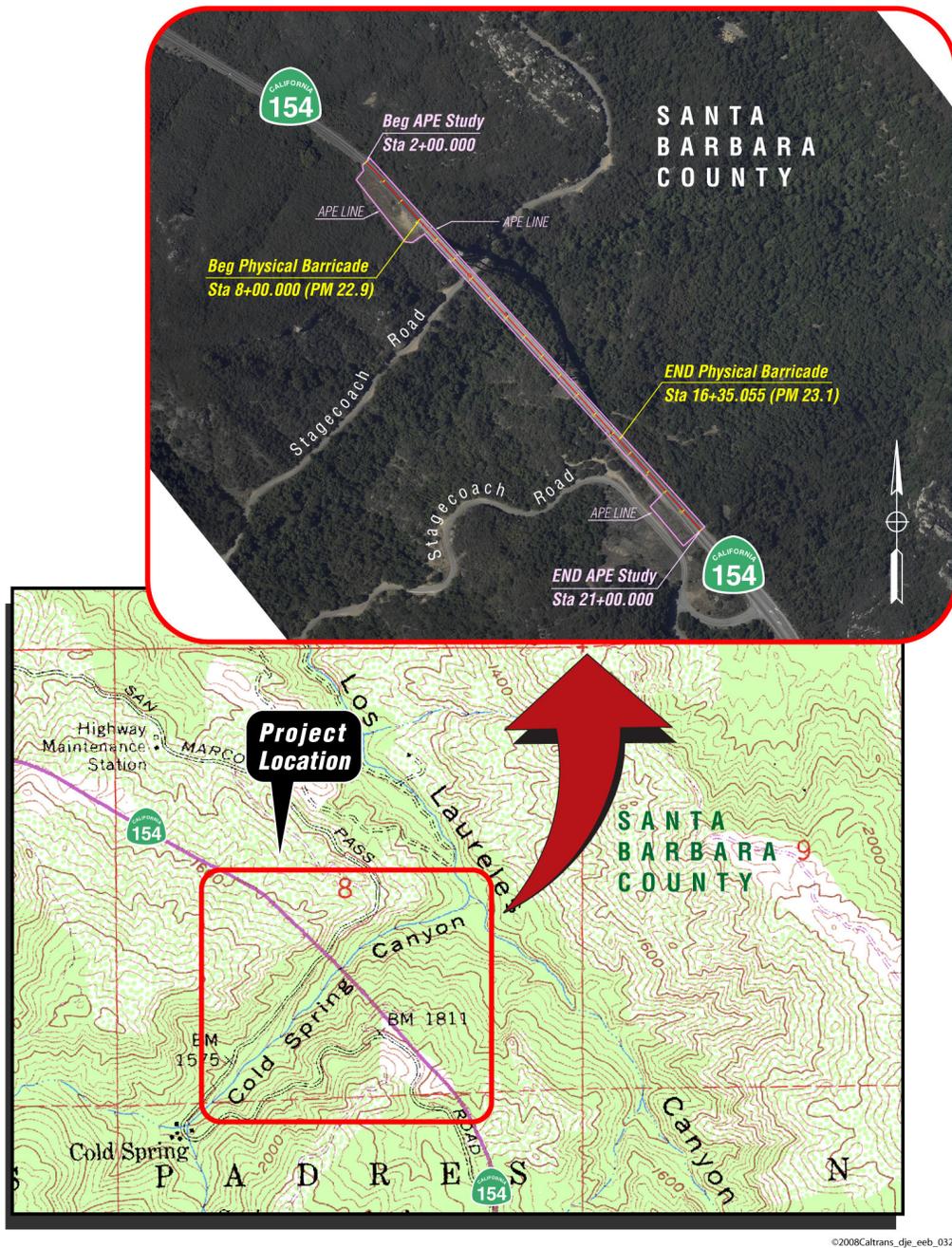


Figure 1-2 Project Area Map

***Reduce risks to emergency personnel: law enforcement, ambulance, and search and rescue teams***

According to the Santa Barbara County Sheriff's office, there have been approximately 162 incidents within the past eight years where law enforcement has responded to a suicide-related call at this location. While it cannot be determined how many of these law enforcement calls have resulted in a contact with a suicidal subject, the Sheriff has stated that for public safety, any call that puts law enforcement personnel on the bridge is considered a potential danger because of the low bridge rails, narrow roadway, and bridge swaying that occurs from cars or wind. If a despondent person is contacted on the bridge and struggles, it endangers both the officer and the person.

For example, on one night in 2006, two Sheriff's deputies and a California Highway Patrol officer were engaging a distraught man in conversation in an effort to dissuade him from leaping to his death. Suddenly, the man released his grip on the bridge and began falling. The law enforcement team lunged toward the edge of the bridge and grabbed his arm as he fell. In rescuing the man from this attempted suicide, the law enforcement team was exposed to a dangerous situation. As one of the deputies leaned over to help save the man's life, both of her feet were lifted from the bridge deck by the weight and force of the man attempting to jump. Her body was pulled on to the bridge rail where her balance was shifted towards the edge; with the help of other officers she was able to regain her balance as the man was pulled to safety. This dramatic rescue was recorded on an in-car video and graphically shows the danger law enforcement personnel can be exposed to when attempting to prevent persons from jumping off the Cold Spring Canyon Bridge.

The Sheriff of Santa Barbara County is also the County Coroner, and Sheriff's Deputies are Deputy Coroners. As such, the Sheriff is responsible for determining the cause of death, recovering the decedent's remains and property, and notifying the next of kin. The Sheriff has the responsibility to recover the remains in a timely manner. Timely recovery is important because the victim may still be alive (all who initially survived the plunge ultimately died), distraught relatives and friends have attempted to search on their own for their loved ones, and wild animals are attracted to the body.

The Santa Barbara County Search and Rescue Team, a highly trained volunteer branch of the Sheriff's Department, has the responsibility to rescue attempted suicides and to recover the victims' remains. Even with their years of experience performing

search and rescue in many diverse physical situations, the team considers the Cold Spring Canyon Bridge area the most hazardous terrain they have encountered for the following reasons:

- Danger is encountered in the terrain below the bridge when searching or recovering a body. In either case, the workers descend down the sides of the canyon. The rocky terrain under the bridge is very steep and is littered with glass, jagged metal, and wires, and is covered by dense poison oak and manzanita. Rescue team members have lost weeks of work due to exposure to poison oak. Team members have tripped in this environment and suffered sprained ankles, knees, and other injuries. Once located, the body must be secured and physically transported back up the steep canyon.
- When searching for a body below the bridge, team members have been exposed to injury from falling rock and gravel that are disturbed by passing cars—once a clipboard fell from the top of the bridge nearly missing a rescuer. With a fall of over 400 feet, the impact of a falling object could cause severe bodily injury or be fatal.
- Suicides that occur at night add a higher degree of difficulty for the search and rescue team. Unless there are reasons to delay recovery until daylight, such as bad weather, recovery must be attempted.
- Often working in darkness and with cars driving nearby on the narrow bridge, the team's recovery efforts expose them to falling from the bridge as they pace the bridge searching with flashlights to the canyon floor, more than 400 feet below. The narrow two-lane road, the low 3-foot, 7-inch existing bridge safety railing, lack of sidewalks, and noticeable swaying of the bridge from traffic and wind are all factors that contribute to the risks that emergency personnel may encounter during a suicide incident.
- Traveling motorists may also be at risk in attempting to stop a suicide if the person is distraught or violent. There is the risk of injury or of being pulled over the bridge by a combatant individual. Motorists have witnessed people jumping off the bridge. Having to confront someone who is suicidal places the untrained person in a foreign situation; if their attempt to prevent the suicide fails, they may be subject to guilt and posttraumatic stress.

### **1.3 Background**

Originally, the proposed project was to have been built under Caltrans' Safety Improvement Program. However, at the request of the California Transportation

Commission, Caltrans investigated alternate funding sources other than the State Highway Operation and Protection Program (SHOPP). As a result it has been determined that the money needed to construct the barriers will now come from local Recovery Act funds.

Santa Barbara County Sheriff-Coroner records indicate that all of the suicides associated with Cold Spring Canyon Bridge have been the results of individuals jumping from the bridge. A multidisciplinary task force consisting of the California Highway Patrol, Santa Barbara County Sheriff's office, emergency services, Santa Barbara County Association of Governments, Caltrans, and experts in the field of suicidology was formed to investigate what could be done to reduce the number of persons jumping from the bridge. The task force recommended that the installation of physical barriers would be an effective method to reduce fatalities by suicide from jumping on this state roadway.

## **1.4 Alternatives**

This section describes the project alternatives that were developed by an interdisciplinary team to achieve the project purpose while avoiding or minimizing environmental impacts. Several criteria were taken into consideration when evaluating the various alternatives for the proposed project, including the project purpose and need, cost, and environmental impacts.

### **1.4.1 Build Alternatives**

The build alternatives consist of the Grid/Mesh Alternative and the Vertical Alternative. Both build alternatives would construct a barrier on each side of the road on the Cold Spring Canyon Bridge to act as a physical barrier to reduce the number of persons jumping from the bridge (see Figures 2-2 through 2-10). The estimated construction cost of the Grid/Mesh Alternative is \$969,000 and the estimated cost of the Vertical Alternative is \$1,050,000 (as of June 2009 and October 2008, respectively).

#### ***Common Design Features of the Build Alternatives***

Experts in the field of suicidology and mental health recommend a physical barrier with the following configuration to be the most effective method to reduce suicides on a bridge. The barrier should include the following features:

- The height should be a minimum of 6 feet

- The top of the barrier should curve inward
- The pickets or members should be difficult to climb and placed a maximum of 6 to 8 inches apart
- The barrier should run the entire span of the bridge on both sides

Both build alternatives that were under consideration meet these configuration criteria and the project's Purpose and Need:

- **Height** - The barrier would have a total height of approximately 6 feet above the existing Type 2 barrier rails; the barrier would curve inward toward traffic at around 5 feet from the bridge deck. The resulting rail height above the bridge deck/roadway surface would be approximately 9 feet, 7 inches.
- **Anchorage** - The barrier would be connected to a bolted anchorage plate placed on the back side of the existing Type 2 barrier rails.
- **Frame** - The frame would consist of two vertical posts and three horizontal rails, which would be placed between adjacent anchorage plates.
- **Aesthetic treatment** – A low reflective finish would be implemented.

#### ***Unique Features of the Build Alternatives***

- **Grid/Mesh Alternative** - This option consists of welded wire or other material in a square grid pattern, spaced approximately 1 to 2 inches apart. Due to the small openings which would be difficult to gain a foothold or handhold, the mesh would not be scalable by most people.
- **Vertical Alternative** - This alternative consists of vertical steel rods/pickets, spaced from 6 to 8 inches apart. The pickets would prevent most people from climbing over the barrier in order to jump off of the bridge.

Existing views and visual simulations of both build alternatives from three different viewpoints are shown in Figures 2-2 through 2-10 in Section 2.1.2 *Visual/Aesthetics*.

#### **1.4.2 No-Build Alternative**

The No-Build Alternative provides a baseline for consideration of other alternatives and may be preferred if the other alternatives and/or variations have significant impacts on the environment, do not serve the project's Purpose and Need, or are not economically feasible.

The No-Build alternative would not impact the bridge structure. However, it is reasonable to assume suicides from individuals jumping from the Cold Spring Canyon Bridge would continue and could potentially increase.

### **1.4.3 Comparison of Alternatives**

Table 1.1 compares the two build alternatives and the No-Build Alternative. Criteria for evaluating alternatives include the project's Purpose and Need issues and potential environmental effects of the proposed project. The two build alternatives are similar for many of the evaluation criteria and meet the project's stated Purpose and Need. Both of the build alternatives would reduce the number of persons jumping from the bridge by providing a physical barrier approximately 9 feet, 7 inches in height with an inward curve. Correspondingly, by reducing the number of suicides at the bridge, risks to law enforcement, emergency personnel, and search and rescue teams would be reduced.

The project would have impacts on the visual/aesthetic and cultural aspects of the bridge. Both proposed barrier alternatives would be incompatible with the natural character of the surrounding landscape, would distract from the existing architectural style, and would diminish the historic qualities of the bridge. However, the Grid/Mesh Alternative would have less of an aesthetic impact than the Vertical Alternative.

With the No-Build Alternative, the bridge rail height would remain at its current height. This alternative would not meet the project's Purpose and Need; it is reasonable to assume that suicides and suicide attempts, as well as risks to emergency services as a result of these incidents, would continue to occur at the bridge without the installation of a barrier.

**Table 1.1 Comparison of Alternatives**

<b>Evaluation Criteria</b>	<b>Grid/Mesh Alternative</b>	<b>Vertical Alternative</b>	<b>No-Build Alternative</b>
<b>Reduce Number of Suicides From Jumping</b>	Helps reduce suicides, meets Purpose and Need	Helps reduce suicides, meets Purpose and Need	Suicides would most likely continue. Does not meet the Purpose and Need.
<b>Reduce Risks to Emergency Personnel</b>	Reduces risks due to reduced number of suicides, meets Purpose and Need	Reduces risks due to reduced number of suicides, meets Purpose and Need	Suicides would most likely continue. Does not meet the Purpose and Need.
<b>Visual/Aesthetic Resources</b>	Lower level of adverse effects of the view from and of the bridge	Higher level of adverse effects of the view from and of the bridge	The appearance of the bridge would not change
<b>Cultural Resources</b>	Adverse effect - diminishes the property's historic qualities	Adverse effect - diminishes the property's historic qualities	The appearance of the bridge would not change
<b>Construction Costs (as of June 2009 and October 2008, respectively)</b>	\$969,000	\$1,050,000	Maintenance costs only

**1.4.4 Environmentally Superior Alternative**

Evaluations revealed that the Grid/Mesh Alternative is the environmentally superior alternative because it would have less of an impact on views of and from the bridge (see Section 2.1.2 *Visual/Aesthetics*). Other than the difference in visual impacts, both build alternatives would have essentially the same environmental impacts.

**1.4.5 Preferred Alternative**

Two build alternatives and the No-Build Alternative were under consideration. After circulation of the Draft Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Assessment (DEIR/EA), Caltrans selected the Grid/Mesh Alternative as the preferred alternative based on environmental analysis, comments on the DEIR/EA, and input from the community-based Aesthetics Design Advisory Committee. While both of the build alternatives would meet the Purpose and Need of the project, the Grid/Mesh Alternative would have less of an impact on views of and from the bridge. See Table 1.1 *Comparison of Alternatives*.

**1.4.6 Alternatives Considered but Eliminated From Further Discussion**

The following five alternatives were considered but eliminated from further discussion by Caltrans.

### **Horizontal Alternative**

A six-foot physical barrier alternative with horizontal members curved inward and a total height of 9 feet, 7 inches above the bridge roadway would be constructed on each side of the bridge. This alternative was considered but rejected because the horizontal design had a “ladder-like” configuration that could be more easily scaled than the other two physical barrier alternatives under consideration.

### **Safety Net Alternative**

A safety net alternative would be installed on each side of the bridge as a suicide deterrent. As a result of meetings between Caltrans, the State Historic Preservation Officer, and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, the safety net alternative was further investigated following the release of the draft environmental document. The findings and conclusions made below in the draft EIR/EA remain the same. This alternative was considered but rejected due to the following reasons:

- The net strategy requires immediate response while those who fall into it are still stunned. The remote location of the bridge would not make this possible and a suicidal person could get to the edge of the net and jump again.
- Risks to the Santa Barbara County Search and Rescue Team during a safety net rescue. Team members would rappel over the edge of the bridge into the net, using technical rescue equipment, a complex system of ropes and hardware. The safety net by design is difficult to walk on or stand in, thus maintaining balance while standing in the net may not be possible. The rescuer would attempt to secure the person for removal from the net. If the suicidal person is violent and possibly armed, subduing them while maintaining balance in the safety net and then securing and hoisting the person to the top of the bridge is very difficult. Search and Rescue Team members are not in law enforcement or trained to confront potential combatants. Conversely, the Santa Barbara County Sheriff's Deputies are not trained in the specialized field of search and rescue and depend on the Search and Rescue team for rescue and recovery.
- Constructability, replacement costs, and maintenance issues. Installing a safety net involves drilling holes in the face of the bridge and adding a large horizontal structure, which could permanently alter the structure's appearance and engineering. If the net catches a person or heavy object, the netting becomes deformed from the impact, which reduces its effectiveness, and requires it to be replaced.

- A safety net may constitute a possible lure to thrill seekers. A net located 400 feet above the ground designed for a human to fall into in relative safety may be an attraction to that segment of the population.
- The safety net may be a danger to those who fall into it. If a suicide attempt occurs or the net catches a thrill seeker, the person may be stunned or injured by the impact. For suicide attempts that occur in darkness, the people may not be seen in the net for an extended period of time, exposing them to cold, heat, wind, and rain. Also, once they are located, the response time for emergency services may be lengthy, due to the bridge's remoteness.
- The safety net would be difficult and dangerous to maintain. Routine maintenance to remove vegetation, trapped animals, and litter that could collect in the netting material would require rappelling into the net to collect the material, securing the material in a container, hoisting it to the top of the bridge, and then ascending back up ropes to the top of the bridge.
- A safety net would not increase the existing railing height.

### ***Partial Barrier Alternative***

A partial barrier would not span the length of the bridge. This alternative was rejected because this barrier configuration would not be effective, since it could be scaled or avoided by persons intent on jumping off of the bridge.

### ***Restricting Access Alternative***

- **Restricting pedestrian access**—Pedestrians are not prohibited from walking on State Route 154, a conventional highway; however, the bridge was not designed for pedestrian use. It has no sidewalks, and the existing 2-foot-wide by 10-inch-high concrete curb is an integral part of the bridge safety railing. The top of the existing safety rails is 3 feet, 7 inches from the roadway and 2 feet, 7 inches above the concrete curb. The 34-foot-wide, two-lane bridge is relatively narrow. If a sign were posted restricting pedestrians, it would be difficult for law enforcement to effectively enforce this restriction because patrols do not monitor the bridge 24 hours a day. Individuals contemplating suicide can walk onto the narrow bridge and jump without impediment because the existing bridge rails are so low.
- **Restricting public parking at pull out areas**—It is not probable that restricting parking or closing pullout areas would reduce the number of persons jumping from the bridge. According to revised statistics (received May 21, 2009) from the Sheriff's Coroner Bureau, at least 10 individuals have abandoned their vehicle on the middle of the bridge and jumped. Also, these roadside locations are necessary

for emergency vehicles, disabled vehicles, and highway maintenance parking to help keep the traffic flowing on State Route 154 in a safe manner.

### **“Human Barrier” Alternative**

The Human Barrier Alternative (“No Barriers”) has been proposed by some interested people as a viable alternative to deter suicides at the Cold Spring Canyon Bridge. This alternative consists of non-physical barrier deterrents such as call boxes, video cameras, surveillance patrols, signs, lighting, and public education. Components of this alternative were previously considered but eliminated from consideration because research on the effectiveness of these measures at other bridges shows the human barrier approach has not been satisfactory at reducing the number of persons jumping from the bridge. Those individuals determined to die have no further suicide deterrent once they pass the signs, call boxes, and video cameras. These non-physical components have also been considered in the aggregate, not just as stand-alone elements. Also having a physical barrier does not preclude the use of these non-physical components as supplemental deterrent strategies.

The human barrier approach was tried on the Golden Gate Bridge in San Francisco, which is the foremost suicide magnet location in the world. Even though the Golden Gate Bridge is adjacent to a large urban area and heavily patrolled, using this approach was found to not be completely effective and persons continue to jump off the bridge. According to the Golden Gate Bridge Highway and Transportation District, the following human barrier methods have been used on the bridge to deter suicides:

- Emergency telephones linked to suicide prevention/crisis intervention counselors were installed in 1993
- Signs to direct people to the emergency crisis phones were installed in 1993
- Closed-circuit television cameras monitored 24 hours a day were upgraded in the mid 1990s and again in 2001 to provide detailed surveillance of sidewalks
- Public safety patrols and law enforcement patrols trained in suicide prevention/crisis intervention began in 1996
- Employee training and education in suicide prevention/crisis intervention started in 2004

Between 1993—when the Golden Gate Bridge’s first human barrier component, emergency crisis telephones, was installed—and 2007, there have been at least 380 suicides from the bridge. The data is from the *San Francisco Chronicle’s* review of Golden Gate Bridge Highway and Transportation District records to determine the

number of suicides by year through 2004 for its series “Lethal Beauty” published on October 30, 2005; the number of incidents for the years 2005 through 2007 are from the Golden Gate Bridge, Highway and Transportation District (the Marin County Coroner maintains the official records). When anti-suicide patrols began in 1996, the San Francisco Suicide Prevention Agency commented in *The New York Times* article by Carey Goldberg, “Golden Gate Bridge to Institute Suicide Patrols,” that the bridge also needed better physical barriers. The bridge’s Board of Directors voted in 2005 to explore installing a barrier.

In 1994, the year after the implementation of emergency telephones, there were 38 known deaths. In 2007, with the presence of the human barrier measures—crisis telephones, signs, closed circuit cameras, safety patrols, and employee crisis intervention training, there were 38 confirmed suicides, the highest number of suicides since 1994.

Human barrier solutions have also been tried at other bridges that attract suicide attempts. An increase in suicides on the Sunshine Skyway Bridge in Saint Petersburg, Florida led officials to install crisis phones and start 24-hour patrols of the bridge in 2000. In 2002, 15 surveillance cameras were added. According to an article by Jamie Jones, “Skyway safeguards don’t deter jumpers,” published October 3, 2003 in the *Saint Petersburg Times*, in spite of these safeguards, from 2000 to the date of the article in 2003, 22 people committed suicide from the bridge. Florida Highway Patrol officers said in the article that many of the people they try to talk down end up jumping.

On May 9, 1999, *The New York Times* published an article written by Rick Bragg entitled, “On Florida Bridge, Troopers Are Also Suicide Counselors.” This article focused on the troopers who respond to suicide attempts on the Sunshine Skyway. These officers face the risk of being taken over the bridge rail in their efforts to prevent a suicide. They also experience emotional trauma when their efforts fail. Those interviewed said that while they are able to talk some people down, others will jump without talking at all or while they are talking.

Analysis of data from the County of San Diego Health and Human Services Agency on the Coronado Bay Bridge in San Diego shows that call boxes and signs encouraging individuals to seek help by using the crisis hotlines have not been an effective suicide prevention strategy. Since the phones’ installation in 1990, suicides by jumping from the Coronado Bridge have remained consistent.

At the Cold Spring Canyon Bridge, practical reasons would limit the effectiveness of the “Human Barrier” Alternative that has been proposed. The remote, rural location makes it difficult for law enforcement and emergency personnel to respond in a timely manner to the proposed video camera surveillance; the Santa Barbara County Sheriff’s Office estimated average response time without the delay of any other activity, is around 15 minutes. The Sheriff also does not have the staff to continually monitor the surveillance video cameras or to heighten existing patrol efforts at the bridge.

Installing crisis telephones/call boxes on the Cold Spring Canyon Bridge would be impractical since the road on the bridge is narrow and there are no sidewalks or shoulders to provide a safe location. There are plans by the Santa Barbara County Association of Governments to install a separate crisis helpline on the two existing motorist aid telephones. The existing call boxes are not located on the bridge for pedestrian safety and practical reasons.

Lighting is an additional human barrier feature that was considered. However, due to the bridge’s remote location and lack of people at the bridge at any given time, additional lighting may not be a deterrent to suicides.

Another component of the human barrier approach is for law enforcement agencies to develop clear policy directives and training for officer safety when encountering suicidal persons. Law enforcement personnel already receive policy directives and training in crisis and high-risk situations and are trained to help everyone; even those who wish to harm themselves. As noted above with troopers at the Sunshine Skyway Bridge, Santa Barbara County Sheriff’s deputies who respond to suicide attempts at the Cold Spring Canyon Bridge must also cope with emotional trauma when they don’t succeed. A commander with the Santa Barbara County Sheriff’s Department has stated that despite specialized training and the officers’ best efforts to prevent a person from taking their own life, witnessing someone jump from the bridge is a difficult experience to live with. The commander said, “These first-responders suffer ongoing psychological trauma and guilt following an incident and the memory of the event stays with them for the rest of their lives...The feeling that you could have done more is a reality, not just an academic study on a problem.”

## **1.5 Permits and Approvals Needed**

None required.

## **Chapter 2**      Affected Environment, Environmental Consequences, and Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures

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This chapter explains the impacts that the project would have on the human, physical, and biological environments in the project area. It describes the existing environment that could be affected by the project, potential impacts from each of the alternatives, and proposed avoidance, minimization, and/or mitigation measures. Any indirect impacts are included in the general impacts analysis and discussions that follow.

As part of the scoping and environmental analysis conducted for the project, the following environmental issues were considered but no adverse impacts were identified. Consequently, there is no further discussion regarding these issues in this document.

- Land Use—There would be no impacts on land use from the project.
- Growth—There would be no impacts on growth from the project.
- Farmlands/Timberlands—No farmlands or timberlands are located in the proposed project area.
- Community Impacts—No communities would be affected by the construction of the project.
- Utilities/Emergency Services—There would be no impact on Utilities/Emergency Services.
- Hydrology and Floodplain—There would be no impacts on the hydrology or any floodplain (Water Quality Technical Memo, dated October 18, 2007, memo from Central Region Hydraulics, dated January 17, 2008).
- Water Quality and Storm Water Runoff—The proposed project would not affect water quality or storm water runoff (Water Quality Technical Memo, October 18, 2007).
- Geology/Soils/Seismic/Topography—There would be no impacts on geology, soils, seismicity, or topography at the project site (memo from Office of Bridge Design Services, Structure Design, Department of Engineering Services, dated January 18, 2008).

- Paleontology—The project would not affect sensitive paleontological resources (Paleontology Report, dated January 11, 2008).
- Hazardous Waste or Materials—The project would not generate hazardous waste or materials (Hazardous Waste Initial Site Assessment dated September 29, 2007).
- Air Quality—The project would not have any impacts on air quality (Air Quality and Noise Technical Reports, dated December 27, 2007).
- Noise and Vibration—There would be no noise or vibration impacts from the project (Air Quality and Noise Technical Reports, dated December 27, 2007).
- Wetlands and other Waters—The project would not have any impacts on wetlands or other waters (Natural Environment Study, dated October 2007).
- Plants—The project would not affect any special-status plants (Natural Environment Study, dated October 2007).
- Animal Species—The project would not have any impacts on animal species (Natural Environment Study, dated October 2007).
- Threatened and Endangered Species—The project would not have any impacts on threatened and endangered species (Natural Environment Study, dated October 2007).

## **2.1 Human Environment**

### **2.1.1 Traffic and Transportation**

#### ***Affected Environment***

The Cold Spring Canyon Bridge is located on State Route 154. The bridge is approximately 1,200 feet in length and towers more than 400 feet above Cold Spring Canyon. The roadway is a two-lane highway with a width of approximately 34 feet. The existing bridge rail barrier is 3 feet, 7 inches above the roadway, and 2 feet, 7 inches above the concrete curb. From bottom to top, it consists of a 2-foot-wide by 10-inch-high concrete curb supporting an 18-inch-high vertical concrete barrier, which in turn supports the 15-inch-high metal rail posts and metal tube rail. The bridge was not designed for pedestrian use. There are no sidewalks and the existing concrete curb was not designed for pedestrian use. However, pedestrians and bicycles as well as motorized vehicles have full access to the bridge.

## **Environmental Consequences**

### *Build Alternatives*

#### **Barriers would benefit highway safety**

In addition to reducing the number of persons jumping from the bridge and reducing risks to emergency personnel, the installation of barriers on Cold Spring Canyon Bridge would have additional benefits.

One of these benefits is to preclude bicycle riders, hikers, and walkers from accidentally falling off the side of the bridge.

Another benefit is through the reduction in traffic disruptions caused by suicidal incidents; safety for the traveling public would be increased on State Route 154 by helping to ensure smooth traffic flow. In the past, some of the individuals intent on suicide have abandoned their cars on the bridge deck, blocking one or both lanes on the narrow two-lane roadway, which effectively closes the bridge or reduces traffic flow. In responding to these incidents, the addition of law enforcement, search and rescue teams, and members of the traveling public, along with the abandoned car on the bridge may further obstruct traffic flow.

It is possible that the barriers would help reduce traffic delay that may occur from suicide jumps and attempted suicide jumps from the bridge. The potential for traveler delay by bridge or lane closures would be lessened by the corresponding reduction in suicides and need for emergency responders on the bridge. If the bridge were closed due to a suicide incident, southbound motorists with a Santa Barbara destination would detour northbound to Santa Ynez, then take State Route 246 to U.S. 101, which would take them south and east through Gaviota to Santa Barbara. The total detour would be over 60 miles and around 65 minutes. When the bridge is open, it is approximately 25 miles and 30 minutes to Santa Barbara. A bridge closure could delay motorists and emergency vehicles for about 65 minutes, more than double the distance and travel time of the bridge travel route.

#### **Evidence that barriers are effective in reducing suicides**

The collective body of evidence shows that a barrier on Cold Spring Canyon Bridge would meet the purpose of the project by reducing suicides at the site. It is well documented that physical barriers have been effective in helping to reduce suicides at bridges and buildings around the world.

Studies conducted in a number of countries by suicidologists, mental health experts, and other professionals have formally evaluated the effectiveness of bridge barriers on suicides. The resulting research has been published in academic, medical, psychiatric, and other books and journals, which are subject to peer review. Some of these published studies are described below.

In the booklet *Guidance on action to be taken at suicide hotspots*, the National Institute for Mental Health in England reviewed and analyzed various intervention measures at suicide hotspots and referenced international studies. Their analysis included physical barriers and human barrier components, such as signs and telephone hotlines, suicide patrols, and staff training. In a table comparing the pros and cons of each of these measures, the study states physical barriers are the most effective intervention at suicide hotspots. It also states there is evidence physical barriers are effective and that barriers delay the jump, which increases chances of intervention. In addition, it says jump survivors recommend physical barriers. The booklet concludes, “The most effective form of prevention at jumping sites is a physical barrier, which literally restricts access to the drop.”

In 1994, an article by Patrick W. O’Carroll, Morton M. Silverman, and Alan L. Berman, “The Effectiveness of Bridge Barriers,” was published in *Suicide and Life-Threatening Behavior*. This study on the effect of barriers on the Duke Ellington Bridge in Washington D.C. reported that prior to installation of barriers, an average of four people a year died by jumping from the bridge. In the five years following installation of barriers, there was only one suicide from the Ellington Bridge. The number of suicides from nearby Taft Bridge, where no barriers had been installed, remained the same.

A 2001 study by Annette L. Beautrais examined suicide patterns before and after removal of barriers on the Grafton Bridge in Auckland City, New Zealand. Results of the study, “Effectiveness of barriers at suicide jumping sites: a case study,” appeared in the *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Psychiatry*. It showed the effectiveness of bridge safety barriers in reducing suicides at that location. After the removal of barriers from the Grafton Bridge, there was an immediate, substantial increase in the number of deaths and the suicide rate. There were three suicides in the four years before the barriers were removed, and 15 suicides in the seven years from removal of the barriers to their subsequent reinstallation. This study shows the effectiveness of means restriction and supports the erection of safety barriers to help reduce suicides at specific locations.

“Preventing suicide by jumping: The effect of a bridge safety fence,” written by Andrew R. Pelletier, appeared in *Injury Prevention* in 2007. In this study, the researcher’s objective was to evaluate the effect of bridge barriers in preventing suicide. On the Memorial Bridge in Augusta, Maine, in the period from 1960 to 1983, there had been 14 suicides. After the installation of barriers in 1983, there have been no suicides on the bridge. Suicide rates by jumping from other structures remained unchanged, suggesting these individuals do not go somewhere else. This study shows the effectiveness of suicide barriers at a specific location. The researcher concluded that barriers were effective in preventing suicides at the Memorial Bridge, and there was no evidence that individuals went to other sites to jump. In 2005, the barriers were removed for bridge renovation. As a result of this study, the community backed measures to reinstall the barriers.

Another 2007 study by Olive Bennewith, Mike Nowers, and David Gunnell, “Effects of barriers on the Clifton Suspension Bridge, England, on local patterns of suicide: implications for prevention,” was published in the *British Journal of Psychiatry*. This report on the Clifton Suspension Bridge in Bristol, England discusses the effectiveness of safety barriers in preventing suicides. Barriers were erected along the main span of the bridge, where 97 percent of the suicides occurred, but not along the buttress of the bridge, where only 3 percent of suicides had occurred. In the five years after installation of the barrier, the number of suicides from the bridge halved. Of this population, half of the jumps were made from the buttress where there was no barrier in place. Taking into consideration that jumps increased from a site on the bridge where they were previously infrequent, and because some people were able to get around the barrier, the authors encourage further expansion of the barriers on the bridge. Within the five years after the construction of barriers, there was a non-significant increase in the number of deaths by jumping from sites other than the suspension bridge. The authors summarize: “This study provides evidence of the effectiveness of barriers on bridges in preventing site-specific suicides and suicides by jumping overall in the surrounding area.”

A 2005 article in the *Journal of the American Medical Association*, “Suicide Prevention Strategies: A systematic review,” cites the importance of means restriction in suicide prevention strategies because means restriction has led to lower overall suicide rates. The construction of barriers at jumping sites was among the methods of means restriction cited. The study authors, headed by J. John Mann, concluded,

“Despite unresolved questions about method substitution, these studies demonstrate the life-saving potential of restricting lethal means.”

Keith Hawton analyzed means restriction in various studies from around the world. His 2007 report, “Restricting access to methods of suicide: Rationale and evaluation of this approach to suicide prevention,” was published in *Crisis*. The author concluded that removing the availability of a specific method of self-harm is a key element in suicide prevention strategies. His research also showed that suicidal behavior is generally brief and impulsive, and those who have survived attempts show a low possibility of long-term risk of suicide.

The American Foundation for Suicide Prevention (AFSP) supports bridge barriers, as stated on their website, “AFSP Policy Positions, Bridge Barriers and Suicides”:  
“According to AFSP-funded research and additional studies worldwide, prevention barriers on bridges have been effective at reducing suicide. Since suicide by jumping tends to be more impulsive in nature than some other methods of suicide, barriers help prevent suicide by providing suicidal individuals the time needed to change their minds, and to seek the treatment that might save their lives. AFSP supports the construction of barriers on the Golden Gate Bridge and other bridges where suicides frequently occur.”

Suicide barriers have been constructed on many sites around the world. The following lists of some of the bridges, buildings, and world landmarks where barriers have been installed:

- Duke Ellington Bridge, Washington, DC
- Memorial Bridge, Augusta, Maine (under renovation)
- Colorado Street Bridge, Pasadena, California
- Vincent Thomas Bridge, San Pedro, California
- Glen Canyon Bridge, near Page, Arizona
- Bloor Street Viaduct, Toronto, Canada
- Jacques Cartier Bridge, Montreal, Canada
- The Clifton Suspension Bridge, Bristol, England.
- Sydney Harbour Bridge, Sydney, Australia
- Grafton Bridge, Auckland City, New Zealand
- Blombachtal Bridge, North Rhine, Germany
- The Red Bridge, Le Pont Grande-Duchesse Charlotte, Luxembourg
- Empire State Building, New York, NY

- Berne Muenster Terrace, Berne, Switzerland
- Eiffel Tower, Paris, France
- Saint Peter's Basilica, The Vatican, Rome

In addition, barriers have been discussed or studied for these bridges:

- Golden Gate Bridge, San Francisco, California
- Aurora Bridge (George Washington Memorial Bridge), Seattle, Washington
- Sunshine Skyway Bridge, Tampa Bay, Florida
- San Diego-Coronado Bridge, San Diego, California

### **Evidence that suicidal people often do not seek another location to attempt self-harm**

A benefit of the proposed project is that people often do not go elsewhere or substitute another method to commit suicide. This is supported by the information and studies described below.

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services specifies restricting the means of suicide in its "National Strategy for Suicide Prevention, Goals and Objectives for Action." The following goal and information is taken from the Health and Human Services website:

#### *Promote Efforts To Reduce Access To Lethal Means and Methods of Self-Harm*

- Evidence from many countries and cultures shows that limiting access to lethal means and methods of self-harm is an effective strategy to prevent self-destructive behaviors in certain individuals.
- This goal is important and necessary to contribute to an overall effort to reduce the rates of suicide and suicidal behaviors in our population. Means restriction is a key activity in a broader public health approach to reducing intentional injuries.
- Much more needs to be done to reduce the likelihood of the use of lethal means during an impulsive act of self-injury or self-destruction. By eliminating or restricting the easy availability of one particular means of suicide, impulsive individuals often do not substitute another method in the immediate time frame.
- Engineering advances have the potential to influence the design and construction of safer bridges and roof barriers...

After studying 515 suicide attempters who were restrained from dying on the Golden Gate Bridge, Dr. Richard Seiden concluded that the hypothesis stating these people went somewhere else to commit suicide was not supported by the data, since suicidal

behavior is generally brief and impulsive. Results of his study, “Where Are They Now? A Follow-up Study of Suicide Attempters from the Golden Gate Bridge,” was published in *Suicide and Life-Threatening Behavior* in 1978. He concluded that the construction of barriers is justified to help prevent suicides.

In this same study, Dr. Seiden cites an example of restriction of means that occurred in Great Britain. For many years coal gas was piped into homes to provide heat, providing easy access to a lethal suicide method. When the utilities replaced coal gas with natural gas, the national suicide rate was significantly reduced.

“Securing a suicide hot spot: Effects of a safety net at the Bern Muenster Terrace” looked at the Bern Muenster Terrace, a church located in Bern, Switzerland, which had become a suicide hot spot. This study by Thomas Reisch and Konrad Michel appeared in *Suicide and Life-Threatening Behavior* in 2005. After introducing a safety net on the building, there were no more suicides at this site and the number of suicides in the area by jumping decreased. The authors maintain that one of the few effective strategies to reduce suicides is to restrict the availability of means. Noting that suicide by jumping is typically used when easily accessible, limiting access to high buildings and bridges is highly important in preventative measures and that restriction of a specific method of self-harm may lead to a decrease in the overall suicide rate.

In the study, “Suicide prevention through means restriction: Assessing the risk of substitution. A critical review and synthesis,” Marc S. Daigle discusses the fact that since a suicidal crisis is usually short lived and prompted by ambivalence or impulsiveness, an individual with restricted access to means will not turn to an alternate method, or deter their plan for a later date. This is noted with those who choose jumping as their preferred method. Due to the likely fatality of this method, and the fact that many who jump had chosen a specific site to complete their attempt, this study further shows an individual’s preference for a detailed suicide that is unlikely to be substituted. This 2005 study was published in *Accident Analysis and Prevention*. Examining the multiple studies from all around the world, the author concluded that the risk of substitution towards an alternate method is small.

The presence of the Clifton Suspension Bridge in Bristol, England contributes significantly to the local pattern of suicide. A 1996 study of this location, “Suicide from the Clifton Suspension Bridge in England,” appeared in the *Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health*. The authors, Mike Nowers and David Gunnell,

note that, “If reducing the availability of means of suicide reduces both method-specific and overall suicide rates, then protective barriers on the bridge may prevent some suicides amongst those for whom ease of access to this method contributed to their decision to commit suicide.” It advocates that health authorities should review the occurrence of suicide and take appropriate action to restrict fatal means wherever feasible. They note, “although the impact of any intervention on what is a relatively unusual method of suicide such as jumping may be difficult to measure in statistical terms, it may be of immeasurable benefit in human terms.”

In the 2003 study “Are suicides by jumping off bridges preventable? An Analysis of 50 cases from Sweden,” the authors, headed by Per Lindqvist, state that any form of obstruction at a high-risk site not only gives the individual time to reconsider but, by delaying the suicidal act, may also increase the chances of intervention. Results of this study were published in the July 2004 issue of *Accident Analysis and Prevention*.

#### **Difference of opinion regarding the effectiveness of physical suicide barriers vs. ‘human barriers’**

During the public circulation of the draft EIR/EA, comments were received questioning Caltrans’ presentation of research that shows the effectiveness of suicide barriers and that suicide barriers save lives. Comments were also received recommending a “human barrier” instead of a physical barrier for the Cold Spring Canyon Bridge. Caltrans had received the comment for a “human barrier” concept during the public scoping process from Mr. Gary Spielmann, an expert in suicidology. He is the former Director of Suicide Prevention for the New York State Office of Mental Health, a consultant to various bridge authorities, and the author of the study: “A Comprehensive Plan for Suicide Prevention, Education and Awareness”- New York State Bridge Authority, In Partnership with Hudson River Coalition for the Prevention of Suicide, Utilizing National Suicide Prevention Lifeline Network. In this plan, Mr. Spielmann recommended the use of National Suicide Prevention Lifeline phones as a cornerstone of the “human barrier” plan on some New York bridges. In his scoping comments recommending the “human barrier” approach for the Cold Spring Canyon Bridge, Mr. Spielmann stated, “...a ‘human barrier’ will outperform any physical barrier and save more lives.” This statement echoes the Executive Summary of the New York State Bridge Authority plan in which Mr. Spielmann recommended for New York bridges “. . . ‘a human barrier’ that will outperform any physical barrier and save more lives.”

In response to this opinion, The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline Steering Committee took action on this issue addressing Mr. Spielmann's comments regarding the use of Lifeline phones on the Cold Spring Canyon Bridge instead of physical bridge barriers. The resulting National Suicide Prevention Lifeline policy statement dated June 16, 2008, by John Draper, Ph.D., Director of the Lifeline, quotes Mr. Spielmann's comment to Caltrans that "suicide barriers are an inferior solution to the problem of suicides on bridges. . . . a 'human barrier' will out perform any physical barrier and save more lives."

The Lifeline's policy states in part, "The Lifeline Steering Committee position is that the use of bridge barriers is the most effective means of bridge suicide prevention. Subsequently, as bridge/transportation authorities or other stakeholders approach the Lifeline with requests for implementing bridge phones, the Lifeline should emphasize the need for barriers as the most effective solution." (See Appendix F for The National Suicide Lifeline Steering Committee position paper.)

The human barrier alternative was withdrawn from consideration as outlined in Chapter 1 of this document. Caltrans stands by the information presented in the draft EIR/EA which is supported by experts in the field of suicidology, including: Dr. John Draper and The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline and experts in the field who commented on the draft EIR/EA: Dr. Richard Seiden, the author of "Where Are They Now? A Follow-up Study of Suicide Attempters from the Golden Gate Bridge," and former UC Berkeley suicidologist, The Glendon Association, a local mental health association that addresses the social problems of suicide, Paula J. Clayton, M.D., Medical Director for the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, Mark Chaffee, President, Suicide Prevention Advocacy Network, and member of the Suicide Prevention Plan Advisory Committee for the "California Strategic Plan on Suicide Prevention: Every Californian Is Part of the Solution."

### *No-Build Alternative*

The No-Build Alternative would not change anything at the bridge; this alternative would not serve the project's Purpose and Need. If the existing bridge rails are not modified, it is reasonable to assume suicides by jumping and suicide attempts would continue. There would be no reduction in the number of persons jumping from the bridge, exposure to risks for law enforcement and search and rescue personnel would continue, and trip delays would continue to affect motorists, pedestrians, and bicyclists.

### **Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures**

No avoidance, minimization, and/or mitigation measures are required as constructing the suicide barriers on the bridge will meet the Purpose and Need of the project, by reducing the number of individuals who attempt suicide or commit suicide by jumping from the bridge.

#### **2.1.2 Visual/Aesthetics**

##### **Regulatory Setting**

The National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended, establishes that the federal government use all practicable means to ensure all Americans safe, healthful, productive, and *aesthetically* (emphasis added) and culturally pleasing surroundings [42 U.S. Code 4331(b)(2)]. To further emphasize this point, the Federal Highway Administration in its implementation of the National Environmental Policy Act [23 U.S. Code 109(h)] directs that final decisions regarding projects are to be made in the best overall public interest taking into account adverse environmental impacts, including among others, the destruction or disruption of aesthetic values.

Likewise, the California Environmental Quality Act establishes that it is the policy of the state to take all action necessary to provide the people of the state “with...enjoyment of *aesthetic*, natural, scenic and historic environmental qualities” [CA Public Resources Code Section 21001(b)].

##### **Affected Environment**

The aesthetic section is based on the *Visual Impact Assessment* prepared by the Caltrans Landscape Architecture branch in January 2008. The *Visual Impact Assessment* was prepared using a process developed by the Federal Highway Administration in conjunction with the American Society of Landscape Architects, specifically for assessing projects related to highways and roadway corridors. (See the *Visual Impact Assessment* dated January 2008, which is bound separately.)

State Route 154 through the project limits is classified as an Officially Designated State Scenic Highway. The State Scenic Highway Program designates routes based on high quality views of the natural landscape along the route, and on the local governing body’s implementation of a Corridor Protection Plan. The Corridor Protection Plan does not preclude development, but includes policies and ordinances addressing land use, design review, billboards, earthwork and landscaping, and utility structures. The State Scenic Highway designation is recognition of the route’s visual

quality, which indicates a higher level of interest in the aesthetic character of the highway corridor.

The project site is within the Santa Ynez mountain range north of Santa Barbara. In general, the regional topography supports a mostly curving roadway, which produces views for the highway traveler ranging from close-in views of roadside slopes to mid-range hillside views and wide-open panoramas.

The project is located in generally steep topography, with the adjacent hillsides rising well above the roadside in certain areas, and dropping below the highway at other locations. The project crosses Cold Spring Canyon, which allows sweeping vistas of the Santa Ynez Valley and mountains beyond. Throughout the region, vegetation is a primary component of overall visual character. Along much of State Route 154, the topography and density of the existing roadside vegetation blocks long-range views to and from the highway. In the vicinity of the project, however, the sloping topography and bridge elevation allows expansive views unhindered by roadside trees.

Along this section of State Route 154, the built development has a low to moderate visual presence in the landscape. Throughout much of this section of the highway, the scale and frequency of roadway elements and other built amenities are such that although visible, they don't dominate the views when seen in the context of the overall landscape.

The quality of the existing visual environment through the project area is high. The quality of this view is due primarily to the varied topography and native vegetation along the roadsides and adjacent hills. The exaggerated landform, curved road alignment, and limited visibility of built elements outside of the roadway corridor also contribute to the existing visual quality. The alternating sweeping vistas of the Santa Ynez Valley and close-in views of the adjacent hillsides provide a dynamic viewing experience for the highway traveler. The Cold Spring Canyon Bridge offers some of the most memorable views along State Route 154 from the highway as well as from Stagecoach Road in the vicinity of the project. The dramatic topography and natural vegetative patterns combine in a classic representation of the natural landscape of the central coast of California. This natural landscape is in part the basis for the route's State Scenic Highway designation.

The Cold Spring Canyon Bridge is considered a Scenic Resource per California Environmental Quality Act Guidelines due to its sculptural quality in the landscape,

and the memorable visual image it creates by its graceful and delicate arched form contrasting with the rugged, natural setting.

The views from the highway include the broad panoramas to the north and the wooded hillsides along the roadway to the south. The high quality of views from the roadway is emphasized by the elevated viewing position the bridge provides. Most views to the bridge are from locations on the highway and the bridge itself. While traveling across the bridge on top of the deck, the bridge arch and super-structure cannot be seen. In addition, the roadway is relatively straight approaching the bridge from both directions, which doesn't allow opportunities to see the lower part of the structure from the roadway elsewhere on State Route 154. As a result, the only bridge elements visible from the highway itself are the paved lanes, bridge rails, guardrail at each end of the bridge rail, and signs.

An unpaved pullout near the call box at the west end of the bridge allows an angled view to the side of the bridge. Guardrail along the other three approaches to the bridge prevents parking and limits side views of the bridge from those locations.

Views of the bridge are available from several locations on Stagecoach Road. Stagecoach Road intersects with State Route 154 approximately 0.2 mile east of the Cold Spring Canyon Bridge and descends into the canyon in a southerly direction. A small, unpaved area off the roadway near the southern end of the bridge provides views of the structure for viewers willing to leave their vehicles and peek through the oak trees. Views of the bridge are also available from Stagecoach Road along the bottom of the canyon. These views provide a dramatic picture of the bridge's steel arch and support structure as it spans the canyon walls approximately 400 feet overhead.

### **Environmental Consequences**

Figure 2-1 shows the three major viewpoints of Cold Spring Canyon Bridge that were assessed for visual impacts:

- Viewpoint 1 is the view from the bridge deck
- Viewpoint 2 is the view from the pullout near the call box at the west end of the bridge
- Viewpoint 3 is the view from below the bridge



Conceptual Photo-Simulations  
Cold Spring Canyon Bridge - Highway 154

Viewpoint Location Map

**Figure 2-1 Map of Viewpoint Locations**

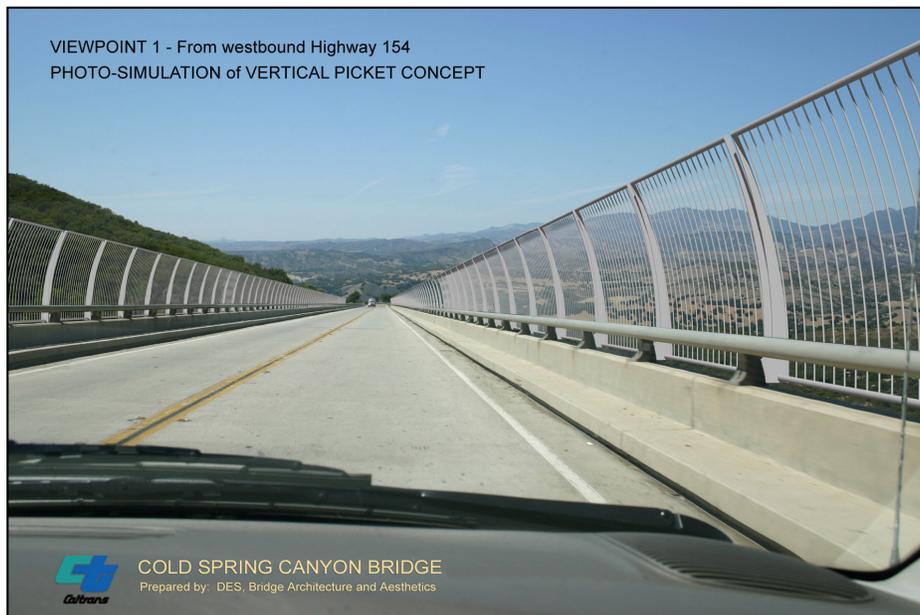
Since few critical offsite views of the bridge exist, the primary affected viewers are those who travel the highway and are in the immediate vicinity of the project. In general, viewers along State Route 154 are considered to be sensitive to changes in the visual environment, based on the high quality of views along the route, as well as increased viewing expectations associated with the State Scenic Highway designation. Views from the bridge deck would be the most affected. Figure 2-2 shows the existing view from Viewpoint 1. Figures 2-3 and 2-4 show simulated photos of the same view with the Grid/Mesh Alternative and Vertical Alternative, respectively.



**Figure 2-2 Existing view from Viewpoint 1**

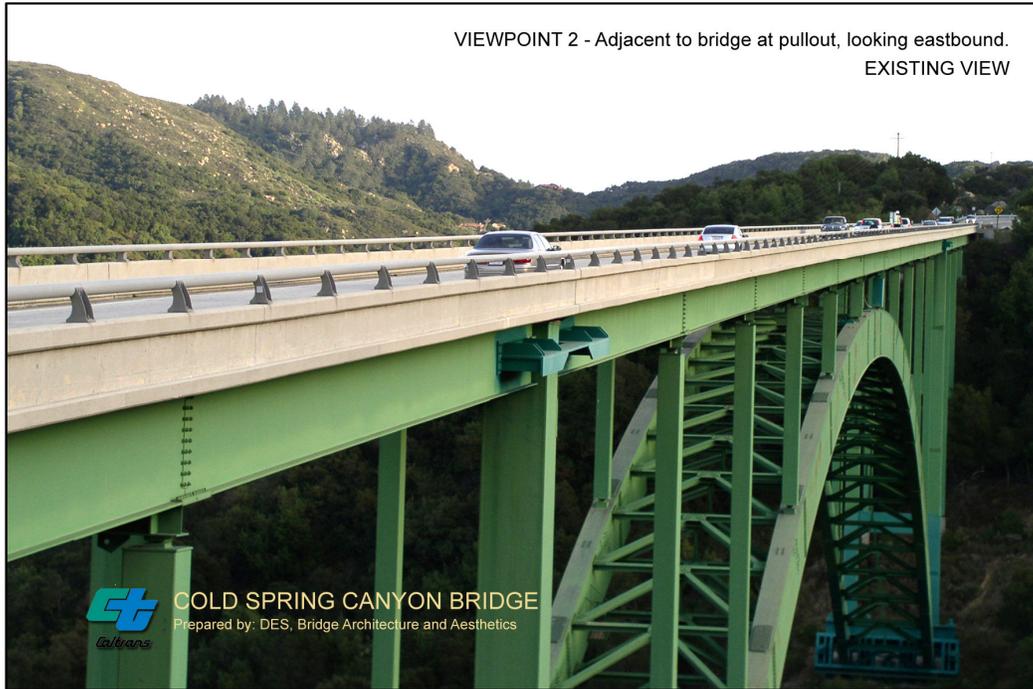


**Figure 2-3 Simulation of Grid/Mesh Alternative from Viewpoint 1**

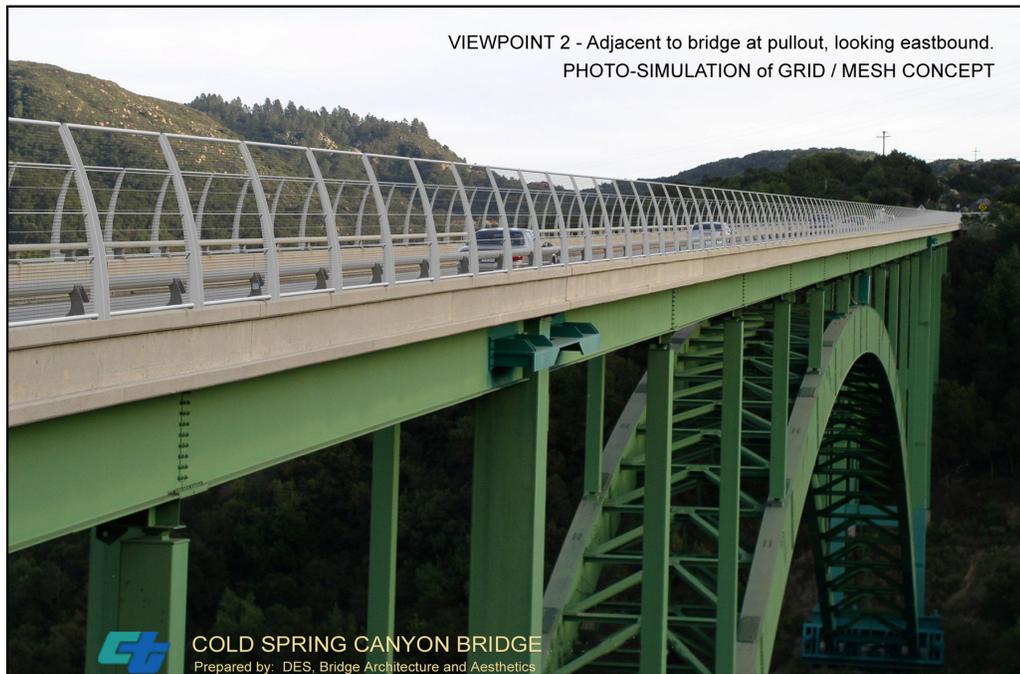


**Figure 2-4 Simulation of Vertical Alternative from Viewpoint 1**

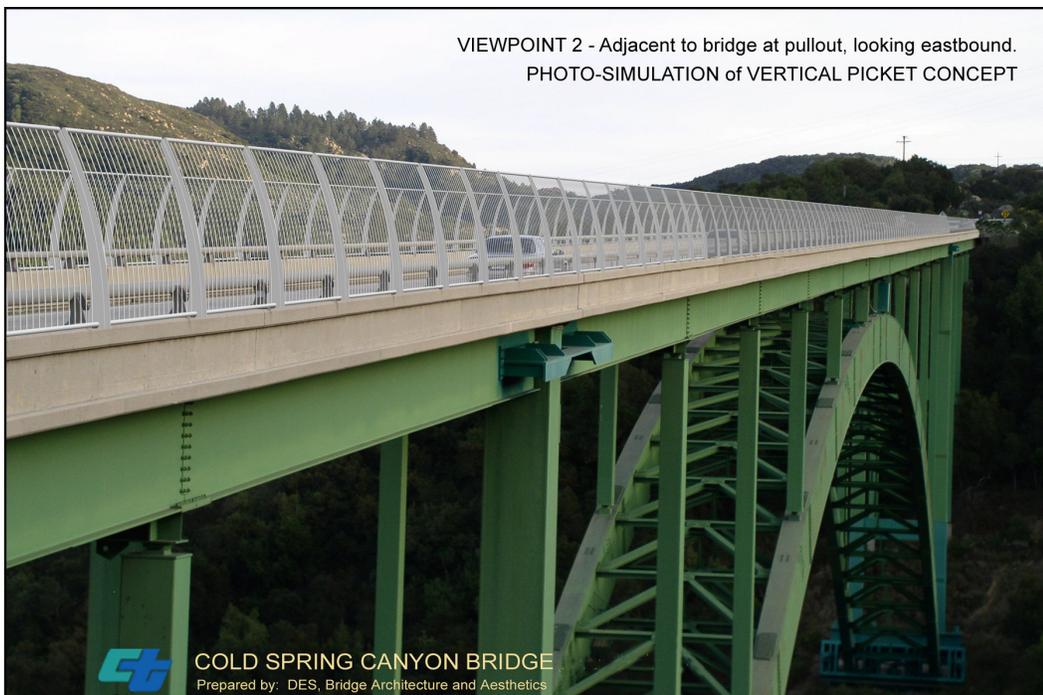
Viewers from the adjacent highway pullout would see the proposed barrier in the context of the bridge's historic super-structure. Figure 2-5 shows the existing view from Viewpoint 2. Figures 2-6 and 2-7 show simulated photos of the same view with the Grid/Mesh Alternative and Vertical Alternative, respectively.



**Figure 2-5 Existing view from Viewpoint 2**



**Figure 2-6 Simulation of Grid/Mesh Alternative from Viewpoint 2**



**Figure 2-7 Simulation of Vertical Alternative from Viewpoint 2**

Changes to the bridge would be least noticeable from the more distant views on Stagecoach Road. Figure 2-8 shows the existing view from Viewpoint 3. Figures 2-9 and 2-10 show simulated photos of the same view with the Grid/Mesh Alternative and Vertical Alternative, respectively.



**Figure 2-8 Existing view from Viewpoint 3**



**Figure 2-9 Simulation of Grid/Mesh Alternative from Viewpoint 3**



**Figure 2-10 Simulation of Vertical Alternative from Viewpoint 3**

Visual quality evaluation ratings conducted for the project show that a substantial change in visual resources would occur as a result of the proposed project. The construction of a barrier would have an effect on as much as 70 percent of the existing view as seen from the bridge deck. The visual quality evaluation identified two distinct potential visual effects the barrier would have: 1) the view blockage (or opacity) caused by the barrier; and 2) the visual detracting to the existing setting caused by the barrier itself. The extent to which the barrier blocks views and/or detracts from the setting would depend on the physical characteristics of the barrier itself. Differences in opacity and compatibility were discovered with each of the two proposed alternatives.

Evaluations revealed that the mesh variation would result in the least overall adverse affect to visual quality. The mesh barrier would be the less noticeable of the two alternatives because the mesh itself would tend to recede and visually blend with the background. Although the mesh alternative would be somewhat opaque, it would not completely block views, and the surrounding landscape would still be seen through the mesh.

The vertical alternative would result in the barrier itself being more noticeable. The visual quality evaluation found that the vertical pickets would themselves be distinguishable elements that would draw attention to the barrier. The vertical pickets would not blend with the background and would be seen more as distinct architectural features that define the barrier. As seen from a moving vehicle, vertical pickets would be somewhat opaque, especially when viewed at an angle. The visual quality evaluation found that the vertical alternative contributed to the urban, somewhat futuristic appearance of the barrier.

Regardless of the alternative, the barrier would be incompatible with the natural character of the surrounding landscape and would distract from the existing architectural style of the bridge. Both alternatives would result in some combination of view blockage (opacity) and visual intrusion due to the intervening barrier elements and architecture. Because of the expected high level of viewer sensitivity associated with the bridge and State Route 154 and the magnitude of visual change, the project is anticipated to result in substantial adverse impacts to the visual environment.

### **Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures**

After circulation of the Draft Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Assessment (DEIR/EA), Caltrans selected the Grid/Mesh Alternative as the Preferred Alternative. Through implementation of the following mitigation measures, potential visual impacts related to construction of the safety barrier would be minimized.

The design of the barrier has been refined with input from the Aesthetics Design Advisory Committee. The purpose of the design committee was to make recommendations to the Caltrans design team regarding the appearance of the barrier and to lessen the project's adverse effects; Caltrans makes the final design determination. The design committee consisted of a broad spectrum of members from the local community, including a representative of the Santa Barbara County Historic Landmarks Advisory Commission, architects, landscape architects, a consulting architectural historian, and County Public Works and Planning staff members, as well as Caltrans experts who provided professional input on prospective designs. The committee met six times between March 19 and August 18, 2008.

The resulting recommendations of the design committee did not change the fundamental design of the barrier, but helped refine detailed aspects of the barrier's design. The committee's recommendations did not change the fundamental mitigation concepts that were presented in the draft EIR/EA. The barrier is designed to be reversible, with minimal permanent impact to the historical fabric of the bridge structure if the panels were to be removed. The committee recommended and Caltrans has adopted the following measures:

- Caltrans has selected the Grid/Mesh Alternative. The physical barrier will consist of a continuous series of in-curving, steel grid/mesh panels framed and supported by steel posts and rails. The Grid/Mesh Alternative will result in less view blockage than the Vertical Alternative because it avoids the "stacking" effect created when closely spaced vertical pickets are viewed from an oblique angle.
- The barrier is designed in an unadorned style that is compatible with, but does not replicate, the Modern-era style for which the bridge is significant.
- The in-curving grid/mesh panels will have two-inch-square openings, which is the largest opening possible that does not provide convenient finger-holds and toe-holds for climbing.
- The cross-section dimensions of the vertical and horizontal framing members are minimized as much as possible without jeopardizing the structural integrity of the panels.

- The horizontal length of the individual panels is increased as much as possible, to reduce the number of vertical elements, without jeopardizing structural integrity.
- The barrier panels will be attached to the outside of the existing concrete railings to minimize physical impacts on the original rails.
- The barrier panel attachment points and the lowest rail (bottom framing member) of the individual barrier panels will be situated below the top of the existing concrete barrier. The attachment points will be out of the line-of-sight of motorists on the bridge.
- The individual barrier panels will be custom made to conform to the irregular intervals between the existing bridge-railing supports, so that the vertical supports will be in alignment, rather than staggered.
- The steel will be coated with a low-reflectivity finish to help reduce glare and to allow the grid/mesh to recede visually.

### **2.1.3 Cultural Resources**

#### ***Regulatory Setting***

“Cultural resources” as used in this document refers to historic-period and archaeological resources, regardless of significance. Laws and regulations dealing with historic and archaeological resources include the following:

The National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, sets forth national policy and procedures regarding historic properties, defined as districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects included in or eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act requires federal agencies to take into account the effects of their undertakings on such properties and to allow the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation the opportunity to comment on those undertakings, following regulations issued by the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (36 Code of Federal Regulations 800). On January 1, 2004, a Section 106 Programmatic Agreement among the Advisory Council, the Federal Highway Administration, the State Historic Preservation Officer, and Caltrans went into effect for Caltrans projects, both state and local, with Federal Highway Administration involvement. The Programmatic Agreement implements the Advisory Council’s regulations, 36 Code of Federal Regulations 800, streamlining the Section 106 process and delegating certain responsibilities to Caltrans. The Federal Highway Administration’s responsibilities under the agreement have been assigned to Caltrans as part of the Surface Transportation Delivery Pilot Program (23 Code of Federal Regulations 773) (July 1, 2007).

Historic properties may also be covered under Section 4(f) of the U.S. Department of Transportation Act, which regulates the “use” of land from historic properties. See Appendix B for specific information regarding Section 4(f).

Historical resources are considered under the California Environmental Quality Act, as well as California Public Resources Code Section 5024.1, which established the California Register of Historical Resources. Section 5024 of the Public Resources Code requires state agencies to identify and protect state-owned resources that meet listing criteria for the National Register of Historic Places. It further specifically requires Caltrans to inventory state-owned structures in its rights-of-way. Sections 5024(f) and 5024.5 require state agencies to provide notice to and consult with the State Historic Preservation Officer before altering, transferring, relocating, or demolishing state-owned historical resources that are listed on or are eligible for inclusion in the National Register or are registered or eligible for registration as California Historical Landmarks.

### ***Affected Environment***

The Area of Potential Effect represents the area within which the proposed project has the potential to affect, either directly or indirectly, any significant archaeological or historic-period resources. Cold Spring Canyon Bridge is the only cultural resource and the only historic property present in the project’s Area of Potential Effect. An assessment of the proposed project’s effects on the bridge is therefore required.

In general, cultural resources that are not yet 50 years old are not evaluated for National Register eligibility. Although Cold Spring Canyon Bridge was only 43 years old, it was formally evaluated in 2007 in connection with the barrier project. This decision was made because the bridge is a notable structure, it is central to the proposed project, and sufficient time has elapsed since the bridge was built to allow an assessment of its place in the historic record.

Cold Spring Canyon Bridge is the largest steel arch bridge in California (it has a main span of 700 feet and a total length of more than 1,200 feet, and rises more than 400 feet above the canyon floor). At the time it was built, it was one of the 10 longest steel arch bridges in the United States, and it was twice as long as any existing steel arch bridge in California. Cold Spring Canyon Bridge was also one of the first major arch structures in the United States and one of only two steel arch bridges on California roadways to be constructed with all-welded steel components.

In August 2007 the State Historic Preservation Officer concurred with the Caltrans finding that the Cold Spring Canyon Bridge is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C and under Criteria Consideration G. See Appendix E. The bridge is eligible under Criterion C for its type, period, and method of construction as an important example of bridge design and engineering. The bridge demonstrates the maturation of steel arch bridge design and welded steel technology in California, and it also represents a high aesthetic quality of contemporary design from its period. It is an important work of the Division of Highways Bridge Department, considered a “master” engineer of the period, and it is an important work of the American Bridge Division of U.S. Steel, considered a “master” builder of the period.

The bridge also possesses exceptional significance that meets the standards for eligibility under Criteria Consideration G, for properties that have achieved significance within the past 50 years. Although the bridge is not yet 50 years old, its significance can be viewed with historical perspective: the structure illustrates a defined period of bridge engineering and architecture in California that reflects the refined development of steel arch bridge technology and the aesthetic of the post-World War II Modern era.

### ***Environmental Consequences***

The character-defining features that make Cold Spring Canyon Bridge eligible for the National Register of Historic Places are those components that are part of its original design and overall design effect, including the arch ribs with their cross bracing, the towers and columns, floor beam girders, skewbacks, abutments, railings, and road deck. Some of these original design features (the arch ribs, towers, columns, and girders, for example) are more significant than others (such as the standard type railings and concrete road deck) in conveying the bridge’s significance. These differences in relative significance are taken into account in assessing the proposed project’s effects on this historic property.

Both of the proposed alternatives would attach a physical barrier 6 feet high outside the existing deck rails of the bridge. The resulting rail height above the bridge deck would be about 9 feet, 7 inches. This would constitute a direct and adverse effect on the integrity of some of the bridge’s character-defining features because it would introduce a visual element that diminishes the property’s historic integrity of design, feeling, and association.

Because the proposed project would affect a historic property, additional analysis pursuant to Section 4(f) of the Federal Department of Transportation Act of 1966 is necessary. The Section 4(f) analysis is found in Appendix B.

### ***Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures***

Since both alternatives involve similar adverse effects, a Finding of Effect document was prepared to fully evaluate the nature and severity of those effects on the historic qualities of the bridge.

The document, a Finding of Adverse Effect, was sent to the State Historic Preservation Officer on June 12, 2008; the State Historic Preservation Officer concurred with this finding in a response dated July 24, 2008 (FHWA070618A). The SHPO requested that Caltrans consider these comments to be their comments under the PRC 5024.5 as well. The State Historic Preservation Officer stated that the Memorandum of Agreement written for this document in order to satisfy 36 CFR Part 800 will constitute prudent and feasible measures under 5024.5. In addition, the State Historic Preservation Officer agreed to add the Cold Spring Canyon Bridge to the State's Master List of Historical Resources (Appendix E).

Caltrans consulted with the State Historic Preservation Officer and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation in compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. A Memorandum of Agreement to address the adverse effects of the project was signed by the State Historic Preservation Officer, the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, and the California Department of Transportation in March 2009 (see Appendix E).

The MOA documents specific mitigation measures that will be implemented to compensate for the project's adverse effects to the bridge. Those measures include:

- Large-format photographs will be taken showing the Cold Spring Canyon Bridge in context as well as details of its historic engineering features. All photographs will be processed for archival permanence in accordance with Historic American Engineering Record photographic specifications.
- In addition Caltrans will photographically reproduce plans, elevations, and selected details from construction drawings in accordance with Historic American Engineering Record photographic specifications that are not deemed confidential for security reasons.

- Written documentation following the National Park Service Historic American Engineering Record Guidelines for Preparing Written Historical and Descriptive Data (September 1983).
- The copies and negatives will be made available to appropriate agencies and local archives in Santa Barbara County.
- Publication of 500 copies and distribution of the Historic Resource Evaluation Report: Cold Spring Canyon Bridge (51-0037), prepared by JRP Historical Consulting.
- Four sets of an interpretive display, which consists of a three-panel interpretive exhibit that illustrates the history of the San Marcos Pass and the construction of the Cold Spring Canyon Bridge, and the bridge's enduring architectural engineering significance.

If cultural materials were to be discovered during construction, all activity within and around the immediate discovery area would be diverted until a qualified archaeologist could assess the nature and significance of the find.

If human remains were to be discovered, State Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5 states that further disturbances and activities would cease in any area or nearby area suspected to overlie remains, and the County Coroner contacted. Pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 5097.98, if the remains were thought to be Native American, the coroner would notify the Native American Heritage Commission, which would then notify the Most Likely Descendent. At this time, the person who discovered the remains would contact Valerie A. Levulett, Heritage Resource Coordinator for Caltrans District 5, so that they may work with the Most Likely Descendent on the respectful treatment and disposition of the remains. Further provisions of Public Resources Code 5097.98 are to be followed as applicable.

## 2.2 Biological Environment

### 2.2.1 Natural Communities

#### ***Regulatory Setting***

This section of the document discusses natural communities of concern. The focus of this section is on biological communities, not individual plant or animal species.

#### ***Affected Environment***

A Natural Environment Study was prepared on October 25, 2007, that evaluated the biological impacts of this project. The project location is within the San Marcos U.S. Geological Survey quadrangle in the Santa Ynez Mountains on State Route 154. The area consists of rural open space and chaparral adjacent to the highway pullouts. The Los Padres National Forest is adjacent to the right-of-way.

Study methods used by the biologist included site visits, a review of past projects in the area, and a search of the California Natural Diversity Database. The site visits included an evaluation of the existing habitats for sensitive biological resources.

#### ***Environmental Consequences***

Based on the findings of the Natural Environment Study (see Natural Environment Study dated October 25, 2007, bound separately), there will be no impacts to the existing chaparral, in accordance with the Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures described below.

#### ***Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures***

All work would be staged and conducted within the existing dirt/asphalt disturbed pullouts adjacent to Cold Spring Canyon Bridge and on the existing bridge deck. To ensure that no unintended impacts would occur to the existing chaparral that exists outside of these staging areas, avoidance measures would include the establishment and use of environmentally sensitive area fencing around these areas. The environmentally sensitive area limits would be shown on the final plan sheets.

### 2.2.2 Invasive Species

#### ***Regulatory Setting***

On February 3, 1999, President Bill Clinton signed Executive Order 13112 requiring federal agencies to combat the introduction or spread of invasive species in the

United States. The order defines invasive species as “any species, including its seeds, eggs, spores, or other biological material capable of propagating that species, that is not native to that ecosystem, whose introduction does or is likely to cause economic or environmental harm or harm to human health.” Federal Highway Administration guidance issued August 10, 1999, directs the use of the state’s noxious weed list to define the invasive plants that must be considered as part of the National Environmental Policy Act analysis for a proposed project.

### ***Affected Environment***

The Natural Environment Study for the project identified the invasive yellow starthistle (*centaurea solstitialis*) in the north pullout. The yellow starthistle is identified on the State of California Department of Food and Agriculture Noxious Weed List under Categories B (subject to action by the Department of Food and Agriculture only when found at a nursery) and C (not subject to action by the Department of Food and Agriculture except to provide for general pest cleanliness). No invasive species were observed at the project site from the federal noxious weed list.

### ***Environmental Consequences***

The yellow starthistle will be removed from the described pullout areas, which may be used as a construction staging area.

### ***Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures***

All work would be staged and conducted only within the existing disturbed pullouts adjacent to the bridge and on the existing bridge deck. The existing yellow starthistle would be eradicated using best management practices. Avoidance measures to ensure construction activities would not contact any invasive plants include the establishment and use of environmentally sensitive area fencing around the existing pullouts. Additional avoidance measures include the inspection and cleaning of construction equipment and further eradication strategies should the invasive plant become an issue.

## **2.3 Construction Impacts**

### ***Affected Environment***

There may be some welding and fitting in the staging areas and on the bridge deck. Staging areas would be used primarily for the storage of the barrier panels and construction equipment.

### ***Environmental Consequences***

No impacts from construction techniques have been identified. Construction staging areas would be within the existing maintained dirt/asphalt pullouts along the right-of-way and on the existing deck of Cold Spring Canyon Bridge. The custom barrier panels would be transported from the staging areas, placed in their appropriate location, and welded and/or bolted to the bridge structure. Final construction details would be developed during the design stage.

One lane would be closed during construction hours and traffic may be delayed up to five minutes. No detours would be necessary.

Construction would generate a small amount of waste from drilling into concrete during installation of the barrier. If waste from drilling into concrete is not collected, the Santa Ynez River watershed could be affected.

### ***Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures***

The proposed barriers are large structures that would be fabricated offsite in a series of individual panels. The panels would be custom made to fit the bridge, in the appropriate design specified to reduce impacts on the bridge. The biologic resources adjacent to the staging areas would be separated from construction activity by the use of environmentally sensitive area fencing.

A Traffic Management Plan has been developed to minimize motorist delays and ensure public and worker safety during barrier construction on State Route 154. To reduce the effects on commuters, the contractor would be allowed to close one lane under one-way traffic control from approximately 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. Two-way traffic would be in operation during non-construction hours. No detours are planned; traffic delays would be limited to 5 minutes. Bicyclists and pedestrians would have access using the existing shoulders.

Motorist information strategies include a public awareness campaign (newspaper, radio, television) and the installation of construction area signs. Two portable changeable message signs, one for each direction of traffic, would alert the traveler prior to and during construction. In addition, information about the planned lane closures would be available for public viewing on Caltrans' website:  
[http://dot.ca.gov/dist05/road\\_information.htm](http://dot.ca.gov/dist05/road_information.htm).

Construction of the proposed barriers would occur in two phases and be completed in approximately eight weeks. Each phase would entail installing the barrier on each side of the bridge. Contractors would typically work an eight-hour day, from approximately 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday.

The waste from drilling would be collected and disposed of properly. A “Water Pollution Control Plan” would be developed during the design stage and implemented. The project would be scheduled for dry weather to ensure no incidental release of contaminants.

# **Chapter 3** California Environmental Quality Act Evaluation

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## **3.1 Determining Significance under the California Environmental Quality Act**

The proposed project is a joint project by the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) and the Federal Highway Administration and is subject to state and federal environmental review requirements. Project documentation, therefore, has been prepared in compliance with both the California Environmental Quality Act and the National Environmental Policy Act. The Federal Highway Administration's responsibility for environmental review, consultation, and any other action required in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act and other applicable federal laws for this project is being, or has been, carried out by Caltrans under its assumption of responsibility pursuant to 23 U.S. Code 327. Caltrans is the lead agency under the California Environmental Quality Act and the National Environmental Policy Act.

One of the primary differences between the National Environmental Policy Act and the California Environmental Quality Act is the way significance is determined.

Under the National Environmental Policy Act, significance is used to determine whether an Environmental Impact Statement, or some lower level of documentation, will be required. The National Environmental Policy Act requires that an Environmental Impact Statement be prepared when the proposed federal action (project) *as a whole* has the potential to "significantly affect the quality of the human environment."

The determination of significance is based on context and intensity. Some impacts determined to be significant under the California Environmental Quality Act may not be of sufficient magnitude to be determined significant under the National Environmental Policy Act. Under the National Environmental Policy Act, once a decision is made regarding the need for an Environmental Impact Statement, it is the magnitude of the impact that is evaluated and no judgment of its individual significance is deemed important for the text. The National Environmental Policy Act does not require that a determination of significant impacts be stated in the environmental documents.

The California Environmental Quality Act, on the other hand, does require Caltrans to identify each “significant effect on the environment” resulting from the project and ways to mitigate each significant effect. If the project may have a significant effect on any environmental resource, then an Environmental Impact Report must be prepared. Each significant effect on the environment must be disclosed in the Environmental Impact Report and mitigated if feasible.

In addition, the California Environmental Quality Act Guidelines list a number of mandatory findings of significance, which also require the preparation of an Environmental Impact Report. There are no types of actions under the National Environmental Policy Act that parallel the findings of mandatory significance under the California Environmental Quality Act.

This chapter discusses the effects of this project and California Environmental Quality Act significance.

## **3.2 Discussion of Significant Impacts**

### **3.2.1 Less than Significant Effects of the Proposed Project**

There would be less than significant impacts on natural communities or from invasive species and construction (see Sections 2.2.1, 2.2.2, and 2.3).

### **3.2.2 Significant Environmental Effects of the Proposed Project**

The following impacts would have a significant effect on the environment:

**Visual/Aesthetic** - The project would be incompatible with the natural character of the surrounding landscape and would distract from the existing architectural style of the bridge. Both alternatives would result in some combination of view blockage (opacity) and visual intrusion due to the intervening barrier elements and architecture. Because of the expected high level of viewer sensitivity associated with the bridge and State Route 154 (a Designated State Scenic Highway) and the magnitude of visual change, the project would result in substantial adverse impacts to the visual environment.

