

State of California  
Business, Transportation and Housing Agency  
Department of Transportation

HIGHWAY ROUTE MATTERS  
Route Adoption as a Conventional Highway  
Resolution HRA 01-05  
12-Ora-133 KP 6.7/13.0 (PM 4.2/8.1)

Prepared by:  
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CTC Meeting: June 6-7, 2001

Agenda Item: 2.3a.

*Original Signed By* \_\_\_\_\_

W.J. EVANS  
Chief Financial Officer  
June 1, 2001

**ADOPTION OF LOCATION FOR STATE HIGHWAY**  
**As a Conventional Highway**

Recommendation

Submitted for transmittal to the California Transportation Commission (Commission) are Highway Route Adoption Resolution HRA 01-05 and the map of a location for the State Highway Route 133. The Department of Transportation (Department) recommends that the Commission approve the resolution and the route location map in accordance with the recommendation of the Chief Engineer. This resolution adopts a 6.3 kilometer (3.9 mile) location for State Highway Route 133 in the County of Orange from State Route 73 (San Joaquin Hills Transportation Corridor) to 0.5 kilometer (0.3 mile) south of Interstate 405 as a conventional highway.

The proposal is documented in the Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR) that was prepared in 1994 by the County of Orange and certified by the County Board of Supervisors on October 18, 1994. The Commission is acting on the Findings with the Statement of Overriding Considerations in Agenda Items 2.2c.6 a separate action. A copy of the executive summary from the FEIR has been sent to each Commissioner and a complete copy of the FEIR has been transmitted to the Commission staff. Pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), an Environmental Assessment has been prepared and is being reviewed by FHWA. It is anticipated that FHWA (the NEPA lead agency) will sign the Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) following this action of the Commission.

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Recommended by: BRENT FELKER  
Chief Engineer

**Background**

State Route 133 was brought into the State Highway System in 1933 and is a component of State Freeway and Expressway System. The proposed project is located from State Route 73 (San Joaquin Hills Transportation Corridor) to 0.5 kilometer (0.3 mile) south of Interstate 405 (San Diego Freeway) in the County of Orange. The existing facility, Laguna Canyon Road, is a two lane conventional highway with a third alternating directional passing lane. The only arterial intersections currently connecting to State Route 133 are at Old Laguna Canyon Road near the north end of the study area, and two intersections with the off-ramps of State Route 73. State Route 133 is a heavily traveled bicycle route and is identified as a Class III Bikeway (on-road bicycle lanes). The roadway is located in Upper Laguna Canyon, which is considered an environmentally sensitive area. Most of Upper Laguna Canyon is being, or has been acquired by public agencies for preservation of a wilderness park and regional open space.

The project was proposed to mitigate congestion and improve safety and facility operations. The current traffic volume between State Route 73 and Old Laguna Canyon Road is 29,000 ADT with peak hour conditions exceeding the County level of service (LOS) D design criteria for both a.m. and p.m. Future traffic volumes for the design year 2020 indicate that the traffic volumes will be approximately 32,000, 40,000 and 56,000 ADT at SR-73/proposed Bake segment, the proposed Bake/Lake Forest segment and the proposed Lake Forest/I-405 segment respectively. The type of development being considered within the boundaries of the City of Irvine will change the area from one of agricultural use and undeveloped land to one of a developed business park, commercial recreation and residential developments. Within the boundaries of the City of Laguna Beach, the Laguna Wilderness Park will not significantly change its demands on the highway facility. As development occurs the highway will change from a facility used primarily for through traffic to a facility that carries the major portion of trips entering and leaving this urban area.

The fatal accident rate for Laguna Canyon Road exceeds average rates for comparable highways. Sixteen percent of the accidents involved vehicles in the opposite direction.

Roadway flooding occurs near the lakes and closures occur regularly during storm events.

Although an alignment for a freeway facility was adopted in 1954, the adopted freeway alignment was rescinded by the COMMISSION on April 21, 1976. In early 1992, the County of Orange established the Laguna Canyon Road Consensus Committee to review potential alternatives for the roadway. The Committee consisted of a broad range of public and private interests. The purpose of the Committee was to get consensus on the need and purpose of the project. The Committee adopted a set of criteria for measuring the performance of the proposals, reviewed several improvement alternatives and identified a conceptual plan which provided for a realigned four lane roadway with a variable median and improved geometrics.

A Project Study Report (PSR) was approved by Caltrans on December 22, 1993. In 1994, the County of Orange prepared and circulated an Environmental Impact Report (EIR). A public meeting was held during the public review period on May 19, 1994. Public hearings were held on September 14 and October 18, 1994. The Laguna Canyon Road Design Oversight Committee was established as a result of the comments from the 1994 EIR circulation. The current proposal differs from the approved PSR by providing a split-level design in two sections of the realignment portion of the project and changing the southern limit from El Toro Road to SR-73. The proposed alternative is intended to improve aesthetics and reduce visual impacts. The County Board of Supervisor's certified the EIR on October 18, 1994.

