Upgrade Bridge Rails of Two Bridges in Calaveras County

North Fork Mokelumne River Bridge
and South Fork Mokelumne River Bridge
10-CAL-26-PM 38.31, 30.00
ID 1015000128/EA 10-0X751
SCH# 2020059001
Volume 1 of 2

Initial Study
with Mitigated Negative Declaration

Prepared by the
State of California Department of Transportation

July 2020

Caltrans

General Information About This Document

This section has been updated since the draft document circulation. The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), has prepared this Initial Study with Mitigated Negative Declaration for the project located in Calaveras County. Caltrans is the lead agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The document tells you why the project is being proposed, what alternatives have been considered for the project, how the existing environment could be affected by the project, the potential impacts of each of the alternatives, and the proposed avoidance, minimization and/or mitigation measures. The Initial Study was circulated to the public for 30 days between May 4, 2020 and June 8, 2020. Comments received during this period are included in Appendix C. Language has been added to indicate changes that have been made after the draft document completed circulation. Minor editorial changes and clarifications have not been so indicated.

Please contact C. Scott Guidi at (209) 990-5719 or by e-mail: Scott.Guidi@dot.ca.gov if you would like a printed version or Compact Disc of this document or related technical studies to be sent to your home address. This document may be downloaded at the following website https://dot.ca.gov/caltrans-near-me/district-10.

For individuals with sensory disabilities, this document is available in Braille, in large print, on audiocassette, or on computer disk. To obtain a copy in one of these alternate formats, please write to or call Caltrans, Attention: C. Scott Guidi, Northern San Joaquin Valley Environmental Management Branch 2, California Department of Transportation, 1976 East Doctor Martin Luther King Junior Boulevard, Stockton, California 95205; phone (209) 990-5719, or use California Relay Service 1 (800) 735-2929 (TTY), 1 (800) 735-2929 (Voice), or 711.

SCH Number 2020059001
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Replace the existing bridge rails on the North Fork Mokelumne River Bridge at post mile 38.31 and the South Fork Mokelumne River Bridge at post mile 30.00 on State Route 26 in Calaveras County, and seismically retrofit the South Fork Mokelumne River Bridge

INITIAL STUDY
with Mitigated Negative Declaration

Submitted Pursuant to: (State) Division 13, California Public Resources Code

THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA
Department of Transportation

Philip Vallejo

Philip Vallejo
Environmental Office Chief, North
California Department of Transportation

7/16/2020

Date

Mitigated Negative Declaration

Pursuant to: Division 13, Public Resources Code

Project Description

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) will replace the existing bridge rails at the North Fork Mokelumne River Bridge and the South Fork Mokelumne River Bridge and seismically retrofit the South Fork Mokelumne River Bridge on State Route 26 in Calaveras County.

Determination

The following paragraph was updated after the draft document completed circulation. Caltrans has prepared an Initial Study Mitigated Negative Declaration for this project, and following public review, has determined from this study that the project will not have a significant effect on the environment for the following reasons:

The project will have no effect on: aesthetics, agriculture and forest resources, air quality, cultural resources, energy, geology and soils, hazards and hazardous materials, hydrology and water quality, land use and planning, mineral resources, noise, population and housing, public services, recreation, transportation, tribal cultural resources, utilities and service systems, and wildfires.

The project will have no significant effect on greenhouse gas emissions.

The project will have no significantly adverse effect on biological resources such as sensitive or special-status species and natural communities because the following mitigation measure will reduce potential effects to insignificance:

- The resource will be mitigated by the purchase of off-site mitigation credits and on-site or off-site restoration.

Philip Vallejo

Philip Vallejo
Environmental Office Chief, North
California Department of Transportation

7/16/2020

Date

Section 1 Project and Background

1.1 Project Title

Upgrade Bridge Rails of Two Bridges in Calaveras County

1.2 Project Location

The project work will occur at two locations on State Route 26:

- South Fork Mokelumne River Bridge (Bridge Number 30-0022) at post mile 30.00 in Calaveras County.
- North Fork Mokelumne River Bridge (Bridge Number 30-0049) at post mile 38.31 on the border of Amador County and Calaveras County.

State Route 26 runs from State Route 99 in Stockton, California, to State Route 88 near Pine Grove, California. State Route 26 provides access to the towns of Mokelumne Hill, West Point, and Pine Grove in northern Calaveras County and Amador County. See Figures 1 and 2 for maps of the project area and bridge locations.

1.3 Description of Project

The project will upgrade the North Fork Bridge and South Fork Bridge to bring the structures to current standards. The project will upgrade the bridge rails and widen the bridges; the South Fork Bridge will also be seismically retrofitted. The following sentence was updated after the draft document completed circulation. Permanent right-of-way acquisitions and temporary construction easements will be needed to allow construction crews and equipment to access the two bridges. Major project work for each bridge will include the following:

Location 1: South Fork Bridge

- Remove and replace portions of the overhangs
- Widen both sides of the bridge by 1 foot
- Do grading
- Improve drainage
- Work in the channel (river)
- Work on existing bridge piers
- Remove or prune vegetation
- Work in seasonal wet areas
- Work off the paved roadway

Figure 1. Project Vicinity Map

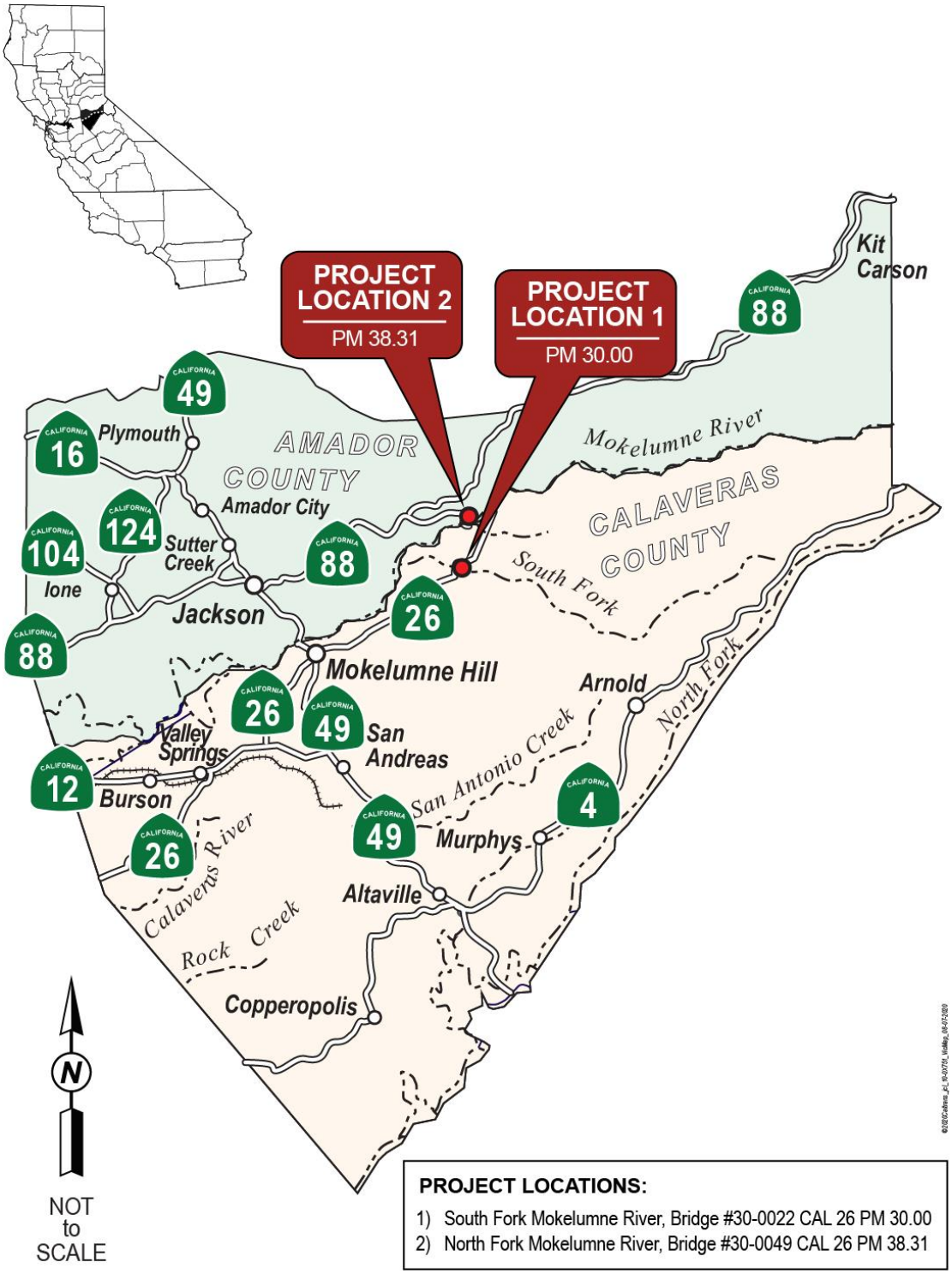
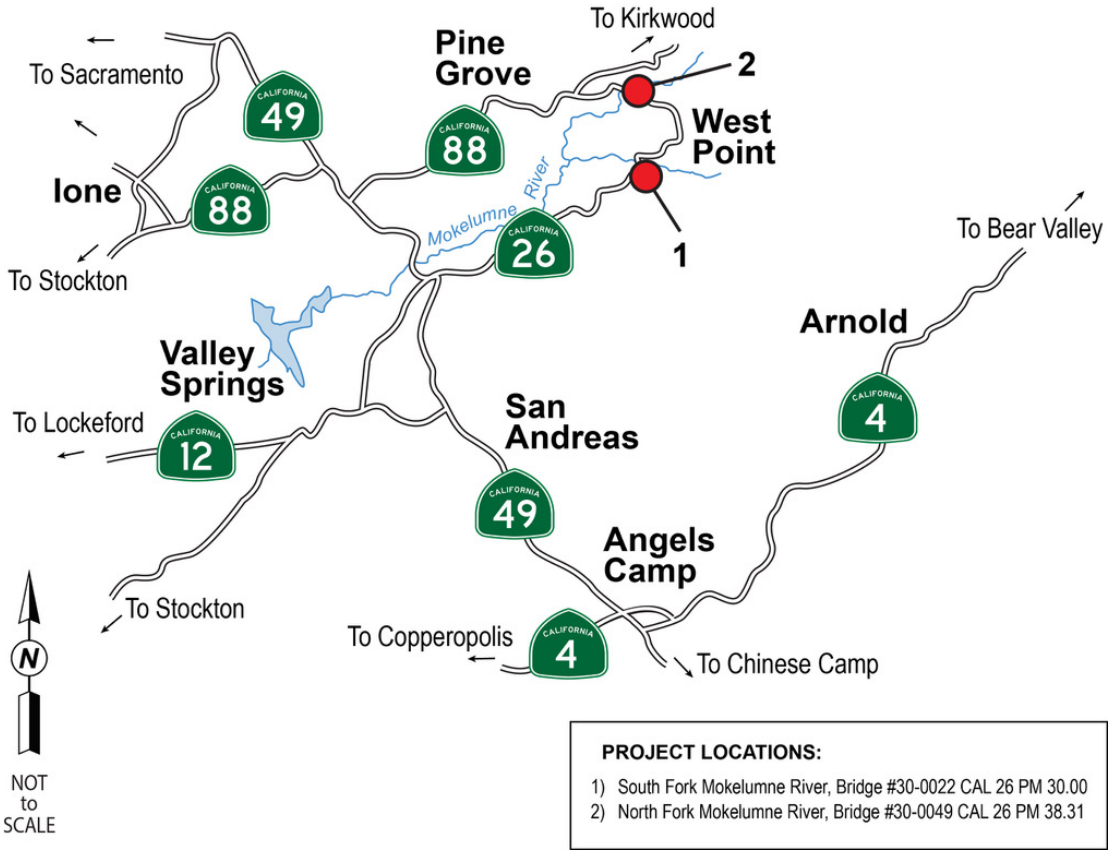


Figure 2. Project Location Map



Construction equipment access during in-water work will be required on both sides of the river and on the upstream and downstream sides of the bridge. On the upstream side of the bridge, access to the channel will be gained from the east through an existing gate and private access road. A temporary river crossing will be constructed to access the west side of the bridge. On the downstream side, access will be gained from the west and east sides of the embankment. Vegetation, consisting of shrubs or trees, will be removed or pruned to accommodate a two-season construction schedule.