**Cultural** - Adverse effects are defined as the direct or indirect alteration of the characteristics that qualify a historic property for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places in a manner that diminishes the historic property’s integrity. The

integrity of a historic property is made up of seven aspects: location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. The proposed project would cause a direct adverse effect on Cold Spring Canyon Bridge because it introduces a visual element that diminishes the property's historic integrity of design, feeling, and association.

Of the four Secretary of the Interior Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties (Preservation, Restoration, Reconstruction, and Rehabilitation), Caltrans has determined that rehabilitation is the most appropriate treatment standard for the proposed project. However, Caltrans recognizes that the addition of a physical barrier of any kind is an alteration to the historic property that is not entirely consistent with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation. For these reasons, additional minimization and mitigation measures have been developed in a Memorandum of Agreement (see Appendix E).

### **3.2.3 Unavoidable Significant Environmental Effects**

The construction of the Grid/Mesh Alternative on Cold Spring Canyon Bridge would introduce a new structure that would significantly affect the bridge's historic character, appearance, and scenic views (see Chapter 2, Section 2.1.2 *Visual/Aesthetics* and Section 2.1.3 *Cultural Resources*). Measures have been proposed to mitigate these significant impacts. It is not possible, however, to reduce the unavoidable visual, aesthetic, and cultural impacts to the bridge to a less than significant level.

## **3.3 Mitigation Measures for Significant Impacts under the California Environmental Quality Act**

Measures are proposed to minimize and mitigate the significant visual, aesthetic, and cultural impacts of the construction of physical barriers on Cold Spring Canyon Bridge. These measures are presented in Section 2.1.2 *Visual/Aesthetics*, Section 2.1.3 *Cultural Resources*, and Appendix D, Minimization and/or Mitigation Summary.

# **Chapter 4**      **Comments and Coordination**

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Early and continuing coordination with the general public and appropriate public agencies is an essential part of the environmental process to determine the scope of environmental documentation, the level of analysis, potential impacts and mitigation measures, and related environmental requirements. Agency consultation and public participation for this project have been accomplished through a variety of formal and informal methods, including project development team meetings, interagency coordination meetings, presentations to interested parties, public information meetings, press releases, and the Caltrans website. This chapter summarizes the results of Caltrans' efforts to fully identify, address, and resolve project-related issues through early and continuing coordination.

## **4.1 Coordination**

Caltrans has conducted a multi-year effort to involve members of the public, local government, and other interested parties in this project and to seek input on the Cold Spring Canyon Bridge Suicide Barrier Project and its potential effects on the bridge and its surrounding environment.

In November 2005, Caltrans, The Glendon Association, the Santa Barbara County Sheriff, and other stakeholders organized a multi-agency Cold Spring Canyon Bridge Suicide Prevention Committee, in response to a community-based request for a suicide deterrent, spearheaded by The Glendon Association, a Santa Barbara mental health organization.

The first meeting of the Cold Spring Canyon Bridge Suicide Prevention Committee was held in the Santa Barbara County Supervisors' office in Santa Barbara on November 9, 2005, and was attended by representatives from Caltrans, The Glendon Association, Santa Barbara County Association of Governments, California State Assembly (35th District), Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors (Third District), Santa Barbara County Alcohol, Drug and Mental Health Services, Santa Barbara County Health and Human Services, California Highway Patrol, and the Santa Barbara County Office of the Sheriff.

A second meeting was held in the Santa Barbara County Association of Governments' offices in Santa Barbara on January 12, 2006. Representatives from the agencies listed above attended the meeting, along with representatives from the Santa

Barbara County Executive Office, Planning and Development, and Public Works. KEYT-TV was also present at the January 12 meeting.

A third meeting was held in the Santa Barbara County Supervisors' offices on March 8, 2006.

Caltrans held two public information town hall meetings in May 2006. The first was held in the North County at the Solvang Veterans Memorial Building on May 10 and the second was held at Santa Barbara City College on May 22.

During preparation of the Historical Resources Evaluation Report, letters were sent to interested parties listed below on February 2, 2007, seeking comment and information pertaining to the bridge's potential historic significance and the potential effect the barrier project might have on the structure's character-defining features.

- County of Santa Barbara, Historic Landmarks Advisory Commission
- City of Santa Barbara Historic Landmarks Commission
- David S. Bisol, Executive Director, Santa Barbara Historical Society
- Jarrell C. Jackman, Executive Director, Santa Barbara Trust for Historic Preservation
- Goleta Valley Historical Society
- Santa Ynez Valley Historical Society
- Public History Information Unit, University of California, Santa Barbara
- Clark Adams and Andy Machen, Co-Chairs, History and Heritage Committee, American Society of Civil Engineers, Los Angeles Section
- Lauren J. Doyel, President, American Society of Civil Engineers, Santa Barbara/Ventura Branch
- Gloria Brown, Forest Supervisor, Los Padres National Forest
- Los Angeles Conservancy, Modern Committee "Modcom"
- Society of Architectural Historians, Southern California Chapter
- Morgan Yates, Archivist, Automobile Club of Southern California

Follow-up telephone calls were made in April 2007 to the people/organizations listed above. Caltrans received input from the Santa Barbara County Historic Landmarks Advisory Commission, the Santa Barbara Trust for Historic Preservation, and Lauren Doyel of the American Society of Civil Engineers, Santa Barbara/Ventura Branch.

## 4.2 Public Information Meetings and Outreach

The public scoping process began with a Public Notice in the *Santa Barbara Independent* and *El Tiempo De La Costa Central* newspapers on July 12, 2007. The Public Information Meeting/Open House was held on July 25, 2007, in the Santa Barbara Central Library at 40 East Anapamu Street, Santa Barbara. In attendance were interested citizens, staff from Caltrans, The Glendon Association, and other officials. Caltrans staff members were present to answer specific questions about the project. A court reporter and a Spanish translator were also available. Invitations were mailed to all of the interested parties previously notified and identified to date. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the project need and strategies to deter suicides on the bridge, obtain the public's ideas, comments, and concerns about this proposed project, and introduce the public to members of the project team.

Public comments at the Public Information Meeting/Open House were overwhelmingly supportive of the proposed barrier. Subsequent emails, letters, and phone calls have ranged from support to opposition to the proposed barrier. Several Santa Barbara County-based groups, as well as several individuals have expressed opposition to the project. Their concerns have centered on the following:

- A physical barrier would merely deflect potential suicides to another location
- A physical barrier has not been shown to be effective at preventing suicides
- A human barrier (consisting of deterrence strategies such as emergency call boxes linked to crisis hotlines, monitored video surveillance, and increased patrols) provides more effective deterrence and prevention
- People have the right to commit suicide
- The money allocated for this project could be better spent elsewhere
- The process needs to include an Environmental Impact Report

On August 13, 2007, Caltrans staff attended a meeting of the Historic Landmarks Advisory Commission regarding the Cold Spring Canyon Bridge Suicide Barrier project. Caltrans staff included presentations on project roles and responsibilities, an explanation of visual impact analysis and scenic resource evaluation, the environmental process, and the project schedule. An additional presentation by the Architectural Historian from JRP Historical Consulting discussed the details of the bridge's mid-century design aesthetic.

On February 11, 2008, Caltrans staff attended a meeting of the Historic Landmarks Advisory Commission in the City of Santa Barbara. In addition to the commissioners,

approximately 15 members of the public and local government attended. Caltrans staff provided an update on the Cold Spring Canyon Suicide Barrier project, explained the proposed formation of the Aesthetics Design Advisory Committee, and invited the Commission to appoint a representative to participate on the committee.

During the presentation and also in response to questions, Caltrans staff clarified that design committee members would not be endorsing any particular alternative but would be providing their unique ideas and viewpoint in the potential design and mitigation measures of the barrier alternatives to Caltrans designers and engineers during the meetings. Also, by participating, their input and design would help to minimize and mitigate the adverse effects that a barrier would have on the Cold Spring Canyon Bridge, should a physical barrier be chosen as the preferred alternative. After some discussion, the Historic Landmarks Advisory Commission voted unanimously to send one of their Commissioners to represent them on the committee. Caltrans also invited the Historic Landmarks Advisory Commission to provide additional input on mitigation measures for the Memorandum of Agreement.

Further public participation, outreach, and input on barrier design have been sought by Caltrans in the formation of an Aesthetics Design Advisory Committee, which met six times between March 19 and August 18, 2008. According to the design committee's charter, the members agreed to suspend their own opinions about the necessity of a suicide barrier on the bridge to discuss ways to minimize adverse effects, should one of the two build alternatives be selected as the preferred alternative. The committee worked as a team to help design the proposed physical barrier alternatives and mitigation measures, so that the barrier alternatives would have the least amount of adverse effect on the bridge.

The team was composed of a broad spectrum of members from the local community including a representative of the Santa Barbara County Historic Landmarks Advisory Commission, architects, landscape architects, and County Public Works and Planning members. The Caltrans design team attended the meetings to receive the committee's recommendations and provide professional input on prospective designs and mitigation measures. The design committee's recommendations did not change the fundamental design of the barrier, but helped refine detailed aspects of the barrier's design (see Section 2.1.2 *Visual/Aesthetics, Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures*).

On April 14, 2008, Caltrans staff attended the Historic Landmarks Advisory Commission meeting regarding the requested input for mitigation measures; however, the mitigation discussion was tabled until the next meeting, scheduled for May 12, 2008. At the subsequent meeting on May 12, the commission's discussion did not include recommendations or suggestions on potential mitigation measures.

Over 165 copies of the draft EIR/EA document were mailed/mailed to interested parties (including individuals, agencies, and associations). The packet included a copy of the *Santa Barbara Independent* newspaper notice announcing the availability of the draft environmental document and the scheduled open house-style public hearings, written in both English and Spanish, to alert the parties of opportunities to review the draft document and to submit public comments. The draft EIR/EA was also available for public review at the Santa Barbara Central Library, Solvang Branch Library, Goleta Branch Library, Montecito Branch Library, at the Caltrans District Office in San Luis Obispo, and on the Caltrans public website.

The two open house-style public hearings were held on June 9 and 10, 2008, in the City of Santa Barbara Downtown Library and Solvang Memorial Veterans' Hall in Solvang, respectively. The hearings coincided with the circulation of the draft environmental document to allow additional input from the community. The hearings were publicized in the local *Santa Barbara Independent* newspaper in both English and Spanish.

At the public hearings, comment cards were available for written public comment; a court reporter and Spanish translator were also available to receive oral public comment on the environmental document. A copy of the draft EIR/EA including information on the public hearings and 45-day public comment period was also available for public access on the Caltrans website.

#### **4.2.1 Notice of Preparation**

A Notice of Preparation was mailed to nine state and federal agencies and the State Clearinghouse on January 14, 2008. It was also mailed or emailed (if the mailing address was not provided) to over 90 local governmental departments, associations, and interested individuals. The Notice of Preparation informed the recipients of Caltrans' intention to prepare an Environmental Impact Report and provided the project description, alternatives under consideration, and the environmental resources the project has the potential to affect. Recipients were alerted to the state law

requiring submittal of their comments to Caltrans no later than 30 days after receipt of the Notice of Preparation.

In response to the Notice of Preparation, written comments were received from the following agency and individuals:

- Katy Sanchez, Native American Heritage Commission, dated January 23, 2008
- Gregory Mohr, dated January 30, 2008
- Marc McGinnes, JD, for “Friends of the Bridge,” dated February 1, 2008
- Garrett Glasgow, dated February 5, 2008

## Chapter 5 List of Preparers

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This document was prepared by the following Caltrans Central Region staff and one consultant retained by Caltrans:

William Arkfeld, Transportation Engineer. B.S., Environmental Engineering, Humboldt State University; 21 years experience in regulatory, water quality, and hazardous waste. Contribution: Water Quality technical report.

Paula Juelke Carr, Associate Environmental Planner (Architectural History). M.A., Independent Studies: History, Art History, Anthropology, Folklore and Mythology, University of California, Santa Barbara; B.A., Cultural Anthropology, University of California, Santa Barbara; over 25 years of experience in California history. Contribution: Wrote Historic Property Survey Report and drafted Memorandum of Agreement, Consultant oversight, including review of Historical Resources Evaluation Report and Finding of Effect, reviewed cultural portions of the Draft Environmental Impact Report, participated on the Aesthetic Design Advisory Committee.

Robert Carr, Associate Landscape Architect. B.S., Landscape Architecture, California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo, 20 years experience preparing Visual Impact Assessments. Contribution: Wrote the Visual Impact Assessment section for the Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Assessment, facilitated the Aesthetic Design Advisory Committee.

Chuck Cesena, Senior Environmental Planner. B.A., Environmental Studies, University of California, Santa Barbara. Over 25 years experience in environmental and biological assessments. Contribution: Responsible for oversight of Biological reports and environmental document review.

Mitch Dallas, Environmental Planner (Natural Sciences). B.S., Natural Resources Management; 9 years environmental impact assessment and biological resources experience. Contribution: Biology, Natural Environment Study.

James Espinosa, Jr., Senior Transportation Engineer. B.S., Mechanical Engineering, University of California, Davis; 17 years of civil engineering experience. Contribution: Preliminary design studies for the environmental process.

David Ewing, Graphic Designer III. B.A., Graphic Design, California State University, Fresno; 13 years graphic design experience. Contribution: Created graphic illustrations and mapping, and coordinated public meetings.

Matt Fowler, Senior Environmental Planner. B.A., Geographic Analysis, San Diego State University; 8 years in environmental planning. Contribution: Final EIR/EA FONSI editing.

Mike Jacob, Associate Environmental Planner. B.A., Environmental Studies, California State University, San Jose, A.A., Geography, Foothill College, Los Altos Hills; 8 years in transportation planning, 12 years in city and environmental planning. Contribution: Coordinated the environmental process for the project and wrote Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Assessment.

Terry L. Joslin, Archaeologist. PhC., Anthropology, University of California, Santa Barbara; 15 years of experience in archaeological studies in California, the Northern Channel Islands, and the Great Basin. Contribution: Prepared Archaeological Survey Report and conducted the Native American coordination for the project.

Wai Kwan, Transportation Engineer. M.S., Civil Engineering, California State University, Sacramento, B.S., Civil Engineering, University of California, Berkeley, 34 years experience in industrial plants and bridge design. Contribution: Performed structural calculations and details for the project, participated in the Aesthetics Design Advisory Committee.

Debra Larson P.E., M.B.A., Chief Traffic Safety Branch District 5. Registered Civil Engineer; 22 years experience in Civil and Transportation Engineering. Contribution: Project Sponsor.

Valerie A. Levulett, Technical Studies Branch Chief. M.A., Ph.D., Anthropology, University of California, Davis; 38 years experience in cultural resource and environmental studies. Contribution: Responsible for oversight of all cultural and technical studies, Section 106 compliance, and environmental document review.

Isaac Leyva, Engineering Geologist. B.S., Geology, California State University Bakersfield, A.S., Cuesta College, San Luis Obispo; 20 years experience in Petroleum Geology, Environmental, Geotechnical Engineering. Contribution: Hazardous Waste technical report.

Christopher McMorris, Architectural Historian, JRP Historical Consulting, LLC. M.S., Historic Preservation, Columbia University; 10 years experience, architectural history/Section 106 and CEQA. Contribution: Wrote Historical Resources Evaluation Report and Finding of Effect Report under the oversight of Valerie A. Levulett, Technical Studies Branch Chief.

Wayne Mills, Transportation Engineer. B.A., Earth Science, California State University, Fullerton; B.A., Social Science, San Diego State University; 24 years air quality, noise, water quality, and paleontology studies experience. Contribution: Air Quality, Noise, and Paleontology Technical Reports.

Michael Sandecki, Associate Environmental Planner. B.A., Geology; 22 years experience in engineering geology and geomorphology; 3 years experience in environmental planning. Contribution: DEIR/EA editing.

Sara von Schwind, P.E., P.M.P., Project Manager. B.S. and M.S., Civil Engineering, California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo; 20 years geotechnical engineering experience, 3 years project management experience. Contribution: Manager of Cost, Scope, and Schedule.

Isaac Tasabia, Bridge Architectural Associate. United States Air Force Academy, A.S., Environmental Design, Cosumnes River College; 10 years architectural experience. Contribution: Provided design studies, architectural renderings, photo-simulations, participated in the Aesthetics Design Advisory Committee.

Jim Walth, Environmental Planner (Natural Sciences). M.S., California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo; B.S., Biology, California State University, Bakersfield; 6 years field survey experience and 2.5 years as Caltrans biologist. Contribution: Biological Surveys and Reports.

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Joseph	Schneider	Email address only provided
Kathrine	Schneider	Email address only provided
Marge	Schwartz	address unkown
Douglas	Scott	Santa Barbara, CA
Richard	Seiden, PhD, MPH	Oakland, CA
Gerry	Shepherd	Santa Ynez, CA
Ray and Domi	Smith	Santa Barbara, CA

<b>First Name</b>	<b>Last Name</b>	<b>Address</b>
Joyce	Spezman-Margolin	Email address only provided
Gary	Spielmann	Kinderhook, NY
Charles	Stacy, Rev	Solvang, CA
Diane	Stevenett	Email address only provided
Sally	Stewart	Santa Barbara, CA
Sarah	Stewart	Santa Barbara, CA
Madelyn	Swed, MFT	Santa Barbara, CA
Becky	Sweeney	Santa Barbara, CA
Maureen	Sullivan	Santa Barbara, CA
Karen	Summer	Santa Barbara, CA
Dennis	Thompson, AIA, LEED AP	Santa Barbara, CA
Paul	Trent	Santa Barbara, CA
L.H.	Tuncil	no address given
Silvia	Uribe	Email address only provided
Gil	Varon	Santa Barbara, CA
Toni	Wellen, MA	Carpinteria, CA
Ron	Werft	Email address only provided
Harwood	White, Jr	Santa Barbara, CA
Theodora	Williams	Email address only provided
Gene	Wilson	Santa Barbara, CA
Allen	Zimmer	Santa Barbara, CA

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# **Appendix A** California Environmental Quality Act Checklist

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The following checklist identifies physical, biological, social, and economic factors that might be affected by the proposed project. The California Environmental Quality Act impact levels include “potentially significant impact,” “less than significant impact with mitigation,” “less than significant impact,” and “no impact.”

Supporting documentation of all California Environmental Quality Act checklist determinations is provided in Chapter 2 of this Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Assessment. Documentation of “No Impact” determinations is provided at the beginning of Chapter 2. Discussion of all impacts, avoidance, minimization, and/or mitigation measures is under the appropriate topic headings in Chapter 2.

Potentially significant impact	Less than significant impact with mitigation	Less than significant impact	No impact
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**AESTHETICS** - Would the project:

- a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?
- b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic building within a state scenic highway?
- c) Substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings?
- d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare that would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?

**AGRICULTURE RESOURCES** - In determining whether impacts to agricultural resources are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to the California Agricultural Land Evaluation and Site Assessment Model (1997) prepared by the California Dept. of Conservation as an optional model to use in assessing impacts on agriculture and farmland. Would the project:

- a) Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?
- b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?
- c) Involve other changes in the existing environment that, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland, to non-agricultural use?

**AIR QUALITY** - Where available, the significance criteria established by the applicable air quality management or air pollution control district may be relied upon to make the following determinations. Would the project:

- a) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?

Potentially significant impact	Less than significant impact with mitigation	Less than significant impact	No impact
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b) Violate any air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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c) Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard (including releasing emissions that exceed quantitative thresholds for ozone precursors)?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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d) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentration?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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e) Create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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**BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES - Would the project:**

a) Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special-status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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b) Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, and regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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c) Have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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d) Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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Potentially significant impact	Less than significant impact with mitigation	Less than significant impact	No impact
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f) Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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**CULTURAL RESOURCES - Would the project:**

a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in §15064.5?

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to §15064.5?

Archaeological resources are considered “historical resources” and are covered under a).

c) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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d) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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**GEOLOGY AND SOILS - Would the project:**

a) Expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:

i) Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42.

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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ii) Strong seismic ground shaking?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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iv) Landslides?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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b) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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c) Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on or offsite landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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Potentially significant impact	Less than significant impact with mitigation	Less than significant impact	No impact
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d) Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial risks to life or property.

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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e) Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of wastewater?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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**HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS -**  
Would the project:

a) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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b) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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c) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous material, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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d) Be located on a site that is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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f) For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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g) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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Potentially significant impact	Less than significant impact with mitigation	Less than significant impact	No impact
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h) Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving wildland fires, including where wildlands are adjacent to urbanized areas or where residences are intermixed with wildlands?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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**HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY - Would the project:**

a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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b) Substantially deplete groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that there would be a net deficit in aquifer volume or a lowering of the local groundwater table level (e.g., the production rate of pre-existing nearby wells would drop to a level that would not support existing land uses or planned uses for which permits have been granted)?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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c) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, in a manner that would result in substantial erosion or siltation on or offsite?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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d) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, or substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner that would result in flooding on or offsite?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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e) Create or contribute runoff water that would exceed the capacity of existing or planned storm water drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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f) Otherwise substantially degrade water quality?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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g) Place housing within a 100-year flood hazard area as mapped on a federal Flood Hazard Boundary or Flood Insurance Rate Map or other flood hazard delineation map?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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h) Place within a 100-year flood hazard area structures that would impede or redirect flood flows?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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Potentially significant impact	Less than significant impact with mitigation	Less than significant impact	No impact
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i) Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving flooding, including flooding as a result of the failure of a levee or dam?

j) Result in inundation by a seiche, tsunami, or mudflow?

**LAND USE AND PLANNING** - Would the project:

a) Physically divide an established community?

b) Conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project (including, but not limited to the general plan, specific plan, local coastal program, or zoning ordinance) adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?

c) Conflict with any applicable habitat conservation plan or natural community conservation plan?

**MINERAL RESOURCES** - Would the project:

a) Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state?

b) Result in the loss of availability of a locally important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan, or other land use plan?

**NOISE** - Would the project result in:

a) Exposure of persons to or generation of noise levels in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?

b) Exposure of persons to or generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?

c) A substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?

Potentially significant impact	Less than significant impact with mitigation	Less than significant impact	No impact
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d) A substantial temporary or periodic increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	-------------------------------------

f) For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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**POPULATION AND HOUSING -** Would the project:

a) Induce substantial population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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b) Displace substantial numbers of existing housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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c) Displace substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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**PUBLIC SERVICES -**

a) Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times, or other performance objectives for any of the public services:

Fire protection?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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Police protection?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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Schools?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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Potentially significant impact	Less than significant impact with mitigation	Less than significant impact	No impact
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Parks?

Other public facilities?

**RECREATION -**

a) Would the project increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?

b) Does the project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities that might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?

**TRANSPORTATION/TRAFFIC -** Would the project:

a) Cause an increase in traffic that is substantial in relation to the existing traffic load and capacity of the street system (i.e., result in a substantial increase in either the number of vehicle trips, the volume to capacity ratio on roads, or congestion at intersections)?

b) Exceed, either individually or cumulatively, a level of service standard established by the county congestion management agency for designated roads or highways?

c) Result in a change in air traffic patterns, including either an increase in traffic levels or a change in location that results in substantial safety risks?

d) Substantially increase hazards due to a design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?

e) Result in inadequate emergency access?

f) Result in inadequate parking capacity?

g) Conflict with adopted policies, plans, or programs supporting alternative transportation (e.g., bus turnouts, bicycle racks)?

**UTILITY AND SERVICE SYSTEMS -** Would the project:

a) Exceed wastewater treatment requirements of the applicable Regional Water Quality Control Board?

Potentially significant impact	Less than significant impact with mitigation	Less than significant impact	No impact
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b) Require or result in the construction of new water or wastewater treatment facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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c) Require or result in the construction of new storm water drainage facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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d) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project from existing entitlements and resources, or are new or expanded entitlements needed?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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e) Result in determination by the wastewater treatment provider that serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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f) Be served by a landfill with sufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the project's solid waste disposal needs?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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g) Comply with federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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**MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE -**

a) Does the project have the potential to degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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b) Does the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? ("Cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects)?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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c) Does the project have environmental effects that will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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## **Appendix B** Section 4(f) Evaluation

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The environmental review, consultation, and any other action required in accordance with applicable federal laws for this project is being, or has been, carried out by Caltrans under its assumption of responsibility pursuant to 23 U.S. Code 327.

Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act of 1966, codified in federal law at 49 U.S. Code, Section 303, declares that “it is the policy of the United States Government that special effort should be made to preserve the natural beauty of the countryside and public park and recreation lands, wildlife and waterfowl refuges, and historic sites.”

Section 4(f) specifies that “[t]he Secretary [of Transportation] may approve a transportation program or project...requiring the use of publicly owned land of a public park, recreation area, or wildlife and waterfowl refuge of national, state, or local significance (as determined by the federal, state, or local officials having jurisdiction over the park, area, refuge, or site) only if:

- 1) there is no prudent and feasible alternative to using that land; and
- 2) the program or project includes all possible planning to minimize harm to the park, recreation area, wildlife and waterfowl refuge, or historic site resulting from the use.”

Section 4(f) further requires consultation with the Department of the Interior and, as appropriate, the involved offices of the Departments of Agriculture and Housing and Urban Development in developing transportation projects and programs that use lands protected by Section 4(f). If historic sites are involved, then coordination with the State Historic Preservation Officer is also needed.

The programmatic agreement for the Section 4(f) Use of Historic Bridges (July 5, 1983) applies to the Cold Spring Canyon Bridge Suicide Barrier project because there are no feasible and prudent alternatives to the rehabilitation of the historic bridge, and because all possible planning to minimize harm resulting from such use has been incorporated into the project. This evaluation is made pursuant to Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act of 1966, 49 U.S. Code 303, and Section 18(a) of the Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1968, 23 U.S. Code 138.

“Use” - The Cold Spring Canyon Bridge is a historic bridge, as evidenced by the California State Historic Preservation Officer’s concurrence that the bridge is eligible

for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C and under Criterion Consideration G.

The bridge is significant, at the state level, under Criterion C for its engineering and architectural design, as well as for its importance as a work of the Division of Highways Bridge Department, considered a master engineer of the period, and as a work of the American Bridge Division of U.S. Steel, considered a master builder of the period. The bridge is the largest steel arch bridge in California and was one of the first in the nation to be built entirely of all-welded steel components. It is an important example of its type and method of construction for its period of significance, 1962 to 1964, exhibiting the maturation of steel arch bridge design and welded steel technology and representing a high aesthetic sensibility illustrating contemporary Modern-era architectural principles, including the virtues of unadorned and efficient design coupled with material and functional honesty.

Under Criteria Consideration G, the bridge possesses exceptional significance that meets the standards for properties that have achieved significance within the past 50 years. The bridge's significance can be viewed with historical perspective because the structure illustrates a defined period of bridge engineering and architecture in California and because there exists a body of scholarly analysis demonstrating the bridge's relative importance for its engineering design and aesthetic achievement.

The bridge was constructed in 1963 and 1964 as part of the evolution of State Route 154, which included construction of a new alignment to eliminate substandard engineering and to decrease travel time on an increasingly traveled route between the coast and interior regions of southern Santa Barbara County. At the time the bridge was constructed, it was determined to be infeasible to construct a new alignment on the ground that would accomplish the purposes of the project. A bridge was therefore required to span Cold Spring Canyon, and the Cold Spring Canyon Bridge was widely regarded as a major feat of bridge engineering, constructed in a difficult location.

As part of the state's existing transportation system, the Cold Spring Canyon Bridge is expected to perform as an integral part of a modern transportation system. In 2005 it was brought to Caltrans' attention that the bridge had become a magnet for suicides by individuals jumping from the bridge. Subsequent research based on the Coroner's statistics conducted for the draft environmental document showed that at least 44 people had committed suicide from the bridge, and that suicide attempts were always

fatal at this location due to the over 400 foot drop and rugged terrain. However, because of revised statistics released by the Coroner on May 21, 2009, this number has been revised to 41. Because of suicides, the bridge was identified as having the highest concentration of fatalities of any location in Caltrans District 5 (encompassing, Santa Barbara, San Luis Obispo, Monterey, Santa Cruz, and San Benito counties). In the ten months since the release of the draft environmental document, five other individuals have committed suicide from the bridge, making a total of 47 deaths as of June 3, 2009. To deter further suicides at this location and to ensure public safety (including the safety of the traveling public and rescue personnel), it has been determined that a physical barrier must be constructed on the deck of the existing bridge structure.

For the purpose of this Programmatic Section 4(f) evaluation, the proposed project would constitute a “use” of a bridge that is eligible for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places. The proposed project would impair some of the bridge’s character-defining features in that it introduces a visual element that diminishes the property’s historic integrity of design, feeling, and association.

### **Applicability**

It is appropriate to apply the Programmatic Section 4(f) evaluation because of the following:

- The bridge would be rehabilitated using federal funds
- The proposed project would require the use of a historic bridge structure that is eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places
- The bridge is not a National Historic Landmark
- Caltrans, as assigned by the Federal Highway Administration, has determined that the facts of the project match those set forth in the sections of this document labeled Alternatives, Findings, and Mitigation
- Section 106 consultation has been concluded, and a Memorandum of Agreement has been signed (see Appendix E).

### **Alternatives**

Acceptable Alternatives under the Programmatic Section 4(f) are the following (and only the following):

- Do nothing

- Build a new structure at a different location without affecting the historic qualities of the old bridge, as determined by procedures implementing the National Historic Preservation Act
- Rehabilitate the historic bridge without affecting the historic qualities of the structure, as determined by procedures implementing the National Historic Preservation Act

### **Findings**

Each of these Acceptable Alternatives is discussed below:

#### **Do Nothing**

The Do Nothing (No-Build) Alternative has been studied. This alternative is not feasible and prudent because it does not correct the situation that occurs when individuals commit suicide by jumping from the bridge. It is reasonable to assume that people would continue to attempt suicide and commit suicide from the Cold Spring Canyon Bridge unless a suicide deterrent is installed. Automobiles abandoned (sometimes in the middle of the bridge span) by persons committing suicide, and the risks encountered in rescue attempts and recovery operations pose safety hazards to the traveling public and to emergency and safety personnel such as the California Highway Patrol, Santa Barbara County Sheriff's office, and the Santa Barbara County Search and Rescue team.

#### **Build on New Location Without Using the Old Bridge**

The alternative of relocating the bridge has been discussed and determined not to be feasible and prudent because of the steep mountainous terrain. The present bridge structure has already been located at the only feasible and prudent site. To build a new bridge at another site would result in extraordinary bridge and approach engineering and construction difficulty, extraordinary costs, and extraordinary disruption of established traffic patterns (the alternative route means a detour through Gaviota Pass, an out-of-direction-travel distance of at least 55 miles). Nor would building a new bridge at another site reduce the number of persons jumping from this bridge.

#### **Rehabilitation Without Affecting the Historic Integrity of the Bridge**

This alternative has been discussed and has been determined not to be feasible and prudent because a physical barrier is the only form of suicide deterrence that has been demonstrated to be effective in deterring suicides from bridges. In its current configuration, individuals are able to climb over the low rail of the Cold Spring

Canyon Bridge and commit suicide by jumping. The State Historic Preservation Officer has concurred with the Finding of Effects evaluation that determined the installation of a physical barrier on the bridge of a size and shape necessary to meet the project's Purpose and Need would constitute an adverse effect on this historic property. A Memorandum of Agreement has been signed (see Appendix E).

**Measures to Minimize Harm**

The proposed project includes all possible planning to minimize harm. The historic integrity of the bridge would be preserved, to the greatest extent possible, consistent with unavoidable measures taken to secure public safety. Specifically the measures proposed have been selected with the following in mind:

**Reversibility:** The installation of the physical barrier is being engineered so that the attachment would entail minimal loss of original fabric. Because the barrier would be applied to the existing Type 2 barrier, the installation is reversible; the proposed barrier is not integral to the bridge structure or superstructure and does not alter the fundamental engineering of the bridge.

**Compatibility:** The proposed design alternatives are each intended to be compatible with the character-defining features of the existing bridge and to be as minimally intrusive as possible while meeting the project's Purpose and Need. Consideration has been given both to views *of* the bridge and views *from* the bridge.

**Materials:** The selection of materials has been made with the intent of preserving original materials as much as possible. New materials would not accelerate the aging or obsolescence of the existing bridge structure.

**Maintenance:** The proposed design alternatives have been selected with the intent of facilitating ongoing inspection and maintenance activities.

Based on the above considerations, there is no feasible and prudent alternative to the use of Cold Spring Canyon Bridge and the proposed action includes all possible planning to minimize harm to Cold Spring Canyon Bridge resulting from such use and causes the least amount of harm in light of the statute's preservation purpose.

# Appendix C Title VI Policy Statement

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STATE OF CALIFORNIA—BUSINESS, TRANSPORTATION AND HOUSING AGENCY

ARNOLD SCHWARZENEGGER, Governor

**DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**  
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January 14, 2005

## TITLE VI POLICY STATEMENT

The California Department of Transportation under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and related statutes, ensures that no person in the State of California shall, on the grounds of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, and age, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination under any program or activity it administers.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Will Kempton".

WILL KEMPTON  
Director

*"Caltrans improves mobility across California"*

# Appendix D Minimization and/or Mitigation Summary

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## ***Visual/Aesthetics***

The Preferred Alternative and the recommendations from the Aesthetics Design Advisory Committee are being incorporated into the final design (see *Visual/Aesthetics*, and Memorandum of Agreement, Appendix E). The design committee's recommendations did not change the fundamental design of the barrier, but helped refine detailed aspects of the barrier's design. The barrier is designed to be reversible, with minimal permanent impact to the historical fabric of the bridge structure if the panels were to be removed. The committee recommended and Caltrans has adopted the following measures:

- Caltrans has selected the grid/mesh alternative. The physical barrier will consist of a continuous series of in-curving, steel grid/mesh panels framed and supported by steel posts and rails. The grid/mesh alternative will result in less view blockage than the vertical picket alternative because it avoids the “stacking” effect created when closely spaced vertical pickets are viewed from an oblique angle.
- The barrier is designed in an unadorned style that is compatible with, but does not replicate, the Modern-era style for which the bridge is significant.
- The in-curving grid/mesh panels will have two-inch-square openings, which is the largest opening possible that does not provide convenient finger-holds and toe-holds for climbing.
- The cross-section dimensions of the vertical and horizontal framing members are minimized as much as possible without jeopardizing the structural integrity of the panels.
- The horizontal length of the individual panels is increased as much as possible, to reduce the number of vertical elements, without jeopardizing structural integrity.
- The barrier panels will be attached to the outside of the existing concrete railings to minimize physical impacts on the original rails.
- The barrier panel attachment points and the lowest rail (bottom framing member) of the individual barrier panels will be situated below the top of the existing concrete barrier. The attachment points will be out of the line-of-sight of motorists on the bridge.
- The individual barrier panels will be custom made to conform to the irregular intervals between the existing bridge-railing supports, so that the vertical supports will be in alignment, rather than staggered.

- The steel will be coated with a low-reflectivity finish to help reduce glare and to allow the grid/mesh to recede visually.

### **Cultural Resources**

A Finding of Effect document was prepared to fully evaluate the nature and severity of the build alternatives' impacts on the bridge's character-defining features. The Memorandum of Agreement documents specific measures that will be implemented to compensate for the project's adverse effects to the bridge (see Appendix E). Those measures include:

- Large-format photographs will be taken showing the Cold Spring Canyon Bridge in context as well as details of its historic engineering features. All photographs will be processed for archival permanence in accordance with Historic American Engineering Record (HAER) photographic specifications.
- In addition Caltrans will photographically reproduce plans, elevations, and selected details from construction drawings in accordance with HAER photographic specifications that are not deemed confidential for security reasons.
- Written documentation following the National Park Service HAER Guidelines for Preparing Written Historical and Descriptive Data (September 1983).
- The copies and negatives will be made available to appropriate agencies and local archives in Santa Barbara County.
- Publication of 500 copies and distribution of the Historic Resource Evaluation Report: Cold Spring Canyon Bridge (51-0037), prepared by JRP Historical Consulting.
- Four sets of an interpretive display, which consists of a three-panel interpretive exhibit that illustrates the history of the San Marcos Pass and the construction of the Cold Spring Canyon Bridge, and the bridge's enduring architectural engineering significance.

If cultural materials were discovered during construction, all activity within and around the immediate discovery area would be diverted until a qualified archaeologist could assess the nature and significance of the find.

If human remains were discovered, State Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5 states that further disturbances and activities would cease in any area or nearby area suspected to overlie remains, and the County Coroner contacted. Pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 5097.98, if the remains were thought to be Native American, the coroner would notify the Native American Heritage Commission, which would then notify the Most Likely Descendent. At this time, the person who discovered the remains would contact Valerie A. Levulett, Heritage Resource Coordinator for Caltrans District 5, so that they may work with the Most Likely Descendent on the respectful treatment and disposition of the remains. Further provisions of Public Resources Code 5097.98 are to be followed as applicable.

### ***Natural Communities***

All work would be staged and conducted within the two existing pullouts adjacent to the bridge and on the existing bridge deck.

To ensure no impacts on any natural communities or plant species occurring outside of the staging areas, avoidance measures include the establishment and use of environmentally sensitive area fencing around these areas. The environmentally sensitive area limits would be shown on the final plan sheets.

### ***Invasive Species***

The yellow starthistle found in the north pullout area would be eradicated using best management practices.

Avoidance measures to ensure construction activities would not contact any invasive species include the use of environmental sensitive area fencing around the existing pullouts. The environmentally sensitive area limits would be shown on the final plan sheets.

Additional avoidance measures include the inspection and cleaning of construction equipment and further eradication strategies if the invasive plant becomes an issue.

### ***Construction Impacts***

The proposed barriers are large structures that would be fabricated offsite in a series of individual panels. The panels would be custom made to fit the bridge, in the appropriate design specified to reduce impacts on the bridge. The biological resources adjacent to the staging areas would be separated from construction activity by the use of environmentally sensitive area fencing.

A Traffic Management Plan has been developed to minimize motorist delays and ensure public and worker safety during barrier construction on State Route 154. To reduce the effects on commuters, the contractor would be allowed to close one lane under one-way traffic control from approximately 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. Two-way traffic would be in operation during non-construction hours. No detours are planned; traffic delays would be limited to 5 minutes. Bicyclists and pedestrians would have access using the existing shoulders.

Motorist information strategies include a public awareness campaign (newspaper, radio, television) and the installation of construction area signs. Two portable changeable message signs, one for each direction of traffic, would alert the traveler prior to and during construction. In addition, information about the planned lane closures would be available for public viewing on Caltrans' website: [http://dot.ca.gov/dist05/road\\_information.htm](http://dot.ca.gov/dist05/road_information.htm).

Construction of the proposed barriers would occur in two phases and be completed in approximately eight weeks. Each phase would entail installing the barrier on each side of the bridge. Contractors would typically work an eight-hour day, from approximately 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday.

The waste from drilling would be collected and disposed of properly. A "Water Pollution Control Plan" would be developed during the design stage and implemented. The project would be scheduled for dry weather to ensure no incidental release of contaminants.

# Appendix E Letters of Concurrence and Correspondence with the State Historic Preservation Officer, Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, and Memorandum of Agreement

STATE OF CALIFORNIA – THE RESOURCES AGENCY

ARNOLD SCHWARZENEGGER, Governor

**OFFICE OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION  
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION**

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calshpo@ohp.parks.ca.gov  
[www.ohp.parks.ca.gov](http://www.ohp.parks.ca.gov)



August 13, 2007

Reply To: FHWA070618A

Valerie Levulett  
Chief, Central Region Technical Studies Branch  
Department of Transportation  
50 Higuera Street  
San Luis Obispo, CA 93401-5415

Re: Determination of Eligibility for the Proposed Cold Spring Canyon Bridge Pedestrian Barrier, Santa Barbara County, CA [05-SB-154 PM 22.95/23.19, EA 05-0P910]

Dear Ms. Levulett:

Thank you for consulting with me about the subject undertaking in accordance with the *Programmatic Agreement Among the Federal Highway Administration, the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, the California State Historic Preservation Officer, and the California Department of Transportation Regarding Compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, as it Pertains to the Administration of the Federal-Aid Highway Program in California (PA)*.

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) is requesting my concurrence, pursuant to Stipulation VIII.C.5 of the PA, that the Cold Spring Canyon Bridge (bridge No. 51 0037) is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) under criterion C at the state level of significance as an important example of bridge design and welded steel technology in California, and that represents a high aesthetic quality of contemporary design from its period. It is also significant as an important work of the Division of Highways Bridge Department, which is considered a master engineer of the period, and it is an important work of the American Bridge Division of US Steel, which is considered a master builder of the period.

The bridge has exceptional importance that meets the standards under Criteria Consideration G for properties that have achieved significance within the past fifty years. The period of significance is 1962-1964 and the historic property boundaries are the horizontal and vertical footprints of the bridge structure.

Thank you for considering historic properties during project planning. If you have any questions, please contact Natalie Lindquist of my staff at (916) 654-0631 or e-mail at [nlindquist@parks.ca.gov](mailto:nlindquist@parks.ca.gov).

Sincerely,

*Lusana K. Shattow for*

Milford Wayne Donaldson, FAIA  
State Historic Preservation Officer

Appendix E • Letters of Concurrence and Correspondence with the  
State Historic Preservation Officer, Advisory Council on Historic Preservation,  
and Memorandum of Agreement

STATE OF CALIFORNIA – THE RESOURCES AGENCY

ARNOLD SCHWARZENEGGER, Governor

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July 24, 2008

Reply To: FHWA070618A

Gregory P. King, Chief  
Cultural and Community Studies Office  
Division of Environmental Analysis  
Department of Transportation  
PO Box 942874  
Sacramento, CA 94274-0001

Re: Finding of Effect for the Proposed Cold Springs Canyon Bridge (#51-0037) Suicide Barrier  
Project, Santa Barbara County, CA

Dear Mr. King:

Thank you for consulting with me about the subject undertaking in accordance with the  
*Programmatic Agreement Among the Federal Highway Administration, the Advisory Council on  
Historic Preservation, the California State Historic Preservation Officer, and the California  
Department of Transportation Regarding Compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic  
Preservation Act, as it Pertains to the Administration of the Federal-Aid Highway Program in  
California (PA).*

Caltrans is requesting my concurrence that the proposed project will have an adverse effect on  
historic properties, specifically the Cold Springs Canyon Bridge, a property previously  
determined eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C at the state  
level of significance. The bridge has exceptional importance that meets the NRHP standards  
under Criterion Consideration G for properties that have achieved significance within the past  
fifty years. Additionally, under PRC §5024.5, Caltrans is providing notice to and seeking  
comments from me regarding the proposed suicide barrier project. Caltrans is also requesting  
that the SHPO add the Cold Springs Canyon Bridge to the Master List of Historical Resources  
pursuant to PRC §5024(d).

Based on my review of the submitted documentation I concur that the undertaking will have an  
adverse effect on historic properties. Please consider these comments to be my comments  
under PRC § 5024.5 as well. The Memorandum of Agreement written for this document in  
order to satisfy 36 CFR Part 800 will constitute prudent and feasible measures under 5024.5. In  
addition I will add the Cold Springs Canyon Bridge to the State's Master List of Historical  
Resources.

Thank you for considering historic properties as part of your project planning. If you have any  
questions, please contact Natalie Lindquist of my staff at your earliest convenience at (916)  
654-0631 or e-mail at [nlindquist@parks.ca.gov](mailto:nlindquist@parks.ca.gov) or Dwight Dutschke at (916) 653-9134 or  
[ddutschke@parks.ca.gov](mailto:ddutschke@parks.ca.gov).

Sincerely,

*Lucan K Shattou for*

Milford Wayne Donaldson, FAIA  
State Historic Preservation Officer

Appendix E • Letters of Concurrence and Correspondence with the  
State Historic Preservation Officer, Advisory Council on Historic Preservation,  
and Memorandum of Agreement

STATE OF CALIFORNIA—BUSINESS, TRANSPORTATION AND HOUSING AGENCY

ARNOLD SCHWARZENEGGER, Governor

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April 13, 2009

Mr. Milford Wayne Donaldson, FAIA  
State Historic Preservation Officer  
P. O. Box 942896  
Sacramento, CA 94296-0001

05-SB-154  
PM 22.9-23.1  
EA 05-0P9100  
Cold Spring Canyon Bridge  
Suicide Barrier Project

Dear Mr. Donaldson:

SUBJECT: Submittal of Signed Memorandum of Agreement for the Cold Spring Canyon Bridge (#51-0037) Suicide Barrier Project, Santa Barbara County, California

Enclosed for your records is a copy of the executed Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) for the above referenced project.

Caltrans is transmitting this as a federal agency, following the provisions of the *Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Federal Highway Administration and the California Department of Transportation Concerning the State of California's Participation in the Surface Transportation Project Delivery Pilot Program*, which became effective on July 1, 2007. The MOU was signed pursuant to Section 6005 of the 2005 Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users, which allows the Secretary of Transportation to assign, and the State of California to assume, responsibility for FHWA's responsibilities under NEPA as well as consultation and coordination responsibilities under other Federal environmental laws. In that this project is covered by the above referenced MOU, FHWA has assigned, and Caltrans has assumed, FHWA responsibility for environmental review, consultation, and coordination on this project. Please direct all future correspondence on this project to Caltrans

If you have any questions, please contact Jill Hupp at (916) 654-3567/jill\_hupp@dot.ca.gov. Thank you for all of your assistance with this undertaking.

Sincerely,

GREGORY P. KING  
Chief  
Cultural and Community Studies Office  
Division of Environmental Analysis

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*Appendix E • Letters of Concurrence and Correspondence with the  
State Historic Preservation Officer, Advisory Council on Historic Preservation,  
and Memorandum of Agreement*

M. Wayne Donaldson, FAIA  
April 13, 2009  
2

Enclosure

cc: Jill Hupp – HQ; Valerie Levulett – District 5; Paula Julke Carr – District 5

JH/jh

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Appendix E • Letters of Concurrence and Correspondence with the  
State Historic Preservation Officer, Advisory Council on Historic Preservation,  
and Memorandum of Agreement

STATE OF CALIFORNIA—BUSINESS, TRANSPORTATION AND HOUSING AGENCY

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April 13, 2009

Ms. Carol Legard  
FHWA Liaison  
Office of Federal Agency Programs  
Advisory Council on Historic Preservation  
1100 Pennsylvania Avenue NW, Suite 803  
Washington, DC 20004

05-SB-154  
PM 22.9-23.1  
EA 05-0P9100  
Cold Spring Canyon Bridge  
Suicide Barrier Project

Dear Ms Legard:

SUBJECT: Submittal of Signed Memorandum of Agreement for the Cold Spring Canyon Bridge (#51-0037) Suicide Barrier Project, Santa Barbara County, California

Enclosed for the Advisory Council for Historic Preservation's records is a copy of the executed Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) for the above referenced project.

Caltrans is transmitting this as a federal agency, following the provisions of the *Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Federal Highway Administration and the California Department of Transportation Concerning the State of California's Participation in the Surface Transportation Project Delivery Pilot Program*, which became effective on July 1, 2007. The MOU was signed pursuant to Section 6005 of the 2005 Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users, which allows the Secretary of Transportation to assign, and the State of California to assume, responsibility for FHWA's responsibilities under NEPA as well as consultation and coordination responsibilities under other Federal environmental laws. In that this project is covered by the above referenced MOU, FHWA has assigned, and Caltrans has assumed, FHWA responsibility for environmental review, consultation, and coordination on this project. Please direct all future correspondence on this project to Caltrans

If you have any questions, please contact Jill Hupp at (916) 654-3567/jill\_hupp@dot.ca.gov. Thank you for all of your assistance with this undertaking.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Gregory P. King".

GREGORY P. KING  
Chief  
Cultural and Community Studies Office  
Division of Environmental Analysis

"Caltrans improves mobility across California"

*Appendix E • Letters of Concurrence and Correspondence with the  
State Historic Preservation Officer, Advisory Council on Historic Preservation,  
and Memorandum of Agreement*

C. Legard  
April 13, 2009  
2

Enclosure

cc: Jill Hupp – HQ; Valerie Levulett – District 5; Paula Julke Carr – District 5

JH/jh

*"Caltrans improves mobility across California"*

Appendix E • Letters of Concurrence and Correspondence with the  
State Historic Preservation Officer, Advisory Council on Historic Preservation,  
and Memorandum of Agreement

MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT  
AMONG THE CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION,  
THE CALIFORNIA STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER,  
AND THE ADVISORY COUNCIL ON HISTORIC PRESERVATION  
REGARDING THE COLD SPRING CANYON BRIDGE SUICIDE BARRIER PROJECT  
ON STATE ROUTE 154 IN SANTA BARBARA COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

WHEREAS, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) has assigned and the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) has assumed FHWA responsibility for environmental review, consultation, and coordination under the provisions of the *Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Federal Highway Administration and the California Department of Transportation Concerning the State of California's Participation in the Surface Transportation Project Delivery Pilot Program*, which became effective on July 1, 2007, and applies to this project; and

WHEREAS, Caltrans has determined that the Cold Spring Canyon Bridge Suicide Barrier Project (Undertaking) will have an adverse effect on the Cold Spring Canyon Bridge (Bridge No. 51 0037), which Caltrans has determined, in consultation with the California State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) to be eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places (National Register) and therefore a historic property as defined at 36 CFR § 800.16(l)(1); and

WHEREAS, Caltrans has consulted with the SHPO and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP) pursuant to Stipulations X.C, and X.I of the January 1, 2004, *Programmatic Agreement among the Federal Highway Administration, the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, the California State Historic Preservation Officer, and the California Department of Transportation Regarding Compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, as it Pertains to the Administration of the Federal-Aid Highway Program in California (PA)*, and where the PA so directs, in accordance with 36 CFR §800, the regulations implementing Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (16 USC Section 470f), as amended (NHPA), regarding the Undertaking's effects on historic properties and has notified the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP) of the adverse effect finding pursuant to 36CFR§800.6(a)(1); and

WHEREAS, Caltrans has thoroughly considered alternatives to the Undertaking, has determined that the engineering constraints on the design of the Undertaking preclude the possibility of avoiding adverse effects to the historic property during the Undertaking's implementation; and has further determined that it will resolve adverse effects of the Undertaking on the subject historic property through the execution and implementation of this Memorandum of Agreement (MOA); and

WHEREAS, Caltrans District 5 (District 5) has participated in the consultation and has been invited to concur in this MOA;

*Appendix E • Letters of Concurrence and Correspondence with the  
State Historic Preservation Officer, Advisory Council on Historic Preservation,  
and Memorandum of Agreement*

*Memorandum of Agreement  
Cold Spring Canyon Bridge Suicide Barrier  
05-0P9100*

NOW, THEREFORE, Caltrans, the SHPO and the ACHP agree that, upon Caltrans' decision to proceed with the Undertaking, Caltrans shall ensure that the Undertaking is implemented in accordance with the following stipulations in order to take into account the effect of the Undertaking on the historic property, and further agree that these stipulations shall govern the Undertaking and all of its parts until this MOA expires or is terminated.

**STIPULATIONS**

**I. AREA OF POTENTIAL EFFECT**

- A. The Undertaking's area of potential effect (APE) is shown in Figure 3 of the May 2008 *Finding of Adverse Effect for the Cold Spring Canyon Bridge Suicide Barrier Project*. The APE includes the entirety of the bridge structure itself, which is the sole historic property.
- B. If modifications to the Undertaking, subsequent to the execution of this MOA, necessitate the revision of the APE, Caltrans will consult with District 5 and the SHPO to facilitate mutual agreement on the proposed revisions. If Caltrans and the SHPO cannot reach such agreement, then the parties to this MOA shall resolve the dispute in accordance with Stipulation V.B, below. If Caltrans, District 5, and the SHPO reach mutual agreement on the proposed revisions, then Caltrans will submit a final map of the revisions, consistent with the requirements of Stipulation VIII.A and Attachment 3 of the PA, no later than 30 days following such agreement.

**II. CONSULTATION TO FINALIZE BARRIER DESIGN**

- A. In consultation with the SHPO, Caltrans will examine the feasibility of developing a platform cantilever or arc design barrier as proposed by SHPO at a meeting among SHPO, ACHP, Caltrans and District 5 held in Sacramento on February 25, 2009.
- B. Within 30 days following execution of this MOA, Caltrans will notify the signatories regarding the results of its feasibility study for the barrier designs referenced in section A of this stipulation and its recommendation for finalizing the design of a fence-type barrier.
- C. Any objections to Caltrans' recommendations shall be resolved in accordance with Stipulation V.B of this MOA.

*Appendix E • Letters of Concurrence and Correspondence with the  
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05-0P9100*

**III. TREATMENT OF HISTORIC PROPERTIES**

**A. Photography and Construction Drawings**

1. Prior to the start of any work that could adversely affect characteristics that qualify the Cold Springs Bridge as a historic property Caltrans shall ensure that large-format (4" by 5" or larger negative size) photographs are taken showing the Cold Spring Canyon Bridge in context as well as details of its historic engineering features. Photographs shall be processed for archival permanence in accordance with the Historic American Engineering Record (HAER) photographic specifications. Views of the Cold Spring Bridge shall include:
  - a. Contextual views showing the Cold Spring Bridge in its setting;
  - b. Elevation views;
  - c. Views of the Cold Spring Bridge approaches and abutments;
  - d. Detail views of significant engineering and design elements
  - e. Copies of the photographs and negatives will be retained by Caltrans District 5 and will be deposited with the Caltrans Transportation Library and History Center at Caltrans Headquarters in Sacramento. Copies of the photographs will also be deposited with the SHPO and offered to the University of California, Santa Barbara, Davidson Library, Special Collections; the Santa Barbara County Public Library; the Santa Barbara Historical Society Gledhill Library; and the Santa Ynez Valley Historical Society.
2. Caltrans shall photographically reproduce plans, elevations and selected details from these drawings in accordance with HAER photographic specifications that are not deemed confidential for security reasons. If they are legible in this format, reduced size (8 1/2" by 11") copies of construction drawings may be included as pages of the report cited in subsection B of this stipulation rather than photographed and included as photographic documentation.

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**B. Written Documentation following the NPS HAER Guidelines for Preparing  
Written Historical and Descriptive Data, September 1993.**

1. A written historical descriptive report for the Cold Spring Canyon Bridge will be completed by Caltrans at the Professionally Qualified Staff level of Principal Architectural Historian. This report will provide a physical description of the bridge, discuss its construction and its significance under applicable National Register criteria, and address the historical context for its construction following the format and instructions in the above-referenced HAER guidelines for written documentation.
2. Caltrans will concurrently distribute the draft HAER report to the other MOA parties for review and comment. The other MOA parties will be afforded 30 days following receipt of the draft HAER report to submit any written comments to Caltrans. Caltrans will provide the other MOA parties with written documentation indicating whether and how the draft HAER report will be modified in accordance with any comments received from the other MOA parties. Unless any MOA party objects to this documentation in writing to Caltrans within 30 days following receipt, Caltrans may modify the draft report, as Caltrans may deem appropriate. Thereafter, Caltrans may issue the HAER report in final form and distribute this document in accordance with paragraph B.3 of this stipulation.
3. Copies of the documentation will be offered to the Santa Barbara County Historic Landmarks Advisory Commission; City of Santa Barbara Historic Landmarks Commission; Santa Barbara County Public Library, Central Library and local branches; University of California, Santa Barbara, Davidson Library, Special Collections; University of California, Santa Barbara, Public History Information Unit; Santa Barbara City College Library; American Society of Civil Engineers, Los Angeles Section, History and Heritage Committee; and the American Society of Civil Engineers, Santa Barbara/Ventura Branch.

**C. Publication and Distribution of Historic Resource Evaluation Report: Cold  
Spring Canyon Bridge (51-0037), prepared by JRP Historical Consulting**

1. Caltrans will print 500 copies of the May 2007 Historic Resources Evaluation Report (HRER) produced in an illustrated booklet format.
2. Caltrans will concurrently distribute the 2007 HRER to the other MOA parties for review and comment. The other MOA parties will be afforded 30 days following receipt of the 2007 HRER to submit any written comments to Caltrans. Caltrans will provide the other MOA parties with written documentation indicating whether and how the 2007 HRER will be modified in accordance with any comments received from the other MOA parties. Unless any MOA party objects

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to this documentation in writing to Caltrans within 30 days following receipt. Caltrans may modify the HRER, as Caltrans may deem appropriate. Thereafter, Caltrans may issue the 2007 HRER in final form and distribute this document in accordance with paragraph C.3 of this stipulation.

3. Copies of this documentation will be offered to local historical societies and organizations including: Santa Barbara County Historic Landmarks Advisory Commission; City of Santa Barbara Historic Landmarks Commission; Santa Barbara County Public Library, Central Library and local branches; Santa Barbara Historical Society; Santa Barbara Trust for Historic Preservation; Santa Ynez Valley Historical Society; Goleta Valley Historical Society; University of California, Santa Barbara, Davidson Library, Special Collections; University of California, Santa Barbara, Public History Information Unit; Santa Barbara City College Library; American Society of Civil Engineers, Los Angeles Section, History and Heritage Committee; American Society of Civil Engineers, Santa Barbara/Ventura Branch; Los Padres National Forest; Los Angeles Conservancy, Modern Committee; Society of Architectural Historians, Southern California Chapter; and Automobile Club of Southern California, Archives) The report will also be posted on the District 5 website.

**D. Interpretive Display**

1. Four sets of a three-panel interpretive exhibit will be produced by Caltrans. The exhibit panels will be drymounted and framed for greater permanence. The panels will feature text and illustrations on the history of San Marcos Pass, the construction history of the Cold Spring Canyon Bridge, and the bridge's enduring architectural engineering significance.
2. Caltrans will concurrently distribute the draft interpretive display to the other MOA parties for review and comment. The other MOA parties will be afforded 30 days following receipt of the proposed interpretive display to submit any written comments to Caltrans. Caltrans will provide the other MOA parties with written documentation indicating whether and how the interpretive display will be modified in accordance with any comments received from the other MOA parties. Unless any MOA party objects to this documentation in writing to Caltrans within 30 days following receipt, Caltrans may modify the interpretive display, as Caltrans may deem appropriate. Thereafter, Caltrans may issue the interpretive display in final form and distribute this document in accordance with paragraph D.3 of this stipulation.
3. The exhibit will be distributed as follows: two sets to the Santa Barbara County Public Library, one set to the Santa Barbara County General Services Department, and one set to the District 5 Office.

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**IV. DISCOVERIES AND UNANTICIPATED EFFECTS**

If Caltrans determines after construction of the Undertaking has commenced that the Undertaking will affect a previously unidentified property that may be eligible for the National Register, or affect a known historic property in an unanticipated manner, Caltrans shall address the discovery or unanticipated effect in accordance with 36 CFR § 800.13(b). Caltrans at its discretion may hereunder and in accordance with 36 CFR § 800.13(c), assume any discovered property to be eligible for inclusion in the National Register.

**V ADMINISTRATIVE PROVISIONS**

**A. Standards.**

1. **Professional Qualifications.** All activities prescribed by stipulations I and III of this MOA shall be carried out under the authority of Caltrans by or under the direct supervision of a person or persons meeting at a minimum the Secretary of Interior's Standards *Professional Qualifications Standards* (48 FR 44738-39, September 29, 1983) (PQS) in the appropriate disciplines. However, nothing in this stipulation may be interpreted to preclude Caltrans or any agent or contractor thereof from using the properly supervised services of persons who do not meet the PQS.
2. **Historic Preservation Standards.** Written documentation of activities prescribed by stipulations I, III, and IV of this MOA shall conform to the *Secretary of the Interior's Guidelines for Archaeology and Historic Preservation* (48 FR 44716-44740) as well as applicable standards and guidelines established by the SHPO.

**B. Dispute Resolution**

Should any signatory to this MOA object at any time to any actions proposed or the manner in which the terms of this MOA are implemented, Caltrans shall consult with such party to resolve the objection. If Caltrans determines that such objection cannot be resolved within 15 calendar days, Caltrans shall:

1. Forward all documentation relevant to the dispute, including Caltrans' proposed resolution, to the ACHP. Caltrans will also provide a copy to all signatories and concurring parties. The ACHP shall provide Caltrans with its advice on the resolution of the objection within thirty (30) days of receiving adequate documentation. Prior to reaching a final decision on the dispute, Caltrans shall prepare a written response that takes into account any timely advice or comments regarding the dispute from the ACHP, signatories and concurring parties and

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provide them with a copy of this written response. Caltrans will then proceed according to its final decision.

2. If the ACHP does not provide its advice regarding the dispute within the thirty (30) day time period, Caltrans may make a final decision on the dispute and proceed accordingly. Prior to reaching such a final decision, Caltrans shall prepare a written response that takes into account any timely comments regarding the dispute from the signatories and concurring parties to the MOA, and provide them and the ACHP with a copy of such written response
3. Caltrans' responsibility to carry out all other actions subject to the terms of this MOA that are not the subject of the dispute remain unchanged

**C. Amendments.**

If any signatory party to this MOA proposes an amendment to its terms, that party shall consult with the other parties to consider such amendment. The amendment will be effective on the last date a copy of it is signed by all of the signatories in counterpoint. If the signatories cannot agree to appropriate terms to amend the MOA, any signatory may terminate the agreement in accordance with section D, below.

**D. Termination.**

1. If any signatory believes that the terms of this MOA are not being carried out or cannot be carried out, they may request that construction stop where historic properties are threatened while the terms of the MOA are amended per section C, above. If within thirty (30) days, or another time period agreed to by all signatories, an amendment cannot be reached, any signatory may terminate the MOA upon written notification to the other signatories.
2. If this MOA is terminated for any reason, and Caltrans determines that the Undertaking will proceed, Caltrans will either execute a new MOA with the signatories under 36 CFR § 800.6(c)(1), or request, take into account, and respond to, the comments of the ACHP pursuant to 36 CFR § 800.7 Caltrans shall notify the signatories as to the course of action it will pursue.

**E. Duration of MOA.**

1. If Caltrans determines that construction of the Undertaking has not been initiated within ten years following execution of this MOA, the signatories shall consult to reconsider its terms. Reconsideration may include continuation of the MOA as originally executed, amendment, or termination.
2. This MOA will be in effect through Caltrans implementation of the Undertaking, and will have no further force or effect when Caltrans, in consultation with the other signatories, determines that the terms of this MOA have been fulfilled in a

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satisfactory manner. Caltrans shall provide the other signatories with written notice of its determination that the terms of the agreement have been fulfilled. In the event that Caltrans is unable to comply with the terms of this MOA, Caltrans shall adhere to Stipulations V C or D as appropriate

**F. Effective Date.**

Caltrans shall ensure that each party is provided with a copy of the fully executed MOA. This MOA will become effective on the date that the last signatory has signed the MOA.

Execution and implementation of this MOA evidence that Caltrans has afforded the ACHP a reasonable opportunity to comment on the Undertaking and the effect of the Undertaking on historic properties, and have themselves taken into account the effect of the Undertaking on historic properties.

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03-0P9100

**SIGNATORY PARTIES:**

California Department of Transportation

By [Signature] Date 3/10/09  
Jay Norvell, Chief  
Division of Environmental Analysis

California State Historic Preservation Officer

By [Signature] Date 13 MAR 2009  
Milford Wayne Donaldson  
State Historic Preservation Officer

Advisory Council on Historic Preservation

By [Signature] Date 3/23/2009  
John Fowler (RONALD D ANZALONE)  
Executive Director

**CONCURRING PARTIES:**

California Department of Transportation, District 5

By [Signature] Date 3/30/09  
Richard Krumholz  
District 5 Director

# **Appendix F Comments and Responses**

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Appendix F addresses the comments received on the Draft Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Assessment for the Cold Spring Canyon Bridge Suicide Barrier project on State Route 154. That document was circulated for public review and comment from May 9, 2008, to June 24, 2008; more than 165 copies of the document were mailed to interested individuals, associations, and agencies. Two open forum-style public hearings were held to further solicit public comment on the draft environmental document. The first public hearing was held in the City of Santa Barbara on June 9, 2008; the second public hearing was held in the City of Solvang on June 10, 2008.

The draft EIR/EA was also available for public review at the Santa Barbara Central Library, Solvang Branch Library, Goleta Branch Library, Montecito Branch Library, at the Caltrans District Office in San Luis Obispo, and on the Caltrans website.

This appendix presents all of the written comments received on the draft document during the public review period. Responses to those comments are also provided.

Comments received on the Draft Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Assessment were in favor of or against the project; expressed suggestions and concerns; or were of a regulatory nature, including:

- Compliance with CEQA/NEPA
- Bridge barriers may or may not save lives
- Preference for the “human barrier” or other alternative
- Effectiveness of physical suicide barriers
- Visual and aesthetic impacts
- Historic impacts
- Using the funding for mental health/community outreach or at another location

This appendix is organized according to the parties commenting on the Draft Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Assessment as follows:

- Section 1.0 State Agencies
- Section 2.0 Local Government and Commissions
- Section 3.0 Associations
- Section 4.0 Individuals

- Section 5.0 Comment Cards from Public Hearings
- Section 6.0 Transcripts from Public Hearings
- Section 7.0 State and Federal Agency Late Comment

Two letters were received after the comment period ended; from a State Agency, the Department of Fish and Game and from a federal agency, the Department of the Army, Corps of Engineers, but are included in this document with a response.

For Sections 1.0 through 4.0, responses are provided after each letter or email or in groups if the response is the same. Corresponding numbers assigned to the comments are in the right-hand margin.

For Sections 5.0 and 6.0, responses are withheld until the end of each section and then provided, in groups if the response is the same. Responses are identified by the surname of the person making the comment and by using the corresponding number assigned to the comments in the right-hand margin.

Section 7.0 displays the comment letters received after the comment period ended.

Several approaches have been used to respond to comments. Some comments were statements of information or opinion; these comments have been acknowledged for the public record. Other comments asked for additional information or for clarification of information in the Draft Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Assessment. Where appropriate, responses to these comments are provided in this appendix. Where the response is presented in the text of the Final Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Assessment (this document), reference is made to the text section in response to the comment.

**Section 1.0 State Agencies**

Terry Roberts, Office of Planning and Research, State Clearinghouse with one page attachment, June 24, 2008

Susan Bransen and John F. Barna, California Transportation Commission, dated May 30, 2008, and June 30, 2008, respectively



ARNOLD SCHWARZENEGGER  
GOVERNOR

June 24, 2008

STATE OF CALIFORNIA  
GOVERNOR'S OFFICE of PLANNING AND RESEARCH  
STATE CLEARINGHOUSE AND PLANNING UNIT



CYNTHIA BRYANT  
DIRECTOR

Cathy Stettler  
California Department of Transportation, District 5  
50 Higuera Street  
San Luis Obispo, CA 93401

Subject: Cold Spring Canyon Bridge Suicide Barrier  
SCH#: 2008011060

Dear Cathy Stettler:

The State Clearinghouse submitted the above named Joint Document to selected state agencies for review. The review period closed on June 23, 2008, and no state agencies submitted comments by that date. This letter acknowledges that you have complied with the State Clearinghouse review requirements for draft environmental documents, pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act.

Please call the State Clearinghouse at (916) 445-0613 if you have any questions regarding the environmental review process. If you have a question about the above-named project, please refer to the ten-digit State Clearinghouse number when contacting this office.

Sincerely,

Terry Roberts  
Director, State Clearinghouse

1400 10th Street P.O. Box 3044 Sacramento, California 95812-3044  
(916) 445-0613 FAX (916) 323-3018 www.opr.ca.gov

**Document Details Report  
State Clearinghouse Data Base**

**SCH#** 2008011060  
**Project Title** Cold Spring Canyon Bridge Suicide Barrier  
**Lead Agency** Caltrans #5

**Type** JD Joint Document  
**Description** NOTE: Joint Document comprised of Draft EIR and Environmental Assessment.

The California Department of Transportation proposes to install a physical suicide barrier on the Cold Spring Canyon Bridge, near San Marcos Pass in Santa Barbara County.

**Lead Agency Contact**

**Name** Cathy Stettler  
**Agency** California Department of Transportation, District 5  
**Phone** (805) 549-3797 **Fax**  
**email**  
**Address** 50 Higuera Street  
**City** San Luis Obispo **State** CA **Zip** 93401

**Project Location**

**County** Santa Barbara  
**City** Santa Barbara  
**Region**  
**Lat / Long** 34° 31' 35.90" N / 119° 50' 7.53" W  
**Cross Streets** State Route 154 and Stagecoach Road  
**Parcel No.**  
**Township** 5N **Range** 28W **Section** 8 **Base** SBB&M

**Proximity to:**

**Highways**  
**Airports**  
**Railways**  
**Waterways** Cold Spring Creek, Santa Ynez River  
**Schools**  
**Land Use** Scenic Corridor and State Scenic Highway, rural public facility

**Project Issues** Aesthetic/Visual; Archaeologic-Historic; Biological Resources; Other Issues; Traffic/Circulation

**Reviewing Agencies** Resources Agency; Regional Water Quality Control Board, Region 3; Department of Parks and Recreation; Native American Heritage Commission; Office of Historic Preservation; Department of Fish and Game, Region 5; Department of Water Resources; Department of Conservation; California Highway Patrol; Cal Fire

**Date Received** 05/08/2008 **Start of Review** 05/08/2008 **End of Review** 06/23/2008

Note: Blanks in data fields result from insufficient information provided by lead agency.

***Response to Terry Roberts, Office of Planning and Research, State Clearinghouse***

Thank you for your letter, which acknowledges that Caltrans has complied with the State Clearinghouse review process.

JOHN CHALKER, Chair  
BOB ALVARADO, Vice Chair  
MARIAN BERGESON  
JAMES EARP  
DARIO FROMMER  
JAMES C. GHIEMMETTI  
CARL GUARDINO  
R. K. LINDSEY  
PHILLIP H. TAGAMI  
JOSEPH TAVAGLIONE  
LARRY ZARIAN

STATE OF CALIFORNIA



ARNOLD SCHWARZENEGGER  
GOVERNOR

SENATOR ALAN LOWENTHAL, Ex Officio  
ASSEMBLYMAN MARK DESAULNIER, Ex Officio

JOHN F. BARNA JR., Executive Director

**CALIFORNIA TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION**

1120 N STREET, MS-52  
P. O. BOX 942873  
SACRAMENTO, 94273-0001  
FAX (916) 653-2134  
(916) 654-4245  
<http://www.catc.ca.gov>

May 30, 2008

Mr. Rich Krumholz  
District Director  
Department of Transportation - District 5  
50 Higuera Street  
San Luis Obispo, CA 93401

RE: Notice of Preparation of a Draft Environmental Impact Report for the Cold Spring Canyon Bridge Suicide Barrier Project

Dear Mr. Krumholz,

At its May 2008 meeting, the California Transportation Commission, as a Responsible Agency as defined in the California Environmental Quality Act, reviewed the Notice of Preparation of a Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) for the installation of a physical suicide barrier on the Cold Spring Canyon Bridge near San Marcos Pass in Santa Barbara County.

Caltrans reported that the project is fully programmed in the 2008 State Highway Operation Protection Program (SHOPP) for \$3,183,000, capital and support. Construction is estimated to begin in Fiscal Year 2009-10.

The Commission has no comments regarding the preparation of the DEIR or environmental issues to be addressed in the DEIR. However, given transportation safety priorities statewide and the limited amount of state transportation funding, the Commission recommends that alternative sources of funding be secured for this project.

If you have any questions, please contact me at (916) 653-2082.

Sincerely,

*Susan Bransen*  
SUSAN BRANSEN  
Associate Deputy Director  
California Transportation Commission

1

2

JOHN CHALKER, Chair  
BOB ALVARADO, Vice Chair  
LUCETTA DUNN  
JAMES EARP  
DARIO FROMMER  
JAMES C. GHIEMMETTI  
CARL GUARDINO  
R. K. LINDSEY  
PHILLIP H. TAGAMI  
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LARRY ZARIAN

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STATE OF CALIFORNIA



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## CALIFORNIA TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

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SACRAMENTO, 94273-0001  
FAX (916) 653-2134  
(916) 654-4245  
<http://www.catc.ca.gov>

June 30, 2008

Mr. Rich Krumholz  
District Director  
Department of Transportation - District 5  
50 Higuera Street  
San Luis Obispo, CA 93401

RE: Draft Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Assessment for the Cold Spring Canyon Bridge Suicide Barrier Project

Dear Mr. Krumholz,

At its June 2008 meeting, the California Transportation Commission, as a Responsible Agency defined in the California Environmental Quality Act, reviewed the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR)/Environmental Assessment (EA) for the installation of a physical suicide barrier on the Cold Spring Canyon Bridge on State Route 154 in Santa Barbara County.

1

Caltrans reported that the project is fully programmed in the 2008 State Highway Operation Protection Program (SHOPP) for \$3,183,000, including both capital and support costs. Construction is estimated to begin in Fiscal Year 2009-10.

In response to the Notice of Preparation, at its May 2008 meeting, the Commission recommended that alternative sources of funding be secured for this project. This was communicated to you in a letter dated May 30, 2008. Subsequent to the Commission's recommendation, we were informed that Caltrans is pursuing other funding sources for this project.

At the June 2008 meeting, the Commission had no comments regarding the alternatives under consideration in the DEIR/EA. However, given transportation safety priorities statewide and the limited amount of state transportation funding, the

2

Rich Krumholz  
June 30, 2008  
Page 2 of 2

Commission recommends that Caltrans continue to pursue and secure alternative sources of funding for this project.

If you have any questions, please contact Susan Bransen at (916) 653-2082.

Sincerely,



JOHN F. BARNA, Jr.  
Executive Director  
California Transportation Commission

cc: John Chalker, Commission Chair, CTC  
James Ghielmetti, Commissioner, CTC  
Will Kempton, Director, Caltrans  
Rachel Falsetti, Chief, Transportation Programming, Caltrans  
Jay Norvell, Division Chief, Environmental Analysis  
Cathy Stettler, Senior Environmental Planner, Caltrans District 5

**Responses to Comments from two letters from the California Transportation Commission; from Susan Bransen, dated May 30, 2008, and from John F. Barna, Jr., dated June 30, 2008**

Thank you for your comments on the project.

**Response to comment #1 in both letters:** Caltrans acknowledges that the California Transportation Commission reviewed both the Notice of Preparation and the draft Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Assessment.

**Response to comment #2 in both letters:** At the request of the California Transportation Commission, Caltrans investigated alternate funding sources other than the State Highway Operation and Protection Program (SHOPP). As a result, it has been determined that the money needed to construct the barriers will now come from local Recovery Act funds.

**Section 2.0 Local Government and Commissions**

John Baker, Assistant County Executive Officer, County of Santa Barbara Executive Office, dated June 19, 2008

Santa Barbara County Sheriff-Coroner Bill Brown, County of Santa Barbara Office of the Sheriff, dated June 9, 2008

Eileen Wyckoff, Chair, Santa Barbara County Historic Landmarks Advisory Commission, dated June 18, 2008

Councilmember Grant House, City of Santa Barbara City Council, dated June 10, 2008

## County of Santa Barbara

Michael F. Brown  
County Executive Officer



105 East Anapamu Street, Suite 406  
Santa Barbara, California 93101  
805/568-3400 • Fax 805/568-3414  
www.co.santa-barbara.ca.us

### Executive Office

June 19, 2008

Fax: 805-549-3233

Email: Cathy\_Stettler@dot.ca.gov

Cathy Stettler, Senior Environmental Planner  
California Department of Transportation-District 5  
50 Higuera Street  
San Luis Obispo, CA 93401

RE: ***Draft Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Assessment and Section 4(f)  
Evaluation-Cold Spring Canyon Bridge Suicide Barrier Project***

Dear Ms. Stettler:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Draft Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Assessment and Section 4(f) Evaluation for Cold Spring Canyon Bridge Suicide Barrier Project. The County submits the following comments for consideration in the Final EIR:

### **Chapter 2 Affected Environment, Environmental Consequences, and Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures**

#### 2.1.1 Traffic and Transportation

Should any change occur in the planned construction operations that would make it necessary to detour traffic onto any County roadway we request that the Caltrans Resident Engineer contact Eric Pearson of the Public Works Construction and Permits Section at (805) 681-4990 so that necessary preparations and precautions can be coordinated.

#### 2.1.2 Visual/Aesthetics (Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures) and;

The Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) acknowledges that the proposed project will have significant environmental effects on visual/aesthetic and cultural resources. Page 34 of the Draft EIR indicates:

“Through implementation of the following mitigation measure, potential visual impacts related to construction of the safety barrier would be minimized. Once the Preferred Alternative is identified, the final design and appearance of the barrier would be developed with input from an Aesthetics Design Advisory Committee.”

***Draft Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Assessment and Section 4(f) Evaluation-  
Cold Spring Canyon Bridge Suicide Barrier Project***

***June 19, 2008***

***Page 2 of 2***

The development of mitigation measures through the Aesthetics Design Advisory Committee at a later date represents a deferred mitigation which should be resolved in the EIR1. Pursuant to CEQA §15124.4 (A)(1)(B), formulation of mitigation measures should not be deferred until some future time. As such, we recommend that a more thorough analysis of the proposed mitigation measure be included. 2

2.1.3 Cultural Resources (Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures)

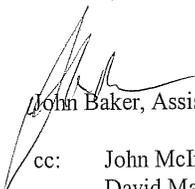
Page 37 of the Draft EIR indicates:

“Since both alternatives involve similar adverse effects, a Finding of Effect document is being prepared to fully evaluate the nature and severity of those effects on historic qualities of the bridge. A Memorandum of Agreement would also be prepared to detail those minimization or mitigation measures (which might include such things as modifications of various barrier components and characteristics, including color, finish, reflectivity, dimension, and profile) that would be implemented to lessen the project’s adverse effects. These measures would be developed with input from the Aesthetics Design Advisory Committee (see the Visual/Aesthetics section of this document).”

Again, this action represents a deferred mitigation. Pursuant to CEQA §15124.4 (A)(1)(B) and (14 CCR Section 15126.4(b)(1)), formulation of mitigation measures should not be deferred until some future time. As such, we recommend that a more thorough analysis of the proposed mitigation measure be included. Additionally, the above referenced Memorandum of Agreement only discusses aesthetic impacts, making it unclear where cultural impacts would be discussed. Finally, the document should discuss the applicability of the Secretary of Interior Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties pursuant to CEQA Guidelines 15064.5(b)(3). 3

The County has no further comments on this project at this time and looks forward to continued dialogue on future projects. If you should have further questions, please do not hesitate to contact my office directly, or David Matson, Deputy Director in the Office of Long Range Planning at (805) 568-2068.

