

Memorandum

To: CHAIR AND COMMISSIONERS

Date: September 24, 2009

From: BIMLA G. RHINEHART
Executive Director

File: Book Item 2.2c (14)
Action

Ref: Mitigated Negative Declaration for the Graham Hill Road Improvement Project (Resolution E-09-88)

ISSUE: Should the Commission, as a Responsible Agency, accept the Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) for the Graham Hill Road Improvement Project (project) southeast of Felton and approve the project for consideration of funding?

RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends that the Commission accept the MND and approve the project for consideration of funding.

BACKGROUND: The County of Santa Cruz (County) is the CEQA lead agency for the project. The project will provide safety and drainage improvements by widening Graham Hill Road southeast of Felton. On October 9, 2002 the County adopted a MND for the project. However, funding constraints prevented the project from moving forward. On August 7, 2006, the project scope was scaled back in response to community concerns, removing several left turn lanes, proposed bike lanes and retaining walls. This portion of Graham Hill Road is a County-designated scenic corridor, and the reduction in overall width of the improvements significantly reduced grading quantities, impacts to wetlands, and tree removals. On June 29, 2009 the County issued an addendum to the MND finding that the project scope changes did not require recirculation of the MND.

The County adopted a Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program for this project as mitigation measures were made a condition of approval of the project. These mitigation measures were necessary to address impacts related to slope stability; erosion; water quality; biological habitat; riparian woodland habitat; noise; short term air quality; aesthetics, and temporary road closures/detours.

Mitigation measures include, but are not limited to, inspections by a geotechnical engineer; conformance with erosion control/vegetation plans; adjustment of construction schedules; compliance with regulatory agency requirements and conditions; employment of a qualified arborist; compliance with all permit conditions; revegetation of cleared areas; and compliance with traffic control plans.

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On September 11, 2009 the County provided confirmation that the scope of the project, as approved by the County Board of Supervisors, is consistent with the project programmed in the STIP.

Project construction is estimated to cost \$3,171,000. The project is programmed for construction funding with STIP (\$2,671,000) and ARRA (\$500,000) funds. Construction is estimated to begin in fiscal year 2009/10.

Attachments

- Resolution E-09-88
- Project Location

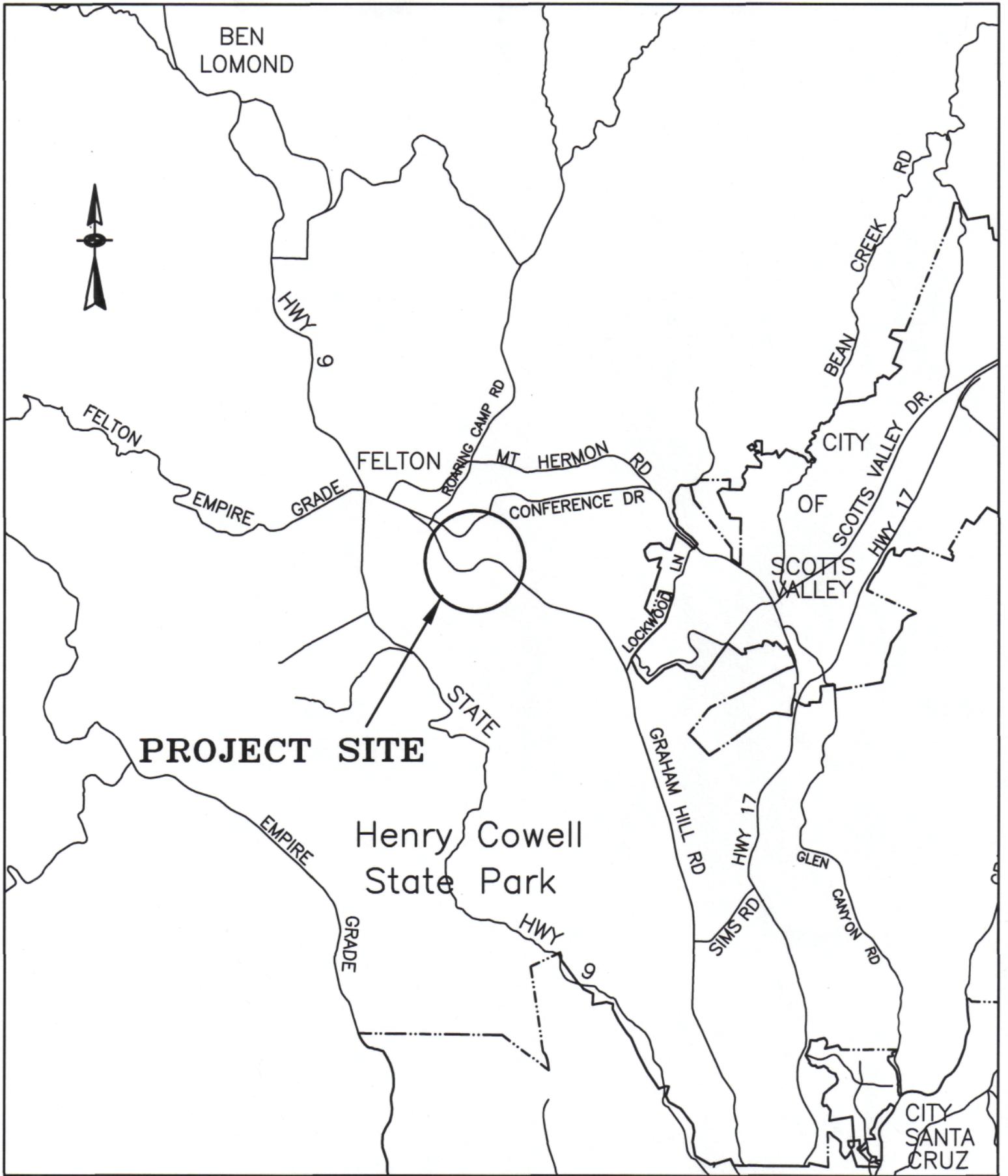
CALIFORNIA TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

Resolution for Consideration of Funding

05-Santa Cruz

Resolution E-09-88

- 1.1 **WHEREAS**, the County of Santa Cruz (County) has completed a Mitigated Negative Declaration pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the CEQA Guidelines for the following project:
- Graham Hill Road Improvement Project
- 1.2 **WHEREAS**, the County Board of Supervisors has certified that the Mitigated Negative Declaration has been completed pursuant to CEQA and the State CEQA Guidelines for its implementation; and
- 1.3 **WHEREAS**, the project would provide safety and drainage improvements by widening Graham Hill Road; and
- 1.4 **WHEREAS**, the California Transportation Commission, as a Responsible Agency, has considered the information contained in the Mitigated Negative Declaration; and
- 1.5 **WHEREAS**, the County found that all significant or potentially significant impacts can be reduced by mitigation measures to a less than significant level; and
- 1.6 **WHEREAS**, the County Board of Supervisors adopted a Mitigation Monitoring Reporting Program for the project; and
- 1.7 **WHEREAS**, the County Board of Supervisors approved the Mitigated Negative Declaration.
- 2.1 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the California Transportation Commission does hereby accept the Mitigated Negative Declaration and approve the above referenced project to allow for consideration of funding.



GRAHAM HILL RD. IMPROVEMENT PROJECT SITE VICINITY MAP

(NTS)