Location 2: North Fork Bridge

- Remove and replace portions of the overhangs
- Widen both sides of the bridge by 11 inches
- Remove or prune vegetation
- Work off the paved roadway

Construction equipment access will be required below the bridge to remove the old railing and construct the new railing. Access to the river will likely be from the north side of the bridge on both the upstream and downstream sides

of the river where the terrain gradually descends to the river. Vegetation, consisting of shrubs or trees, within these access and staging areas will be removed or pruned to accommodate a two-season construction schedule.

1.3.1 Build Alternative

To update the existing structures, the concrete bridge rails on both the North Fork and South Fork bridges will be removed and replaced with current standard bridge railings recommended by the Office of Structures and Maintenance Inspection, California Type ST-75 railing or California Type 85 barrier. To accommodate the new railings, the existing bridge railings will be removed entirely, and each bridge will be widened by 11–12 inches on each side by removing and replacing portions of the overhangs.

Four temporary support pads, two on each side of the bridge, will be required to support a 45,000-pound person lift to access the bridge railings from beneath the bridge. The support pads will be placed within 30 feet of the bridge deck and outside of the ordinary high-water mark of the river.

The South Fork Bridge will also be seismically retrofitted to bring the bridge structure to current seismic standards in the event of an earthquake. The seismic retrofitting will involve widening the existing load-bearing beams that support the bridge, called girder seats, to make the bridge structure more resistant to seismic activity. The seismic retrofit will require work in the channel. A temporary diversion dam will be constructed up to 150 feet upstream from the bridge in order to divert water away from where it will be necessary to construct temporary falsework to operate construction equipment in the channel. The temporary diversion dam will be constructed using a combination of materials, such as prewashed cobbles with gravel, K-rail, precast concrete blocks, rock-filled gabions, thick plastic rubber-neoprene pool liners, added berm-erosion-control-diversion pipes 12 to 24 inches in diameter, bolted-down or free-standing prefabricated metal or plastic berm liners to support gravel placements on the edges of the berms, and thick plastic-rubber-neoprene bladders filled with water to line the edges of the berms.

The following sentence was updated after the draft document completed circulation. The project will acquire permanent right-of-way acquisitions and temporary construction easements for construction access for the two bridges. No utility impacts are expected.

Construction activities at each bridge site will be accomplished within two construction seasons during the summer and fall of 2022 and 2023. Construction will require about five months at the South Fork Bridge and about eight months at the North Fork Bridge.

1.3.2 No-Build (No-Action) Alternative

If no action is taken and the project is not built, the bridges will continue to be deficient. The No-Build Alternative will leave the bridge rails on both bridges in their current non-standard condition, and the South Fork Bridge will not meet current Caltrans seismic standards.

1.3.3 Identification of a Preferred Alternative

Section 1.3.3 was added after the draft document completed circulation. The draft environmental document was circulated for public review and comment. All comments have been considered, and Caltrans has identified the Build Alternative as the preferred alternative. The No-Build Alternative was not chosen as it does not meet the purpose and need of the project.

1.4 Surrounding Land Uses and Setting

The South Fork Bridge is in Calaveras County. The North Fork Bridge is in both Calaveras County and Amador County; this segment of the river forms the border between Calaveras and Amador counties, placing the North Fork Bridge within both county limits. Discussion of the project within the body of this document is limited with respect to Amador County because only minor improvements are planned within its limits.

According to the Calaveras County General Plan, Calaveras is known for its rural character with three main landscapes shaping the county: ranching, mining, and forest. The two project locations can be described as both mining and forest landscapes. During the California gold rush, Calaveras County was known as a hot spot for gold mining, earning the county the nickname the "Mother Lode." Though Calaveras is mostly rural, the mining history has contributed to its appeal for tourism and recreational activities. For example, former mining ditches now serve as walking trails and habitat for plants and animals. Forested landscapes are another draw to the county, featuring deep granite canyons, streams, meadows, and forests.

There is no river access near the South Fork Bridge except for a private, gated road near the southeast corner of the bridge. A permit-to-enter for this road will provide construction equipment access to work underneath the bridge. At the approach of the North Fork Bridge, a small, unpaved public road leads to an unpaved parking lot next to the bridge. Next to the public parking lot are stairs carved out of the rocky riverbank, providing access to the North Fork Mokelumne River. The main purpose of this parking lot is to provide a take-out location for recreational rafting. The run is three miles long, beginning upstream at the Tiger Creek Dam and ending right before the North Fork Bridge. The portion of the Mokelumne River running underneath the North Fork Bridge has been designated as a California Wild and Scenic River to preserve its high value scenery and wildlife habitats.

The North Fork Bridge is in between the small towns of West Point in Calaveras County and Pioneer in Amador County. Both towns are over two miles away from the project location, and the surrounding area is mainly rural with dispersed housing. The South Fork Bridge is about two miles south of the small rural community of Sandy Gulch in Calaveras County.

1.5 Other Public Agencies Whose Approval is Required

Table 1 shows the permits required for the project.

Table 1. Permits

Agency	Permit/Approval	Status
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	Endangered Species Act Section 7: Inter-agency consultation	Informal consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service was initiated on September 18, 2019 for a "may affect, not likely to adversely affect" determination. A letter of concurrence was received on October 4, 2019.
California Department of Fish and Wildlife	California Endangered Species Act Section 2081: Incidental Take Permit	If determined to be necessary, an application for the 2081 permit will be submitted during the project's final design phase.
California Department of Fish and Wildlife	California Fish and Game Code Section 1602: Lake and Streambed Alteration Agreement	The application for the Section 1602 permit will be submitted during the project's final design phase.
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Sacramento District	Clean Water Act Section 404: Placement of Fill	The application for the Section 404 permit will be submitted during the project's final design phase.
Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board	Clean Water Act Section 401: Water Quality Certification	The application for the Section 401 permit will be submitted during the project's final design phase.

Section 2 CEQA Environmental Checklist

2.1 CEQA Checklist

This checklist identifies physical, biological, social, and economic factors that might be affected by the project. Potential impact determinations include Significant and Unavoidable Impact, Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated, Less Than Significant Impact, and No Impact. In many cases, background studies performed in connection with a project will indicate that there are no impacts to a particular resource. A No Impact answer reflects this determination. The words “significant” and “significance” used throughout the following checklist are related to California Environmental Quality Act (known as CEQA) impacts, not National environmental policy Act (known as NEPA) impacts. The questions in this checklist are intended to encourage the thoughtful assessment of impacts and do not represent thresholds of significance.

Project features, which can include both design elements of the project, and standardized measures that are applied to all or most Caltrans projects such as Best Management Practices and measures included in the Standard Plans and Specifications or as Standard Special Provisions, are considered to be an integral part of the project and have been considered prior to any significance determinations documented below.

2.1.1 Aesthetics

CEQA Significance Determinations for Aesthetics

Except as provided in Public Resources Code Section 21099, 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 buildings within a state scenic highway?

c) In non-urbanized areas, substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings? (Public views are those that are experienced from a publicly accessible vantage point.) If the project is in an urbanized area, would the project conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality?

d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?

a-d) No Impact. The project will not have an adverse effect on any scenic vista or damage any scenic resources. The project is in a rural setting and is not within the vicinity of an eligible state or designated scenic highway. Though the North Fork Mokelumne River is a State Wild and Scenic resource with a public access point adjacent to the North Fork Bridge, the project will not degrade the existing visual character and quality of the site and surroundings. Additionally, there will not be any new sources of substantial light or glare that will affect day or nighttime views (Scenic Resource Evaluation, 2019).

2.1.2 Agriculture and Forest Resources

CEQA Significance Determinations for Agriculture and Forest 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 Department of Conservation as an optional model to use in assessing impacts on agriculture and farmland. In determining whether impacts to forest resources, including timberland, are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to information compiled by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection regarding the state's inventory of forest land, including the Forest and Range Assessment Project and the Forest Legacy Assessment Project; and the forest carbon measurement methodology provided in Forest Protocols adopted by the California Air Resources Board.

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) Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code section 12220(g)), timberland (as defined by Public Resources Code section 4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code section 51104(g))?

d) Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?

e) Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?

a-e) No Impact. The project will involve upgrades to bridge rails on two existing bridge structures. The project work will not involve the conversion or rezoning of farmland, timberland, or forest lands. According to the Calaveras County General Plan and Amador County General Plan, both bridges are considered general forest zones. The North Fork Bridge project area is zoned as resource management. The South Fork Bridge project area is zoned as working lands. Resource management and working lands are compatible for agriculture and timberland zoning but neither bridge location is currently managed for agriculture or timberland. Additionally, as both project areas are not managed or zoned specifically for farmland, there will be no conversion or confliction with prime or unique farmland, farmland of statewide importance, or Williamson act properties. Therefore, the project will not conflict with existing zoning or cause a change in the existing environment of forest land, farmland, timberland, or timberland zoned timberland production. (Calaveras Draft General Plan 2018 and Amador County General Plan 2016)

2.1.3 Air Quality

CEQA Significance Determinations for Air Quality

Where available, the significance criteria established by the applicable air quality management district 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?

b) 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?

c) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?

d) Result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people?

a-d) No Impact. The project does not conflict or obstruct with the implementation of applicable air quality plans as the counties are a non-attainment status for the State Ozone ambient air standard. The project will not lead to a cumulative considerable determination. For federal standards, the project is exempt from all project-level conformity requirements. The project locations are in rural locations with low

exposure to sensitive receptors and no other emissions or odors are expected to come from the project. (Air Quality, Noise, and Water Memorandum, June 2019)

2.1.4 Biological Resources

CEQA Significance Determinations for Biological Resources

Please refer to Appendix A for further information on the avoidance, minimization, and mitigation measures.

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 Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?

a) Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated. The project will temporarily change habitat that could be used by candidate, sensitive, or special-status species. The changes involve pruning or removing trees to allow staging and access on both sides of the North Fork Bridge and South Fork Bridge and a temporary stream diversion at the South Fork Bridge. To the extent practical, vegetation will be pruned instead of removed to allow for regrowth within temporary work areas and access routes will be determined with the goal of avoiding actual impacts on vegetation. The number of trees or shrubs needing to be removed will not be determined until final design. Compensatory mitigation will be applied for loss of riparian woodland, loss of mixed hardwood forest, and loss of overhead shaded riverine aquatic cover vegetation. With implementation of avoidance, minimization, and mitigation measures, the project will have a less than significant impact:

- **BIO 1—**Install high-visibility temporary fencing between the construction area and adjacent sensitive biological resources
- **BIO 2—**Conduct mandatory environmental awareness training for construction personnel
- **BIO 3—**Retain a qualified biologist to conduct periodic monitoring during construction in sensitive habitats
- **BIO 4—**Protect water quality and prevent erosion and sedimentation in perennial stream habitat
- **BIO 6—**Compensate for loss of riparian woodland
- **BIO 7—**Compensate for loss of mixed hardwood forest

- **BIO 8—**Conduct preconstruction surveys for special-status amphibians, and monitor initial in-water work
- **BIO 9—**Conduct preconstruction surveys for northern western pond turtles and allow turtles to leave work area unharmed
- **BIO 10—**Conduct vegetation removal during non-breeding season for migratory birds and raptors
- **BIO 11—**Conduct preconstruction surveys for nesting migratory birds and raptors, including special-status species, and establish protective buffers
- **BIO 12—**Conduct preconstruction surveys for roosting bats, and implement protective measures, if necessary
- **BIO 13—**Implement cofferdam and stream diversion restrictions (South Fork Bridge)
- **BIO 14—**Guide fish from affected habitats prior to initiating in-water activities, and rescue fish from dewatered habitats
- **BIO 15—**Avoid and minimize disturbance and removal of shaded riverine aquatic cover
- **BIO 16—**Replace affected overhead shaded riverine aquatic cover vegetation
- **BIO 17—**Remove the bridge railing and overhangs during the non-breeding season for nesting migratory birds, or implement exclusion measures to deter nesting

- The following sentence was modified after the draft document completed circulation. Based on the extent of construction disturbances and results of species-focused surveys for foothill yellow-legged frog, Caltrans may seek an Incidental Take Permit under Section 2081 of the California Endangered Species Act for the foothill yellow-legged frog, a state-endangered species. (Natural Environment Study, August 2019, revised June 2020)

  b) Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?