Sincerely,

  
John Baker, Assistant County Executive Officer

cc: John McInnes, Director, Office of Long Range Planning  
David Matson, Deputy Director, Office of Long Range Planning

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<sup>1</sup> Pursuant to CEQA §15124.4 (A)(1)(B) “Where several measures are available to mitigate an impact, each should be discussed and the basis for selecting a particular measure should be identified. Formulation of mitigation measures should not be deferred until some future time. However, measures may specify performance standards which would mitigate the significant effect of the project and which may be accomplished in more than one specified way.”

**Response to Comments from John Baker, Assistant County Executive Officer, County of Santa Barbara Executive Office**

Thank you for your comments on the project.

**Response to comment #1:** Thank you for your input. It is Caltrans' standard process to contact local agencies when detouring traffic within their right-of-way. The project's Resident Engineer will have a list of contacts to call in the event that a change in traffic operations is required; Eric Pearson of the County's Public Works Construction and Permits Section will be included in this list.

**Response to comment #2:** Thank you for your comment that a more thorough analysis of a proposed visual impact mitigation measure is required pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15124.4 subd. (a)(1)(B). It appears from your comment that you intended to reference material in Section 15126.4 subd. (a)(1)(B) of CEQA, not Section 15124.4 subd. (a)(1)(B).

Please note that a *Visual Impact Assessment* (January 2008) was prepared by Caltrans to fully evaluate visual impacts of the proposed project. This technical study was summarized in the draft EIR/EA in Section 2.1.2 *Visual/Aesthetics*. Before and after visual simulations from various viewpoints are included. Because any build alternative would create some combination of view blockage and visual intrusion, impacts are considered significant. These visual impacts would remain significant and unavoidable because it would not be possible to mitigate them to a less than significant level (see EIR/EA Section 3.2.3 *Unavoidable Significant Effects*).

In addition, the use of an Aesthetics Design Advisory Committee did not limit public comment on the aesthetics of the bridge barriers or the visual impact analysis. Visual simulations of the alternative designs and a summary of the visual impact analysis were included in the draft EIR/EA. The standard 45-day review and comment period was provided, and the public did comment on the design features. Comment letters on the draft document and public hearing input included feedback on the barrier designs. For example, one commenter suggested that darkening the color of the barrier would make it less intrusive. Another commenter thought the barriers were aesthetically pleasing and carefully designed—she had expected the barriers to be ugly.

Caltrans has provided ample opportunities for feedback. The Aesthetics Design Advisory Committee includes representatives from the Santa Barbara County Historic

Landmarks Advisory commission, architects, landscape architects, and County Public Works and Planning members, as well as Caltrans experts. The basic height, shape, and type (grid/mesh or vertical picket) would remain the same. The design committee's recommendations did not change the overall design of the barrier, but helped refine detailed aspects of the barrier's design.

As a group, the committee concluded that if a barrier would be installed that the Grid/Mesh Alternative is the superior alternative with the least visual impacts that meets the project's purpose. (See Section 2.1.2 *Visual/Aesthetics, Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures.*)

**Response to comment #3:** For the reasons cited above, the application of CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.4 subd. (a)(1)(B) to cultural resources is also incorrect. Standard documentation of cultural resources and consultation with the State Historic Preservation Officer was summarized in Section 2.1.3 of the draft EIR/EA, *Cultural Resources* and in Appendix E.

Under 14 CCR Section 15126.4(b)(1) a project that has been determined to conform to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties can generally be considered a project that will not cause a significant impact under CEQA. Section 15126.4(b)(1) does not apply to the Cold Spring Bridge Suicide Barrier project, however, because it has been determined that the project will not be able to conform to all of the applicable Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties. Caltrans designed the build alternatives in a manner that would minimize the effect the project may have on the bridge by following the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties as much as possible. The appropriate treatment to guide the design of this project was identified as Rehabilitation. Preservation, Restoration, and Reconstruction treatments were not appropriate for this project.

In 2007 Caltrans prepared a Finding of Effect for the proposed project. Under CEQA, the project was evaluated for its ability to conform to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation. The findings were as follows: the project design complies with Standards 1, 3, and 10; Standards 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8 were not applicable; and the project was unable to fully comply with Standards 2 and 9 while still meeting the project's stated Purpose and Need.

Standard 2 states that the "alteration of features, spaces, and spatial relationships that characterize a property will be avoided." Standard 9 says that new additions to

historic properties should not “destroy historic. . . spatial relationships that characterize the property” and that new additions should be compatible with the historic “features, size, scale, and proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of the property.” The addition of a physical barrier was therefore found to be an alteration to the historic property that is not consistent with the Secretary of Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties.

Because of this evaluation – and because of other evaluations carried out under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act – the Finding of Effect concluded that the proposed project will diminish the bridge’s historic integrity of design, feeling, and association. The California State Historic Preservation Officer concurred with these findings on July 24, 2008.



**STATIONS**

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Buellton, CA 93427  
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**Carpinteria**  
5775 Carpinteria Avenue  
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Isla Vista, CA 93117  
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**Lompoc**  
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Phone (805) 737-7737

**New Cuyama**  
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New Cuyama, CA 93254  
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**Santa Maria**  
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Santa Maria, CA 93455  
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**Solvang**  
1745 Mission Drive  
Solvang, CA 93463  
Phone (805) 686-5000

**Sheriff - Coroner Office**  
66 South San Antonio Road  
Santa Barbara, CA 93110  
Phone (805) 681-4145

**Main Jail**  
4436 Calle Real  
Santa Barbara, CA 93110  
Phone (805) 681-4260

**COURT SERVICES  
CIVIL OFFICES**

**Santa Barbara**  
1105 Santa Barbara Street  
P.O. Box 690  
Santa Barbara, CA 93102  
Phone (805) 568-2900

**Santa Maria**  
312 E. Cook Street "O"  
Santa Maria, CA 93455  
Phone (805) 346-7430

**Lompoc**  
401 E. Cypress #105  
Lompoc, CA 93436  
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**SANTA BARBARA COUNTY**

**HEADQUARTERS**  
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**BILL BROWN**  
Sheriff-Coroner

**KENNETH R. SHEMWELL**  
Undersheriff

June 9, 2008

Cathy Stettler, Senior Environmental Planning  
Central Coast Environmental Analysis  
California Department of Transportation  
50 Higuera Street  
San Luis Obispo, CA 93401-5415

**RE: Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) for the Cold Spring Canyon  
Bridge Suicide Barrier, Santa Barbara County, California  
[05-SB-154-PM22.9/23.1, 05-OP9100]**

Dear Ms. Stettler,

My comments on the DEIR are as the Sheriff/Coroner of Santa Barbara County. I have reviewed this report and its stated purpose and need, which is to prevent suicides at the Cold Spring Canyon Bridge and to reduce risks to emergency personnel responding to suicide attempts and/or to recover the remains of those who have fallen to their deaths. The barrier proposal is the best solution to meet both of these goals.

The bridge was built in 1963, a time when the population and the traffic volume in Santa Barbara County were far less than both are today. The current pedestrian safety rail rises only 32 inches in height above the two-foot wide concrete curb. The bridge and safety rail were not designed for the number of pedestrians and bicyclists that now use the bridge.

The low height of the railing puts public safety personnel at great risk when they respond to calls on the bridge, especially when dealing with suicidal subjects. A vivid example of the dangers involved occurred during an incident on February 11, 2006 and was caught on a patrol car video camera. The video shows a deputy dangerously leaning over the railing at her mid-point as she lunges to grab a suicidal man to pull him to safety. Two officers (a California Highway Patrolman and a Deputy Sheriff) then grabbed both the victim and deputy and pull them back over the railing to safety. This video shows how the 32 inch safety railing fails to adequately protect those dedicated peace officers who live by the Law Enforcement Code of Ethics, wherein their fundamental duty is to serve mankind and safeguard lives.

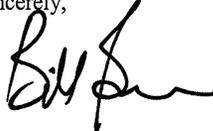
Ms. Cathy Stettler  
June 9, 2008  
Page 2

The remoteness of the bridge also makes it difficult for law enforcement when responding to calls. Our records show that suicide victims usually jump before they can be contacted. The objective of the responding public safety personnel then changes from rescue to the recovery of a body, a task which involves many hazards. The majority of the area below the bridge is sloped, uneven rocky terrain which is covered with thick brush. Often traffic must be stopped while officers use ropes from the top of the bridge to lift and recover the victim. The officers on the ground and on the bridge are placed in danger during these hazardous and time consuming recovery operations.

I recognize the need for continued and enhanced outreach in the community regarding mental health issues and suicide awareness. I fully support such efforts by our County Mental Health Department and many of our County's outstanding non-profit organizations. The addition of secondary call boxes, located off the bridge and linked directly to a helpline, and any signage indicating help is available, are excellent ideas that I would support in addition to the barrier installation project.

In conclusion, let me make it clear that this project has my full support. A barrier will save lives and protect emergency personnel. I believe Cal Trans should continue with the barrier proposal, keeping in mind the aesthetics of the bridge.

Sincerely,



BILL BROWN  
Sheriff – Coroner

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**Response to Comments from Santa Barbara County Sheriff-Coroner Bill Brown, County of Santa Barbara Office of the Sheriff**

Thank you for your comments on the project. Your support for the project has been noted.

**Response to comment #1:** A separate project sponsored by the Santa Barbara County Association of Governments, referred to in the draft EIR/EA Section 1.4.6, would install crisis phones at the two nearest call boxes to the bridge; the crisis phones cannot be located on the bridge deck for safety reasons. Signs stating, “In Crisis? We Care Please Call Us” in both English and Spanish would be included in the Santa Barbara County Association of Governments project.

**Response to comment #2:** Regarding the aesthetics of the bridge, Caltrans is making every effort to minimize the impacts from the proposed barriers.



**Santa Barbara County  
Historic Landmarks Advisory Commission**

June 18, 2008

Cathy Stettler, Senior Environmental Planner  
Central Coast Environmental Analysis  
California Department of Transportation  
50 Higuera Street  
San Luis Obispo, CA 93401

The Santa Barbara County Historic Landmarks Advisory Commission (HLAC) has studied and discussed the concepts and proposals for potential mitigation measures as described and defined within the Caltrans May 2, 2008 Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) on the Cold Spring Canyon Bridge Suicide Barrier project. The DEIR proposes utilizing either of two "Build Alternatives" to minimize the environmental impact of a physical barrier on the Cold Spring Canyon Bridge located on State Route 154.

In an action taken at the HLAC hearing on June 9, 2008, it was the unanimous decision of the Commission that there is no acceptable mitigation that would offset the harm resulting from construction of a suicide barrier on the Bridge. Furthermore, mitigation measures as described in the DEIR will significantly and cumulatively compromise the Bridge's historic character and appearance. The existing scenic views from the Bridge deck will be blocked as much as 70 percent, thereby reducing this signature Santa Barbara County visual resource to an extent that none of the physical barrier alternatives are acceptable.

The proposed "Build Alternatives" described in the DEIR would be incompatible with the natural character of the surrounding landscape and would distract from the existing architectural style of the Bridge. The grid/mesh and vertical picket alternatives would result in a combination of view blockage and visual intrusion due to the design and architecture of the barrier. The addition of a physical barrier mounted on the Bridge would be an alteration to the historic property such that the project would not be consistent with the Secretary of Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties and/or Rehabilitation. The integrity of an historic property is comprised of: "location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association". The proposed suicide barrier would cause a "direct adverse effect" on the Bridge by diminishing design, setting, feeling and association.

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In a letter from the State Historic Preservation Officer dated August 13, 2007, Milford Wayne Donaldson states that the Cold Spring Canyon Bridge is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C at the state level of significance as an

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Planning and Development, 123 East Anapamu St., Santa Barbara, CA 93101  
Phone (805) 568-2000

important example of bridge design and welded steel technology, and that it represents a high aesthetic quality of contemporary design from its period. It is the largest steel arch bridge in California; it is significant as an important work of the Division of Highways Bridge Department, which is considered a master engineer of the period; and it is an important work of the American Bridge Division of US Steel, which is considered a master builder of the period. Donaldson's letter also states that the bridge has exceptional importance that meets the standards under Criterion G for properties that have achieved significance within the past fifty years, and he also states that the historic property boundaries are the horizontal and vertical footprints of the bridge structure. The construction of the "Build Alternatives" would introduce a new structure that will significantly affect the bridge's eligibility as an important cultural resource in addition to compromising its integrity, historic character, appearance and scenic views.

To quote from the DEIR, "the California Environmental Quality Act establishes that it is the policy of the state to take all action necessary to provide the people of the state with ... "enjoyment of *aesthetic*, natural, scenic and historic environmental qualities." Under CEQA, the Cold Spring Canyon Bridge is considered a "Scenic Resource ... due to its sculptural quality in the landscape, and the memorable visual image it creates by its graceful and delicate arched form contrasting with the rugged natural setting".

The Santa Barbara County Historic Landmarks Advisory Commission strongly requests that Caltrans eliminate the suicide barrier "Build Alternatives" from the Cold Spring Canyon Bridge project and subsequently consider *all* of the no-build alternatives that have been submitted to Caltrans to deter suicide attempts at this location.

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Sincerely,



Eileen Wyckoff, Chair  
Santa Barbara County Landmarks Advisory Commission

Cc: Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors  
Santa Barbara County Sheriff's Department  
Assemblymember Pedro Nava  
Mary Pat Berry, Deputy County Counsel  
Anne Almy, Supervising Planner

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**Response to Comments from Eileen Wyckoff, Chair, Santa Barbara County Historical Landmarks Advisory Commission**

Thank you for your comments on the project. Your opposition to the project has been noted.

**Response to comment #1:** The construction of either barrier on Cold Spring Canyon Bridge would introduce a new structure that would significantly affect the bridge's historic character, appearance, and scenic views. Measures have been proposed to mitigate these significant impacts. However, these impacts would remain significant and unavoidable because it would not be possible to mitigate them to a less than significant level (see EIR/EA Section 3.2.3 *Unavoidable Significant Effects*).

**Response to comment #2:** Caltrans led the effort to have the Cold Spring Canyon Bridge determined eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. Caltrans presented the results of its own extensive historical research in a Historic Property Survey Report, which determined that the bridge was indeed eligible for listing in the National Register under Criterion C and under Criteria Consideration G. The Historic Property Survey Report was sent to the State Historic Preservation Officer, who agreed with Caltrans, as documented in the August 13, 2007, letter of concurrence, see Appendix E of this document. Both the conclusions and the justification for those conclusions, as expressed in the concurrence letter, are excerpts from the Historic Property Survey Report and were written by Caltrans. The Cold Spring Canyon Bridge in its entirety can be viewed only from below; that view would remain virtually unchanged. The most significant features of the bridge that make it eligible for the National Register of Historic Places cannot be seen while the viewer is on the bridge itself. The physical alteration to the historic fabric of the bridge would be limited to bolt holes to attach the barrier.

**Response to comment #3:** As discussed in the draft EIR/EA, many alternatives have been analyzed, including crisis phones, and as discussed in the environmental document, physical barriers have been shown to be the most effective in reducing the number of persons jumping from bridges. The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline Steering Committee's position paper, developed in response to the promoters of "human barrier" measures on the Cold Spring Canyon Bridge (attached to The Glendon Association's comment letter below), states that physical barriers are the most effective measure to reduce bridge suicides. Please refer to Section 2.1.1 of the

EIR/EA, which includes a discussion by experts on the effectiveness of physical suicide barriers, “Difference of opinion regarding the effectiveness of physical suicide barriers vs. ‘human barriers.’” Also refer to Response to comment #1 to Santa Barbara County Sheriff-Coroner Bill Brown, regarding Santa Barbara County Association of Government’s project to install crisis phones with signs near the bridge.

The No-Build Alternative would not meet the project’s Purpose and Need.

Appendix F • Comments and Responses



"House, Grant"  
<GHouse@SantaBarbaraCA.gov>  
06/10/2008 09:36 PM

To <cathy\_stettler@dot.ca.gov>  
cc  
bcc  
Subject Cold Springs Bridge Suicide Barrier

History: This message has been forwarded.

Dear Ms. Stettler,

I am a long time advocate for a suicide barrier on Cold Springs Bridge. I lost a dear friend who was known widely for her service on behalf of the underprivileged. An associate lost her husband there a number of years ago. Both, along with 41 others, have perished in temporary moments of depression or despair. The design of the bridge with its low railing poses a risk to anyone with a passing thought of suicide. It must seem so quick and easy, painless even. But the results are forever and they are tragic.

So many are affected. A member of the recovery team who searched for my friend attempted to describe to me what they experience when finding the body of someone who has jumped from the bridge. We have seen that trying to interrupt a suicide attempt could very well take the rescuer's life. The impact on all involved is too horrible for words and the effects of the loss on those left behind cannot be explained away by aesthetics.

Suicides have stopped at the bridge above Stephen's Park since the hardly noticed barrier was added years ago. Once installed on the sides of Cold Springs Bridge, the safety features will disappear and people traveling across the span will focus out on the splendid scenery as before. The only difference is that lives will be saved and friends and family members will be given another chance to help their precious loved one.

I strongly urge Caltrans to proceed with this much needed project.

Grant House  
Councilmember  
City of Santa Barbara  
805 564-5319  
ghouse@SantaBarbaraCa.gov

***Response to Comments from Councilmember Grant House, City of Santa Barbara City Council***

Thank you for your comments on the project. Your support for the project has been noted.

### **Section 3.0 Associations**

The Glendon Association with a 9-page attachment, undated

Paula J. Clayton, M.D., American Foundation for Suicide Prevention with a 2-page attachment, dated June 6, 2008

Mark Chaffee, President of the Suicide Prevention Advocacy Network-California, June 3, 2008

Lauren J. Doyel, P.E., Past President American Society of Civil Engineers, Santa Barbara Ventura Branch, June 19, 2008

Kellam de Forest, Chairman, Preservation Committee, Pearl Chase Society, dated June 9, 2008

Marc McGinnes, Friends of the Bridge with a 65-page attachment, dated June 23, 2008, and a second letter with a 2-page attachment, dated June 24, 2008

Jeff Kuyper, Executive Director, Los Padres ForestWatch, dated June 24, 2008



## The Glendon Association

a 501(c)(3) California nonprofit corporation

5383 Hollister Avenue, # 270 ♦ Santa Barbara, CA 93111 ♦ Tel: 805.681.0415 ♦ Fax: 805.681.0425  
www.glendon.org

Cathy Stettler  
Senior Environmental Planner  
Central Coast Environmental Analysis  
California Department of Transportation  
50 Higuera Street  
San Luis Obispo, CA 93401

Dear Cathy Stettler,

The Glendon Association supports the construction of suicide barriers on the Cold Spring Bridge and commends CalTrans for addressing this important safety issue. We base our position on published research regarding suicidal behavior and restriction of means as well as the recommendations of public health officials and mental health professionals. One such example is the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline which, in a statement written by Dr. John Draper, asserts that “barriers are the most effective means of preventing suicides on bridges.”

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Building a barrier will make our community safer by removing one of the few very lethal means of suicide available to individuals when they are in suicidal crisis. A barrier on the bridge will allow time for suicidal impulses to pass and time for the person to get help. Furthermore, research demonstrates that there is no evidence that barriers will lead suicidal individuals to seek other methods and barriers may even reduce overall suicide rates in the area. Additionally, we recognize the bridge, in its current state, is a safety hazard to law enforcement and recovery teams who must respond to incidents on the bridge. Eliminating the bridge as a site for suicide will not only help protect those individuals in crisis, but also those officers who must put their own safety and wellbeing at risk to help these individuals.

While we do believe in the efficacy of restrictions of means in preventing suicide, we also agree with Dr. John Draper’s comments that “even if method substitution concerns were considered to be valid, the degree to which such concerns are relevant from the perspective of a bridge or transportation authority is highly questionable,” and “suggesting that bridge or transportation authorities should make an exception for bridge barriers due to method substitution is contrary to their typically responsible approach of employing the most effective measures to maximizing the safe use of their bridges, roads or highways.” The responsibility of CalTrans is not to prevent suicide in general, but to prevent deaths and injuries on state-owned structures. By constructing a barrier on the Cold Spring Bridge, CalTrans is fulfilling their responsibility to address serious safety issues on their property.

The Glendon Association has many years of experience serving as a community resource on suicide and violence. We recognize that education is an important part of suicide prevention and thus have produced numerous films and books on the topic and our lecturers travel nationally and internationally as experts in the field of suicidology. We have authored and published several assessment instruments to measure an individual’s intent for suicide and self-destructive thoughts. Glendon conducts education and awareness outreach in our

*Our mission is to save lives and help people create more meaningful lives by addressing the social problems of suicide, child abuse, violence, and troubled interpersonal relationships.*



## The Glendon Association

a 501(c)(3) California nonprofit corporation

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[www.glendon.org](http://www.glendon.org)

community by making available free literature and hosting public educational forums annually during National Suicide Prevention Month. Additionally, Glendon representatives have provided training for mental health professionals, first responders, public mental health officials, and crisis phone operators. We will continue to advocate for more attention to be paid to this serious issue.

Sincerely,

The Glendon Association  
5383 Hollister Ave, Ste 270  
Santa Barbara, CA 93111  
(805) 681-0415

Encl. "Suicide Prevention on Bridges: The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline Position"  
By John Draper PhD Director

*Our mission is to save lives and help people create more meaningful lives by addressing the social problems of suicide, child abuse, violence, and troubled interpersonal relationships.*



National Suicide Prevention Lifeline



**SUICIDE PREVENTION ON BRIDGES:  
THE NATIONAL SUICIDE PREVENTION LIFELINE POSITION**  
John Draper, Ph.D., Director, National Suicide Prevention Lifeline  
June 16, 2008

At the January 2008, National Suicide Prevention Lifeline Bi-Annual Steering Committee meeting, the Committee addressed the question:

*What is the position of the Lifeline Steering Committee on the use of bridge phones as the primary intervention to prevent bridge suicides?*

The Lifeline Steering Committee position is that the use of bridge barriers is the most effective means of bridge suicide prevention. Subsequently, as bridge/transportation authorities or other stakeholders approach the Lifeline with requests for implementing bridge phones, the Lifeline should emphasize the need for barriers as the most effective solution. In addition to “reducing access to lethal means” (barriers), the Lifeline recognizes that “promoting access to lifesaving means”—such as signage or other public education media near bridges that promotes awareness of hotlines (such as 273-TALK) or other suicide prevention services—is a **supplement** to bridge barriers.

Bridge or transportation authorities may choose to install bridge phones linked to local suicide prevention call centers as cost saving mechanisms over installing bridge barriers. Lifeline is **unable** to recommend this approach as the first most effective, empirically-validated course of action in preventing suicides from bridges.

**Background**

The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline is a national network of more than 130 independently operating crisis call centers linked to a series of toll-free lines, of which the most prominent is 800-273-TALK. Callers to this number are routed to the nearest networked center to them, and calls are answered by telephone helpers trained in suicide prevention who assess the caller’s risk, provide support, intervention and resource linkages, as needed. This service is administered by Link2Health Solutions, Inc., under a five-year grant provided by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). Link2Health’s administration of the program’s operations is aided by their partnership with the National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors (NASMHPD) and consultation with national experts in suicide prevention who act as members of the Lifeline’s Steering Committee and two Subcommittees (Standards Training and Practices Subcommittee and Consumer-Survivor Subcommittee).

Recently, Lifeline’s administrators asked its Steering Committee to address the role of the Lifeline and its crisis centers in consulting with transportation and bridge authorities seeking to implement bridge phones to prevent bridge-related suicides. Community debates have arisen over the most effective intervention for preventing persons from suicidal acts associated with bridge jumping. These debates are entangled with issues related to evidence-based practices, cost-effective measures, and personal opinions and agendas. The Lifeline has been brought into this debate over the past year by several state bridge authorities. These bridge authorities have been advised by one consultant



National Suicide Prevention Lifeline



who has supported the use of bridge telephones and not the use of bridge barriers as a first line of suicide prevention.

The Lifeline was first approached in the spring of 2007, when the New York State Bridge Authority (NYSBA) proposed to establish suicide prevention phones (using the Lifeline number) on five bridges in the Catskill region of the state. The NYSBA sought to effectively prevent suicides from occurring on these bridges and had reviewed a number of methods for addressing the problem. Erecting physical barriers had been ruled out by the NYSBA, due to claims that the structure and locations of the bridges prevented practical use of bridge barriers (e.g., weight and wind issues; snow trapping against the bridges, transportation hazards; safety inspection impediments). Based on a model proposed by a suicide prevention consultant, the NYSBA sought to combine the installation of Lifeline bridge phones in conjunction with a public education/awareness campaign promoting the Lifeline number.

Since completing installation in the summer of 2007, some media and the NYSBA have hailed the program as a success, and a “model for other bridge authorities around the nation”. This recognition has emerged in spite of a lack of current evidence clearly supporting the model’s effectiveness in significantly reducing overall suicides from the appointed bridge locations. However, as a consequence of a growing awareness of the NYSBA’s model, the Lifeline has been contacted by other bridge authorities in NYS, as well as other interested parties from Virginia to Santa Barbara, CA.

With the increasing interest in the NYSBA bridge phone model—and its concomitant promotion of Lifeline and/or local crisis centers as integral to this proposed solution to bridge suicides—Lifeline felt that it was critical to consult with its national Steering Committee for guidance on this issue. In light of convincing evidence supporting the efficacy of restricting access to lethal methods of suicide, the Lifeline Director expressed his concern that the propagation of bridge phone strategies could potentially undermine political will in support of bridge barriers. In the absence of a clear stance from the Lifeline that clearly considered the efficacy of barrier approaches, bridge phones and/or signage, a bridge or transportation authority might proceed with NYSBA-like approach without full knowledge of the evidence and experience known to Lifeline and other members of the suicide prevention community.

#### **Evidence: Bridge barriers effectively prevent bridge-related suicides**

- **Decades of research clearly demonstrate that bridge barriers effectively prevent suicides** (e.g., Beauvais, 2007; O’Carroll & Silverman, 1994). England’s National Institute of Mental Health examined “suicide hotspots” in a 2006 report analyzing appropriate interventions, including bridges in their analysis. In reviewing all suicide prevention approaches—barriers, signs and telephone hotlines, bridge patrols and staff trainings—they concluded that “The most effective form of prevention at jumping sites is a physical barrier, which literally restricts access to the drop”. Other illustrations include:



National Suicide Prevention Lifeline



- **Bloor Street Viaduct Bridge, Toronto.** By 2003, the 480 deaths by suicide from Toronto's Bloor Street Viaduct were second in number only to the Golden Gate Bridge, the most prominent location for bridge-related suicides in the world. Amidst mixed public opinion and efforts by some community groups to undermine the project, suicide prevention advocates succeeded in persuading the city to install "The Luminous Veil" barrier in 2003. There have been no suicides from the Viaduct since the barrier's installation (Zinko, 2005).
- **Duke Ellington Bridge, Washington, D.C.** Washington D.C. installed a barrier on the Duke Ellington Bridge in 1986, prompted by findings that an average of four persons per year had killed themselves by jumping from this structure. This was more than double the number of suicides reported from a neighboring bridge in D.C., the Taft Bridge. During the barrier's installation, one person died by suicide by jumping from the Ellington Bridge, and no other suicides by jumping occurred over the next five years. Over the same period, suicide rates from the non-barrier-restricted Taft Bridge remained unchanged (O'Carroll & Silverman, 1994).
- **Grafton Bridge, Auckland, New Zealand.** When safety barriers were removed from the Grafton Bridge in Auckland, New Zealand, the site experienced a five-fold increase in suicides. Subsequently, when the barriers were re-installed, no further suicides occurred, and other bridge sites did not demonstrate a "substitution effect" (e.g., an increase of suicides from other bridges as a result of barriers at the Grafton Bridge) (Beautrais, 2007).
- **Memorial Bridge, Augusta, Maine.** 14 suicides occurred from the Memorial Bridge in Augusta, Maine from 1960-1983. Since a barrier was erected in 1983, no further suicides have occurred from the bridge. The CDC researcher that examined the suicide prevention impact of the barrier noted that no other sites in the area registered an increase in suicides, suggesting no "site substitution". The researcher further concluded that the larger decline in the city's suicide rate compared with the rest of the state "further suggests that the fence was probably effective in lowering the overall suicide rate in Augusta" (Pelleteir, 2007).
- **Clifton Suspension Bridge, Bristol, England.** When a partial barrier on the Clifton Suspension Bridge was erected in Bristol, England, the overall number of suicides from the bridge was cut in half over a five year period. The researchers examining the barrier's efficacy recommended that a complete barrier would reduce the number of suicides further. They noted that these findings, along with evidence that no significant increases of jumping from other nearby bridges subsequently occurred, concluded that barriers are effective "in preventing site-specific suicides and suicides by jumping overall in the surrounding area" (Bennewith, Nowers & Gunnell, 2007).

It has been argued by some that installing barriers on bridges will only lead suicidal individuals to seek other methods (Glasgow, 2007). Some of the research above indicates that there is no evidence to support this assertion, while some appears to suggest findings to the contrary, e.g., that bridge barriers may reduce overall suicides in the surrounding area. A recent investigation of this hypothesis was deliberately undertaken through a national survey in Switzerland, whereby suicide rates from regions with and without "suicide bridges" were examined to estimate the degree to which "method substitution" might occur (Reisch, Shuster & Michel, 2007). The researchers found that regions with bridges attracted more "suicide jumpers" than regions without bridges, including regions with other buildings or high places where jumps are occurring. After applying a formula to



National Suicide Prevention Lifeline



analyze the comparison, the authors estimated that 62% of individuals would not choose another place to jump from, and concluded overall that “method substitution” would not be significant (Reisch et al.2007). This finding supported the authors’ earlier investigations concluding that bridge barriers effectively reduce suicides in the regions where they are installed (Reisch & Michel, 2005). Similarly, a study of 515 persons who were restrained from leaping off the Golden Gate Bridge over a period of 40 years found that nearly 94% were still alive at the time of the investigation or had died from natural causes (Seiden, 1978). In general, research has shown that persons thwarted in utilizing a preferred method of suicide do not typically seek other approaches to kill him/her self (Daigle, 2005).

Even if method substitution concerns were considered to be valid, the degree to which such concerns are relevant from the perspective of a bridge or transportation authority is highly questionable. In general, opponents of barriers that cite the “method substitution” criticism are implying that a bridge or transportation authority should factor overall community suicide prevention effectiveness into their decision-making process. However, the primary responsibility of such authorities is to better ensure that commuters using their highways, bridges, tunnels or overpasses are protected from safety hazards. To the degree that individuals are killing themselves on their property and research shows that specific structures such as barriers can effectively prevent them from doing so, their serious consideration of barrier installation should therefore be paramount. Certainly, the installation of traffic lights, stop signs, warning and street lights are designed for the very purpose of reducing fatalities in areas considered to be vulnerable to travelers. How might the public respond if a transportation authority rejected a proposal to install a traffic light at a dangerous intersection because “accident-prone drivers would simply get in an accident elsewhere”? Suggesting that bridge or transportation authorities should make exceptions for bridge barriers due to method substitution is contrary to their typically responsible approach of employing the most effective measures to maximizing the safe use of their bridges, roads or highways.

In addition to preventing suicides from bridges, transportation authorities have noted that barriers may have other safety benefits to bridge users. In reviewing a proposal to build a barrier on the Cold Spring Canyon Arch Bridge near Santa Barbara, the CalTrans authority determined that a barrier would protect riders and hikers from falling over the rail under windy conditions, and traffic safety would improve by reducing the risk of cars parked on the bridge deck by would-be jumpers (CalTrans Report, 2008). In a personal communication with the Tappan Zee Bridge Authority in New York, their plan to raise the railing was motivated by a need to support their structure’s safety for vehicles first, with the secondary benefit of adding a degree of difficulty for would-be jumpers (personal communication with Ramesh Mehta, 4/29/2008).

#### **Are suicide prevention phones on bridges effective?**

Aside from the structural or cost issues related to installing bridge barriers, there is another reason that bridge phone proponents have supported their implementation. A suicide prevention consultant to the NYSBA bridge phone initiative stated his view on the subject in a letter to the CalTrans Authority, in response to a challenge to this approach by the Glendon Association, a Santa Barbara area suicide prevention organization:



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*The Glendon Association has given the impression that NYSBA did not choose to install suicide prevention barriers on its bridges due to maintenance and traffic concerns, such as snowplowing and bridge inspections. While these factors did play a role in our decision, there was a fundamental reason that NYSBA did not opt to install barriers: suicide prevention barriers are an inferior solution to the problem of suicides on bridges. Suicide prevention measures that place the suicidal individual in touch with another human being are the preferred method for preventing suicide. Such a 'human barrier' will outperform any physical barrier and save more lives (Speilman, G. in letter submitted to CalTrans, January 9, 2008)*

Recent research has shown that crisis hotlines can reduce suicidal thinking, with some users reporting that calls to hotlines prevented them from killing themselves (Gould, Kalafat, Munfakh & Kleinman, 2007). In the New Forest region of the United Kingdom, hotlines and signage promoting their use were placed in select car parks due to data showing significant numbers of car-exhaust-related suicides at those locations. A three-year evaluation of the initiative found both a significant drop in car-exhaust suicides at those car parks and a reduction of suicides in New Forest, in general (King & Frost, 2005).

However, is it true that bridge phones on “suicide bridges”, in particular, can “outperform barriers” in preventing suicides from these locations?

Some answers to this question are suggested by the experience of using bridge phones in New York. Glatt (1987) reported that 30 of 39 would-be jumpers called the Dutchess County suicide prevention bridge phone on the Mid-Hudson Bridge in New York over a two-year period. The 30 bridge-phone callers were typically ambivalent and receptive to help, with only one later dying by suicide. Of the non-callers from the bridge, five subsequently leapt to their death. The NYSBA’s installation of the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline bridge phones on five bridges in the Catskill region of New York in 2007 linked to the same Dutchess County crisis line, a member center of the Lifeline network. Since the lines have been installed, calls from the bridge have led to two rescues of suicidal individuals. However, at least two suicides have occurred from the bridges since the phones were installed. In addition, New York’s Tappan Zee Bridge partially adopted the NYSBA’s model and installed Lifeline bridge phones, though they did not include signage or handouts prominently promoting the Lifeline number to commuters. Since their installation in 2007, the phones have not been used, and four individuals have killed themselves by jumping off the bridge.

The experience of installing crisis/suicide phones on bridges in other regions has also shown inconsistent efficacy in preventing bridge-related suicides. Some of the examples are chronicled below.

- **Golden Gate Bridge, San Francisco.** Since crisis/suicide hotline phones were installed on the Golden Gate Bridge in 1993, there have been at least 380 suicides from that location through 2007 (Trumbull, 2005).
- **Sunshine Skyway Bridge, Saint Petersburg, Florida.** Since crisis phones were implemented on the Sunshine Skyway Bridge in Saint Petersburg, Florida to prevent suicides from that structure, 22 people jumped to their deaths from the bridge in the following three years (Jones, 2003).



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- **Coronado Bay Bridge, San Diego.** Suicide prevention call boxes and signs promoting their use on the Coronado Bay Bridge in San Diego have not led to a reduction of suicides at that location (CalTrans Report, 2008).

While it may be true that suicide hotline call boxes on “suicide-prone bridges” have successfully prevented suicide for individuals who have chosen to use them, it is also clear that many suicides have occurred from bridges where they have been present. Placing a hotline phone on a bridge provides a “rescue option” for suicidal individuals who are knowingly ambivalent. However, for other persons who come to the bridge that are consumed with psychological pain and intent on dying, relying on them to pick up the phone in that climactic moment places too much confidence in their capacity to still make a rational choice. By analogy, imagine a roadway that dead-ends into a cliff, with a canyon below. Would it make more sense to put a clear, large “STOP” sign at the edge of a cliff, with the hope that a speeding driver might slow down in time, or would it be more reasonable to erect a solid barricade blocking access further up the road?

**Are signs on or near bridges promoting suicide hotlines effective in preventing bridge suicides?**

In extending the previous analogy, imagine a roadway sign placed a mile ahead of the cliff that read something like, “Road ends in 1 mile; Detour ½ mile ahead”, with signs following that led the traveler to an intersecting road for continuing safe passage. A similar bridge suicide prevention strategy has been used which employs signs near a “suicide-prone bridge” offering a number intended to “detour” persons in crisis to hotline services. The suicide prevention logic of providing such a “detour”—instead of implementing barriers—is further stated in Mr. Spielman’s letter to CalTrans:

*Physical barriers...do nothing to address the suicidal condition of the person who might be tempted to jump from the bridge. Unlike the live voice at the receiving end [of a telephone], a physical barrier does not give a desperate person a reason to live or serve as a listening post for the real or imagined motives for being on the bridge....By relying solely on an inanimate object to ‘save a life’, an opportunity to identify and help a suicidal individual is lost.*

Placing signs promoting a hotline number near bridges could encourage people in crisis to call for help from their home, their car, or some location removed from the perilous precipice of the bridge. It is likely that most suicidal persons who select a specific bridge from which to jump have traveled across that bridge repeatedly, or “cased the bridge” previously in planning their suicide. Exposing persons in crisis to hotline information well before an imminent jump is clearly preferable to providing a suicidal individual with a chance to get help exclusively from a phone on a bridge.

It may also be advisable for such signage near bridges to avoid explicitly mentioning suicide, to minimize reinforcing public associations between the structure and these tragic past events. Less explicit wording can also invite non-suicidal individuals in crisis to call and get help before they are suicidal.

The NYSBA supplemented their billboards with other information and materials promoting the Lifeline to nearby residents. The NYSBA advertised the Lifeline on local newspaper web sites for



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up to a year, such as Mid-Hudson News.com. That banner ad linking to the Lifeline's web site received 62,859 views in August 2007 alone, according to a personal communication from the NYSBA's Communications Director, John Bellucci (9/25/2007). Additionally, the NYSBA provide Lifeline wallet cards (complete with suicide warning signs) at commuter toll booths near the bridges that are dispensed to inquiring travelers that have expressed curiosity about the billboard messages. Approximately a year after introducing the initiative, the NYSBA has reported handing out 750 wallet cards at their toll booths, and have ordered more cards to replenish their supply (Bellucci, personal communication, 5/1/2008).

Is there evidence, however, that such signage and promotional information reduces suicides on bridges? It is possible that such information campaigns require time to register a clear impact, as their focus is more "prevention" than "intervention". With the NYSBA initiative now only a year old, it may be too early to gauge its long-term effect on nearby community suicide rates. Overall, there are few evaluations that have explicitly examined this approach. The Coronado Bay Bridge in San Diego employed a similar model using bridge phones and public awareness signage, to little effect. Perhaps the closest evidence suggesting the potential efficacy of this method is the previously cited research showing a reduction in suicides in car parks and the surrounding New Forest community following the implementation of hotline awareness signs and phones in car parks.

Nevertheless, the compelling logic of "promoting access to lifesaving means" (e.g., hotlines) in no way undermines the argument for implementing approaches to "restricting access to lethal means" (e.g., bridge barriers). Rather than contrasting the effectiveness of these approaches, a strong case can be made for their complementary impact on suicide prevention if employed in tandem. As barriers can most effectively keep suicidal persons from jumping off bridges, nearby hotline information can, as Mr. Spielman might also say, point such desperate persons to an empathic voice that can help them find a reason to live.

### Conclusion

Transportation and bridge authorities around the nation have been under enormous pressure to address "suicide-prone bridges" under their auspices. They face a wide variety of challenges in determining the appropriate method for preventing further suicides from occurring on their property. As noted by the NYSBA and other bridge authorities, among the considerations they face in considering barriers and alternative methods include: structural and weight issues; potential weather hazards (snow removal, wind factors); safety concerns related to bridge and barrier maintenance; high costs of barrier installation; and impassioned advocates from suicide prevention circles, as well as community residents seeking to preserve the historic, environmental and/or scenic vista of the bridges in their current state (Bellucci, personal communication, 4/29/2008). Increasingly, local crisis lines as well as the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline are consulted by bridge authorities and/or community advocates to discern both the feasibility and efficacy of linking bridge phones to their services for the purposes of preventing further suicides from such locations. This paper is intended to provide reasonable perspectives and research that might help guide Lifeline and its network of centers in their response to such inquiries.



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Based on the current state of the research, physical barriers are an effective means of preventing suicides on bridges. Further, there is no evidence that barriers on bridges lead to “method substitution” for would-be jumpers. In contrast, bridge phones and other “human barrier” methods have not shown comparable success in significantly reducing bridge suicides in any known situation where they have been implemented. In consulting with bridge or transportation authorities, it is therefore suggested that the Lifeline and its network of crisis centers recommend bridge barrier installation as the most effective bridge suicide prevention approach. In order to promote awareness of resources for help, it is further suggested that Lifeline and its network centers recommend that bridge or transportation authorities support the dissemination of public education materials, signage or other information about hotlines or other local suicide prevention assistance, as appropriate. However, the latter recommendation is best seen as a supplement to a barrier, as it alone is unlikely to significantly reduce bridge suicides. Above all, it should be made clear to inquiring authorities: **barriers are the most effective means of preventing suicides on bridges.**

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### ***Response to Comments from The Glendon Association***

Thank you for your comments on the project. Your support for the project has been noted.

**Response to comment #1:** Your recommendation that the installation of a physical barrier would be the most effective method to reduce the number of suicides on the Cold Spring Canyon Bridge and your recommendations for the general dimensions and shape of effective suicide barriers were supported by research, including validation from an often-referenced suicidologist, Richard H. Seiden, Ph.D., M.P.H., formerly of UC Berkeley, where he conducted studies of San Francisco Bay Area suicides.

Also, the position paper you have enclosed with your letter from John Draper, Ph.D., Director of the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline, supporting physical barriers over crisis hotlines as the best measure to reduce bridge suicides has been cited in the final EIR/EA.



"Paula Clayton"  
<PClayton@afsp.org>  
Sent by: "Wylie Tene"  
<wtene@afsp.org>

To <Cathy\_Stettler@dot.ca.gov>

cc

bcc

06/06/2008 09:11 AM

Subject Cold Spring Bridge Suicide Prevention Barrier - Letter of Support

History: This message has been forwarded.



American Foundation  
for Suicide Prevention

June 6, 2008

Cathy Stettler - Senior Environmental Planner  
Central Coast Environmental Analysis  
California Department of Transportation  
Via email: Cathy\_Stettler@dot.ca.gov

Dear Ms. Steller:

As the leading national not-for-profit organization exclusively dedicated to understanding and preventing suicide through research and education, the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention supports the building of suicide prevention barriers.

Considering that suicide by jumping tends to be more impulsive in nature than other methods of suicide, barriers work by giving individuals and those who care for them something they desperately need – time; time to change their mind, time for someone to intervene and time to seek help. Despite the many myths and misconceptions about suicide, many who die by suicide don't want to die. Rather, they are seeking an end to the psychic pain and debilitating symptoms caused by a mood disorder, most often major depression.

A study supported by our Foundation (see attached, Gunnell et al) examined the effectiveness of a suicide barrier on a bridge in England known for suicides. According to this study, barriers worked at reducing suicide, especially among young men. Furthermore, the research shows that jumps did not increase from other nearby bridges – another common myth. Additional studies regarding suicide prevention barriers on bridges, of which there are numerous throughout the world, continue to show that barriers save lives.

Furthermore, a suicide at a public location such as a bridge often receives more media coverage than suicide by other means, which can contribute to suicide contagion or "copycats", hence increasing suicides at that location. An effective barrier would reduce suicides and the subsequent media coverage, thus helping remove the allure of the Cold Spring Bridge as a suicide hotspot.

We hope you will move forward with erecting an effective suicide prevention barrier. Together we can save lives.

Sincerely,

Paula J. Clayton, M.D.  
American Foundation for Suicide Prevention  
Medical Director  
120 Wall St., 22<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
New York, NY 10005



Bennewith 2007 Clifton Bridge Barriers.pdf

## Effect of barriers on the Clifton suspension bridge, England, on local patterns of suicide: implications for prevention

OLIVE BENNEWITH, MIKE NOWERS and DAVID GUNNELL

**Summary** We assessed the effect of the installation of barriers on the Clifton suspension bridge, Bristol, England, in 1998 on local suicides by jumping. Deaths from this bridge halved from 8.2 per year (1994–1998) to 4.0 per year (1999–2003;  $P=0.008$ ). Although 90% of the suicides from the bridge were by males, there was no evidence of an increase in male suicide by jumping from other sites in the Bristol area after the erection of the barriers. This study provides evidence for the effectiveness of barriers on bridges in preventing site-specific suicides and suicides by jumping overall in the surrounding area.

**Declaration of interest** None.

A number of sites around the world, particularly bridges, have gained notoriety as places from which suicide by jumping is popular (Gunnell & Nowers, 1997). As many acts of self-harm are impulsive in nature (Mann, 2003), restricting access to commonly used methods can result in reductions in both method-specific and overall suicide rates.

While two studies have found barriers to be effective in the prevention of suicide by jumping from particular bridges (O'Carroll *et al.*, 1994; Beautrais, 2001) neither study investigated thoroughly the effects on suicide by jumping from other sites nearby and overall suicides. In December 1998, two metre-high wire barriers were installed on the main span of the Clifton suspension bridge in Bristol. For architectural reasons similar protective measures were not placed on the buttress walls at either end of the bridge (a photograph of the bridge is available as a data supplement to the online version of this paper). We used local and national suicide data to assess the effectiveness of these barriers in suicide prevention.

### METHOD

The Clifton suspension bridge is located at the centre of the geographic area served by the Bristol coroner (Nowers & Gunnell, 1996). The bridge is over 6 km from the nearest psychiatric hospital; it is 75 m above the river and the case fatality of jumps from the bridge is over 95%.

Coroners' inquest files were examined to obtain information on all suicides occurring in the Bristol area, 5 years before (1994–1998) and 5 years after (1999–2003) the installation of the barriers. All deaths with an inquest verdict of suicide were included in the study. Records of deaths given an open, accidental or misadventure verdict by the coroner were also examined, as previous research suggests that some deaths that are likely to be suicide are given such verdicts for legal reasons (O'Donnell & Farmer, 1995). For cases given these verdicts, vignettes describing the events leading up to the death were written (O.B.). The likelihood (high, medium, low or unclear) that these deaths were suicide was rated independently by D.G. and M.N., masked to the year of death. Only cases rated as medium or high likelihood were included in the study. Where the raters disagreed in their initial coding, consensus was reached through discussion. Of the 451 cases given a verdict other than suicide (open,  $n=189$ ; accident or misadventure,  $n=260$ ; no verdict,  $n=2$ ), independent ratings by D.G. and M.N. resulted in agreement on inclusion or exclusion in 383 (84.9%) cases. After discussion a consensus on inclusion or exclusion was reached in the remaining 68 cases. We did not examine the coroner's files for accidental acute alcohol poisonings or deaths from illegal drug use or methadone poisoning, as determining the possibility of suicide in such deaths is particularly problematic.

For all cases of suicide information was obtained on the person's date of death, age and gender. To compute local and national

rates of suicide, relevant population and mortality data were obtained from the Office for National Statistics on: (a) the number of suicides by jumping in England and Wales: ICD-10 codes X80 and Y30 (World Health Organization, 1992); (b) the overall number of suicides in England and Wales: ICD-10 codes X60–X84, Y10–Y34 excluding Y33.9 (where verdict pending); (c) population figures for the years 1994 to 2003.

Statistical analyses were carried out using Stata version 8.2 for Windows. Poisson regression was used to compare the number of deaths by jumping in the years before and after the construction of the barriers.

### RESULTS

There were 987 suicides in the Bristol area over the 10-year study period. Of these deaths, 134 (13.6%) were suicides by jumping, 61 from the Clifton suspension bridge. There were a further 4 deaths where both the location of the body or skeletal remains and indications of trauma suggested that the person might have fallen from the bridge ( $n=3$ ) or from nearby cliffs ( $n=1$ ). All these deaths occurred before the barriers were erected, were given open verdicts and the remains were never identified; none of these deaths was included in subsequent analyses.

The number of deaths by jumping from the Clifton suspension bridge halved (from 41 to 20;  $P=0.008$ ) in the 5 years after the construction of the barriers compared with the previous 5 years (Table 1). Ninety per cent (55 of 61) of the people who died in this way were male, and the decline in deaths was seen in men only.

Before the barriers were erected (1994–1998) 30 of the 31 suicides (97%) for which the site of the jump was recorded were from the span of the bridge and only one (3%) from the buttresses. In the subsequent 5 years nearly half (8/17) of the jumps for which the site was recorded were from the buttresses where no fencing was in place. In the 5 years after the construction of the barriers there was a non-significant increase compared with the previous 5 years in the number of deaths by jumping from sites other than the suspension bridge: from 6.2 deaths per year to 8.4 deaths per year ( $P=0.2$ ). This increase was entirely due to a rise in female deaths by jumping – in keeping with national trends in female suicide by jumping (see Table 1).

There was a non-significant fall in the mean number of deaths per year (14.4 to 12.4;  $P=0.4$ ) by jumping from all sites in the area across the two study periods. This fall was due to a reduction in male ( $P=0.017$ ) suicides by jumping. There was an increase in suicides by jumping among women ( $P=0.001$ ). There was no change in the overall rate of suicide among those resident in the area during the periods before and after the placement of the barriers on the bridge: mean annual rate 11.2 per 100 000 *v.* 10.5 per 100 000, difference  $-0.7$  (95% CI  $-1.9$  to  $0.9$ ),  $P=0.39$ . This was the case for both men (difference  $-1.8$  per 100 000, 95% CI  $-1.7$  to  $0.9$ ) and women (difference  $0.4$  per 100 000, 95% CI  $-0.9$  to  $2.1$ ).

## DISCUSSION

The number of deaths by jumping from the Clifton suspension bridge halved following the installation of the preventive barriers.

**Table 1** Suicides by jumping before (1994–98) and after (1999–2003) the installation of preventive barriers on the Clifton suspension bridge

Site of suicide by jumping	1994–1998	1999–2003	Difference in means (95% CI) <sup>1</sup>	P
<b>Clifton suspension bridge</b>				
<b>All suicides</b>				
Deaths/year, mean	8.2	4.0	$-4.2$ ( $-5.9$ to $-1.4$ )	0.008
Total deaths	41	20		
<b>Male</b>				
Deaths/year, mean	8.0	3.0	$-5.0$ ( $-2.6$ to $-6.3$ )	0.001
Total deaths	40	15		
<b>Female</b>				
Deaths/year, mean	0.2	1.0	$0.8$ ( $-0.08$ to $0.4$ )	0.1
Total deaths	1	5		
<b>Sites in Bristol other than the suspension bridge</b>				
<b>All suicides</b>				
Deaths/year, mean	6.2	8.4	$2.2$ ( $-0.9$ to $7.2$ )	0.2
Total deaths	31	42		
<b>Male</b>				
Deaths/year, mean	5.2	5.2	$0$ ( $2.2$ to $-3.8$ )	1.0
Total deaths	26	26		
<b>Female</b>				
Deaths/year, mean	1.0	3.2	$2.2$ ( $0.2$ to $7.7$ )	0.023
Total deaths	5	16		
<b>All sites in England and Wales (rates per 100 000)</b>				
All suicides	0.34	0.36	$0.02$ ( $0.01$ to $0.06$ )	0.2
Male	0.54	0.53	$-0.01$ ( $-0.07$ to $0.06$ )	0.8
Female	0.15	0.20	$0.05$ ( $0.01$ to $0.10$ )	0.005

1. Poisson regression analyses.

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(First received 6 June 2006, final revision 6 November 2006, accepted 14 November 2006)

Although there was a decrease overall in the number of deaths by jumping in the area among men, this was not the case for women. However, any impact on female suicide rates would be expected to be minimal, as only one woman jumped from the bridge in the 5 years prior to the installation of the barriers and national data suggest that suicide by jumping among females is increasing, although the proportional increase across the two study periods was higher in the Bristol area.

This study provides evidence for the preventive role of barriers on bridges. There

was some evidence that the presence of the barriers did not lead to an increase in deaths by jumping from other sites. The case-fatality rate among those jumping from the Clifton bridge is greater than 95%. Therefore, any displacement of people deterred from jumping to other methods of suicidal behaviour is likely to have a beneficial effect on levels of suicide, because no other method is associated with such a high case fatality. In view of continued suicides from some parts of the Clifton suspension bridge structure, further work to improve the safety of the site is warranted.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We thank Mr Paul Forrest, HM Coroner for Avon, staff employed at the coroner's office, and Ms Alison Brown and search room staff at the Bristol Records Office, for their help in accessing suicide data. Local and national population data and national suicide data were provided by the Office for National Statistics for England and Wales. The study was funded by the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention.

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***Response to Comments from Paula J. Clayton, M.D., American Foundation for Suicide Prevention***

Thank you for your comments on the project. Your support for the project has been noted. The study of the effectiveness of barriers on the Clifton Suspension Bridge on local patterns of suicide you discussed and enclosed with your letter was referenced in Section 2.1.1 of the draft EIR/EA.

Appendix F • Comments and Responses



"Mark Chaffee"  
<markch@roadrunner.com>  
06/03/2008 05:47 PM

To <cathy\_stettler@dot.ca.gov>  
cc <lfirestone@glendon.org>  
bcc  
Subject Cold Springs Brdige Barrier Project

History: This message has been forwarded.

Dear Ms. Stettler,

Suicide Prevention Advocacy Network - California (SPAN-CA) emphatically supports all efforts to reduce suicide by limiting access to lethal means. This is a key component to any comprehensive plan to prevent suicide and is included in the California Suicide Prevention Plan that will soon be published by the Department of Mental Health.

The Cold Springs Bridge Barrier Project is a perfect example of how we can reduce suicide by limiting compulsive behavior. Barriers are an effective strategy and the Cold Springs Bridge barrier should be built. If we, as a society, have an opportunity to save lives, then we must take that opportunity. Aesthetics be damned.

SPAN-CA urges CalTrans to fund and complete this project as soon as possible.

Mark Chaffee, President  
Suicide Prevention Advocacy Network - California



"Doyel, Lauren [FWI]"  
<LDoyel@fugro.com>  
06/19/2008 06:10 PM

To <andrewmachen@rivsan.com>  
cc <Cathy\_Stettler@dot.ca.gov>, "Wayne Fitch"  
<wff@penfieldsmith.com>, "Linda Sumansky"  
<lsumansky@santabarbaraca.gov>  
bcc  
Subject Comments on Draft EIR Cold Spring Canyon Suicide Barrier  
from Santa Barbara-Ventura Branch, ASCE

History: This message has been forwarded.

Dear Andy:

During my tenure as President and now Past-President for the Santa Barbara-Ventura branch of the Los Angeles Section of ASCE, I have received and reviewed the Caltrans proposal for the Cold Spring Canyon Bridge Suicide Barrier. This bridge was designated a historical engineering landmark by the ASCE LA Section. I was not sure what to do with the Draft EIR report, and intended to forward it sooner to the LA Section Historical Committee, but did not realize the formal comment period was ending so soon on June 24, 2008. I am sending you my comments herein, and cc'ing Cathy Stettler at CalTrans, who is receiving formal comments. The link to project information and Draft EIR is as follows:  
[http://www.dot.ca.gov/dist05/projects/sb\\_cold\\_springs/index.html](http://www.dot.ca.gov/dist05/projects/sb_cold_springs/index.html)

I have already submitted comments on behalf of the Santa Barbara Ventura Branch of ASCE, via email and telephone call over a year ago, when the document was being prepared. These comments are to the effect that civil engineering structures are meant to serve the public and that if there was a functional flaw that needed correcting to protect the safety of the public, then that purpose should be paramount. My husband, who works for the County of Santa Barbara County Behavioral Health Dept, says that there are actually quite a few suicides off this bridge. There are not really many options since blocking pedestrian access to the bridge by making the sidewalks inaccessible will not stop someone from walking out on the bridge and jumping off, or stopping mid-bridge in their car, exiting and doing the same. What is needed to prevent this is a barrier along the length of both sides of the bridge, which is what is planned.

The proposed barrier will not compromise the structural integrity of the bridge, nor will it alter the essence of the bridge that caused it to be named a historical civil engineering structure. Visually, when looking at the bridge from a distance, the barrier will not be noticeable. It will only be noticeable when driving across the bridge, where the current unobstructed view of the Valley will be diminished, but not eliminated. And really, on that bridge, you should be looking at the road, not the views, because it is very narrow and has two-way single traffic.

The only other alternative I have ever heard of to barriers is a Swiss example, as my daughter observed on one very high midtown bridge in Lausanne, Switzerland. This last Christmas she saw and spoke to two psychologists stationed in a shack midway across the bridge on the sidewalk, where during the holiday seasons, they are stationed for 8 hour shifts. Their sole job is to look out for jumpers, make hot cocoa for people, and counsel them to prevent suicides.

It is my professional judgment that by supporting construction of the suicide barriers, ASCE would be upholding Canon 1 of the ASCE Civil Engineering Code of Ethics.

**Guidelines to Practice Under the Fundamental Canons of Ethics**  
**CANON 1.**

Engineers shall hold paramount the safety, health and welfare of the public and shall strive to comply with the principles of sustainable development in the performance of their professional duties.

1. Engineers shall recognize that the lives, safety, health and welfare of the general public

are dependent upon engineering judgments, decisions and practices incorporated into structures, machines, products, processes and devices.

2. Engineers should seek opportunities to be of constructive service in civic affairs and work for the advancement of the safety, health and well-being of their communities, and the protection of the environment through the practice of sustainable development.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment. I hope that you will pass these comments on as you see fit, and if you feel necessary, add your own comments.

**Lauren J. Doyel, P.E.**

*Past President, ASCE  
Santa Barbara Ventura Branch, Los Angeles Section*

*Associate Engineer  
Fugro West, Inc.*

4820 Mcgrath Street, Suite 100  
Ventura, CA 93003  
TEL: 805.289.3839  
CELL: 805.208.1911  
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www.fugrowest.com

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***Response to Comments from Mark Chaffee, President of the Suicide Prevention Advocacy Network-California, and Lauren J. Doyel, P.E., Past President American Society of Civil Engineers, Santa Barbara Ventura Branch***

Thank you for your comments on the project. Your support for the project has been noted.



deforek@aol.com  
06/16/2008 04:20 PM

To: Cathy\_Stettler@dot.ca.gov  
cc  
bcc  
Subject: Cold Spring Bridge

History: This message has been forwarded.

Cathy Stettler, Senior Environmental Planner  
Central Coast Environmental Analysis  
California Department of Transportation  
50 Higuera Street  
San Luis Obispo CA 93104

June 9, 2008

DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT - COLD SPRING CANYON BRIDGE  
SUICIDE BARRIER  
05-SB-154-PM 22.9/23.1

Dear Ms Stettler:

On January 2, 2008, the Pearl Chase Society wrote your Director, Richard Krumholz, pointing out the historic significance of the Bridge and asking that the visual beauty of this architectural gem and the vistas from its motor-way be preserved.

The Society appreciates Caltrans recognition in the Draft EIR of the historical and visual significance of the bridge but objects to the proposal of a physical suicide barrier. Our Society dedicated to preserving Santa Barbara's historic architecture, landscapes and cultural heritage can not support any project that compromises any structure that is eligible for the National Register for Historic Places and is nominated as a Santa Barbara County Landmark.

1

The significant impacts both visual and historic that would be caused by this proposed barrier project make the No-Build Alternative the one favored by the Pearl Chase Society.

2

Kellam de Forest  
Chairman, Preservation Committee  
Pearl Chase Society

**Response to Comments from Kellam de Forest, Chairman, Preservation Committee, Pearl Chase Society**

Thank you for your comments on the project. Your opposition to the project has been noted.

**Response to comment #1:** Caltrans acknowledges the uniqueness and character of the existing Cold Spring Canyon Bridge. In accordance with state and federal environmental laws and policies, Caltrans initiated the process that resulted in the determination that the Cold Spring Canyon Bridge is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. The State Historic Preservation Officer agreed with this determination on August 13, 2007. Please see Appendix E for a copy of the Letter of Concurrence from the State Historic Preservation Officer.

Many of the features of the bridge that make it eligible for the National Register of Historic Places cannot be seen while you are driving on the bridge itself. The most significant historical aspects of the Cold Spring Canyon Bridge can only be viewed from below the bridge; that view would remain virtually unchanged. The physical alteration to the historic fabric of the bridge itself would be limited to bolt holes to attach the barrier.

Although the Historic Landmarks Advisory Commission has put the nomination of the Cold Spring Canyon Bridge as a Santa Barbara County Landmark on their agenda since August 2007, as of October 2008, no definitive action has been taken on this proposal. The designation of the Cold Spring Canyon Bridge as a Santa Barbara County Landmark, however, would not alter the findings of this EIR/EA.

**Response to comment #2:** Caltrans has noted your opposition to the project and support for the No-Build Alternative.

Note: Following is the first of two emails from Mr. Marc McGinnes, Friends of the Bridge, dated June 23, 2008, which includes 65 pages of attachments including comment letters from Mr. Gregory Mohr and Dr. Garrett Glasgow which are responded to separately in this Appendix; his second letter dated June 24, 2008, includes two pages of attachments.



Marc McGinnes  
<mcginnes@es.ucsb.edu>  
06/23/2008 09:14 PM

To Cathy\_Stettler@dot.ca.gov  
cc  
bcc

Subject Comments on DEIR/EA

History: This message has been forwarded.

Greetings:

Friends of the Bridge, an unincorporated association, makes the following comments in relation to the DEIR/EA prepared in connection with the deeply flawed and fiscally irresponsible proposal by Caltrans to install barriers on the Cold Spring Canyon Bridge:

Attached hereto and incorporated herein by this reference are the following documents:

Comments dated June 17, 2008, of Gregory Mohr;

Comments dated June 20, 2008, of Garrett Glasgow; and

1

Each of the following documents previously submitted to and received by Caltrans and made a part of the administrative record in connection with this matter:

Mtg22may06, Proj Init From, AlternativeProposal, CSB suicide stats, memo 18aug06, Memo funding, Funds source, Glasgow report, Spielmann comment, NYSBA Suicide Prev, Glasgow Report #2, Response to Alternat, Valley Alliance letter, LTCaltrans1feb08

The administrative record clearly discloses that Caltrans is attempting to perpetrate a bait-and-switch scheme. First, Caltrans justified its proposal primarily on the basis that it would save many lives, and then when it was shown that such a claim lacked a basis in fact, it switched its pitch to assert that stopping a relatively few suicides from the bridge, rather than saving any lives at all, was its purpose. That and with protecting the safety of persons responding to occasional suicidal behavior on the bridge.

2

Caltrans does not, of course, know much of anything about suicidal behavior on bridges generally, and it has clearly demonstrated that it knew even less about the frequency of suicide at the Cold Spring Canyon Bridge and the effect that barriers on the bridge might have at the time it initiated its proposal.

3

Rather than do the sensible thing and hire a qualified expert on the relative merits of alternative means to address suicidal behavior on bridges, Caltrans let themselves be drawn into the company of uninformed zealots determined to see barriers installed on the bridge at any cost. The zealotry of Caltrans Traffic Safety Officer Nevin Sams was such that he sought and received permission to continue working on the barriers project on his own time after his retirement, and one of the more shocking aspects of this sordid tale is the fact that Caltrans officials were willing to let him do so until the public learned about this bizarre and inappropriate arrangement at the Caltrans event in Santa Barbara on July 25, 2007.

But the worst kind of uninformed zealotry was practiced in this case by the Glendon Association which misinformed Caltrans about the research on the

question of the effectiveness of bridge barriers in saving lives. Considering the magnitude of their misinformation, it is difficult if not impossible to understand how Glendon continues to serve as a member of the Project Development Team for this proposal right up to the present moment. As of this date, more than \$500,000 of taxpayer money has been diverted by this proposal because of the uninformed zealotry that has characterized this matter from the beginning.

As the administrative record also shows, Caltrans failed to properly address in its DEIR/EA the "Proposed Project Alternative" submitted to it several months ago by Friends of the Bridge. Its attempts to avoid a complete description and analysis of it is contrary to its legal obligations under CEQA. Particulars about this unlawful avoidance are set forth in comments incorporated herein by reference. Where in the DEIR/EA did Caltrans take cognizance of the successful no-barriers plan of the New York State Bridge Authority that was submitted by Friends of the Bridge to Caltrans or to the comments of its designer Gary Spielmann, the only qualified suicide prevention expert on no-barrier approaches to suicidal behavior on bridges who has offered evidence into the administrative record in this case?

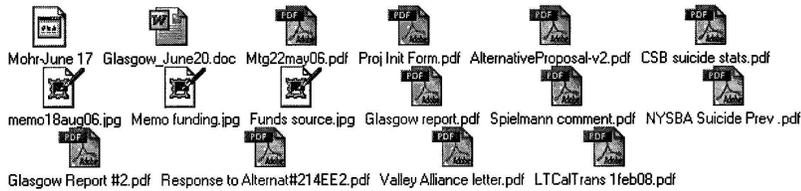
4

Where in the DEIR/EA is there the legally required description and discussion of mitigation measures to address the significant adverse impacts associated with the installation of barriers? As the 45-day public comment period expires, Caltrans has failed in its duty to disclose its proposed measures so that the same may be reviewed and commented upon by the public and interested agencies. For that reason, Friends of the Bridge believes that the DEIR/EA was prematurely released for circulation and comment, and that it must be revised and recirculated.

5

Kindly acknowledge your receipt of these comments and all attached documentation at your earliest opportunity.

Marc McGinnes  
For Friends of the Bridge

  
Mohr June 17 Glasgow June 20.doc Mtg 22 May 06.pdf Proj Init Form.pdf Alternative Proposal-v2.pdf CSB suicide stats.pdf  
memo 18 Aug 06.jpg Memo funding.jpg Funds source.jpg Glasgow report.pdf Spielmann comment.pdf NYSBA Suicide Prev.pdf  
Glasgow Report #2.pdf Response to Alternat#214EE2.pdf Valley Alliance letter.pdf LTCalTrans 1feb08.pdf

3069 Calle Mariposa  
Santa Barbara, California 93105-2740  
June 17, 2008

Ms. Cathy Stettler, Senior Environmental Planner  
Caltrans District 5  
50 Higuera Street  
San Luis Obispo, California 93401

Via U.S. Mail and e-mail attachment (cathy\_stettler@dot.ca.gov)

RE: Comments on Draft Environmental Impact Report, Environmental Assessment  
and Section 4(f) Evaluation, Proposed Suicide Barrier on Cold Spring Canyon  
Arch Bridge, State Highway 154, Santa Barbara County

Dear Ms. Stettler:

Thank you for the chance to review and comment on this draft environmental document. I've organized the following comments in the order that the subject sections appear in the document, and reserve overall comments on the project until the end of this letter.

1. **Pg. 1, Need.** This section, based on a NEPA format, rather than CEQA's requirement for defining Project Objectives, is essentially just that. Therefore, the proposed "Human Barrier" alternative can be shown to address both Project Objectives: to reduce suicides; and to reduce potential hazards to law enforcement. Since the No Barriers Alternative addresses both objectives, it meets "most of the proposed project's objectives." Therefore, under CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6(a), it must be identified as an alternative to the proposed action, as it achieves this requirement, while also avoiding or reducing potentially significant impacts on visual resources and historic resources. The central court ruling, *Citizens of Goleta Valley v. Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors* (1990), regarding the need for evaluating reasonable and feasible alternatives to the project at the Bacara Hotel, is cited in CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6(a) for just this reason.
2. **Pg. 6, Common Design Features.** The "experts in the fields of suicidology and mental health" are not identified, and therefore the basis for including those perspectives exclusively, while not including those of Dr. Glasgow at UCSB, is faulty. CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5(f)(g) requires that a disagreement among experts be clearly discussed in the context of an EIR.
3. **Pg. 9, end of first paragraph (Comparison of Alternatives).** This statement should also reflect that, should Caltrans find that the NEPA action *does* significantly affect the environment, a full Environmental Impact Statement

Ms. Cathy Stettler, Caltrans  
Cold Spring Bridge Suicide Barrier DEIR-EA-Sec. 4(f) Evaluation  
Page 2 of 4

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4. **Pg. 11-14, Human Barrier Alternative.** The document seeks to characterize this alternative as infeasible due to its inability to be implemented successfully. This needs to be more fully addressed, especially in light of Dr. Glasgow’s research findings.
5. **Pg. 14, Permits and Approvals Needed.** “None required” is wholly implausible—someone, somewhere has to decide whether or not to implement a project and, if so, how to implement it. This critical fact must be disclosed in the document.
6. **Pg. 34, Sec. 2.1.2, Visual/Aesthetics, Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures.** On its face, the statement “Once the Preferred Alternative is identified, the final design and appearance of the barrier would be developed with input from an Aesthetics design Advisory Committee” betrays a strong bias that assumes a barrier would be constructed. Regardless, this measure would be neither effective nor feasible because no specific beneficial outcome would be assured. Also, should a physical barrier be pursued, it appears that the public would be deprived of the chance to review and comment upon a final design. This would impermissibly defer specific mitigation until after the conclusion of CEQA and NEPA review.
7. **Pg. 36-37, Sec. 2.1.3, Cultural Resources, Environmental Consequences.** As defined, the proposed project action requires either of two barriers that would create an additional rail height of over 9.5 feet high (pg. 37). The adverse effect to those qualities that make the Cold Springs Bridge eligible for the National Register of Historic Places also make it eligible for the California Register of Historic Resources (see CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5(3)(C)). The EIR must note that the proposed project would have a significant impact on the historic resource because it would:

“Demolish or materially alter in an adverse manner those physical characteristics that convey its historical significance and that justify its inclusion in, or eligibility for, inclusion in the California Register of Historic Resources.” CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5(b)(2)(A)
8. **Pg 37, Sec. 2.1.3, Cultural Resources, Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures.** The EIR must note that the mitigation of the significant impact on the Cold Springs Bridge’s historic properties shall comply with the following:

“Generally, a project that follows the Secretary of Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating, Restoring and Reconstructing Historic Buildings or Secretary of Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for

following:

“Generally, a project that follows the Secretary of Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating, Restoring and Reconstructing Historic Buildings or Secretary of Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings (1995), Weeks and Grimmer, shall be considered as mitigated to a level of less than a significant impact on the historic resource.” CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5(b)(3)

There is no indication that the significant impact on the Cold Springs Bridge, a historic resource as defined by the National Historic Preservation Act, NEPA, and CEQA, would be feasibly mitigated by any of the “suggestions” identified in this section. The Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) referenced as mitigation is only a mechanism used to implement specific measures that avoid or reduce impacts consistent with the Secretary of Interior’s Standards defined above. The MOA does not in itself describe the ways in which modifications to the proposed bridge barriers would preserve the character defining features that make the Cold Springs Bridge significant.

Also, the later completion of “a Finding of Effect document” and “Memorandum of Agreement” would defer important facts and analysis until after the conclusion of CEQA and NEPA review. This would deprive the public of the chance to review and comment upon such important facts and analysis, and would impermissibly defer specific mitigation.

The introduction of the new barriers would irreparably compromise the integrity of the “original design features (the arch ribs, towers, columns, and girders, for example)” (EIR pg. 36, paragraph 4). There is no feasible mitigation to preserve the integrity of these original design features, consistent with the Secretary of Interior’s Standards defined above.

The resulting Finding of Adverse Effect, given the fact that there is no potential for feasible mitigation to address the proposed project’s impacts on the Cold Springs Bridge, must require the preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement.

9. **Pg. 38, Sec. 2.2.1, Natural Communities, Environmental Consequences.** The extent to which a physical barrier could increase the chance of bird strikes must be addressed, especially considering the local presence of endangered and threatened species such as the Bald Eagle and California Condor.
10. **Pg. 43, Sec. 3.2.2, Significant Environmental Effects of the Proposed Project**

Ms. Cathy Stettler, Caltrans  
Cold Spring Bridge Suicide Barrier DEIR-EA-Sec. 4(f) Evaluation  
Page 3 of 4

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– **Cultural.** The document states that the proposed project safety barriers is “rehabilitation,” as defined in the Secretary of Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating, Restoring and Reconstructing Historic Buildings. This is clearly inappropriate, as the bridge does not require any improvements to maintain its structural integrity and safety to travelers. The proposed modification to the bridge is appropriately assessed in terms of the *Preservation* of its original design features, as discussed in comment no. 8 above.

Also, as previously described, deferring the development of “additional mitigation measures... for the Memorandum of Agreement” would impermissibly preclude the public from reviewing and commenting on such measures.

11. **Pg. 44, Sec. 3.2.3, Unavoidable Significant Environmental Effects.** The EIR properly identifies impacts on cultural (historic) resources as significant and unavoidable. This finding applies to the NEPA characterization of Finding of Adverse Effect, as no feasible mitigation exists to reduce impacts on the National Register-eligible property. The EIR/EA Section 4(f) analysis (Appendix B) already acknowledges this (page 77, paragraph 5): “A Finding of Effects evaluation (pending) is expected to find that the installation of a physical barrier on the bridge deck—of a size and shape necessary to meet the project’s purpose and need—would constitute an adverse effect on this historic property.”
12. **Pg. 50, Chapter 5, List of Preparers.** It is unclear as to who prepared the historic resources studies for this EIR/EA, including the Historic Resources Evaluation Report and Historic Property Survey Report.

I hope that these comments are helpful in preparing a final environmental document that fully complies with both CEQA and NEPA requirements.

In conclusion, I find it disturbing that the carefully-formulated “ ‘Human Barrier’ Alternative” put forth by the Friends of the Cold Spring Canyon Bridge has been dismissed from consideration in this document, given the significant and unavoidable impacts associated with the physical barrier alternatives. It clearly appears that Caltrans is on a pre-determined course toward constructing a physical barrier. I strongly advocate trying the components of the “human barrier” alternative first; should these measures prove to be ineffective, then a physical barrier might be reconsidered.

Sincerely,

Gregory Mohr

Ms. Cathy Stettler, Caltrans  
Cold Spring Bridge Suicide Barrier DEIR-EA-Sec. 4(f) Evaluation  
Page 4 of 4

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Garrett Glasgow  
Political Science 9420  
UC Santa Barbara  
Santa Barbara, California 93106-9420  
June 20, 2008

Ms. Cathy Stettler, Senior Environmental Planner  
Caltrans District 5  
50 Higuera Street  
San Luis Obispo, California 93401

Via e-mail attachment (Cathy\_Stettler@dot.ca.gov)

RE: Comments on Draft Environmental Impact Report, Proposed Suicide Barrier on  
Cold Spring Canyon Arch Bridge, State Highway 154, Santa Barbara County

Dear Ms. Stettler:

Thank you for the chance to review and comment on this draft environmental document. As my area of expertise is in social science statistics and research design, I will limit my comments to that topic.

1. **Pg. 1, Purpose and Need.** The purpose of the proposed project contradicts earlier analysis and recent public statements by Caltrans officials, making the real purpose of this project unclear. The two goals of the project as stated here are:
  1. Reduce the number of suicides at the Cold Spring Canyon Bridge.
  2. Reduce the risks to emergency personnel such as law enforcement officers or search and rescue teams when attempting to prevent a suicide or recovering a body.

Note that these goals can be achieved by simply diverting suicidal people from the Cold Spring Canyon Bridge to commit suicide elsewhere. Thus, the purpose of the project as stated here is keeping suicidal people off the bridge, not saving the lives of suicidal people.

This contradicts the benefit-cost ratio calculation of August 18, 2006 (File No. 05-SB-154-PM-22.95/23.19), which calculated a safety index based on the assumption that this project would save 1.6 suicidal people per year. As saving the lives of suicidal people is not listed as a purpose for this project, this benefit-cost ratio is irrelevant (and also unsupported by scientific research on suicide prevention barriers). The benefits of achieving the purposes of the project as listed on page 1 have not been formally evaluated – instead, this document simply asserts these benefits are worth the project cost.

Also note that the purpose of this project as stated on page 1 contradicts statements by Caltrans officials, who continue to tell the public that the purpose of the project is to save the lives of suicidal individuals. For instance, on May 20<sup>th</sup> Colin Jones told *The Daily Nexus* “The main message is this is the ultimate safety project. If it was your mother or child out there, wouldn’t you like to spend the money to save them, whether it’s one million or two million dollars?” On June 10<sup>th</sup> Jim Shivers told the *Independent* “We see this as something that will save lives.”

Thus, the purpose of this project is unclear – is it designed to save the lives of suicidal people, or simply to keep suicidal people off of the Cold Spring Canyon Bridge? There is a difference between preventing suicides at a particular location and saving lives, and this document should state explicitly which of these goals the project is designed to achieve. If the goal of the project is simply to keep suicidal people away from the Cold Spring Canyon Bridge, a new benefit-cost ratio for the project must be calculated.

2. **Pg. 12, The Human Barrier Alternative.** On page 12 the document states “research in the field of suicide prevention shows the human barrier approach has not been successful.” This is false. There is no scientific research that demonstrates that a “human barriers” approach is ineffective, or even less effective than physical barriers.

In fact, the human barriers alternative was explicitly recommended for the Cold Spring Canyon Bridge by Gary Spielmann. Mr. Spielmann is the former Director of Suicide Prevention for the New York State Office of Mental Health, and a consultant for suicide prevention to the New York State Bridge Authority (NYSBA), the New York State Thruway Authority, and the international Peace Bridge Authority. Mr. Spielmann is also the architect of the NYSBA “human barriers” approach to suicide prevention that was presented to Caltrans as a project alternative.

In testimony submitted to Caltrans Mr. Spielmann stated “suicide prevention barriers are an inferior solution to the problem of suicide on bridges.” He also stated “A ‘human barrier’ will outperform any physical barrier and save more lives.” Although Mr. Spielmann is a credible authority on suicide prevention on bridges, his testimony is completely ignored in this document.

The only sense in which a physical barrier has been demonstrated to be superior to a “human barrier” alternative is in keeping suicidal people away from a particular location. Again, if the purpose of this project is simply to keep suicidal people away from the Cold Spring Bridge, without regard for saving lives, then this must be explicitly stated and a new benefit-cost ratio calculated.

3. **Pg. 21, The Benefits of Barriers.** On page 21 the document states “A benefit of the proposed project is that people often do not go elsewhere or substitute another method to commit suicide. This is supported by the information and studies described below.” This is false, at least in the case of barriers on bridges. To date no scientific study has been able to demonstrate that suicide barriers save lives.