## **Proposal**

In 1993 a total of ten alternatives were considered. Eight of those alternatives were considered and rejected prior to preparation of the Project Study Report and the Environmental Impact Report.

Two viable alternatives were studied. Under the No Build Alternative, no improvements would be made to State Route 133 between State Route 73 and Interstate 405. This alternative did not resolve the congestion levels nor did it address the accident rates and resolve roadway flooding conditions.

As the selected alternative, the proposed project is to widen the highway to a four-lane conventional highway and realign that portion of the route west of Laguna Lakes. The improvement would also upgrade the on-street bicycle route, allow for standard 2.4 meter outside shoulders and 1.5 meter inside shoulder, provide a median which separates traffic and provide access to Laguna Canyon Wilderness. The peak hour directional capacity for this alternative is approximately 3,400 vehicles per hour (1,700 VPHPL). This capacity is adequate for LOS D, which represents a high density, but stable flow, in the design year (2020) from the future intersection of Lake Forest Drive to State Route 73. This alternative would not preclude the opportunity for future widening to six lanes as a separate project. The current alignment would remove the entire roadway out of the 100-year floodplain, and would further facilitate emergency access to and from the City of Laguna Beach during emergencies. The current cost estimate for the project is \$38.9 million (capital and support costs). The SHOPP funds for the project will be limited to the programmed amount of \$16.3 million with Orange County funding any additional costs. This project is scheduled for construction in the 2002/2003 fiscal year.

## **Coordination**

The Department approved the Project Report on May 14, 2001. An Addendum to the EIR was prepared by the County of Orange and approved by the Board of Supervisors on November 14, 2000. The Commission has reviewed a summary of the environmental document and a copy of the EIR has been sent to the Commission's staff.

The State right-of-way currently exists as an easement. In areas where the roadway is being realigned and portions of the right of way is no longer needed for operations and maintenance of the highway, the old improvements will be removed, and disposal of the right-of-way will be processed. The majority of right-of-way required for the project is being donated by the County of Orange and the Irvine Company.

Control of vehicular access will be acquired from the abutting property owners. Access will be provided for existing opening, proposed connections by roads in the Master Plan of Arterial Highways and the Laguna Coast Wilderness Park.

Cooperative Agreements between Caltrans and the County of Orange will be prepared. The Agreements will outline each agency's funding, design, right-of-way, and construction responsibilities for the project.

The Department and the County will execute a maintenance agreement in order to address the maintenance of trails and trail related features within the State right-of-way.

The project will affect waters of the U.S. and waters of the State of California and, as such, will require a Section 404 Permit and a Section 1601 Streambed Alteration Agreement. Additionally a biological opinion under Section 7 of the Federal Endangered Species Act may be necessary from the United States Fish and Wildlife Service.

### Conclusion

The route adoption is needed to reflect the new alignment for State Route 133 which is proposed in order to reduce congestion, accommodate planned growth, and improve the safety and operation of the facility.

**CALIFORNIA TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION  
Resolution Adopting A Conventional Highway Location  
12-Ora-133 KP 6.7/13.0 (PM 4.2/8.1)**

**Resolution HRA 01-5**

**WHEREAS**, the Department of Transportation has completed studies and approved of the public hearing process relative to the location for State Highway Route 133 from State Route 73 to 0.5 kilometer (0.3 mile) south of Interstate 405; and

**WHEREAS**, the Department of Transportation has completed an Environmental Impact Report in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act and Department Regulations, and the studies have determined that the location of the preferred alternative for State Route 133 is the Build Alternative identified in the approved Project Report; and,

**WHEREAS**, the California Transportation Commission, in Resolution E-01-14 has adopted findings with a Statement of Overriding Considerations supporting approval of the project.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** by the California Transportation Commission that pursuant to the authority vested in it by law, this Commission does hereby select, adopt and determine the location of that segment of State Highway Route 133 in the County of Orange State Route 73 [Kilometer Post 6.7 (Postmile 13.0)] to 0.3 Kilometer (0.2 Mile) south of Interstate 405 [Kilometer Post 4.2 (Postmile 18.1)], and officially designated as 12-Orange-133, as said location is shown on the map submitted on June 1, 2001 by Karla Sutliff, Acting Chief Division of Design; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that portions of the existing traversable highway that are no longer needed for operations and maintenance, will have the facility removed and disposal of the right-of-way will be processed; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that this Commission has found and determined and hereby declares that such the location of said State highway is for the best interest of the State.