  b) Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated. The project will temporarily change natural communities of riparian woodland, mixed hardwood forest, and perennial stream habitat. The changes involve pruning or removing trees to allow staging and access on both sides of the North Fork Bridge and South Fork Bridge and a temporary stream diversion at the South Fork Bridge. To the extent practical, vegetation will be pruned instead of removed to allow for regrowth within temporary work

areas and access routes will be determined with the goal of avoiding actual impacts on vegetation. The number of trees or shrubs needing to be removed will not be determined until final design. Compensatory mitigation will be applied for loss of riparian woodland, loss of mixed hardwood forest, and loss of overhead shaded riverine aquatic cover vegetation. With the implementation of avoidance, minimization, and mitigation measures, the project will have a less than significant impact (Natural Environment Study, August 2019):

- **BIO 1—**Install high-visibility temporary fencing between the construction area and adjacent sensitive biological resources
- **BIO 2—**Conduct mandatory environmental awareness training for construction personnel
- **BIO 3—**Retain a qualified biologist to conduct periodic monitoring during construction in sensitive habitats
- **BIO 4—**Protect water quality and prevent erosion and sedimentation in perennial stream habitat
- **BIO 5—**Minimize disturbance of wetland and non-wetland waters of the United States/waters of the state, and restore to pre-project conditions
- **BIO 6—**Compensate for loss of riparian woodland
- **BIO 7—**Compensate for loss of mixed hardwood forest
- **BIO 15—**Avoid and minimize disturbance and removal of shaded riverine aquatic cover
- **BIO 16—**Replace affected overhead shaded riverine aquatic cover vegetation

c) Have a substantial adverse effect on state or federally protected wetlands (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?

c) Less Than Significant Impact. The project will involve temporary impacts to the emergent wetland habitat from the installation of the stream diversion at the South Fork Bridge. A Clean Water Act Section 404 permit and a Clean Water Act Section 401 Water Quality Certification will be required for the regulation of temporary fill materials in the South Fork Mokelumne River. The project will not result in the permanent loss of emergent wetland habitat; therefore, no compensatory mitigation is required. With implementation of avoidance and minimization measures, the project will not result in the loss of wetland functions and values (Natural Environment Study, August 2019):

- **BIO 1—**Install high-visibility temporary fencing between the construction area and adjacent sensitive biological resources
- **BIO 2—**Conduct mandatory environmental awareness training for construction personnel
- **BIO 3—**Retain a qualified biologist to conduct periodic monitoring during construction in sensitive habitats
- **BIO 4—**Protect water quality, and prevent erosion and sedimentation in perennial stream habitat
- **BIO 5—**Minimize disturbance of wetland and non-wetland waters of the United States/waters of the state, and restore to pre-project conditions

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?

d) Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated. The perennial stream habitat at both the North Fork Bridge and South Fork Bridge serves as a migration and movement corridor for resident aquatic species. In addition, the riparian and mixed hardwood forest habitats along the river channels are likely used by many species of birds and terrestrial animals. The project will improve two existing bridges. All work will be temporary, and changes to habitats will be less than significant with implementation of avoidance, minimization, and mitigation measures (Natural Environment Study, August 2019).

- **BIO 1—**Install high-visibility temporary fencing between the construction area and adjacent sensitive biological resources
- **BIO 2—**Conduct mandatory environmental awareness training for construction personnel
- **BIO 3—**Retain a qualified biologist to conduct periodic monitoring during construction in sensitive habitats
- **BIO 4—**Protect water quality and prevent erosion and sedimentation in perennial stream habitat
- **BIO 5—**Minimize disturbance of wetland and non-wetland waters of the United States/waters of the state, and restore to pre-project conditions
- **BIO 6—**Compensate for loss of riparian woodland
- **BIO 7—**Compensate for loss of mixed hardwood forest

- **BIO 15—**Avoid and minimize disturbance and removal of shaded riverine aquatic cover
- **BIO 16—**Replace affected overhead shaded riverine aquatic cover vegetation

e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?

e) Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated. The project will not conflict with any local policies or ordinances. A tree survey will be done in the biological study area prior to construction to identify trees/shrubs. In addition, standard measures have been identified for tree and sensitive vegetation community protection. Where potential impacts occur, the following standard project measures and avoidance, minimization, and mitigation measures will be implemented (Natural Environment Study, August 2019):

- **BIO 1—**Install high-visibility temporary fencing between the construction area and adjacent sensitive biological resources
- **BIO 2—**Conduct mandatory environmental awareness training for construction personnel
- **BIO 3—**Retain a qualified biologist to conduct periodic monitoring during construction in sensitive habitats
- **BIO 6—**Compensate for the loss of riparian woodland
- **BIO 7—**Compensate for the loss of mixed hardwood forest

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?

f) No Impact. No such ordinances are in place in the study area. (Natural Environment Study, August 2019)

2.1.5 Cultural Resources

CEQA Significance Determinations for Cultural Resources

Would the project:

a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to Section15064.5?

b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to Section 15064.5?

c) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of dedicated cemeteries?

a-c) No Impact. The project will not affect any known cultural resources within the project area, including human remains. The project has no potential to affect historic properties or historical resources (Section 106 Compliance- Screened Undertaking Memo, September 2019; Amended August 2020).

2.1.6 Energy

CEQA Significance Determinations for Energy

Would the project:

a) Result in potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during project construction or operation?

b) Conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency?

a-b) No Impact. Caltrans' Best Management Practices will be used to improve and encourage fuel efficiency on the construction site during construction and operation. The project will install bridge railings and is not expected to result in additional trips during construction. In addition, the project will include standard specification to reduce idling of construction vehicles. (Climate Change and Greenhouse Gas Analysis October 2019)

2.1.7 Geology and Soils

CEQA Significance Determinations for Geology and Soils

Would the project:

a) Directly or indirectly cause 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.

ii) Strong seismic ground shaking?

iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?

iv) Landslides?

a) i-iv) No Impact. The project is not located near any known earthquake faults (California Department of Conservation 2019). There is no evidence of seismic-related ground failure, seismic ground shaking, liquification, or landslides. (Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map, October 2019)

b) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?

b) No Impact. The project will not result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil. Site clearing, vegetation pruning and removal, and the installation of a stream diversion (South Fork Bridge only) could result in the disturbance of soil and streambed sediments. For less than one acre of disturbance, a water pollution control program will be required.

c) Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable because of the project, and potentially result in on-site or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse?

d) Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial direct or indirect risks to life or property?

e) Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative waste water disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of waste water?

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

c-f) No Impact. The project locations do not show signs of substantial erosion or landslide activity, and there is no indication of high rates of erosion, slope failure, or unstable geology. (Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map, October 2019) The project is not located on expansive soil and no septic tanks or waste water disposal systems are located in or near the project area. The project will not directly or indirectly destroy paleontological resources or unique geological features.

2.1.8 Greenhouse Gas Emissions

CEQA Significance Determinations for Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Would the project:

a) Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?

b) Conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?

a-b) Less Than Significant Impact. While the project will result in a small amount of greenhouse gas emissions during construction, it will not interfere with the implementation of any traffic control measures; or increase operational greenhouse gas emissions. However, dust generated during excavation, grading and related activities could cause occasional annoyance. Overall, the project does not conflict with any applicable plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases. Standard specifications Section 14-9.02 Air Pollution Control and Section 14-9.03 Dust Control will be implemented as described in Air, Noise, and Water Memorandum, Jun 2019. Therefore, Greenhouse Gas impact will be less than significant (Climate Change and Greenhouse Gas Analysis, October 2019).

2.1.9 Hazards and Hazardous Materials

CEQA Significance Determinations for 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?

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?

a-b) No Impact. The project is not expected to create a significant hazard to the public involving hazardous materials. Only shallow excavation will be required, and as such the potential to encounter contaminated soil is minimal. There is potential to encounter non-hazardous concentrations of Aerially Deposited Lead while working in unpaved areas within the project limits. Caltrans Standard Special Provision pertaining to Earth Material Containing Lead and a lead compliance plan will be required. Asbestos Containing Materials and lead based paint may be present at both bridges, therefore a survey will be conducted prior to construction activities. Caltrans Standard Special Provisions will also be implemented (Initial Site Assessment, July 2019).

c) Produce hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?

c) No Impact. There are no existing or proposed schools within one-quarter mile of the project area, and the completion of work is not expected to result in the release of hazardous emissions. (Initial Site Assessment, July 2019)

d) Be located on a site which 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?

d) No Impact. There are no active leaking underground storage tanks within the project study area. Only shallow excavation will be required for the project, and as such the potential to encounter contaminated soil is minimal. (Initial Site Assessment, July 2019)

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 or excessive noise for people residing or working in the project area?

e) No Impact. There are no airports or airstrips located within 2 miles of the project study area. Both project locations are rural and will not result in a safety hazard or excessive noise impacts for residents. (Calaveras County Draft General Plan 2018 and Amador County General Plan 2016)

f) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?

f) No Impact. State Route 26 is not the only evacuation route from either Calaveras or Amador counties. The project will not interfere with any emergency response or evacuation plans.

g) Expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires?

g) No Impact. A review of the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection's Fire Hazard Severity Zones maps for Calaveras and Amador counties indicated the project is in a high-risk area for wildfires. The project will not increase the risk of wildfires with implementation of construction site Best Management Practices.

2.1.10 Hydrology and Water Quality

CEQA Significance Determinations for Hydrology and Water Quality

Would the project:

a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or ground water quality?

b) Substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin?

a-b) No Impact. The contractor, as required in Caltrans Standard Specification Section 13-1 must address all potential water quality impacts that may occur during construction (Air Quality, Noise, and Water Memorandum, June 2019). With incorporation of Best Management Practices, the project will not produce significant impacts to water quality or groundwater supplies during construction or operation.

c) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner which would:

i) Result in substantial erosion or siltation on-site or off-site;

ii) Substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on-site or off-site;

iii) Create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff; or

iv) Impede or redirect flood flows?

c) i-iv) No Impact. The project is not expected to change existing drainage patterns or volumes. However, the project may result in temporary erosion as a result of shallow excavation. The project has been designed to include Best Management Practices and Caltrans standard specifications to reduce impacts. Caltrans Standard specification 13-1 will be implemented to protect the river from Construction runoff (Air Quality, Noise, and Water Memorandum, June 2019).

d) In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk release of pollutants due to project inundation?

d) No Impact. The project is within a floodplain but there is no current history of flooding in either project location. The project is not within a tsunami or seismic zone and there is no risk of release of pollutants (Location Hydraulic Study, August 2019).

e) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan?

e) No Impact. The project will not conflict or obstruct with any sustainable groundwater management plans. A water pollution control program will be prepared and implemented by the contractor in accordance with Caltrans Standard Specification Section 13-1 Water Pollution Control Program (Air Quality, Noise, and Water Memorandum, June 2019).

2.1.11 Land Use and Planning

CEQA Significance Determinations for Land Use and Planning

Would the project:

a) Physically divide an established community?

a) No Impact. The project will occur at existing bridges, so the improvements will not create a division or disruption in the community. (Calaveras County Draft General Plan 2018 and the Amador County General Plan 2016)

b) Cause a significant environmental impact due to a conflict with any land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted to avoid or mitigate an environmental effect?

b) No Impact. The following sentence was edited after the draft document completed circulation. The project will not conflict with any existing land use policies or goals. (Calaveras County Draft General Plan 2018 and the Amador County General Plan 2016)

2.1.12 Mineral Resources

CEQA Significance Determinations for 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?

a-b) No Impact. The two project locations are not near any existing mines. There are no known mineral resource or locally important mineral resources (California Department of Conservation Maps: Minerals and Resources 2019).

2.1.13 Noise

CEQA Significance Determinations for Noise

Would the project result in:

a) Generation of a substantial temporary or permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the project in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?

b) Generation of excessive ground-borne vibration or ground-borne noise levels?

a-b) No Impact. The project will not cause a permanent substantial increase in ambient noise level (12 decibels or more, A-weighted) above existing conditions. Caltrans Standard Specifications Section 14-8.02 Noise Control will be followed; Therefore, no adverse noise impacts from construction are expected (Air Quality, Noise, and Water Memorandum, June 2019).

c) For a project located within the vicinity of a private airstrip or 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?

c) No Impact. Neither project location is within 2 miles of a public or private airport. (Calaveras County Draft General Plan 2018 and Amador County General Plans 2016)

2.1.14 Population and Housing

CEQA Significance Determinations for Population and Housing

Would the project:

a) Induce substantial unplanned 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)?

a) No Impact. The project will improve two existing bridges. It will not increase capacity and will not encourage growth in the area.

b) Displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?

b) No Impact. The project will improve two existing bridges. No homes or businesses will need to be relocated to accommodate the project.

2.1.15 Public Services

CEQA Significance Determinations for 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?

Police protection?

Schools?

Parks?