It is true that means restriction has proven effective at reducing suicides by some methods. This evidence of the effectiveness of means restriction as a suicide prevention strategy comes from studies of lethal agents people keep in their homes and might use in an impulsive suicide, such as firearms and prescription medications.

While some have argued that the concept of means restriction might also extend to suicides by jumping from bridges, this is purely conjecture. To date every study on the effectiveness of suicide barriers has been inconclusive – nobody knows whether suicide barriers save lives, or just divert suicides to other locations.

The fact that means restriction works for some methods of suicide but is unproven in the case of suicide barriers is well known among researchers and public health officials. For instance, after endorsing means restriction strategies for firearms, domestic gas, and toxic substances, on the topic of suicide barriers the World Health Organization states:

In addition to the measures described, whose efficacy is attested to by the scientific literature, it is thought that other measures, such as the use of fencing on high buildings and bridges, could also contribute to a reduction in suicide rates, although there is no definitive evidence to support this idea. (p. 87)

In more than 30 years of research, not one study has found evidence that suicide barriers save lives. For instance, in the most recent study on the topic (published in December 2007), Reisch et al. conclude “[b]arriers on bridges may prevent suicides but also may lead to a substitution of jumping site or method” (p.681). In sum, there is no scientific evidence that suicide barriers on bridges save lives.

4. **Pgs. 17-23, The Description of the Scientific Literature is Misleading.** The discussion of the scientific literature on suicide barriers in this document is either misleading or misinformed. Studies are cited as if they contain evidence that barriers save lives, when in fact they explicitly state they should not be interpreted in this way.

For example, on page 18 the document cites O’Carroll et al. (1994), but omits any discussion of the conclusion of the study, which states:

Ms. Cathy Stettler, Caltrans  
Cold Spring Bridge Suicide Barrier DEIR-EA-Sec. 4(f) Evaluation  
Page 4 of 4

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Are the data provided sufficient to substantiate the effectiveness (or lack thereof) of bridge barriers as a means to prevent suicide? The answer is no, the data are not sufficient to answer that question, because they do not touch on the issue of whether persons who would have committed suicide by jumping from the Ellington Bridge went on to commit suicide by other means. ... [P]ersons frustrated in their efforts to commit suicide by jumping from the Ellington Bridge are in no sense restricted to committing suicide by jumping from the Taft Bridge. (p. 92)

Most of the other studies cited on pages 17-23 contain similar cautionary notes, but no mention of this is made anywhere in the document. There is no scientific evidence that suicide barriers save lives, but this is not the impression given by this section of the document.

In conclusion, this document is unclear about what the actual purpose of the project is (keeping suicidal people away from the bridge or saving lives). If the actual goal of the project is simply to keep suicidal people away from the Cold Spring Canyon Bridge, this must be made clear in the document and to the public, and a new benefit-cost ratio must be calculated. This document also makes at least two false statements about the scientific literature on suicide prevention on bridges, presents the scientific evidence on the topic in a misleading way, and neglects to even mention testimony from a recognized expert on suicide prevention who recommended an alternative to the physical barrier. Overall, this document gives the distinct impression that the evidence on this topic is being deliberately distorted in order to support the decision to construct a physical barrier.

Sincerely,  
Garrett Glasgow

## **Cold Spring Canyon Arch Bridge Suicide Prevention Committee**

### **Town Hall Meeting**

6:30 to 8 p.m.

Monday, May 22, 2006

Santa Barbara City College

721 Cliff Drive, Santa Barbara, CA

### **Meeting Summary**

#### **AT A GLANCE**

- 1) Local leaders and residents overwhelmingly support the idea of constructing a pedestrian barrier on the Cold Spring Canyon Arch Bridge on Highway 154 to prevent suicides. An audience poll at the meeting resulted in nearly everyone raising a hand in support of the barrier.
- 2) Caltrans will investigate the potential of state or federal funding to construct a proposed barrier on the bridge. If the proposed project qualifies for state transportation funding, it could be built within two years or less.
- 3) The Santa Barbara County Search and Rescue Team, comprised of local volunteers, recently adopted a resolution supporting the Cold Spring Bridge Committee's suicide prevention efforts. A team representative verbally read the resolution during the meeting.

#### **MEETING PURPOSE**

About 50 people attended the public forum. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss strategies for preventing suicides at Cold Spring Bridge and obtain community input on them. The meeting also addressed rescue and recovery operations, and understanding and preventing suicide.

#### **PRESENTATIONS**

- Nevin Sams, Caltrans District Traffic Safety Engineer, began the meeting with a PowerPoint presentation on *Preventing Suicides at Cold Spring Canyon Arch Bridge*.
- Commander Dominick Palera of the Santa Barbara County Sheriff's Department showed a brief video of a recent suicide rescue at Cold Spring Bridge. He also discussed the safety of public safety personnel during rescue and recovery operations.
- Dr. Lisa Firestone of The Glendon Association gave a PowerPoint presentation on *Understanding and Preventing Suicide*.

#### **KEY POINTS**

- The Cold Spring Bridge committee was formed to investigate the suicide issue and identify possible means to reduce suicide.
- Law enforcement personnel—and search and rescue workers and volunteers—risk their own lives and limbs responding to suicide incidents.
- Pedestrian barriers have proven nation-wide to be the most effective strategy for preventing bridge-related suicides.

- Barriers can be built with aesthetic priorities.
- Interim fencing—such as a chain-link fence—is effective in reducing suicides, but could interrupt the process of installing a permanent barrier with aesthetic features if the community objects to its appearance.
- A barrier is estimated to cost between \$200,000 to \$300,000.
- Studies show that when people are prevented from jumping, they do **not** go on to commit suicide by other means.
- Mental health professionals support efforts to reduce access to lethal means and methods of self-harm.
- Cold Spring Bridge is a visual resource that may be eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. As such, the proposed barrier may be subject to several environmental review and permitting processes.

**QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS (Public input phase of town hall meeting)**

- 1) We have the best architects in the world here. We should challenge the designers for this project.  
*Caltrans has architectural designers at Headquarters. We'll work with the community to come up with the appropriate design.*
- 2) It's very important to take away the means to take one's own life. Suicide is a permanent solution to a temporary problem. At a separate meeting tonight, the Mental Health Association of Santa Barbara County voted unanimously to support the barrier and any other options the Cold Spring committee recommends.
- 3) 2-1-1 averages one suicide call per day in Santa Barbara County. ACCESS teams also get these calls.
- 4) When we're dealing with the value of human life, who cares what an interim barrier looks like?  
*The proposed strategy is an interim barrier (standard Caltrans fence) with the next phase being the installation of a more elaborate and aesthetic pedestrian barrier.*
- 5) Hospice supports the barrier.
- 6) I'd like to commend the committee for their work. People are frustrated because a barrier has not yet been built. People understand about temporary barriers with construction. Imagine losing an officer—we support the committee fully and hope this barrier will move forward as quickly as possible.
- 7) What is the next step?  
*We'll review the comment cards and determine what the community wants to do. There are several funding possibilities—federal, state, Santa Barbara County Association of Governments, or county Public Works. We're optimistic that funding is not an issue.*
- 8) What is triggering the historical criteria for the bridge? It is not yet 50 years old. Make the barrier a project before the bridge is a national landmark—it will take so much longer with environmental and permitting requirements.  
*We'll involve the environmental community in the process.*
- 9) When my son was ill and psychotic, I thought of that bridge. Once a barrier is up, people get used to them and they're not noticeable. I'm not comfortable driving over Cold Spring Bridge without a barrier.
- 10) Caltrans can take three years or more to do a project.  
*District 5 will make it a priority to expedite a project.*
- 11) I recently lost a friend on the bridge. I had no indication of it. Had I known at the time, my impulse would've been to find the \$200,000 to \$300,000, and an architect, and get a barrier built. The barrier to this barrier must be torn down.  
*District 5 will make it a priority to expedite progress on this issue.*

- 12) Supervisor Firestone's office has not yet heard a lot of resistance to the barrier. At first, we were concerned about aesthetics and the costs of a barrier. To expedite the project, we recommend spreading the word and deferring people to our office.
- 13) If you were building a structure like Cold Spring Bridge today, would you build it without a barrier?  
*Our latest design standards require higher bridge rails with an option for pedestrian barricades.*
- 14) I'm all for the barrier. I don't see it as a financial issue. It's a social issue. Is the county and state involved for funding? If the project gets tied up in a bureaucratic process, we need to look at other options. We need an advocate for funding.  
*The Caltrans Traffic Safety Office is investigating the potential for funding through existing state programs. The pedestrian barricade is not a high cost item, and the District is optimistic that funding sources can be found.*
- 15) I'm the mayor of Santa Barbara. I'm on SBCAG and work with Supervisor Firestone. This issue has not yet come to SBCAG. If it fits into a Caltrans program, it would get built faster. Other than that, SBCAG would assist.
- 16) Caltrans has done an amazing job with the committee and stepped up to the plate.  
*We're not going to drop this issue.*
- 17) What's the problem with the Golden Gate Bridge getting a barrier?  
*There are aesthetic issues, but mostly it's the stigma of mental illness. The mental health community is moving along with public awareness to eliminate the stigma. A study is now looking at the feasibility of a barrier on that bridge—it probably will be built. It's the number one bridge in the world for suicide (The Glendon Association).*
- 18) We seem to have support here for the barrier with this group.
- 19) What is the next step? This should not be done in a series of steps.  
*Caltrans will expedite the process.*
- 20) If there were five people who could get the barrier done, who are they?  
*Your county representative is one, and Supervisor Firestone is working on it. Write letters to the editor. The multi-agency Cold Spring Canyon Arch Bridge Committee is also in support of the effort.*
- 21) We operate the suicide hotline. We had a lot of people calling about suicide last week and we get this fairly often. There might be one life saved between now and when we put up the barrier.
- 22) What has been done to integrate the mental health services in this county?  
*2-1-1 is an excellent information source along with The Glendon Association and ACCESS. The Glendon Association holds a suicide prevention forum every year and the next one is in September. For more information, contact The Glendon Association at 805-681-0415 or [www.glendon.org](http://www.glendon.org).*
- 23) Will there be a web site for the public to receive information on the proposed barrier project?  
*Caltrans will soon provide regular updates on its department web page. For more information, contact Jim Shivers, Caltrans public information officer, at 805-549-3237 or [info-d5@dot.ca.gov](mailto:info-d5@dot.ca.gov).*

**COMMENT CARDS**

- 14 people noted full support for the pedestrian barrier to be constructed as soon as possible
- Two people advocated the temporary barrier be installed immediately
- Several people endorsed the committee's work on suicide prevention

D. K. Harrison

**CALTRANS PROJECT INITIATION FORM**      **SHOPP**  
(Conceptual Report)

Type of Report:		Date Prepared: 6/1/2006 8/17/2006	Project Name: Cold Spring Canyon Bridge Physical Barricade	*EA: OP910K	*PFO:
Initiated By:	Deb Larson	*Pj Mgr Support Unit: 05-144		*Distribution (No): R: 100% U:	
Department:	Traffic 805-441-5875	*Dist-Co-Rte: 05-SB-154		*KP (PM)   % Cost: 36.93/37.32 (PM 22.95/23.19)	
D5 Program Coordinator:	Nevin Sams 805-549-3017	Location Description: Cold Spring Canyon Bridge, near San Marcos Pass in Santa Barbara County.		*PID Due Date:	
HQ Program Advisor:	Janice Benton 916-654-5176	Type of Work: Physical Barricade		*Design Mgr / Phone #: TBD	
Lead Agency:		*Project Mgr / Phone #: TBD		*PID Due Date:	
Contact Name:		*Design Mgr / Phone #: TBD		*PID Due Date:	
Phone #:		*PID Due Date:		*PID Due Date:	
Comments (for PMCS): Physical Barricade		*PID Due Date:		*PID Due Date:	
Estimated FYs for K-phase:		*PID Due Date:		*PID Due Date:	
*K-Phase Authorizations Recommended:		*PID Due Date:		*PID Due Date:	
D5 Prog. Co-ordinator    Date    D5 Prog. Manager    Date [Signature]    7-11-06    [Signature]    9/2/06		Estimated Cost (451000):    Edw: \$1,000    Str:    \$: 100%    E:    M:    D:		*TRAMS Code: 20.XXX.201.010 *Old Program Code: FBI	

**BASIC TRANSPORTATION DEFICIENCY:** Incident Reports are not reported into Traffic Collision Report, State related, data base.

**BACKGROUND:** see below

**PURPOSE AND NEED DESCRIPTION:**  
This location has the highest concentration of fatalities at a spot location on a state facility in the District. A multidisciplinary task force, including experts in the field of suicidology was formed to investigate what can be done to prevent future bridge suicides. Investigations and research has shown a physical barricade is the most effective strategy for reducing suicides. Studies have found those people who are prevented from committing suicide rarely go on to commit suicide by other means. This safety improvement project will be an extremely effective method for significantly reducing fatalities at this state facility.

**PROPOSED SOLUTION(S) OR RANGE OF ALTERNATIVES:**  
Install aesthetic railing to fit architectural concept of bridge style - this may involve structures working with community. Local Architects have suggested design competition/contest into design. Project Sponsor expects State Structures to complete design.

**ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES/KNOWN CONCERNS (include biological, cultural, related community considerations, etc.):**  
Multidisciplinary Task Force was formed with California Highway Patrol, Sheriff's Department, Glendon Association (a nonprofit group that provides free training and educational materials on suicide prevention, domestic violence and child abuse), Assemblyman Pedro Nava, D-Santa Barbara, Department of Transportation, Santa Barbara County Public Works, Santa Barbara County Association of Governments, Emergency and Health Services, Family Service Agency/211, and supported by Santa Barbara County Supervisor Brooks Firestone and other members of the community.

Two public meetings were held in Santa Barbara County. Attendees were overwhelmingly in favor of installing pedestrian barricades and voiced a strong desire to expedite this process.

Involved in the discussions from the Department were Nevin Sams from Traffic Safety, Michael Downs Headquarters Structural Liaison, Alex Kennedy Headquarters Traffic Liaison, Martin Sanchez SB Co. Maintenance Superintendent, Paula Carr-Architectural History, Bob Carr-Scenic, Cindy Uiter-Community Planning, and Colin Jones-Public Affairs.

**RIGHT OF WAY CONCERNS (include Railroad involvement, Airport involvement, known utility involvement, and other Right of Way concerns):**  
None

**SYSTEM PLANNING (Use all historical data, previous studies, related planning documents (RTI, MIS, DSM, ITSP, RCR/ICA, IIS, SHOPP Plan, etc.):**  
69400 SB-154-FM 4.3/28.3 Operational Improvements - Group II, Measure Project RTL 11/1/2007 Target  
0E270 SB-154-PM 21.4/32.2 Chg M - PID, RTL 7/1/2008 Target

**OTHER COMMENTS (Emergency involvement, Social Justice considerations, Potential IIS Concerns, etc.):**  
Involve stakeholders in design discussions.

**ATTACHMENTS (as applicable):**

<input type="checkbox"/> Preliminary Proposal sketches	<input type="checkbox"/> FIN or SI	<input type="checkbox"/> Other Pertinent Information -
<input type="checkbox"/> Traffic Data	<input type="checkbox"/> Safety/Operations Conceptual Report	
<input type="checkbox"/> Accident Data	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Preliminary Contact List for PDT - Nevin Sams, David Chesbro, Martin Sanchez SB Co. Maintenance Superintendent, Paula Carr-Architectural History, Bob Carr-Scenic, Cindy Uiter-Community Planning and work with Michael Downs HQ Structural Liaison	OP910K

**Alternative Project Proposal:  
Development of a Comprehensive "Human Barriers" Plan  
to Respond Effectively to Suicidal Behavior on the Cold Spring Bridge**

This proposal is submitted to CalTrans by Friends of the Bridge, an unincorporated association of citizens residing in CalTrans District 5, as a superior alternative to the proposal given conceptual approval on September 12, 2006 for SHOPP funding of 201.010 under designation as a safety improvement project (File: 3.1.20 / 05-SB-154/ PM 22.95/23.19/ Physical Barricade) (1)

Why this alternative is being proposed:

It has now become clear that the now-pending proposal to install physical barriers on the bridge was based upon misplaced reliance by CalTrans on certain studies (2) that have recently been shown to have been misinterpreted or misrepresented (3). According to all evidence available, physical barriers on bridges have not proven to be an effective suicide prevention measure, generally serving only to divert suicidal behavior to other places in the community. (4) Seen in the light of this evidence, it would clearly be a flagrant misuse of traffic safety funds for CalTrans to expend \$1,000,000 or more to install barriers on the Cold Spring Bridge under the guise of saving lives. In reality, the barriers proposal amounts to nothing more than a misguided and costly suicide diversion effort that bears almost no legitimate relation to any traffic safety problem within the scope of CalTrans' mission and primary functions.

In addition, it is now clear that physical barriers on the bridge are not needed to protect the safety of law enforcement personnel who encounter persons demonstrating suicidal behavior on the bridge. (5) A no-cost solution exists in the form of a clear and unequivocal law enforcement agency policy (backed by training) addressing the do's and don'ts of encountering potential jumpers. (For example: Do remain at all times in a safe position from which you can attempt to induce the person to move to you so that you can safely accept the person into protective custody. Don't move out of a safe position in an effort to take the person into protective custody, as by grabbing, shoving, or similar means.) A person who demonstrates suicidal behaviors on the bridge is troubled, but suicide is not a crime, and law enforcement officers need to behave accordingly in responding to such people and their behavior. With adequate training, every officer can acquire and maintain the competence required to respond safely in such situations, thus obviating any need for barriers on this account.

Also, there now exists the ability to establish and operate a specialized suicide prevention Lifeline connection with local mental health responders, a vast improvement over existing call boxes connected to law enforcement dispatchers (6) This is an effective suicide prevention and life-saving measure that was not available locally at the time that CalTrans formulated and initiated its barriers proposal, according to information on the CalTrans website for the barriers proposal. (7)

Finally, it is now known that placing so-called suicide prevention barrier on bridges does not constitute a "best practice" approach for a transportation agency such as CalTrans to pursue, given the very tenuous (at best) connection between such an undertaking and the

agency's primary functions. We know this because such a "best practice" approach has been developed by the New York State Bridge Authority in response to suicidal behavior on the five bridges under its jurisdiction. **(8)** The installation of physical barriers was considered and rejected as a component of the NYSBA plan.

The elements of the proposed alternative:

In light of the foregoing, we propose a comprehensive "human barriers" plan to respond more effectively than physical barriers to problems of suicidal behavior on the Cold Spring Bridge. The proposal rejects the installation of barriers, regardless of considerations about their feasibility or design. The proposal consists of the following elements:

- Provide assistance to law enforcement agencies in developing clear policy directives and training concerning the safety of their officers in encountering and accepting into their protective custody persons demonstrating suicidal behavior on the bridge (no CalTrans funds required)
- Encourage the establishment of a community crisis center connection with the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline Program to provide immediate call box connection to qualified mental health practitioners trained in suicide prevention counseling (no CalTrans funds required)
- Install call boxes and appropriate signs to induce use of Lifeline call boxes (some but relatively few CalTrans funds required)
- Install closed-circuit surveillance cameras that will provide alert to possible suicidal behavior on the bridge that will be regularly monitored by either or both appropriate law enforcement agency(ies) and local Lifeline crisis center (some but relatively limited CalTrans funds required)
- Encourage the establishment of an appropriate schedule of periodic "pass-by" monitoring patrols by law enforcement agency personnel and/or other qualified persons in order to assure proper functioning of call boxes and cameras (no CalTrans funds required) **(9)**
- Continuing participation in and contributions to community efforts to promote education and public awareness concerning the causes of suicidal behaviors and effective responses to it **(10)** (some but relatively few CalTrans funds required)

Reasons why the proposed alternative is superior to the physical barriers proposal:

- Offers superior prospect of saving lives in the community rather than merely diverting suicidal behavior from the bridge to another place and/or means
- Conserves limited funds available to plan and carry out far more important and pressing traffic safety needs in the community
- Conserves the beauty, architectural integrity, and historic significance of the justly-famed Cold Spring Bridge
- Alternative proposal can be reviewed, approved and implemented on an expedited basis in compliance with all applicable laws (11)

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**Endnotes and References:**

1. The proposal to install so-called suicide prevention barriers has been allocated the sum of \$1,000,000 from funds budgeted for quite a different purpose: "Collision Reduction-Safety Improvements" (See [http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/oppd/pdpm/chap\\_pdf/ch09.pdf](http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/oppd/pdpm/chap_pdf/ch09.pdf), p. 9-17) Thus, we have a case of diverting funds in order to carry out a suicide diversion project.
2. See CalTrans Project Initiation Form (rev. 09/21/06) and memorandum of September 12, 2006 from Janice Benton to Paul McClintoc concerning same.
3. See <[http://www.polsci.ucsb.edu/faculty/glasgow/barrier\\_report.pdf](http://www.polsci.ucsb.edu/faculty/glasgow/barrier_report.pdf)>
4. Op cit.
5. The barriers proposal is an outgrowth of a request to CalTrans from the office of the Santa Barbara County Sheriff to initiate a barrier installation project in order to assure the safety of its officers and other law enforcement personnel. The current "suicide prevention" rationale was a subsequent add-on to overcome initial CalTrans reluctance. (Interview of Commander Dominick Palera by Marc McGinnes, September 28, 2007.)
6. See <<http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org>>
7. See <[http://www.dot.ca.gov/dist05/projects/sb\\_cold\\_springs/index.html](http://www.dot.ca.gov/dist05/projects/sb_cold_springs/index.html)>
8. See <<http://www.nysba.state.ny.us/Documents/Suicide%20Prevention%20Plan%20in%20PDF.pdf>>. Note in particular the discussion of the plan by Gary Spielmann, former Director of the New York State Office of Mental Health, who served as project consultant, in which the pros and cons of bridge barriers identified and compared. Further information about the plan and its success can be obtained from John Bellucci, NYSBA Director of Planning at Public Relations <[jbellucci@nysba.state.ny.us](mailto:jbellucci@nysba.state.ny.us)>

9. In the process of formulating and initiating the barriers proposal it was claimed that such a measure "may require more law enforcement staffing and resources than is currently available." (See [http://www.dot.ca.gov/dist05/projects/sb\\_cold\\_springs](http://www.dot.ca.gov/dist05/projects/sb_cold_springs)) This may be the case, but it is not a legitimate reason for CalTrans to divert funds earmarked for traffic safety measures to "solve" this law enforcement funding problem by building barriers on the bridge.

10. Such educational and public awareness efforts contain appropriate information and guidelines for media concerning the coverage of suicidal behavior. While the incidence of suicidal behavior on the Cold Spring Bridge is not high, suicide prevention experts warn that inappropriate publicizing regarding suicide in a particular place can trigger a "copy cat" chain reaction whereby that place comes to be seen as a "suicide magnet," thus attracting an increase of suicidal behaviors to it. Unfortunately, the CalTrans barriers proposal has drawn this kind of attention to the bridge, and the sooner it is set aside the better it will be in terms of this issue.

11. Most obviously, since the alternative proposal does not call for the installation of barriers on the bridge and therefore would not have significant impacts on aesthetic, scenic and historical resources, there would be no need for CalTrans to prepare an environmental impact report, thereby saving substantial time and expense otherwise required,

(rev. 11.15.70)



**Santa Barbara County Sheriff-Coroner**  
**Coroner's Bureau**  
 66 S. San Antonio Road  
 Santa Barbara, California 93110  
 (805) 681-4145

The following is statistical data of people that have committed suicide by jumping off the Cold Springs Bridge on Highway 154, in Santa Barbara County, from the bridge's completion in 1963- present.

YEAR	CORONER CASE#	AGE	CITY OF RESIDENCE	RACE / SEX	DATE OF JUMP	TIME OF DAY
1964	W-4492	29	Carpinteria	White / Female	5/5/1964	0240
1967	W-6620	38	Goleta	White / Female	4/14/1967	0638
1967	W-6641	58	Goleta	White / Male	5/1/1967 FND	1800
1968	W-7086	31	Santa Barbara	White / Female	5/30/1968	1755
1969	W-7483	29	Santa Barbara	White / Female	2/16/1969	1400
1969	W-7565	48	Windsor, CA	White / Male	4/13/1969	1400
1970	W-7995	68	Beverly Hills, CA	White / Male	2/8/1970	0905
1971	C-8730	51	Santa Barbara	White / Male	6/23/1971	1400
1974	C-74-050	41	Santa Barbara	White / Female	2/8/1974 FND	0230
1974	C-74-197	52	Santa Barbara	White / Female	5/25/1974	1010
1977	C-77-144	60	Santa Barbara	White / Female	3/15/1977	0701
1977	C-77-403	45	Santa Barbara	White / Male	8/1/1977 FND	0247
1982	C-82-415	41	Montecito	White / Male	9/9/1982	1504
1982	C-82-471	24	Goleta	White / Male	10/23/1982	0950
1982	C-82-527	20	Goleta	White / Male	12/5/1982	1800
1984	C-84-200	22	Pomona, CA	White / Male	5/12/1984 FND	0715
1984	C-84-398	27	Arroyo Grande	Asian / Male	9/23/1984	1600
1985	C-85-237	18	Santa Barbara	Hispanic/ Male	6/15/1985 FND	1000
1986	C-86-321	26	Goleta	White / Male	9/2/1986	1100
1990	C-90-291	39	Santa Barbara	White / Female	8/27/1990	1828
1992	C-92-414	28	Goleta	White / Male	11/30/1992	1915
1993	C-93-180	41	Santa Barbara	White / Male	5/14/1993 FND	1746
1993	C-93-398	51	Santa Barbara	White / Male	10/29/1993	1143
1993	C-93-459	22	Los Olivos	White / Male	12/9/1993 FND	2229
1994	C-94-327	19	Buellton	Black / Male	6/16/1994	0520
1994	C-94-379	31	Santa Maria	White / Male	10/12/1994FND	1400
YEAR	CORONER CASE#	AGE	CITY OF RESIDENCE	RACE / SEX	DATE OF JUMP	TIME OF DAY



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1995	C-95-383	71	Santa Barbara	White / Male	11/5/1995	0615
1997	C-97-095	66	Santa Ynez	White / Male	3/12/1997	0720
1997	C-97-102	60	Santa Barbara	White / Male	3/17/1997	1115
1997	C-97-114	63	Goleta	White / Male	3/27/1997	1000
1997	C-97-276	32	Solvang	White / Male	8/23/1997	1200
1998	C-98-265	26	Santa Ynez	White / Female	7/8/1998	2245
1999	C-99-352	32	Solvang	White / Male	8/28/1998	2315
2000	C-00-335	48	Santa Barbara	Hispanic/ Female	8/8/2000	1500
2000	C-00-406	74	Santa Maria	White / Male	9/12/2000	1557
2001	C-01-115	46	Santa Barbara	White / Male	3/16/2001	1030
2001	C-01-531	35	Lake Forest, CA	White / Male	12/11/2001	0200
2002	C-02-550	40	Los Osos	White / Male	12/31/2002FND	0531
2004	C-04-0423	56	Santa Barbara	White / Female	4/21/2004 FND	1534
2004	C-04-1180	37	Santa Barbara	White / Male	12/8/2004	0900
2004	C-04-1251	20	Ojai	White / Male	12/30/2004	0055
2005	C-05-0352	35	Los Angeles	White / Male	4/5/2005	1054
2005	C-05-0695	18	Santa Barbara	White / Male	7/15/2005	0531
2006	NONE					
2007	None as of 3/6/2007					

There were a total of 43 deaths between the dates of, 1/1/1963-03/06/2007.



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The following information is a breakdown of the statistical data of people that have committed suicide by jumping off the Cold Springs Bridge in Santa Barbara County:

<b>AGE:</b>		<b>RACE:</b>	
0-20	5	White	39
21-40	19	Hispanic	2
41-60	14	Asian	1
61 - +	5	Black	1

<b>SEX:</b>		<b>TIME OF DAY:</b>	
Male	32	AM Hrs 0000-1200	25
Female	11	PM Hrs 1201-2359	18

<b>TIME OF YEAR:</b>	
January / February / March	0 / 3 / 5 Total of 8
April / May / June	4 / 6 / 3 Total of 13
July / August / September	2 / 5 / 4 Total of 11
October / November / December	3 / 5 / 6 Total of 11

<b>COUNTY / CITY OF RESIDENCE:</b>	
Southern Santa Barbara County Santa Barbara, Goleta, Carpinteria, Montecito	27
Northern Santa Barbara County Santa Ynez Valley / Santa Maria	7
Ventura County	1
San Luis Obispo County	2
Los Angeles County	4
Orange County	1
Sonoma County	1

State of California  
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Business, Transportation and Housing Agency

**Memorandum**

*Put your papers  
to energy efficient*

To: **PAUL MCCLINTIC**  
Acting Deputy District Director  
Traffic Operations  
District 05

Date: September 12, 2006

File: 3.1.20  
05-SB-154  
PM 22.95/23.19  
Physical Barricade

Attention: Nevin Sams

From: **JANICE BENTON**  
Acting Chief  
Office of Traffic Safety Program



Subject: **Conceptual Approval for the SHOPP Funding of 201,010 – Safety Improvement Project**

The project proposed for the State Highway Operation and Protection Program (SHOPP) is to reduce an increasing rate of suicides occurring on Cold Springs Canyon Arch Bridge by placing a physical barricade on this state owned structure in Santa Barbara County. The Traffic Safety Index is greater than 200 for the above referenced project and is approved at the estimated cost of \$1,000,000.

Final project approval will be granted after review of the Project Study Report/Project Report (PSR/PR). This project should be amended into the SHOPP once the PSR/PR is signed.

The SHOPP Performance Measure for this project is 32 incidents reduced over the life of the project (20 years).

If you have any questions regarding the above, please contact me at CALNET 464-5176.

cc: Alex Kennedy  
Rick Guevel  
Mary Payyappilly  
Helen Rainwater  
Bob Engelmann

*"California improves mobility across California"*

State of California Business, Transportation and Housing Agency

**Memorandum**

August 18, 2006  
File No: 05-SB-154-PM 22.95/23.19

To: Janice Benton, Chief  
Highway Safety Improvement Program

From: DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
Nevin Sams  
District 5 Traffic Safety

Subject: 05-SB-154-PM 22.95/23.19  
Cold Spring Canyon Arch Bridge, Physical Barriade  
SHOPP Item# 201.010

The Cold Springs Canyon Arch Bridge experiences the highest concentration of fatalities of any point location in the District. This proposed 201.010 SHOPP project will reduce or eliminate an increasing rate of suicides occurring on this state owned structure.

Over the past five years, ten (10) suicides have occurred from the Cold Spring Canyon Arch Bridge. A multidisciplinary task force consisting of CHP, County Sheriff, emergency services, Santa Barbara County Association of Governments and experts in the field of suicidology was formed to investigate what can be done to prevent future bridge suicides. Investigations and research has shown a physical barrier is the most effective strategy for reducing suicides. Studies have found those people who are prevented from committing suicide rarely go on to commit suicide by other means. For example, in Augusta Maine a study was completed by Dr. Andrew Pelletier March 27, 2006 that studied suicide rates in Augusta, and the overall suicide rate in Maine. Fencing was installed on Memorial Bridge in Augusta Maine in 1983. After installation, suicides related to jumping from other structures in Augusta remained unchanged following the installation of the fencing on Memorial Bridge. Overall suicide rates dropped for both the City and the State. Dr. Pelletier deduced that the suicidal individuals did not seek alternative sites. In another example, two nearby bridges in Washington DC (Taft and Ellington) were experiencing suicides. Pedestrian Fencing was installed on Ellington, dropping the suicide rate to zero. The suicide rate of the Taft Bridge remained constant, showing no increase in suicides.

It is the conclusion of the task force, the District Traffic Safety office, and the Headquarters Traffic Operation Liaison that this safety improvement project will be an extremely effective method of significantly reducing fatals at this state facility.

Two public meetings were held in Santa Barbara County, one in Santa Barbara, the second in Santa Ynez Valley. Headquarters Traffic Operations Liaison Alex Kennedy was able to attend

SB-154-PM 22.95/23.19 Page 2

one of these public meetings May 9, 2006. Further, he reviewed this proposed project with District staff June 7, 2006, concurring with the submittal of the project.

After consulting with the County Sheriff's office, it was found that suicides are rarely recorded by CHP and, as a result, typically do not show up in SWITERS or TASAS. Suicides are coded as "incidents" rather than "collisions" which would show up in State TASAS data.

For a before project cost, utilizing fatal costs of \$4,521.90 (\$1,000's) per fatal, multiplied by ten (10) suicides over the five-year period, multiplied by a suggested project life of twenty (20) years, one obtains a before project fatal factor of  $(4,521.90 * 10 * 20) = 180,876.00$  /year

After project cost will utilize a conservative 80% reduction factor, although it is believed the project will actually reduce the suicides by 100%, as studies have shown on similar projects. Utilizing the 80% reduction factor, or  $[(1-0.80)*10]=2$ . With two (2) suicides over the five year period year after the improvement multiplied over the project life, one obtains an after project factor of  $(4,521.90*2*20)=36,175.20$ /year

A project construction cost of \$1,000,000 is estimated. Calculation of the ratio will be completed with the cost shown as a factor of \$1,000.

Benefit:Cost Ratio  
 $[(180,876.00-36,175.20)/1000]=14,470$

Or in other words, a "Safety Index" of 14,470.

This project, the twenty-year project life and the 100% project reduction factor were suggested by, and discussed with, Alex Kennedy, HQ Traffic Liaison August 15, 2006.

The Central Region's Multifunctional Safety Improvement Team has reviewed the project June 7, 2006 and concurs with initiation.

The performance indicator for this project is (8 suicides reduced/5 years\*20 years =) 32 fatal incidents reduced over the project life of 20 years.

Attached for your information is the Draft Project Initiation Form, which has not been submitted for an EA.

Previously submitted to your office were:  
Santa Barbara County Sheriff Corvax, Suicide Statistical Data  
Santa Barbara County Search & Rescue Resolution  
Project Information

Please feel free to call Del Larson at 805.441.5875 or me at Cabinet 629.3017 (805.548.3017) in District 5 Traffic Safety, if you have any questions or require further information. Thank you for your assistance on this matter.

Table 3  
PID Templates for the SHOFT Program

PROGRAM	ACCOUNT CODE <sup>(1)</sup>	TYPE OF PID	REFERENCES TO OTHER PDPM CHAPTERS AND APPENDICES
<b>Emergency Response</b>			
Major Damage Restoration	201.130	Damage Assessment Report or Memo	App. D
<b>Collision Reduction</b>			
Safety Improvements	201.010	PR or PSR or PSR-PR <sup>(2)</sup>	App. A, E, L
Collision Severity Reduction	201.015	PSR	App. L
Upgrade Median Barriers	201.020	PSR	App. L
<b>Maintenance</b>			
Restriping	201.160	PSR	App. L
Noise Attenuation for Schools	201.270	PSR	App. L
Railroad/Highway At-grade Crossing	201.325	PSR	App. L
Hazardous Waste Mitigation	201.330	PSR	App. L
Storm Water Mitigation	201.335	PSR	App. L
ADA Curb Ramps	201.361	PSR	App. L
TEA - Caltrans Share from TEA 21 by Other Agencies	201.736	PSR	App. L
<b>Bridge Preservation</b>			
Bridge Rehabilitation	201.110	PSSR, PSR <sup>(3)</sup>	App. E
Bridge Spill Mitigation	201.111	PSSR, PSR <sup>(3)</sup>	App. E
Bridge Rail Replacement and Upgrades	201.112	PSSR, PSR <sup>(3)</sup>	App. E
Bridge Seismic Restoration	201.113	PSSR, PSR <sup>(3)</sup>	App. E
Truss Formal Requirements for Bridges	201.322	PSSR, PSR <sup>(3)</sup>	App. E
<b>Roadway Preservation</b>			
Roadway Rehabilitation	201.120	PSSR	App. G
Pavement Rehabilitation	201.121	CAPM PR	App. H
Long-Life Pavement Curb/Loam	201.125	PSR	App. L
Roadway Protective Barrierment	201.150	PSR	App. L
Drainage System Restoration	201.151	PSR	App. L
Signs and Lighting Rehabilitation	201.170	PSR	App. L

**Would a Suicide Prevention Barrier on the Cold Spring Bridge Save Lives?  
A Review of the Evidence**

Garrett Glasgow  
Associate Professor of Political Science  
University of California, Santa Barbara

With support from mental health workers, elected officials, the California Highway Patrol, and the local community, Caltrans has announced their intention to install a suicide prevention barrier on the Cold Spring Bridge by 2010 at a cost of \$605,000. During the course of the debate a number of people have claimed that such a barrier would not only deter suicides at the Cold Spring Bridge, but actually prevent suicides and thus save lives. This claim is unfounded. A review of the evidence presented in favor of building the barrier and my own research reveals that there is *no* evidence that installing a suicide prevention barrier on the Cold Spring Bridge would save lives.

*Preventing Suicides at a Particular Location versus Saving Lives*

First, note that there is a distinction between preventing suicides and preventing suicides *at a particular location*. Numerous studies have shown that installing a suicide prevention barrier on a bridge deters suicides at that location. Thus, there is little doubt that a suicide prevention barrier on the Cold Spring Bridge would reduce suicides at that location.<sup>1</sup>

However, deterring suicides at a particular location is *not* proof that we have saved lives. We must consider the possibility of *displacement* – that is, will placing a barrier on the Cold Spring Bridge simply lead those intending to commit suicide to jump at another location? We must also consider the possibility of *substitution* – that is, will placing a barrier on the Cold Spring Bridge lead those intending to commit suicide to substitute a different method of suicide, such as poison or a handgun? If installing a suicide prevention barrier on the Cold Spring Bridge simply leads suicidal individuals to kill themselves in another place or in another way, we are not saving lives.

This point appears to have been ignored or misunderstood by many who are advocating the construction of a suicide prevention barrier on the Cold Spring Bridge. For instance, one handout made available at the July 25<sup>th</sup> meeting listed the number of suicides by year from the Coronado Bay Bridge in San Diego County, noting that 99 people committed suicide using the bridge since call boxes and signs were installed in 1990. This handout makes the claim that “99 deaths could have been prevented if barriers had been installed at that time,” but there is no basis for this claim.<sup>2</sup> Again, we must consider displacement

<sup>1</sup> It should be noted that in some cases suicides do still occur at locations that have suicide prevention barriers. For instance, the most recent suicide from the Colorado Street Bridge in Pasadena was July 2, 2007, even though a suicide prevention barrier was installed in 1993.

<sup>2</sup> Similarly, there is no basis for the claim that alternatives such as call boxes and signs don't save lives. Although people still jump from bridges with call boxes and signs, we don't know if other individuals may have decided *not* to commit suicide because of these safety features. In other words, we know call boxes and signs don't prevent *all* suicides, but it does not follow from this that they don't work at all.

and substitution – would the installation of barriers on the Coronado Bay Bridge in 1990 have simply lead to those 99 people jumping from another location, or using a different method of suicide? More generally, does the installation of a suicide prevention barrier on a bridge simply lead to displacement and substitution, resulting in the same number of suicides as if the barrier had not been built? Many suicide researchers claim the answer is “no,” but of course we should not accept this claim without evidence.

*A Review of Existing Research on Suicide Prevention Barriers*

What kind of evidence should we look for in order to know if suicide prevention barriers save lives? We cannot simply look at the numbers who jump from a bridge before and after the installation of a suicide barrier for the reasons discussed above. Instead, we must look for changes in the *suicide rate* in the communities surrounding the bridge.<sup>3</sup> If suicide prevention barriers are saving lives, then this means that there will be some individuals who would have committed suicide if there had been no barrier, but instead choose to live – all else equal, this will lead to a reduction in the overall suicide rate. Conversely, if suicide prevention barriers do not save lives, individuals deterred from jumping from the bridge in question will simply commit suicide in another place (displacement) or in another way (substitution) – all else equal, this will leave the overall suicide rate unchanged.

A number of studies were presented at the Caltrans public information meeting of July 25<sup>th</sup> that claim to have evidence that suicide barriers on bridges do save lives. Perhaps the most prominent of these is a study that tracked 515 people who were restrained from committing suicide from the Golden Gate Bridge between 1937 and 1971, finding that about 94% of these people did not go on to commit suicide in the 7 years in which they were tracked.<sup>4</sup> This study is frequently interpreted as evidence of the likely effectiveness of suicide prevention barriers, but this is misleading.

First, it should be noted that this study suffers from what is known as a *self-selection bias*. That is, there are many reasons to believe that the individuals tracked in this study are not representative of individuals that actually commit suicide by jumping from bridges.<sup>5</sup> Simply put, were the people in this study serious about committing suicide, or did they go to a highly visible public place and threaten to commit suicide as a “cry for

<sup>3</sup> The majority of suicide victims who jump from bridge come from communities close to the bridge. The Marin County Coroner’s office recently released a study showing that 85% of people jumping from the Golden Gate Bridge are San Francisco Bay Area residents. Similarly, statistics gathered by the Santa Barbara County Sheriff-Coroner show that 86% (37 of 43) suicide victims from the Cold Spring Bridge lived in Santa Barbara County. Thus, any effect of a suicide prevention barrier on the suicide rate should primarily be observed in the area around the bridge in question.

<sup>4</sup> Seiden, Richard H. 1978. “Where Are They Now? A Follow-Up Study of Suicide Attempters from the Golden Gate Bridge.” *Suicide and Life-Threatening Behavior*, Vol. 8, pp. 203-216.

<sup>5</sup> Note that we have seen another type of self-selection bias in the debate over the suicide prevention barrier on the Cold Spring Bridge – treating the opinions of those that choose to attend the Caltrans public information meetings as representative of the community at large. See for instance [http://www.dot.ca.gov/dist05/projects/sb\\_cold\\_springs/mtg06may22.pdf](http://www.dot.ca.gov/dist05/projects/sb_cold_springs/mtg06may22.pdf).

help”)? If it is the latter, it would be a mistake to count them as examples of the lives suicide prevention barriers could save if they never intended to die in the first place.

More importantly, this study simply assumes away the displacement and substitution problems. The individuals in this study were prevented from committing suicide at their preferred location, and then chose to live – but if suicide prevention barriers made suicide at the Golden Gate Bridge impossible, would it still be their preferred suicide location, or would they simply substitute another bridge or another method? In order to regard this study as evidence that suicide prevention barriers save lives then we must assume these individuals would *only* have attempted suicide on the Golden Gate Bridge – in other words, these studies assume away the problem we must solve.

Studies based on interviews with those who survived a jump from a bridge are similarly flawed.<sup>6</sup> Survivors often report they only planned to jump from a specific bridge, but one factor that likely influenced this preference was the fact that it was *actually possible* to commit suicide at this location. If a suicide prevention barrier had made suicide at their preferred location impossible, would these individuals have simply formed a suicide plan involving a different location or a different method? Many survivors also claim that they would not have attempted suicide if a barrier had been in place, but can we really believe this, given that a barrier does nothing to solve the mental and emotional problems that led these individuals to attempt suicide in the first place?

Another study often cited as evidence of the likely effectiveness of suicide prevention barriers is a comparison of the number of suicides from the Ellington and Taft Bridges in Washington, D.C.<sup>7</sup> After a suicide prevention barrier was installed on the Ellington Bridge, there were no further suicides from that bridge, and the number of suicides per year from the Taft Bridge remained roughly constant. In the meeting on July 25<sup>th</sup> this study was presented as evidence that the suicide prevention barrier on the Ellington Bridge was saving lives, as it did not appear that suicide victims were being displaced to the Taft Bridge. However, this is not actually proof that the suicide prevention barrier on the Ellington Bridge is saving lives. In the words of one of the authors of the study:

Are the data provided sufficient to substantiate the effectiveness (or lack thereof) of bridge barriers as a means to prevent suicide? The answer is no, the data are not sufficient to answer that question, because they do not touch on the issue of whether persons who would have committed suicide by jumping from the Ellington Bridge went on to commit suicide by other means. ... [P]ersons frustrated in their efforts to commit suicide by jumping from the Ellington Bridge are in no sense restricted to committing suicide by jumping from the Taft Bridge. (p. 92)

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<sup>6</sup> See for instance Rosen, David H. 1975. “Suicide Survivors: A Follow-up Study of Persons Who Survived Jumping from the Golden Gate and San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridges.” *The Western Journal of Medicine*, Vol. 122, pp. 289-294.

<sup>7</sup> O’Carroll, Patrick W., Morton M. Silverman, and Alan L. Berman. 1994. “Community Suicide Prevention: The Effectiveness of Bridge Barriers.” *Suicide and Life-Threatening Behavior*, Vol. 24, pp. 89-99.

Besides these studies, I reviewed all of the other studies cited during the meeting on July 25<sup>th</sup>, and every other study of the effectiveness of suicide prevention barriers I was able to locate. Nearly all of these studies show that installing a suicide prevention barrier on a bridge reduces suicides at that location. However, *not one* finds a statistically significant<sup>8</sup> change in the suicide rate in the surrounding community after the barrier is installed, meaning that none of these studies can rule out the possibility that suicide prevention barriers simply lead people to commit suicide in another place or in another way.

Thus, despite an extensive search I have been unable to locate any evidence that suicide prevention barriers save lives.

*Suicide Prevention Barriers only Work if Bridges Cause Suicides*

Many suicide researchers realize there is no statistical evidence that suicide prevention barriers save lives. However, they argue that suicide prevention barriers *could* be saving lives, but since suicide prevention barriers on bridges are rare, we do not yet have enough evidence to prove it. For instance, one recent study of suicide prevention barriers wrote:

It should be remembered that although the impact of any intervention [suicide prevention barriers] on what is a relatively unusual method of suicide such as jumping may be difficult to measure in statistical terms, it may be of immeasurable benefit in human terms.<sup>9</sup>

A useful analogy here might be the study of the health benefits of smoking prevention programs in the 1950s. Smoking prevention programs were extremely rare at this time, and had not existed for very long, so it would have been difficult to find any statistical evidence of the health benefits of these programs given the limited evidence available. Of course, we now know that smoking prevention programs *do* have public health benefits – it would have been a mistake to conclude that smoking prevention programs did not work based on the limited evidence available in the 1950s.

However, despite the lack of statistical evidence of the effectiveness of smoking prevention programs, researchers in the 1950s were still confident that these programs would have some health benefits. The reason for this is because at that time there was a growing body of statistical work that demonstrated that smoking had negative health consequences. That is, while there was not enough evidence to show that smoking prevention programs would *save* lives, there *was* evidence that smoking was *costing* lives.

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<sup>8</sup> Even if nothing else changed, we expect the suicide rate in a community to have some amount of natural variation from year to year. A change in the suicide rate is *statistically significant* if a statistical test shows that we can be reasonably sure that the change we observe is not simply due to this kind of natural variation.

<sup>9</sup> Nowers, Mike, and David Gunnell. 1996. "Suicide from the Clifton Suspension Bridge in England." *Journal of Epidemiology and Public Health*, Vol. 50, pp. 30-32.

If we extend this analogy to our current research question, this means that the way to determine if suicide prevention barriers prevent suicides given our limited experience with these barriers is to determine if bridges *without* barriers *increase* the suicide rate. If we believe suicide prevention barriers *save* lives, then logically it *must* be the case that bridges without suicide prevention barriers are *costing* lives. In other words, we must believe that bridges without barriers help *cause* suicides.<sup>10</sup>

If this is the case, rather than examining changes in the suicide rate in the few areas where a suicide prevention barrier has been installed on a bridge, we can examine how the suicide rate in different communities across the United States is related to exposure to bridges without suicide prevention barriers. If we find evidence that bridges help cause suicides, this would suggest that suicide prevention barriers are likely to be effective in saving lives.

In order to determine if exposure to bridges increases the suicide rate, I examined the relationship between the suicide rate and the number of bridges likely to attract suicidal individuals in all 50 states plus Washington D.C. from 1979 through 2004 (the only years for which complete data was available).<sup>11</sup> Bridges likely to attract suicide victims were defined as those bridges over 30 meters (about 98 feet) high with pedestrian access.<sup>12</sup> In order to statistically test the relationship between the number of bridges and the suicide rate in a state in a given year, I use a technique known as linear regression. Essentially, this is the process of fitting a trend line to a scatter plot of data, and then testing to see if the trend line has a positive, zero, or negative slope. If increased exposure to bridges leads to more suicides, we would expect to see more suicides in states that have more bridges, and thus a positively sloping trend line.

The relationship between the number of bridges and the suicide rate in each state from 1979 through 2004 is presented on the following page. Each dot in the graph indicates a particular state in a particular year, and the line running through the dots is the trend line estimated by linear regression.

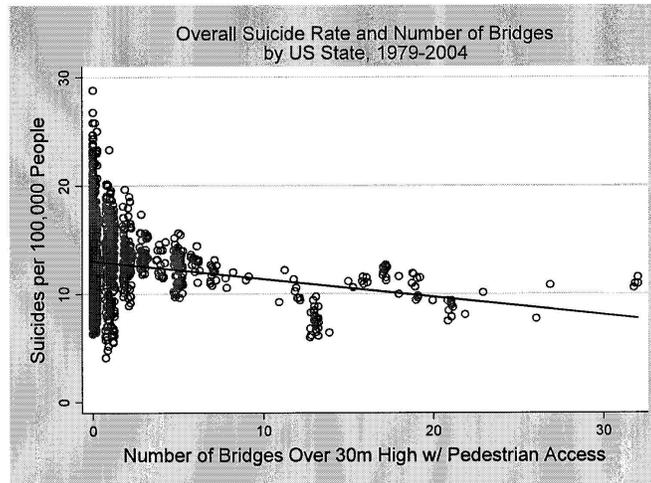
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<sup>10</sup> This is in fact the claim made by many suicide researchers who argue for suicide prevention barriers. For instance, Clarke and Lester explicitly claim “lethal agents in the environment play a causal role in suicide...” (Clarke, Ronald V., and David Lester. 1989. *Suicide: Closing the exits*. New York: Springer Verlag Press, p. 12).

<sup>11</sup> Data on the suicide rate by jumping and the overall suicide rate in each state was obtained from the Center for Disease Control (CDC) mortality database, available at <http://wonder.cdc.gov/mortSQL.html>. Data on the number and date of construction of bridges in each state was obtained from the Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration National Bridge Inventory, available at <http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/bridge/britab.htm>.

<sup>12</sup> Alternative definitions of bridges likely to attract suicide victims (over 20 meters and over 15 meters high, with and without pedestrian access) were also tested, and yielded nearly identical results to those presented here.

<sup>13</sup> This finding also serves as a cautionary note for the interpretation of some other suicide prevention studies that have examined the relationship between a single factor and the suicide rate. For instance, one study found that the suicide rate in the United Kingdom declined as domestic gas became less toxic (Clarke and Lester, p. 30), but as with the simple statistical test presented here, this study did not consider other factors that could influence the suicide rate.



This figure reveals that there is a *negative* relationship between the overall suicide rate and the number of bridges in a state, exactly the *opposite* of the relationship we would expect to see if bridges helped cause suicides and suicide prevention barriers saved lives. It does not seem plausible that increasing the number of bridges in a state would directly reduce the suicide rate – instead, the number of bridges in a state may be a proxy for some other factor that reduces the suicide rate (such as a robust state economy).<sup>13</sup> At any rate, there is no evidence to suggest that increased exposure to bridges increases the suicide rate.<sup>14</sup>

I also undertook more complicated statistical analyses of the relationship between the overall suicide rate and exposure to bridges, controlling for differences in the baseline suicide rate across states, differences in the variability in the suicide rate across states over time, and including the unemployment rate as an additional factor that could influence the suicide rate.<sup>15</sup> These further analyses did not find any statistically significant relationship between the number of bridges in a state and the suicide rate, no matter which definition of bridge was used.

Thus, there is no evidence that increased exposure to bridges increases the suicide rate, which logically suggests that suicide prevention barriers on bridges will not save lives.

<sup>14</sup> Note there is a *positive* relationship between the number of bridges in a state and the suicide rate *by jumping*. This suggests that substitution is occurring – individuals wishing to commit suicide in an area with a tall bridge may choose that method, while other methods are substituted in areas without tall bridges.

<sup>15</sup> In technical terms, these analyses were fixed-effects linear regression models with heteroskedasticity-robust standard errors.

*Conclusion*

A review of all of the available evidence and my own statistical study reveals that there is no evidence that a suicide prevention barrier on the Cold Spring Bridge would save lives.

Despite this, some may say that we should still build the barrier, arguing that if it saves even one life it is worth it. This is mistaken – if we are serious about saving lives, the question we must ask is whether we could save *more* lives by spending the \$605,000 we would spend on the barrier elsewhere.

For instance, in 2005 two people jumped to their deaths from the Cold Spring Bridge. In that same year, 4,304 people died in traffic accidents on California highways, 71 of them in Santa Barbara County.<sup>16</sup> In 2004 there were 3,349 suicides in California, 35 of them in Santa Barbara County.<sup>17</sup>

Whether our goal is highway safety or suicide prevention, we must question the decision to spend \$605,000 on a project with no evidence of effectiveness at a location averaging one death per year.

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<sup>16</sup> California Highway Patrol 2005 Annual Report of Fatal and Injury Motor Vehicle Traffic Collisions, Table 8E, available at <http://www.chp.ca.gov/switrs/pdf/2005-sec8.pdf>.

<sup>17</sup> Calculated from the CDC mortality database, available at <http://wonder.cdc.gov/mortSQL.html>. 2004 was the latest year of data available.

**Comment on Cold Spring Bridge Project submitted by Gary L. Spielmann, Director of Suicide Prevention (retired), New York State Office of Mental Health, and consultant for suicide prevention to the New York State Bridge Authority, New York State Thruway Authority, and international Peace Bridge Authority (Ontario, Canada)**

Both sides in the debate over the possible construction and deployment of physical barriers to the Cold Spring Bridge in Santa Barbara cite the New York State Bridge Authority (NYSBA) plan for suicide prevention as evidence for their respective positions. While I am usually reluctant to directly comment on matters faced by public agencies in other states, I am deeply concerned by the highly selective use of my work by the Glendon Association in its response to the 'human barriers' proposal submitted by Friends of the Bridge. As the author of the study and architect of the NYSBA plan, please permit me to place in the record my views of the issues involved and a preferred solution.

The Glendon Association has given the impression that NYSBA did not choose to install suicide prevention barriers on its bridges due to maintenance and traffic concerns, such as snowplowing and bridge inspections. While these factors did play a role in our decision, there was a fundamental reason that NYSBA did not opt to install barriers: suicide prevention barriers are an inferior solution to the problem of suicides on bridges. Suicide prevention measures that place the suicidal individual in touch with another human being are the preferred method for preventing suicide. Such a 'human barrier' will outperform any physical barrier and save more lives.

The message conveyed by a physical barrier (i.e. fence) on a bridge to a potential jumper is: **don't jump here**. The message that should be conveyed to a distraught person is: **we want to help you now**, so that you don't lose your life as a result of a temporary crisis. Advocates like the Glendon Association rely far too much on the efficacy of a structure to block the impulsive behavior of would-be suicidal individuals, and fail to appreciate its limitations and shortcomings.

Specifically, physical barriers:

\*\* provide society with the impression that by installing a physical barrier, we have somehow addressed the needs of suicidal individuals, so we can continue to ignore the likely root problem - mental illness, which is probably treatable in a

majority of cases. "We need to understand that the bridge is not the problem. The problem is the stigma, shame, and fear behind mental illness and the thoughts that surround suicide. It is a subject many are afraid to discuss, and it is a subject often misunderstood and undertreated or untreated. The solution is to stop making headline news and become proactive in preventing suicide by talking and writing about it, and infusing awareness and prevention in the schools and communities." (Miccio in **NYSBA Report**, p. 18)

\*\* are expensive to construct and maintain relative to other suicide prevention measures available, given the limited funding available for both suicide prevention and highway safety.

\*\* do nothing to address the suicidal condition of the person who might be tempted to jump from the bridge. Unlike the live voice at the receiving end of a callbox, a physical barrier does not give a desperate person a reason to live or serve as a listening post for the real or imagined motives for being on the bridge at that point in time. By relying solely on an inanimate object to "save a life", an opportunity to identify and help a suicidal individual is lost.

\*\* do not take advantage of the fact that most would-be bridge jumpers are deeply ambivalent about wanting to end their lives. The 23 year experience of the Mid-Hudson Bridge phones in saving lives shows the potential value of human intervention made possible by modern communications technology connected to a certified and trained Lifeline provider. While professing to block the 'impulsive' tendencies of would-be suicides, lacking a communications component and a human interface, barrier advocates have no means of identifying or assisting such persons. In such situations, a human presence could lead to assistance for an individual crying for help.

\*\* can pose an irresistible challenge to certain people bent on jumping. It wouldn't take much effort for an individual to carry a step ladder in a pickup truck or car, drive to the bridge, unload the ladder and use it to climb over an 8' fence before anyone realized what they were up to. Some people don't even need a ladder: one man scaled a 10' high curved metal barrier on the Empire State Building Observation Deck, and another climbed over the high fencing along a 'suicide bridge' in Schenectady, New York. In the latter incident, the metal fencing actually prevented the responders from reaching the jumper in time to

save him.

\*\* shift the risk of suicide, rather than manage it. A careful review of the literature on the efficacy of bridge barriers shows that their installation doesn't reduce the suicide rate in the surrounding geographic area. Most suicide prevention experts are in agreement that suicide rates are unlikely to go down as long as we confine prevention efforts to only those who are at immediate risk of attempting suicide. (Caine and Conwell: 2003) While a barrier may reduce - but not eliminate - the numbers of deaths at a specific site, it won't prevent individuals from going elsewhere to jump, or to substitute another means to end their lives. While suicidal behavior is crisis-oriented and acute in nature, without a means to communicate that urgency to persons in a position to be helpful at that time and place, the suicidal person is left to his/her devices while still vulnerable to self-destructive thoughts and behaviors. For this reason, the *National Strategy on Suicide Prevention* (2001) and related public policy sources call for an integrated strategy that is community-based and founded on evidence-based practices to identify and treat suicidal individuals. For example, depression is treatable in 80 to 90% of cases, yet only 30 to 50% of depressed individuals are diagnosed as such by their primary care physicians. (*Reducing Suicide*: Institute of Medicine, 2002). For that reason, the State of New York is funding production of a video for physicians to help them better recognize the symptoms of depression in their patients, and thereby reduce their suicidal risk. Another initiative will help train 'gatekeepers' in the community to recognize the same symptoms among students and peers.

#### **Why a Human Barrier is Better**

One reason why suicide rates are much higher in the sparsely populated Rocky Mountain region than in the more populous East and West Coasts is the individuals suffering from mental disorders there are less likely to be noticed or helped by others. Social isolation, self-medication and loneliness are risk factors for suicidal behavior and countering them can save lives. For that reason, maintaining a human connection with a suicidal individual is the best way to ensure that person's survival. These findings underscore the need for a universal hotline service able to reach individuals in remote locations, including the walkways on bridges, and provide emotional support and advice to those in danger of harming themselves. By partnering with mental health professionals who know how to identify, assess, refer and treat those in danger of self-harm, we can help address the needs of

people who are drawn to these bridges out of desperation.

Call boxes hooked to a certified Lifeline call center provide vital human contact for suicidal individuals, and are a core component of the NYSBA plan. These call boxes offer individuals expert help from nationally certified suicide prevention specialists, and additional protection when accompanied by trained first responders (law enforcement). This capability was largely unavailable nationally until January 1, 2005, when Lifeline began operations under contract with the federal government. Call boxes have a low maintenance cost and a reasonable installation cost.

The safety of law enforcement personnel and first responders is also enhanced by the installation of call boxes. Prior to installation of the Lifeline phones, these professionals were frequently the first persons to contact distraught individuals. It fell to them to negotiate the individuals' safe removal from the bridge. With the phone system in place, a trained mental health counselor typically plays that role, thereby reducing the responsibility and risk faced by law enforcement in dealing with suicidal individuals. The New York State Police responders have expressed their appreciation to NYSBA for the new resource that has made their jobs easier and safer.

Call boxes have proven to be effective in saving lives. For instance, mental health officials in Dutchess County (New York) installed two crisis telephones on one of NYSBA's bridges back in 1984. In the 23 years of operation, 53 individuals who called from these bridge phones were successfully rescued and their lives saved. Only one individual phone user went on to jump from the bridge.

Other components of the NYSBA plan that Caltrans should consider:

\*\* Urge the state and local mental health agencies to conduct an education and awareness campaign regarding suicidal behaviors in the surrounding communities, including media coverage 'best practices' and the existence of Lifeline as a resource that can be accessed from any phone, not just from bridges, by dialing (1-800-273-TALK);

\*\*Provide emergency call training for personnel and response training for first responders encountering suicidal individuals;

\*\* Re-emphasize random road patrols on the bridge

\*\* Deploy CCTV cameras on the bridge

Together, these initiatives are the core components of the NYSBA Comprehensive Plan. They were chosen after a rigorous evaluation by Authority staff, and after consulting with experts in telecommunications and law enforcement. For each of these areas, 'best practices' exist and are readily available upon request. The NYSBA Plan combines advanced communications technology, public awareness and informed intervention to achieve its goal of saving lives, while enabling Caltrans to serve its primary goal: ensuring safe and efficient transportation to the public.

Finally, whatever strategies and technologies are adopted, bear in mind that there is no way to completely prevent all suicide attempts at most bridges. However, based on the foregoing, a callbox system has the greatest chance of reducing suicidal deaths from the Cold Spring Bridge.

Thank you.

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**A Comprehensive Plan for Suicide Prevention  
New York State Bridge Authority**

**Briefing & Summary Report  
for Consideration by Transportation Agencies**



**ELIOT SPITZER**  
GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK

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## Executive Summary

### Challenges & Conclusions A System-Wide Solution The NYSBA Plan for Suicide Prevention & Saving Lives

Of all the challenges posed by suicide, one of the most difficult is the widely-held belief that we can do little to prevent or control such destructive behavior.

Committing suicide by jumping off a bridge poses additional challenges for a transportation agency in that the public nature of the act, while generally rare, usually generates significant media and public attention. In addition, the governmental nature of most bridge operators creates the situation where the public demands action.

The typical layman reaction is to call for barriers to prevent suicide. While physical barriers have an appeal to the common observer, the actual effectiveness of physical barriers in preventing suicide is circumspect and the engineering and operational aspects of physical barriers is frequently questionable.

#### *Is there a better way?*

In consultation with regional, state and national leaders in suicide prevention, the New York State Bridge Authority (NYSBA) has developed and implemented an alternative that has already provided verifiable and sustainable results.

#### Understanding Suicide

We wouldn't change a structural deficiency without determining why the problem exists in the first place, nor would we implement a new tolling system without knowing its impact on our customers. In order to deal with the issue of suicides, we need to understand the problem first.

Depression is the leading cause of suicidal behavior. Depression is also treatable in 80% of cases which means most suicides are preventable. Educating the public to this truth is critical to the efforts at making our communities safe from suicidal behavior.

The Golden Gate Bridge is the most studied bridge in the world as it relates to suicide risk management. Many years of study at the Golden Gate conclude that if a suicidal person can be helped through his/her crises, one at a time, chances are extremely good that he/she won't die by suicide later. The difference between entertaining suicidal thoughts and acting on them can be as basic as having a casual encounter with a person - anyone - who exhibits concern and empathy.

The ambivalence of bridge jumpers and survivors points to a key strategy for saving lives:

*Maintaining a human connection with a suicidal individual  
is the best way to ensure that person's survival.*

### Constructing a 'Human Barrier' against Suicide

Preventing suicides on bridges will most likely occur if we recognize the situation for what it is: a mental health problem. But how does a transportation agency address a mental health problem?

By partnering with mental health professionals who know how to assess, refer and treat those in danger of self-harm, transportation agencies can do their job and allow these professionals to construct a 'human barrier' that will outperform any physical barrier and save more lives.

Why is the NYS Bridge Authority involved in Suicide Prevention? Because it works, it's the right thing to do and it is the best decision from a transportation management point of view.

Of course, this made some uncomfortable. ***What we discovered is that we need to be neither suicide prevention experts nor mental health consultants. We were welcomed with open arms by professionals in those fields and our efforts have received wide praise.***

The goodwill engendered by this project and the reduction in negative publicity provide added benefits to a public agency.

### A System-Wide Solution

Based on the advice of mental health professionals, the most appropriate approach for the NYSBA was to implement a comprehensive package that utilizes technology, awareness and informed intervention.

It is neither appropriate nor sufficient to deny access to our bridges for pedestrians. These spans are historic and integral components of the federally designated Hudson River Heritage Area.

The NYSBA also must keep its primary function, the efficient and safe passage of vehicles across the Hudson River, in the forefront. Physical barriers will significantly impact regular inspection and maintenance operations, cause extensive delays and costs in implementation, and divert the Authority from its primary task.

In addition, limiting access might temporarily defer a potential suicide attempt, but does nothing towards the desired outcome of long-term suicide prevention. Getting appropriate help to those who need it is the best approach.

To this end and after an extensive review of suicide mitigation efforts by bridge and transportation agencies both nationally and internationally through the International Bridge, Tunnel & Turnpike Association (IBTTA), combined with the resources of the NYS Office of Mental Health, the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention and the past Director of Suicide Prevention for New York State, NYSBA developed a concise - and implementable - plan of action.

**Key Elements of the NYSBA Plan for Suicide Prevention & Saving Lives**

The Comprehensive Plan is the culmination of the 'best practices' conclusions of our technology, engineering and planning departments combined with the advice and direction of state and national experts in the field of suicide prevention.

- ❖ **Implementing a Suicide Prevention Hotline Service on Every Bridge**
- ❖ **Conduct Education & Awareness Campaigns for the Community**
- ❖ **Emergency Call Training for Personnel**

**Suicide Prevention Hotline Services**

Professionals in the field of mental health overwhelmingly agree that qualified intervention is the best way to try to stop a potential suicide and establish a process for long-term prevention of suicide.

The federally-funded National Suicide Prevention Lifeline (1-800-273-TALK) is a network of crisis centers located in communities across the country that are committed to suicide prevention. Persons in emotional distress or in a suicidal crisis can call anytime from anywhere in the nation and speak to a trained worker who will listen to and assist the caller in getting the help they need. Calls are routed to the nearest available crisis center (of more than 120) in 46 states that are currently participating in the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline network.

*The implementation of a system of direct-link phones on and/or near bridges, combined with the public awareness campaign that the service exists and is successful, is the first key accomplishment for the NYSBA plan to prevent suicides.*

**Education & Awareness**

While not detracting from our primary mission, the Authority, as a public entity with extensive contact with the community, decided to also play a role in education and awareness by making use of its facilities and resources to inform the public that suicide is a serious, and largely preventable, act.

*A combination of signage, access to Lifeline and assistance in promotion of the help available to potential suicide victims and other interested parties are all aspects that have produced results.*

**Emergency Call Training for Personnel**

Whether it's a potential suicide, security threat, traumatic accident or any other emergency situation, how our personnel respond is important. Whether it is by motorist aid call box, cell phone call or physical encounter – our personnel are receiving additional training in procedures for receiving an emergency call.

The New York State Police have an effective training program for their civilian dispatchers. They are given the primary do's and don'ts, a protocol to be followed and some basic techniques that allow the call to be taken and fully trained emergency services to be dispatched in the most professional and expeditious manner possible.

## Implementation

The Authority Board of Commissioners approved a plan for purchase of Lifeline phone systems. Technical issues were resolved and the phones were manufactured, installed and made operational in about 10 weeks. Regular inspections check operability and the system became the foundation for a comprehensive plan.

The phone system, while certainly worthy, is a 'last attempt' to intercede with a suicidal individual. Perhaps just as important, the Bridge Authority is utilizing its significant exposure to the general public, at very little cost, to promote the Lifeline service.

The Bridge Authority began an ongoing campaign to make the public aware that information on treating depression and a free, confidential service is available through mental health offices. In addition to distributing literature to patrons who ask for it, the Bridge Authority assisted in some advertising and is placing information signs on our property.

These signs do not mention the bridge or suicide, but simply let the public know that help is available and here's how to get it.

## The Results

### *The system saves lives.*

In August, 2007 – less than two months after full activation – a NYS Trooper was called to the Newburgh-Beacon Bridge by a mental health counselor who had a suicidal individual on one of the new Lifeline phones. The trooper was able to talk the person out of jumping, the person was transported to a mental health hospital and proper care was given.

This was the first of several successful 'saves'.

The suicide prevention experts tell us that we have raised awareness about the issue in a positive fashion. *By virtue of the dozens upon dozens of positive print stories and radio and TV interviews, the Bridge Authority received praise not only for our efforts in suicide prevention, but also for inter-agency cooperation, vision and foresight in using the assets we have to serve the public in a manner that is truly beyond the scope of the typical transportation mission.*

The New York State Bridge Authority will continue its efforts by making our consultant and our in house professionals available to any agency that desires to undertake a similar program. We have authorized them to do this at our expense.



**recordonline.com**  
from the **TIMES HERALD-RECORD**

February 26, 2007

**Cheers** \* To the State Bridge Authority for taking an enlightened approach to the challenge of preventing suicides. Instead of installing physical barriers, which have a mixed record of effectiveness, the authority is taking an educational approach to the challenge. The issue is very real, as demonstrated by recent suicides and attempts. The authority will install hot line phones connected to mental health clinics and join with organizations in the area already working on suicide prevention.

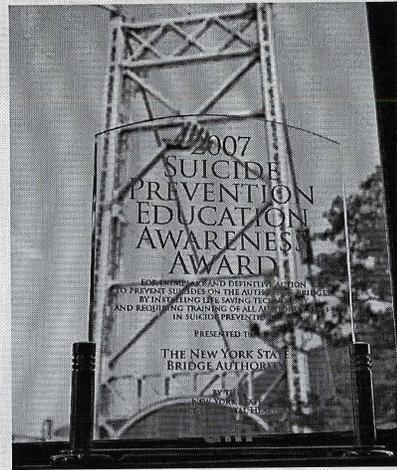
**Poughkeepsie Journal.com**  
Since 1785 | New York's Oldest Newspaper

Gannett Newspaper Friday, May 25, 2007

**Emergency bridge phones may save lives**

To their credit, state Bridge Authority officials have moved quickly to install emergency phone lines along the Kingston-Rhinecliff Bridge to help minimize suicide attempts on the 250-foot-high span. The move was in reaction to two suicides off the bridge within days of each other in December. The deaths prompted a review that culminated in a decision in February to install the suicide prevention telephone lines on that span and three others - the Newburgh-Beacon, the Rip Van Winkle and Bear Mountain bridges. Another person committed suicide off the Kingston-Rhinecliff Bridge in April. The Bear Mountain Bridge will have phones installed next. Such phones have been effective on the Mid-Hudson Bridge for more than two decades. Those call boxes go directly to a 24-hour help line, where distraught people can speak to a mental health counselor. More than 50 people have used them and have been persuaded not to jump. Seven people have jumped during that time, but only one of them used the phone. The telephone connection used on the Mid-Hudson Bridge couldn't be replicated on the other bridges. So officials put together a variety of technologies to create the systems. Calls will be routed through the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline, which connects calls to the nearest 24-hour-a-day mental health clinic. The cost to install the phones is not expected to exceed \$166,000. That's a small price to pay for these potentially life-saving devices. Bridge Authority officials rightfully sought to do what they could to prevent future attempts after the tragedies in December. Surely, the phones alone won't stop all suicides. And much more needs to be done to erase the stigma surrounding mental illness that often deters people from seeking help when they most need it. Still, the phones could be a much-needed lifeline for those on the bridge feeling they have no other choice but to take their own life.

When it seems like there's **no hope**, there is help. **1-800-273-TALK (8255)**  
National Suicide Prevention Lifeline. Sponsored by the NYSEA

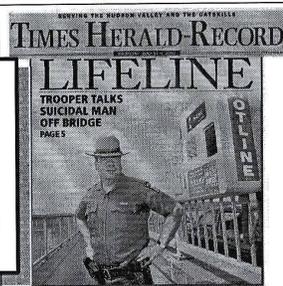


2/14/07 Kingston Daily Freeman  
Phones aim to prevent bridge jumps

Times Herald-Record February 23, 2007  
Bridge Authority will increase education, provide cell phones to prevent suicide...

Wednesday, 9.26.2007 Poughkeepsie Journal on-line  
Bridge Authority recognized for suicide prevention

"The Office of Mental Health applauds the Bridge Authority for promoting suicide awareness, and directly connecting individuals to Lifeline so they can get the help they need." - *Michael F. Hogan, PhD*, Commissioner of the NYS Office of Mental Health



Times Herald-Record Thursday, August 9, 2007

# First call is a lifesaver

## Suicidal man uses new bridge phone

By Lisa Corley  
For the Times Herald Record

Beacon — It was the first call ever made from the new suicide-prevention phone line on the Newburgh-Beacon Bridge.

Trooper Michael Beers was first on the scene and thought the best idea was to talk to the distraught young man who was threatening to jump off the bridge Sunday night.

"We just had guy talk," Beers said yesterday. "It was no big deal, really."

### COVER STORY

State police Troop T in Newburgh received a call from the Dutchess County Department of Mental Hygiene around 7 p.m. Sunday telling them there was a man contemplating suicide on the Newburgh-Beacon Bridge. The man had called a hot-line counselor from one of the six phone boxes that were installed in May.

Beers didn't know what to expect as he climbed over the divider separating the road from the pedestrian walkway.

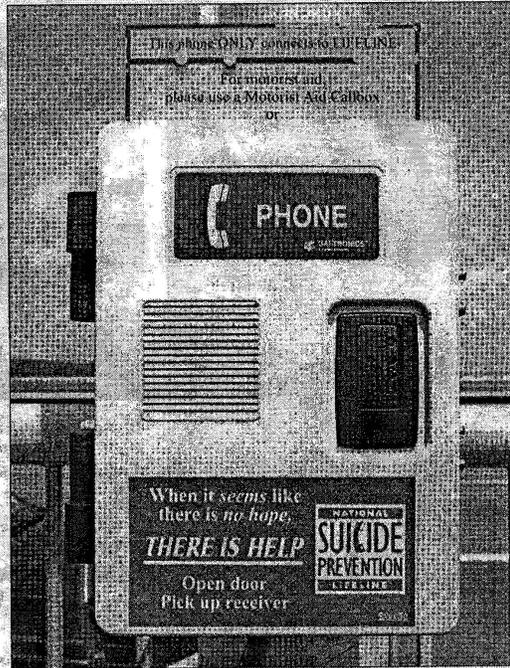
"I didn't know if he had already jumped or if the man I was approaching was even the right guy," recounted Beers, who described how he positioned himself between the man and the bridge railing and placed his hands on the man. "I asked him if he was thinking about killing himself and he said 'yes.' Then I said, 'Let me talk to you a minute.'"

The man agreed and climbed over the divider with the trooper.

The conversation Beers had with the man was not rehearsed. The academy offers training for these situations, Beers said, but his was seven years ago. He simply had a conversation with the 22-year-old man, who was distraught over a recent break-up with his girlfriend.

Beers told the teary-eyed man, "She's not worth your life." The "guy talk" seemed to work. The man agreed to be transported to an emergency room.

State police Sgt. Jaime Alvear, who also responded to the incident Sunday, said the phones can prove vital.



A suicide-prevention call box on the Beacon side of the Newburgh-Beacon Bridge. A despondent man picked up one of the bridge's six phones Sunday night; a responding state trooper was able to talk the man out of taking his life.

Times Herald-Record/CHET GORDON

"The phones give us a chance to get there. Most people don't want to do it, so they pick up the phone," Alvear said.

The New York State Bridge Authority installed the phones on the pedestrian walkway on the eastbound side of the Newburgh-Beacon Bridge, as well as on three other Hudson River bridges.

There have been multiple suicides from local bridges this summer, including that of a woman who jumped from the Newburgh-Beacon Bridge in July and the suspected suicide of a 71-year-old Goshen man who is believed to have leaped from the Bear Mountain Bridge on Monday. Neither of those people used the hot-line phones.

Another woman was talked out of jumping from the Tappan Zee Bridge Sunday by a motorist.

"The (bridge) phones are the last attempt to intercede," said John Bellucci, the Bridge Authority's director of planning and public relations. "If you just want to talk to someone or if you have a friend who needs help, the call is confidential and free."

About 80 percent of those who call suicide-prevention counselors are talked out of hurting themselves, Bellucci said.

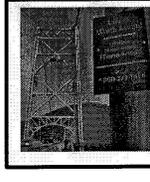
The suicide-prevention hot line can be dialed from any phone at 800-273-TALK (8255).



### NYS OMH Honors RNN-TV and NYS Bridge Authority for Suicide Prevention Efforts



The first OMH Suicide Prevention Awards were presented to Richard French III, general manager of RNN-TV (left); and James P. Sproat, Chairman of the New York State Bridge Authority.



The NYS Bridge Authority was recognized for installing lifeline phones on four Hudson River Bridges.

Albany, NY September 28, 2007 (condensed)

Mike Hogan, Ph.D., Commissioner of the New York State Office of Mental Health (OMH) today presented the first OMH Suicide Prevention Awards to RNN-TV and its general manager Richard French III, and to the New York State Bridge Authority, in recognition of both organizations' substantial contributions to the prevention of suicide.

"RNN-TV and the NYS Bridge Authority have both showed tremendous initiative and leadership in the area of suicide prevention," said OMH Commissioner Hogan. "Both have taken real steps toward preventing these tragedies, and have recognized the importance of the human connection in preventing suicides. I commend their consideration and compassion for others, and I am pleased to publicly recognize and applaud their contributions toward saving lives in New York State."

RNN-TV and French were honored for RNN's media coverage around suicide prevention efforts. The television station's news coverage of regional suicide prevention efforts, including an outstanding series on suicides in the Hudson Valley area, effectively put a face on the tragedy of suicide by providing valuable information about risks, warning signs, and steps someone can take if they are concerned about the possibility of suicide.

The State Bridge Authority was honored for taking definitive action to prevent suicides on the Authority's Hudson Valley bridges. The Authority installed lifeline phones on four Hudson River bridges this year, with the phones providing a direct connection to the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline. In their first few weeks of operation, the new bridge phones have already proven effective in saving lives.

"Studies have shown that suicide attempts are crisis-oriented and acute in nature. We have learned that if a suicidal person can be helped through his or her crisis, chances are extremely good that he or she won't die by suicide later. Prevention programs like these can truly make a difference and save lives," said OMH Commissioner Hogan.

