

Memorandum

To: CHAIR AND COMMISSIONERS

CTC Meeting: January 13, 2010

Reference No.: 2.8d. - **REVISED**
Action Item

From: NORMA ORTEGA
Chief Financial Officer

Prepared by: Denix D. Anbiah
Division Chief
Local Assistance

Subject: **REQUEST TO EXTEND THE PERIOD OF PROJECT DEVELOPMENT EXPENDITURE FOR LOCALLY-ADMINISTERED STIP PROJECTS PER STIP GUIDELINES WAIVER-10-01**

CTC ACTION TAKEN: The California Transportation Commission approved the extension request for E&P for the Wildwood Road Reconstruction project (PPNO 02-2421) for 12 months only, to June 30, 2011.

RECOMMENDATION:

The California Department of Transportation (Department) recommends the California Transportation Commission (Commission) approve the request by the County of Trinity (County) to extend the period of project development expenditure for Environmental and Permits (E&P) for the Wildwood Road Reconstruction project (PPNO 02-2421) by 20 months, to February 29, 2012.

ISSUE:

On January 10, 2008, the Commission approved Resolution FP-07-50, allocating \$500,000 for the E&P component of the Wildwood Road Reconstruction project. The County anticipates that they will be unable to complete the E&P component of the project due to unforeseen environmental issues. The County requests a 20-month time extension for the E&P component of the project to February 29, 2012.

BACKGROUND:

The project area is located in the Shasta-Trinity National Forest. At the time of allocation, the County anticipated that Wildwood Road would be designated as a Forest Highway, and therefore, would receive cooperative funding from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Forest Highways Program. Under the Forest Highway Program, the FHWA typically performs the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requirements, design, and construction of the project. After three months of negotiations with the FHWA, the County was unsuccessful designating Wildwood Road as a Forest Highway.

In April 2008, the County began surveying the project. In June 2008, there was a large wildfire that burned the survey staking and prevented the survey team from working on Wildwood Road until the end of September 2008. In November 2008, the County was able to resume progress collecting

survey data, and in October 2009, the County completed the survey data needed to develop the environmental study limits map. At that time, however, the County discovered an environmentally sensitive area within the project boundaries that were identified by the environmental study limits map. The United States Forest Service (USFS) indicated that the project would require extensive biological field studies for certain fungi, lichens, mollusks, and plants in the project area and a full Environmental Impact Report to comply with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The County plans to conduct the additional studies in spring 2010 through fall 2010, due to winter weather conditions. After the studies are completed, the County must obtain USFS approval prior to completing the environmental documents. The County estimates that they will obtain USFS approval and complete CEQA and NEPA documentation by April 2011. However, because of the uncertain outcome of the biological studies, the County requests the maximum time extension of 20 months to February 29, 2012.

Current State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) Guidelines stipulate that funds allocated for local project development or right of way costs must be expended by the end of the second fiscal year following the fiscal year in which the funds were allocated. The Commission may approve a waiver to the timely use of funds deadline one time only for up to 20 months in accordance with Section 14529.8 of the Government Code.