Other public facilities?

a) No Impact. During construction, traffic will be reduced to one lane, with traffic control, using a temporary traffic signal. The one lane traffic reduction may cause brief temporary traffic delays, but the project will not affect emergency services or public facilities. The unpaved public parking lot next to the North Fork Bridge has been recognized as a resource used by the public but will not be physically impacted by the project and will remain open during construction.

2.1.16 Recreation

CEQA Significance Determinations for 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 which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?

a-b) No Impact. The project is located in a rural setting so there will be no increased use of neighborhood or regional parks. The North Fork Mokelumne River is used for recreation, but the river is not designated for recreational use; it is designated as a California Wild and Scenic River. The North Fork Bridge is adjacent to the Tiger Creek White Water Rafting Pullout parking area marking the end of a three-mile rafting run down the North Fork Mokelumne River. Project work and construction staging areas (locations used as storage for construction-related equipment and materials) will not close off access to the parking lot or have any adverse physical effect on the environment. (California Legislature Chapter 1.4 California Wild and Scenic Rivers Act [5093.545])

2.1.17 Transportation

CEQA Significance Determinations for Transportation

Would the project:

a) Conflict with a program plan, ordinance or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle and pedestrian facilities?

a) No Impact. The project will not conflict with any plans, ordinances, or policies related to the local circulation system. One-way traffic control during construction may cause a minor traffic conflict but State Route 26 is not a major arterial route for Calaveras County in case of any emergencies. (Calaveras County Draft General Plan 2018 and Amador County General Plans 2016)

b) Conflict with or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines section 15064.3, subdivision (b)?

b) No Impact. The project will improve two existing bridges in order to meet current design standards. The project will not increase vehicle miles traveled or auto trips.

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

c) No Impact. The project will improve two existing bridges in order to meet current design standards. No new geometric design features or incompatible uses are expected.

d) Result in inadequate emergency access?

d) No Impact. The project will not result in inadequate emergency access. During construction, traffic will be reduced to one lane, with traffic control, using a temporary traffic signal. The one lane traffic reduction may cause brief temporary traffic delays, but the project will not affect emergency services or public facilities.

2.1.18 Tribal Cultural Resources

CEQA Significance Determinations for Tribal Cultural Resources

Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in Public Resources Code section 21074 as either a site, feature, place, cultural landscape that is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American tribe, and that is:

a) Listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, or in a local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code section 5020.1(k), or

a) No Impact. No resources are listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, or in a local register of historical resources.

If any tribal cultural materials are discovered during project excavation and construction, the implementation of standard measures will prevent any potential impacts to tribal cultural resources. (Section 106 Compliance-Screened Undertaking Memo, September 2019; Amended August 2020).

b) A resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1. In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resource Code Section 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.

b) No Impact. No resources, significant or otherwise, were identified. (Section 106 Compliance- Screened Undertaking Memo, September 2019; Amended August 2020). If any tribal cultural materials are discovered during project excavation and construction, the implementation of standard measures will prevent any potential impacts to tribal cultural resources.

2.1.19 Utilities and Service Systems

CEQA Significance Determinations for Utilities and Service Systems

Would the project:

a) Require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment or storm water drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects?

a) No Impact. The project, as designed, does not include utility relocation or utility construction.

b) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry and multiple dry years?

c) Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider which 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?

d) Generate solid waste in excess of state or local standards, or in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure, or otherwise impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals?

e) Comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste?

b-e) No Impact. The project will not produce wastewater or result in substantial demands to solid waste disposal and will follow federal, state, and local statutes regarding solid waste; and the project will have sufficient water supplies.

2.1.20 Wildfire

CEQA Significance Determinations for Wildfire

If located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, would the project:

a) Substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?

a) No Impact. State Route 26 is not the only evacuation route from either Calaveras or Amador counties. The project will not interfere with any emergency response or evacuation plans. (Calaveras County Draft General Plans 2018 and Amador County General Plan 2016)

b) Due to slope, prevailing winds, and other factors, exacerbate wildfire risks, and thereby expose project occupants to pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire?

b) No Impact. A review of the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection's Fire Hazard Severity Zones maps for Calaveras and Amador counties indicated the project areas are in or near a zone classified as a very high fire hazard severity zone for wildfires. Construction activities will not increase the risk of wildfires or expose project occupants to pollutant concentrations from a potential wildfire.

c) Require the installation or maintenance of associated infrastructure (such as roads, fuel breaks, emergency water sources, power lines or other utilities) that may increase fire risk or that may result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment?

c) No Impact. The project will not require the installation or maintenance of associated infrastructure such as roads, fuel breaks, emergency water sources, power lines or other utilities.

d) Expose people or structures to significant risks, including downslope or downstream flooding or landslides because of runoff, post-fire slope instability or drainage changes?

d) No Impact. Both project locations are within a 100-year base floodplain; however, the project will not result in a significant

encroachment in the 100-year floodplain. (Location Hydraulic Study, August 2019). The project will not expose people or structures to significant risks related to flooding. Best Management Practices and Caltrans standard provisions will result in the contractor protecting the river runoff (Air Quality, Noise, and Water Memorandum, June 2019).

2.1.21 Mandatory Findings of Significance

CEQA Significance Determinations for Mandatory Findings of Significance

a) Does the project have the potential to substantially 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, substantially 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?

a) Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated. Vegetation removal is expected to occur at the North Fork Bridge and South Fork Bridge affecting three natural communities (riparian woodland, mixed hardwood, and perennial stream habitat). The number of tree and shrub removal will be finalized during the final design phase. As discussed in Section 2.1.4 Biological Resources, standard project measures and avoidance, minimization, and mitigation measures will be implemented to ensure direct and indirect impacts to fish or wildlife populations will not occur. The project is not expected to degrade the quality of the environment. Also, the project is not expected to substantially reduce the habitat or affect populations of any fish or wildlife species or eliminate important examples of a major period of California history or prehistory.

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.)

b) No Impact. The project will not contribute to cumulative impacts when viewed in conjunction with other closely related past, present, and probable future projects.

c) Does the project have environmental effects that will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?

c) No Impact. The project will not generate environmental impacts that will directly or indirectly cause substantial adverse effects on human beings. Where potential impacts occur, standard project measures and

avoidance and minimization measures will be implemented to ensure direct and indirect impacts to human beings do not occur.

Appendix A Environmental Commitment Record

This appendix contains a collection of all avoidance, minimization, and mitigation measures for the project. Certain measures are performed as standard practice on all Caltrans jobs, and others are measures that will be combined into the project scope.

Biology

The following measure, BIO 12, per the recommendations provided from the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, was modified after the draft document completed circulation.

BIO 1—Install high-visibility temporary fencing between the construction area and adjacent sensitive biological resources

Prior to construction, Caltrans or its contractor, or both, will install high-visibility orange construction fencing or flagging, as deemed appropriate by a qualified biologist, along the perimeter of the work area next to Environmentally Sensitive Areas (e.g., riparian vegetation, wetlands, streams, special-status species habitat, and active bird nests). Where specific buffer distances are required for sensitive biological resources (e.g., special-status species habitats), they will be specified under the corresponding measures below. Caltrans will ensure that the final construction plans show the locations where fencing will be installed. The plans also will define the fencing installation procedure. The project proponent or contractor (at the discretion of Caltrans) will ensure that the fencing is maintained throughout the duration of the construction period. If the fencing is removed, damaged, or otherwise compromised during the construction period, the fencing will be repaired or replaced. The project's special provisions package will provide clear language regarding acceptable fencing material and prohibited construction-related activities, vehicle operation, material and equipment storage, and other surface-disturbing activities within Environmentally Sensitive Areas. All temporary fencing will be removed upon completion of construction.

BIO 2—Conduct mandatory environmental awareness training for construction personnel

Caltrans will retain a qualified biologist to conduct environmental awareness training for construction crews before project implementation. The awareness training will be provided to all construction personnel and will brief them on the need to avoid effects on sensitive biological resources (such as natural communities of special concern and special-status species habitats in and adjacent to the construction area). The education program will include a brief review of the special-status species with the potential to occur in the

biological study area (including their life history, habitat requirements, and photographs of the species). The training will identify the portions of the biological study area in which sensitive habitats and species may occur, as well as their legal status and protection, and applicable permit conditions. The program also will cover the restrictions and guidelines that must be followed by all construction personnel to reduce or avoid effects on these species during project implementation. This will include the steps to be taken if a sensitive species is found within the construction area (such as notifying the Caltrans Resident Engineer or inspector who will coordinate with the designated biologist).

Construction employees will also be educated about the importance of controlling and preventing the spread of invasive plant infestations. An environmental awareness handout that describes and illustrates sensitive resources to be avoided during project construction and identifies all relevant permit conditions will be provided to each crew member. The crew foreman will be responsible for ensuring that crew members adhere to the guidelines and restrictions. Education programs will be conducted for appropriate new personnel as they are brought on the job during the construction period.

BIO 3—Retain a qualified biologist to conduct periodic monitoring during construction in sensitive habitats

Caltrans will retain a qualified biological monitor for the project who will visit the site a minimum of once per week to ensure that fencing around Environmentally Sensitive Areas is intact and that activities are being conducted in accordance with the agreed upon project schedule and agency conditions of approval. The monitor will complete daily logs for each site visit, and a final monitoring report will be prepared at the end of each construction season and will be submitted to Caltrans and other overseeing agencies (e.g., California Department of Fish and Wildlife, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service), as appropriate.

BIO 4—Protect water quality and prevent erosion and sedimentation in perennial stream habitat

Caltrans or its construction contractor, or both, will comply with all construction site Best Management Practices developed from Caltrans' *Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan and Water Pollution Control Program Preparation Manual* (California Department of Transportation 2016) and specified in the Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan, and any other permit conditions to minimize the introduction of construction-related contaminants and mobilization of sediment in wetlands and other waters in and next to the project area. These Best Management Practices will address soil stabilization, sediment control, wind erosion control, vehicle tracking control, non-stormwater management, and waste management practices. The Best

Management Practices will be consistent with the Best Management Practices and control practices required under the Clean Water Act.

The project is subject to stormwater quality regulations established under the National Pollutant Discharge and Elimination System, described in Section 402 of the federal Clean Water Act. In California, the National Pollutant Discharge and Elimination System requires that any construction activity disturbing one or more acres comply with the statewide General Permit, as authorized by the State Water Board. The General Permit requires elimination or minimization of non-stormwater discharges from construction sites and development and implementation of a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan for the site. The main elements of the Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan include the following:

- Description of site characteristics, including runoff and streamflow characteristics and soil erosion hazard, and construction procedures.
- Guidelines for proper application of erosion and sediment control Best Management Practices.
- Description of measures to prevent and control toxic materials spills.
- Description of construction site housekeeping practices.

In addition to these elements, the Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan will specify that the extent of soil and vegetative disturbance will be minimized by control fencing or other means and that the extent of soil disturbed at any given time will be minimized. The Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan must be retained at the construction site.

The Best Management Practices will be selected to achieve maximum sediment removal. The Best Management Practices will represent the best available technology that is economically achievable and are subject to review and approval by Caltrans. Caltrans will perform routine inspections of the construction area to verify that the Best Management Practices are properly implemented and maintained.

The project proponent also will obtain a Clean Water Act 401 water quality certification from the Central Valley Regional Water Board and a Lake and Streambed Alteration Agreement from the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, which may contain additional Best Management Practices and water quality measures to ensure the protection of water quality.

BIO 5—Minimize disturbance of wetland and non-wetland waters of the United States/waters of the state, and restore to pre-project conditions

To the extent possible, Caltrans will minimize impacts on wetlands and non-wetland waters of the United States and waters of the state by implementing

the following measures (these measures will be incorporated into contract specifications and implemented by the construction contractor):

Temporarily disturbed aquatic habitats will be stabilized immediately upon completion of construction activities.

Wetland and Non-Wetland Waters of the United States/waters of the state will be restored to pre-project contours and in a manner that encourages vegetation to reestablish to its pre-project condition and reduces the effects of erosion on the drainage system.

Any trees, shrubs, debris, or soils that are inadvertently deposited below the ordinary high-water mark of streams and drainages will be removed in a manner that minimizes disturbance of the bed and bank.

All activities will be completed promptly to minimize their duration and resultant impacts.