Bridge Authority Chairman James P. Sproat said "We are honored by this award. The leadership Commissioner Hogan and Governor Spitzer have shown in suicide prevention is noteworthy and set the groundwork for the plan the Bridge Authority adopted. This is proof that agencies with very different missions, working together for the benefit of all New Yorkers, can make a difference."

Selected Research

**Gary L. Spielmann, MA, MS**

Former Director of Suicide Prevention, New York State Office of Mental Health  
Principal Author & Senior Advisor, New York State Suicide Prevention Strategy and Plan  
Member, New York State Suicide Prevention Council (2002-2006)

**IBTTA**

International Bridge, Tunnel and Turnpike Association, Neil Gray, Director of Governmental  
Affairs

Forth Estuary Transportation Authority, South Queensferry, UK

Chesapeake Bay Bridge and Tunnel Authority

Port Authority of NY/NJ

South Africa National Road Agency

Aurora Bridge, Seattle, Washington

Coronado Bridge, San Diego, CA

Cold Spring Canyon Arch Bridge, Caltran

Golden Gate Bridge, San Francisco, CA

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Education & Awareness"*, full report, February 2007

New York State Bridge Authority, *"An Executive Summary for Suicide  
Prevention, Education & Awareness"*, February 2007

**Technical Summary Regarding Suicide Mitigation Efforts**

The Information Technology Department was tasked with researching solutions to reduce the number of suicides at NYSBA facilities. Options were measured against many factors (Note: the following are in no particular order):

- I. Effectiveness – Will the option effectively reduce the number of successful suicide attempts or could it potentially lead to an increase in the number of incidents? Studies show that certain methods may actually make a despondent individual more aware of the option to use a facility to carry out their end.
- II. Reliability – Is the option reliable? Will it stand up to the harsh elements associated with the bridge environment? If technology based, are we using a proven technology that is not prone to service interruptions? Does the option have lasting power or will it need to be replaced frequently?
- III. Maintenance – Maintenance is a two fold consideration. What is the maintenance required to keep a solution up and running? Secondly, what impact will the solution have on our ability to properly maintain the facility? Also included in this category is the impact on the ability to perform proper bridge inspections.
- IV. Impact on Mission: Does the option impede our ability to maintain and operate safe vehicle crossings over the Hudson River?
- V. Aesthetics – Countless efforts have been made in the Hudson Valley to keep the river aesthetically pleasing. Are there any historic considerations or visual considerations that must be addressed?
- VI. Incident Response – Does the installed measure help or hinder incident response personnel?
- VII. Sensitivity – Does the solution offer an individual a path to ‘help’ or does it simply cause them to find another location to carry out their plans?
- VIII. Cost – What are the short term costs associated with design and installation? What long term costs are there? Where will funding for a system come from?

The following is a list of prevention strategies that have been evaluated for the Kingston-Rhinecliff Bridge. This summary has applications throughout the NYSBA System. Each strategy is followed by a brief list of benefits and/or negative factors that contribute to the final recommendation.

**Fence:**

1. Effectiveness – Effective at limiting access to potential jump areas. Can be scaled.
2. Reliability – Once installed, there is very little to go wrong.
3. Maintenance of Option – Easy to maintain by existing workforce (assuming chain link fence).
4. Maintenance of Facility – Severe hindrance to snow removal requiring possible closure of bridge. Hinders bridge maintenance and inspection operations.
5. Impact on Mission – May impede crossing of some over height vehicles. Snow removal may require closing of bridge.
6. Aesthetics – History shows fencing will cause opposition from scenic and wildlife groups.
7. Incident Response – May hinder emergency personnel. An individual who has scaled the fence would be unreachable by responders. May impede efforts involving fire or other emergencies on bridge.
8. Sensitivity – While a fence may stop an individual from jumping from the bridge, it does not offer help to the person. A fence says, ‘we don’t want you jumping here’ as compared to ‘we care about you and want to help you find a non-destructive solution.’
9. Cost – Extremely high cost for design and installation. Requires a long period of time for installation.

**Cellular Callbox:**

1. Effectiveness – Based on statistics from the Mid-Hudson Bridge, call boxes appear to be very effective. Out of the last 60 individuals to use a callbox on MHB, only one proceeded to jump.
2. Reliability – Localized installation should increase reliability.
3. Maintenance of Option – Low maintenance. Batteries would have to be replaced periodically. Signage or labels need replacement as they fade.
4. Maintenance of Facility – No impact.
5. Impact on Mission – No impact.
6. Aesthetics – No impact. (Note: signage or labels on box will fade over time and need to be replaced).
7. Incident Response – Allows responders to know the location of the individual.
8. Sensitivity – Can be configured to call a crisis hotline with trained individuals answering calls.
9. Cost – \$6500 per callbox (rough estimate) + \$12/month service fee.

**Satellite Callbox:**

1. Effectiveness – See ‘Cellular Callbox’ (Note: calls from this type of callbox may take 30 to 60 seconds for a connection to be made.)
2. Reliability – Somewhat reliable. Environmental factors such as solar flares may cause service interruptions.
3. Maintenance of Option – Unknown at this time. Batteries would have to be replaced periodically. Signage or labels need replacement as they fade.
4. Maintenance of Facility – No impact.
5. Impact on Mission – No impact.
6. Aesthetics – No impact. (Note: signage or labels on box will fade over time and need to be replaced).
7. Incident Response – Allows responders to know the location of the individual.
8. Sensitivity – User could call crisis center to talk to a trained professional.
9. Cost – \$8,000 per callbox. \$50/month + \$1 per minute. Cannot restrict what number is dialed.

**Landline Callbox:**

1. Effectiveness – Very Effective – see paragraph on MHB call boxes at end of document.
2. Reliability – Very reliable.
3. Maintenance of Option – Low Maintenance. Signage or labels need replacement as they fade.
4. Maintenance of Facility – No impact.
5. Impact on Mission – No impact.
6. Aesthetics – No impact.
7. Incident Response – Allows responders to know the location of the individual.
8. Sensitivity – Can be configured to call a crisis hotline with trained individuals answering calls.
9. Cost – \$46,000 +/- for conduit and copper installation. \$500 +/- per callbox. Waiting on monthly fee from Telco. Conduit costs will vary significantly by bridge. Total solution across all facilities \$365,000.

**Radio Callbox:**

1. Effectiveness – Allows individual to reach out for help. (Note: radio calls would come in over our existing radio system and be answered by Authority personnel.)
2. Reliability – Very reliable.
3. Maintenance of Option – Low maintenance. Batteries would have to be replaced periodically. Signage or labels need replacement as they fade.
4. Maintenance of Facility – No impact.
5. Impact on Mission – No impact.
6. Aesthetics – No impact
7. Incident Response – Allows responders to know the location of the individual.
8. Sensitivity – Allows individual to speak to a live person. Authority personnel are not trained in crisis management. Calls cannot be connected to a trained suicide prevention counselor.
9. Cost – \$2,000 + \$800 (if solar is needed for power).

**Video Cameras:**

1. Effectiveness – Will help with incident management, but in and of itself will have no effect on number or outcome of incidents. Some studies indicate that publicized surveillance may act as an attraction.
2. Reliability – Very reliable.
3. Maintenance of Option – Requires a higher level of maintenance. Malfunctioning cameras must be replaced. Preset view locations must be maintained.
4. Maintenance of Facility – Low.
5. Impact on Mission – Aids in the management of traffic flow.
6. Aesthetics – Low impact.
7. Incident Response – Allows responders to know the location of the individual.
8. Sensitivity – N/A
9. Cost – \$20,000 to \$500,000 – Fixed vs. Pan/tilt/zoom.

**Report to Caltrans in Response to the Notice of Preparation of a Draft  
Environmental Impact Report for the Cold Spring Canyon Bridge Suicide Barrier**

**Garrett Glasgow  
University of California, Santa Barbara**

As requested, here is my evaluation of the proposed suicide barrier on the Cold Spring Canyon Bridge. The stated goal of this project is to save lives by preventing suicides (Caltrans 2006a, 2006b). My area of expertise is in research design and statistics in the social sciences. Thus, I will confine my report to a review of the evidence presented on the likelihood that this project will achieve its goal of saving lives by preventing suicides.

**The Effectiveness of Suicide Barriers: A Review of the Evidence**

As a suicide prevention strategy, suicide barriers fall in the category of “means restriction.” It is widely believed that some suicides are impulsive, and thus some suicidal individuals can be saved by restricting their access to lethal agents, allowing time for the suicidal crisis to pass (Clarke and Lester 1989). As one might expect, most of the evidence for the effectiveness of means restriction as a suicide prevention strategy comes from studies of lethal agents people keep in their homes and might use in an impulsive suicide, such as firearms (Caron 2004) and prescription medications (Lester 1989).

Due to travel time and effort, suicide by jumping from the Cold Spring Bridge seems less likely to be the product of an impulsive suicidal moment than suicide by a lethal agent found in the home. Nevertheless, it is possible that the concept of means restriction might also extend to suicides by jumping from bridges.

While this is plausible, at this point it is purely conjecture. To date every study on the effectiveness of suicide barriers has been inconclusive, unable to determine if suicide barriers are an effective method of preventing suicide and saving lives.

***Preventing Suicides at a Particular Location versus Saving Lives***

How can we determine if suicide barriers on bridges save lives? It is not enough to simply point out that bridges that have installed barriers see fewer suicides, as there is a distinction between preventing suicides and preventing suicides at a particular location. While we can be reasonably confident that a suicide prevention barrier on the Cold Spring Bridge will reduce suicides at that location, it does not follow from this that a barrier would save lives.

We must consider the possibility of *displacement* – that is, will placing a barrier on the Cold Spring Bridge simply lead those intending to commit suicide to jump at another location? For instance, there are preliminary reports by local officials in Toronto that suicides by jumping from freeway overpasses have increased since the installation of a suicide barrier (the “Luminous Veil”) on the Bloor Viaduct in 2003, although this has not yet been the topic of a formal study (Mandel 2007). We must also consider the

possibility of *substitution* – that is, will placing a barrier on the Cold Spring Bridge lead those intending to commit suicide to substitute a different method of suicide, such as poison or a handgun? There is research that suggests that substitution does take place in some cases – for instance, Rich et al. (1990) found evidence that the implementation of stricter gun laws in Canada in 1978 led to more suicides by jumping among those most likely to use guns for suicide (young men).

If installing a suicide prevention barrier on the Cold Spring Bridge simply leads suicidal individuals to kill themselves in another place or in another way, we are not saving lives, and the proposed Caltrans project will not achieve its goal.

Several people have observed that the Cold Spring Bridge has the highest concentration of fatalities in any spot location owned by the state in Caltrans District 5. However, if the goal of the project is to save lives, this fact is irrelevant. Again, the stated goal of the project is to save lives, and this goal will not be achieved if the barrier on the Cold Spring Bridge simply disperses suicidal individuals to take their lives elsewhere.

#### ***Existing Research on Suicide Barriers is Inconclusive***

What kind of evidence should we look for in order to know if suicide prevention barriers save lives? We cannot simply look at the numbers who jump from a bridge before and after the installation of a suicide barrier for the reasons discussed above. Instead, we must look for changes in the *suicide rate* in the communities surrounding the bridge. If suicide prevention barriers are saving lives, then this means that there will be some individuals who would have committed suicide if there had been no barrier, but instead choose to live – all else equal, this will lead to a reduction in the overall suicide rate. Conversely, if suicide prevention barriers do not save lives, individuals deterred from jumping from the bridge in question will simply commit suicide in another place (displacement) or in another way (substitution) – all else equal, this will leave the overall suicide rate unchanged. Finding a decrease in the *suicide rate by jumping* would suggest there is no *displacement*, while finding a decrease in the *overall suicide rate* would suggest there is neither *displacement* nor *substitution*.

Perhaps the most widely cited study in debates about suicide barriers on bridges is Seiden (1977). This study tracked 515 people who were restrained from committing suicide from the Golden Gate Bridge between 1937 and 1971, and found that about 94% of these people did not go on to commit suicide in the following 7 years. Although this study is frequently interpreted as evidence of the likely effectiveness of suicide barriers, it actually does not speak to this question for two reasons.

First, and most obviously, the individuals in this study were restrained from suicide not by a physical barrier, but by human intervention. Thus, the results of this study are better interpreted as an examination of the long-term effectiveness of human intervention strategies such as call boxes and patrols rather than physical suicide barriers.

Second, if we are to interpret this study as evidence of the likely effectiveness of physical barriers, we must assume that installing suicide barriers does not result in displacement or substitution. The individuals in this study were prevented from committing suicide at their preferred location, and then chose to live – but if barriers made suicide at the Golden Gate Bridge impossible, would they still go to the Golden Gate Bridge, or would they simply go to another bridge or substitute another method? In order to regard this study as evidence that suicide barriers would save lives in the same way as the human intervention actually observed, then we must assume these individuals would have behaved in exactly the same way whether or not the Golden Gate Bridge had suicide barriers – in other words, we must assume away the possibility of displacement and substitution.

Also note that this study suffers from what is known as a *self-selection bias*. That is, there are many reasons to believe that the individuals tracked in this study are not representative of individuals that actually commit suicide by jumping from bridges. Simply put, were the people in this study serious about committing suicide, or did they go to a highly visible public place and threaten to commit suicide as a “cry for help”? If it is the latter, it would be a mistake to count them as examples of the lives suicide prevention barriers could save if they never intended to die in the first place.

Studies based on interviews with those who survived a jump from a bridge are similarly flawed (Rosen 1975). Survivors often report they only planned to jump from a specific bridge, but one factor that likely influenced this preference was the fact that it was actually possible to commit suicide at this location. If a suicide barrier had made suicide at their preferred location impossible, would these individuals have simply formed a suicide plan involving a different location or a different method? We have no way of knowing. Some survivors also claim that they would not have attempted suicide if a barrier had been in place, but there are reasons to doubt such claims given that a barrier does nothing to solve the mental and emotional problems that led these individuals to attempt suicide in the first place.

Another well-known study of a suicide barrier on a bridge was a comparison of the number of suicides from the Ellington and Taft Bridges in Washington, D.C. (O’Carroll et al. 1994). After a suicide prevention barrier was installed on the Ellington Bridge, this study found there were no further suicides from that bridge, and the number of suicides per year from the Taft Bridge remained roughly constant. However, this is not proof that the suicide prevention barrier on the Ellington Bridge is saving lives. In the words of O’Carroll:

Are the data provided sufficient to substantiate the effectiveness (or lack thereof) of bridge barriers as a means to prevent suicide? The answer is no, the data are not sufficient to answer that question, because they do not touch on the issue of whether persons who would have committed suicide by jumping from the Ellington Bridge went on to commit suicide by other means. ... [P]ersons frustrated in their efforts to commit suicide by jumping from the Ellington Bridge are in no sense restricted to committing suicide by jumping from the Taft Bridge. (p. 92)

Similarly, Silverman states there is a "... lack of clear evidence unequivocally proving that the construction of barriers on the Ellington Bridge has resulted causally in an absolute reduction in the *number* and *rate* of suicides in Washington D.C. ..." (p. 99). Thus, both authors in this study conclude that the effectiveness of suicide barriers has not been proven. Note further that no statistical tests for changes in the suicide rate were conducted.

Another commonly cited study examined a case where a suicide barrier was removed from a bridge (Beautrais 2001). This study found that when barrier were removed from the bridge, the number of people jumping from this bridge increased substantially (3 in the 4 years before the removal of the barrier versus 15 in the 4 years after the removal of the barrier). Note this bridge was adjacent to the region's largest inpatient psychiatric unit, which would seem to make it a more likely site for "impulsive" suicides than the Cold Spring Bridge.

As with O'Carroll et al., the results of this study were inconclusive. Beautrais did not test the impact of the removal of the barrier on overall suicide rates, which is the test we would need to see in order to determine if the removal of the suicide barrier resulted in more suicides. In reviewing her own study and others, Beautrais concludes:

The weight of evidence from these studies clearly suggests reductions in the rate of suicide by jumping from the sites following the introduction of barriers. However, the extent to which such changes lead to (i) an overall reduction in suicide or, (ii) increased preferences for other sites or methods of suicide remains contentious. (p. 561)

One study specifically cited in the Caltrans memorandum of August 18, 2006 is a study by Pelletier (2007, cited by Caltrans as a 2006 unpublished working paper). This study examined the impact of a suicide barrier on the Memorial Bridge in Augusta, Maine. As with the studies examined above, Pelleiter found that while the barrier reduced suicides at the bridge, it did not have a statistically significant impact on the suicide rate (p. 58).

Other studies on suicide barriers produce equivalent results. Reisch and Michel (2005) examine the effect of a safety net designed to prevent suicides from the Bern Muenster Terrace, and found no statistically significant change in the suicide rate by jumping (they did not test the effect of the net on the overall suicide rate). Bennewith et al. (2007) found that a suicide barrier on the Clifton Suspension Bridge in England reduced the suicide rate at the bridge, but did not have a statistically significant effect on either the suicide rate by jumping or the overall suicide rate. Reisch et al. (2007) test the relationship between suicide by jumping and the accessibility of bridges, and conclude "[b]arriers on bridges may prevent suicides but also may lead to a substitution of jumping site or method" (p.681).

In a review of the existing literature on suicide prevention on bridges Gunnell et al. (2005) conclude "[w]hist there is no clear evidence that the installation of barriers results

in a reduction in overall population suicide rates, extrapolation from other studies concerning the effect of changes in the availability of commonly used methods suggests this may be the case” (p. 17). That is, while researchers hypothesize that the concept of means restriction might be successfully extended to suicide prevention on bridges, there is currently no proof that barriers save lives.

Thus, while there is growing evidence that installing a suicide barrier will reduce the incidence of suicides on a bridge, there is no proof that this in turn results in lives saved. That is, no existing research has been able to rule out the possibility that suicide barriers simply lead people to commit suicide in another place or in another way.

#### ***Changes in the Suicide Rate***

Although not the subject of a published study, it has been pointed out that there is evidence that suicide rates have dropped in communities that have installed suicide barriers on bridges. For instance, according to data from the Center for Disease Control (CDC 2008) the suicide rate in Washington D.C. declined by almost 49% from 1986 (the year of the installation of the suicide barrier on the Ellington Bridge) to 2004. However, this remarkable decline should give us pause for two reasons.

First, suicides by jumping comprise a small fraction of suicides overall – suicides by jumping from all bridges comprised less than 10% of all suicides in Washington D.C. from 1981 to 1986 (Forgey 1987), so it seems implausible that a barrier on a single bridge could produce such a dramatic drop in the suicide rate.

More importantly, the suicide rate has been dropping everywhere in the U.S. (Lubell et al. 2008, McKeown et al. 2006), both in communities that have installed suicide barriers and in communities that have not. For instance, over the same 1986-2004 time period suicides in San Francisco County (the site of the barrier-less Golden Gate Bridge) dropped by over 30%, and by a remarkable 56% from 1979-2004 (the numbers remain roughly the same if Marin County is included in these calculations). Given that there are clearly other forces at work reducing the suicide rate, attributing changes in the suicide rate in Washington D.C. to the barrier on the Ellington Bridge is premature.

#### ***A Possible Case of Barrier Ineffectiveness***

It should be noted that while barriers are generally effective at reducing suicides from bridges, this is not always the case. For instance, the Colorado Street Bridge in Pasadena has seen four suicides in the last year despite having suicide barriers in place (*Pasadena Star-News*, various dates). This is approximately three times the average rate of suicide from this bridge in the period before the barrier was installed (based on newspaper reports, approximately 1.25 per year). In the event a barrier is installed on the Cold Spring Bridge this case should be studied to determine if this increase in suicides is due to a design flaw or an unforeseen maintenance issue with the barriers. However, this case may simply be an indication that barriers are unable to prevent determined individuals from committing suicide.

**Who Endorses Bridge Barriers as a Suicide Prevention Strategy?**

It is clear from the discussion above that suicide barriers are not proven to save lives. However, this raises another point of confusion. During the course of the debate about the barrier on the Cold Spring Bridge several statements were made that seemed to suggest that a number of public health agencies endorse the construction of barriers on bridges as an effective strategy for suicide prevention. How can this be, given the state of the evidence we have reviewed above?

A review of the policy statements put forth by these public health agencies quickly clears up the confusion – public health agencies do not explicitly endorse suicide barriers as an effective method of suicide prevention. I have reviewed the National Strategy for Suicide Prevention, which is a collaborative effort from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Service Administration (SAMHSA), the Center for Disease Control (CDC), the National Institutes of Health (NIH), the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), and the Indian Health Service (IHS). I have also studied reviews of suicide prevention strategies put forth by the American Medical Association and the World Health Organization (WHO). None of these organizations explicitly endorses the use of suicide barriers as a suicide prevention method.

For instance, consider the National Strategy for Suicide Prevention (NSSP 2001). All of the suicide prevention strategies based on means restriction in the NSSP are focused on reducing access to lethal agents in the home. Suicide barriers are simply mentioned in passing as a subject of interest (p. 72), and the NSSP recommends further research on the topic (p. 77).

Similarly, the AMA review (Mann et al. 2005) simply notes that “suicides by such methods have decreased following ... construction of barriers at jumping sites (p. 2070)” – in other words, this review points out that barriers on bridges reduce the number of suicides by jumping from bridges, which as we have already seen is not proof that lives were saved. More importantly, the AMA makes no specific recommendation regarding suicide barriers. The AMA’s policy recommendation for means prevention reads:

Restricting access to lethal methods decreases suicides by those methods. Priority should be given to the most commonly used methods used in each country. The possibility of substitution of methods requires ongoing monitoring, as does compliance with restrictions such as firearm access. (p. 2071)

This policy recommendation in fact seems to suggest that we should focus our means restriction efforts on projects other than suicide barriers, as suicide by jumping is comparatively rare in Santa Barbara County.

Finally, after endorsing means restriction for firearms, domestic gas, and toxic substances, on the topic of suicide barriers the WHO (WHO 1998) states:

In addition to the measures described, whose efficacy is attested to by the scientific literature, it is thought that other measures, such as the use of fencing on high buildings and bridges, could also contribute to a reduction in suicide rates, although there is no definitive evidence to support this idea. (p. 87)

Thus, while regarding suicide barriers as a promising area of research (in part though the hope that restricting access to very lethal means will lead suicidal individuals to substitute less lethal means), these agencies acknowledge that this is an unproven suicide prevention strategy, and the specific means restriction policies these organizations endorse are focused on lethal agents in the household.

To the best of my knowledge, the only organizations that explicitly endorse suicide barriers as a suicide prevention strategy are suicide prevention advocacy groups such as the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention (AFSP), the Glendon Association, and the Suicide Prevention Resource Center (SPRC) (in fact, the SPRC calls for legislation that would require all elevated bridges in California to install suicide barriers (SPRC 2004)).

#### **Implications for the Caltrans Project**

It appears that the existing Caltrans analysis (Caltrans 2006a, 2006b) is overly optimistic in estimating the likelihood a suicide barrier on the Cold Spring Bridge will achieve the stated goal of saving lives.

There are two flaws in the calculation of the benefit:cost ratio presented in the Caltrans memorandum on this project (Caltrans 2006b).

First, this benefit:cost ratio makes the assumption that the Cold Spring Bridge averages two suicides per year. However, information released by the Santa Barbara County Sheriff-Coroner reveals that the average number of suicides from the bridge in a year is 0.98, or 43 suicides in 44 years (Santa Barbara County Sheriff-Coroner, 2007). To be fair, this information only became available after the memorandum was written, but nevertheless this means the average number of suicides per year at the Cold Spring Bridge is overstated by a factor of 2.

Second, and more importantly, the benefit:cost ratio assumes that 80% of individuals who would have committed suicide from the Cold Spring Bridge would be saved by the proposed suicide barrier. As we have seen, this assumption is not supported by the data, the academic literature, or public health agencies. In short, there is no proof that the proposed suicide barrier will save lives. Given this, the conservative estimate for lives saved by this project would be 0, which in turn would yield a benefit:cost ratio of 0.

Thus, the prospects for the success of this project are very uncertain, and there is a significant chance that this project will deliver no benefits at all.

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**Building a Bridge to Safety:  
What valid research says about Bridges and Suicide**

In response to the most recent attempts to prevent suicide barriers from being erected on the Cold Spring Bridge, it is vital to clarify the misinformation circulating regarding the effectiveness of means restriction. Local, national and international suicide prevention efforts place means restriction within their top five strategies; this includes building physical barriers. Marc McGinnes and Professor Garrett Glasgow represent themselves as valid authorities in the area of suicide; they are not. They neglect data, information and the recommendations of public health officials supporting the use of barriers in suicide prevention, in an attempt to justify their prioritization of the aesthetics of the Cold Spring Bridge. Within their proposal, they claim to have proven that barriers do not work. However, the only evidence provided to support this is Garret Glasgow's unpublished paper, which has not undergone the scrutiny of peer review and is not backed by a university or any mental health officials. In addition, they also cite the New York State Bridge Authority's Comprehensive Plan for Suicide Prevention; however, upon review, it is evident that there are circumstances that lead New York to take a different approach to suicide prevention in their area that would not be effective here.

The NYSBA specifically states that "incidents are few and rare" and "until 2006, there had been no suicide at any Authority facility in 2 years." This means that within the multiple bridges referenced, there were only 1-2 deaths total, if any, per year and none of the bridges can be considered a "magnet" bridge for suicides. At the Cold Spring Bridge alone, there is an average of two suicides a year. There is no doubt that the jump from Cold Spring Bridge is lethal with no chance of survival; it is an iconic spot to jump, and a safety hazard for our community.

The new proposal advocates the installation of call boxes as the primary solution. It is important to note that the installation of call boxes is already within the initial barrier plan, but the location of phones will have to be before the bridge in the nearest turn outs. The NYSBA relies heavily on crisis phone lines because they can be placed across the expanse of the bridges, because most are open to pedestrian access. Unfortunately, there is no data that suggests that crisis phones prevent suicides or eliminate them at a location. Although they may be an important resource for individuals who choose to use them, they are not an overall effective strategy, rather, just a part of the solution. The limitations of call boxes' effectiveness are apparent. For example, the rate of suicides from the Golden Gate Bridge remained steady at 20 per year, despite the installation of call boxes and use of police patrols. The Friends of the Bridge group claims that the phones on the Golden Gate Bridge are ineffective because the calls go to the Bridge Authority and not a crisis hotline. However, the Coronado Bridge in San Diego installed call boxes and signage with crisis numbers in 1990. There have been over 100 suicides since the installation and the suicide rate from the bridge did not decrease. Additionally, in 2000, phones connecting directly to crisis hotlines were installed on the Sunshine Skyway Bridge in Florida and the highway patrol initiated heavy monitoring of the area. There were 22 suicides within the first three years after the installation and people continue to

jump from the bridge at the same rate. Therefore, crisis phones and patrols alone have not been shown to eliminate suicides from a location.

The NYSBA proposal rejects building bridge barriers because of safety issues and cost unique to their area. The proposal states “certain barriers will significantly impact regular inspection and maintenance operations, cause extensive delays and costs in implementation.” The NYSBA also states “snow plowing removal could be affected by the presence of a high barrier” which could “lead to icing conditions on the roadway and create a hazard to the driving public.” Erecting barriers on these bridges would actually make the bridges less safe, which is not the case on the Cold Spring Bridge. In contrast to the bridges referenced by NYSBA, the Cold Spring Bridge is only ¼ mile long, and thus the cost of barriers is reasonable.

The proposal to utilize cameras and to have constant monitoring is not suitable due to cost, the remote location of the Cold Spring Bridge, and overall ineffectiveness. Law enforcement agencies do not have the resources to patrol the area or monitor the cameras. Even if funding came from an outside source for this, it would take a significant amount of time for someone to respond due to the geography. It should also be noted that the use of cameras has been shown, in some situations, to attract suicidal people to bridges, thus increasing suicides.

The alternate plan proposed by the Friends of the Bridge also calls for training of law enforcement to engage the subject while remaining at a distance. When approaching someone in a suicidal crisis, it is difficult not to become emotionally involved. Law enforcement’s job is to protect and to serve, not just to prevent crime. Not surprisingly, most members therefore feel an obligation to do everything in their power to save a person’s life. Officers could face feelings of extreme guilt and trauma, were they forced to witness a person jumping from the bridge. Additionally, the strong winds on the bridge pose a safety hazard to law enforcement officers who do respond to these incidents. And furthermore, when suicides are completed from the bridge, recovery teams have to retrieve the body from the terrain. A physical barrier would create a buffer zone and would prevent the worst case scenario from becoming a reality.

The Friends of the Bridge group insists that the money allocated for bridge barriers could be better spent on improving areas with higher mortality. The funds are allocated for the improvement of state owned structures and roads. The Cold Spring Bridge is the single most fatal spot in five counties. Therefore, Cal-Trans deemed the project necessary to promote safety. To put the cost of this project in perspective, they have compared it to the installation of a traffic light. The money for this project cannot merely be diverted to another project.

The alternative plan is far from “superior.” The authors of the proposal, whose backgrounds are in political and environmental science, claim to understand the issue of suicide more than leading psychology professionals. The evidence they present to back their plan is neither valid nor applicable in our area. Moreover, their approach neglects the policies advocated by local, national and international authorities in suicide

prevention. The money designated specifically for a Cal Trans safety project is required to be spent improving a section of road that is of high safety risk, and there really isn't a better option than a bridge that claims lives annually.

The Glendon Association  
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March 10, 2008

*Santa Ynez  
Valley Alliance*

Richard Krumholz, Director  
Caltrans District 5  
50 Higuera Street  
San Luis Obispo, CA 93401-5415

**Re: Caltrans Cold Spring Canyon Bridge Physical Barricade**

Dear Director Krumholz,

The Santa Ynez Valley Alliance would like to express its concern regarding the Caltrans Cold Springs Canyon Bridge Physical Barricade, a project dated 8/17/06 on "Caltrans Project Initiation Form (Conceptual Report) SHOPP", signed by Sharon Fasulo 9/26/06.

We are troubled by the process, the seemingly rapid policy decisions, and the relative lack of community involvement. We believe that the extreme narrow focus on a bridge barricade is misplaced and incorrect.

We agree with many comments made by Gary L. Spielmann in his recent letter to our community. Mr. Gary Spielmann was former Director of Suicide Prevention 2002-2006-New York State Office of Mental Health (retired) and is currently Consultant for Suicide Prevention (2007-present).

A number of his statements from that letter follow:

- A) "Physical barriers can pose an irresistible challenge to certain people bent on jumping...it wouldn't take much effort for an individual to carry a step ladder..."
- B) "Physical barriers provide society with the impression that by installing a physical barricade, we have somehow addressed the needs of suicidal individuals, so we can continue to ignore the likely root of the problem-mental illness, which is probably treatable in a majority of cases. We need to understand that the bridge is not the problem".
- C) "The problem is the stigma, shame, and fear behind mental illness and the thoughts that surround suicide. The solution is to stop making headline news and become proactive in preventing suicide by talking and writing about it, and infusing awareness and prevention in the schools and communities".
- D) "The message conveyed by a physical barrier (i.e. fence) on a bridge to a potential jumper is: **don't jump here**. The message that should be conveyed to a distraught person is: **we want to help you now**, so that you don't lose your life as a result of a temporary crisis".

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Richard Krumholz, Caltrans District 5  
March 10, 2008  
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Regarding Mr. Spielmann's comment in item C above, many people from Santa Maria, Santa Barbara, and the Santa Ynez Valley attended a presentation by the Glendon Association titled, "Suicide: what our Community Need to Know" on September 17, 18, 19 in 2007. The Los Olivos event was well attended and very educational. It offered a deeper understanding of the causes of suicide that a barrier will never be able to address. As a matter of policy this type of information should be shared extensively throughout affected communities.

Unfortunately, the public discussion of this issue has become dogmatic, contentious, and controversial. Mr. Spielmann writes, "I am deeply concerned by the highly selective use of my work by the Glendon Association in its response to the 'human barricades' proposal submitted by Friends of the Bridge. As the author of the study and architect of the NYSBA plan, please permit me to place in the record my views of the issues involved and a preferred solution". We have read most of the articles and letters we could obtain referencing Spielmann, The Glendon Association, Friends of the Bridge, and Garrett Glasgow, and other sources, and can warn that this project will become even more difficult for those whose responsibility it is to administer.

We believe the current process and stated reasoning for construction of the barricade is flawed, hasty, and seeks to apply a 'band-aid' to solving a much more insidious problem. Significantly, it does not structure a systematic process to educate our community about how to respond and manage people that may be suicidal. Such a set of guidelines would be a far more effective deterrent to suicide than a barrier could ever hope to be.

Our recommendations are as follows:

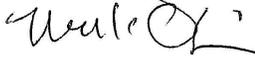
- 1) Based on the apparently incorrect or selective use of the suicide rate of 2 per year in the formal project calculations, the current approved project is invalid. The correct number should be determined and recalculated.
- 2) Mr. Gary Spielmann is a consultant with extensive years of experience in the area of suicide, highways, and bridges. We recommend he be retained as a consultant and the various interested parties be invited to discuss different approaches to the problem of suicide. The objective should be to design an effective community-oriented systematic approach to suicide prevention and education.
- 3) The current project trajectory of the bridge barrier should be suspended and the various interested parties brought together for a constructive team-oriented focus to reset the process. This will allow for a more coherent collaborative methodology that will yield a better result with much less rancor than the current process has created.
- 4) The information presented and the record of the discussion of a meeting of the Caltrans which took place on 1/8/08 to discuss the barricade should be made public. A list of the interested parties and participants should be provided.

The Santa Ynez Valley Alliance is a grassroots group founded to protect the rural character of our community. The Alliance works collaboratively with individuals, groups and governments to support good stewardship of natural and agricultural resources. The Alliance seeks to inform and empower Valley citizens regarding important planning issues affecting the community's future.

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We believe that focusing on building a physical barricade on the Cold Spring Bridge is unjustified and is an inappropriate use of precious public funds. The Valley Alliance is opposed to the proposed project.

Thank you for your consideration.



Mark Oliver, President  
MO:wr

cc via email to:

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Will Kempton-Director of DOT Caltrans.Director@dot.ca.gov>  
Pedro Nava via <Caroline.Vance@asm.ca.gov> □ Sen. Tom McClintock <senator.mcclintock@sen.ca.gov> □ Brooks Firestone <bfirestone@co.santa-barbara.ca.us> □ Salud Carbajal Supervisor Carbajal@sbcbos1.org> □ Janet Wolf <jwolf@sbcbos2.org> □ Joni Gray <jgray@co.santa-barbara.ca.us> □ Joe Centeno <jcenteno@co.santa-barbara.ca.us>

#### Attachment – References

We have also attached “Suicide in Colorado” a publication of The Colorado Trust, a grant making Foundation in Colorado. We found it interesting and thought you would too. Clearly, this is relevant to the Board of Supervisors from a public policy perspective. We believe our community focus should be towards a holistic plan to understand suicide and its causes as a community, an awareness we currently generally lack.

1) **Reference Document: Caltrans Project Initiation Form SHOPP. Date prepared 6/1/2006 & 8/17/06, signed 9/21/06 and 9/26/06.**

- a. We have a general concern that the sections “PURPOSE AND NEED DESCRIPTION”, “ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES/KNOW CONCERNS”, and “OTHER COMMENTS” are woefully inadequate and could be considered overly cursory and somewhat misleading.
- b. For instance: “Studies have found those people who are prevented from committing suicide rarely go on the commit suicide by other means”.
- c. For instance: “Involve Stakeholders in design discussions” on the same page as “Project Sponsor expects State Structures to complete design”.

2) **Reference Document: Nevin Sams Memorandum to Janice Benton, Dated 8/18/06. Subject: 05-SB-154-PM 22.95/23.19 Cold Springs Canyon Arch Bridge, Physical Barricade SHOPP Element 201.010.**

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- a. The first sentence of the second paragraph reads, "Over the past five years, ten (10) suicides have occurred from the Cold Spring Canyon Arch Bridge". Since this Memorandum is dated 8/18/06, we read that to mean the years between and including, 2001-2005. Our review of the Santa Barbara County **Sheriff-Coroner report shows that eight, not ten suicides took place in the referenced time period.** If the incorrect number (10) was used, the calculations and assumptions would be different. Has this been reviewed, recalculated, and corrected?
- b. The comments of the writer, a traffic Safety Engineer, regarding suicide issues and a March 2006 bridge fencing study in Augusta, Maine by Dr. Andrew Pelletier are **brief and disjointed, and yet seemingly scientifically conclusive.** The comments appear to be the written basis of the decision to move forward with the Cold Springs Bridge Barricade. It appears to be hastily written, confusing, and is far from conclusive.
- c. We know of three referenced meetings that took place in the community: 5/8/06 Santa Ynez Valley-Vets Hall and Solvang, a Town Hall Meeting 5/22/06 at Santa Barbara City College, and Faulkner Gallery were used as the basis for community approval. Another Caltrans meeting took place at the Santa Barbara Library on 7/25/07. Not what we would call full community involvement.
- d. Mr. Nevins writes, "After consulting with the County Sheriff's office, it was found that suicides are rarely recorded by CHP and, as a result, typically do not show up in SWITERS or TASAS. Suicides are coded as 'incidents' rather than 'collisions' which would show up in State TASAS data."
- e. There is an additional reference to "Multiplied by ten (10) suicides over the five year period..." Again, **the correct number is 8 suicides in the period 2001-2005, not 10. Furthermore, using only 5 years rather than 10 is too short a time period. We are concerned regarding this methodology. The number of 8, while correct, is a misleading number to use, as it is the second highest 5 year number in the history of the bridge. In this case the correct number is 1.6 per year, not 2 per year.**
- f. Mr. Sams writes, "Studies have found those people who are prevented from committing suicide rarely go on to commit suicide by other means." Do you know which studies he is referring to? Mr. Spielmann's words seem to contradict those of Mr Sams when he writes, "While a barrier may reduce-but not eliminate-the numbers of deaths at a specific site, it won't prevent individuals from going elsewhere to jump, or to substitute another means to end their lives". g. In summary, we don't find the statistics credible.

**3) Memorandum from Janice Benton to Paul McClintic, Attention: Nevin Sams, dated 9/12/06. Conceptual Approval for the SHOPP Funding of 201.010-Safety Improvement Project.**

- a. The letter states, "The project proposed for the State Highway Operation and Protection Program (SHOPP) is to reduce an increasing rate of suicides occurring on Cold Springs Canyon Arch Bridge". We note from 1996-2005 Trailing 10 years shows 17 deaths, and from 1986-1995 trailing 10 years shows 9 deaths. Yes, this number set shows an increase, 88% to be precise. However, our calculations of suicide show the Trailing 10 years from 1998 to 2007 to be 12 persons, and the Trailing 10 years from 1988 to 1997 to also be 12 persons. From this data set, there is no increase rate of suicides comparing 2 trailing ten year periods. So, 0% and 88%. One data set shows an increase, one does not. Both are accurate. Please note that 1997 had 4 deaths, the highest year in the history of the bridge. This data point can skew the calculation. Our point is the rate may not be increasing. b. If you compare the rate of suicides per capita in Santa Barbara county, for the two trailing ten year periods from 2007, the most recent 10 year rate is slightly lower. c. If you compare the suicide rate of the two trailing 10 year periods back from 2007 to the number of people crossing the bridge (traffic counts) on an annual basis, the suicide rate per traffic count would be markedly decreased.

Richard Krumholz, Caltrans District 5  
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**7) Reference Document SBCAG: Cold Spring Arch Bridge Crisis Helpline Call Boxes, dated March 15, 2007, Staff Contact Brittany Odermann, Agenda Item 6D.**

a. On page two, under "Project Schedule", it states "5/1/08 Circulate Draft Environmental Studies...and 3/2/09 Project Approval and Environmental Document". Can you please give us an update regarding the details of the referenced "Draft Environmental Studies"?

8) We've found the public dialogue between Friends of the Bridge, Glendon Association, Garret Glasgow, and Gary L. Spielmann to contain much useful and relevant information. While we have quoted some of them in this report, we refrain from getting involved in the arguable and varied nuances of the topic. It is unfortunate the discussion is taking place in the public media rather than collaboratively as interested parties sitting at the table together. We think there is an opportunity for the community to create a best-in-class approach to the community suicide issue. Various parties share in common a desire to save lives and help suicidal persons. Any action that would bring them together in a collaborative discussion would be useful. We also think there is some logic in inviting Gary Spielmann to come for a consultative meeting with the community.

**9) Reference Document: The Glendon Association, dated 1/15/08 to Mike Jacob c/o Caltrans from Lisa A. Firestone with cc to Gary Spielman, John Draper, Marc McGinnes and Garrett Glasgo.**

a. The third paragraph includes the words "...the remote location of the Cold Spring Bridge. Law enforcement agencies do not have the resources to patrol the area...". We must challenge this statement. While we cannot comment on the resources of law enforcement, anecdotally in the least, commuters between the Santa Ynez Valley and Santa Barbara know well CHP officers regularly and frequently travel highway 154. b. On a regular basis, speed traps are set within 2-10 minutes drive of the bridge, in both directions. Additionally, the CHP regularly monitors the driving behavior of travelers on highway 154.

**10) Route 154 Fatals Reference Document: OTM22130 Table B-Selective Accident Rate**

**Calculation:** We wanted to find out the number of deaths on Route 154 over a period of time. We had to actually file a formal request, and only obtained one set of data, so we don't know the context of this data, nor do we know the full statistics, nor do we know why we were given this data set versus any other. Nonetheless it was learned:

- a. On 154, between 5/1/04 and 4/30/07, a three year period, there were 347 accidents, of which 158 were multivehicle, and 10 included fatalities. In those 10 accidents, 12 people died, or 4 deaths per year.  
b. This death rate is at least 100% to 200% of the suicide rate on the bridge, depending on the figures for suicides referenced.

**11) Reference Document Internet Location, The California Highway Patrol at <http://www.chp.ca.gov/switrs/>, also known as State Integrated Traffic Records System.** How many people die per year on Santa Barbara County roads that are not suicidal, death by accident, as opposed to choice.

The statistics for 2004 are as follows:

- a. 35 Suicides in Santa Barbara County (number derived from Garrett Glasgow report)  
b. 3 Suicides took place from the Cold Springs Bridge.  
c. 41 people killed in Santa Barbara County due to traffic accidents

Richard Krumholz, Caltrans District 5  
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- d. 11 of those 41 were killed in alcohol related collisions, or 26% of the deaths were alcohol related.
- e. 3,150 injuries took place in 2004 due to traffic accidents in Santa Barbara County.
- f. 408 of the 3,150 accidents were related to alcohol related collisions, or 12.9%.

**12) Reference Document Internet Location, The California Highway Patrol at <http://www.chp.ca.gov/switrs/>, also known as State Integrated Traffic Records System.**

a. Between 1996 and 2005, 413 people died in driving related accidents in SB County, an average of 41 people per year, or 3.4 per month. During the same time period, an average of 2,956 traffic related injuries a year. b. Between 2001 and 2005, 224 people were killed in driving collisions in Santa Barbara county, an average of 44.8 deaths per year or 3.7 per month. c. Between 2001 and 2005, of the 224 people that were killed, 55 were killed due to DUI/PCF Collisions. An average of 11 deaths per year on county roads due to driving under the influence, or almost 1 person per month.

1 February 2008

Michael H. Thomas  
California Department of Transportation  
50 Higuera Street  
San Luis Obispo, CA 93401

Re Cold Spring Canyon Bridge Suicide Barrier proposal  
Response to NOP of DEIR

Dear Mr. Thomas:

These comments are submitted in connection with the preparation of the DEIR for the referenced proposal.

With respect to the issue of the basic objective(s) and underlying purpose(s) of the barriers proposal and the requirement that they be clearly and fully set forth in the DEIR, your attention is directed to the evidence that has already been submitted for inclusion into the administrative record for this project that indicates that the proposal was formulated on the basis of false information and flawed analysis and that, in reality, the installation of physical barriers will not achieve the said objective(s) and purpose(s). Your particular attention in this respect is directed to the material submitted into the record by Professor Garrett Glasgow.

With respect to the issue of the consideration and evaluation in the DEIR of project alternatives, including a "no project" alternative, your attention is directed to the evidence that has already been submitted for inclusion into the administrative record for this project that indicates that a "Alternative Project Proposal" has been submitted which can address the problem of suicidal behavior on the bridge in a superior manner while avoiding significant impacts on cultural and visual resources. Your particular attention in this respect is directed to the material submitted into the record by suicide prevention expert Gary Spielmann.

Thank you.

Marc McGinnes, J.D.  
for Friends of the Bridge

133 E. De la Guerra #191  
Santa Barbara, CA 93101

encl (1/31/08 email McGinnes to von Schwind)

Appendix F • Comments and Responses



Marc McGinnes  
<mcginnes@es.ucsb.edu>  
06/24/2008 04:39 PM

To Cathy\_Stettler@dot.ca.gov, Chuck Cesena  
<chuck.cesena@dot.ca.gov>  
cc  
bcc

Subject Comments on DEIR/EA-Part 2

History: This message has been forwarded.

Greetings

Friends of the Bridge, an unincorporated association, makes the following further comments in relation to the DEIR/EA prepared in connection with the deeply flawed and fiscally irresponsible proposal by Caltrans to install barriers on the Cold Spring Canyon Bridge:

Attached hereto as a submission to the administrative record in this matter is a document comparing the annual average of one death per year by suicide from the Cold Spring Bridge and the far, far greater numbers of deaths by suicide and by traffic accidents each year in both the County of Santa Barbara and the five counties of Caltrans District 5; this document is hereby incorporated herein by this reference.

1

In light of the far greater number of deaths each year in Caltrans District 5 from traffic accidents and suicide, it was a gross abuse of discretion even to initiate the proposal to install barriers on the Cold Spring Bridge. It appears that the main reason that the project was initiated was the ability to divert \$1,000,000 in funds for "collision reduction safety improvements" to this project, and in this connection it appears that Assemblyman Pedro Nava, then Chair of the Assembly Transportation Committee, played a pivotal role in accomplishing this diversion.

2

Kindly respond to the foregoing comment by explaining the role that Pedro Nava played in securing the \$1,000,000 allocated to this project.

It has been asserted that having initiated this proposal to install barriers, Caltrans will face the prospect of being sued successfully by relatives of any future suicides from the bridge if it does not complete the installation. We believe that this proposition is contrary to settled law. Kindly comment on this issue affecting the proposal.

3

As an additional feature of its Proposed Project Alternative, Friends of the Bridge proposes that a single rail be added along each side of the bridge to better protect the safety of law enforcement personnel and other persons responding to the occasional suicidal behavior on the bridge.

4

Kindly acknowledge your receipt of these comments and the attached document at your earliest opportunity.

Marc McGinnes  
For Friends of the Bridge



Comp death rates.pdf

COMPARATIVE ANNUAL DEATHS BY SUICIDE AND TRAFFIC ACCIDENTS AND THE ONE (1) SUICIDE AT THE COLD SPRING BRIDGE

In order to place into perspective the CalTrans proposal to spend approximately \$3 million on a so-called traffic safety improvement project to erect barriers on the Cold Spring Bridge in an effort to address the problem of occasional suicide there (an average of one a year), a reasonable person might take the following information into consideration:

Average number of suicides in Santa Barbara County [1] each year: 42

Average number of suicides in CalTrans District 5 [2] each year: 150

Average number of traffic deaths in Santa Barbara County [3] each year: 44

Average number of traffic deaths on Highway 154 [4] each year: 4

Average number of traffic deaths in CalTrans District 5 [5] each year: 183

Average number of suicides at Cold Spring Bridge each year: 1

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Sources as of dates in parentheses:

- [1] <http://www.sbsheriff.org/de/orde/leo/cortox/cocast.html> (10/15/07); for period 1998-2006
- [2] [http://www.dhs.ca.gov/chs/OHIR/reports/leadingcause/suicide\[year\].pdf](http://www.dhs.ca.gov/chs/OHIR/reports/leadingcause/suicide[year].pdf) (12/20/07); for period 1998-2004
- [3] <http://www.sbsheriff.org/de/orde/leo/cortox/cocast.html> (10/15/07); for period 1998-2006
- [4] OTM22130 Table B- Selective Accident Rate Calculation, ref 310 from Valley Alliance letter \*\*\*pdf attached\*\*\*to Caltrans, March 10, 2008

- [5] [http://www-nrd.nhtsa.dot.gov/departments/nrd-30/ncsa/STSI/6\\_CA/2006/6\\_CA\\_2006.htm](http://www-nrd.nhtsa.dot.gov/departments/nrd-30/ncsa/STSI/6_CA/2006/6_CA_2006.htm) (12/20/07); for period 2002-2006

**Response to Comments from two letters from Marc McGinnes, Friends of the Bridge, dated June 23, 2008 and June 24, 2008**

Thank you for your comments on the project. Your opposition to the project has been noted.

**Response to the comment letter dated June 23, 2008:**

**Response to comment #1:** Copies of comment letters on the draft EIR/EA from Mr. Gregory Mohr and Dr. Garrett Glasgow included with your letter have been responded to separately in this document. Also to clarify, regarding the study by Dr. Glasgow attached to your letter, please note that Caltrans did not specifically request that Dr. Glasgow prepare any studies for this project.

Please note, in regards to funding, originally the proposed project was to have been built under Caltrans' Safety Improvement Program. However, at the request of the California Transportation Commission, Caltrans investigated alternate funding sources other than the State Highway Operation and Protection Program (SHOPP). As a result, it has been determined that the money needed to construct the barriers will now come from local Recovery Act funds.

**Response to comment #2:** The purpose of the project, which is the subject of your comment in this paragraph, is stated in the Summary and in Chapter 1 of the EIR/EA. The associated benefit of saving lives is presented in the impact analysis in Chapter 2, Section 2.1.1, including the section titled "Difference of opinion regarding the effectiveness of physical suicide barriers vs. 'human barriers.'"

**Response to comment #3:** The text of the document regarding the number of suicides from the Cold Spring Canyon Bridge has been revised to 47 as of June 3, 2009, due to revised Coroner's data received on May 21, 2009, and a subsequent suicide (see the EIR/EA including page iii and Sections 1.2.2 and 1.3). Please note that at the time of the project's initiation in 2006 it had been reported by the Coroner that there had been 43 suicides by jumping from the bridge, however the revised Coroner's data shows there were 40 suicides. In regard to the statement that "Caltrans does not, of course, know much of anything about suicidal behavior on bridges generally..." and that "Caltrans let themselves be drawn into the company of uninformed zealots..." our findings are consistent with the consensus of experts in the field of suicidology. This is documented in Chapter 2 including the section titled

“Difference of opinion regarding the effectiveness of physical suicide barriers vs. ‘human barriers.’” In addition, Santa Barbara County Sheriff-Coroner Bill Brown wrote a comment letter supporting the project from a law enforcement perspective. Please also refer to the Response to comments #2 and #4 to Mr. Gregory Mohr, below.

Mr. Nevin Sams attended the July 25, 2007 public information meeting and provided a brief history of how Caltrans was contacted and informed of the suicides, who had been involved (stakeholders), what had been discussed/considered, and the pre-project public informational meetings held in Santa Barbara and Solvang.

**Response to comment #4:** Caltrans did analyze the human barrier (no-barriers) alternative and determined that it would not meet the project’s objectives. This conclusion is discussed and supported in Section 1.4.6 *Alternatives Considered but Eliminated From Further Discussion*, “Human Barrier Alternative” of the EIR/EA, which includes a discussion of supporting evidence.

The “human barrier” plan offers the experience of the New York State Bridge Authority with National Suicide Prevention Lifeline phones as a superior solution to suicide prevention at bridges, as promoted by Gary L. Spielmann, M.A. M.S. (the expert cited in your letter). Mr. Spielmann, a former Director of Suicide Prevention in the New York State Office of Mental Health, recommended the use of the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline phones on some bridges in New York for the New York State Bridge Authority. As stated in your letter “. . . its designer, Gary Spielmann, [is] the only qualified suicide prevention expert on no-barrier approaches to suicidal behavior on bridges who has offered evidence into the administrative record...”

The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline Steering Committee, however, took action on this issue referencing the comments of Mr. Spielmann regarding his view that the use of Lifeline phones on the Cold Spring Canyon Bridge is superior to bridge barriers. The resulting National Suicide Prevention Lifeline policy statement specifically quotes Mr. Spielmann’s comment to Caltrans that states “suicide barriers are an inferior solution to the problem of suicides on bridges. . . .a ‘human barrier’ will outperform any physical barrier and save more lives.”

The resulting position policy “Suicide Prevention on Bridges: The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline Position,” by John Draper, Ph.D., Director, National Suicide Prevention Lifeline, June 16, 2008, states in part, “The Lifeline Steering Committee position is that the use of bridge barriers is the most effective means of bridge suicide

prevention. Subsequently, as bridge/transportation authorities or other stakeholders approach the Lifeline with requests for implementing bridge phones, the Lifeline should emphasize the need for barriers as the most effective solution.”

Dr. Draper and The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline, explicitly contradict the “human barrier” plan for the Cold Spring Canyon Bridge promoted by Mr. Spielmann, please refer to Section 2.1.1 of the EIR/EA, including the “Difference of opinion regarding the effectiveness of physical suicide barriers vs. ‘human barriers.’” section.

However, a separate project sponsored by Santa Barbara County Association of Governments, referred to in the draft EIR/EA Section 1.4.6 would install crisis phones at the two nearest call boxes to the bridge, but cannot be placed on the bridge deck for safety reasons. Signs stating, “In Crisis? We Care Please Call Us” in both English and Spanish would be included in the Santa Barbara County Association of Governments project.

Mr. Spielmann, in an article he authored on the New York State Office of Mental Health website [http://www.omh.state.ny.us/omhweb/savinglives/Volume2/means\\_rest.html](http://www.omh.state.ny.us/omhweb/savinglives/Volume2/means_rest.html), accessed on January 22, 2008, discusses the “effective strategy” of means restriction. In this article, Mr. Spielmann writes: “Limiting access to lethal means of self-harm is an effective strategy to prevent self-destructive behavior, including suicide. Some suicidal acts are impulsive, resulting from a combination of psychological pain or despair coupled with easy availability of the means to inflict self-injury: firearms, carbon monoxide, medications, sharp objects, tall structures. By limiting the individual’s accessibility to the means of self-harm, a suicidal act may be prevented. The goal is to separate in time and space the individual experiencing an acute suicidal crisis from easy access to lethal means of self-injury and personal harm. The hope is by making it harder for those intent on self-harm to act on that impulse, one can buy time for the crisis to pass and for healing and recovery to occur.” Mr. Spielmann, in this quote, is discussing the importance of restriction of means that can prevent a person from committing suicide, which is the conclusion of many suicidologists. The proposed physical suicide barriers help reduce the number of suicides through means restriction.

**Response to comment #5:** It is stated that Caltrans has failed in its duty to disclose proposed mitigation measures so that they may be reviewed and commented on by agencies and the public. Please note that a *Visual Impact Assessment* (January 2008)

was prepared by Caltrans to fully evaluate visual impacts of the proposed project. This technical study was summarized in the draft EIR/EA Section 2.1.2, *Visual/Aesthetics*. Before and after visual simulations from various viewpoints are included. Because all build alternatives would create some combination of view blockage and visual intrusion, impacts are considered significant under CEQA. These visual impacts would remain significant and unavoidable because it would not be possible to mitigate them to a less than significant level (see EIR/EA Section 3.2.3, *Unavoidable Significant Effects*).

The use of an Aesthetics Design Advisory Committee does not limit public comment on the aesthetics of the bridge barriers or the visual impact analysis. Visual simulations of the alternative designs and a summary of the visual impact analysis were included in the draft EIR/EA. The normal 45-day review and comment period was provided and the public did comment on the design features. Comment letters on the draft document and public hearing input included feedback on the barrier designs. For example, one commenter suggested that darkening the color of the barrier would make it less intrusive. Another commenter thought the barriers were aesthetically pleasing and carefully designed—she had expected the barriers to be ugly.

Caltrans has gone beyond the minimum requirements for public review by expanding the opportunity for community comments. The Aesthetics Design Advisory Committee includes representatives from the Santa Barbara County Historic Landmarks Advisory commission, architects, landscape architects, and County Public Works and Planning members, as well as Caltrans experts. The basic height, shape, and type of the grid/mesh or vertical picket would remain the same. The design committee's recommendations did not change the overall design of the barrier, but helped refine detailed aspects of the barrier's design and did not change the fundamental mitigation concepts that were presented in the draft EIR/EA. As a group, the committee concluded that if a barrier would be installed on the bridge that the Grid/Mesh Alternative is the superior alternative with the least visual impacts that meets the project's purpose. (For the design committee's recommendations, please see the updated Section 2.1.2 *Visual/Aesthetics*, Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures.)

**Response to the comment letter dated June 24, 2008:**

**Response to comment #1:** The EIR/EA's Purpose and Need addresses the Cold Spring Canyon Bridge on State Route 154 and not other state highways or facilities in

Caltrans District 5, refer to the Summary and Chapter 1. Because of suicides, the Cold Spring Canyon Bridge has the highest concentration of fatalities for any spot location on the state highway system in Caltrans District 5 (Santa Barbara, San Luis Obispo, Monterey, Santa Cruz, and San Benito counties). Your letter and attachments are part of the record.

**Response to comment #2:** Please refer to the Purpose and Need of the project which is in the Summary and Chapter 1. Your comment on Assemblyman Pedro Nava is not a part of the draft environmental document.

**Response to comment #3:** This comment does not identify who made this assertion. It is not a part of the environmental document. However, the court case *Milligan v. Golden Gate Bridge Highway and Transportation District* (2004) 120 Cal. App. 1, 15, concluded that the absence of a suicide barrier on the Golden Gate Bridge is not a dangerous condition for tort liability purposes, because persons who use the bridge to commit suicide are not using it with due care.

**Response to comment #4:** This comment proposes that a single rail be added to each side of the bridge to better protect the safety of law enforcement and other first responders. This proposal for a single rail does not meet the Purpose and Need of the project, because the single rail proposal may not deter individuals from attempting to commit suicide and the rail may be easily climbed or avoided; a reduction in suicides may not occur and law enforcement and rescue teams may still be endangered during a rescue or recovery. The Grid/Mesh Alternative meets the projects' Purpose and Need.



VIA EMAIL &  
FIRST CLASS MAIL

June 24, 2008

Cathy Stettler, Senior Environmental Planner  
Central Coast Environmental Analysis  
California Department of Transportation  
50 Higuera Street  
San Luis Obispo, CA 93401  
[Cathy\\_Stettler@dot.ca.gov](mailto:Cathy_Stettler@dot.ca.gov)

RE: Comments on Draft Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Assessment and Section 4(f) Evaluation for the Cold Spring Canyon Bridge Barrier

Dear Ms. Stettler:

Thank you for this opportunity to submit comments on your agency's proposal to construct a suicide barrier on the Cold Spring Canyon Bridge along Highway 154, a California Scenic Highway in the Los Padres National Forest. Los Padres ForestWatch is a local, community-based nonprofit organization working to protect and restore the natural and cultural heritage of the Los Padres National Forest and other public lands along California's central coast. We are supported by more than seven hundred members who value the forest for its wildlife habitat, scenic landscapes, open space, and outdoor recreation opportunities.

As you know, the Cold Spring Canyon Bridge is located inside the Los Padres National Forest, and California Scenic Highway 154 is one of two scenic highways that pass through the national forest. The bridge is a noted feature along Scenic Highway 154, which takes travelers through the Santa Ynez Mountain Range and the Los Padres National Forest. The bridge itself was recently found eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places by the State Historic Preservation Officer. Approaches to suicide prevention should be carefully and comprehensively planned to assure that important public resources are not unnecessarily degraded or destroyed.

The Cold Spring Canyon Arch Bridge on Scenic Highway 154 is an important scenic, aesthetic and historic public resource, widely renowned for its dramatic views across the Santa Ynez Valley and the Los Padres National Forest. We hope your agency shares our goal of preserving the scenic and historic qualities along this unique stretch of highway, and we appreciate that your agency decided to prepare a full Environmental Impact Report for this project. Below are our comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Assessment for the Cold Spring Canyon Bridge Barrier ("DEIR").

Post Office Box 831 • Santa Barbara, California 93102 • 805-617-4610 • [www.LPFW.org](http://www.LPFW.org)

The DEIR concludes that the proposed barrier project would result in significant, unavoidable impacts to the bridge's historic character, appearance, and scenic views. Specifically, the DEIR states:

- "the barrier would be incompatible with the natural character of the surrounding landscape and would distract from the existing architectural style of the bridge. Both alternatives would result in some combination of view blockage (opacity) and visual intrusion due to the intervening barrier elements and architecture. Because of the expected high level of viewer sensitivity associated with the bridge and State Route 154 (a Designated State Scenic Highway) and the magnitude of visual change, the project is anticipated to result in substantial adverse impacts to the visual environment." DEIR at 43.
- "the installation of a physical barrier on the bridge deck – of a size and shape necessary to meet the project's purpose and need – would constitute an adverse effect on this historic property." DEIR at 77.
- "the proposed project would cause a direct adverse effect on Cold Spring Canyon Bridge because it introduces a visual element that diminishes the property's historic integrity of design, feeling, and association" DEIR at 44.
- "The construction of either the Grid/Mesh Alternative or Vertical Alternative barriers on Cold Spring Canyon Bridge would introduce a new structure that would significantly affect the bridge's historic character, appearance, and scenic views. Measures have been proposed to avoid these significant impacts. It is not possible, however, to reduce the unavoidable visual, aesthetic, and cultural impacts to the bridge to a less than significant level." DEIR at 44.

With these significant impacts in mind, we believe that CalTrans should fully evaluate the Human Barrier alternative in the DEIR and recirculate it for public review and comment. This Human Barriers alternative consists of deterrents such as call boxes, video cameras, surveillance patrols, signs, lighting, and public education. While the DEIR dismisses these environmentally superior alternatives as ineffective, we believe that the significance of the barrier impacts identified in the DEIR warrants a more detailed evaluation of non-barrier alternatives. Furthermore, we believe that there is ample evidence in the record demonstrating the effectiveness of the Human Barriers approach.

We also respectfully request that CalTrans include a more thorough evaluation of the impacts of the proposed barrier on the eligibility of Highway 154 as a California Scenic Highway. The DEIR states "The Cold Spring Canyon Bridge offers some of the most memorable views along State Route 154 from the highway as well as from Stagecoach Road in the vicinity of the project. The dramatic topography and natural vegetative patterns combine in

2

3

a classic representation of the natural landscape of the central coast of California. This natural landscape is in part the basis for the route's State Scenic Highway designation." DEIR at 25. Because the Cold Spring Canyon Bridge plays such an important role in the scenic values of the highway, the significant effects of barrier construction may render all or part of Highway 154 as ineligible for continued status as a California Scenic Highway. Please revise and recirculate the DEIR to include an evaluation of the impacts of the proposed action, and alternatives, on the status of this highway's "Scenic" designation.

Thank you for your consideration of these important issues. Please send us a copy of any future environmental documents, public notices, and decisions regarding this proposal.

Sincerely,



Jeff Kuyper  
Executive Director

**Response to Comments from Jeff Kuyper, Executive Director, Los Padres ForestWatch**

Thank you for your comments on the project. Your opposition to the project has been noted.

**Response to comment #1:** Caltrans acknowledges the uniqueness and character of the existing Cold Spring Canyon Bridge. In accordance with state and federal environmental laws and policies, Caltrans initiated the process that resulted in the determination that the Cold Spring Canyon Bridge is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. The State Historic Preservation Officer agreed with this determination on August 13, 2007. Please see Appendix E for the Letter of Concurrence from the State Historic Preservation Officer.

Many of the features of the bridge that make it eligible for the National Register of Historic Places cannot be seen while you are driving on the bridge itself. The most significant historical aspects of the Cold Spring Canyon Bridge can only be viewed from below the bridge; that view would remain virtually unchanged. The physical alteration to the historic fabric of the bridge itself would be limited to bolt holes to attach the barrier.

Although the Historic Landmarks Advisory Commission has put on their agenda the nomination of the Cold Spring Canyon Bridge as a Santa Barbara County Landmark since August 2007, as of October 2008, no definitive action has been taken on this proposal. The designation of the Cold Spring Canyon Bridge as a Santa Barbara County Landmark, however, would not alter the findings of this EIR/EA.

**Response to comment #2:** Caltrans did analyze the human barrier alternative and determined that it would not meet the project's objectives. This conclusion is discussed and supported in Section 1.4.6 *Alternatives Considered but Eliminated From Further Discussion* "Human Barrier Alternative" of the EIR/EA, which includes supporting evidence. Also refer to Section 2.1.1, including the "Difference of opinion regarding the effectiveness of physical suicide barriers vs. 'human barriers'" section of the EIR/EA. The "human barrier" plan offers the experience of the New York State Bridge Authority with National Suicide Prevention Lifeline phones as a superior solution to suicide prevention at bridges, as promoted by Gary L. Spielmann, M.A. M.S. an expert in suicidology. Mr. Spielmann, a former Director of Suicide Prevention in the New York State Office of Mental Health, recommended the

use of the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline phones on some bridges in New York for the New York State Bridge Authority.

The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline Steering Committee, however, took action on this issue referencing the comments of Mr. Spielmann regarding his view that the use of Lifeline phones on the Cold Spring Canyon Bridge is superior to bridge barriers. The resulting National Suicide Prevention Lifeline policy statement specifically quotes Mr. Spielmann's comment to Caltrans that states "suicide barriers are an inferior solution to the problem of suicides on bridges. . . .a 'human barrier' will outperform any physical barrier and save more lives."

The resulting position policy "Suicide Prevention on Bridges: The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline Position," by John Draper, Ph.D., Director, National Suicide Prevention Lifeline, June 16, 2008, states in part, "The Lifeline Steering Committee position is that the use of bridge barriers is the most effective means of bridge suicide prevention. Subsequently, as bridge/transportation authorities or other stakeholders approach the Lifeline with requests for implementing bridge phones, the Lifeline should emphasize the need for barriers as the most effective solution."

Dr. Draper and The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline, experts in suicidology, explicitly contradict the "no barriers" plan for the Cold Spring Canyon Bridge promoted by Mr. Spielmann. It should be noted, however, that a separate project sponsored by Santa Barbara County Association of Governments, referred to in the EIR/EA Section 1.4.6 would install crisis phones at the two nearest call boxes to the bridge, but not on the bridge deck for safety reasons. Signs stating, "In Crisis? We Care Please Call Us" in both English and Spanish would be included in the Santa Barbara County Association of Governments project, please refer to Response to comment #1 to Santa Barbara County Sheriff-Coroner Bill Brown.

**Response to comment #3:** According to the California State Scenic Highway Guidelines (2007), the installation of barriers on the bridge would not affect State Route 154's Scenic Highway status. The State Scenic Highway Guidelines Section IX states: "Highway construction and emergency repairs proposed on designated State Scenic Highways are evaluated for visual impact to scenic views as part of the environmental process. If impacts occur, then appropriate mitigation measures will be implemented. *Generally, the designation of a route as an official scenic highway does not substantially alter the type of project proposed, but it may limit the use of statutory or categorical exemption from the California Environmental Quality Act*

[emphasis added]. Caltrans consults with the appropriate agencies to ensure the protection of scenic corridors to the maximum extent feasible. Caltrans identifies impacts to scenic corridors such as degradation and obstruction of scenic views as an integral part of its project planning, project development and maintenance operations.”

Consistent with the Scenic Highway Guidelines and the California Environmental Quality Act, the environmental document addresses the bridge’s contribution to the visual quality of the highway corridor and surroundings. In addition, the environmental document considers the state scenic highway designation’s potential affect on viewers’ expectations when determining the extent of visual impacts.

### **Section 4.0 Individuals**

Gregory Mohr, dated June 17, 2008

Garrett Glasgow, dated June 20, 2008

Dr. Richard H. Seiden, dated June 2, 2008

Kevin Hines, dated June 8, 2008

Ted Adams, dated June 17, 2008

Dave Oettinger, dated June 11, 2008

Anonymous, dated May 15, 2008

Karen May, dated June 7, 2008

Steven James, dated June 16, 2008

Rev. Charles H. Stacy, dated June 5, 2008

Dan Marchiando, dated June 12, 2008

Alice Aspinwall, dated June 19, 2008

Edwin H. Aspinwall, dated June 19, 2008

Dennis Thompson AIA, LEED AP, dated June 17, 2008

Becky Sweeney, dated June 13, 2008

Rod Adler, dated June 18, 2008

Claudia Crawford, MFT, dated May 13, 2008

Sheila Morrell, dated June 10, 2008

Ann Bennett Trent, dated June 10, 2008

Ann B. Bennett Trent and Paul Trent, dated June 7, 2008

Lucy and Ralph Archuleta, dated June 12, 2008

Ron Werft, dated June 11, 2008

Douglas Scott, dated June 10, 2008

Terre Lapman, dated June 9, 2008

karenc, dated May 14, 2008

Toni Wellen, M.A., dated June 5, 2008

Tom Carlyle, dated June 10, 2008

Chris Lancashire, dated May 14, 2008

Laura Inks, dated June 6, 2008

Madelyn Swed, MFT, dated June 4, 2008

Terry Harris, dated June 10, 2008

Whitney Ingersoll, dated June 11, 2008

Jack Clymer, dated May 12, 2008

Stephen P. Lane, dated June 10, 2008

Silvia Uribe, dated June 3, 2008

Bruce Klobucher, dated June 10, 2008

Gil Varon, dated May 14, 2008

Ann Rudolph, dated June 10, 2008

Sherri W. Adler, dated June 10, 2008

Nicole Queen with a 6 page attachment, dated May 20, 2008

Kristen Dahlin, dated June 16, 2008

Joyce Spezman-Margolin, dated June 17, 2008

Donald B. Margolin, dated June 16, 2008

Paula Hinck, Henry Hinck, Kathrine Schneider, Joseph Schneider, Luke Murray, Christopher Andropoulos, dated June 12, 2008

Paul Trent, dated June 19, 2008

Marty Kauth, dated June 11, 2008

Cherri Robinson, dated May 14, 2008

Sarah Stewart, dated June 10, 2008

Kellam de Forest, dated June 16, 2008

Barbara Kloos, dated June 4, 2008

Jordan Mo, dated June 11, 2008

Lee Chiacos, dated June 15, 2008

Christine Holland, dated June 11, 2008

Anna M. Kokotovic, Ph.D., dated May 13, 2008

Ward Rafferty, Jr. with a 7 page attachment, dated June 22, 2008

Tracy Fernandez, dated June 24, 2008

L. H. Tuncil, dated June 13, 2008

Maxi Decker, dated June 6, 2008

Peter Neuhaus, dated May 9, 2008

Nancy R. Heck, dated June 16, 2008

Patrick D. McDermott, CPA, dated June 16, 2008

Jim Beltran, dated May 12, 2008

Theodora Stephan Williams, dated May 13, 2008

3069 Calle Mariposa  
Santa Barbara, California 93105-2740  
June 17, 2008

Ms. Cathy Stettler, Senior Environmental Planner  
Caltrans District 5  
50 Higuera Street  
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Via U.S. Mail and e-mail attachment ( [cathy\\_stettler@dot.ca.gov](mailto:cathy_stettler@dot.ca.gov) )

RE: Comments on Draft Environmental Impact Report, Environmental Assessment and Section 4(f) Evaluation, Proposed Suicide Barrier on Cold Spring Canyon Arch Bridge, State Highway 154, Santa Barbara County

Dear Ms. Stettler:

Thank you for the chance to review and comment on this draft environmental document. I've organized the following comments in the order that the subject sections appear in the document, and reserve overall comments on the project until the end of this letter.

1. **Pg. 1, Need.** This section, based on a NEPA format, rather than CEQA's requirement for defining Project Objectives, is essentially just that. Therefore, the proposed "Human Barrier" alternative can be shown to address both Project Objectives: to reduce suicides; and to reduce potential hazards to law enforcement. Since the No Barriers Alternative addresses both objectives, it meets "most of the proposed project's objectives." Therefore, under CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6(a), it must be identified as an alternative to the proposed action, as it achieves this requirement, while also avoiding or reducing potentially significant impacts on visual resources and historic resources. The central court ruling, *Citizens of Goleta Valley v. Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors* (1990), regarding the need for evaluating reasonable and feasible alternatives to the project at the Bacara Hotel, is cited in CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6(a) for just this reason. 1
  
2. **Pg. 6, Common Design Features.** The "experts in the fields of suicidology and mental health" are not identified, and therefore the basis for including those perspectives exclusively, while not including those of Dr. Glasgow at UCSB, is faulty. CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5(f)(g) requires that a disagreement among experts be clearly discussed in the context of an EIR. 2
  
3. **Pg. 9, end of first paragraph (Comparison of Alternatives).** This statement should also reflect that, should Caltrans find that the NEPA action *does* significantly affect the environment, a full Environmental Impact Statement would be prepared. 3

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|----|---|----|
| 4. | <b>Pg. 11-14, Human Barrier Alternative.</b> The document seeks to characterize this alternative as infeasible due to its inability to be implemented successfully. This needs to be more fully addressed, especially in light of Dr. Glasgow’s research findings.  | 4  |
| 5. | <b>Pg. 14, Permits and Approvals Needed.</b> “None required” is wholly implausible—someone, somewhere has to decide whether or not to implement a project and, if so, how to implement it. This critical fact must be disclosed in the document.  | 5  |
| 6. | <b>Pg. 34, Sec. 2.1.2, Visual/Aesthetics, Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures.</b> On its face, the statement “Once the Preferred Alternative is identified, the final design and appearance of the barrier would be developed with input from an Aesthetics design Advisory Committee” betrays a strong bias that assumes a barrier would be constructed. Regardless, this measure would be neither effective nor feasible because no specific beneficial outcome would be assured. Also, should a physical barrier be pursued, it appears that the public would be deprived of the chance to review and comment upon a final design. This would impermissibly defer specific mitigation until after the conclusion of CEQA and NEPA review.   | 6  |
| 7. | <b>Pg. 36-37, Sec. 2.1.3, Cultural Resources, Environmental Consequences.</b> As defined, the proposed project action requires either of two barriers that would create an additional rail height of over 9.5 feet high (pg. 37). The adverse effect to those qualities that make the Cold Springs Bridge eligible for the National Register of Historic Places also make it eligible for the California Register of Historic Resources (see CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5(3)(C)). The EIR must note that the proposed project would have a significant impact on the historic resource because it would:<br><br>“Demolish or materially alter in an adverse manner those physical characteristics that convey its historical significance and that justify its inclusion in, or eligibility for, inclusion in the California Register of Historic Resources.” CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5(b)(2)(A) | 7  |
| 8. | <b>Pg 37, Sec. 2.1.3, Cultural Resources, Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures.</b> The EIR must note that the mitigation of the significant impact on the Cold Springs Bridge’s historic properties shall comply with the following:<br><br>“Generally, a project that follows the Secretary of Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating, Restoring and Reconstructing Historic Buildings or Secretary of Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for  | 8a |

Rehabilitating Historic Buildings (1995), Weeks and Grimmer, shall be considered as mitigated to a level of less than a significant impact on the historic resource.” CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5(b)(3)

There is no indication that the significant impact on the Cold Springs Bridge, a historic resource as defined by the National Historic Preservation Act, NEPA, and CEQA, would be feasibly mitigated by any of the “suggestions” identified in this section. The Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) referenced as mitigation is only a mechanism used to implement specific measures that avoid or reduce impacts consistent with the Secretary of Interior’s Standards defined above. The MOA does not in itself describe the ways in which modifications to the proposed bridge barriers would preserve the character defining features that make the Cold Springs Bridge significant.

Also, the later completion of “a Finding of Effect document” and “Memorandum of Agreement” would defer important facts and analysis until after the conclusion of CEQA and NEPA review. This would deprive the public of the chance to review and comment upon such important facts and analysis, and would impermissibly defer specific mitigation.

The introduction of the new barriers would irreparably compromise the integrity of the “original design features (the arch ribs, towers, columns, and girders, for example)” (EIR pg. 36, paragraph 4). There is no feasible mitigation to preserve the integrity of these original design features, consistent with the Secretary of Interior’s Standards defined above.

The resulting Finding of Adverse Effect, given the fact that there is no potential for feasible mitigation to address the proposed project’s impacts on the Cold Springs Bridge, must require the preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement.

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9. **Pg. 38, Sec. 2.2.1, Natural Communities, Environmental Consequences.** The extent to which a physical barrier could increase the chance of bird strikes must be addressed, especially considering the local presence of endangered and threatened species such as the Bald Eagle and California Condor.

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10. **Pg. 43, Sec. 3.2.2, Significant Environmental Effects of the Proposed Project – Cultural.** The document states that the proposed project safety barriers is “rehabilitation,” as defined in the Secretary of Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating, Restoring and Reconstructing Historic Buildings. This is clearly inappropriate, as the bridge does not require any improvements to maintain its structural integrity and safety to travelers. The proposed modification to the bridge is appropriately assessed in terms of the *Preservation* of its original design features, as discussed in comment no. 8 above.

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Ms. Cathy Stettler, Caltrans  
Cold Spring Bridge Suicide Barrier DEIR-EA-Sec. 4(f) Evaluation  
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Also, as previously described, deferring the development of “additional mitigation measures...for the Memorandum of Agreement” would impermissibly preclude the public from reviewing and commenting on such measures.

11. **Pg. 44, Sec. 3.2.3, Unavoidable Significant Environmental Effects.** The EIR properly identifies impacts on cultural (historic) resources as significant and unavoidable. This finding applies to the NEPA characterization of Finding of Adverse Effect, as no feasible mitigation exists to reduce impacts on the National Register-eligible property. The EIR/EA Section 4(f) analysis (Appendix B) already acknowledges this (page 77, paragraph 5): “A Finding of Effects evaluation (pending) is expected to find that the installation of a physical barrier on the bridge deck—of a size and shape necessary to meet the project’s purpose and need—would constitute an adverse effect on this historic property.”
12. **Pg. 50, Chapter 5, List of Preparers.** It is unclear as to who prepared the historic resources studies for this EIR/EA, including the Historic Resources Evaluation Report and Historic Property Survey Report.

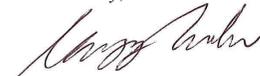
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I hope that these comments are helpful in preparing a final environmental document that fully complies with both CEQA and NEPA requirements.

In conclusion, I find it disturbing that the carefully-formulated “‘Human Barrier’ Alternative” put forth by the Friends of the Cold Spring Canyon Bridge has been dismissed from consideration in this document, given the significant and unavoidable impacts associated with the physical barrier alternatives. It clearly appears that Caltrans is on a pre-determined course toward constructing a physical barrier. I strongly advocate trying the components of the “human barrier” alternative first; should these measures prove to be ineffective, then a physical barrier might be reconsidered.

Sincerely,



Gregory Mohr

### **Response to Comments from Gregory Mohr**

Thank you for your comments on the project. Your opposition to the project has been noted.

**Response to comment #1:** CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6 concerns the consideration and discussion of alternatives. This section states, “There is no ironclad rule governing the nature or scope of the alternatives to be discussed other than the rule of reason.” *Citizens of Goleta Valley v. Board of Supervisors* emphasizes the importance of decisions about alternatives being supported by substantial evidence, particularly specific and concrete evidence. Caltrans did analyze the Human Barrier Alternative and determined that it would not meet the project’s objectives. This conclusion is supported in Section 1.4.6 and 2.1.1 of the EIR/EA. A section discussing expert opinion titled “Difference of opinion regarding the effectiveness of physical suicide barriers vs. ‘human barriers’” has been included in Chapter 2, see Response to comment #2 below.

**Response to comment #2:** In the comment on disagreements among experts, it appears that CEQA Section 15064 (f)(g) is being referenced, not CEQA Section 15064.5 (f)(g). Section 15064 discusses how lead agencies determine the significance of environmental effects on a project, and that if there is a disagreement among expert opinion over the significance of an effect, the lead agency shall treat this effect as significant and prepare an Environmental Impact Report.

A section discussing expert opinion titled “Difference of opinion regarding the effectiveness of physical suicide barriers vs. ‘human barriers’” has been included in Chapter 2. Dr. Glasgow has identified research design and social science statistics as his areas of expertise, not suicidology or a related field. Caltrans had received the comment for a “human barrier” concept during the public scoping process from Mr. Gary Spielmann, an expert in suicidology. He is the former Director of Suicide Prevention for the New York State Office of Mental Health, and a consultant to various bridge authorities. Mr. Spielmann is the author of the study: “A Comprehensive Plan for Suicide Prevention, Education and Awareness”- New York State Bridge Authority, In Partnership with Hudson River Coalition for the Prevention of Suicide, Utilizing National Suicide Prevention Lifeline Network. In this plan, Mr. Spielmann recommended the use of National Suicide Prevention Lifeline phones as a cornerstone of the “human barriers” concept on some New York bridges. In scoping comments recommending the “human barrier” approach for the Cold

Spring Canyon Bridge, Mr. Spielmann stated, “. . . a ‘human barrier’ will outperform any physical barrier and save more lives.” This statement echoes the Executive Summary of the New York State Bridge Authority plan that also recommended for bridges “. . . ‘a human barrier’ that will outperform any physical barrier and save more lives.”

In response to this, The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline Steering Committee, an expert agency, took action on this issue referencing Mr. Spielmann’s comments regarding the use of their Lifeline crisis phones on the Cold Spring Canyon Bridge, instead of physical bridge barriers. The resulting National Suicide Prevention Lifeline policy statement dated June 16, 2008, by John Draper, Ph.D., Director of the Lifeline, quotes Mr. Spielmann’s comment to Caltrans that “suicide barriers are an inferior solution to the problem of suicides on bridges. . . . a ‘human barrier’ will out perform any physical barrier and save more lives.”

The Lifeline’s policy states in part, “The Lifeline Steering Committee position is that the use of bridge barriers is the most effective means of bridge suicide prevention. Subsequently, as bridge/transportation authorities or other stakeholders approach the Lifeline with requests for implementing bridge phones, the Lifeline should emphasize the need for barriers as the most effective solution.” See The National Suicide Lifeline Steering Committee position paper attached to the comment letter from The Glendon Association, in this Appendix.

The human barrier alternative was withdrawn from consideration as outlined in Chapter 1 of this document. Caltrans stands by the information presented in the draft EIR/EA. In addition to the position paper from Dr. John Draper and The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline, the following experts in the field of suicidology wrote comment letters on the draft EIR/EA supporting physical barriers for the Cold Spring Canyon Bridge: Dr. Richard Seiden, the author of “Where Are They Now? A Follow-up Study of Suicide Attempters from the Golden Gate Bridge,” formerly of UC Berkeley, where he conducted studies of San Francisco Bay Area suicides, The Glendon Association, a local mental health association that addresses the social problems of suicide, Paula J. Clayton, M.D., Medical Director for the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, Mark Chaffee, President, Suicide Prevention Advocacy Network, and member of the Suicide Prevention Plan Advisory Committee for the “California Strategic Plan on Suicide Prevention: Every Californian Is Part of the Solution.” (Comment letters and responses are in this Appendix.)

There was no difference of opinion regarding the dimensions of effective suicide barriers received in comment letters on the DEIR/EA. The Glendon Association, an expert agency in suicidology, provided the general dimensions and shape of effective suicide barriers. These dimensions were validated by an often-referenced suicidologist, Richard H. Seiden, Ph.D., M.P.H.

**Response to comment #3:** Caltrans, as delegated by the Federal Highway Administration, has determined that the Grid/Mesh Alternative will have no significant impact on the human environment (see the Finding of No Significant Impact at the beginning of this document). This finding is in regard to the National Environmental Policy Act only, not the California Environmental Quality Act. See additional information under the Response to comment #11 below. A discussion of significance findings in joint CEQA/NEPA documents was included in the Summary of the draft EIR/EA; it is also included in this document.

**Response to comment #4:** Dr. Garrett Glasgow has identified research design and social science statistics as his areas of expertise, not suicidology or a related field. Scientific literature and research and opinions from experts in the field of suicidology discussed in Chapter 2 of the EIR/EA support the effectiveness of physical barriers over the “human barrier” concept and that physical barriers save lives. Also refer to Response to comment #2 above.

However, a separate project to install crisis phones near the bridge, sponsored by the Santa Barbara County Association of Governments, referred to in the draft EIR/EA Section 1.4.6 and in the Response to comment #1 to Santa Barbara County Sheriff-Coroner Bill Brown, would install crisis phones at the two nearest call boxes to the bridge, but not on the bridge deck for safety reasons. Signs stating, “In Crisis? We Care Please Call Us” in both English and Spanish would be included in the Santa Barbara County Association of Governments’ project.

**Response to comment #5:** The section “Permits and Approvals Needed” refers to permits and approvals that must be obtained from other agencies before the project can be implemented. This section does not apply to Caltrans’ approval authority. In response to your question about the approval authority within Caltrans, the District Director of Caltrans District 5 has the authority to approve the project.

**Response to comment #6:** Please note that a *Visual Impact Assessment* (January 2008) was prepared by Caltrans to fully evaluate visual impacts of the proposed project. This technical study was summarized in the draft EIR/EA Section 2.1.2

*Visual/Aesthetics.* Before and after visual simulations from various viewpoints are included. Because any build alternative would create some combination of view blockage and visual intrusion, impacts are considered significant under CEQA. These visual impacts would remain significant and unavoidable because it would not be possible to mitigate them to a less than significant level (see EIR/EA Section 3.2.3, *Unavoidable Significant Effects*).

In addition, the use of an Aesthetics Design Advisory Committee does not limit but adds to public comment on the aesthetics of the bridge barriers or the visual impact analysis. Visual simulations of the alternative designs and a summary of the visual impact analysis were included in the draft EIR/EA. The normal 45-day review and comment period was provided and the public did comment on the design features. Comment letters on the draft document and public hearing input included feedback on the barrier designs. For example, one commenter suggested that darkening the color of the barrier would make it less intrusive. Another commenter thought the barriers were aesthetically pleasing and carefully designed—she had expected the barriers to be ugly.

Caltrans has exceeded the minimum requirement for public comment by expanding the opportunity for community comments. The Aesthetics Design Advisory Committee includes representatives from the Santa Barbara County Historic Landmarks Advisory commission, architects, landscape architects, and County Public Works and Planning members, as well as Caltrans experts. The basic height, shape, and type (grid/mesh or vertical picket) would remain the same. The design committee's recommendations did not change the overall design of the barrier, but helped refine detailed aspects of the barrier's design. As a group, the committee concluded that if a barrier would be installed that the Grid/Mesh Alternative is the superior alternative with the least visual impacts that meets the project's purpose. Please refer to Section 2.1.2 *Visual/Aesthetics, Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures* for the design committee's recommendations.

**Response to comment #7:** The draft EIR/EA identified the unavoidable significant impacts under CEQA in Chapter 3. The impact mentioned in this comment was covered in Section 3.2.2 and 3.2.3. Adverse effects are defined as the direct or indirect alteration of the characteristics that qualify a historic property for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places in a manner that diminishes the historic property's integrity. The integrity of a historic property is made up of seven aspects: location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. The

proposed project would cause a direct adverse effect on Cold Spring Canyon Bridge because it introduces a visual element that diminishes the property's historic integrity of design, feeling, and association.

Of the four Secretary of the Interior Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties (Preservation, Restoration, Reconstruction, and Rehabilitation), Caltrans has determined that rehabilitation is the most appropriate treatment standard for the proposed project. However, Caltrans recognizes that the addition of a physical barrier of any kind is an alteration to the historic property that is not entirely consistent with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation. For these reasons, additional minimization and mitigation measures have been developed in a Memorandum of Agreement (see Appendix E).

The construction of the Grid/Mesh Alternative on Cold Spring Canyon Bridge would introduce a new structure that would significantly affect the bridge's historic character, appearance, and scenic views (as defined under CEQA). Measures have been proposed to mitigate these significant impacts. It is not possible, however, to reduce the unavoidable visual, aesthetic, and cultural impacts to the bridge to a less than significant level under CEQA (see Section 3.2.3 *Unavoidable Significant Environmental Effects*).

Caltrans consulted with the State Historic Preservation Officer and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation in compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. A Memorandum of Agreement to address the adverse effects of the project was signed by the State Historic Preservation Officer, the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, and the California Department of Transportation in March 2009 (see Appendix E). Also refer to Response to comment #3 to Mr. John Baker, County of Santa Barbara Executive Office.

**Response to comment #8a:** The draft EIR/EA indicated that an adverse effect under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act was expected. A Finding of Effect document was prepared which determined that the project would have an adverse effect on the bridge, an historic property. The State Historic Preservation Officer concurred with this determination on July 24, 2008.

The FOE (Finding of Effect) addresses impacts under Section 106 and analyzes the extent to which the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating, Restoring, and Reconstructing Historic Buildings can be met. The FOE concluded that two of the

Standards for Rehabilitation could not be met. Caltrans acknowledges that the significant impacts cannot be mitigated to a level of less than significant on the historic resource and that there is no feasible mitigation to fully comply with Standard 2 and Standard 9 of the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.

A Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) is executed once a preferred alternative is selected. By definition, this does not happen until the final environmental document is in preparation. The preferred alternative, the Grid/Mesh Alternative, has now been selected, and a Memorandum of Agreement has been signed (see Appendix E). The standard Section 106 evaluation process has been followed.

**Response to comment #8b:** One of the primary differences between the National Environmental Policy Act and the California Environmental Quality Act is the way significance is determined. Under the National Environmental Policy Act, significance is used to determine whether an Environmental Impact Statement, or some lower level of documentation, will be required. The National Environmental Policy Act requires that an Environmental Impact Statement be prepared when the proposed federal action (project) *as a whole* has the potential to “significantly affect the quality of the human environment.”

The determination of significance is based on context and intensity. Some impacts determined to be significant under the California Environmental Quality Act may not be of sufficient magnitude to be determined significant under the National Environmental Policy Act. Under the National Environmental Policy Act, once a decision is made regarding the need for an Environmental Impact Statement, it is the magnitude of the impact that is evaluated and no judgment of its individual significance is deemed important for the text. The National Environmental Policy Act does not require that a determination of significant impacts be stated in the environmental documents.

The California Environmental Quality Act, on the other hand, does require Caltrans to identify each “significant effect on the environment” resulting from the project and ways to mitigate each significant effect. If the project may have a significant effect on any environmental resource, then an Environmental Impact Report must be prepared. Each significant effect on the environment must be disclosed in the Environmental Impact Report and mitigated if feasible.

In addition, the California Environmental Quality Act Guidelines list a number of mandatory findings of significance, which also require the preparation of an

Environmental Impact Report. There are no types of actions under the National Environmental Policy Act that parallel the findings of mandatory significance under the California Environmental Quality Act. Please refer to the Responses to comments #3 above and #11 below.

**Response to comment #9:** Many bridges throughout California use similar structures such as that proposed in this project (mesh fencing, railing, chain link, etc.) with no evidence of a significant impact to avian species. Furthermore, state and federal resource agencies, including the California Department of Fish and Game and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, reviewed the draft EIR/EA and had no comments.

**Response to comment #10:** As stated in the environmental document as a project benefit, the safety of the traveling public can be compromised by suicide-related incidents, such as when drivers intent on committing suicide abandon their vehicles on the narrow two-lane bridge deck. Search and rescue operations can distract drivers and disrupt the normal traffic flow on the bridge and highway. As the owner-operator of the bridge facility, Caltrans has an obligation to promote the safe operation of the structure.

The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating, Restoring, and Reconstructing Historic Buildings have been applied to this project. The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation are the most appropriate treatment approaches. Rehabilitation is defined as the act or process of making possible a compatible use for a property through repair, alterations, and additions while preserving those portions or features that convey its historical, cultural, or architectural values.

**Response to comment #11:** Thank you for your comment regarding the analysis of unavoidable significant impacts under CEQA in Section 3.2.3 of the environmental document. In the case of this project, Caltrans did not initially view the project's impacts as significant under either CEQA or NEPA. The scoping process revealed that a fair argument could be made that the visual impacts and related Section 106 adverse effect (on an historic bridge) could be considered significant under CEQA. Caltrans prepared an EIR-level analysis to the conservative side of the fair argument standard, even though a fair argument could also be made that the impacts are not significant under CEQA. Caltrans chose this conservative approach to CEQA to ensure that the maximum substantive protection of CEQA would apply to visual and cultural resources.

Since both alternatives involve similar adverse effects, a Finding of Effect document was prepared under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act to fully evaluate the nature and severity of those effects on the historic qualities of the bridge. The document, a Finding of Adverse Effect, was sent to the State Historic Preservation Officer on June 12, 2008; the State Historic Preservation Officer concurred with this finding in a response dated July 24, 2008 (refer to Section 2.1.3 *Cultural Resources*; a copy of the concurrence letter is in Appendix E). NEPA and CEQA are distinct from each other and governed by different standards as more fully discussed in Section 3.2 of the EIR/EA *Determining Significance under the California Environmental Quality Act*. Accordingly, findings of CEQA significance or a finding of adverse effect under Section 106 are not identical to a finding of NEPA significance so as to necessarily trigger an EIS. Please refer to Response to comment #8b, above.

**Response to comment #12:** The cultural reports were prepared under the supervision of Dr. Valerie Levulett (see Chapter 5, List of Preparers). Paula Carr and Terry Joslin are cultural resource experts who prepared the cultural resource studies for this project (see Chapter 5). The Historic Property Survey Report was prepared by Paula Carr. The Historical Resources Evaluation Report was prepared under Dr. Levulett's oversight by Christopher McMorris, JRP Historical Consulting, who has been added to the List of Preparers in Chapter 5.

Garrett Glasgow  
Political Science 9420  
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Santa Barbara, California 93106-9420  
June 20, 2008

Ms. Cathy Stettler, Senior Environmental Planner  
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50 Higuera Street  
San Luis Obispo, California 93401

Via e-mail attachment (Cathy\_Stettler@dot.ca.gov)

RE: Comments on Draft Environmental Impact Report, Proposed Suicide Barrier on  
Cold Spring Canyon Arch Bridge, State Highway 154, Santa Barbara County

Dear Ms. Stettler:

Thank you for the chance to review and comment on this draft environmental document. As my area of expertise is in social science statistics and research design, I will limit my comments to that topic.

1. **Pg. 1, Purpose and Need.** The purpose of the proposed project contradicts earlier analysis and recent public statements by Caltrans officials, making the real purpose of this project unclear. The two goals of the project as stated here are:

1. Reduce the number of suicides at the Cold Spring Canyon Bridge.
2. Reduce the risks to emergency personnel such as law enforcement officers or search and rescue teams when attempting to prevent a suicide or recovering a body.

Note that these goals can be achieved by simply diverting suicidal people from the Cold Spring Canyon Bridge to commit suicide elsewhere. Thus, the purpose of the project as stated here is keeping suicidal people off the bridge, not saving the lives of suicidal people.

This contradicts the benefit-cost ratio calculation of August 18, 2006 (File No. 05-SB-154-PM-22.95/23.19), which calculated a safety index based on the assumption that this project would save 1.6 suicidal people per year. As saving the lives of suicidal people is not listed as a purpose for this project, this benefit-cost ratio is irrelevant (and also unsupported by scientific research on suicide prevention barriers). The benefits of achieving the purposes of the project as listed on page 1 have not been formally evaluated – instead, this document simply asserts these benefits are worth the project cost.

1

Also note that the purpose of this project as stated on page 1 contradicts statements by Caltrans officials, who continue to tell the public that the purpose of the project is to save the lives of suicidal individuals. For instance, on May 20<sup>th</sup> Colin Jones told *The Daily Nexus* “The main message is this is the ultimate safety project. If it was your mother or child out there, wouldn’t you like to spend the money to save them, whether it’s one million or two million dollars?” On June 10<sup>th</sup> Jim Shivers told the *Independent* “We see this as something that will save lives.”

Thus, the purpose of this project is unclear – is it designed to save the lives of suicidal people, or simply to keep suicidal people off of the Cold Spring Canyon Bridge? There is a difference between preventing suicides at a particular location and saving lives, and this document should state explicitly which of these goals the project is designed to achieve. If the goal of the project is simply to keep suicidal people away from the Cold Spring Canyon Bridge, a new benefit-cost ratio for the project must be calculated.

2. **Pg. 12, The Human Barrier Alternative.** On page 12 the document states “research in the field of suicide prevention shows the human barrier approach has not been successful.” This is false. There is no scientific research that demonstrates that a “human barriers” approach is ineffective, or even less effective than physical barriers.

2

In fact, the human barriers alternative was explicitly recommended for the Cold Spring Canyon Bridge by Gary Spielmann. Mr. Spielmann is the former Director of Suicide Prevention for the New York State Office of Mental Health, and a consultant for suicide prevention to the New York State Bridge Authority (NYSBA), the New York State Thruway Authority, and the international Peace Bridge Authority. Mr. Spielmann is also the architect of the NYSBA “human barriers” approach to suicide prevention that was presented to Caltrans as a project alternative.

In testimony submitted to Caltrans Mr. Spielmann stated “suicide prevention barriers are an inferior solution to the problem of suicide on bridges.” He also stated “A ‘human barrier’ will outperform any physical barrier and save more lives.” Although Mr. Spielmann is a credible authority on suicide prevention on bridges, his testimony is completely ignored in this document.

The only sense in which a physical barrier has been demonstrated to be superior to a “human barrier” alternative is in keeping suicidal people away from a particular location. Again, if the purpose of this project is simply to keep suicidal people away from the Cold Spring Bridge, without regard for saving lives, then this must be explicitly stated and a new benefit-cost ratio calculated.

3. **Pg. 21, The Benefits of Barriers.** On page 21 the document states “A benefit of the proposed project is that people often do not go elsewhere or substitute another method to commit suicide. This is supported by the information and studies described below.” This is false, at least in the case of barriers on bridges. To date no scientific study has been able to demonstrate that suicide barriers save lives.

It is true that means restriction has proven effective at reducing suicides by some methods. This evidence of the effectiveness of means restriction as a suicide prevention strategy comes from studies of lethal agents people keep in their homes and might use in an impulsive suicide, such as firearms and prescription medications.

While some have argued that the concept of means restriction might also extend to suicides by jumping from bridges, this is purely conjecture. To date every study on the effectiveness of suicide barriers has been inconclusive – nobody knows whether suicide barriers save lives, or just divert suicides to other locations.

The fact that means restriction works for some methods of suicide but is unproven in the case of suicide barriers is well known among researchers and public health officials. For instance, after endorsing means restriction strategies for firearms, domestic gas, and toxic substances, on the topic of suicide barriers the World Health Organization states:

In addition to the measures described, whose efficacy is attested to by the scientific literature, it is thought that other measures, such as the use of fencing on high buildings and bridges, could also contribute to a reduction in suicide rates, although there is no definitive evidence to support this idea. (p. 87)

In more than 30 years of research, not one study has found evidence that suicide barriers save lives. For instance, in the most recent study on the topic (published in December 2007), Reisch et al. conclude “[b]arriers on bridges may prevent suicides but also may lead to a substitution of jumping site or method” (p.681). In sum, there is no scientific evidence that suicide barriers on bridges save lives.

4. **Pgs. 17-23, The Description of the Scientific Literature is Misleading.** The discussion of the scientific literature on suicide barriers in this document is either misleading or misinformed. Studies are cited as if they contain evidence that barriers save lives, when in fact they explicitly state they should not be interpreted in this way.

For example, on page 18 the document cites O’Carroll et al. (1994), but omits any discussion of the conclusion of the study, which states:

3

4

Ms. Cathy Stettler, Caltrans  
Cold Spring Bridge Suicide Barrier DEIR-EA-Sec. 4(f) Evaluation  
Page 4 of 4

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Are the data provided sufficient to substantiate the effectiveness (or lack thereof) of bridge barriers as a means to prevent suicide? The answer is no, the data are not sufficient to answer that question, because they do not touch on the issue of whether persons who would have committed suicide by jumping from the Ellington Bridge went on to commit suicide by other means. ... [P]ersons frustrated in their efforts to commit suicide by jumping from the Ellington Bridge are in no sense restricted to committing suicide by jumping from the Taft Bridge. (p. 92)

Most of the other studies cited on pages 17-23 contain similar cautionary notes, but no mention of this is made anywhere in the document. There is no scientific evidence that suicide barriers save lives, but this is not the impression given by this section of the document.

In conclusion, this document is unclear about what the actual purpose of the project is (keeping suicidal people away from the bridge or saving lives). If the actual goal of the project is simply to keep suicidal people away from the Cold Spring Canyon Bridge, this must be made clear in the document and to the public, and a new benefit-cost ratio must be calculated. This document also makes at least two false statements about the scientific literature on suicide prevention on bridges, presents the scientific evidence on the topic in a misleading way, and neglects to even mention testimony from a recognized expert on suicide prevention who recommended an alternative to the physical barrier. Overall, this document gives the distinct impression that the evidence on this topic is being deliberately distorted in order to support the decision to construct a physical barrier.

Sincerely,  
Garrett Glasgow

### **Response to Comments from Garrett Glasgow**

Thank you for your comments on the project. Your opposition to the project has been noted.

**Response to comment #1:** The purpose of the project that is the subject of your comment is stated in the Summary and Chapter 1 of the EIR/EA. The associated benefit of saving lives is presented in the impact analysis in Chapter 2, Section 2.1.1. A cost-benefit analysis is not included in the EIR/EA; neither CEQA nor NEPA require cost-benefit analysis. The assertion that the project purpose “can be achieved by simply diverting suicidal people from the Cold Spring Canyon Bridge to commit suicide elsewhere” is also addressed in Section 2.1.1. A benefit of the proposed project is that people often do not go elsewhere or substitute another method to commit suicide, see Section 2.1.1.

**Response to comment #2:** It was stated that it is “false” to state that the human barrier approach has not been successful. If any lives are saved through the use of call boxes and related measures, that approach should be considered a success. The EIR/EA Section 1.4.6 has been revised and clarified to read, “Components of this alternative were previously considered but eliminated from consideration because research on the effectiveness of these measures at other bridges shows the human barrier approach has not been satisfactory at reducing the number of persons jumping from the bridge. . . .These non-physical components have also been considered in the aggregate, not just as stand-alone elements. Also having a physical barrier does not preclude the use of these non-physical components as supplemental deterrent strategies.”

Scoping comments submitted by Mr. Gary Spielmann, an expert in suicidology stated that “...suicide prevention barriers are an inferior solution to the problem of suicides on bridges. Suicide prevention measures that place the suicidal individual in touch with another human being are the preferred method for preventing suicide. Such a ‘human barrier’ will outperform any physical barrier and save more lives.” The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline Steering Committee took action on this issue referencing these comments by Mr. Spielmann regarding the use of Lifeline crisis phones on the Cold Spring Canyon Bridge, instead of bridge barriers.

The resulting Lifeline policy statement dated June 16, 2008, specifically quotes Mr. Spielmann’s comment to Caltrans that “suicide barriers are an inferior solution to the

problem of suicides on bridges. . . .a ‘human barrier’ will outperform any physical barrier and save more lives.”

The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline policy states in part, “The Lifeline Steering Committee position is that the use of bridge barriers is the most effective means of bridge suicide prevention. Subsequently, as bridge/transportation authorities or other stakeholders approach the Lifeline with requests for implementing bridge phones, the Lifeline should emphasize the need for barriers as the most effective solution.” It should be noted that a section discussing expert opinion titled “Difference of opinion regarding the effectiveness of physical suicide barriers vs. ‘human barriers’” has been included in Chapter 2. Also please refer to Response to comment #4 to Mr. Marc McGinnes, Friends of the Bridge, to his letter dated June 23, 2008, and to Response to comment #2 to Mr. Gregory Mohr, above. In addition, please refer to Response to comment #2 to Santa Barbara County Sheriff-Coroner Bill Brown, regarding SBCAG’s project to independently install crisis phones and signs near the bridge.

**Response to comment #3:** Gary L. Spielmann, M.A. M.S. (the expert cited) states in the New York State Bridge Authority report which he authored, “A Comprehensive Plan for Suicide Prevention, Education and Awareness”- New York State Bridge Authority, In Partnership with Hudson River Coalition for the Prevention of Suicide, Utilizing National Suicide Prevention Lifeline Network, that “The Golden Gate Bridge is the most studied bridge in the world as it relates to suicide risk management. One of its lessons is powerful evidence that some suicides are impulsive. A classic [Sieden, “Where Are They Now? A Follow-up Study of Suicide Attempters from the Golden Gate Bridge” (1978)] study of 515 persons prevented from jumping from the Golden Gate Bridge found that 94% of those had died from natural causes or were still alive 25 years later. The belief that Golden Gate Bridge attempters will simply go elsewhere to kill themselves was clearly unsupported by the data.”

This study referenced by Mr. Spielmann, authored by Dr. Richard Seiden, noted UC Berkeley suicidology expert, was one of a number of studies cited the draft EIR/EA in support of the benefits of physical barriers that are questioned. Dr. Seiden wrote a comment letter in support of the proposed project (in this Appendix). In 2007, Dr. Seiden wrote a letter validating the proposed design features (height and shape) of an effective physical barrier in regards to the Cold Spring Canyon Bridge.

In addition, the New York State Office of Mental Health website, [http://www.omh.state.ny.us/omhweb/savinglives/Volume2/means\\_rest.html](http://www.omh.state.ny.us/omhweb/savinglives/Volume2/means_rest.html), accessed on January 22, 2008, posts an article by Mr. Spielmann entitled “Means Restriction.” Mr. Spielmann wrote: “Limiting access to lethal means of self-harm is an effective strategy to prevent self-destructive behavior, including suicide. Some suicidal acts are impulsive, resulting from a combination of psychological pain or despair coupled with easy availability of the means to inflict self-injury: firearms, carbon monoxide, medications, sharp objects, tall structures. By limiting the individual’s accessibility to the means of self-harm, a suicidal act may be prevented. The goal is to separate in time and space the individual experiencing an acute suicidal crisis from easy access to lethal means of self-injury and personal harm. The hope is by making it harder for those intent on self-harm to act on that impulse, one can buy time for the crisis to pass and for healing and recovery to occur.”

The Glendon Association, a local mental health association that addresses the social problems of suicide stated in their comment letter supporting the proposed suicide barriers on the Cold Spring Canyon Bridge that “We base our position on published research regarding suicidal behavior and restriction of means as well as the recommendations of public health officials and mental health professionals. One such example is the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline which, in a statement written by Dr. John Draper, asserts that ‘barriers are the most effective means of preventing suicides on bridges’”(See a copy in this Appendix.)

Mark Chaffee, President, Suicide Prevention Advocacy Network, also discussed means restriction in his comment letter, at the Cold Spring Canyon Bridge as an “opportunity to save lives.” Like other experts in suicidology, Chaffee notes that means restriction “is a key component to any comprehensive plan to prevent suicide and is included in the California Suicide Prevention Plan that will soon be published by the Department of Mental Health.” (See his letter in this Appendix.)

Paula J. Clayton, M.D., Medical Director for the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention (AFSP), commented on the draft environmental document. As supported by other experts in suicidology, Dr. Clayton states “Considering suicide by jumping tends to be more impulsive in nature than other methods of suicide, barriers work by giving individuals and those who care for them something they desperately need-time; time to change their mind, time for someone to intervene and seek help.” This view by the AFSP is referenced from its website on page 20 of the draft EIR/EA. (See a copy in this Appendix.)

Dr. Richard Seiden, the suicidologist Mr. Spielmann referenced and quoted above in Response to comment #3, submitted a comment letter supporting the project, which is included in this document. Dr. Seiden wrote: “I am firmly convinced that a bridge barrier will be effective in preventing suicides. This is not simply an unsupported opinion but a conclusion based on much empirical research including my own studies of Bay Area suicides conducted when I was a professor at U.C. Berkeley.” Also please refer to the section discussing expert opinion titled “Difference of opinion regarding the effectiveness of physical suicide barriers vs. ‘human barriers’” in Chapter 2 and the Response to comment #2 to Mr. Gregory Mohr, above.

**Response to comment #4:** The purpose of the project is to reduce the number of suicides on the bridge and not to reduce the overall suicide rate, please refer to the Summary and Chapter 1 for a more thorough discussion.

Chapter 2, Section 2.1.1 of the document presents evidence supporting the effectiveness of suicide barriers in reducing suicides on bridges and evidence of the benefit that often people do not go on to commit suicide through other methods. Our findings are consistent with the consensus of experts in the field of suicidology, as documented in Chapter 2 including the section titled “Difference of opinion regarding the effectiveness of physical suicide barriers vs. ‘human barriers.’” The National Suicide Lifeline policy dated June 16, 2008, states in part, “The Lifeline Steering Committee position is that the use of bridge barriers is the most effective means of bridge suicide prevention. Subsequently, as bridge/transportation authorities or other stakeholders approach the Lifeline with requests for implementing bridge phones, the Lifeline should emphasize the need for barriers as the most effective solution.” See Responses to comments #2 and #3 above.

An expert in the field of suicidology, Paula J. Clayton, M.D., Medical Director for the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, wrote a comment letter supporting this project, discussing that barriers reduce suicides: “A study supported by our Foundation (see attached, Gunnell et al) examined the effectiveness of a suicide barrier in England known for suicides. According to this study, barriers worked at reducing suicide, especially among young men. Furthermore, the research shows that jumps did not increase from other nearby bridges – another common myth. Additional studies regarding suicide prevention barriers on bridges, of which there are numerous throughout the world, continue to show that barriers save lives.” The referenced study by Gunnell et al “Effect of barriers on the Clifton suspension bridge,

England, on local patterns of suicide: implications for prevention” is summarized in Section 2.1 of the EIR/EA.

It should also be noted that a separate project sponsored by Santa Barbara County Association of Governments, referred to in the EIR/EA Section 1.4.6, would install crisis phones at the two nearest call boxes to the bridge, but not on the bridge deck for safety reasons. Signs stating, “In Crisis? We Care Please Call Us” in both English and Spanish would be included in the Santa Barbara County Association of Governments (SBCAG) project.

Appendix F • Comments and Responses



RICHARD SEIDEN  
<dthntxs@sbcglobal.net>  
06/02/2008 12:23 PM

To Cathy\_Stettler@dot.ca.gov  
cc Glendon Association <jina@glendon.org>  
bcc  
Subject Bridge Barrier

History:  This message has been forwarded.

Dear Ms. Stettler,  
I am firmly convinced that a bridge barrier will be effective in preventing suicides. This is not simply an unsupported opinion but a conclusion based on much empirical research including my own studies of Bay Area suicides conducted when I was a professor at U.C.Berkeley.  
Sincerely yours,  
Dr. Richard H. Seiden

***Response to Comments from Dr. Richard H. Seiden***

Thank you for your comments on the project. Your support for the project has been noted.

The study “Where Are They Now? A Follow-up Study of Suicide Attempters from the Golden Gate Bridge” *Suicide and Life-Threatening Behavior*. Winter 1978. 8(4), 203-216 was referenced in the environmental document.



john hines  
<jkevin057@yahoo.com>  
06/08/2008 04:47 PM

To Cathy\_Stettler@dot.ca.gov  
cc  
bcc

Subject Cold Springs Caynon Bridge Suicide Barrier

History: This message has been forwarded.

Hello,

My name is Kevin Hines. I was one of the speakers who addressed the city council of Santa Barbara with the Glendon Association back when the decision was made to raise the rail to end the deaths by suicide at the CSCB.

I spoke to them because I have a heart felt passion for ending suicide off of bridges. In the year 2000, September 25th at 10AM I took a leap from the Golden Gate Bridge with every attempt to end my life. What I got was a miracle. I lived that day where by all accounts I should have died.

I didn't notice the Crisis Phones, no not when I was hearing voices telling me that "I must die" or that "I was a terrible person" or that "everyone would be better off without me" I didn't or rather couldn't ask anyone for help while trapped inside my own paranoid, hallucinatory, depressed, manic, and bipolar disorder inflicted mind. All I could see was death.

I could not think about my family and the devastation my near actions would cause them. I had no vision of hope or future. I believed that I had to die, I believed that I was a burden.

I tell you this with the most sincere feeling I can give to you. If there had been a suicide prevention railing put up before I tried to die off that bridge, I would have gotten there, with no money to get back home, with no phone to call help and I would have been taken from the bridge and put into a hospital where I could have had the mental health help that I needed, instead I fell 220 feet (half of the Bank of America Building) at 75 miles per hour, and hit the water like a jaguar hitting a brick wall, I shattered my T-12 and L-1 Lower Vertebrae and sprained my ankle.

Most people die less than 2 % survive. yet at your bridge no one lives from the fall. And you have complete radicals who have very little sense of moral integrity who say "what about the View!" "what about the aesthetics"

I say "WHAT ARE THE AESTHETICS OF A BRIDGE COMPARED TO ONE BEAUTIFUL LIFE" The life of a mother , father , cousin, aunt, or loved one of any kind. The life of a person who has lost all hope and desperately needs help to find some. The important life of someone who deserves to live even though that person is feeling suicidal. Most likely due to an imbalance of chemicals in that persons brain and not due to the fact that "they really want to die"

Most suicidal people are ambivalent, partly wanting to die, but underneath that suicidal ideation is a person desperately reaching out for help.

You have the studies that prove that suicide railings or barriers have worked all over the world, stopping suicide at the site and decreasing it in the sites metropolitan areas.

Do the right thing, Do the right thing for the people who need the time to get help but simply cannot ask for it themselves. Do the right thing and Build the barrier on the cold spring canyon bridge.

It is a Jewish teaching that states this: "if you save one life, you save the world" Think about what a powerful meaning that has save one life and save the world.

Please erect the Suicide Prevention Railing at the CSCB. Do it because you and Caltrains are not morally corrupt, But full of integrity and full of hope to keep all safe even from themselves.

Sincerely,

Kevin Hines  
[jkevin057@yahoo.com](mailto:jkevin057@yahoo.com)

Speaker: Glendon Association  
Speaker: National Mental Health Awareness Campaign (NMHAC)  
Speaker: Suicide Awareness Voices of Education (SAVE)  
Board Member: Bridge Rail Foundation (BRF)  
Board Member: Mental Health Board SF(MHB)  
Board Member: American Foundation for Suicide Prevention (AFSP, NOR CAL)

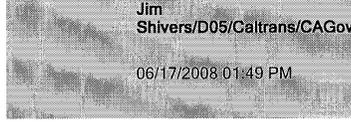
Best,

Kevin Hines  
415.407.9624  
[jkevin057@yahoo.com](mailto:jkevin057@yahoo.com)  
Speaker, National Mental Health Awareness Campaign  
Speaker/Advisory Committee, Glendon Association of Suicide Prevention  
Speaker, SAVE- Suicide Awareness and Voices of Education  
Board Member, Nor Cal Chapter American Foundation for Suicide Prevention  
Board Member/Speaker, The Bridge Rail Foundation  
Board Member/Speaker, Mental Health Board of San Francisco  
Committee Member, California Bipolar Foundation

***Response to Comments from Kevin Hines***

Thank you for your comments on the project. Your support for the project has been noted.

Appendix F • Comments and Responses



Jim Shivers/D05/Caltrans/CAGov

06/17/2008 01:49 PM

To Mike Jacob/D05/Caltrans/CAGov@DOT  
cc  
bcc  
Subject Fw: Cold Spring Bridge barrier color

Hi,

Note from Ted Adams of Santa Barbara County and Hwy. 154 resident.

Jim Shivers  
Caltrans  
District 5 Public Information Officer  
(805) 549-3237

----- Forwarded by Jim Shivers/D05/Caltrans/CAGov on 06/17/2008 01:46 PM -----



**Ted Adams**  
<ted@paintedcave.com>  
06/17/2008 01:24 PM

To jim\_shivers@dot.ca.gov  
cc  
Subject Cold Spring Bridge barrier color

Hey Jim,

On the bridge aesthetics concerns, I learned early on as a window dressing installer (who would have guessed) that window frames painted white stand out and frames painted dark disappear. This applies to anything that you look through such as screening or fencing etc. I believe that this dark coloring would make the bridge barrier much less apparent to those traveling across the bridge or looking at the bridge from a distance thus addressing some of the aesthetic considerations expressed by some detractors of the project.

All the best,  
Ted

***Response to Comments from Ted Adams***

Thank you for your comments on the project. Your support for the project has been noted. Your suggestion to use a dark color on the barriers will be taken into consideration.



Dave Oettinger  
<freeballer65@yahoo.com>  
06/11/2008 02:26 PM

To Cathy\_Stettler@dot.ca.gov  
cc  
bcc

Subject Cold spring bridge suicide barrier

History: This message has been forwarded.

Dear Ms. Stettler

I have checked out the proposed plan for the cold springs bridge suicide barrier.

I am unhappy with your current plan. You are eliminating one of the most striking (and perhaps defining) views in the county, and a source of revenue for numerous filming events that occur there because of a few people who will find another way to take their lives if they really want to. I guess it will take them another 20 seconds max to get to the top of the new fence and in that time, a cop just happens to be rolling by?

I have a couple alternative ideas:

1. put a catch net underneath, maybe 10 or feet below the bridge. 1 foot squares in rope so all the debris will go thru still, but will catch a human.
2. Electrify the rails, and or a much smaller fence offset from the existing rails. Not with tazer level lethality, but just enough to make it extremely unpleasant. Use some solar cells and batteries for a charge buildup and then ZAPPA! You never make it to the other fence or in combination you fall into the catch net.

Once this is put up, this beautiful view is forever gone. I really think that we should think of different plan rather than the old concrete steel fix all.

Best Regards

Dave O.

***Response to Comments from Dave Oettinger***

Thank you for your comments on the project. Your opposition to the project has been noted. The suggestions for alternatives such as a safety net and electric rails on the bridge have been considered. The safety net alternative was considered, but rejected, as discussed in Chapter 1. Adding electric rails or fencing was discussed but found to be infeasible.

provided on  
5/15/08 at  
SBCAG BOARD  
MEETING.

# NOTICE

EXTENSIVE MEASURES

HAVE BEEN TAKEN IN

PLANTINGS, IRRIGATION ~~AND~~  
AND NETTING

GROUND SOFTENING ↑ TO

ENSURE THE PREVENTION

OF FATAL FALLS FROM THE

COLD SPRINGS BRIDGE

CAL TRANS

***Response to Comments from Anonymous***

Thank you for your comments on the project. Your suggestion for an alternative involving vegetation has been considered, but found to be infeasible. The safety net alternative was considered, but rejected, as discussed in Chapter 1.



"Karen May"  
<amaybird@msn.com>  
06/07/2008 09:26 AM

To <Cathy\_Stettler@dot.ca.gov>  
cc "Ann Bennett" <annbennet@gmail.com>  
bcc  
Subject Cold Spring Bridge Suicide Barrier

History:  This message has been forwarded.

Dear Ms Stettler,

I am writing in support of building a suicide barrier at Cold Spring Bridge in Santa Barbara County.

It has the strong potential of saving the lives of distraught suicide planners, and also saving their families and friends from significant suffering. It would eliminate the possibility of law enforcement/rescue personnel being pulled over the side of that dangerously low railing along with the suicide.

As for the view obstruction - the barrier would create a minor change in the appearance of the bridge from a distance. It would impact the view of drivers passing over the bridge. The roadway across the bridge has only one lane in each direction, with no shoulder and no room for error. I want the drivers crossing the bridge to be looking at the roadway, not gazing at the view.

Karen May  
Santa Barbara



"Steven James"  
<Steven@advantusmedical.com>  
06/16/2008 01:11 PM

To <Cathy\_Stettler@dot.ca.gov>  
cc  
bcc  
Subject Cal trans bridge project

History: This message has been forwarded.

Cathy,

I am writing to let you know that I support the Cold Springs Bridge Suicide Barrier project. I think the benefits to having a suicide barrier greatly out way the costs, both fiscal and aesthetically.

Thank you for your concern for the well being of others,

**Steven James**

Billing Specialist  
Advantus Medical International  
(805) 962-7100 Ext. 122



*The information contained in this e-mail may be privileged and confidential and protected from disclosure. If the reader of this message is not the intended recipient, or an employee or agent responsible for delivering this message to the intended recipient, you are hereby notified that any dissemination, distribution or copying of this communication is strictly prohibited. If you have received this communication in error, please notify us immediately by replying to the message and deleting it from your computer. Thank you.*

1509 Eucalyptus Dr.  
Solvang, CA 93463  
June 5, 2008

Cathy Stettler  
California Department of Transportation  
50 Higuera Street  
San Luis Obispo, CA 93401

Dear Ms Settler,

My name is the Rev. Charles H. Stacy. I recently retired from St. Mark's-Episcopal Church in Los Olivos where I was the rector for thirty one years. Besides having been an Episcopal priest for forty years, I also have an MS in Rehabilitation Counseling with an emphasis on substance abuse.

I am in favor of a barrier on the Cold Springs bridge. Personally I have buried two people who "dove" of the bridge i.e. they were both swimmers, one with an Olympic medal and the other gave swimming lessons. I have also known in one way or another, others who have jumped from the bridge. It is too bad but it is what it has become and I believe that a barrier would be a positive way to address this situation.

For a bridge is meant to be a means between two points. The Colds Springs bridge is a beautiful bridge to look at and to drive over. It also, was never meant to be walked over for had it been so, then it would have large designated walk ways like the Golden Gate bridge. The beauty of the bridge would not be ruined by the addition of the barrier proposed.

From my experience of many years as a parish priest and counselor, I believe that the addition of the proposed barrier will help people to stop ruining their lives by jumping off the bridge. No, it will not stop all people from ultimately taking their own lives, but I do believe that the barrier will close a means that now has a "suicidal attraction" to it. We can do something about this and we should.

The bridge will still be beautiful. In fact it will be even more beautiful in that people will not use it as a means to kill themselves. Furthermore, if people want to enjoy its beauty even more by walking over it, they should be approaching you and others for a large designated walk way over it.

Yours truly,



Rev. Charles Stacy

Appendix F • Comments and Responses



"Dan Marchiando"  
<dmarchiando@cox.net>

To <cathy\_stettler@dot.ca.gov>

cc

06/12/2008 10:14 AM

bcc

Please respond to  
<dmarchiando@cox.net>

Subject Support for Cold Spring Bridge suicide barrier

History: This message has been forwarded.

Dear Ms. Stettler,

I am writing to voice my support for the Cold Spring Bridge suicide barrier fence on State Highway 154. This is an improvement that is 45 years overdue.

Suicide due to depression is a preventable tragedy when there is intervention. The bridge barrier will be an effective deterrent saving countless lives. Many suicide attempts are impulsive, and when easy means to commit suicide are removed, many suicides can be avoided. Thousands of suicidal people are alive today, leading productive lives, because of deterrents and barriers like the proposed fence on the Cold Spring Bridge.

There is no doubt that the view of and from the bridge may be compromised slightly by the fence. However, the view OF the bridge is from Cold Spring Canyon, at a distance of thousands of feet. The fencing material will be hardly noticeable against the blue-gray skies. There are many beautiful views along the Highway 154 corridor, and the MAN-MADE view FROM the bridge will not be affected much when speeding by at 55 or 65 miles an hour.

Please approve this project as soon as possible.

Sincerely,

Dan Marchiando  
4066 Naranjo Dr.  
Santa Barbara CA 93110  
805-886-0581  
dmarchiando@cox.net

No virus found in this outgoing message.

Checked by AVG.

Version: 7.5.524 / Virus Database: 270.3.0 - Release Date: 6/11/2008 12:00 AM



"Paul Trent"  
<paultrentjr@gmail.com>  
06/19/2008 08:13 PM

To Cathy\_Stettler@dot.ca.gov  
cc  
bcc  
Subject Cold Spring Bridge Barrier

History: This message has been forwarded.

I am in favor of the installation of a suicide barrier on Cold Springs Bridge. The beauty of the bridge has always been in viewing the structure from below., and that will not change.

Alice Aspinwall



"Paul Trent"  
<paultrentjr@gmail.com>  
06/19/2008 08:22 PM

To cathy\_stettler <cathy\_stettler@dot.ca.gov>  
cc  
bcc  
Subject Cold spring bridge barrier

History:  This message has been forwarded.

I have been following with interest the discussions related to the installation of a suicide barrier on the bridge or not to do it. For me, the beauty of the bridge is from the road below it, I am not convinced that the installation of the barrier would in any lessen the beauty of the bridge. But, for me the deterrence of a potential suicide, would give it added grace. I approve the installation of the barrier. Sincerely, Edwin H. Aspinwall



"Dennis Thompson"  
<Dennis@thompsonnaylor.com>  
06/17/2008 10:05 AM

To <cathy\_stettler@dot.ca.gov>  
cc "Paul Trent" <paultrentjr@gmail.com>  
bcc  
Subject Support for Cold Spring Bridge barrier

History:  This message has been forwarded.

Ms. Stettler-

When I first heard about the proposed suicide barrier on this bridge, I was opposed to it. After educating myself some more, I am now supportive of this proposal. I hope it will be handled well aesthetically.

Dennis Thompson, AIA, LEED AP  
Thompson Naylor Architects, Inc.  
900 Philinda Ave., Santa Barbara, CA 93103  
(805) 966-9807  
[www.thompsonnaylor.com](http://www.thompsonnaylor.com)



"Becky Sweeney"  
<bsweeney26@cox.net>  
06/13/2008 11:18 AM

To <Cathy\_Stettler@dot.ca.gov>  
cc <paultrentjr@gmail.com>  
bcc  
Subject I support the Cold Springs bridge barrier

History:  This message has been forwarded.

I believe it will save lives and will not harm the beauty of the area at all.

Becky Sweeney  
5165 Via Valverde  
Santa Barbara



"Ron Adler"  
<RBAdler@cox.net>  
06/18/2008 07:20 AM

To <Cathy\_Stettler@dot.ca.gov>  
cc  
bcc

Subject Supporting Cold Spring Bridge project

History:  This message has been forwarded.

**Dear Ms. Settler—**

**I'm writing to add my support to the Cold Spring Bridge barrier.**

**Having reviewed the arguments on both sides of this issue, I'm convinced that the barrier will indeed discourage suicides. While I consider myself a friend of the bridge, I'm a greater friend of saving lives.**

**Sincerely,**

**Ron Adler  
1617 Franceschi Rd.  
Santa Barbara, CA 93103**

Appendix F • Comments and Responses



"Claudia Crawford"  
<ccrawford@spscb.org>  
05/13/2008 02:04 PM

To <cathy\_stettler@dot.ca.gov.>  
cc  
bcc

Subject Cold Springs Bridge

History: This message has been forwarded.

Dear Cathy:

I cannot comprehend why anyone would say no to this effort. How can anyone want even to chance a potential suicide? Please enter my comments on the side of INSTALLING THE BARRIER as soon as possible. I shall be ashamed to be part of a community that would be more concerned with aesthetics than human life.

Thank you,

Claudia Crawford, MFT

---

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"Sheila Morrell"  
<sheilamorrell@cox.net>  
06/10/2008 05:01 PM

To <Cathy\_Stettler@dot.ca.gov>  
cc  
bcc  
Subject Suicide barrier

History:  This message has been forwarded.

I would just like to add my support for a mesh barrier on the Cold Springs bridge. I truly believe that one life that could be saved because of a barrier on the bridge would be worth it and should override any argument based on the aesthetics of the bridge.  
Thank you,  
Sheila Morrell

***Response to Comments from Karen May, Steven Jones, Rev. Charles H. Stacy, Dan Marchiando, Alice Aspinwall, Edwin H. Aspinwall, Dennis Thompson AIA, LEED AP, Becky Sweeney, Rod Adler, Claudia Crawford, MFT, and Sheila Morrell***

Thank you for your comments on the project. Your support for the project has been noted. The barrier is being designed with sensitivity to the bridge's history and aesthetics, and with input from a citizens' Aesthetics Design Advisory Committee. Please refer to the design committee's recommendations in Section 2.1.2 *Visual/Aesthetics*, Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures.

June 10, 2008

I would like to thank Caltrans for asking for public input regarding the Cold Spring Bridge suicide barrier. I am in favor of the project, and want to register my strong support for it and my fervent hope that it will not be halted by a group of people who describe themselves as “large” but have not proved any such thing; who use words to describe themselves such as “overwhelming majority of the community” but have not put forth any such proof that a majority or even significant minority agree with them.

I believe the majority of the community can see the wisdom and logic of this barrier beyond the twisting of statistics and the hairsplitting of what can be absolutely known.

I personally sent about 70 emails to friends and relatives in the area, and an overwhelming majority supported the barrier.

In spite of discussion that there is little we can prove, in fact there ARE certain facts WE KNOW:

1. **We know for a fact** that survivors who were stopped from jumping from bridges or survived a fall, as a few have who jumped from the Golden Gate, later are deeply grateful they survived.
2. **We know for a fact** that 44 people, an average of one per year, die jumping from Cold Spring Bridge.
3. **We know for a fact** that restriction of means works.
4. **We know for a fact** that several police officers and rescue workers have suffered injury and risk of death at rescue attempts and recovery of bodies below this bridge.
5. **We know for a fact** that different psychological profiles are drawn to different means. In a simple example, let's say your son---brother---father--- or--- spouse was drawn to drive to and jump from this bridge in an impulsive moment of despair. This person had not premeditated the jump, did not have access to pills, did not have a gun or garage, and so forth. If the bridge were unavailable, the suicide would not happen. The person might well get help. We know for a fact that this scenario is highly plausible.
6. **We know for a fact** that the “aesthetics of the bridge” are irrelevant, or should be, in contrast to the unending grief survivors must live with. I know from personal experience that there is no more painful position to be in than a survivor of a suicide.
7. **We know for a fact** that when approaching the bridge it looks just like any another stretch of highway. You can see that in the Caltrans EIR. For approximately one minute or less traversing the bridge, a driver's view of the scenery would be slightly diminished by the barrier, but there is a lovely vista point just on the other side of the bridge, where enjoying the view would be a lot safer.
8. **We know for a fact** that from a distance the side view, (where you can actually see it) will still look almost the same, and its “grace” will not be harmed.

For all of these reasons, I implore you to proceed with this humane use of public funding, energy and skill to decrease death and suffering at Cold Spring bridge.

Respectfully,  
Ann Bennett Trent  
5657 W. Camino Cielo,  
Santa Barbara, CA 93105



"ann bennett"  
<annbennet@gmail.com>  
06/07/2008 08:03 AM

To Cathy\_Stettler@dot.ca.gov  
cc  
bcc  
Subject Suicide Barrier at Cold Spring Bridge

History: This message has been forwarded.

My husband and I live near the bridge.

We have lost a child to suicide and understand the never-ending trauma to family and friends when a depressed person takes this impulsive way out of their pain.

We know some of the local safety officers who have risked their lives to save people on the bridge.

We and our entire family **STRONGLY SUPPORT** this effective and needed improvement to prevent at least one death a year at this spot. To our knowledge, many in our neighborhood support it as well.

Thank you for your effort,  
Sincerely,

Ann B. Bennett Trent, Paul Trent  
5657 W Camino Cielo  
Santa Barbara, CA 93105



"Lucy Archuleta"  
<larchuleta@rwcpa.com>  
06/12/2008 12:04 PM

To <Cathy\_Stettler@dot.ca.gov>  
cc  
bcc

Subject Cold Spring Bridge Suicide Barrier

History: This message has been forwarded.

Cold Spring Bridge Suicide Barrier

Cathy Stettler, Senior Environmental Planner

My husband and I are both in favor of the suicide barrier. Having had a friend jump from the bridge years ago, we strongly feel anything that can help save lives is important. Even though the barrier may not stop them from committing suicide, it may make them think about doing it, since that opportunity was not available.

Lucy and Ralph Archuleta  
Santa Barbara California

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"ron werft"  
<rmwerft@cox.net>  
06/11/2008 08:23 PM

To <Cathy\_Stettler@dot.ca.gov>  
cc  
bcc  
Subject Cold Spring Bridge

History:  This message has been forwarded.

I am writing in support of the suicide barrier proposed for the Cold Spring Bridge in Santa Barbara County. I lost a friend a few months ago who jumped off the bridge, and my teenage children lost one of their friends 3-4 years ago as well. Some have indicated that these individuals would have found a way to end their lives if this bridge did not exist, and that might be correct, but the number of people who choose this method is beyond comprehension. There is clearly some kind of appeal to those who are beyond depression to jump off this bridge. A barrier is needed and I urge you to build one.

Ron Werft



"Douglas Scott"  
<douglas.scott@cox.net>  
06/10/2008 02:58 PM

To <Cathy\_Stettler@dot.ca.gov>  
cc "Paul Trent" <PaulTrentJr@gmail.com>  
bcc

Subject Hwy 154 - Cold Springs Bridge Suicide Barrier

History: This message has been forwarded.

Cathy:

I am writing to tell you I support the construction of a barrier to suicide on the Cold Springs Arch Bridge. I have known three people who committed suicide including one who jumped off of the Cold Springs Bridge. Often these people are depressed and it is the convenience of a means, particularly a spectacular one, like a high bridge or building that allows them to take advantage of a momentary state of depression. It should be obvious that people who are suicidal probably shouldn't have a gun in the house. We as a society could also exercise some common sense in this area.

It is a tragic and largely preventable accident. I ask your support for construction of the barrier.

Thank you.

**Douglas Scott**

**DOUGLAS W. SCOTT, INC.**  
*Commercial Real Estate Finance & Consulting*

1215 De la Vina, Suite H  
Santa Barbara, CA 93101  
Phone: 805.845.5200  
Fax: 805.845.5202  
Cell: 805.637.3665  
Email: douglas.scott@cox.net

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"Terre Lapman"  
<terre.lapman@gmail.com>  
06/09/2008 09:43 PM

To Cathy\_Stettler@dot.ca.gov  
cc  
bcc  
Subject paultrentjr@gmail.com

History:  This message has been forwarded.

Dear Cathy,

I support the suicide barrier on Cold Springs Bridge.

Depression is real, and often hidden from us even by friends and loved ones.

I personally have known 2 friends who have taken their lives. A neighbor of mine and a co-worker. And, in both cases no one had a clue.

It must be a terrible feeling of desperation to finally make that decision.

Also, to consider the emotional toll it takes on the personnel that must go to the bottom to recover the remains.

So, please let us try and discourage using Cold Springs Bridge for this by installing the barrier.

Thank you,  
Terre Lapman

Appendix F • Comments and Responses



karenc@sbceo.org  
05/14/2008 08:21 AM

To cathy\_stettler@dot.ca.gov  
cc  
bcc  
Subject

History:  This message has been forwarded.

I work in the ED at Cottage in Emergency Pyschiatric Services, I hear, first hand the many people who consider jumping from that bridge and have seen the devastating effects on families whoes loved ones have gone to their death over the bridge. I think anything that can be done to prevent more deaths should be done. I will be at work at the times of the supes meeting but if there is a petition to sign or something to show my support please let me know.

Thanks for the work you are doing towards this.

Appendix F • Comments and Responses



"Toni Wellen"  
<toni@silcom.com>  
06/05/2008 12:07 PM

To <Stettler@dot.ca.gov>  
cc  
bcc

Subject Cold Springs Bridge

History: This message has been forwarded.

Dear Cathy,

As a practicing Marriage, Family Therapist since 1988, I fully support a barrier on the Cold Springs Bridge. People contemplating suicide usually have a moment in time when all seems hopeless and they often seek the quick and easy way out. Prevention is key and we need to put community safety ahead of any other consideration.

Thank you,  
Toni Wellen, M.A.  
Marriage, Family & Child Counselor  
Lic. No. MFC 24702  
7040 Shepard Mesa Carpinteria, CA 93013  
TEL (805) 684-8434 tFAX (805) 684-6664  
toni@silcom.com  
No virus found in this outgoing message.  
Checked by AVG.  
Version: 7.5.524 / Virus Database: 269.24.6/1485 - Release Date: 6/5/2008  
10:07 AM



"Tom Carlyle"  
<Acarly@cox.net>  
06/10/2008 07:47 AM

To <Cathy\_Stettler@dot.ca.gov>  
cc "Paul Trent" <paultrentjr@gmail.com>  
bcc  
Subject Support for Cold Spring Bridge barrier.

History: This message has been forwarded.

Cathy Stettler

This email is to let you know that I support the construction of a suicide prevention barrier on Cold Spring Bridge on Highway 154 in Santa Barbara County. I served as a volunteer crisis/suicide prevention counselor for eleven years on the Santa Barbara County HelpLine, which has evolved into the County 211 line. During my tenure, I had several phone clients that ended up on, or considered going to, Cold Spring Bridge. The details of the phone conversations are privileged information. Many suicide attempts are impulsive. The Bridge is magnetic to some who are in a deep depression. I would like to see this well-known suicide magnet cease to be available for those contemplating a jump.

I have heard the objection to a railing barrier for aesthetic reasons. I would like to note that motorists cannot see the impressive arches and struts while driving over the bridge. Most tourists are not even aware they have crossed over this magnificent engineering structure. The beauty of the structure can only be seen from deep down in the canyon, after taking a long detour on a winding country side-road.

Respectfully submitted,

Tom Carlyle  
4365 Via Presada  
Santa Barbara, CA  
805-845-7666



"Chris Lancashire"  
<christiancashire@cox.net>  
05/14/2008 08:50 PM

To <cathy\_stettler@dot.ca.gov>  
cc  
bcc  
Subject

History: This message has been forwarded.

Please will you add my support to erecting a barrier on the bridge to save lives. It is too easy and irreversible at present. I have three teenage children and I still feel for the parents of the young man of 18 years who ended his life in the not too distant past. I cannot understand how anyone is able to vote against this prudent path to save lives. Will the next death be etched into their conscience? I wish you the best in your worthwhile cause, thank you.  
All the best,  
Chris.

Chris Lancashire  
Schott House  
1505 Alameda Padre Serra  
Santa Barbara, CA 93103  
Tel: 805 455 9554  
Fax: 805 963 3057



"Laura Inks"  
<laurainks@cox.net>  
06/06/2008 05:00 PM

To <Stettler@dot.ca.gov>  
cc  
bcc  
Subject

History:  This message has been forwarded.

Hi Cathy,

I just want to enter a public comment on the [Barriers on the Cold Spring Bridge is a safety project that will reduce deaths at the most lethal spot of road in five counties.](#)

I would like to show my support for the Glendon Suicide Prevention efforts and request that the project move forward in order to save lives.

Thank you for all you are doing towards this effort.

My daughter's friend, Lainy's brother jumped off the bridge last year and we are now seeing the devastating effects his suicide is having on their family and our community. Lainy was top of her class, into sports and now her life has fallen apart. Another one lost!

We must save lives.

Thank you,  
Laura Inks



Swedlight@aol.com  
06/04/2008 07:14 PM

To Cathy\_Stettler@dot.ca.gov  
cc  
bcc  
Subject Cold Spring Bridge Suicide Barrier

History:  This message has been forwarded.

Dear Ms. Stettler,

Please support the construction of barriers on the Cold Spring Bridge. It is a safety project that will reduce deaths at the most lethal spot of road in five counties. Jumping is one of the most lethal methods for committing suicide, and those who jump there face 100% fatality. This project will make our community safer by removing one of the few lethal means of suicide available to individuals when they are in suicidal crisis.

Thank you,

Madelyn Swed

Madelyn Swed.MFT  
Mindfulness and Body-Centered Depth Psychotherapy  
1018 Garden St., Suite 102  
Santa Barbara, CA 93101  
805 962-6842

---

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Terry Harris  
<terry@flywithjoy.com>  
06/10/2008 08:00 PM

To <Cathy\_Stettler@dot.ca.gov>  
cc Ann Bennett <annbennet@gmail.com>  
bcc  
Subject Cold Springs Bridge

History:  This message has been forwarded.

Dear Caltrans,  
I urge you to save lives by making Cold Spring Bridge more difficult access. Two minutes of delay can be long enough for an impulsive suicidal victim to reconsider. One life alone would justify the barrier.  
Sincerely,  
Terry Harris



Whitney  
<whitneytinker@aol.com>  
06/11/2008 07:15 AM

To Cathy\_Stettler@dot.ca.gov  
cc  
bcc

Subject cold springs bridge

History: This message has been forwarded.

Dear Cathy Stettler

I support adding the suicide barrier on to the Cold Spring Bridge.

Though I feel it is not something I look forward to looking at, I am putting that aside for the gift of saving someone's life. I'd rather choose the option of a family member being able to "see" their relative (or friend) over a longer period of life, than me "seeing" the barrier.

Sincerely,

Whitney Ingersoll

Whitney Heimlich Ingersoll  
595 Hot Springs Road  
Santa Barbara, CA 93018  
805 969-2721

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"NearSB"  
<nearsb@hughes.net>  
05/12/2008 05:48 PM

To <cathy\_stettler@dot.ca.gov>  
cc  
bcc  
Subject Cold Springs Barrier

History:  This message has been forwarded.

Dear SBCAG,

If the proposed barrier saves just one life... it was worth the effort. More than likely it will deter many who would think of jumping and that is precisely the point. Sincerely, Jack Clymer , Solvang , Ca.

Appendix F • Comments and Responses



Steveo Lane  
<steveo@sbms.org>  
06/10/2008 03:02 PM

To Cathy\_Stettler@dot.ca.gov  
cc  
bcc  
Subject Suicide barriers

History: This message has been forwarded.

Dear Cathy,

I am writing this short note to you to convey my support for the construction of a suicide barrier on Cold Spring Bridge. I commute from Los Olivos to Santa Barbara every day via the San Marcos Pass (154) and I know that the construction would make my journey to town longer, time-wise. However, the inconvenience to me is inconsequential when compared to the opportunity to, perhaps, prevent just one suicide from happening. The opportunity to save one human life is something we should all embrace enthusiastically!

Warmest Regards,

Stephen P. Lane  
2895 Alta St.  
Los Olivos, CA 93441



"Uribe, Silvia"  
<suribe@co.santa-barbara.ca.us>

To "cathy\_stettler@dot.ca.gov" <cathy\_stettler@dot.ca.gov>

cc

06/03/2008 11:34 AM

bcc

Subject SUICIDE PREVENTION

History:  This message has been forwarded.

I just learned about the meeting that will take place at the Faulkner Gallery on June 9th. Unfortunately, due to previous commitments I will not be able to attend, but I want to express my **SUPPORT TO THE INSTALLATION OF A BARRIER ON THE BRIDGE**. Normally, I would push for protecting the views and the environment before anyone's interest, but in this case we are talking about human lives that can be saved, which to me, come first without a doubt.

I will appreciate the inclusion of this comment during your meeting.

*Silvia Uribe*  
805-717-5013

Appendix F • Comments and Responses



"Bruce Klobucher"  
<brucek@visioncal.com>  
06/10/2008 10:02 AM

To <Cathy\_Stettler@dot.ca.gov>  
cc  
bcc

Subject Cold Spring Bridge Suicide Barrier

History:  This message has been forwarded.

Hello Cathy,

I am in favor of building the Suicide Barrier.

I am a native Santa Barbaran, who has travelled over this bridge countless times over the past 30 years.

I am also in favor of saving lives. I am especially in favor of saving lives.

Suicide is impulsive, and your bridge offers the perfect opportunity for impulsive people visiting dark places to act in moments of extreme weakness. If we can save one or two lives and by extension all the lives that touch them, I say we make the investment. The relative cost is cheap, the funds can be had, and the benefit in human terms is incalculable.

I look forward to driving over this bridge in the near future with the knowledge that we saved a life.

Regards,

Bruce Klobucher  
221 Mohawk Rd  
Santa Barbara, CA 93109



Gil Varon  
<gilvaron@yahoo.com>  
05/14/2008 05:32 PM

To cathy\_stettler@dot.ca.gov  
cc  
bcc

Subject Cold Springs Bridge barrier

History: This message has been forwarded.

Dear Ms. Stettler,

I wanted to let you know my support for adding a barrier to the Cold Springs Bridge. I drive this road everyday and have passed several people who parked near the bridge and were walking towards it during the last 13 years I have lived in Santa Ynez. It always sends a chill up my spine, not knowing if they are sane and thinking of taking their lives.

As I am sure you are aware, if a person is thinking of suicide and finds a deterrance that stops them, they often will not take their life. If we can save lives of people that are not thinking right, we owe it to them to build this barrier.

I appreciate your time and support.

Thank you,

Gil Varon  
3463 State St. PO Box #502  
Santa Barbara, CA 93105

Appendix F • Comments and Responses



Ann Rudolph  
<wrrudolph@cox.net>

To Cathy\_Stettler@dot.ca.gov

cc

06/10/2008 10:15 AM

bcc

Please respond to  
wrrudolph@cox.net

Subject Cold Springs Bridge

History:  This message has been forwarded.

I support placing suicide barriers on the Cold Spring Bridge. These barriers may not forever prevent someone from jumping but they can act as a deterrent and give a person time to reconsider taking their life. The bridge in its current state is too accessible to anyone thinking that they want to end their life. Given a second chance they may reconsider and seek help to continue living.

Ann Rudolph  
4539 Nueces Dr.  
SB 93110



"Sherri Adler"  
<SWAdler@cox.net>  
06/10/2008 01:59 PM

To <Cathy\_Stettler@dot.ca.gov>  
cc  
bcc  
Subject Cold Spring Bridge

History:  This message has been forwarded.

Please add my name to list of supporters for the suicide barrier on Cold Springs Bridge. It seems certain we will help save lives with it's construction.

Sherri W. Adler

Appendix F • Comments and Responses



**Sara von  
Schwind/D05/Caltrans/CAGov**  
v  
05/20/2008 04:00 PM

To Mike Jacob/D05/Caltrans/CAGov@DOT  
cc  
bcc  
Subject Fw: Thank you-regarding article posted on Daily  
Nexus/University of California,Santa Barbara

For your records.

Sara von Schwind, PE, PMP  
Caltrans, District 5 Project Management  
(805) 549-3198  
Fax (805) 549-3620

----- Forwarded by Sara von Schwind/D05/Caltrans/CAGov on 05/20/2008 04:00 PM -----

**Colin  
Jones/D05/Caltrans/CAGov**  
05/20/2008 03:58 PM

To "Queen, Nicole (DET)" <NQueen@detma.org>  
cc Jim Shivers/D05/Caltrans/CAGov@DOT, Sara von  
Schwind/D05/Caltrans/CAGov@DOT  
Subject Re: Thank you-regarding article posted on Daily  
Nexus/University of California,Santa Barbara

Thanks for your support, we appreciate it. If you can, please attend one of our public hearings on June 9 in SB and on June 10 in Solvang to voice your opinion and learn more about the project. Contact me for more details.

Colin Jones  
Public Affairs Manager  
Caltrans District 5  
(805) 549-3189

"Queen, Nicole (DET)" <NQueen@detma.org>



**"Queen, Nicole (DET)"  
<NQueen@detma.org>**  
05/20/2008 09:51 AM

To <Colin.Jones@dot.ca.gov>  
cc  
Subject Thank you-regarding article posted on Daily  
Nexus/University of California,Santa Barbara

"People were dying on our bridge, and the fact of the matter is if you get killed, whether by an accident or by suicide, it's happening on our bridge," Jones said. "We looked at a lot of things, including cameras, and the best solution we believe is a physical barrier that will make it difficult for them to jump off the bridge. ... It's one of the most cost effective programs we have. Over 44 people have jumped off that bridge since it was opened, and if we can prevent those suicides, we will."

THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR THIS QUOTE. IT IS SO REFRESHING THAT DESPITE ALL THE CRITICS WHO STATE THAT MONEY IS THE MOST IMPORTANT THING INVOLVED IN THE SUICIDE BARRIERS ON BRIDGES DEBATE SOMEONE IS SPEAKING THE TRUTH. ONE LIFE OR A MILLION, ITS THE SAME VALUE. BARRIERS STOP DEATH. THANK YOU.

<http://www.dailynexus.com/article.php?a=16871>

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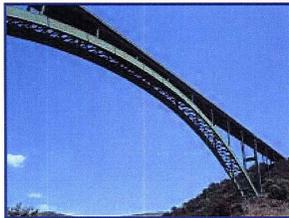
# Controversy Rises Over County's Number One Suicide Spot

By Travis Miller / Staff Writer

Published Tuesday, May 20, 2008

[Issue 131 / Volume 88](#)

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Travis Miller / Daily Nexus

On July 15, 2005, two local law enforcement officers watched as 18-year-old Andrew Popp leaned backwards over the edge of the Cold Springs Bridge on Highway 154 and fell the 420 feet to his death.

<http://www.dailynexus.com/article.php?a=16871>

5/21/2008

Once a star player on the San Marcos High School basketball team, Popp's decision to kill himself sent shockwaves through the Santa Barbara community. Soon after his death, CalTrans embarked on the process of making Cold Springs Bridge - the number one location to commit suicide on the Central Coast - safer. Nearly three years later, the project is flooded in controversy as the opposing sides debate CalTrans' plan to install physical suicide prevention barriers on the 45-year-old bridge.

Although the project was originally unopposed, controversy arose after Garrett Glasgow, an associate political science professor at UCSB, released a statistical study in September 2007 arguing that there was no evidence to suggest suicide barriers on large bridges actually save lives. The barriers, Glasgow said, simply divert suicides elsewhere.

Additionally, the project's estimated price tag has more than quadrupled since CalTrans initially suggested the barriers would cost about \$600,000. In response to the increased price, nearly a dozen local organizations, including the Santa Barbara County Taxpayers Association, have declared their opposition to the plan. According to public records, the estimated cost is now over \$2.8 million.

Ultimately, however, the decision lies in the hands of CalTrans. The Cold Springs Bridge is located on a California State Highway and as such it is under the sole jurisdiction of the California Dept. of Transportation. If the barriers are eventually installed, it will be the first time such preventative barriers will have been placed on a California state highway.

#### **Saving Lives?**

**Central to the debate over Cold Springs Bridge is whether or not suicide prevention barriers actually save lives. When CalTrans originally proposed the project, they listed 'saving lives' as a primary goal. However, in the Environmental Impact Report released last week, saving lives had been removed from their list of goals.**

**"[CalTrans] has something in there that says 'maybe it will work', but it doesn't say they will save lives anymore," Glasgow said. "They started by telling people that [physical barriers] would save people and that's why I did my research, but instead of confronting [the findings] they just dropped it."**

**The citizen-run activist group Friends of the Bridge - whose sole concern is preserving the aesthetic and historic attributes of the Cold Springs Bridge - decided to pitch an proposal to CalTrans last year that avoided the issue of barriers altogether.**

**"We've presented information that [CalTrans] reports are flawed and that barriers don't save lives," said Marc McGinnes, a retired UCSB environmental studies professor and active member of Friends of the Bridge. "We continue to call upon CalTrans to abandon this flawed barriers proposal and pursue the alternatives."**

**The alternative would have cameras and call boxes installed on the bridge, in addition to a speaker box that would emit a voice designed to console the troubled individual. McGinnes also stressed the importance of not arresting the potential jumper, saying that the peace officer's job is to assist, not apprehend.**

**The alternative plan offered by Friends of the Bridge is nearly an exact copy of the plan submitted to and accepted by the New York State Bridge Authority, which controls five major bridges in the New York City area.**

Despite this, the Glendon Association, a local mental health institute that helped CalTrans design the current proposal, insists that barriers are the best choice. Lisa Firestone, research and education director for the Glendon Association, said it is a misnomer that barriers do not save lives - clearly, she noted, they physically stop people from plummeting to their death.

“When barriers are put up on bridges, the suicide rate drops to zero at that location and the suicide rate in the surrounding area goes down,” Firestone said.

Firestone said the act of suicide is often impulsive, and by restricting access to the means of suicide, the impulse will often pass and that individual will go on to live a full life.

Glasgow, the author of the statistical report that first sparked the debate, said that while suicide rates have declined in communities with suicide barriers on large bridges, the rate has also dropped in communities without barriers.

“The suicide rate has been going down across the whole country,” Glasgow said. “The suicide rate went down by 40 percent in [Washington] DC over the last 20 years, where there are barriers, and it has gone down 60 percent in San Francisco, where the Golden Gate Bridge - the number one spot to kill yourself in the country - doesn’t have barriers.”

According to CalTrans spokesperson Colin Jones, for the agency, the whole issue comes down restricting the number of deaths on a state highway.

“People were dying on our bridge, and the fact of the matter is if you get killed, whether by an accident or by suicide, it’s happening on our bridge,” Jones said. “We looked at a lot of things, including cameras, and the best solution we believe is a physical barrier that will make it difficult for them to jump off the bridge. ... It’s one of the most cost effective programs we have. Over 44 people have jumped off that bridge since it was opened, and if we can prevent those suicides, we will.”

#### Dollars and Cents

Originally estimated to cost \$605,000, the physical barriers proposal now has an estimated cost of \$2.8 million dollars, according to McGinnes. Additionally, McGinnes has asserted that CalTrans was aware of the actual cost from the beginning, but purposefully withheld that information.

“They originally stated [it would cost] \$605,000,” McGinnes said. “That was done at a public hearing in July 2007. But we know, from looking at the public records, that they knew at the time that the budget really was \$2.821 million. They knew that, but they are trying to sell something here and they were trying to make it look like a bargain.

“[CalTrans] has been mishandling and concealing information. That is what I call a stealth project,” he added.

While admitting that the estimated costs have risen, Jones denied any prior knowledge of the final price and said that CalTrans had never engaged in any “stealthy” behavior.

“It is untrue [that CalTrans knew of the expenses],” Jones said. “How can you know completely how much something will cost before you go through the complete design process? We tried to estimate as best we can, but this is not uncommon for projects to become more expensive. We

were not trying to be stealthy.”

Jones also reiterated that the issue is more about saving lives than money.

“The main message is this is the ultimate safety project,” he said. “If it was your mother or child out there, wouldn’t you like to spend the money to save them, whether it is one million or two million dollars?”

Ultimately, it was the sharp rise in expenses that lead many local organizations to second-guess CalTrans’ decisions. On May 8, the Santa Barbara County Taxpayers Association wrote a letter to CalTrans voicing their opposition to the plan.

“SBCTA would rather see our taxpayer dollars used to pay for putting more officers on the street and/or by providing our existing officers the wages and benefits they deserve as opposed to using these finite resources to build fencing and other barriers that are not only aesthetically unappealing, but are ultimately ineffective at stopping suicides from occurring,” the letter read.

The SBCTA is the latest in a long list of organizations that have publicly expressed their opposition to the program. Others include the Santa Barbara Trust for Historic Preservation, the Los Padres Chapter of the Sierra Club, the Santa Barbara County Action Network and the Pearl Chase Society.

Brooks Firestone, 3rd District Supervisor and member of the Santa Barbara County Association of Governments, said that while SBCAG originally supported the barriers proposal, its support was given prior to any opposition and prior to any additions to the cost.

“I’m just glad I don’t have to make a vote up or down on this,” Firestone said.

CalTrans does have many supporters, however. These include the Glendon Association, the Santa Barbara Sheriff’s Dept. and the California Highway Patrol, among others.

Naturally, with so many backers on each side, the debate is still ongoing.

#### The Next Step

CalTrans will be having a public information hearing Tuesday, June 3, to discuss the project and more specifically the issue of whether or not barriers save lives.

A week later, on June 9 and June 10, CalTrans will hold another public meeting to hear comments concerning their draft Environmental Impact Report that was made public last week. The EIR can be viewed online at [CalTrans’ Web site](#)

---

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***Response to Comments from Ann Bennett Trent, Ann B. Bennett Trent and Paul Trent, Lucy and Ralph Archuleta, Ron Werft, Douglas Scott, Terre Lapman, karenc, Toni Wellen, M.A., Tom Carlyle, Chris Lancashire, Laura Inks, Madelyn Swed, MFT, Terry Harris, Whitney Ingersoll, Jack Clymer, Stephen P. Lane, Silvia Uribe, Bruce Klobucher, Gil Varon, Ann Rudolph, Sherri W. Adler, and Nicole Queen***

Thank you for your comments on the project. Your support for the project has been noted. Caltrans has extensively researched suicide deterrents for bridges, and a physical barrier has been shown to be the most effective in reducing suicides. In addition to reducing suicides on the bridge, a benefit of the barriers identified in the draft EIR/EA is that often people do not seek another location to attempt self-harm. Please see Section 2.1.1 of the environmental document for the analysis.



Kristen Dahlin  
<kmdahlin@yahoo.com>

06/16/2008 12:34 PM

Please respond to  
kmdahlin@yahoo.com

To Cathy\_Stettler@dot.ca.gov

cc

bcc

Subject Cold Spring Bridge Suicide Barrier Project

History: This message has been forwarded.

Dear Cathy Settler,

I am writing to you to formally submit my support of constructing a suicide barrier on the Cold Spring Bridge. I commend CalTrans for addressing this safety hazard in our community, and reaching past the stigma surrounding suicide in order to help prevent these tragedies. Additionally, thank you for supporting the safety and well-being of our law enforcement, as they already make so many sacrifices to serve our community. Once again, thank you for taking on this project and setting a wonderful example for others who may encounter a similar situation with a bridge in their community.