BIO 6—Compensate for loss of riparian woodland

Caltrans will compensate for construction-related effects and loss of riparian woodland at a minimum ratio of 1:1 (1 acre of mitigation for every 1 acre of riparian woodland removed). Final compensation ratios will be based on site-specific information and determined through coordination with the appropriate agencies during the permitting process. Caltrans will implement on-site and, if necessary, off-site restoration measures and/or purchase mitigation bank credits to compensate for temporary losses of riparian woodland, including riparian woodland supporting shaded riverine aquatic cover habitat (portions of the riparian woodland in the biological study area also provide shaded riverine aquatic cover habitat for fish). On-site restoration will be used to the maximum extent practicable. If on-site or off-site restoration and enhancement along the South Fork and North Fork Mokelumne Rivers is not feasible, Caltrans will purchase mitigation bank credits at a locally approved bank or pay into an in-lieu fee program to achieve no net loss of existing in-kind riparian woodland and shaded riverine aquatic cover habitat values (see Measure 16: Replace Affected Overhead Shaded Riverine Aquatic Cover Vegetation, for mitigation requirements associated with affected shaded riverine aquatic cover habitat). Both options are described below.

1. On-site or Off-site Restoration, or both, along South Fork and North Fork Mokelumne Rivers. For on-site or off-site replacement plantings, Caltrans will employ a qualified restoration biologist to prepare a riparian restoration and monitoring plan that involves restoring or enhancing riparian woodland and shaded riverine aquatic vegetation in the biological study area or elsewhere along the river channels. The restoration plan will include a site-specific plant and seed palette, planting locations, and maintenance requirements. The number of plantings will be adequate to

ensure that the required mitigation ratio will be reached by the end of the monitoring period and that canopy cover and species composition requirements are met. Planted species composition will be based on native species that occur in and near the biological study area, such as Fremont cottonwood, California walnut, white alder, and arroyo willow, and native understory species will be included in the plan. Plantings will consist of cuttings taken from local plants or plants grown from local seed. As feasible, existing native vegetation from the affected sites should be harvested and maintained for replanting after construction.

The project proponent will implement the restoration plan and maintain plantings for up to 3 years or until established (including weed removal, irrigation, and herbivory protection). Plantings will be monitored annually for 3 years or as required in the project permits. Project-specific performance standards and success criteria (e.g., plant survival, vegetation cover) will be developed in coordination with resource agencies. If the success criteria are not met at the end of the monitoring period, the site will be evaluated to determine the cause, remedial measures will be implemented, and the monitoring period will be extended.

2. Mitigation Bank Credit Purchase. If this option is used, the project proponent will provide written evidence to the resource agencies that compensation has been established through the purchase of mitigation credits. The amount to be paid will be the fee that is in effect at the time the fee is paid. The mitigation will be approved by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife and may be modified during the permitting process. If no suitable mitigation bank options are available at the time of construction, the project proponent will pay into the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation Sacramento District in-lieu fee program. The final compensation ratio of restored or created riparian habitat for each acre of riparian habitat removed will be approved by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife to result in no net loss of riparian and shaded riverine aquatic cover habitat.

BIO 7—Compensate for loss of mixed hardwood forest

Caltrans will compensate for construction-related effects and loss of mixed hardwood forest at a minimum ratio of 1:1 (1 acre replaced for every acre removed). The actual compensation ratios will be determined through agency coordination as part of the permitting process.

Replacement plantings for mixed hardwood forest may be planted at on-site or off-site locations, or both. If on-site or off-site replacement planting will occur, Caltrans will prepare a mitigation planting plan, including a species list and number of each species, planting locations, and maintenance requirements. Plantings will consist of cuttings taken from local plants or plants grown from local material. Planted species for the mitigation plantings

will be like those removed from the biological study area, and will include native species, such as interior live oak, canyon live oak, buckeye, common bedstraw (*Galium aparine*), common viburnum (*Viburnum ellipticum*), and other habitat-appropriate species. All plantings will be fitted with exclusion cages or other suitable protection from herbivory. Plantings will be irrigated for up to 3 years or until established.

Plantings will be monitored annually for 3 years or as required in the project permits. If 75% of the plants survive at the end of the monitoring period, the revegetation will be considered successful. If the survival criterion is not met at the end of the monitoring period, planting and monitoring will be repeated after mortality causes have been identified and corrected.

BIO 8—Conduct preconstruction surveys for special-status amphibians and monitor initial in-water work

To avoid potential injury or mortality of special-status amphibians (including foothill yellow-legged frogs and California red-legged frogs), Caltrans will retain a qualified wildlife biologist to conduct a preconstruction survey for foothill yellow-legged frogs and California red-legged frogs within 3 to 5 days from the start of construction. The biologist will survey the aquatic habitat and adjacent river banks within the construction area, plus a 500-foot buffer zone upstream and downstream of the construction area. Where in-water work is occurring but does not start immediately, the biologist will return to the construction site immediately prior to the start of in-water work to conduct another preconstruction survey of the construction area. The biologist will remain on-site until initial in-water work (installation of temporary diversion and falsework) is complete.

If a foothill yellow-legged frog or California red-legged frog is observed during in-water work, construction activities will cease within 50 feet of the frog to allow the frog to voluntarily move out of the work area. If a frog becomes entrapped within the work area, the lead Caltrans biologist will be contacted immediately so that they can coordinate with the appropriate wildlife agency to determine what course of action is needed to protect or rescue the animal.

If no foothill yellow-legged frogs, California red-legged frogs, or eggs or larvae of either species are observed during the preconstruction survey, but surface water is present within the active construction area, a biologist will inspect the work site each day before the start of work.

Following in-water work, the biologist will remain on call in case a foothill yellow-legged frog or California red-legged frog is discovered. The construction crew will be instructed to notify the crew foreman or Caltrans Resident Engineer, who will contact the lead Caltrans biologist if a frog is found within the construction area. Work in the area where the frog is observed will stop until the biologist arrives and determines what additional

protection measures are needed. Any observations of a foothill yellow-legged frog or California red-legged frog will be reported by Caltrans to the appropriate wildlife agency within one day of the observation.

BIO 9—Conduct preconstruction surveys for northern western pond turtles, and allow turtles to leave work area unharmed

To avoid potential injury to or mortality of northern western pond turtles, Caltrans will retain a qualified biologist to conduct a preconstruction survey for pond turtles immediately prior to construction activities (including vegetation removal and construction of the temporary stream diversion at South Fork) along the banks of the South Fork and North Fork Mokelumne Rivers. The biologist will survey the aquatic habitat, river banks, and adjacent riparian and mixed hardwood forest habitat within the construction area immediately prior to disturbance.

If a northern western pond turtle is found within the immediate work area during the preconstruction survey or during project activities, work will cease in the area until the turtle is able to move out of the work area on its own. Information about the location of turtles seen during the preconstruction survey will be included in the environmental awareness training (Measure 2) and provided directly to the construction crew working in that area to ensure that areas where turtles were observed are inspected each day prior to the start of work to ensure that no turtles are present.

If a northern western pond turtle nest is discovered during the preconstruction survey or during project construction, Caltrans will coordinate with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife to determine whether implementation of additional avoidance measures (e.g., no-disturbance buffer or monitoring) is prudent.

BIO 10—Conduct vegetation removal during non-breeding season for migratory birds and raptors

Caltrans will conduct vegetation removal and pruning during the non-breeding season (generally between September 1 and January 31) for tree and shrub-nesting migratory birds and raptors. If vegetation removal cannot be confined to this period, the project proponent will retain a qualified wildlife biologist with knowledge of the wildlife species that could occur in the biological study area to conduct the appropriate preconstruction surveys and establish no-disturbance buffers for sensitive wildlife species, as described in Measure 11.

BIO 11—Conduct preconstruction surveys for nesting migratory birds and raptors, including special-status species, and establish protective buffers

Caltrans will retain a qualified wildlife biologist to conduct nesting bird surveys if construction will occur between February 1 and August 31. These nesting bird surveys will include a minimum of two separate surveys to look for active

nests of migratory birds, including raptors. Surveys will include a search of all trees and shrubs, and ruderal areas that provide suitable nesting habitat for birds within 100 feet of construction disturbance. In addition, a 0.5-mile area from the biological study area will be surveyed for nesting raptors to identify raptors that might be affected by construction disturbances, particularly special-status raptors (i.e., white-tailed kite, northern goshawk, great gray owl, bald eagle, and California spotted owl). The biologists conducting the surveys should have experience with all special-status birds that could potentially nest within the survey area. In areas where access is not permitted, the surveyors will use binoculars and spotting scopes to inspect any potential nest trees, particularly large trees and snags. Surveys should occur during the height of the breeding season (March 1 to June 1), with one survey occurring within one week prior to the start of construction.

Additional surveys may be conducted during the appropriate period to document special-status raptors. These surveys will include vocalization playback calls according to established survey protocols for great gray owl (Beck and Winter 2000), northern goshawk (U.S. Forest Service 2002), and California spotted owl (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service 2012). The need for these types of surveys will be determined by the Caltrans biologist in coordination with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife during the spring and summer prior to the start of construction to inform the potential for these species to be present in or near the work area. Full protocol surveys may not be warranted, and focused surveys may include a variation on the full protocol surveys. Positive detections may necessitate additional nest search surveys as determined by Caltrans.

If no special-status raptor species or active nests are detected during these surveys, no additional measures are required. If an active nest is found in the survey area, a no-disturbance buffer will be established to avoid disturbance or destruction of the nest site until the end of the breeding season (August 31) or until after a qualified wildlife biologist determines that the young have fledged and moved out of the construction area (this date varies by species). The extent of these buffers will be determined by the Caltrans designated biologist in coordination with any applicable agencies (as determined by species) and will depend on the level of noise or construction disturbance taking place, line-of-sight between the nest and the disturbance, ambient levels of noise and other non-project disturbances, and other topographical or artificial barriers. Suitable buffer distances may vary between species; however, a minimum of 50 feet for song birds and 300 feet for raptors is typical.

BIO 12—The following measure was modified after the draft document completed circulation. Conduct preconstruction surveys for roosting bats and implement protective measures, if necessary.

To avoid and minimize potential impacts on day-roosting special-status and non-special-status roosting bats from the pruning and removal of trees and modification of bridges, Caltrans will implement the following actions. No modifications to the bridge structures that will preclude night-roosting bats is anticipated; therefore, no night-roosting surveys are proposed.

Preconstruction Surveys

During the summer season immediately prior to the start of construction, Caltrans will perform evening emergence surveys at potential day-roost sites, using night-vision goggles in conjunction with active full-spectrum acoustic monitoring to identify species. The use of night-vision goggles is primarily for identifying a specific location where bats are emerging from a roost. Using them in combination with acoustic detectors will allow the biologist to note the time at which emergence was observed with the time stamp on the calls that were recorded, thereby allowing one to assign a greater likelihood of a species being tied to a specific roost site. Evening emergence surveys will consist of at least one biologist stationed on each side of the bridge or structure watching for emerging bats from one-half hour before sunset to one to two hours after sunset for a minimum of two nights.

Potential day-roosting habitat will be identified by a qualified biologist(s) prior to performing the emergence surveys. The biologists will examine trees to be removed or pruned and bridge structures where construction activities are proposed. Habitat features (e.g., large tree cavities, basal hollows, loose or peeling bark, weep holes, expansion joints, etc.) will be inspected and the area around these features searched for bats and bat signs (e.g., guano, culled insect parts, staining). All potential roosting habitat will be mapped and identified for follow-up emergence surveys.

Qualified biologists will have knowledge of the natural history of the species that could occur in the biological study area and experience using full-spectrum acoustic equipment. During surveys, biologists will avoid unnecessary disturbance of occupied roosts.

If roosting bats are detected within habitat features that will be impacted by project activities, Caltrans will implement the following protection measures.

Protective Measures

Protective measures may be necessary if it is determined that bats are using bridges or trees in the project area as roost sites. The following measures will be implemented when bat roosts are found within trees planned for removal or pruning, or within portions of the bridge structure that could be disturbed during construction. Ridges. Protection measures may include preparation and implementation of a Bat Avoidance Plan and installation of bat exclusionary devices. Specific measures to avoid and exclude bats from

occupied roosts in the project area will be approved by Caltrans in coordination with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife prior to commencing construction activities.