Best,

Kristen Dahlin

1470 Camino Rio Verde

Santa Barbara, CA 93111

(805) 453-0355

Appendix F • Comments and Responses



"Joyce" <jmargolin@cox.net>

To <Cathy\_Stettler@dot.ca.gov>

cc <paultrentjr@gmail.com>

06/17/2008 02:22 PM

bcc

Subject Cold Spring Bridge

History: This message has been forwarded.

I support the building of the suicide barrier on Cold Spring Bridge, highway 154.  
\*\*\*\*\*

Joyce Spezman-Margolin  
805-569-5651  
[www.mannapages.com/margolin](http://www.mannapages.com/margolin)



"Don Margolin"  
<skymandon@cox.net>  
06/16/2008 12:49 PM

To <cathy\_stettler@dot.ca.gov>  
cc  
bcc  
Subject Cold Springs barrier

History:  This message has been forwarded.

I am in favor of the suicide barrier on Hwy 154 on the Cold Springs bridge. I am a Santa Barbara County resident.  
Donald B. Margolin



"Paul Trent"  
<paultrentjr@gmail.com>  
06/12/2008 12:18 PM

To Cathy\_Stettler@dot.ca.gov  
cc  
bcc  
Subject bridge barrier

We support the project to build a barrier on the Cold Spring bridge.  
Paula Hinck, Henry Hinck, Kathrine Schneider, Joseph Schneider, Luke Murray and Christopher Andropoulos.  
We feel it is an important project.  
Thank you.  
Paula Hinck  
Schneider Autohaus



"Paul Trent"  
<paultrentjr@gmail.com>  
06/19/2008 12:13 PM

To: Cathy\_Settler@dot.ca.gov  
cc  
bcc  
Subject: Fwd: Letters

History: This message has been replied to and forwarded.

----- Forwarded message -----  
From: **Paul Trent** <paultrentjr@gmail.com>  
Date: Thu, Jun 19, 2008 at 12:05 PM  
Subject: Letters  
To: [Cathy\\_Settler@dot.ca.gov](mailto:Cathy_Settler@dot.ca.gov)

Dear Cathy

I strongly support the Cold Spring Bridge Suicide barrier. Many of my acquaintances have also written in support. I know there is a small vocal minority opposing the project. I wondered how important letters in support are at this time. Many people don't write as they can't imagine why anyone would oppose it and they are busy with other things. If more letters are useful I will urge people to write.

Paul Trent



"Marty Kauth"  
<ymkmarty@cox.net>  
06/11/2008 02:57 PM

To <Cathy\_Stettler@dot.ca.gov>  
cc  
bcc  
Subject Bridge

History:  This message has been forwarded.

I just wanted to tell you that I favor the Cold Springs Bridge barrier.

Marty Kauth

---

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"Cherri Robinson"  
<cherrir@russco.com>  
05/14/2008 10:26 AM  
Please respond to  
<cherrir@russco.com>

To <cathy\_stettler@dot.ca.gov.>  
cc  
bcc  
Subject Cold Springs Barrier

History: This message has been forwarded.

Good morning, I would like to offer my support of the Cold Springs suicide barrier project. I am unable to attend the meeting on short notice but would like to offer my support. Please let me know if there is a petition or other document I can send in to support this project.

Thank you for your efforts!

Cherri Robinson

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Appendix F • Comments and Responses



Sarah Stewart  
<sarah\_stewart@cox.net>  
06/10/2008 06:47 PM

To Cathy\_Stettler@dot.ca.gov, paultrentjr@gmail.com  
cc  
bcc  
Subject Cold Spring Bridge

History:  This message has been forwarded.

I support the construction of a suicide barrier on the Cold Spring bridge on Highway 154. Please do all you can to ensure that it will be built as soon as possible.

Sarah Stewart  
Santa Barbara, CA

***Response to Comments from Kristen Dahlin, Joyce Spezman-Margolin, Donald B. Margolin, Paula Hinck, Henry Hinck, Kathrine Schneider, Joseph Schneider, Luke Murray, Christopher Andropoulos, Paul Trent, Marty Kauth, Cherri Robinson, and Sarah Stewart***

Thank you for your comments on the project. Your support for the project has been noted.



deforek@aol.com  
06/16/2008 05:59 PM

To Cathy\_Stettler@dot.ca.gov  
cc  
bcc  
Subject Cold Spring Bridge

History: This message has been forwarded.

DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT - COLD SPRING BRIDGE SUICIDE BARRIER

Dear Ms Stettler:

I want to thank you and Caltrans for your open house last Monday explaining your project. I especially enjoyed speaking to your historian. I was pleased to learn that the No-Build Alternative is still under consideration.

1

As stated in your Draft EIR on page 6, Section 1.3, "the proposed project would be built under Caltrans' Safety Improvement Program. The purpose of this program is to reduce the number and severity of accidents on the State's highway system by implementing safety improvements to existing roadways. Suicide is the act of intentionally taking one's own life. A suicide is not an accident.

2

The monies proposed to be spent for building a barrier to discourage suicide at this site, less than one per year, could be much better spent on actually reducing vehicular accidents. This is significant because the expensive barrier "would cause a direct adverse effect on the Cold Spring Canyon Bridge because it introduces a visual element that diminishes the property's historic integrity of design, feeling, and association" ( page v of the Draft EIR). Preventing accidents is laudable even at the price of preserving an historical structure, but just sending distraught individuals to another site is not.

3

I urge that Caltrans chose the No-Build Alternative. It does not have to be completely No-Build. Help-line telephones and the restricting pedestrian access and public parking, although not 100 percent effective, might help. By choosing the No-Build Alternative Caltrans would save an historic bridge which, I am sorry to say, I consider more important than the slim possibility that some sick individual might be dissuaded from suicide.

4

Respectfully yours,

Kellam de Forest

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### **Response to Comments from Mr. Kellam de Forest**

Thank you for your comments on the project. Your opposition to the project has been noted.

**Response to comment #1:** Regarding the various alternatives being considered, the No-Build is a viable alternative that is under consideration. Thank you for your comments on the open forum public hearing.

**Response to comment #2:** Originally, the proposed project was to have been built under Caltrans' Safety Improvement Program. However, at the request of the California Transportation Commission, Caltrans investigated alternate funding sources other than the State Highway Operation and Protection Program (SHOPP). As a result it has been determined that the money needed to construct the barriers will now come from local Recovery Act funds.

**Response to comment #3:** Regarding "sending distraught individuals to another site," experts in the field of suicidology have stated that there is evidence that people often do not seek another location to attempt self-harm. This is documented as a benefit of the project in the environmental document in Section 2.1.1.

**Response to comment #4:** As discussed in the EIR/EA, crisis help-line telephones, restricting pedestrian access, and restricting public parking alternatives were considered but eliminated from further discussion, for reasons stated in Section 1.4.6, also refer to Section 2.1.1 for the section "Difference of opinion regarding the effectiveness of physical suicide barriers vs. 'human barriers'" which includes a discussion of the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline's position paper in response to promoters of the "human barrier" alternative on the Cold Spring Canyon Bridge, which identified physical barriers as the most effective means to reduce suicides on bridges. In addition, please refer to Response to comment #1 to Santa Barbara County Sheriff-Coroner Bill Brown, regarding Santa Barbara County Association of Governments' project to install crisis phones and signs near the bridge.

Appendix F • Comments and Responses



Barb K <barbk77@cox.net> To Cathy\_Stettler@dot.ca.gov  
06/04/2008 06:41 PM cc  
bcc  
Subject COLD SPRING BRIDGE

History: This message has been forwarded.

Hi Cathy,

I received an e-mail asking for support for the bridge barrier. I am writing to do the opposite, as I am not in favor of spending the money for a suicide barrier on that particular bridge. There is still too much "research" out there that does not support having a barrier, and in particular on the Cold Spring bridge where suicides are very rare. Perhaps on the Golden Gate bridge where it is famous for suicides, but not our bridge. I just cannot justify pouring that amount of money into a project to save just a few lives. While I know that sounds awfully cold hearted (especially coming from a therapist), but rationally I just don't see how our city can justify this expense. I think the public needs to know just how many people have jumped off this bridge over the past 30 years, and how often it happens, before a solid decision can be made. There is a lot of heart-wrenching information being thrown out in support of this project, but no facts. How can anyone in the government make a well thought-out decision without solid facts? Please do your homework and use the money wisely.

1

2

Thank you.  
Barbara Kloos

**Response to Comments from Barbara Kloos**

Thank you for your comments on the project. Your opposition to the project has been noted.

**Response to comment #1:** Studies by suicidologists, as referenced in the draft EIR/EA, have shown that physical barriers on bridges help reduce suicides on bridges by jumping. Also, a benefit of the barriers is that experts in the field of suicidology have stated that there is evidence that people often do not go to another location to commit suicide, as documented in Chapter 2.

**Response to comment #2:** According to revised data from the-Santa Barbara County Coroner's Bureau (received May 21, 2009) and a subsequent suicide on June 3, 2009, at least 47 people have committed suicide at this location since the bridge was built in 1963. The Santa Barbara County Sheriff-Coroner's office maintains and provides statistics about suicides from the bridge, as referenced in the environmental document. Caltrans conducted a careful analysis of this subject including much community involvement. Please refer to the-Summary and Chapter 1 for a discussion about the facts of the project including the Purpose and Need. Refer to Chapters 1, 2, and 4 for a discussion on the research and public coordination conducted to identify the preferred solution to reduce suicides at this bridge.

Appendix F • Comments and Responses



Jordan Mo  
<jordanmo@verizon.net>  
06/11/2008 02:45 PM

To: Cathy\_Stettler@dot.ca.gov  
cc  
bcc  
Subject: Cold Spring Canyon Bridge

History: This message has been forwarded.

I visited the Solvang meeting regarding the proposed suicide barrier for the Cold Springs Canyon Bridge and am in favor of the NO-BUILD alternative for the following reasons:

1. It's stated purpose of preventing suicide will not be accomplished;

1

2. The integrity of the most elegant structure on the Central Coast will be defaced;

2

3. The cost, \$3 million, could be much better spent on the mental health programs being sacrificed to "budget constraints" at the County level

3

(I know that highway funds are sacred, but under the general definition of "public safety" a transfer could be rationalized);

4. Traffic disruption will be a major cost in time and (gas) money to commuters, businesses in both Solvang and Santa Barbara, and tourists.

4

But since it appears to be a "done deal", I hope somebody remembers to specify black for the mesh (unaccountably silver on the displays). This would partly mitigate the unsightliness.

5

6

One final question: How can this project justify a \$2 million staff/\$1 million construction budget allocation?

7

Sincerely,

Jordan Mo  
(805-686-4301)

cc: Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors: Joni Gray, Salud Carbajal, Brooks Firesstone, Joe Centeno

### **Response to Comments from Jordan Mo**

Thank you for your comments on the project. Your opposition to the project has been noted.

**Response to comment #1:** A program to prevent all suicides is not the purpose of the project. Please see the project Summary and Chapter 1 for a full discussion of the Purpose and Need.

**Response to comment #2:** In the EIR/EA, Caltrans acknowledges that the installation of a barrier will constitute an adverse effect to the historic integrity of the bridge and result in substantial adverse impacts to the visual environment. The final design of the bridge will be developed with input from a community-based design committee to minimize these adverse effects, through the selection of less obtrusive materials, finishes, gauges, and dimensions (please refer to Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures in Section 2.1.2 *Visual/Aesthetics*). But even with these measures, substantial adverse impacts will remain. In this case, overriding considerations make it necessary to go forward with the project despite the loss of historic integrity and impacts to the visual environment.

**Response to comment #3:** Local Recovery Act funds have been designated specifically for this project.

**Response to comment #4:** As stated in the document in Section 2.3, a Traffic Management Plan has been developed to minimize motorist delays and to reduce the effects of construction on commuters.

**Response to comment #5:** As more fully discussed in Chapter 4, *Comments and Coordination*, the environmental process began with early scoping on July 12, 2007, alternatives were considered including the No Build, and potential environmental impacts were analyzed and identified. The draft EIR/EA has been widely circulated to receive public and agency comment. There have been newspaper notices in English and Spanish informing the public of the two public hearings. A court reporter and Spanish translator were present at these meetings. Public comment letters have been reviewed, considered, and responded to in the final environmental document, which is subject to change based on these. All of this is reviewed and analyzed before a decision can be made. The environmental process must comply with the California Environmental Quality Act and the National Environmental Policy Act.

**Response to comment #6:** Your suggestion to use a black material to help reduce the visual impact if the barriers are built will be considered.

**Response to comment #7:** Please refer to the project's Purpose and Need in the Summary and in Chapter 1 of this document.



Lee Chiacos  
<sbtrout@mindspring.com>  
06/15/2008 11:36 AM

To cathy\_stettler@dot.ca.gov  
cc  
bcc

Subject Cold Spring Barrier

History: This message has been forwarded.

Dear Ms. Stetter,

After reviewing the Environmental Report for the proposed barrier on Cold Spring Bridge, I am not convinced that it will save lives. The evidence is inconclusive that it will. It may only divert people to other locations or methods of committing suicide. Now that the cost estimate has risen to nearly \$3 million I would like Caltrans to consider alternative plans. There are many safety issues on Highway 154 which is irregularly patrolled by the CHP. I drive the road daily and see numerous accidents and near accidents all the time. I would like to see the money used to install cameras on the bridge. Perhaps the places where people pull over to park could be closed with extended guardrails that would require a long walk to the bridge next to the road. That would deter many people who would not want to walk a distance to the bridge. A suicide hotline telephone may also help. Thank you for your kind consideration of my thoughts on the matter.

Sincerely,  
Lee Chiacos  
18 San Marcos Trout Club  
Santa Barbara, Ca. 93105

- 1
- 2
- 3

## **Response to Comments from Lee Chiacos**

Thank you for your comments on the project. Your opposition to the project has been noted.

**Response to comment #1:** The purpose of the project is to reduce suicides from people jumping from the bridge, please refer to the Summary and Chapter 1. As discussed in Section 2.1.1 of the EIR/EA, the collective body of research by experts in the field including mental health and suicidology, has shown that physical bridge barriers are effective in reducing suicides, and that people deterred by means restriction, including physical bridge barriers, often do not go to another location to attempt self-harm.

**Response to comment #2:** Originally, the proposed project was to have been built under Caltrans' Safety Improvement Program. However, at the request of the California Transportation Commission, Caltrans investigated alternate funding sources other than the State Highway Operation and Protection Program (SHOPP). As a result, it has been determined that the money needed to construct the barriers will now come from local Recovery Act funds which are designated specifically for this project. Santa Barbara County Sheriff-Coroner records indicate that all of the suicides associated with the Cold Spring Canyon Bridge have been the result of persons jumping from the bridge. As the owner-operator of the bridge facility, Caltrans has an obligation to promote the safe operation of the structure. The estimated construction cost for the Grid/Mesh Alternative is \$969,000 and the estimated cost of the Vertical Alternative is \$1,050,000 (as of June 2009 and October 2008, respectively). Listing construction cost without support costs is the standard method of stating project costs.

**Response to comment #3:** Regarding installing closed-circuit cameras, restricting parking or closing pullout areas, and installing crisis telephones, these alternatives were considered but eliminated from further discussion because research in the field of suicide prevention shows the "human barrier" approach has not been satisfactory at limiting suicide. Please refer to Section 1.4.6 and 2.1.1 of the environmental document for the full analysis including The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline's position "that the use of bridge barriers is the most effective means of bridge suicide prevention. Subsequently, as bridge/transportation authorities or other stakeholders approach the Lifeline with requests for implementing bridge phones, the Lifeline

should emphasize the need for barriers as the most effective solution.” See “Difference of opinion regarding the effectiveness of physical suicide barriers vs. ‘human barriers’” and the expert opinion of suicidologists in Section 2.1.1. In addition, please refer to Response to comment #1 to Santa Barbara County Sheriff-Coroner Bill Brown, regarding Santa Barbara County Association of Governments’ project to install crisis phones and signs near the bridge.



"Christine Holland"  
<cholland@west.net>

06/11/2008 05:19 PM  
Please respond to  
<cholland@west.net>

To <cathy\_stettler@dot.ca.gov>

cc

bcc

Subject cold springs bridge suicide prevention fence

History: This message has been forwarded.

Dear Ms. Stettler,

Please put me down as a taxpayer very much opposed to spending so much money on the proposed new fences across the Cold Springs Bridge. To me, the whole idea is an outrage. The proposal is based on a very misguided belief that it is the purpose of government to make everything perfectly safe for each individual person, no matter what the burden to the rest of the society.

1

The government is not in the business of using taxpayers' money to make the world a perfectly safe place and to save people from themselves. Rather, government should be in the business of making the world a REASONABLY safe place, and taking reasonable steps to protect people from themselves (drugs, suicide).

In addition, the proposal will not be perfectly effective, which makes it a wrong idea considering the huge cost of the proposal, and the impact on the rest of the society both financially and in terms of enjoyment of the environment which we all have a right to enjoy.

2

The fences will not stop people from jumping who really wish to do so – and if they want to jump, this is a good place instead of off a freeway overpass bridge where the jumper would impact some innocent freeway drivers. A jumper off another bridge could cause traffic accidents and injuries, and most certainly would cause severe psychological distress to drivers. Other methods of suicide are gruesome and horrible for the people who find the body; it's not pleasant to collect a body in the forest below a bridge but it is a lot cleaner than with other scenarios.

If the government is dead set to spend over a million dollars, I suggest that the amount be allocated, placed into a Certificate of Deposit, and the monthly income be used to install cameras and to pay someone at \$10.00 per hour to watch the cameras like a security guard, and if a potential suicidal person comes on to the bridge, the guard should alert law enforcement and/or suicide prevention people. If the person jumps before the arrival of help, then that person is determined and would have chosen some other place. If the person is not sure, and needs to be talked out of it, then the assistance will arrive to help. (five percent interest income on a million dollars can pay for a lot).

3

Please note my absolute opposition to the proposed fencing project; I was not able to make the meeting to voice my opposition in person.

Thank you.

Very truly yours,

Christine Holland  
Santa Barbara, Ca.

### **Response to Comments from Christine Holland**

Thank you for your comments on the project. Your opposition to the project has been noted.

**Response to comment #1:** The purpose of the project is to reduce the number of suicides at the bridge resulting from individuals jumping off the bridge, not to reduce suicides at other locations, please refer to the Summary and Chapter 1 for a full discussion of the project's Purpose and Need. Physical suicide barriers have been shown to be effective on bridges, as described in Chapter 2 of the environmental document. Our findings are consistent with the consensus of experts in the field of suicidology, as documented in Chapter 2 including the section titled "Difference of opinion regarding the effectiveness of physical suicide barriers vs. 'human barriers.'" "

**Response to comment #2:** Regarding physical barriers not being 100% effective, the purpose of the project is to help reduce the number of suicides at this location. Regarding saving lives and possibly diverting people to jump off freeway overpasses, the purpose of the project is to reduce suicides and reduce risks to emergency personnel on the bridge itself, not at other locations. However, a benefit of the project as described in Section 2.1.1 of the EIR/EA is that research has shown that often people do not go to another location to attempt self-harm.

**Response to comment #3:** The local Recovery Act funds have been designated specifically for this project. In addition, as stated in Section 1.4.6 of the EIR/EA, the "human barrier" alternative, of which closed-circuit cameras is a component, was considered but eliminated because research in the field of suicide prevention shows this alternative has not been satisfactory at limiting suicides. Also refer to Section 2.1.1, including the "Difference of opinion regarding the effectiveness of physical suicide barriers vs. 'human barriers'" section of the EIR/EA which presents the views of experts in the field, including "Suicide Prevention on Bridges: The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline Position," by John Draper, Ph.D., Director, National Suicide Prevention Lifeline, June 16, 2008, which states in part: "The Lifeline Steering Committee position is that the use of bridge barriers is the most effective means of bridge suicide prevention. Subsequently, as bridge/transportation authorities or other stakeholders approach the Lifeline with requests for implementing bridge phones, the Lifeline should emphasize the need for barriers as the most effective solution." In addition, please refer to Response to comment #1 to Santa Barbara

County Sheriff-Coroner Bill Brown, regarding the Santa Barbara County Association of Governments' project to install crisis phones and signs near the bridge.



"Anna Kokotovic"  
<akokotovic@calm4kids.org>

To <cathy\_stettler@dot.ca.gov>

cc <bill@fsacares.org>

05/13/2008 05:01 PM

bcc

Subject Cold Springs Bridge

History: This message has been forwarded.

I do not support building a barrier on the bridge on Cold Springs to prevent suicide. If something is to be done, I would support additional outreach and training on the topic by Glenden and other organizations, such as CALM, who work with suicidal clients. Most important, I would fully fund the county's effective 211 line, provided by Family Service Agency. I am unable to attend the meetings, but urge you to share my opinion where and when necessary.

1

2

Anna M. Kokotovic, PhD  
Licensed Psychologist

-----  
Anna M. Kokotovic, Ph.D.  
Executive Director, C.A.L.M.  
1236 Chapala  
Santa Barbara, CA 93101  
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**Response to Comments from Anna M. Kokotovic, Ph.D.**

Thank you for your comments on the project. Your opposition to the project has been noted.

**Response to comment #1:** The project is intended to reduce the number of suicides at the bridge resulting from jumping, not to prevent suicides in the community. Please refer to the Summary and Chapter 1 for a full discussion of the project’s Purpose and Need.

**Response to comment #2:** Regarding funding outreach programs and the County’s 211 line, local Recovery Act funding has been designated specifically for this project. However, please refer to Section 1.4.6 of the EIR/EA which discusses the Santa Barbara County Association of Government’s project to install crisis lines on the two motorist call boxes near the bridge (the phones cannot be located on the bridge deck for safety reasons) and Response to comment #1 to Santa Barbara County Sheriff-Coroner Bill Brown. Caltrans is responsible for preventing deaths on its facilities and as examined in the document, a physical barrier would reduce suicides from people jumping off of the Cold Spring Canyon Bridge. Please see Section 2.1.1 including the section, “Difference of opinion regarding the effectiveness of physical suicide barriers vs. ‘human barriers’” which presents the views of experts in the field, including the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline policy recommending physical bridge barriers.

WARD RAFFERTY JR.

6/22/08

Cathy Stettler,  
Senior Environmental Planner  
Central Coast Environmental Analysis  
California Department of Transportation  
50 Higuera Street  
San Luis Obispo, CA 93404

Dear Ms. Stettler,

I attended the 6/10/08 hearing in Solvang during which I asked for copies of the PDF's for the placard presentations. I gave the front desk my email and mailing address. They said they would either mail or email them to me. As of today I have not received them, can you follow and see that they are forwarded to me? Thank you.

The meeting on 6/10/08 while not a normal public comment meeting was informative, however, I suspect you did not receive as much comment as you might have due to the nature of the timing, various graduations from middle school, high school, and college were taking place or the planning stages during this time period. Naturally, as I am sure you know, the end of the school year is one of the busiest for parents.

While I have many questions about the process, the timing of events, and various cost numbers that conflict with each other, I would like to direct my DEIR questions to the attached document, a letter mailed and emailed to Richard Krumholz from the Santa Ynez Valley Alliance on 3/10/08. I am aware that certain persons have acknowledged this was received by Director Krumholz, however, I am under the impression that many of the questions directed to the director have not been responded to by Caltrans directly to the Santa Ynez Valley Alliance.

There are many comments in the letter that suggest serious fiduciary lapses on the part of Caltrans in regards to the process.

I would like to have answers and clarifications regarding:

- 1) The "Attachments -References "Section" that begin on page three.

1

2

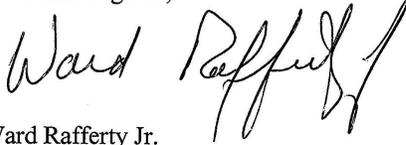
- 2) To have answers to the recommendations that appear on page two.
- 3) To have a meeting between Director Krumholz, the Santa Ynez Valley Alliance, Dr. Gary Spielman, The Friends of the Bridge, The Glendon Association, and any other groups that would like to ensure our community is putting the best process in place for this very sensitive issue.

3

4

I agree with the spirit of the 3/10/08 letter by The Santa Ynez Valley Alliance. Please refer to the Attachments and References. If any of these issues are confirmed as accurate, there is no legal (nor moral) way the project can move forward as it currently stands, and is approved by Caltrans internal processes. It is in Caltrans interest to clarify these issues, and if necessary, clean them up.

With kind regards,



Ward Rafferty Jr.  
1474 Kronborg Drive  
Solvang, CA 93463  
805-451-2565 c  
[wardraff@verizon.net](mailto:wardraff@verizon.net)



March 10, 2008

*Santa Ynez  
Valley Alliance*

Richard Krumholz, Director  
Caltrans District 5  
50 Higuera Street  
San Luis Obispo, CA 93401-5415

**Re: Caltrans Cold Spring Canyon Bridge Physical Barricade**

Dear Director Krumholz,

The Santa Ynez Valley Alliance would like to express its concern regarding the Caltrans Cold Springs Canyon Bridge Physical Barricade, a project dated 8/17/06 on "Caltrans Project Initiation Form (Conceptual Report) SHOPP", signed by Sharon Fasulo 9/26/06.

We are troubled by the process, the seemingly rapid policy decisions, and the relative lack of community involvement. We believe that the extreme narrow focus on a bridge barricade is misplaced and incorrect.

We agree with many comments made by Gary L. Spielmann in his recent letter to our community. Mr. Gary Spielmann was former Director of Suicide Prevention 2002-2006-New York State Office of Mental Health (retired) and is currently Consultant for Suicide Prevention (2007-present).

A number of his statements from that letter follow:

- A) "Physical barriers can pose an irresistible challenge to certain people bent on jumping...it wouldn't take much effort for an individual to carry a step ladder..."
- B) "Physical barriers provide society with the impression that by installing a physical barricade, we have somehow addressed the needs of suicidal individuals, so we can continue to ignore the likely root of the problem-mental illness, which is probably treatable in a majority of cases. We need to understand that the bridge is not the problem".
- C) "The problem is the stigma, shame, and fear behind mental illness and the thoughts that surround suicide. The solution is to stop making headline news and become proactive in preventing suicide by talking and writing about it, and infusing awareness and prevention in the schools and communities".
- D) "The message conveyed by a physical barrier (i.e. fence) on a bridge to a potential jumper is: **don't jump here**. The message that should be conveyed to a distraught person is: **we want to help you now**, so that you don't lose your life as a result of a temporary crisis".

POST OFFICE BOX 941  
SANTA YNEZ, CA. 93460  
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Richard Krumholz, Caltrans District 5  
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Regarding Mr. Spielmann's comment in item C above, many people from Santa Maria, Santa Barbara, and the Santa Ynez Valley attended a presentation by the Glendon Association titled, "Suicide: what our Community Need to Know" on September 17, 18, 19 in 2007. The Los Olivos event was well attended and very educational. It offered a deeper understanding of the causes of suicide that a barrier will never be able to address. As a matter of policy this type of information should be shared extensively throughout affected communities.

Unfortunately, the public discussion of this issue has become dogmatic, contentious, and controversial. Mr. Spielmann writes, "I am deeply concerned by the highly selective use of my work by the Glendon Association in its response to the 'human barricades' proposal submitted by Friends of the Bridge. As the author of the study and architect of the NYSBA plan, please permit me to place in the record my views of the issues involved and a preferred solution". We have read most of the articles and letters we could obtain referencing Spielmann, The Glendon Association, Friends of the Bridge, and Garrett Glasgow, and other sources, and can warn that this project will become even more difficult for those whose responsibility it is to administer.

We believe the current process and stated reasoning for construction of the barricade is flawed, hasty, and seeks to apply a 'band-aid' to solving a much more insidious problem. Significantly, it does not structure a systematic process to educate our community about how to respond and manage people that may be suicidal. Such a set of guidelines would be a far more effective deterrent to suicide than a barrier could ever hope to be.

Our recommendations are as follows:

- 1) Based on the apparently incorrect or selective use of the suicide rate of 2 per year in the formal project calculations, the current approved project is invalid. The correct number should be determined and recalculated.
- 2) Mr. Gary Spielmann is a consultant with extensive years of experience in the area of suicide, highways, and bridges. We recommend he be retained as a consultant and the various interested parties be invited to discuss different approaches to the problem of suicide. The objective should be to design an effective community-oriented systematic approach to suicide prevention and education.
- 3) The current project trajectory of the bridge barrier should be suspended and the various interested parties brought together for a constructive team-oriented focus to reset the process. This will allow for a more coherent collaborative methodology that will yield a better result with much less rancor than the current process has created.
- 4) The information presented and the record of the discussion of a meeting of the Caltrans which took place on 1/8/08 to discuss the barricade should be made public. A list of the interested parties and participants should be provided.

The Santa Ynez Valley Alliance is a grassroots group founded to protect the rural character of our community. The Alliance works collaboratively with individuals, groups and governments to support good stewardship of natural and agricultural resources. The Alliance seeks to inform and empower Valley citizens regarding important planning issues affecting the community's future.

3(1)

3(2)

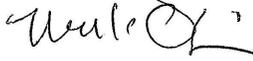
3(3)

3(4)

Richard Krumholz, Caltrans District 5  
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We believe that focusing on building a physical barricade on the Cold Spring Bridge is unjustified and is an inappropriate use of precious public funds. The Valley Alliance is opposed to the proposed project.

Thank you for your consideration.



Mark Oliver, President  
MO:wr

cc via email to:

Sara von Schwind ProjManager [sara\\_von\\_schwind@dot.ca.gov](mailto:sara_von_schwind@dot.ca.gov) □ Richard Krumholz-Director District 5  
[rich.krumholz@dot.ca.gov](mailto:rich.krumholz@dot.ca.gov)  
Will Kempton-Director of DOT [Caltrans.Director@dot.ca.gov](mailto:Caltrans.Director@dot.ca.gov)  
Pedro Nava via < [Caroline.Vance@asm.ca.gov](mailto:Caroline.Vance@asm.ca.gov) > □ Sen. Tom McClintock  
<[senator.mcclintock@sen.ca.gov](mailto:senator.mcclintock@sen.ca.gov)> □ Brooks Firestone < [bfirestone@co.santa-barbara.ca.us](mailto:bfirestone@co.santa-barbara.ca.us) > □ Salud  
Carbajal Supervisor [Carbajal@sbcbos1.org](mailto:Carbajal@sbcbos1.org) □ Janet Wolf < [jwolf@sbcbos2.org](mailto:jwolf@sbcbos2.org) > □ Joni Gray  
<[jgray@co.santa-barbara.ca.us](mailto:jgray@co.santa-barbara.ca.us)> □ Joe Centeno < [jcenteno@co.santa-barbara.ca.us](mailto:jcenteno@co.santa-barbara.ca.us) >

#### Attachment – References

We have also attached “Suicide in Colorado” a publication of The Colorado Trust, a grant making Foundation in Colorado. We found it interesting and thought you would too. Clearly, this is relevant to the Board of Supervisors from a public policy perspective. We believe our community focus should be towards a holistic plan to understand suicide and its causes as a community, an awareness we currently generally lack.

1) **Reference Document: Caltrans Project Initiation Form SHOPP. Date prepared 6/1/2006 & 8/17/06, signed 9/21/06 and 9/26/06.**

- a. We have a general concern that the sections “PURPOSE AND NEED DESCRIPTION”, “ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES/KNOW CONCERNS”, and “OTHER COMMENTS” are woefully inadequate and could be considered overly cursory and somewhat misleading.
- b. For instance: “Studies have found those people who are prevented from committing suicide rarely go on the commit suicide by other means”.
- c. For instance: “Involve Stakeholders in design discussions” on the same page as “Project Sponsor expects State Structures to complete design”.

2) **Reference Document: Nevin Sams Memorandum to Janice Benton, Dated 8/18/06. Subject: 05-SB-154-PM 22.95/23.19 Cold Springs Canyon Arch Bridge, Physical Barricade SHOPP Element 201.010.**

2(1a)

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a. The first sentence of the second paragraph reads, "Over the past five years, ten (10) suicides have occurred from the Cold Spring Canyon Arch Bridge". Since this Memorandum is dated 8/18/06, we read that to mean the years between and including, 2001-2005. Our review of the Santa Barbara **County Sheriff-Coroner report shows that eight, not ten suicides took place in the referenced time period.** If the incorrect number (10) was used, the calculations and assumptions would be different. Has this been reviewed, recalculated, and corrected?

2(2a)

b. The comments of the writer, a traffic Safety Engineer, regarding suicide issues and a March 2006 bridge fencing study in Augusta, Maine by Dr. Andrew Pelletier are **brief and disjointed, and yet seemingly scientifically conclusive.** The comments appear to be the written basis of the decision to move forward with the Cold Springs Bridge Barricade. It appears to be hastily written, confusing, and is far from conclusive.

2(2b)

c. We know of three referenced meetings that took place in the community: 5/8/06 Santa Ynez Valley-Vets Hall and Solvang, a Town Hall Meeting 5/22/06 at Santa Barbara City College, and Faulkner Gallery were used as the basis for community approval. Another Caltrans meeting took place at the Santa Barbara Library on 7/25/07. Not what we would call full community involvement.

2(2c)

d. Mr. Nevins writes, "After consulting with the County Sheriff's office, it was found that suicides are rarely recorded by CHP and, as a result, typically do not show up in SWITERS or TASAS. Suicides are coded as 'incidents' rather than 'collisions' which would show up in State TASAS data."

2(2d)

e. There is an additional reference to "Multiplied by ten (10) suicides over the five year period..." Again, **the correct number is 8 suicides in the period 2001-2005, not 10. Furthermore, using only 5 years rather than 10 is too short a time period. We are concerned regarding this methodology. The number of 8, while correct, is a misleading number to use, as it is the second highest 5 year number in the history of the bridge. In this case the correct number is 1.6 per year, not 2 per year.**

2(2e)

f. Mr. Sams writes, "Studies have found those people who are prevented from committing suicide rarely go on to commit suicide by other means." Do you know which studies he is referring to? Mr. Spielmann's words seem to contradict those of Mr Sams when he writes, "While a barrier may reduce-but not eliminate-the numbers of deaths at a specific site, it won't prevent individuals from going elsewhere to jump, or to substitute another means to end their lives". g. In summary, we don't find the statistics credible.

2(2f)

**3) Memorandum from Janice Benton to Paul McClintic, Attention: Nevin Sams, dated 9/12/06. Conceptual Approval for the SHOPP Funding of 201.010-Safety Improvement Project.**

a. The letter states, "The project proposed for the State Highway Operation and Protection Program (SHOPP) is to reduce an increasing rate of suicides occurring on Cold Springs Canyon Arch Bridge". We note from 1996-2005 Trailing 10 years shows 17 deaths, and from 1986-1995 trailing 10 years shows 9 deaths. Yes, this number set shows an increase, 88% to be precise. However, our calculations of suicide show the Trailing 10 years from 1998 to 2007 to be 12 persons, and the Trailing 10 years from 1988 to 1997 to also be 12 persons. From this data set, there is no increase rate of suicides comparing 2 trailing ten year periods. So, 0% and 88%. One data set shows an increase, one does not. Both are accurate. Please note that 1997 had 4 deaths, the highest year in the history of the bridge. This data point can skew the calculation. Our point is the rate may not be increasing. b. If you compare the rate of suicides per capita in Santa Barbara county, for the two trailing ten year periods from 2007, the most recent 10 year rate is slightly lower. c. If you compare the suicide rate of the two trailing 10 year periods back from 2007 to the number of people crossing the bridge (traffic counts) on an annual basis, the suicide rate per traffic count would be markedly decreased.

2(3)

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d. **Most importantly**, the Caltrans calculations used to approve the project and affirm the financials, are based on an average of 2 suicides per year. Our calculations for the last two trailing 10 year periods place the number at 1.2 per year, **40% less than the numbers used by Caltrans**. If you use the total **deaths over 44 years (through 2007) the rate drops to 0.98**. e. The average number of 2 suicides per year is also referenced by the Glendon Association in their 1/17/08 and 11/14/07 PRESS RELEASE's titled, "There is no Debate: Barriers Save Lives". The highest five year rate we could find in the data was the years 1993-1997, during which 10 people took their lives. This time period averages 2 per year, but it is not the period referenced by Caltrans in its calculations, Caltrans used 2001-2005. We do not believe a five year data point should be used, especially when it's the highest 5 year average over 43 years of records available. The lowest five year rate is 0.4 suicides per year.f. **We would again ask the question, are the formal calculations that stand behind the Caltrans project based on incorrect, selective, or biased data?**

2(d)

4) **Reference Document: Meeting Summary, 5/22/06 Town Hall Meeting at Santa Barbara City College 6:30 to 8:00 pm: "Cold Spring Canyon Arch Bridge Suicide Prevention Committee"**. We found a few comments confusing and worth noting for the record.

a. "A barrier is estimated to cost between \$200,000 to \$300,000". This is well below the \$605,000 estimate and \$1,000,000 allocation referenced in other documents. b. Question #1 refers to local architects in SB. Caltrans responded, "Caltrans has architectural designers at Headquarters. **We'll work with the community to come up with the appropriate design**". The Reference Document "Caltrans Project Initiation Form" dated 6/1/2006 and 8/17/06 states (Item 1 above), "Local Architects have suggested **design competition/input into design**". Another section shows "Project Sponsor expects State Structures to complete design". The official plan appears to be inconsistent with the earlier comments made to the public. What is the status of the Design issue and the commitment "**We'll work with the community to come up with the appropriate design**"?

2(4)

c. Item #4 states, "The proposed strategy is an interim barrier (standard Caltrans fence) with the next phase being the installation of a more elaborate and aesthetic pedestrian barrier". Is this still the current strategy? d. Item #8 states, "We'll involve the environmental community in the process". How are you currently involving the environmental community in the process? What environmental organizations are currently involved?

5) **Reference Document: Caltrans Cold Spring Canyon Bridge Proposed Suicide Barrier Project Information Meeting & Open House, Faulkner Gallery Santa Barbara Library, dated Wednesday July 25, 2007.**

a. On the page titled, "The Issue and Concern", it states "31 have committed suicide since 1981". **This rate is 1.19 per year (26 years), again much lower than the official referenced (by Caltrans and Glendon Association) 2 per year**. b. We observed there were no suicides in 1981, 1980, 1979, or 1978. Therefore the phrase could have stated, "**31 have committed suicide since 1978**". **31 suicides over 30 years would yield a rate of 0.97 per year. Based on this, the numbers used in the formal Caltrans recommendation are overstated by more than 100%**. c. On the page titled **Public Meetings**, it notes, "These (meetings) were not required as a project development process". Yet, the comment is made in the formal project paperwork, "Public response was overwhelmingly in favor of moving forward with a suicide barrier as quickly as possible". The Santa Ynez Valley Alliance believes many interested parties and groups were not involved in the process, we don't think its appropriate therefore to highlight the "public response was overwhelmingly in favor". The "public" is poorly referenced.

2(5)

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**7) Reference Document SBCAG: Cold Spring Arch Bridge Crisis Helpline Call Boxes, dated March 15, 2007, Staff Contact Brittany Odermann, Agenda Item 6D.**

a. On page two, under "Project Schedule", it states "5/1/08 Circulate Draft Environmental Studies...and 3/2/09 Project Approval and Environmental Document". Can you please give us an update regarding the details of the referenced "Draft Environmental Studies"?

2(7)

8) We've found the public dialogue between Friends of the Bridge, Glendon Association, Garret Glasgow, and Gary L. Spielmann to contain much useful and relevant information. While we have quoted some of them in this report, we refrain from getting involved in the arguable and varied nuances of the topic. It is unfortunate the discussion is taking place in the public media rather than collaboratively as interested parties sitting at the table together. We think there is an opportunity for the community to create a best-in-class approach to the community suicide issue. Various parties share in common a desire to save lives and help suicidal persons. Any action that would bring them together in a collaborative discussion would be useful. We also think there is some logic in inviting Gary Spielmann to come for a consultative meeting with the community.

2(8)

**9) Reference Document: The Glendon Association, dated 1/15/08 to Mike Jacob c/o Caltrans from Lisa A. Firestone with cc to Gary Spielman, John Draper, Marc McGinnes and Garrett Glasgo.**

a. The third paragraph includes the words "...the remote location of the Cold Spring Bridge. Law enforcement agencies do not have the resources to patrol the area...". We must challenge this statement. While we cannot comment on the resources of law enforcement, anecdotally in the least, commuters between the Santa Ynez Valley and Santa Barbara know well CHP officers regularly and frequently travel highway 154. b. On a regular basis, speed traps are set within 2-10 minutes drive of the bridge, in both directions. Additionally, the CHP regularly monitors the driving behavior of travelers on highway 154.

2(9)

**10) Route 154 Fatafs Reference Document: OTM22130 Table B-Selective Accident Rate**

**Calculation:** We wanted to find out the number of deaths on Route 154 over a period of time. We had to actually file a formal request, and only obtained one set of data, so we don't know the context of this data, nor do we know the full statistics, nor do we know why we were given this data set versus any other. Nonetheless it was learned:

a. On 154, between 5/1/04 and 4/30/07, a three year period, there were 347 accidents, of which 158 were multivehicle, and 10 included fatalities. In those 10 accidents, 12 people died, or 4 deaths per year.

b. This death rate is at least 100% to 200% of the suicide rate on the bridge, depending on the figures for suicides referenced.

2(10)

**11) Reference Document Internet Location, The California Highway Patrol at <http://www.chp.ca.gov/switrs/>, also known as State Integrated Traffic Records System.** How many people die per year on Santa Barbara County roads that are not suicidal, death by accident, as opposed to choice.

The statistics for 2004 are as follows:

- a. 35 Suicides in Santa Barbara County (number derived from Garrett Glasgow report)
- b. 3 Suicides took place from the Cold Springs Bridge.
- c. 41 people killed in Santa Barbara County due to traffic accidents

2(11)

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- d. 11 of those 41 were killed in alcohol related collisions, or 26% of the deaths were alcohol related.
- e. 3,150 injuries took place in 2004 due to traffic accidents in Santa Barbara County.
- f. 408 of the 3,150 accidents were related to alcohol related collisions, or 12.9%.

**12) Reference Document Internet Location. The California Highway Patrol at <http://www.chp.ca.gov/switrs/>, also known as State Integrated Traffic Records System.**

a. Between 1996 and 2005, 413 people died in driving related accidents in SB County, an average of 41 people per year, or 3.4 per month. During the same time period, an average of 2,956 traffic related injuries a year. b. Between 2001 and 2005, 224 people were killed in driving collisions in Santa Barbara county, an average of 44.8 deaths per year or 3.7 per month. c. Between 2001 and 2005, of the 224 people that were killed, 55 were killed due to DUI/PCF Collisions. An average of 11 deaths per year on county roads due to driving under the influence, or almost 1 person per month.

2(12)

**Response to Comments from Ward Rafferty, Jr.**

Thank you for your interest in the Cold Spring Canyon Bridge Suicide Barrier project. Your opposition to the project has been noted. The Santa Ynez Valley Alliance letter (March 10, 2008) preceded the release of the draft EIR/EA. We have incorporated responses to this letter along with responses to your letter, below.

**Response to comment #1:** As you've acknowledged, the information you requested for the display panels was emailed to you before Caltrans' received this letter.

**Response to comment #2(1a):** The project's Purpose and Need is correctly stated in the Summary and in Chapter 1 of the draft EIR/EA.

**Response to comment #2(2a):** Based on revised information received on May 21, 2009, from the Santa Barbara County Sheriff-Coroner's office and a subsequent suicide on June 3, 2009, the accurate number of suicides since 1963 is 47. The text of the environmental document has been revised to reflect this revised total. Although not described in the environmental document, in the five-year period, from August 1, 2000, through July 31, 2005, there were 9 fatalities from suicide; in the five-year period from January 1, 2001 to December 31, 2005, there were 8 deaths by suicide.

**Response to comment #2(2b):** The comments of the traffic safety engineer to which you refer are not a part of the draft environmental document. However, the study of the Memorial Bridge in Augusta, Maine, by Dr. Andrew Pelletier is correctly referenced in the draft document in Section 2.1.1.

**Response to comment #2(2c):** As stated in Chapter 4 of the environmental document, Caltrans has conducted an effort to involve members of the public, local government, and interested parties.

**Response to comment #2(2d):** Regarding the comment about the California Highway Patrol's reporting of suicides, the statistics on deaths by suicide from the bridge are maintained by the Santa Barbara Sheriff-Coroner's office, not by the California Highway Patrol.

**Response to comment #2(2e):** In the five-year period from January 1, 2001 to December 31, 2005, there were 8 deaths by suicide. The average number of suicides per year is not an issue in the environmental review of the project. Based on revised information received on May 21, 2009, from the Santa Barbara County Sheriff-

Coroner's office and a subsequent suicide on June 3, 2009, the accurate number of suicides since 1963 is 47.

**Response to comment #2(2f):** Regarding your comment on barriers and suicides, please refer to Section 2.1.1 for the "Difference of opinion regarding the effectiveness of physical suicide barriers vs. 'human barriers'" section of the EIR/EA, which presents the views of experts in the field, including Dr. John Draper, Director of The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline. The Lifeline position is that the "use of bridge barriers is the most effective means of bridge suicide prevention. Subsequently, as bridge/transportation authorities or other stakeholders approach the Lifeline with requests for implementing bridge barriers, the Lifeline should emphasize the need for barriers as the most effective solution."

**Response to comment #2(3):** Regarding the memorandum you reference, please note that this memorandum is not referenced in the draft EIR/EA.

**Response to comment #2(3d):** For the correct number of suicides, please refer to the environmental document and Response to comment #2(a) above.

**Response to comment #2(4):** Regarding the comments on the Town Hall Meeting on May 22, 2006, the meeting discussions and preliminary estimates on costs, design, etc., are not a part of the draft EIR/EA. Please see Response to comment #2(2c) above, and Chapter 4 of the environmental document.

**Response to comment #2(5a&b):** Please refer to Response to comment #2(2a) above for the number of suicides since 1963.

**Response to comment #2(5c):** Regarding public involvement, please refer to Response to comment #2(2c) above.

**Response to comment #2(7):** Please refer to the draft EIR/EA, distributed on May 9, 2008.

**Response to comment #2(8):** Please refer to the Response to your comment #2(2c) above regarding community involvement. Please refer to the "Difference of opinion regarding the effectiveness of physical suicide barriers vs. 'human barriers'" section of the EIR/EA which presents the views of experts in the field, to the Responses to comments #2 and #4 to Mr. Gregory Mohr.

**Response to comment #2(9a&b):** The Santa Barbara County Sheriff's office in Section 1.4.6 of the document has stated the average response without the delay of any other activity to be around 15 minutes. The CHP conducts traffic enforcement patrols during peak traffic times and patrolling vehicles do not park very often, which may give the appearance that there are numerous law enforcement cars patrolling the highway. The Sheriff's Department is normally on the highway in response to a call or if one of the units is traveling from one area to another. Neither agency has officers stationed on the bridge, and traffic stops are not conducted on the bridge itself. An example of the delayed response would be a call that took place on the morning of September 8, 2008. A passerby saw a man sitting on the railing and called it in. A Sheriff's patrol car was the closest and was coming from Goleta. By the time the patrol car got there, the man had already fallen to his death.

As discussed in the environmental document, the Golden Gate Bridge has law enforcement patrols, and people still are able to jump before an officer can make contact. Cold Spring Canyon Bridge is of a much smaller scale, but resources are not available to station someone on the bridge around the clock. The presence of physical barriers would be available to help reduce suicides at the Cold Spring Canyon Bridge 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

**Response to comment #2(10a&b):** The project's purpose as stated in the EIR/EA concerns deaths from individuals jumping off of the Cold Spring Canyon Bridge on State Route 154, and not deaths at other locations.

**Response to comment #2(11&12):** Your comments are noted.

**Response to comment #3(1):** Based on revised statistics received by the Coroner's office on May 21, 2009, and a subsequent suicide on June 3, 2009, the number of suicides that have occurred since 1963 is 47. The average number of suicides per year is not relevant to the document.

**Response to comment #3(2):** Regarding retaining Mr. Spielmann as a consultant, meeting with various parties, and different approaches and alternatives, please refer to the environmental document, Section 1.4.6 *Alternatives Considered but Eliminated From Further Discussion*, which explains that the "human barrier" alternative has not been satisfactory at reducing the number of persons jumping from the bridge. The "human barrier" alternative was ruled out in the draft environmental document for the reasons stated in Chapter 1.

Also please refer to Section 2.1.1 in the EIR/EA for the “Difference of opinion regarding the effectiveness of physical suicide barriers vs. ‘human barriers’” section that discusses the expert opinion of suicidologists, including The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline’s position paper in response to the “human barrier” alternative promoted by Mr. Spielmann and the Friends of the Bridge. “The Lifeline Steering Committee position is that the use of bridge barriers is the most effective means of bridge suicide prevention. Subsequently, as bridge/transportation authorities or other stakeholders approach the Lifeline with requests for implementing bridge phones, the Lifeline should emphasize the need for barriers as the most effective solution.”

3) **Response to comment #3(3):** Please refer to the Response to comment #3(2) above for a discussion that physical barriers are the most effective measure to reduce suicides on bridges. Caltrans came to this conclusion based on an extensive study of the many alternatives available.

4) **Response to comment #3(4):** Project Development Team meetings are an advisory body to the Caltrans District Director and are not public meetings. The District Director considers the Project Development Team’s recommendations and subsequently makes his/her own decision regarding a project.

**Response to comment #4:** As stated in the Response to comment #2(2c) above, Caltrans has made a good faith effort in its outreach to citizens, associations, and governmental agencies.

COMMENT ON THE DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL REPORT OF MAY 2008 FOR THE  
COLD SPRING CANYON BRIDGE SUICIDE BARRIER ON STATE ROUTE 154 AT COLD  
SPRING CANYON BRIDGE 05-SB-154-PM 22.9/23.1 05-OP9100

If the No-Build Alternative of the project is not selected, the project will “result in substantial adverse impacts to the visual environment” [p.v] because of “the expected high level of viewer sensitivity associated with the bridge and State Route 154 (a Designated State Scenic Highway) and the magnitude of the visual change [p.v].” These substantial adverse impacts are “view blockage (or opacity) [p.33]” and “visual detractor to the existing setting caused by the barrier itself [p.33].” It is not made clear in the Draft Environmental Report [DER] that the first concerns primarily the scenic panorama viewed **from** the bridge [Viewpoint 1, p.26], and the second, the character of the bridge itself as seen not only when on the bridge [Viewpoint 1, p.26], but also when looking at the bridge from elsewhere [Viewpoints 2 & 3, p.26].

Since the proposal in question is a “joint project by the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) and the Federal Highway Administration and is subject to state and federal environmental review requirements [p.42],” the project documentation is supposed to be prepared “in compliance with both the California Environmental Quality Act and the National Environmental Policy Act [p.42].” Under the National Environmental Policy Act 42 U.S.C. §§4321, *et seq.*, decisions undertaken by federal agencies must be based on complete analysis so that they are fully informed and well-considered. The analysis in the DER of the “view blockage (or opacity),” based on the *Visual Impact Assessment [VIA]* of January 2008 by the Caltrans Landscape Architecture branch [p.24], is incomplete and faulty.

The DER, in discussing the “visual environment through the project area [p.25],” refers only to features of the **landscape** and never mentions the **skyscape**, as, for example, in the following summarizing sentence: “The dramatic topography and natural vegetative patterns combine in a classic representation of the natural landscape of the central coast of California [p.25, from *VIA*, p.3].” The sky with its changing colors, cloudforms, and qualities of light (including **starlight** and **moonlight**), and the sky’s interface with landscape forms at the horizon are also major components of the views in question, especially **from** the bridge, and should be taken into consideration in the analysis of the opacity of the barrier and the way it disrupts the balance between the sky and the land forms and interferes with the horizon. When the DER remarks that “the construction of a barrier would have an effect on as much as **70 percent** of the existing view as seen from the bridge deck [p.33, from *VIA*, p.7, my emphasis],” does the “existing view” referred to here also include the skyscape, or would the figure, as depressingly high as it is, be even higher when the skyscape is taken into consideration? The three evaluative criteria on page 6 of the previously mentioned *Visual Impact Assessment*, and used in the Visual Quality Evaluation in that same document, are defined only in terms of landscape features, and thus prevent the extensive views of the skyscape from raising the rating for all three criteria for the existing views, and correspondingly lowering the rating in those criteria for the proposed views. Indeed, the barrier from Viewpoint 2 actually **intrudes into the skyline** and thus violates the Visual Resource Policy of the Santa Barbara County Comprehensive Plan Land Use Element which says that “[structures] shall be sited so as not to intrude into the skyline as seen from public viewing places [*VIP*, p.4].”

Finally, as was suggested in the previous paragraph by boldface, the panoramic view from the bridge of the **night sky** with its stars and heavenly bodies is a significant aesthetic experience, and, even **after** a spectacular sunset and **before** sunrise, confers aesthetic value to the darkened landscape with its topographical features silhouetted beautifully against that same night sky. However, following the *VIA*, the DER offers no analysis of the effects of traffic **headlights** illuminating the barrier at night and adding to the opacity and interference of the views **from** the

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bridge (and to the bridge); in addition, there is also no analysis of the potential adverse effects of barrier **shadows** at different times of the day. Grid/mesh barriers tend to **collect water** during and after rain and fog; there is no analysis of the potential obscuring effects of these collected water droplets themselves, or the tendency of wet surfaces to reflect light and add to the visual interference of such barriers, or the possibility of such collected water dripping or blowing onto the windshields and windows of passing traffic. [All of these potential negative effects of headlight illumination, shadows, and collected water have not been taken into consideration, either, in the pseudo-quantitative Visual Quality Evaluation of the *Visual Impact Assessment*, and there is no mention of the possible adverse effects water collection will have on the maintenance of both the barrier and the bridge.]

The *Visual Impact Assessment* does not discuss how the actual numerical ratings were assigned or whether these numbers were the subjective assessment of a single person or the pooled subjective assessments of a group, as in Olympic gymnastics judging. When the existing view from the Cold Spring Canyon Bridge from Viewpoint 1 is given a total score of 5.2 out of 7, are there other views in the California, or in the United States [or in the world?] which rate a total score of 7? How does the “quantified” 5.2 relate to other scenic views in the County, State, and country?

It was not emphasized enough in both documents, the *VIA* and the DER based on it, that since no suicide barrier of any kind has been constructed on Cold Spring Canyon Bridge, the proposed views cannot **actually** be looked at by anyone, let alone the “judges” who assigned numerical ratings for the three criteria of these proposed views. Were the color photo-simulations [they are called “Conceptual Views” in the *VIA*] that play such a prominent role in the DER [pp.27–32] used to make these numerical ratings and the decisions concerning the visual impacts of the proposed barrier in the DER? If so, besides being static one-point views that cannot capture the changing panoramic experience of driving over the bridge or on relevant sections of Highway 154, there is be a **serious flaw** in using some of these photo-simulations because the opacity effect of the perspective **foreshortening** of the **grid/mesh vertical spaces** [not the vertical grid/mesh strut **support** spaces] is **not shown**: even though the view-angle gets progressively more acute, the simulated grid/mesh does **not** get progressively **more opaque** as it should according to the discussion in paragraph 3 of page 7 of the *Visual Impact Assessment*, but remains **the same** until the simulated convergence of the widely spaced grid/mesh support **struts** produces its own opacity near the end of the bridge, **long after** the grid/mesh would have become opaque from the convergence of its own verticals. Omitting this source of opacity from the photo-simulations makes the barrier appear less opaque than it really will be, especially from Viewpoint 1, which has the most increasingly acute view-angles. Now the DER maintains [p.33] that the “mesh variation would be the less noticeable of the two alternatives because the mesh itself would tend to recede and visually blend with the background,” which conclusion is based on the Visual Quality Evaluation of Viewpoint 1 [p.8 of the *VIA*], but this effect on the view **from** the bridge would only occur at a view-angle perpendicular to the bridge (incidentally, where motion past the grid/mesh would also blur the view), and not from the more acute view-angles which would produce **complete opacity** allowing no background at all to be seen.

There is a constant confusion in both documents of the visual impacts of the suicide barrier when considering the adverse effects of the barrier on the views **from** the bridge as opposed to the views **of** the bridge. The preferred grid/mesh barrier has slightly less adverse effects on the views **of** the bridge, but considerably more adverse effects on the views **from** the bridge. These two very different impacts should not be **evenly weighted** as they are in the *VIA* and the DER based on it. It should be obvious that the views **from** the bridge are more important, and since they are more important, it is an **oversight** of the analysis that a **passenger** viewpoint from vehicles traveling over the bridge should have been included.

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Another shortcoming of the Visual Quality Analysis of the *VIA*, and thus of the conclusions of the DER, is that not only do barriers detract from the existing views to produce a “negative Visual Quality Difference,” but they have a negative effect **in themselves** (what one might call the “prison or asylum effect”) which is **independent** of the effect they have on the views **from** the bridge. Since the Landscape Architecture branch of Caltrans is skilled at numerically assessing imaginary views, I would ask them to imagine the effects of putting a grid/mesh over all the windows in their homes in order to discover that not only does the grid/mesh have blockage or opacity effects, but also the effect of making one feel imprisoned. The free and expansive feeling engendered by traveling over the Cold Spring Bridge would be replaced by a captive and claustrophobic feeling engendered by the barrier itself, independent of its negative effects on the panoramic scenery or an aesthetic consideration of the bridge structure. Perhaps a suitable experiment in barrier proposal modeling would be to transport the Landscape Architecture staff over Cold Springs Canyon Bridge in a police paddy wagon with grid/mesh windows. I await the quantified Visual Quality Analysis of this experiment.

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To turn now briefly to the adverse effects of the suicide barrier on what are called “cultural resources,” the DER concludes that the “only historic property present is the bridge itself [p.v]” and concludes that the barrier “introduces a visual element that diminishes the property’s historic integrity of design, feeling, and association [p.v].” However, because the views **from** the bridge will suffer from “substantial adverse impacts [p.v],” two other criteria of adverse effect as defined in 36 Code of Federal Regulations 800.5 [p.v], the integrity of location and the setting, will suffer substantial adverse impacts, too, because the views **from** the bridge are a direct result of its special location and setting, and indeed, help to **constitute** its location and setting. To the extent those views are no longer possible, to that extent is the bridge removed from its location and its setting. One of the consequences of the Eiffel Tower and the Washington Monument trading places—that is, changing locations and settings—would be that the views from the Washington Monument would be of Paris and the views of the Eiffel Tower, of Washington, a thought experiment which demonstrates that scenic views are part of what constitute the “integrity of a historical property” and are inextricably tied to its location and setting. Ruin the view and you ruin the integrity of any historical property with a view. This shows that the views **from** the bridge are relevant to other cultural characteristics of the bridge than its integrity of design, feeling, and association. A portion of the historic Freemont Trail, for example, is presently visible **from** the bridge.

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The DER (and the *VIA*) fail to point out that the “substantial adverse impacts” to both the views **from** the bridge and **of** the bridge will be suffered by those travelers over the relevant section of Highway 154 making the approximately **5,840,000** trips a year [that is a rough estimate based on the figure of 16,000 vehicles using the relevant section of Highway 154 a day, p.3 of the *VIA*; this figure is **not found** in the DER!]. Caltrans is supposed to possess the expertise to make this estimate [based on a simple multiplication by 365] more accurate, perhaps even to the extent of calculating the average number of passengers per vehicle in addition to the driver of each trip, but they have not done this analysis to make a “fully informed and well-considered” decision concerning the potential adverse impacts of their project to millions of people a year.

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Admitting these “substantial adverse impacts to the visual environment,” what does the DER offer as “**minimization and/or mitigation**” [see Appendix D and also section 3.3, p.44 referencing section 2.1.2, p. 34; also *VIA*, p.11]? The formation of an Aesthetics Design Advisory Committee! Because these “substantial adverse impacts to the visual environment,” the aforementioned [my first paragraph] “view blockage (opacity) and visual intrusion [p.v],” (incompletely) analyzed in the DER [based on the *VIA*] will result from **any design** of the preferred Grid/Mesh Alternative [and indeed of **any design** of the Vertical Alternative] that

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meets the **basic requirements** of the project, the formation of an Aesthetics Design Advisory Committee and their work **does not constitute a minimization and/or mitigation** of the “substantial adverse impacts to the visual environment.” This Committee could only mitigate other adverse effects **not** discussed in the DER, for example, by not painting the barrier fire-engine yellow, encrusting it with diamonds, illuminating it at night, or flying the Caltrans flag from the grid/mesh support struts! Unless this Committee could make the barrier **invisible**, I repeat, **THERE IS NO MITIGATION** of the substantial adverse visual impacts of the barrier. Let’s have the DER repeat it: “It is not possible, however, to reduce the unavoidable visual, aesthetic, and cultural impacts to the bridge to a less than significant level [p.44, Section 3.2.3, “Unavoidable Significant Environmental Impacts”].”

We have a Proposed Action with substantial adverse visual impacts on a Designated State Scenic Highway for which there is no mitigation, but how well does this project meet its Purpose and Need? Its purpose is stated [p.iii] to be twofold: 1) To “reduce the number of suicides at Cold Spring Canyon Bridge” and 2) To reduce the risks to “emergency personnel” when “attempting to prevent a suicide or when recovering a body.”

To take the second part of the Purpose first, the DER does not comply with the National Environmental Policy Act 42 U.S.C. §§4321, *et seq.*, because it does not offer a complete analysis of the so-called risks encountered by emergency personnel, nor are these “risks” compared to the “risks” encountered by the same personnel on other rescue jobs they respond to (for example, injured hikers in the backcountry, or other types of suicide attempts). The mere presence of a component factor (for example, dense manzanita, p.5) of the emergency job in question (preventing a suicide from the bridge or recovering a body below the bridge) does not constitute a **demonstrable** risk unless this factor has actually resulted in injury in the past. In the extremely sketchy injury “statistics” given by the DER, the only vaguely identified factors that have actually **resulted in injury** are poison oak and whatever caused the sprained ankles and knees [rocky ground? steep terrain? tripping?], and these injuries were among an unspecified number of rescue team members, and not, apparently, among law enforcement who have responded to “approximately 162 incidents in the past eight years” that were “suicide-related” at the bridge without a single injury [p.4]! How many cases of poison oak rash and sprains there were and over what period of time is not said; nor are these cases compared to the frequency of injuries of the same type for other types of jobs the same emergency personnel respond to, or even to injury statistics in general, such as the frequency of cases of poison oak rash among recreational hikers in Santa Barbara, or sprains from tripping in one’s own back yard. **No other factors** mentioned as risks on pages 4–5 of the DER **have resulted in injury** [and the fifth bullet point on page 5 is irrelevant because it does not concern emergency personnel]. These poorly documented injuries and anecdotes really substantiate the fact that the emergency personnel are **fully competent** to do their jobs **without significant injury**, and thus that they are **not at significant risk** because of their training, experience, and fitness. The DER does **not** substantiate the Need for the second part of the Purpose of the proposed project.

Concerning the first part of the Purpose, to “reduce the number of suicides at the Cold Spring Bridge,” the DER again fails to comply with the National Environmental Policy Act 42 U.S.C. §§4321, *et seq.*, because it offers an incomplete and indeed again flawed analysis concerning the Need for this part of the Purpose. It is stated on page 1 that at least 44 people have committed suicide at this location since the bridge was built in 1963. The DER offers **no other information** concerning these people or why their deaths have to be considered **suicides** and not rather **accidents** from one of the unsubstantiated risk factors sketched on pages 4 through 5 concerning the second part of the Purpose, for example, the supposedly “low ... existing bridge safety railing, lack of sidewalks, and noticeable swaying of the bridge from traffic and wind [p.5].” This is less than one person a year for 46 years and that statistic has not been

compared with the relevant accident rates or even with the suicide rates on other bridges, or with the rates of suicide using other methods. Where did these 44 people live? There is absolutely no demographic information at all given as a context for this magic number 44. The DER also offers the information that “in the past 25 years, at least 31 deaths have occurred [p.1],” but again offers absolutely no information concerning these deaths, or even whether these deaths are all suicides. This is a rate of 1.24 a year; again very small and not put into the context of population increases, or in any other demographic context.

If these opaque numbers are compared to the average number of trips across the bridge in a year, they pale into insignificance. For example, if we compare the **total number** of suicides over 46 years to the average number of trips across the bridge in a year, that number is .00075%! If we make the same comparison for .97 suicides per year we get .000016%, or for the 1.24 deaths in the last 25 years, .0000212%. **Millions** of travelers a year, including potential suicide victims, over the relevant section of Highway 154 will suffer from “substantial adverse visual impacts” because of an extremely tiny segment of the population who have been determined by the Sheriff/Coroner’s office to be suicides.

Despite the fact that there are 13 people who prepared the DER, not a single person is qualified by training or experience to evaluate the extensive literature on suicides, and yet the civil engineers, transportation engineers, engineering geologists, traffic planners, graphic designers, environmental planners, geologists, archaeologists, etc., who drafted the DER—all laypersons in the fields of psychiatry, psychology, and medicine—claim that “the **collective body of evidence** shows that a barrier on Cold Spring Canyon Bridge would meet the Purpose of the proposed project by reducing suicides at the site [p.17, my emphasis]” and then offer a short and contradictory medley of such research [pp.17–23] purporting to show that 1) “barriers are effective in reducing suicides [p.17; the conclusion on the same page is actually that “physical barriers have been effective **in helping** to prevent suicides”],” and 2) “suicidal people often do not seek another location [p.21; how often?].” A brief look at this material is sufficient to show how treacherous it can be for laypersons to assess its value and come to conclusions at the level of reliability required by an environmental impact document.

It is well-known that suicide rates vary considerably from country to country because of the complex relationship between a given society or culture and the mental health of its populace, yet, of the 8 studies cited in support of the first point (barrier effectiveness), 3 concern other nations than the United States and one is world-wide; in addition, 2 are not restricted to suicides from bridges. Of the 7 studies cited in support of the second point (method substitution), again 3 concern foreign countries, one is world-wide, and 3 are not restricted to suicides from bridges. Of the 12 **bridges** [other **monuments** are not relevant] with barriers listed on page 20, 7 (over half) are located in foreign countries.

Of the 2 American **studies** [though included in the total of 7 in the previous paragraph, the first citation on p.21 is not a study at all but a **policy statement**] cited to support the second point, Dr. Richard Seiden’s study concerns the Golden Gate Bridge, one of the most studied bridges and, according to page 12 of the DER, “the foremost suicide magnet in the world.” If the “collective body of evidence” for the effectiveness of suicide barrier installation on bridges were conclusive, why hasn’t a barrier been erected on the Golden Gate Bridge?

The 2005 article in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* by J. John Mann, et al., cited in support of the first point (barrier effectiveness) refers to the “**unresolved** questions about method substitution [p.19 of the DER, my emphasis],” a reference which calls into question the studies cited in support of the second point (method substitution) like the 2005 article in *Accident Analysis and Prevention* by Mark S. Daigle who concluded that “the risk of substitution towards an alternate method is small [p.22 of the DER].” And one of the English studies cited in support of this second point says that “...the impact of any intervention on what

is a relatively unusual method of suicide such as jumping may be difficult to measure in statistical terms...[p.23 of the DER,]” which hardly confers credibility on such research.

Nothing is said, either, in these citations, about the possibility that potential suicides on bridge who, prompted by the **natural fear** of high places, decide not to jump, may reconsider their decision to do away with themselves; whereas, if prevented from such an experience, may instead choose another method without a such high fear component, such as taking pills, and succeed. Such persons would not have the benefit, either, of the relatively successful interventions of emergency personnel like those who, at Cold Springs Bridge with a single suicide a year, respond 8 times a year to suicide-related calls.

One of the main assumptions of the fraction of the immense body of literature on suicide cited in the DER is that a suicide from a bridge is a sudden, impulsive act without a history in the previous life of the victim. If there were no history of any kind of mental disturbance in the previous life of the victim, how was it determined that 44 people since 1963 committed suicide by jumping from Cold Spring Canyon Bridge? Why weren't any of the deaths considered by the Coroner [p.6] to be **accidental**? If there were some previous history of mental disturbance, prevention of suicide **at the bridge** can occur **elsewhere**, and the cited studies were invoked only to support prevention **at the site**.

Indeed, all (including those rejected as infeasible) of the *Draft Environmental Report* Alternatives to reduce the number of suicides at Cold Spring Canyon Bridge concern prevention methods **at the bridge itself** and none are **off-site** prevention methods that would, for example, involve the identification, timely intervention, and treatment by mental health professionals of persons-at-risk **before the crisis situation** occurs. Absolutely no evidence has been offered in the DER that **on-site** prevention measures are **more effective** at reducing suicides at the bridge than the many **off-site** prevention alternatives that could be instituted. This is the **greatest deficiency** of the DER. At just the time when mental health funding in the County of Santa Barbara is being severely cut, a proposal is put forth to reduce suicide that does not consider mental health programs at all!

It might be replied that the effectiveness of such mental health programs is not the business of Caltrans and the Federal Highway Administration, but is suicide prevention their business? I would argue that it is not. According to the DER: “The proposed project would be built under Caltrans’ Safety Improvement Program. The purpose of this program is to reduce the number and severity of accidents on the State’s highway system by implementing safety improvements to existing roadways [p.6].”

The simple fact is that **SUICIDES ARE NOT ACCIDENTS**, nor are they to be considered **traffic fatalities!** They are deliberate acts which are not the **intended use** of the State’s highway system and existing roadways, including bridges. There is no mandate from any governmental body that Caltrans prevent the deliberate misuse of their highway system. A suicide from Cold Spring Canyon Bridge is absolutely **no evidence** that the bridge is not **safe!** There are “approximately 16,000 vehicles a day using this section of Highway 154 [p.3 of the *Visual Impact Assessment*],” which roughly amounts to 5,840,000 vehicles a year. What **would** constitute evidence that the bridge is unsafe would be statistics showing that there are too many **traffic accidents** for this volume of traffic. No figures to this effect figures are offered by the *Draft Environmental Report*.

There is, however, a brief and **unquantified** discussion of three benefits to highway safety of the proposed barrier on page 17. The first is that the barrier would protect bicyclists and pedestrians from “falling over the side of the bridge when it sways during windy weather.” Since no evidence is offered that any of the few [?] bicyclists or pedestrians who use the bridge has ever fallen over during windy weather [nor how often the weather is windy], the present barrier

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whose height given on page 11 [3 feet 7 inches from the road and 2 feet 7 inches from the curb] is **already** sufficiently **safe**.

The second purported benefit is supposed to be increased traffic safety in the case where a suicide intender has abandoned their car on the bridge deck, blocking either one or two lanes. Considering that there is less than one suicide per year (p.1) and recently only 8 suicide-related incidents per year (p.4), no statistics are given as to **how often** cars have been abandoned (in one or both lanes) or what the traffic flow was **at the time** of such an incident, for example, late at night. No statistics are given as to whether these rare events actually **resulted in an accident**, showing that such abandonment was unsafe, nor are statistics given to show that **decreased traffic flow** controlled by emergency personnel is **unsafe**.

The third purported benefit to traffic safety is supposed to be the reduction of traffic delays. No evidence is given to show that delaying traffic is inherently **unsafe**. Again, no statistics are given as to how often suicide-related events result in the partial or complete closure of the bridge or, if such closures have indeed occurred, for how long. If it is true that reduced traffic flow or traffic delays are **unsafe**, it will be **unsafe to build** the suicide barrier because its construction will entail at least **420 hours** of single lane traffic with 5 minute delays on the bridge. No comparable statistics concerning closures, partial or otherwise, have been given for routine maintenance on the bridge, or for the **additional maintenance** that the suicide barrier will involve [which additional maintenance **costs** have unaccountably been omitted from Table 1.1 on p.9 of the DER].

Since all three of the purported benefits to traffic **safety** of the proposed project have not been sufficiently demonstrated in the DER, it would be a misuse of Caltrans Safety Improvement Program funds to use them to build a suicide barrier. Traffic safety, at any rate, is **not** the Purpose of the proposed project as stated on page 1 of the *Draft Environmental Report*.

It can be concluded that a proposed project with significant and substantial environmental impacts which cannot be mitigated, whose Purpose is misguided and inappropriate to the lead agency, and whose Need has not been sufficiently demonstrated by its draft environmental report, should not be built.

 6/24/08  
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## **Response to Comments from Tracy Fernandez**

Thank you for your interest in the project. Your opposition to the project has been noted.

**Response to comment #1:** The term “landscape” as used in the *Visual Impact Assessment* (VIA) includes views of the sky. The term “landscape” is used in the broad sense, similar to the definition of a “landscape painting,” which depicts the total view, not just the ground plane. The terms “vistas,” “viewshed,” “panoramic views” and “views” are also used in the analysis. Landform and landcover elements are distinguished from overall views when specific “non-sky” features are discussed. The EIR/EA *Visual/Aesthetics* section finds CEQA Class I impacts based in part on view blockage. The EIR/EA considers local policy when determining viewer sensitivity and making impact findings but does not list individual policies.

**Response to comment #2:** The project includes no new source of light that might affect nighttime views. Views of headlights from off-site locations would diminish because the barrier would visually block a percentage of headlight glare. The barrier would not become back-lit or glow as with a solid opaque screen. Because of the viewing angles upward, over, and between the barriers as seen from the bridge deck, views of the night sky would not be obscured. Because of the proposed barriers’ partial opacity, visibility of headlight glare as seen from the surrounding areas is expected to be partially reduced by a corresponding amount. The barrier finish will be darkened to reduce reflectivity from both headlights and from the sun. The grid/mesh alternative proposes an approximately two-inch square mesh, which would place the individual wires too far apart to collect moisture by surface tension, and too far apart to create a “glow” effect for viewers on or off the bridge.

The Santa Barbara Comprehensive Plan Land Use Element Section IV, Goals and Policies, Subsection 2, Visual Resource Policies states: "In areas designated as rural on the land use plan maps, the height, scale, and design of structures shall be compatible with the character of the surrounding natural environment, except where technical requirements dictate otherwise. Structures shall be subordinate in appearance to natural landforms; shall be designed to follow the natural contours of the landscape; and shall be sited so as not to intrude into the skyline as seen from public viewing places."

The VIA references the above County policy in the Viewer Sensitivity section (page 4). Neither the VIA nor the EIR/EA claim that the project does not violate portions of the referenced visual resources policy. The VIA and environmental document fully disclose the potential affect of the project on the skyline and hillsides in photo-simulations and in the analysis. Page 7 of the VIA states "The proposed barrier would affect approximately 70 percent of the existing views of the valley and hills as seen from the bridge deck." Furthermore, the VIA and EIR/EA find that significant visual impacts would be the result of "The partial blockage of high-quality views from an Officially Designated State Scenic Highway."

**Response to comment #3:** A multi-disciplinary team as recommended by Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) guidelines conducted the Visual Quality Evaluation ratings. Ratings were done independently of each other and numerically averaged to minimize individual subjectivity. A numerical range of 1 to 7 is used, with 7 being the highest quality view available regardless of geographic location. The VIA uses a methodology and rating system defined by FHWA guidelines. Consistent with this FHWA methodology, in order to minimize individual subjectivity, each member of the visual quality evaluation team rated the existing and proposed views independently, then the numerical ratings of all members were averaged. The FHWA guidance suggests a rating from 1 to 7, with 1 representing the least and 7 representing the greatest value. The ratings are made relative to any possible view anywhere, not just the county or state. The FHWA guidance uses views of the Yosemite Valley including Half Dome and El Capitan as a possible example of a "7" visual quality rating. It is not recommended or appropriate to conduct a numerical rating analysis of the entire county, state, and country. The VIA includes a discussion of the regional and Route 154 visual setting, in addition to the site specific analysis as recommended by FHWA guidelines. Furthermore the VIA acknowledges Highway 154's Official Designated Scenic Highway status as recognition of its high visual quality.

**Response to comment #4:** Photo-simulations, along with field reviews, were used by the analysis team to assess the potential visual effects of the project. The visual quality evaluation rating team included professionals from landscape architecture, civil engineering, and environmental planning. The use of photo-simulations is an industry standard and a best practice method of understanding the potential appearance of a proposed project. Computer-modeling software is used to increase accuracy of the renderings. The simulations are a tool for analysis, and are used in conjunction with knowledge of the project site, understanding the physical

characteristics of the project and its individual elements, the differences between static and dynamic viewpoints, among other factors. The decision to use photo-simulations as part of the analysis is based on FHWA guidelines, academic research, professional journals, and professional experience regarding preparation and consultant review of VIAs prepared for local, state and federal agencies.

**Response to comment #5:** The VIA specifically addresses the increasing opacity of both the mesh/grid and vertical picket alternatives as the view-angle becomes more acute. The VIA also specifically addresses the differences between stationary and moving viewpoints and the related effect on potential impacts. The VIA acknowledges that both alternatives would effect up to seventy percent of the existing views from the bridge deck, and that both alternatives would become more opaque as the viewing angle became more acute. The study found that when seen at highway speeds, the grid/mesh alternative visually blurred more than the vertical picket alternative, making it less noticeable and receding more. This concept was tested and proven true by full-scale mock-ups conducted by the project team. The VIA states for both alternatives that “Views from the front of the vehicle would see the barrier at a more acute angle, which would result in the barrier elements appearing closer together and blocking a greater percentage of the existing view through it. The barrier would appear increasingly more opaque as the view-angle became more acute.” The VIA differentiates between the alternatives as follows “the individual vertical pickets would visually blur somewhat when seen at highway speeds, however they would still be noticeable enough to contribute to the visual dominance of the barrier in the overall view,” and that “the grid mesh alternative would result in a slightly more opaque view outward from the bridge, however the grid mesh would tend to blur more when viewed from a moving vehicle. The mesh would visually recede more than the vertical alternative, and as a result the barrier itself would become less of a visual element as seen from this highway viewpoint.”

**Response to comment #6:** Per FHWA guidelines, the VIA considers, documents and makes findings based on views both from the bridge (Viewpoint 1, a viewpoint from within a vehicle on the bridge), and to the bridge (Viewpoints 2 and 3, from the adjacent pullout and from Stagecoach Road below).

**Response to comment #7:** The VIA describes an adverse effect to the open space character of the existing view. The spatial characteristics of the project were considered in the determination that viewer sensitivity regarding changes to the visual setting would be high. It should be noted however that testimony at public hearings

for the project indicate that because of the openness and height, some viewers feel unsafe and experience a sense of danger when crossing the bridge under the existing conditions.