- Caltrans will prepare a project-specific Bat Avoidance Plan when occupied bat roosts are identified within the project area. The plan will include results of the preconstruction surveys, including the location of occupied bat roosts and species identified, and specific measures that should be implemented to avoid and minimize impacts to roosting bats. These protection measures may include restrictions on timing of certain activities within proximity to a roost site, including tree removal.
- Trees containing an active bat roost will be removed between August 31 and October 15 or between March 1 and April 15 to avoid the maternity season and the typical hibernation period. Prior to tree removal of an active roost site, structural changes may be made to the tree to create conditions in the roost that are undesirable to roosting bats and encourage the bats to leave on their own (e.g., open additional portals so that the temperature, wind, light and precipitation regime in the roost change). Structural changes to the roost will be authorized by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife and will be performed during the appropriate exclusion timing (described above) to avoid harming bats. The tree will then be removed in pieces, rather than felling the entire tree, which will create some initial disturbance to rouse bats and allow the more time to exit/leave a tree before the entire tree is cut down. Tree removal should be done late in the day or in the evening to reduce the likelihood of evicted bats falling prey to diurnal predators. Tree removal will take place during warm weather conditions conducive to bat activity. Tree removal will be monitored by a qualified biologist.
- If an occupied bat roost is found within the bridge, the roost will be avoided to the maximum extent feasible by minimizing construction disturbances (i.e., noise, vibration) in the vicinity of the roost site. Because minimal bridge modification is proposed, it is preferred that occupied bat roosts within the bridge be left undisturbed. However, if it is anticipated that construction activities could cause substantial disturbance to bats during the maternity season, then evictions measures may be warranted.
- If substantial impacts to an occupied bat roost cannot be avoided, eviction will be attempted, and procedures will be developed in consultation with California Department of Fish and Wildlife to reduce the likelihood of mortality of evicted bats. In all cases, the following restrictions will apply.
    - Eviction will take place between August 31 and October 15 or between March 1 and April 15 to avoid the maternity season and hibernation period.

- Qualified biologists, under the direction of Caltrans, will carry out or oversee all eviction tasks.

- Eviction will take place during weather and temperature conditions conducive to bat activity.

Eviction procedures will include the following characteristics.

- Bat exclusion devices will include the use of one-way doors in conjunction with backer rods and/or expansion foam to seal off all other roost entrance points. The one-way doors must be installed securely to withstand the elements including wind and rain. One-way doors will be installed every 5 feet along joints and within all weep holes. One-way doors should be placed so that they do not extend more than 0.25 inch into the opening and extend outward at a downward angle. The one-way doors will be left in place for seven days and then removed and opening sealed.

- All exclusion devices will be monitored and inspected daily for the initial seven days and then weekly thereafter to ensure materials are properly in-place. Any repairs needed will be made immediately to ensure exclusion devices remain effective.

BIO 13—Implement cofferdam and stream diversion restrictions

Any activity that temporarily diverts flow from any segment of the South Fork Mokelumne River will trigger implementation of the following conditions:

- The extent of cofferdam footprints and stream channel dewatering will be limited to the minimum necessary to support construction activities.
- If temporary diversion cofferdams are constructed of natural materials (i.e., gravel), the material will be composed of washed, rounded, spawning-sized gravel 0.4 inch to 4 inches in diameter and any gravel in contact with flowing water will be left in place, manually spread out using hand tools, if necessary, to ensure adequate fish passage for all life stages, and then allowed to disperse naturally by high winter flows.
- Before flow is diverted, water diversion and conveyance structures (e.g., culverts) will be placed in the creek in such a way that flow to creek segments downstream from the construction site will not be interrupted as streamflow is being diverted.
- During dewatering, flow will be incrementally diverted from the affected stream reach at the upstream boundary, with diversion progressively increasing over a 4-hour period in the following increments: 50%, 75%, 90%, and 100%. Incremental reduction in flow allows fish that remain following fish guiding (see Measure 14: Guide Fish from Affected Habitats Prior to Initiating In-Water Activities and Rescue Fish from Dewatered

Habitats) to move to deeper habitats where they can be captured and relocated before affected stream segments are completely dewatered.

- Water will always be released or pumped downstream at an appropriate rate to maintain downstream flows, and the outlet of the diversion will be positioned so that the discharge of water does not induce bank erosion or channel scour.
- All pumps used during dewatering will be screened according to California Department of Fish and Wildlife screening guidelines and will not exceed 0.25 inches diameter to prevent entrainment of fish and amphibians by the pumps.

BIO 14—Guide fish from affected habitats prior to initiating in-water activities, and rescue fish from dewatered habitats

Prior to initiation of any in-water construction activity, fish will be guided with nets (e.g., seines and block nets) and excluded from the affected reaches of the South Fork Mokelumne River by qualified fish biologists using the following methods:

- No fish will be captured or handled during fish guiding activities, and fish guiding activities will serve only to coax fish, including special-status fish, out of harm's way prior to initiating in-water construction activities.
- Seining to guide fish from the work area will be repeated, as necessary, to ensure that most fish are successfully guided from the work area. Block nets will remain in place until cofferdams are installed (see Measure 13: Implement Cofferdam and Stream Diversion Restrictions).
- The methods used to guide fish during the dewatering of the work area will be limited to nets and will be developed cooperatively by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife and Caltrans. The methods will also specify the type, construction, and material of the nets used to guide and exclude fish from the work area. Fish will not be captured or handled during seining activities to guide fish out of affected stream reaches.

BIO 15—Avoid and minimize disturbance and removal of shaded riverine aquatic cover

Caltrans will require the contractor to implement the following measures to avoid and minimize disturbance and removal of shaded riverine aquatic cover:

- The amount of shaded riverine aquatic cover, including overhead vegetation and instream cover, disturbed or removed will be limited to the minimum necessary to support construction activities.
- Instream woody material subject to damage or removal will be retained and replaced on-site after project completion.

- Where stream substrates are removed temporarily to facilitate construction, they will be stored next to the site and then placed back in the channel post-construction at about pre-project depth and gradient.

BIO 16—Replace affected overhead shaded riverine aquatic cover vegetation

Caltrans will replace overhead shaded riverine aquatic cover vegetation affected by bridge rail and retrofit construction activities. In conjunction with implementation of Measure 6: Compensate for Loss of Riparian Woodland, Caltrans will:

- Establish up to 293 linear feet (South Fork biological study area) and 72 linear feet (North Fork biological study area) of new shaded riverine aquatic vegetative cover by planting native riparian trees along affected banks. This linear distance will provide a 1:1 replacement ratio (i.e., 1 linear foot replaced for every 1 foot affected) in each biological study area.
- Plant riparian trees that are intended to provide shaded riverine aquatic cover along the water's edge at summer low flows and at levels sufficiently dense to provide shade along at least 85% of the bank's length when the plant reaches maturity.
- Ensure that riparian plantings intended for shaded riverine aquatic cover mitigation be planted within 10 feet (horizontal distance) of the summer wetted channel. This maximum planting distance will ensure that riparian plantings will contribute to shaded riverine aquatic cover once they approach maturity.
- Monitor and evaluate revegetation success of riparian plantings intended for shaded riverine aquatic cover mitigation as described in Measure 6.
- This mitigation is not intended to be additive to Measure 6, but rather to provide guidance on how the riparian mitigation should be implemented so that it meets the needs of shaded riverine aquatic replacement.

BIO 17—Remove the bridge railings and overhang during the non-breeding season for structure-nesting migratory birds, or implement exclusion measures to deter nesting

To avoid impacts to nesting swallows and other structure-nesting migratory birds that are protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act and the California Fish and Game Code, the project proponent will remove or modify existing structures after the conclusion of the bird nesting period (February 15 through August 31). A qualified biologist will monitor any active nests near the end of the breeding season to determine when nesting has concluded. Removal or modification of structures after the nesting period has concluded is strongly preferred; however, if this is not possible, the project proponent will implement the following avoidance measures.

- Prior to the start of construction, the project proponent will hire a qualified wildlife biologist to inspect any bridge structure that will be modified during the non-breeding season (September 1 through January 31). If nests are found and are determined to be inactive or abandoned, they may be removed.
- After inactive nests are removed and prior to construction that will occur between February 1 and August 31, the undersides of the bridge to be modified will be covered with a suitable exclusion material that will prevent birds from nesting (i.e., 0.25-inch weather-resistant polypropylene netting, plastic sheeting, or other suitable material safe for wildlife). A qualified wildlife management specialist experienced with installation of bird exclusion materials will be hired by Caltrans or their contractor to ensure that exclusion devices are properly installed and will avoid inadvertent entrapment of migratory birds. All exclusion devices will be installed before February 1 and will be monitored by a qualified biologist throughout the breeding season (typically several times a week). The exclusion material will be anchored so that swallows cannot attach their nests to the structures through gaps in the net or in the sheeting.
- Bird exclusion devices will be monitored and inspected weekly prior to construction and daily during construction. Any necessary repairs will be made immediately to keep the exclusion devices effective.
- As an alternative to installing exclusion materials on a structure, Caltrans may hire a qualified biologist or qualified wildlife management specialist to remove nests as the birds construct them and before any eggs are laid. Visits to the site will need to occur daily throughout the breeding season (February 1 through August 31) as swallows can complete a nest in a 24-hour period.
- If exclusion material is not installed on structures prior to February 1 or if manual removal of nests is not conducted daily and migratory birds colonize a structure, removal or modification to that portion of the structure may not occur until after August 31, or until a qualified biologist has determined that the young have fledged, and all nest use has been completed.
- If appropriate steps are taken to prevent swallows from constructing new nests as described above, work can proceed at any time of the year.

BIO 18—Avoid the introduction and spread of invasive plants

Caltrans or its contractor will be responsible for avoiding the spread of invasive plants previously documented in the construction area. Accordingly, the following measures will be implemented during construction:

- Minimize the surface disturbance necessary to complete the project to the greatest extent feasible.

- Use weed-free imported erosion-control materials (or rice straw in upland areas).
- Use locally grown native plant stock and native or naturalized (noninvasive) grass seed during revegetation.

Appendix B Title VI Policy Statement

STATE OF CALIFORNIA—CALIFORNIA STATE TRANSPORTATION AGENCY — Gavin Newsom, Governor

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
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Making Conservation a California Way of Life.

November 2019

NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY STATEMENT

The California Department of Transportation, under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, ensures "*No person in the United States shall, on the ground of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance.*"

Related federal statutes, remedies, and state law further those protections to include sex, disability, religion, sexual orientation, and age.

For information or guidance on how to file a complaint, or obtain more information regarding Title VI, please contact the Title VI Branch Manager at (916) 324-8379 or visit the following web page: https://dot.ca.gov/programs/business-and-economic-opportunity/title-vi.

To obtain this information in an alternate format such as Braille or in a language other than English, please contact the California Department of Transportation, Office of Business and Economic Opportunity, at 1823 14th Street, MS-79, Sacramento, CA 95811; (916) 324-8379 (TTY 711); or at Title.VI@dot.ca.gov.

Toks Omishakin
Director

"Provide a safe, sustainable, integrated and efficient transportation system to enhance California's economy and livability"

Appendix C Comment Letters and Responses

Appendix C was added after the draft document completed circulation. This appendix contains the comments received during the public circulation and comment period from May 4, 2020 to June 8, 2020, retyped for readability. A Caltrans response follows each comment presented. Copies of the original comment letters and documents can be found in Volume 2 of this document.

On June 4, 2020, an email was received from the State Clearinghouse to inform Caltrans of the transition from providing close of review period acknowledgement and where comments submitted by State Agencies would be available.

Two comments were received from the California Department of Fish and Wildlife and the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board. The comments from the California Department of Fish and Wildlife came with a 47-page informational guidance: Considerations for Conserving the Foothill Yellow-Legged Frog. A request made in a letter from the Foothill Conservancy to a sister project 10-0X752/101700004 Mokelumne River Bridge Upgrade project was received. This project is located at the border of Amador County and Calaveras County.

Comment from: State Clearinghouse and Planning Unit

Comment 1:

From: Justin Le <Justin.Le@OPR.CA.GOV>
Sent: Thursday, June 4, 2020 1:53 PM
To: Guidi, Scott@DOT <Scott.Guidi@dot.ca.gov>
Subject: SCH Number 2020059001

The State Clearinghouse (SCH) would like to inform you that our office will transition from providing close of review period acknowledgement on your CEQA environmental document, at this time. During the phase of not receiving notice on the close of review period, comments submitted by State Agencies at the close of review period (and after) are available on CEQAnet.

Please visit: https://ceqanet.opr.ca.gov/Search/Advanced

Filter for the SCH# of your project OR your “Lead Agency”

If filtering by “Lead Agency”

Select the correct project

Only State Agency comments will be available in the “attachments” section: bold and highlighted

Thank you for using CEQA Submit.

Response to comment 1: Thank you for reaching out to our office. We have checked the CEQAnet website: http://ceqanet.opr.ca.gov/Search/Advanced on June 16, 2020 and found only the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board comments, which was dated May 21, 2020. Responses to the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board comments can be found below.

Comment from: Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board

Comment 1:

21 May 2020

Scott Guidi
California Department of Transportation
1976 East Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard
Stockton, CA 95205

Comments to request for review for the mitigated negative declaration, Bridge Rail Upgrade of Two Bridges in Calaveras County/ 10-0x751 Project, SCH#2020059001, Calaveras County.

Pursuant to the State Clearinghouse's 1 May 2020 request, the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board (Central Valley Water Board) has reviewed the *Request for Review for the Mitigated Negative Declaration* for the Bridge Rail Upgrade of Two Bridges in Calaveras County/ 10-0x751 Project, located in Amador and Calaveras Counties.

Our agency is delegated with the responsibility of protecting the quality of surface and groundwaters of the state; therefore, our comments will address concerns surrounding those issues.

1. **Regulatory Setting**

Basin Plan

The Central Valley Water Board is required to formulate and adopt Basin Plans for all areas within the Central Valley region under Section 13240 of the Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act. Each Basin Plan must contain water quality objectives to ensure the reasonable protection of beneficial uses, as well as a program of implementation for achieving water quality objectives with the Basin Plans. Federal regulations require each state to adopt water quality standards to protect the public health or welfare, enhance the quality of water and serve the purposes of the Clean Water Act. In California, the beneficial uses, water quality objectives, and the Antidegradation Policy are the State's water quality standards. Water quality standards are also contained in the National Toxics Rule, 40 CFR Section 131.36, and the California Toxics Rule, 40 CFR Section 131.38.

The Basin Plan is subject to modification as necessary, considering applicable laws, policies, technologies, water quality conditions and priorities. The original Basin Plans were adopted in 1975, and have been updated and revised periodically as required, using Basin Plan amendments. Once the Central Valley Water Board has adopted a Basin Plan amendment in noticed public hearings, it must be approved by the State Water Resources Control

Board (State Water Board), Office of Administrative Law (OAL) and in some cases, the United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA). Basin Plan amendments only become effective after they have been approved by the OAL and in some cases, the USEPA. Every three (3) years, a review of the Basin Plan is completed that assesses the appropriateness of existing standards and evaluates and prioritizes Basin Planning issues. For more information on the *Water Quality Control Plan for the Sacramento and San Joaquin River Basins*, please visit our website: http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralvalley/water_issues/basin_plans/

Response to comment 1: Thank you for your comments. Caltrans operates and maintains the public transportation system in concert with the water quality protective goals of the Central Valley Water Quality Control Boards' Basin Plans.

Comment 2:

Antidegradation Considerations

All wastewater discharges must comply with the Antidegradation Policy (State Water Board Resolution 68-16) and the Antidegradation Implementation Policy contained in the Basin Plan. The Antidegradation Implementation Policy is available on page 74 at: https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralvalley/water_issues/basin_plans/sacsjr_201805.pdf

In part it states:

Any discharge of waste to high quality waters must apply best practicable treatment or control not only to prevent a condition of pollution or nuisance from occurring, but also to maintain the highest water quality possible consistent with the maximum benefit to the people of the State.

This information must be presented as an analysis of the impacts and potential impacts of the discharge on water quality, as measured by background concentrations and applicable water quality objectives.

The antidegradation analysis is a mandatory element in the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System and land discharge Waste Discharge Requirements (WDRs) permitting processes. The environmental review document should evaluate potential impacts to both surface and groundwater quality.

Response to comment 2: All of Caltrans activities involving discharges to high quality waters do so consistent with the Antidegradation polices of the California State Water Resources Control Board. In addition, all work will occur according to Caltrans' 2018 Standard Specifications for water pollution

control (Section 13 of the Standard Specifications) and Caltrans' 2017 Construction Site Best Management Practices Manual.

Comment 3:

II. Permitting Requirements

Construction Storm Water General Permit

Dischargers whose project disturb one or more acres of soil or where projects disturb less than one acre but are part of a larger common plan of development that in total disturbs one or more acres, are required to obtain coverage under the General Permit for Storm Water Discharges Associated with Construction Activities (Construction General Permit), Construction General Permit Order No. 2009-009- DWQ. Construction activity subject to this permit includes clearing, grading, grubbing, disturbances to the ground, such as stockpiling, or excavation, but does not include regular maintenance activities performed to restore the original line, grade, or capacity of the facility. The Construction General Permit requires the development and implementation of a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP). For more information on the Construction General Permit, visit the State Water Resources Control Board website at: http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/stormwater/constperm its.shtml

Response to comment 3: This project is expected to disturb approximately 0.26-acre of soil. Therefore, Caltrans does not qualify for coverage under the Construction General Permit. Instead, discharges of stormwater runoff from the construction sites will be covered under Caltrans' Statewide National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Permit. The project will not need to formulate a Construction General Permit Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan and will instead be required to formulate a Caltrans Water Pollution Control Program

Comment 4:

Phase I and II Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) Permits

The Phase I and II MS4 permits require the Permittees reduce pollutants and runoff flows from new development and redevelopment using Best Management Practices (BMPs) to the maximum extent practicable (MEP). MS4 Permittees have their own development standards, also known as Low Impact Development (LID)/post-construction standards that include a hydromodification component. The MS4 permits also require specific design concepts for LID/post-construction BMPs in the early stages of a project during the entitlement and CEQA process and the development plan review process.

For more information on which Phase I MS4 Permit this project applies to, visit the Central Valley Water Board website at: http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralvalley/water_issues/storm_water/municipal_permits/

For more information on the Phase II MS4 permit and who it applies to, visit the State Water Resources Control Board at: http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/stormwater/phase_ii_municipal.shtml

Response to comment 4: The State Water Resources Control Board issued to California Department of Transportation a Statewide Phase I Municipal Separate Stormwater Sewer System National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Permit in 1999. Caltrans formulated a Statewide Storm Water Management Plan explaining how it will comply with the Caltrans Statewide Phase I Municipal Separate Stormwater Sewer System. For every project not requiring coverage under the Construction General National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Permit, Caltrans has committed to formulating Water Pollution Control Programs. This project will formulate a Water Pollution Control Program consistent with Caltrans Specifications.

Comment 5:

Clean Water Act Section 404 Permit

If the project will involve the discharge of dredged or fill material in navigable waters or wetlands, a permit pursuant to Section 404 of the Clean Water Act may be needed from the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE). If a Section 404 Permit is required by the USACE, the Central Valley Water Board will review the permit application to ensure that discharge will not violate water quality standards. If the project requires surface water drainage realignment, the applicant is advised to contact the Department of Fish and Game for information on Streambed Alteration Permit requirements. If you have any questions regarding the Clean Water Act Section 404 Permits, please contact the Regulatory Division of the Sacramento District of USACE at (916) 557-5250.

Clean Water Act Section 401 Permit – Water Quality Certification

If an USACE permit (e.g., Non-Reporting Nationwide Permit, Nationwide Permit, Letter of Permission, Individual Permit, Regional General Permit, Programmatic General Permit), or any other federal permit (e.g., Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act or Section 9 from the United States Coast Guard), is required for this project due to the disturbance of waters of the United States (such as streams and wetlands), then a Water Quality Certification must be obtained from the Central Valley Water Board prior to initiation of project activities. There are no waivers for 401 Water Quality

Certifications. For more information on the Water Quality Certification, visit the Central Valley Water Board website at: https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralvalley/water_issues/water_quality_certification/

Waste Discharge Requirements – Discharges to Waters of the State

If USACE determines that only non-jurisdictional waters of the State (i.e., "non- federal" waters of the State) are present in the proposed project area, the proposed project may require a Waste Discharge Requirement (WDR) permit to be issued by Central Valley Water Board. Under the California Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act, discharges to all waters of the State, including all wetlands and other waters of the State including, but not limited to, isolated wetlands, are subject to State regulation. For more information on the Waste Discharges to Surface Water NPDES Program and WDR processes, visit the Central Valley Water Board website at: https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralvalley/water_issues/waste_to_surface_water/

Projects involving excavation or fill activities impacting less than 0.2 acre or 400 linear feet of non-jurisdictional waters of the state and projects involving dredging activities impacting less than 50 cubic yards of non-jurisdictional waters of the state may be eligible for coverage under the State Water Resources Control Board Water Quality Order No. 2004-0004-DWQ (General Order 2004-0004). For more information on the General Order 2004-0004, visit the State Water Resources Control Board website at: https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/board_decisions/adopted_orders/water_quality/20 04/wqo/wqo2004-0004.pdf

Response to comment 5: All wetlands delineated within the study area will qualify as waters of the United States. As previously mentioned in the Initial Study with Mitigated Negative Declaration, Caltrans will apply for a Clean Water Act Section 404 Permit from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and Clean Water Act Section 401 Permit—Water Quality Certification from the Regional Water Quality Control Board, which will be obtained prior to construction, during the design phase of the project.

Comment 6:

Dewatering Permit

If the proposed project includes construction or groundwater dewatering to be discharged to land, the proponent may apply for coverage under State Water Board General Water Quality Order (Low Risk General Order) 2003-0003 or the Central Valley Water Board's Waiver of Report of Waste Discharge and Waste Discharge Requirements (Low Risk Waiver) R5-2013-0145. Small temporary construction dewatering projects are projects that discharge

groundwater to land from excavation activities or dewatering of underground utility vaults. Dischargers seeking coverage under the General Order or Waiver must file a Notice of Intent with the Central Valley Water Board prior to beginning discharge.

For more information regarding the Low Risk General Order and the application process, visit the Central Valley Water Board website at: http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/board_decisions/adopted_orders/water_quality/200 3/wqo/wqo2003-0003.pdf

For more information regarding the Low Risk Waiver and the application process, visit the Central Valley Water Board website at: http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralvalley/board_decisions/adopted_orders/waivers/r5-2018-0085.pdf

Limited Threat General NPDES Permit

If the proposed project includes construction dewatering and it is necessary to discharge the groundwater to waters of the United States, the proposed project will require coverage under a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit. Dewatering discharges are typically considered a low or limited threat to water quality and may be covered under the General Order for *Limited Threat Discharges to Surface Water* (Limited Threat General Order). A complete Notice of Intent must be submitted to the Central Valley Water Board to obtain coverage under the Limited Threat General Order. For more information regarding the Limited Threat General Order and the application process, visit the Central Valley Water Board website at: https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralvalley/board_decisions/adoptedorders/general orders/r5-2016-0076-01.pdf

Response to comment 6: Dewatering permit will not be required as the project will not discharge water to land.

Comment 7:

NPDES Permit

If the proposed project discharges waste that could affect the quality of surface waters of the State, other than into a community sewer system, the proposed project will require coverage under a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit. A complete Report of Waste Discharge must be submitted with the Central Valley Water Board to obtain a NPDES Permit. For more information regarding the NPDES Permit and the application process, visit the Central Valley Water Board website at: https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralvalley/help/permit/

If you have questions regarding these comments, please contact me at (916) 464-4856 or Nicholas.White@waterboards.ca.gov.

Original Signed By:

Nicholas White

Water Resource Control Engineer

cc: State Clearinghouse unit, Governor's Office of Planning and Research, Sacramento

Response to comment 7: Caltrans will obtain a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Permit for any discharges of wastewater.

Comment from: California Department of Fish and Wildlife

Comment 1:

From: Tran, Harvey@Wildlife <Harvey.Tran@Wildlife.ca.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, May 27, 2020 5:36 PM
To: Guidi, Scott@DOT <Scott.Guidi@dot.ca.gov>
Cc: Wildlife R2 CEQA <R2CEQA@wildlife.ca.gov>
Subject: Caltrans 10-0X751 Bridge Rail Upgrade of Two Bridges in Calaveras County - CDFW CEQA comments 2020-0229-0000-R2

Hi Scott,

Here are the CDFW's CEQA comments for the Caltrans 10-0X751 Bridge Rail Upgrade of Two Bridges in Calaveras County Project's MND.

The California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) appreciates the opportunity to comment on the proposed draft Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) for the 10-0X751 Bridge Rail Upgrade of Two Bridges in Calaveras County (Project). CDFW is responding to the proposed MND as a Trustee Agency for fish and wildlife resources (Fish & G. Code, §§ 711.7 & 1802, and CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15386), and as a Responsible Agency regarding any discretionary actions (CEQA Guidelines Section 15381), such as the issuance of a Lake or Streambed Alteration Agreement (California Fish and Game Code Sections 1600 et seq.) and/or a California Endangered Species Act (CESA) Permit for incidental take of Endangered, Threatened, and/or Candidate species (Fish & G. Code, § 2080 and 2080.1).