**Response to comment #8:** Views from the bridge were a benefit following construction, but were not part of the design process and are not considered to be a character-defining element of the bridge. Regarding the bridge's features and historical status, please refer to Response to comment #1 to Mr. Kellam de Forest, Preservation Committee, Pearl Chase Society, in this document.

**Response to comment #9:** The Average Annual Daily Traffic is included in the VIA because the number of viewers is relevant and is a factor, along with other factors such as viewing distance, angle, duration, viewer activity and expectations in determining the anticipated level of viewer response, as recommended by FHWA guidelines. Number of viewers also is considered when determining key viewing areas. The VIA considers number of viewers both on and off the road in its analysis and findings.

**Response to comment #10:** The purpose of the Aesthetics Design Advisory Committee was to help minimize potential adverse visual impacts. Both the VIA and EIR/EA make the finding that significant visual impacts would remain even with implementation of mitigation measures. The resulting recommendations of the design committee did not change the fundamental design of the barrier, but helped refine detailed aspects of the barrier's design. The committee's recommendations did not change the fundamental mitigation concepts that were presented in the draft EIR/EA.

**Response to comment #11:** The information on the risks and injuries to the County of Santa Barbara Sheriff's Search and Rescue Team was provided by the Search and Rescue Team leader and Sheriff's office. The number of incidents was provided by the Sheriff-Coroner. The County of Santa Barbara Sheriff-Coroner's office has identified all of these fatalities as deaths by suicide by jumping from the Cold Spring Canyon Bridge.

**Response to comment #12:** As presented in the environmental document, experts in the field of suicidology have concluded that physical suicide barriers will help reduce the number of suicides on bridges. Caltrans did analyze the human barrier alternative and determined that it would not meet the project's objectives. This conclusion is discussed and supported in Section 1.4.6 *Alternatives Considered but Eliminated From Further Discussion* "Human Barrier Alternative" of the EIR/EA, which

includes supporting evidence. Also refer to Section 2.1.1, including the “Difference of opinion regarding the effectiveness of physical suicide barriers vs. ‘human barriers’” section of the EIR/EA which presents the views of experts in the field, including “Suicide Prevention on Bridges: The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline Position,” by John Draper, Ph.D., Director, National Suicide Prevention Lifeline, June 16, 2008, which states in part: “The Lifeline Steering Committee position is that the use of bridge barriers is the most effective means of bridge suicide prevention. Subsequently, as bridge/transportation authorities or other stakeholders approach the Lifeline with requests for implementing bridge phones, the Lifeline should emphasize the need for barriers as the most effective solution.”

**Response to comment #13:** The County of Santa Barbara Sheriff-Coroner’s office has identified all of these fatalities/incidents as deaths by suicide by jumping from the bridge, and not death by accident nor by vehicle accident.

**Response to comment #14:** Regarding off-site alternatives, local Recovery Act funds have been designated specifically for this project. Please see Section 2.1.1 for The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline policy position that suicide barriers are a highly effective measure to reduce suicides at bridges and are recommended over suicide hotlines. Please refer to the section “Difference of opinion regarding the effectiveness of physical suicide barriers vs. ‘human barriers’” for a more thorough discussion.

**Response to comments #15 and #16:** Originally, the proposed project was to have been built under Caltrans’ Safety Improvement Program. However, at the request of the California Transportation Commission, Caltrans investigated alternate funding sources other than the State Highway Operation and Protection Program (SHOPP). As a result, it has been determined that the money needed to construct the barriers will now come from local Recovery Act funds. The purpose of the project is not suicide prevention, please refer to the project’s Purpose and Need. As the owner-operator of the bridge facility, Caltrans has an obligation to promote the safe operation of the structure. The number of vehicles trips is not relevant to the project’s purpose. According to revised statistics (received May 21, 2009) from the Sheriff’s Coroner Bureau, at least 10 individuals have abandoned their vehicle on the middle of the bridge and jumped (see Section 1.4.6).

**Response to comment #17:** The benefits to highway safety mentioned in the comment on are not a part of the project’s Purpose and Need, but are benefits of the

proposed project that have been identified. Either of the build alternatives would meet the project's stated Purpose and Need.

June 13, 2008

Cathy Stettler  
Senior Environmental Planner  
Calif. Dept of Transportation  
50 Higuera St.  
San Luis Obispo, CA 93401

Re: Barrier for Cold Spring Bridge

Dear Ms. Stettler:

Please add my voice to those who support NO BARRIER for Cold Spring Bridge. Building a suicide barrier is well-intentioned, but unfortunately a poor solution to an intractable problem. Suicide is always unpredictable - this project will make some people feel better, but it will not solve the suicide issue.

Also, for the following reasons I am against this project:

1. Our state is suffering historic budget deficits - 17 billion plus at latest reading - we simply cannot afford the estimated \$ 3 million in projected costs. Even if the cost was less, it is too much.
2. Santa Maria has a huge problem that will cause suicides - its levee along the Santa Maria River. We are playing Russian roulette with the weather. Hundreds of homes are in the flood plain and

the levee as everyone knows can be breached like Katrina. This is just one example of crumbling infrastructure that needs IMMEDIATE repair. The feds have earmarked a preliminary study but no guarantees. The truth is: the feds, the state, and the county are broke and have no money.

3. Our state and county needs to prioritize projects more adequately — a barrier for Cold Spring Bridge in a time of budgetary crisis, shows a lack of basic reality on a cosmic scale.

Suicide is never a pleasant occurrence. Any homicide, whether self-inflicted or not, is a shattering experience that affects us all. My heart goes out to the loved ones of suicides. A reaction of society is to make an attempt to prevent people from taking their lives — isn't that a misplaced attempt in this case? Why, because it will have no effect, but it will make us feel that we are doing something. Suicide is tragic and part of the human condition. There are no solutions with steel barriers.

Let's face reality and not build a barrier. For years San Francisco has dealt with the same issues on the beautiful Golden Gate Bridge. So far no barriers have been built.

Sincerely,  
L. H. Tuncil

***Response to Comments from L. H. Tuncil***

Thank you for your interest in the Cold Spring Canyon Bridge Suicide Barrier project. Your opposition to the project has been noted. Your letter and comment regarding the levee along the Santa Maria River will be forwarded to the City of Santa Maria and County of Santa Barbara.

Appendix F • Comments and Responses



Maxid595@aol.com  
06/06/2008 06:19 PM

To Cathy\_Stettler@dot.ca.gov, annbennet@gmail.com  
cc  
bcc  
Subject Cold Spring bridge

History:  This message has been forwarded.

Cathy. In response to the proposed railing along Cold Spring bridge, I feel it is an unnecessary expense and interference in a person's choice of suicide spots. If a person is determined, he/she will find a way. Putting up a railing is merely a deterrence - - similar to putting up "railings" against abortion. Yours Truly, Maxi Decker

\*\*\*\*\*

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(<http://food.aol.com/tyler-florence?video=4?&NCID=aolfod00030000000002>)



"Peter Neuhaus"  
<p@petern.com>

05/09/2008 04:16 PM

Please respond to  
<p@petern.com>

To <Cathy\_Stettler@dot.ca.gov>

cc

bcc

Subject Cold Spring Bridge suicide barrier

History: This message has been forwarded.

Dear Cal Trans,

This project is a waste of MILLIONS of taxpayer's dollars.

It will just send potential suicides to another easier-to-use location.

What's next, a barrier on every bridge, over every freeway, along every train track?

PLUS, it will ruin one of the most spectacular views in Santa Barbara County.

I TOTALLY OPPOSE this project. Spend OUR money on something else!

Peter



nancyheck1@aol.com  
06/16/2008 10:17 AM

To Cathy\_stettler@dot.ca.gov  
cc  
bcc  
Subject Cold Spring Canyon bridge

History: This message has been forwarded.

Dear Ms. Stettler

I am writing to ask Cal Trans to not build a suicide barrier on the Cold Spring Canyon bridge.

I believe that those funds could be more wisely spent on other projects that would save more lives.

If people really want to kill themselves, they will find a way.

It is not government's responsibility to go to such costs to save people from themselves. This statement may make me sound like a die-hard Republican, but, actually, I am pretty much a Democrat.

Please save our tax dollars.

Thank you for listening.

Nancy R. Heck  
822 Speed St.  
Santa Maria, CA 93454

---

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"Patrick D. McDermott"  
<pdmcpa@pdmcpa.net>  
06/16/2008 01:27 PM

To <Cathy\_stettler@dot.ca.gov>  
cc  
bcc  
Subject Cold Spring Canyon Bridge

History: This message has been forwarded.

It is rare that I find an issue that causes me to shake my head with amazement at the waste of tax dollars as much as this proposed project does.

How can anyone justify spending millions, and detracting from one of the most wonderful views on the Central Coast, in order to attempt to protect one or two people per year from themselves?

How many dangerous intersections are in the county that would actually benefit from some work?

How many students could be educated for that amount of money?

How many meaningful projects could be funded instead of this project?

I hope that there will be a massive public outcry for a ridiculous project of this nature.

Patrick D. McDermott, CPA  
Santa Maria, CA  
voice 805-925-8729

IRS Circular 230 Tax Advice Disclaimer: As required by U.S. Treasury Regulations governing tax practice, you are hereby advised that, if any advice concerning one or more U.S. Federal tax issues is contained in this communication (including any attachments), such advice is not intended or written to be used, and cannot be used, for the purpose of (i) avoiding penalties under the Internal Revenue Code or (ii) promoting, marketing or recommending to another party any transaction or matter addressed herein.



"Jim Beltran"  
<jimbeltran@cox.net>  
05/12/2008 06:18 PM

To <cathy\_stettler@dot.ca.gov>  
cc  
bcc  
Subject Suicide bridge

History: This message has been forwarded.

Hello Cathy,

I do not support adding suicide prevention to the bridge. If someone wants to commit suicide, they are going to do it. By spending the money on this bridge, it will just make them go somewhere else to do it.

I am not unfeeling, I lost a Niece to suicide a few years ago. I know the loss the families suffer when this occurs. However, I do not feel it could have been prevented. People that want to die can be very resourceful. I do not want to turn this country into a place where the government runs everything and dictates everything.

If there was a safety issue about the bridge, I would be all for fixing the problem. Since the bridge is safe, leave it alone and spend the money on other things that need fixing.

Jim

Jim Beltran

Jack of All Trades

Ph. 805 708-5466

Fx. 805 964-6530

[www.joat.biz](http://www.joat.biz)

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Appendix F • Comments and Responses



Theo Stephan  
<theo@globalgardensgifts.com>

05/13/2008 05:35 PM

To <cathy\_stettler@dot.ca.gov>

cc

bcc

Subject Cold Springs Bridge

History:  This message has been forwarded.

Dear Cathy:

I drive HWY 154 frequently as I live in Los Olivos. I am highly opposed to the motorcycle helmet law, the seatbelt law and the proposed barrier on the Cold Springs Bridge. I have had friends & relatives who were suicidal and done a lot of counseling regarding suicide. If someone wants to kill themselves at the Bridge...they obviously want to draw dramatic attention to their last moments. If a barrier is constructed, they will find another way if they really want to end their lives. The costs associated with the construction of this is not something I want my tax money to go to. Please vote no on the proposed barrier.

Thank you, Theodora Stephan Williams

***Response to Comments from Maxi Decker, Peter Neuhaus, Nancy R. Heck, Patrick D. McDermott, CPA, Jim Beltran, and Theodora Stephan Williams***

Thank you for your comments on the project. Your opposition to the project has been noted.

### **Section 5.0 Comment Cards from the Public Hearings**

The following 26 comment cards (including four that were mailed and a typed letter submitted at the Santa Barbara hearing) were submitted at the public hearings in Santa Barbara on June 9, 2008, and in Solvang on June 10, 2008. Responses to comments are provided at the end of the comment card copies.

Jennifer Herges	Hyla Fetler
Petti Pfau	Jarrell Jackman
Rev. Charles Stacy	Harwood A. White, Jr.
Walton Clark	Ingrid Leeman
Mark Brickley	Victor Di Bella
Coleen Hefley	Andrew Hankin
Sarah Adams	Sylvia Casberg
Allen Zimmer	Gerry B. Shepherd
David Baldwin	Lisa Benson Psy.D.
Paul Trent	Suzanne Machet Kling
Jina Carvalho	Thore H. Edgren
Tom Gilmore	No name given
Ward Rafferty, Jr.	Anonymous

June 9, 2008  
Santa Barbara

# Cold Spring Canyon Bridge

S U I C I D E B A R R I E R CALIFORNIA 154

## COMMENT CARD

NAME: Jennifer Herges  
ADDRESS: 21783 Woodrose Place CITY: Salinas ZIP: 93908  
REPRESENTING: The Glendon Association

Do you wish to be added to the project mailing list?  YES  NO  
Please drop comments in the Comment Box or

Mail to: **Cathy Stettler**  
Senior Environmental Planner  
Department of Transportation  
50 Higuera St.  
San Luis Obispo, CA 93401

I would like the following comments filed in the record (please print):  
First off, I attended the first meeting for this situation and I am  
glad to see that a second public hearing has been scheduled.  
This project is extremely important in regards to human lives.  
A price cannot be placed on a human life and one million  
dollars is a meaningless amount compared to the valuable life  
of a human being. My hopes is that Caltrans will choose  
to build the grid/mesh Plan. I feel as if it is less  
inhibiting to the view of the environment and will  
deter an individual trying to take their own life.

( Please respond by June 24, 2008 )

How Did You Hear About This Meeting?  newspaper  newsletter  someone told me about it  other: The Glendon Association /  
Public Hearing  
Mailing from CalTRANS.

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# Cold Spring Canyon Bridge

S U I C I D E B A R R I E R

June 10, 2008  
Solvang



## COMMENT CARD

NAME: PETTI PFAU  
ADDRESS: 72 Sandalwood CITY: Solvang ZIP: 93463  
REPRESENTING: SELF

Do you wish to be added to the project mailing list?  YES  NO

Please drop comments in the Comment Box or

Mail to: **Cathy Stettler**  
Senior Environmental Planner  
Department of Transportation  
50 Higuera St.  
San Luis Obispo, CA 93401

I would like the following comments filed in the record (please print):

*The Grid-mesh Concept is the most needed idea for the Cold Spring Bridge. The barrier only needs to save one life - and it is well worth the cost.*

( Please respond by June 24, 2008 )

How Did You Hear About This Meeting?  newspaper  newsletter  someone told me about it  other: \_\_\_\_\_

# Cold Spring Canyon Bridge

S U I C I D E B A R R I E R 

June 10, 2008  
Solvang

## COMMENT CARD

NAME: Rev. Charles H. Stacy  
ADDRESS: 1509 Eucalyptic CITY: Solvang ZIP: 93463  
REPRESENTING: Self

Do you wish to be added to the project mailing list?  YES  NO

Please drop comments in the Comment Box or

Mail to: **Cathy Stettler**  
Senior Environmental Planner  
Department of Transportation  
50 Higuera St.  
San Luis Obispo, CA 93401

I would like the following comments filed in the record (please print):

You received my letter  
I like the vertical ~~Robert~~ Conception  
Grid Mesh

( Please respond by June 24, 2008 )

How Did You Hear About This Meeting?  newspaper  newsletter  someone told me about it  other: Glendon Ass.

# Cold Spring Canyon Bridge

S U I C I D E B A R R I E R 

June 9, 2008  
Santa Barbara

## COMMENT CARD

NAME: WALTON CLARK  
ADDRESS: P.O. Box 6755 CITY: Santa Barbara ZIP: 93160  
REPRESENTING: Self

Do you wish to be added to the project mailing list?  YES  NO  
Please drop comments in the Comment Box or

Mail to: **Cathy Stettler**  
Senior Environmental Planner  
Department of Transportation  
50 Higuera St.  
San Luis Obispo, CA 93401

I would like the following comments filed in the record (please print):  
I like the barrier design. I don't find it unpleasing.  
The present barrier is too low. Walking or biking across  
would make me uneasy. In bad weather it would be dangerous  
to cross with only that low railing.  
Considering the long history of suicides at that site and  
the fact that it is so accessible, seems to be like leaving a  
loaded gun in your living room. It's worthy of note that all  
the survivors of the Golden Gate bridge regretted having jumped  
before they hit the water. There are no survivors at the  
Cold Springs bridge. Lets have no more "I wish I hadn't."

( Please respond by June 24, 2008 )

How Did You Hear About This Meeting?  newspaper  newsletter  someone told me about it  other: \_\_\_\_\_

Via mail

# Cold Spring Canyon Bridge

S U I C I D E B A R R I E R CALIFORNIA 154

## COMMENT CARD

NAME: MARK BRICKLEY

ADDRESS: 3375 FOOTHILL RD CITY: CARPINTERIA ZIP: 93013

REPRESENTING: SELF

Do you wish to be added to the project mailing list?  YES  NO

Please drop comments in the Comment Box or

Mail to: **Cathy Stettler**  
Senior Environmental Planner  
Department of Transportation  
50 Higuera St.  
San Luis Obispo, CA 93401

I would like the following comments filed in the record (please print):

I have given my UNAL SUPPORT for this important  
Caltrans project previously. As the Juvenile Division  
MANAGER for the SANTA BARBARA County Probation Dept.,  
I would offer my assistance to your design  
Team to view the small gage, unclimbable fence  
at Santa Barbara Juvenile Hall. Please call me at  
H-684-3302 or work: 692-4851 if I could be of  
help. I am concerned that the design and choice of  
wire grid in your mock-up photos will allow a  
determined subject to climb the fence to be built on the  
bridge

( Please respond by June 24, 2008 )

How Did You Hear  
About This Meeting?

newspaper

newsletter

someone  
told me  
about it

other:

County  
Board of  
Supervisors  
Announced mtg.

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# Cold Spring Canyon Bridge

S U I C I D E B A R R I E R 

June 10, 2008  
Solvang

## COMMENT CARD

NAME: Coleen Hetley  
ADDRESS: 3650 Montebello St CITY: Santa Ynez ZIP: 93440  
REPRESENTING: me

Do you wish to be added to the project mailing list?  YES  NO  
Please drop comments in the Comment Box or

Mail to: **Cathy Stettler**  
Senior Environmental Planner  
Department of Transportation  
50 Higuera St.  
San Luis Obispo, CA 93401

I would like the following comments filed in the record (please print):  
I had a friend who committed suicide  
recently after a crisis in his life. Had  
he not had the means to kill himself easily  
available and had waited 30 days or so, the  
feelings of my life is over would have subsided & he  
would have been able to cope. So removing easy  
means to suicide is a must.  
To make it more aesthetic - or invisible if you  
ask me - simply paint the barrier black. You won't  
even hardly be able to see it. Really!

( Please respond by June 24, 2008 )

How Did You Hear About This Meeting?  newspaper  newsletter  someone told me about it  other: \_\_\_\_\_

June 9, 2008  
Santa Barbara

# Cold Spring Canyon Bridge

S U I C I D E B A R R I E R CALIFORNIA 154

## COMMENT CARD

NAME: Sarah Adams

ADDRESS: 566Z Calle Real #476 CITY: Goleta ZIP: 93117

REPRESENTING: Self

Do you wish to be added to the project mailing list?  YES  NO

Please drop comments in the Comment Box or

Mail to: **Cathy Stettler**  
Senior Environmental Planner  
Department of Transportation  
50 Higuera St.  
San Luis Obispo, CA 93401

I would like the following comments filed in the record (please print):

I support the construction of the suicide barriers on the Cold Spring Canyon Bridge. I believe that the barriers will prevent suicides and help to make our community a safer place. The bridge is a beautiful sight, but no value or beauty can compare to the impact of saving lives. Also from viewpoint 3, the barriers are hardly seen. Thank you.

( Please respond by June 24, 2008 )

How Did You Hear About This Meeting?  newspaper  newsletter  someone told me about it  other: \_\_\_\_\_  
independent Grendon

# Cold Spring Canyon Bridge

S U I C I D E B A R R I E R

June 9, 2008  
Santa Barbara



## COMMENT CARD

NAME: ALAN ZIMMER

ADDRESS: 421 FIGUERA ST CITY: SB ZIP: 9314

REPRESENTING: SELF

Do you wish to be added to the project mailing list?  YES  NO  
Please drop comments in the Comment Box or

Mail to: **Cathy Stettler**  
Senior Environmental Planner  
Department of Transportation  
50 Higuera St.  
San Luis Obispo, CA 93401

I would like the following comments filed in the record (please print):  
COMPLETION OF THE BARRIER IS ESSENTIAL AND  
MUST BE COMPLETED ASAP!  
THE AESTHETIC ARGUMENTS AGAINST THE  
BARRIER ARE INCONSEQUENTIAL COMPARED  
WITH THE SAVING OF LIVES.  
WHEN TRAVELING 70 MPH OVER A NARROW  
BRIDGE A DRIVERS VIEW SHOULD BE  
ON THE TRAFFIC NOT RUBBERNECKING  
WITNESS THE AUTO ACCIDENTS ON SIM. PASS

( Please respond by June 24, 2008 )

How Did You Hear About This Meeting?  newspaper  newsletter  someone told me about it  other: \_\_\_\_\_

June 9, 2008  
Santa Barbara

# Cold Spring Canyon Bridge

## S U I C I D E B A R R I E R



### COMMENT CARD

NAME: David Baldwin

ADDRESS: 1224 Coast Village Rd CITY: SB ZIP: 93108

REPRESENTING: \_\_\_\_\_

Do you wish to be added to the project mailing list?  YES  NO

Please drop comments in the Comment Box or

Mail to: **Cathy Stettler**  
Senior Environmental Planner  
Department of Transportation  
50 Higuera St.  
San Luis Obispo, CA 93401

I would like the following comments filed in the record (please print):

Aside from some minor aesthetic changes the  
barrier will save lives. It is a simple cost effective  
solution to erect barriers to prevent suicides.

( Please respond by June 24, 2008 )

How Did You Hear About This Meeting?  newspaper  newsletter  someone told me about it  other: \_\_\_\_\_

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June 9, 2008  
Santa Barbara

# Cold Spring Canyon Bridge

S U I C I D E B A R R I E R 

## COMMENT CARD

NAME: Paul Treat  
ADDRESS: 5657 W Camino Cir CITY: SB ZIP: 93105  
REPRESENTING: Self

Do you wish to be added to the project mailing list?  YES  NO  
Please drop comments in the Comment Box or

Mail to: **Cathy Stettler**  
Senior Environmental Planner  
Department of Transportation  
50 Higuera St.  
San Luis Obispo, CA 93401

I would like the following comments filed in the record (please print):

I AM STRONGLY IN FAVOR OF THIS  
PROJECT. I KNOW A LOT ABOUT SUICIDE  
Don't let a few noisy protesters derail  
THIS PROJECT

( Please respond by June 24, 2008 )

How Did You Hear About This Meeting?  newspaper  newsletter  someone told me about it  other: \_\_\_\_\_

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June 9, 2008  
Santa Barbara

# Cold Spring Canyon Bridge

S U I C I D E B A R R I E R 

## COMMENT CARD

NAME: Jina Carvalho  
ADDRESS: 748 A Cieneguitas CITY: Santa Barbara ZIP: 93110  
REPRESENTING: \_\_\_\_\_

Do you wish to be added to the project mailing list?  YES  NO

Please drop comments in the Comment Box or

Mail to: **Cathy Stettler**  
Senior Environmental Planner  
Department of Transportation  
50 Higuera St.  
San Luis Obispo, CA 93401

I would like the following comments filed in the record (please print):

I am in full support of the bridge barrier project. Any life that can be saved at any cost. This is a public safety issue I commend Caltrans for their response to this issue - which has been had some controversy - and misinformation - I have lost people I know to suicide and want to support this to the end - and when I see the barriers up.

( Please respond by June 24, 2008 )

How Did You Hear About This Meeting?  newspaper  newsletter  someone told me about it  other: \_\_\_\_\_

Via Mail



### COMMENT CARD

NAME: TOM GILMORE  
 ADDRESS: 1116 de la Vina CITY: S. BARB. CA ZIP: 93101  
 REPRESENTING: MYSELF

Do you wish to be added to the project mailing list?  YES  NO

Please drop comments in the Comment Box or

Mail to: Cathy Stettler  
 Senior Environmental Planner  
 Department of Transportation  
 50 Higuera St.  
 San Luis Obispo, CA 93401

I would like the following comments filed in the record (please print):

TO THOSE OUT THERE WHO ARE THINKING  
ABOUT COMMITTING SUICIDE? DON'T  
COMMIT SUICIDE; BECAUSE THERE ARE  
CERTAIN PEOPLE WHO NEED YOU.  
THE GOOD LORD MEANT FOR US TO  
ENJOY LIFE NO MATTER WHAT, AND TO  
REJOICE ALWAYS.  
IF THAT SUICIDE BARRIER IS PUT ON  
THAT BRIDGE AND SAVES JUST ONE LIFE,  
IT'S WORTH IT!

( Please respond by June 24, 2008 )

How Did You Hear About This Meeting?  newspaper  newsletter  someone told me about it  other: JUST CAME IN

# Cold Spring Canyon Bridge

S U I C I D E B A R R I E R 

June 10, 2008  
Solvang

## COMMENT CARD

NAME: WALTER RAFFERTY JR.  
ADDRESS: 1474 Kronborg Dr. CITY: Solvang ZIP: 93463  
REPRESENTING: myself ans i (805) 688-0015

Do you wish to be added to the project mailing list?  YES  NO

Please drop comments in the Comment Box or

Mail to: **Cathy Stettler**  
Senior Environmental Planner  
Department of Transportation  
50 Higuera St.  
San Luis Obispo, CA 93401

I would like the following comments filed in the record (please print):

Please send PDF'S or electronic copies of  
the display boards.

( Please respond by June 24, 2008 )

How Did You Hear About This Meeting?  newspaper  newsletter  someone told me about it  other: \_\_\_\_\_

June 9, 2008  
Santa Barbara

# Cold Spring Canyon Bridge

S U I C I D E B A R R I E R 

## COMMENT CARD

NAME: Hyla Fetter  
ADDRESS: 302 Palisades Dr. CITY: Santa Barbara ZIP: 93109  
REPRESENTING: myself

Do you wish to be added to the project mailing list?  YES  NO

Please drop comments in the Comment Box or

Mail to: **Cathy Stettler**  
Senior Environmental Planner  
Department of Transportation  
50 Higuera St.  
San Luis Obispo, CA 93401

I would like the following comments filed in the record (please print):

I am 65 years old. I have known people who have committed suicide by pills, drowning, asphyxiation, guns, but I do not know anyone who has jumped off a bridge. I think this is a rare choice. I know one person who had attempted suicide before who went to Cold Springs Bridge to kill herself. She walked on to the bridge to jump, then changed her mind. I do not believe that barriers will keep people from killing themselves, but I do know that wire fencing will add ugliness (at great expense) to our world where there is already so much human-created ugliness. In Santa Barbara we have a bridge over San Roque Creek. It used to be my spirits would lift every time I rode over it and saw the mountains on one side, the ocean on the other. Years ago, a barrier was installed. Now my spirit sinks. I feel like I am entering a cage or a prison. It is depressing. I do not look to the right or the left. I try not to think about it. I realize that people at Caltrans will not need to feel guilty if someone who might have jumped, instead shoots himself or goes into the ocean instead, but I don't think this is a reason to build this very expensive ugliness. I AM IN FAVOR OF THE NO-BUILD ALTERNATIVE

( Please respond by June 24, 2008 )

How Did You Hear About This Meeting?  newspaper  newsletter  someone told me about it  other: \_\_\_\_\_

June 9, 2008  
Santa Barbara

# Cold Spring Canyon Bridge

S U I C I D E B A R R I E R 

## COMMENT CARD

NAME: JARRELL JACKMAN

ADDRESS: 5060B Calle Real CITY: SB ZIP: 93101

REPRESENTING: S Barbara Trust for Historic Preservation

Do you wish to be added to the project mailing list?  YES  NO

Please drop comments in the Comment Box or

Mail to: **Cathy Stettler**  
Senior Environmental Planner  
Department of Transportation  
50 Higuera St.  
San Luis Obispo, CA 93401

I would like the following comments filed in the record (please print):

The barriers should NOT be built

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( Please respond by June 24, 2008 )

How Did You Hear About This Meeting?  newspaper  newsletter  someone told me about it  other: various sources

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June 9, 2008  
Santa Barbara

**HARWOOD A. WHITE, JR.**  
Land Use Planning • Project Management

Attn: CALTRANS  
June 9, 2008  
Subject: Cold Springs Bridge

Dear CALTRANS:

As a longtime member of Santa Barbara City Planning Commission, I have had the pleasure of working with CALTRANS to plan the next phase of improvements to the Milpas/Hot Springs Road segment of Highway 101. CALTRANS displayed an extraordinary ability to listen to community feedback and cherry pick amongst the many options, and arrive at a design which met with local support.

1

How different appears to be the approach to the Cold Springs Bridge barriers. I submit this at an information session, wherein we, the taxpaying public cannot testify. I object to this process of expediency.

2

I also object to this project. This money can be better spent in so many ways. Mental Health budgets, public transit, and even road repairs.

3

But NOT the ruination of this beautiful bridge!

I urge you to hold bona-fide public hearings on this topic.

4

And for the record, I voice an emphatic "NO" to the barrier proposal.

Respectfully submitted,



Harwood A. White, Jr.

# Cold Spring Canyon Bridge

S U I C I D E B A R R I E R 

June 9, 2008  
Santa Barbara

## COMMENT CARD

NAME: Ingrid Leeman  
ADDRESS: PO Box 90125 CITY: San Luis Obispo ZIP: 93190  
REPRESENTING: self

Do you wish to be added to the project mailing list?  YES  NO  
Please drop comments in the Comment Box or

Mail to: **Cathy Stettler**  
Senior Environmental Planner  
Department of Transportation  
50 Higuera St.  
San Luis Obispo, CA 93401

I would like the following comments filed in the record (please print):  
Not in favor of the Bridge Construction  
I understand the facts. The suicide rate, the  
danger for rescue teams.  
Still I think the rate of suicide in the local  
does not warrant its construction. Specially  
because I am sure people who are suicidal  
will find another place. I understand the money  
allocation issue for safety Projects, why spend for yarding?  
The bridge is visually impaired, will clog 154  
during construction.

( Please respond by June 24, 2008 )

How Did You Hear About This Meeting?  newspaper  newsletter  someone told me about it  other: \_\_\_\_\_

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June 9, 2008  
Santa Barbara

# Cold Spring Canyon Bridge

S U I C I D E B A R R I E R CALIFORNIA 154

## COMMENT CARD

NAME: Victor Di Bella  
ADDRESS: 1233 Alta Vista Rd CITY: Sta. Barb. ZIP: 93103-2339  
REPRESENTING: self

Do you wish to be added to the project mailing list?  YES  NO

Please drop comments in the Comment Box or

Mail to: **Cathy Stettler**  
Senior Environmental Planner  
Department of Transportation  
50 Higuera St.  
San Luis Obispo, CA 93401

I would like the following comments filed in the record (please print):

The unfortunate suicides at CSCB were considerate people who chose to escape their pain WITHOUT killing any other fellow humans in the process. I believe that during that 40 year period countless murder-suicides have occurred on Cal-Trans roads. Humans are a gregarious species; many don't fancy the idea of dying alone. Resources should be used to identify such people and deny them the driving privilege (we don't allow the blind to drive) the bridge should remain as it is.

( Please respond by June 24, 2008 )

How Did You Hear About This Meeting?  newspaper  newsletter  someone told me about it  other: \_\_\_\_\_

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June 9, 2008  
Santa Barbara

# Cold Spring Canyon Bridge

## S U I C I D E B A R R I E R



### COMMENT CARD

NAME: ANDREW HANKIN, 228 WEST VICTORIA ST. APT. 4  
ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_ CITY: SANTA BARBARA ZIP: CA 93101  
REPRESENTING: MYSELF

Do you wish to be added to the project mailing list?  YES  NO

Please drop comments in the Comment Box or

Mail to: **Cathy Stettler**  
Senior Environmental Planner  
Department of Transportation  
50 Higuera St.  
San Luis Obispo, CA 93401

I would like the following comments filed in the record (please print):

I'M ~~OPPOSED~~ OPPOSED TO ANY BARRIER BEING ADDED TO THE COLD SPRING CANYON BRIDGE, FOR THE FOLLOWING REASONS:

- \$3.2 MILLION DOLLAR PROJECT COST COULD SAVE MORE LIVES IF SPENT IN A MORE POPULATED AREA THAN THE BRIDGE IS LOCATED.
- THE AVAILABLE FUNDING IS FOR ACCIDENT PREVENTION, YET SUICIDE IS A CHOICE, NOT AN ACCIDENT. SUICIDE PREVENTION IS THE PRIORITY OF MENTAL HEALTH AGENCIES (WHICH OUGHT TO BE FULLY FUNDED), NOT CALTRANS.
- THE BRIDGE IS GORGEOUS IN ITS CURRENT FORM AND SHOULD NOT BE 70% VIEW-OBSTRUCTED BY INCARCERATION FENCING.
- EMERGENCY HELP PHONES SHOULD BE INSTALLED IMMEDIATELY ON BOTH SIDES OF THE ROAD AND BOTH ENDS OF THE BRIDGE.

( Please respond by June 24, 2008 )

How Did You Hear About This Meeting?  newspaper  newsletter  someone told me about it  other: \_\_\_\_\_

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# Cold Spring Canyon Bridge

S U I C I D E B A R R I E R

June 10, 2008  
Solvang



## COMMENT CARD

NAME: Sylvia Casberg

ADDRESS: 2162 Creekside CITY: Solvang ZIP: 93463

REPRESENTING: Self

Do you wish to be added to the project mailing list?  YES  NO

Please drop comments in the Comment Box or  
Mail to: **Cathy Stettler**  
Senior Environmental Planner  
Department of Transportation  
50 Higuera St.  
San Luis Obispo, CA 93401

I would like the following comments filed in the record (please print):  
Thank you for the opportunity to share my insights - I worked with Marin County Suicide Prevention in 1979 - The question of putting a barrier on the Cold Spring Canyon Bridge was being discussed - This bridge has been a symbol of suicide around the world - Well into the discussion attorneys suggested, no matter how high or how secure the barrier is built, someone will get over it and their family will

sue because ( Please respond by June 24, 2008 )  
it wasn't enough

How Did You Hear About This Meeting?  newspaper  newsletter  someone told me about it  other: \_\_\_\_\_

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# Cold Spring Canyon Bridge

## S U I C I D E B A R R I E R



June 10, 2008  
Solvang

### COMMENT CARD

NAME: Gerry B. Shepherd

ADDRESS: PO Box 30 CITY: SANTA YNEZ ZIP: 93460

REPRESENTING: \_\_\_\_\_

Do you wish to be added to the project mailing list?  YES  NO

Please drop comments in the Comment Box or

Mail to: **Cathy Stettler**  
Senior Environmental Planner  
Department of Transportation  
50 Higuera St.  
San Luis Obispo, CA 93401

I would like the following comments filed in the record (please print):

① FUNDS SPENT ON THIS PROJECT (TO POSSIBLY SAVE 1 SUICIDE/LIFE PER YEAR) WOULD BE BETTER SPENT ON MAKING HWY 154 SAFER FROM SPEEDING AND DRUNK DRIVERS. (MORE PATROL CARS, MORE SPEED WARNINGS), HIGHER FINES FOR INFRACTIONS)

② SPENDING TAXPAYER MONEY ON <sup>ATTEMPTING</sup> PREVENTION OF SUICIDE (PERSONAL CHOICE) IS COUNTER TO THE GREATEST GOOD OF THE MAJORITY (TAXPAYERS)

③ FISCALLY, SPENDING MILLIONS TO POSSIBLY PREVENT 1 SUICIDE PER YEAR IS IRRESPONSIBLE <sup>FISCAL POLICY</sup> WHEN FUNDS COULD BETTER BE SPENT MEETING OTHER NEEDS (CALTRANS EDUCATION IN SCHOOLS; TEEN DRIVING SEMINARS, ETC.)

④ NOT A SINGLE ORGANIZATION OR COMMUNITY GROUP HAS SUPPORTED THE SUICIDE BARRIER FOR GOLD SPRING BRIDGE. THE VOICE OF THE COMMUNITY IS BEING ~~IGNORED~~ (Please respond by June 24, 2008)

⑤ NO STATISTICS EXIST, TO SUPPORT <sup>OR QUANTIFY</sup> THE CONCERN THAT ERECTING THE BARRIER <sup>How Did You Hear</sup> MAY ACTUALLY INCREASE TRAFFIC ACCIDENTS AS DRIVERS STRAIN TO SEE <sup>About This Meeting?</sup> THRU THE BARRIER TO THE BEAUTIFUL LANDSCAPE YOU CHOOSE TO OBLITERATE.  newspaper  newsletter  someone told me about it  other

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Via Mail



### COMMENT CARD

NAME: Lisa Benson, Psy.D.

ADDRESS: 602 Calle Palo Colorado CITY: S.B. ZIP: 93105

REPRESENTING: \_\_\_\_\_

Do you wish to be added to the project mailing list?  YES  NO

Please drop comments in the Comment Box or

Mail to: **Cathy Stettler**  
 Senior Environmental Planner  
 Department of Transportation  
 50 Higuera St.  
 San Luis Obispo, CA 93401

I would like the following comments filed in the record (please print):

As a local psychologist I am interested in this project. I agree that removing lethal means of committing suicide (i.e. guns, bridge access, etc.) is helpful in preventing them. However, there is no research suggesting that this will reduce suicide rates in the community. I do not support the use of this money in preventing suicide. The money is better spent on prevention programs built into mental health organizations.

( Please respond by June 24, 2008 )

How Did You Hear About This Meeting?  newspaper  newsletter  someone told me about it  other: \_\_\_\_\_

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### COMMENT CARD

NAME: SUZANNE MACHET KLING

ADDRESS: 3895 CINCO AMIGOS CITY: SANTA BARBARA ZIP: 93105

REPRESENTING: SELF

Do you wish to be added to the project mailing list?  YES  NO

Please drop comments in the Comment Box or

Mail to: Cathy Stettler  
Senior Environmental Planner  
Department of Transportation  
50 Higuera St.  
San Luis Obispo, CA 93401

I would like the following comments filed in the record (please print):

SPENDING 1-3 MILLION DOLLARS ON BARRICADE FENCING ON COLD SPRING CANYON  
BRIDGE WOULD HAVE A DETRIMENTAL ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECT. THIS IS NOT THE ANSWER  
TO SOLVING THE PROBLEM OF SUICIDE FROM THE BRIDGE.

DISTURBED INDIVIDUALS WHO MAY WANT TO COMMIT SUICIDE HAVE TO BE  
COUNSELED BY PROFESSIONALS. THEY ALSO NEED THE LOVE, UNDERSTANDING,  
AND COMPASSION OF FAMILY AND FRIENDS.

THE COLD SPRING CANYON BRIDGE IS NOT THE PROBLEM, NOR THE  
CAUSE. PLEASE DONT MAKE IT THE VICTIM !!

( Please respond by June 24, 2008 )

How Did You Hear About This Meeting?  newspaper  newsletter  someone told me about it  other: \_\_\_\_\_

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Via mail

# Cold Spring Canyon Bridge

S U I C I D E B A R R I E R CALIFORNIA 154

## COMMENT CARD

NAME: THORE A. EDGREN

ADDRESS: 6545 CAMINO VENTUROSO CITY: GOLETA ZIP: 93117

REPRESENTING: \_\_\_\_\_

Do you wish to be added to the project mailing list?  YES  NO

Please drop comments in the Comment Box or

Mail to: **Cathy Stettler**  
Senior Environmental Planner  
Department of Transportation  
50 Higuera St.  
San Luis Obispo, CA 93401

I would like the following comments filed in the record (please print):  
THE COLD SPRINGS BRIDGE IS A LANDMARK STRUCTURE & ITS DESIGN IS AESTHETICALLY PLEASING AS IT COMPLIMENTS ITS BEAUTIFUL NATURAL SURROUNDINGS. ON TRAVELING ACROSS THE BRIDGE ONE IS ONLY AWARE OF THE UNINTERRUPTED VIEW OF THE FABULOUS NATURAL SURROUNDINGS. THE PROPOSED BARRIER CONCEPTS WILL PROVIDE AN URBAN UGLINESS TYPICALLY FOUND ON PED. & VEH. FREEWAY OVERPASSES, & THE APPEARANCE OF DRIVING ON A LONG PRISON ROAD. THE PROPOSED BARRIERS CAN BE BREACHED BY USING A VEHICLE ROOF AS A PLATFORM TO EASILY CLIMB OVER THE BARRIER. SUICIDE IS A SOCIAL PROBLEM WHICH NEEDS TO BE ADDRESSED, HOWEVER THE MAJORITY DO NOT TAKE PLACE BY JUMPING OFF BRIDGES. THE PROPOSED BARRIERS HAVE TOO GREAT AN IMPACT ON THE ENVIRONMENT TO BE JUSTIFIED. THE BARRIER CAN BECOME A DEPOSITORY FOR DEBRIS, PAPER SIGNS, GRAFFITI, ETC.

( Please respond by June 24, 2008 )

How Did You Hear About This Meeting?  newspaper  newsletter  someone told me about it  other: \_\_\_\_\_

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June 9, 2008  
Santa Barbara

# Cold Spring Canyon Bridge

S U I C I D E B A R R I E R 

## COMMENT CARD

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_ CITY: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

REPRESENTING: \_\_\_\_\_

Do you wish to be added to the project mailing list?  YES  NO

Please drop comments in the Comment Box or

Mail to: **Cathy Stettler**  
Senior Environmental Planner  
Department of Transportation  
50 Higuera St.  
San Luis Obispo, CA 93401

I would like the following comments filed in the record (please print):

Forget IT!  
2.3 million??  
Put money into mental health  
instead

( Please respond by June 24, 2008 )

How Did You Hear About This Meeting?  newspaper  newsletter  someone told me about it  other: \_\_\_\_\_

# Cold Spring Canyon Bridge

S U I C I D E B A R R I E R 

June 9, 2008  
Santa Barbara

## COMMENT CARD

NAME: Anonymous  
ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_ CITY: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_  
REPRESENTING: \_\_\_\_\_

Do you wish to be added to the project mailing list?  YES  NO  
Please drop comments in the Comment Box or

Mail to: **Cathy Stettler**  
Senior Environmental Planner  
Department of Transportation  
50 Higuera St.  
San Luis Obispo, CA 93401

I would like the following comments filed in the record (please print):  
I came to the Faulkner on 6/9/08 for a hearing  
because that is what was advertised, on a suicide  
barrier @ cold springs bridge. But there was  
no hearing, no discussion. Only propaganda  
supporting this lucrative project for Caltrans to  
be paid for by the taxpayers.

( Please respond by June 24, 2008 )

How Did You Hear About This Meeting?  newspaper  newsletter  someone told me about it  other: \_\_\_\_\_

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### **Response to Comment Cards**

#### **Jennifer Herges, Petti Pfau**

Thank you for your interest in the Cold Spring Canyon Bridge Suicide Barrier Project. Your support for the project has been noted.

#### **Rev. Charles Stacy**

Thank you for your interest in the Cold Spring Canyon Bridge Suicide Barrier Project. Your support for the project has been noted. Your mailed comment letter dated June 5, 2008, was received and has been included in this document.

#### **Walton Clark**

Thank you for your interest in the Cold Spring Canyon Bridge Suicide Barrier Project. Your support for the project has been noted.

#### **Mark Brickley**

Thank you for your interest in the Cold Spring Canyon Bridge Suicide Barrier Project. Your support for the project has been noted. Your suggestion for Caltrans staff to view an example of safety fencing will be taken into consideration.

#### **Coleen Hefley**

Thank you for your interest in the Cold Spring Canyon Bridge Suicide Barrier Project. Your support for the project has been noted. Your suggestion to paint the barriers black to improve the aesthetics will be taken into consideration.

#### **Sarah Adams, Allen Zimmer, David Baldwin, Paul Trent, Jina Carvalho, Tom Gilmore**

Thank you for your interest in the Cold Spring Canyon Bridge Suicide Barrier Project. Your support for the project has been noted.

#### **Ward Rafferty, Jr.**

Thank you for your interest in the Cold Spring Canyon Bridge Suicide Barrier Project. As you have acknowledged in a subsequent letter, the electronic copies of the public meeting display boards you requested were made available to you.

**Hyla Fetler**

Thank you for your interest in the Cold Spring Canyon Bridge Suicide Barrier Project. Your opposition to the project and support for the No-Build Alternative has been noted.

**Jarrell Jackman**

Thank you for your interest in the Cold Spring Canyon Bridge Suicide Barrier Project. Your opposition to the project has been noted.

**Harwood A. White, Jr.**

Thank you for your interest in the Cold Spring Canyon Bridge Suicide Barrier Project. Your opposition to the project has been noted.

**Response to comment #1:** Thank you for your comments regarding Caltrans and the Milpas/Hot Spring Road project.

**Response to comment #2:** Chapter 11 of the Project Development Procedures Manual is the guide to the public hearing process (along with the guidelines of the California Environmental Quality Act and the National Environmental Policy Act). “The District Director decides whether to hold a formal hearing or an open forum hearing...Open forum hearings are preferred to formal hearings, because they result in a greater and more balanced input and are less likely to result in confrontational situations. . . .Open forum hearings generally result in better communication with affected interests than do formal hearings. Open forum hearings provide an opportunity to discuss projects and proposals in a less emotional atmosphere.” For these reasons, the Director chose the open forum hearing format as the most appropriate format to receive public comment on the Cold Spring Canyon Suicide Barrier draft EIR/EA.

Regarding the appropriateness of the format of the open forum public hearing you attended on June 9, please refer to Response #2(8) to Mr. Ward Rafferty, Jr., in this document.

**Response to comment #3:** This local Recovery Act funding has been designated specifically for this project.

**Response to comment #4:** Regarding public involvement, Caltrans has made a good faith effort to involve the public. Please refer to Chapter 4 of the EIR/EA and Response to comment #2(2c) to Mr. Ward Rafferty, Jr.

**Ingrid Leeman**

Thank you for your interest in the Cold Spring Canyon Bridge Suicide Barrier Project. Your opposition to the project has been noted. To minimize motorist delays and ensure public and worker safety during construction of the barriers on State Route 154, a comprehensive Traffic Management Plan has been developed. The Traffic Management Plan is a mitigation measure listed in Appendix D, Construction Impacts.

**Victor Di Bella**

Thank you for your interest in the Cold Spring Canyon Bridge Suicide Barrier Project. Your opposition to the project has been noted.

**Andrew Hankin**

Thank you for your interest in the Cold Spring Canyon Bridge Suicide Barrier Project. Your opposition to the project has been noted.

**Response to comment #1:** As stated in the environmental document in the Summary and Chapter 1, the purpose of the project is not to reduce the suicide or death rate in the community, but to reduce the number of suicides at the bridge resulting from individuals jumping off the bridge (please refer to the Purpose and Need in the Summary and in Chapter 1 for a complete discussion. Because of suicides, the Cold Spring Canyon Bridge has the highest concentration of fatalities for any spot location on the state highway system in Caltrans District 5 (Santa Barbara, San Luis Obispo, Monterey, Santa Cruz, and San Benito counties).

**Response to comment #2:** Originally, the proposed project was to have been built under Caltrans' Safety Improvement Program. However, at the request of the California Transportation Commission, Caltrans investigated alternate funding sources other than the State Highway Operation and Protection Program (SHOPP). As a result, it has been determined that the money needed to construct the barriers will now come from local Recovery Act funds. As the owner-operator of the bridge facility, Caltrans has an obligation to promote the safe operation of the structure.

**Response to comment #3** The environmental document states that the construction of a barrier would have an effect on as much as 70 percent of the existing view as seen from the bridge deck and that although the views through the proposed barrier would be somewhat opaque, it would not completely block views, and the landscape would still be seen through the mesh.

**Response to comment #4:** Regarding the effectiveness of emergency help phones and the Santa Barbara County Association of Governments' project to install crisis lines near the bridge, please refer to the environmental document Section 2.1.1 including "Difference of opinion regarding the effectiveness of physical suicide barriers vs. 'human barriers.'" Also in the Response to comment #1 to Santa Barbara County Sheriff-Coroner Bill Brown, the Santa Barbara County Association of Governments' project to install crisis phone lines near the bridge is discussed.

**Sylvia Casberg**

Thank you for your interest in the Cold Spring Canyon Bridge Suicide Barrier Project. Your opposition to the project has been noted. The purpose of the barrier is to reduce the number of suicides from the bridge, not stop all of them from occurring. A rate of 100% effectiveness may not be possible.

**Gerry B. Shepherd**

Thank you for your interest in the Cold Spring Canyon Bridge Suicide Barrier Project. Your opposition to the project has been noted. Originally, the proposed project was to have been built under Caltrans' Safety Improvement Program. However, at the request of the California Transportation Commission, Caltrans investigated alternate funding sources other than the State Highway Operation and Protection Program (SHOPP). As a result, it has been determined that the money needed to construct the barriers will now come from local Recovery Act funds. Regarding alternate uses of funding, this local Recovery Act funding has been designated specifically for this project. Regarding community support, most of the comments received on the draft environmental document support the proposed barriers.

**Lisa Benson Psy.D.**

Thank you for your interest in the Cold Spring Canyon Bridge Suicide Barrier Project. Your opposition to the project has been noted. Regarding reducing the suicide rate in the community and using the funding for mental health purposes, please refer to Responses to comments #1 and #2 respectively, to Mr. Andrew Hankin.

**Suzanne Machet Kling**

Thank you for your interest in the Cold Spring Canyon Bridge Suicide Barrier Project. Your opposition to the project has been noted. In regard to solving the problem of suicides at the bridge, physical barriers have been shown to be effective at reducing suicides on bridges, as discussed in the EIR/EA Section 2.1.1. and the section “Difference of opinion regarding the effectiveness of physical suicide barriers vs. ‘human barriers’” including the statement “The Lifeline Steering Committee position is that the use of bridge barriers is the most effective means of bridge suicide prevention. Subsequently, as bridge/transportation authorities or other stakeholders approach the Lifeline with requests for implementing bridge phones, the Lifeline should emphasize the need for barriers as the most effective solution.”

**Thore H. Edgren**

Thank you for your interest in the Cold Spring Canyon Bridge Suicide Barrier Project. Your opposition to the project has been noted.

**Response to comment #1:** Regarding the proposed barriers being breached by standing on a parked car, please see the response to Sylvia Casberg in this document.

**Response to comment #2:** Caltrans Maintenance crews will continue with maintenance duties on the bridge, including cleaning up any future occurrences of litter, debris, paper signs, graffiti, and so forth associated with the barriers.

**No name given**

Your opposition to the project has been noted. Regarding alternate uses of funding, this local Recovery Act funding has been designated specifically for this project. The estimated construction cost of the Grid/Mesh Alternative is \$969,000 and the estimated construction cost of the Vertical Alternative is \$1,050,000 (as of June 2009 and October 2008, respectively).

**Anonymous**

Your opposition to the project has been noted. Regarding the appropriateness of the public hearing format, please refer to Response to comment #2(8) to Mr. Ward Rafferty, Jr., in this document.

## **6.0 Transcripts from Public Hearings**

The following transcripts are from the public hearings held in Santa Barbara on Monday, June 9, 2008, and in Solvang on June 10, 2008. Responses to comments are provided at the end of the certified transcript copies.

Shirley Force

Mark Brickley

Tom Gilmore

Marge Schwartz

Robert and Pat Maxim

Andre Hankin

Joni Kelley

Jamie Rotnofsky

Nevin Sams

James G. Mills

Robert and Inge Kristoffersen

Jim Richardson

Coleen Hefley

Karen Summer

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CALTRANS PUBLIC HEARING PROJECT INFORMATION  
SANTA BARBARA, CALIFORNIA

**CERTIFIED COPY**

COLD SPRING CANYON BRIDGE SUICIDE BARRIER  
TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS  
MONDAY, JUNE 9, 2008  
40 EAST ANAPAMU STREET  
SANTA BARBARA, CALIFORNIA

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REPORTED BY:

JOAN L. PARKER, C.S.R. 12912

Pages 1 - 10

FILE NO.: A203962

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1 SANTA BARBARA, CALIFORNIA; MONDAY, JUNE 9, 2008

2 5:30 P.M.

3

4 P R O C E E D I N G S

5

6 MS. VON SCHWIND: The public hearing is now  
7 officially open. Thank you and welcome.

8

9 SHIRLEY FORCE  
10 1674 Franceschi Road  
Santa Barbara 93103

11

12 MS. FORCE: I'm not here representing  
13 anyone, I'm a homeowner of the Riviera.

14 I drive back and forth every so often. I  
15 have three things that I feel are not in favor of the  
16 project: Number one, ineffective. People will find  
17 another way to, if they're that determined; and, two,  
18 too expensive. Don't use my tax money for this; and,  
19 three, ugly forever.

20 And frankly, you know, they've only had less  
21 than one death a year. It's not exactly a monumental  
22 number of people. I'm sorry about that. But, you know,  
23 there are too many people on the planet at this very  
24 moment. If somebody wants to leave, I say, Let them go.

25 That might not be a very nice thing to say,

2

1 but what are we going to do?

2 I just wanted to have my opinion recorded.

3 We'll see what the rest of the people think.

4

5 MARK BRICKLEY  
6 3375 Foothill Road, No. 733  
7 Carpinteria 93013

7

8 MR. BRICKLEY: Representing -- I'm a private  
9 citizen. I would like to say that I am the juvenile  
10 division manager for the Santa Barbara County Probation  
11 Department. That's my profession, and I've worked there  
12 for over 27 years.

13 I am here today to offer my strong support  
14 for the suicide barrier at the Cold Spring Canyon  
15 Bridge. I think it would benefit the community  
16 immediately and for decades to come.

17 I think it's one of the most significant  
18 projects that I can remember the state and community  
19 partners undertaking in my career. And I've been a  
20 resident of Santa Barbara almost all my life.

21 I'd like to say that suicide is a -- can't  
22 be fully appreciated unless it is personally experienced  
23 in a family situation and that I hope that the -- those  
24 that are opposed to this project can fully and better  
25 understand the impacts of suicide on family, friends,

1 and the community.

2           And that if we can prevent loss of life from  
3 this project, we will be doing something that is both  
4 significant in terms of who we are as human beings,  
5 helping and supporting each other, but also caring for  
6 those that we don't know and that are often anonymous  
7 and those that are forgotten. And so we're acting for  
8 those individuals when we support a suicide barrier like  
9 this.

10           So again, I just wanted to say that if  
11 there's anything I can do as a private citizen, I would  
12 be more than happy to help in any way.

13  
14           TOM GILMORE  
15           116 De La Vina, Apartment 241  
16           Santa Barbara

17           MR. GILMORE: I'm a private citizen.

18           To all you out there that are thinking about  
19 suicide, I advise you not to commit suicide because  
20 there's a number of people that need you. The good Lord  
21 works in mysterious ways and you should enjoy life no  
22 matter what.

23           Yes, I am in support of the barrier if it  
24 just keeps one person from committing suicide.

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MARGE SCHWARTZ  
(Declined to give address)

MS. SCHWARTZ: It's not a hearing, this is not a hearing. They advertised this as a "hearing" and it's not.

Well, I feel like they don't want a hearing because then they'd have to look at alternatives and therefore, the alternatives might not be as lucrative as a suicide barrier. I'm not saying I'm against the barrier, I'm saying they should have a discussion, not propaganda.

ROBERT and PAT MAXIM  
123 West Yanonali Street  
Santa Barbara 93101

MR. MAXIM: I'm speaking for -- my name is Robert and my wife's name is Pat Maxim.

We're private citizens and we came here because, like most other Santa Barbarans, we love the architecture in the city and its surrounding areas. This bridge has always been held in awe by us and those who we bring to visit it.

When we heard -- several months ago when we heard about proposed mitigation efforts regarding suicide, we were totally opposed. Letters were written,

1 phone calls made to -- I can't even -- well, local  
2 political types advising them or suggesting to them that  
3 they vote against this Caltrans proposal and that the  
4 money would be better used somewhere else.

5 Now that we've had a chance to visit and see  
6 this exposition, which has been extremely well done, it  
7 has answered all of our questions and now we can do  
8 nothing but be in favor of the mitigation efforts  
9 proposed by Caltrans.

10 We still -- we would still prefer that the  
11 barrier not be put up, but now we better understand its  
12 absolute need.

13 And what else?

14 MS. MAXIM: Well, you don't have to write  
15 this, it seems to us as though every effort has been  
16 made by Caltrans to minimize the visual impact to the  
17 bridge from observers and from those driving across to  
18 view the countryside.

19 MR. MAXIM: Bravo.

20 MS. MAXIM: Bravo.

21 MR. MAXIM: Thumbs up from the Maxims.

22

23 ANDRE HANKIN  
24 Downtown Santa Barbara

24

25 MR. HANKIN: Representing just myself.



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JAMIE ROTNOFSKY  
746 Toro Canyon Road  
Santa Barbara, California 93108

MS. ROTNOFSKY: I represent the Glendon Association, but I also represent myself. And I also -- myself as a member of Santa Barbara County, as well as a community psychologist.

I'd like to see, obviously, the barriers move forward with the project. If anything, I'd like to see it move faster. The current fast track is 2010, that's a long time away.

And since the committee has formed, there has been another death, that we know of, from that bridge. So unfortunately the barrier wasn't fast enough to save that life, but then the hope is it's built as fast as possible to save future lives.

That obviously, I think that Caltrans did do a great job offering different options as far as aesthetics which, of course, are important; however, not more important than saving a human life.

And basically all the statistics and research demonstrate that for this particular issue at this particular site, this is the most effective means to decreasing suicide for this site.

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NEVIN SAMS  
8050 Graves Creek Road  
Atascadero 93422

MR. SAMS: I'm here for myself.

Well, I'm in favor of the project. I was involved with it from the beginning when I did work for Caltrans. And I understand the purpose of it and I think it would be effective, so I came to the meeting tonight to offer my support.

That's it.

MS. VON SCHWIND: This public hearing is officially closed. Thank you all for coming.

(The proceedings concluded at 8:30 p.m.)

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CERTIFICATE

I, JOAN L. PARKER, CSR No. 12912, in and for the State of California, do hereby certify that I am not related to counsel nor to any of the parties connected with this action and that I have no interest in the outcome of said events.

I declare under penalty of perjury of the laws of the State of California that the foregoing is true and correct.

Executed this 20<sup>th</sup> day of June, 2008, at Santa Barbara, California.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
JOAN L. PARKER, CSR No.: 12912  
Certified Shorthand Reporter in  
and for the State of California

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CALTRANS PUBLIC HEARING PROJECT INFORMATION  
SANTA BARBARA, CALIFORNIA

**CERTIFIED COPY**

COLD SPRING CANYON BRIDGE SUICIDE BARRIER  
TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS  
TUESDAY, JUNE 10, 2008  
1745 MISSION DRIVE  
SOLVANG, CALIFORNIA

REPORTED BY:  
JOAN L. PARKER, C.S.R. 12912

Pages 1 - 14  
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FILE NO.: A203963

1 SOLVANG, CALIFORNIA; TUESDAY, JUNE 10, 2008

2 5:30 P.M.

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4 P R O C E E D I N G S

5  
6 MR. EWING: This public hearing is now  
7 officially open.

8  
9 JAMES G. MILLS  
10 1660 Fredensborg Way  
11 Solvang, California 93463  
12 (805) 688-0712

13 MR. MILLS: Representing just myself.  
14 My objections to this project is not  
15 aesthetic. To me it looks like a horrible misdirection  
16 of substantial funds from reading the draft document.  
17 The obligation of Caltrans is to improve safety on the  
18 roadways in this area.

19 I have a feeling from reading the document  
20 the entire thrust of this thing was suicide prevention.  
21 That looks like something that should be handled by the  
22 health department of public health, psychiatrists, and  
23 so forth.

24 Caltrans has no business, in my mind,  
25 getting into this project. They should be figuring  
which cuts are too narrow now to widen, perhaps have the

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1 traffic controlled where 154 headed north turns  
2 westbound to 246. That's been a scene of accidents and  
3 there are going to be more. It's kind of tricky going  
4 through there.

5 Lights in the tunnel in the Gaviota Pass  
6 turning darkness into daylight there.

7 There's all kinds of things that could be  
8 done to make these highways safer, but instead they've  
9 got a suicide thing.

10 Now, I had prepared a statement; I thought  
11 this was going to be a public hearing. So if you don't  
12 mind, I'll just read that to you.

13 "Before the Cold Spring Canyon Bridge was  
14 built I had served as a fireman, both on the  
15 Santa Barbara Fire Department and the Los Angeles City  
16 Fire Department.

17 "Those employments involved responses to  
18 suicides and attempted suicides, some by means of hoses  
19 from a car's exhaust to its interior, on several  
20 occasions, as well as from drug overdoses and other  
21 means which I won't go into.

22 "Not having that bridge or any other bridge  
23 deterred none of them. The majority of preventable  
24 deaths that I had encountered had nothing to do with  
25 suicides, but rather with vehicle and other accidents,

3

3

1 sometimes with accompanying fires.

2 "As a former fireman, to me the only really  
3 valid purpose among those purposes listed in your draft  
4 report would be the reduction of risks to emergency  
5 personnel in to trying to prevent a suicide.

6 "In my mind they have no business in trying  
7 to wrestle with someone intent on dying. They shouldn't  
8 take those risks, it's unjustified.

9 "The six-foot extension of the present rail  
10 to reach over nine feet total would be a massive  
11 overkill for that purpose where an additional simple  
12 handrail could be effective and avoidance training could  
13 obviate the need even for that.

14 "The monies proposed for this project could  
15 save other lives if applied elsewhere, and those would  
16 be lives of people who would want nothing more than to  
17 live out their normal spans as well as for their  
18 innocent children. Suicides are hardly accidents.

19 "Most reasonable people would conclude that  
20 those people who jump off that bridge do not wish to  
21 live.

22 "The purpose of the Caltrans safety  
23 improvement program is, in the main, and I quote: To  
24 reduce accidents by implementing safety improvements to  
25 existing roadways, unquote.

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5

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1 "Any normal, rational person could envision  
2 from that that widening of narrow cuts on other spots on  
3 154 would take place, helping bicycle riders in  
4 particular, as well as other traffic, or adding more  
5 passing sections to enable the flow of traffic around  
6 the too many inept drivers. Traffic control, especially  
7 for northbound traffic from 154 west on to 246 toward  
8 Santa Ynez and Solvang, if not as an interchange, at  
9 least as traffic signals would be protective.

10 "Most of the people here have driven north  
11 on the 101 through the Gaviota Pass Tunnel. They have  
12 probably felt as I have, a bit wary as they plunge into  
13 that darkened hole where an investment in improved  
14 lighting would reduce the potential for any tragedy.

15 "Anyone here today could think of many  
16 places to protect drivers and their innocent children  
17 without waiting for fatalities to guide your efforts.

18 "But, instead, you've got the bit in your  
19 teeth on suicide prevention, rather than highway  
20 improvements.

21 "Although some corollary traffic hazards  
22 related to suicides are mentioned, nearly the entire  
23 thrust of your document is to prevent suicides; not, in  
24 fact, making that highway safer, which should be your  
25 main thrust.

6

7

1 "Giving higher priority to the lives of  
2 people who voluntarily want to end their lives, over the  
3 lives of innocent people, children particularly, is a  
4 horrible failure of judgement.

5 "I was sorry to read in the 'Santa Ynez  
6 Valley News' that Mr. Rich Krumholz, district director  
7 of Caltrans, has already determined to go ahead with  
8 this antisuicide campaign.

9 "In the absence of any citizens' means to  
10 override this ill-advised project, I plead of you, don't  
11 invest our tax dollars, especially in these tight  
12 economic times, on such a misdirected massive project as  
13 the suicide barrier.

14 "Any objective reasoning would show that  
15 your forays into the field of mental health and suicide  
16 prevention bear little connection to implementing safety  
17 improvements to existing roadways, unquote.

18 "Please give priority to safety on our  
19 highways for innocent people rather than for those who  
20 wish to opt out of this life."

21 Thank you.

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ROBERT and INGE KRISTOFFERSEN  
7888 Refugio  
93460

MR. KRISTOFFERSEN: Private citizen.

Well, I've been telling those people here, I want to commit suicide. Okay. I go up to the Pass, but I can't jump up because of that barrier. So I just continue down San Marcos, park my car, and go out on the bridge on the Old Pass and jump out in front of a big semi, and we have a hell of a mess, maybe 10, maybe 20 people killed.

Now, wouldn't it be better if I had jumped off the bridge and killed myself instead of taking other people with me?

Are they going to put up fences on all the overpasses next? We've got to stop them some place. This cost many billions and billions of dollars caused by Caltrans. It's the biggest waste we got.

MS. KRISTOFFERSEN: It's taxpayer money.

MR. KRISTOFFERSEN: Taxpayer money wasted.

MS. KRISTOFFERSEN: I mean, we don't want people to kill themselves, of course, but I think they'll find a way. If they don't find that, they'll find somewhere else to go.

MR. KRISTOFFERSEN: Yep.

7

1 MS. KRISTOFFERSEN: And that's really what  
2 we want to say.

3 MR. KRISTOFFERSEN: And then get the trucks  
4 out of the San Marcos Pass, big semi trucks.

5 MS. KRISTOFFERSEN: I think money could be  
6 spent better elsewhere, other safety issues.

7 MR. KRISTOFFERSEN: The barrier wouldn't  
8 have any change when the wind, against the bridge, maybe  
9 sway. I don't know. Birds fly into it, it kills the  
10 birds.

11 MS. KRISTOFFERSEN: Then the  
12 environmentalists will be there.

13 MR. KRISTOFFERSEN: I just don't -- I mean,  
14 people want to die, let them die in peace.

15 MS. KRISTOFFERSEN: There was -- they were  
16 mentioning someone that tried to commit suicide and they  
17 saved him because they pulled them off. Well, what  
18 about the someone to pull them off?

19 And who paid for the medical bills for this  
20 guy to recover?

21 MR. KRISTOFFERSEN: We are.

22 MS. KRISTOFFERSEN: And I'm glad that they  
23 saved him, but what is his life like now?

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JIM RICHARDSON  
881 Kolding Avenue  
Solvang

MR. RICHARDSON: I'm here representing myself, although I am a member of the city council of Solvang.

I've gotten e-mails from various organizations looking for support about building barriers on the bridge. From my standpoint, barriers would destroy the aesthetic features of the bridge and I'm opposed to that.

However, the presentation of the EIR describing the alternatives that are available has convinced me that the barriers are necessary. And I want it -- a choice of which barrier goes up. And so I'm in favor of the vertical barrier. I would like that one rather than the mesh barrier.

In regards to saving lives, it's important to save the lives; however, I don't believe that it will reduce the suicide rate.

Those are my comments.

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COLEEN HEFLEY  
3650 Montebello Street  
Santa Ynez 93460

MS. HEFLEY: I'm representing myself. I'm in favor of the barrier. I think it's long overdue. I think after the time three or four people committed suicide, it would have been time back then to do it.

I had a friend who recently committed suicide and it was due to a crisis in his life. And had he not had the easy means to kill himself, I think if 30 days or so had gone by, he would have been able to cope with it and would not have done it. So I do believe that restricting easy means to suicide is a good thing.

I've also been on the search and rescue team. And some of my buddies have gone to collect the bodies at the bottom of the canyon there. And I guess people think that when they jump off the bridge, it's going to be an instant "boom, you're dead." It's not. They get impaled on the trees on the way down. They rarely die right away, and they're rarely in one piece.

And it's very difficult on the search and rescue volunteers when they find the people this way. And it's also very treacherous to get down those hills to get to the bodies also.

10

1                   To please the people who are more worried  
2 about aesthetics than about lives, I would have them do  
3 what I did to my railing at my house: It's painted  
4 black. And when something like that is painted black,  
5 you just don't hardly see it and it doesn't interfere at  
6 all with my view. So that's the only thing  
7 aesthetically, is paint it black and I don't think  
8 there's going to be any trouble with that.

9                   That's it.

10  
11                   KAREN SUMMER  
12                   3463 State Street, #156

13                   MS. SUMMER: I'm here for myself.

14                   Before I came today, I was supportive of the  
15 building the barrier. I wanted to come and actually see  
16 the concept of how the barrier would look. I had a lot  
17 of concerns because I understood it was going to be  
18 obstructing the view and change the historic value of  
19 it.

20                   What I found when I came was that it's  
21 actually, the concept is actually aesthetically  
22 pleasing, that it's sleek and well-designed and not an  
23 eyesore at all that it's being portrayed as.

24                   I think it would be a testament to  
25 Santa Barbara County that we support life, that when you

1 drive past that bridge and it has a barrier it says,  
2 Santa Barbarans care about lives of Santa Barbarans.  
3 And if we can stop one suicide, then that's a very good  
4 thing.

5 I don't think it's going to take anything  
6 away from the bridge. I understand that there's costs  
7 involved and that's always a concern. But then I found  
8 out that Caltrans is putting this money towards the  
9 bridge and if they didn't put it towards the bridge,  
10 they'd just be putting it towards another project. It's  
11 not as if the City of Santa Barbara will get this money  
12 if they don't build this barrier.

13 Then I researched it some more and I found  
14 out that people who are coming to the bridge that will  
15 try and jump from the bridge, or in other cases and  
16 other bridges, that their suicides go down obviously on  
17 the bridge with barriers, but also within the radius  
18 with the bridges around those new barriers.

19 I didn't want to listen to either side. I  
20 wanted to make my own decisions, because I travel over  
21 the bridge. And I didn't want to be persuaded.

22 But if you look at the research and you look  
23 at that chain link fence outside, that's what I thought  
24 it would be. And if it was that fence, then I would be  
25 opposed to it.

1                   But looking for another alternative, I came  
2 here and saw what's real and I found out that it's very  
3 nice. They definitely put a lot of time and effort into  
4 it.

5                   So when making up my mind, I'm more  
6 supportive now than I was when I came here because I  
7 saw. And I firmly support it now.

8                   And that's it.

9                   MR. EWING: This public hearing is now  
10 officially closed.

11                   (The proceedings concluded at 8:30 p.m.)

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1 CERTIFICATE  
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4 I, JOAN L. PARKER, CSR No. 12912, in and for  
5 the State of California, do hereby certify:  
6 That I am not related to any of the parties  
7 connected with this action and that I have no interest  
8 in the outcome of said events;  
9 That the foregoing proceedings were taken  
10 before me at the time and place herein set forth; that  
11 the testimony and proceedings were reported  
12 stenographically by me and were transcribed through  
13 computerized transcription under my direction;  
14 That the foregoing is a true record of the  
15 testimony and proceedings taken at that time.  
16 I declare under penalty of perjury of the  
17 laws of the State of California that the foregoing is  
18 true and correct.  
19 Executed this 23rd day of June, 2008,  
20 at Santa Barbara, California.  
21  
22  
23   
24 JOAN L. PARKER, CSR No.: 12912  
25 Certified Shorthand Reporter in  
and for the State of California

## **Responses to Transcript Comments**

### **Shirley Force**

Your opposition to the project has been noted.

### **Mark Brickley, Tom Gilmore**

Your support for the project has been noted.

### **Marge Schwartz**

Caltrans appreciates your comments on the project. The meeting format was appropriate for receiving public comment on a draft environmental document. Please refer to Response to comment #2 to Mr. Harwood A. White, Jr., in this document.

### **Robert and Pat Maxim**

Your support for the project has been noted.

### **Andre Hankin**

Your opposition to the project has been noted. Because of suicides, the Cold Spring Canyon Bridge has the highest concentration of fatalities for any spot location on the state highway system in Caltrans District 5 (Santa Barbara, San Luis Obispo, Monterey, Santa Cruz, and San Benito counties). This funding has been allocated only for this specific highway project. The environmental document states that the construction of a barrier would have an effect on as much as 70 percent of the existing view as seen from the bridge deck and that although the views through the proposed barrier would be somewhat opaque, it would not completely block views, and the landscape would still be seen through the mesh.

### **Joni Kelley, Jamie Rotnofsky, Nevin Sams**

Your support for the project has been noted.

**James G. Mills**

Your opposition to the project has been noted.

**Response to comment #1:** Regarding alternate uses of funding, this local Recovery Act funding has been designated specifically for this project. As the owner-operator of the bridge facility, Caltrans has an obligation to promote the safe operation of the structure.

**Response to comment #2:** As stated in the Purpose and Need in the Summary and in Chapter 1, the purpose of the project is not to reduce suicides or the death rate in the community but to reduce the suicide rate on the bridge. As stated above, as the owner-operator of the bridge facility, Caltrans has an obligation to promote the safe operation of the structure.

**Responses to comment #3 and #6:** Regarding installing lights in the Gaviota Pass tunnel, your suggestion has been forwarded to the Caltrans Maintenance Department.

**Response to comment #4:** Please visit the Santa Barbara County Sheriff's website: <http://www.sbsheriff.org/guidingprinciples.html>, or contact the County of Santa Barbara Sheriff's Office or California Highway Patrol office regarding your questions about procedures law enforcement should or should not take in attempting to save a person's life.

**Responses to comments #5:** As the owner-operator of the bridge facility, Caltrans has an obligation to promote the safe operation of the structure. Originally, the proposed project was to have been built under Caltrans' Safety Improvement Program. However, at the request of the California Transportation Commission, Caltrans investigated alternate funding sources other than the State Highway Operation and Protection Program (SHOPP). As a result it has been determined that the money needed to construct the barriers will now come from local Recovery Act funds.

**Responses to comments #7 and #8:** Please refer to the first two Responses to comments to you, #1 and #2, above.

**Robert and Inge Kristoffersen**

Your opposition to the project has been noted.

**Jim Richardson**

Your support for the barriers and preference for the Vertical Alternative have been noted. The project's purpose includes reducing the number of suicides at the state-owned bridge on State Route 154 and not with reducing the overall suicide rate.

**Coleen Hefley**

Your support for the project has been noted. Your suggestion to minimize the presence of the barriers by painting them black will be considered.

**Karen Summer**

Your support for the project has been noted. Thank you for your comments regarding the aesthetics and potential effectiveness of the barriers.

**Section 7.0 State and Federal Agencies' Late Comments**

Leslee Newton-Reed, Department of Fish and Game, dated October 8, 2008

Aaron O. Allen, Ph.D., Department of the Army, Corps of Engineers, dated August 25, 2008



State of California – The Resources Agency

ARNOLD SCHWARZENEGGER, Governor

DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

http://www.dfg.ca.gov  
Environmental Review and Permitting  
1416 Ninth Street, Suite 1260  
Sacramento, California 95814



**CEQA Filing Fee No Effect Determination Form**

**Applicant Name:** California Department of Transportation, District 5  
**Date Submitted:** September 16, 2008  
**Applicant Address:** 50 Higuera Street, San Luis Obispo, CA 93401

**Project Name:** Cold Spring Canyon Bridge Suicide Barrier

**CEQA Lead Agency:** California Department of Transportation, District 5  
**CEQA Document Type:** (ND, MND, EIR) EIR  
**SCH Number and/or local agency ID number:** 2008011060

**Project Location:** Cold Spring Canyon Bridge on State Route 154

**Brief Project Description:** Caltrans proposes to install a suicide barrier to act as a physical barricade for reducing the number of suicides on the Cold Spring Canyon Bridge, near San Marcos Pass on State Route 154 in Santa Barbara County. Barriers would have a total height above the bridge deck/roadway of approximately 10 feet. The barrier alternatives would be a continuous metal barrier with inward sloping vertical steel rod pickets or inward sloping grid/mesh steel rod/wire pickets.

**Determination:** Based on a review of the Project as proposed, the Department of Fish and Game has determined that for purposes of the assessment of CEQA filing fees [F&G Code 711.4(c)] the project has no potential effect on fish, wildlife and habitat and the project as described does not require payment of a CEQA filing fee. This determination does not in any way imply that the project is exempt from CEQA and does not determine the significance of any potential project effects evaluated pursuant to CEQA.

Please retain this original determination for your records; you are required to file a copy of this determination with the County Clerk after your project is approved and at the time of filing of the CEQA lead agency's Notice of Determination (NOD). If you do not file a copy of this determination with the County Clerk at the time of filing of the NOD, the appropriate CEQA filing fee will be due and payable.

Without a valid No Effect Determination Form or proof of fee payment, the project will not be operative, vested, or final and any local permits issued for the project will be invalid, pursuant to Fish and Game Code Section 711.4(c)(3).

DFG Approval By: Yuh Ma-Ri Leslee Newton-Reed Date: 10-8-2008

Title: Environmental Scientist

CALIFORNIA DEPT. OF FISH AND GAME  
SOUTH COAST REGION  
4949 VIEWRIDGE AVENUE *Conserving California's Wildlife Since 1870*  
SAN DIEGO, CA 92123-1662

***Response to Leslee Newton Reed, Environmental Scientist, Department of Fish and Game***

Thank you for your letter, which determined that the project does not require payment of a CEQA filing fee.



**DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY**

Los Angeles District, Corps of Engineers  
Ventura Field Office  
2151 Alessandro Drive, Suite 110  
Ventura, CA 93001

August 25, 2008

REPLY TO  
ATTENTION OF:  
Office of the Chief  
Regulatory Division

Mr. Mike Jacob  
Department of Transportation, District 5  
Division of Environmental Planning  
50 Higuera Street  
San Luis Obispo, California 93401

Dear Mr. Jacob :

Reference is made to the Draft Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Assessment and Section 4(f) Evaluation for the Cold Spring Canyon Bridge Suicide Barrier dated May 2008. The Corps of Engineers reviewed this document and determined the project would not result in a discharge of dredged or fill material into waters of the U.S. or wetlands. Therefore, no permit is required.

If you have any questions, please contact Theresa Stevens, Ph.D. of my staff at 805-585-2146 or via e-mail at [Theresa.Stevens@usace.army.mil](mailto:Theresa.Stevens@usace.army.mil). Please refer to SPL-2008-00836 in any future correspondence for this project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Aaron O. Allen". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large loop at the end.

Aaron O. Allen, Ph.D.  
Chief, North Coast Branch  
Regulatory Division

***Response to Aaron O. Allen, Ph.D., Chief, North Coast Branch,  
Department of the Army, Corps of Engineers***

Thank you for your letter, which confirmed that wetlands or other waters of the U.S. would not be affected by the project.

List of Technical Studies that are Bound Separately

Air Quality and Noise Technical Reports

Water Quality Technical Memo/Hydraulics Memo

Natural Environment Study

Paleontology Report

Hazardous Waste Initial Site Assessment

Geotechnical Memo

Visual Impact Assessment

Historical Resources Evaluation Report