This Project will upgrade the North Fork Bridge and South Fork Bridge to bring the structures to current standards. The Project would upgrade the bridge rails and widen the bridges. The South Fork Bridge would also be seismically retrofitted. Construction work would include grading, improving drainages, work in the channel, work on existing bridge piers, removing vegetation, and dewatering.

CDFW recommends the following items be addressed in the CEQA document:

1. Page 11 2.1.4 Biological Resources

Foothill yellow-legged frog (FYLF) is currently listed as state-endangered for the Southern Sierra clade as of December 2019. CDFW recommends updating the MND to reflect the recent change in status.

Response to comment 1: Thank you for your review of the document and your comments and recommendation. The document has been updated to reflect this status change of foothill yellow-legged frog.

Comment 2:

2. Pages 32-33 BIO-6 Compensate for loss of riparian woodland

CDFW does not accept in-lieu fee for mitigation. CDFW may ask for greater than 1:1 mitigation ratio depending on the quality of the habitat impacted. Mitigation purchase should be done at a CDFW-approved mitigation bank. Additionally, CDFW Region 2 typically requires 5 years of post-construction plant monitoring for restoration efforts.

Response to comment 2: We understand that California Department of Fish and Wildlife may have specific riparian mitigation requirements as part of the Lake or Streambed Alteration Agreements as it relates to ratios, location of mitigation, and monitoring of any on-site restoration. For purposes of the CEQA document, this mitigation ensures a non-net loss of riparian habitat at a local level at a minimum 1:1 ratio. As it relates to post-construction planting, the mitigation is written as a minimum of 3 years monitoring of planted vegetation or until established based meeting success criteria developed as part of final permitting requirements.

Comment 3:

3. Pages 34 and 35 BIO 8 and BIO 9 Special-status amphibians and Northern western pond turtles

Relocation plans for FYLF and western pond turtle shall be approved by CDFW before implementation. The document states that Caltrans plans to pursue a 2081 Incidental Take Permit (ITP) for FYLF for possible take of the species. The FYLF relocation plan will fall under the 2081. CDFW recommends that Caltrans identify possible compensatory mitigation measures if the Project is expected to permanently impact the species and/or its habitat. CDFW recommends Caltrans review the “Considerations for Conserving the Foothill Yellow-legged Frog” document (Attachment) for assistance in these efforts.

Response to comment 3: A relocation plan is not proposed as part of this project and avoidance, minimization, and/or mitigation do not include moving any animals without proper agency authorization. If a sensitive species is encountered that will require relocation, Caltrans will contact the appropriate agencies. Avoidance, minimization, and/or mitigation were designed to avoid and minimize encounters with special-status species and to allow animals to move out on their own volition. Caltrans may pursue a 2081 take permit for foothill yellow-legged frog if the species is detected during the 2020 summer surveys. If no foothill yellow-legged frog is detected during surveys than a 2081 permit will likely not be pursued. An update to the Initial Study with Mitigated Negative Declaration has been made to reflect this.

Comment 4:

4. Page 40 BIO 16—Replace affected overhead shaded riverine aquatic cover vegetation

Similar to the Recommendation #2 above, CDFW may ask for greater than 1:1 replacement ratio depending on the quality of the habitat impacted. This shall be determined during Caltrans' consultation with CDFW for the 1602.

Response to comment 4: As stated in the response to comment 2, Caltrans understands that replacement ratios may increase during the final permitting phase.

Comment 5:

5. Pages 36-38 BIO 12—Roosting Bats

CDFW recommends adding measures to avoid bat impacts and proportionately enhance or create habitat impacted as a result of the Project. CDFW recommends utilizing the following measures as appropriate, to reduce potentially significant impacts to bat habitat:

Qualified Bat Biologist. Retain a biologist with expertise and experience with bats and their habitat. The minimum qualifications for the biologist should include at least 3 years of experience in conducting bat habitat assessments, night-time emergence surveys, and acoustic monitoring. The bat biologist should have adequate experience identifying local bat species (visual and acoustic identification), type of habitat, and differences in roosting behavior and types (i.e. day, night, maternity). The Qualified Bat Biologist should ensure that no Project Activities occur within 200 ft of a bat roost during the maternity (April 15 to August 31) or hibernation (October 15 to March 1) seasons.

Surveys and Monitoring. Conduct pre-Project surveys or monitoring, usually over the course of spring, summer, fall, and winter (and possibly for two or more years) to determine which bat species are using the site. Multiple survey visits are necessary because different species may use a particular roost only during certain seasons (maternity, hibernation, dispersal, migration). Further, multiple visits within a season may be necessary to ensure intermittent use is observed. Due to year-to-year variation in use, multiple years of surveys may also be necessary.

Bat Avoidance Plan. The Qualified Bat Biologist should prepare a Bat Avoidance Plan for roosts identified during pre-construction surveys. The Bat Avoidance Plan should include detailed measures to avoid and minimize impacts to roosting bats in and near the construction areas. Bats should not be disturbed without an experienced biologist overseeing avoidance and minimizations measures designed to protect nesting/roosting bats. All appropriate exclusionary measures should be implemented prior to the bridge construction during the period of March 1 to April 15 or August 31 to October

15. Potential avoidance efforts may include exclusionary blocking or filling potential roosting cavities with foam or steel wool, visual monitoring, and staging Project work to avoid bats. CDFW does not recommend utilizing netting as an exclusion method due to the likelihood of bats being entangled on it. The exclusion device should be monitored at least weekly. CDFW further recommends that construction activities be implemented outside the critical hibernation and maternity seasons if feasible.

Response to comment 5: Bat roosting habitat will not be permanently removed or modified as a result of the project and so no enhancement or habitat creation is proposed. Caltrans will retain a qualified biologist with bat experience to conduct the preconstruction survey identified under measure BIO-12. Additional language has been added to measure BIO-12 related to bat experience.

Moreover, the Project will not result in permanent impacts to potential roosting habitat because proposed modifications will not permanently alter roost areas. Surveys will focus on identifying whether bats could be temporarily disturbed during construction. Additional preconstruction survey language has been added to the Initial Study with Mitigated Negative Declaration to include surveys conducted in the summer season prior to construction.

Comment 6:

6. Page 39 BIO 13—Implement cofferdam and stream diversion restrictions

CDFW recommends the mesh size of the dewatering pumps to be no larger than 0.125” to prevent take of tadpoles. CDFW also recommends creating sites in gravel/cobble bars to draft water from or using very deep pools. If none are present, then have the operators dig a hole in the gravel/cobble bars and allow subsurface flow to fill the hole and then draft from there. The site will need to be fenced so juvenile/adult frogs and other mobile species do not colonize it.

CDFW recommends that Caltrans look at CDFW’s “Considerations for Conserving the Foothill Yellow-legged Frog” document and incorporate the following dewatering measures:

Intake screening. To minimize entrainment of foothill yellow-legged frog larvae during water diversion, all pump intakes should be fitted with a screen-type device consisting of, at minimum, a water intake strainer. Water intake strainers are most appropriate for low-volume diversion Projects. For high-volume water diversion Projects or other diversion activities that may warrant greater protection, pump intakes should be fitted with screens made of woven mesh, perforated plate, or wedge wire. The screen medium must be able to withstand forces related to pumping and be of sufficient size to prevent foothill yellow-legged frog larvae from entering the intake and being pumped along

with diverted water. High-volume water diversion Projects may require Project-specific consultation with CDFW engineering staff.

For water diversions involving water trucks, operators should move drafting hoses with attached screens in and out of the water after each drafting operation. The screen should be brushed clean and inspected each time it is placed into the water. This practice will usually prevent screens from accumulating significant amounts of debris and essentially replicate the function of a self-cleaning screen. Where a stationary pump is used, the screen should be checked frequently to ensure it is kept clean and free of debris.

Diversion rate. Water diversion rates may cause adverse impacts to foothill yellow-legged frogs if the flow in source streams is reduced to levels insufficient to support eggs, tadpoles, and subadults. For these cases, a site-specific water diversion plan and measures such as these may minimize impacts in smaller streams:

For small streams, maintain flow in the source stream during water diversion at a minimum rate of 2.0 cubic feet/second or greater;

If diverting from a pool, do not reduce pool volume by more than 10 percent;

Do not exceed a diversion rate of 10 percent of the surface flow from the source stream;

Do not exceed an instantaneous diversion rate of 350 gallons per minute (0.78 cubic feet/second).

Response to comment 6: Thank you for pointing this out. Measure BIO-13 was modified to include mesh size restrictions. Any specifics on methods of diversion will be described in the stream diversion plan prepared by Caltrans prior to construction and included with permitting applications.

Measure BIO-13 does not contain specifics on the methods of diversion because Caltrans has not completed the hydrology report and dewatering limits have not been established for this project. More details will be included in the Stream Diversion Plan, which will be prepared prior to construction and will be included in the applicable permit applications. The measure BIO-13 states that “All pumps used during dewatering will be screened according to CDFW screening guidelines to prevent entrainment of fish by the pumps”. This language has been modified to also include amphibians.

Furthermore, diversion is only proposed at the South Fork Mokelumne, which is a large river system. The limitation to not exceed an instantaneous diversion rate of 350 gallons per minute (0.78 cubic feet/second) may not be practical. This can be confirmed once the Hydrology Report is available and

diversion limits will be more specifically defined in the Stream Diversion Plan prepared during permitting phase.

Comment 7:

7. Pages 40-41 BIO 17—Nesting Birds

The nesting period is not consistent with BIO 11. CDFW recommends consistency in the nesting period used in the document to plan the bird exclusion and work window. CDFW recognizes the nesting period as between February 1 and August 31.

CDFW encourages the use of exclusion materials other than netting, in order to reduce the likelihood of birds becoming entangled.

Please note that when acting as a responsible agency, CEQA guidelines section 15096, subdivision (f) requires CDFW to consider the CEQA environmental document prepared by the lead agency prior to reaching a decision on the Project. Addressing CDFW's comments and disclosing potential Project impacts on CESA-listed species and any river, lake, or stream, and provide adequate avoidance, minimization, mitigation, monitoring and reporting measures; will assist CDFW with the consideration of the MND.

Thanks.

Harvey Tran
Environmental Scientist
California Department of Fish and Wildlife
Region 2 - North Central Region
Habitat Conservation Program
(916) 358-4035

Response to comment 7: Measures BIO-11 and BIO-17 were targeting vegetation nesting species versus bridge nesting species, but for consistency we will make the dates the same: February 1 through August 31. Netting is an option that is contained within Caltrans' 2018 Standard Specifications and it has been modified to only allow max 0.25-inch openings in the mesh. In addition to netting, plastic sheeting is also an option.

Comment from: Foothill Conservancy to sister project 10-0X750/101700004 Mokelumne River Bridge Upgrade project. Only the relevant information for 10-0X751 from the letter was retyped below because everything else in the letter corresponds to 10-0X752.

Comment 1:

Ms. Sinarath Pheng
Project Manger
California Department of Transportation
1976 East Charter Way
Stockton, CA 95205

May 21, 2020

By email transmission

Re: Highway 49 Bridge Upgrade over the Mokelumne River

Conclusion and request

Thank you for considering our concerns and answering our additional question. We are looking forward to working with you and your team to resolve our concerns and to the future completion of this valuable safety project.

Also, it was brought to our attention that Caltrans is also preparing draft environmental documents for the Highway 26 bridges over the Mokelumne's South and North Forks. Please consider this letter a request to be put on the public notice list for these and other projects in Amador and Calaveras that may affect recreation, fire, streams, and rivers so that we are notified when the projects are initiated, not only following the release of a draft environmental document.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact us.

Respectfully,

Originally Signed by

Sherry A. Pease
Executive Director
Foothill Conservancy
209-223-2508

Theresa L. Simsiman
California Stewardship Director
American Whitewater

916-835-1460

Response to comment 1: Caltrans appreciate your request and will include you in our public notice list for this project.

List of Technical Studies

Air Quality, Noise, Water Memorandum (June 2019)

- Air Quality Conformity Checklist (June 2019)

Climate Change/Greenhouse Gas Analysis (October 2019)

Cultural Screening Memorandum (September 2019; Amended August 2020)

Hazardous Waste Reports

- Initial Site Assessment (July 2019)
- Preliminary Site Investigation (in progress)

Location Hydraulic Study (August 2019)

Natural Environment Study (September 2019)

- Aquatic Resources Delineation Report (August 2019)
- Letter of Concurrence (October 2019)

Scenic Resource Evaluation (September 2019)

To obtain a copy of one or more of these technical studies/reports or the Initial Study, please send your request to the following email address: D10.public.info@dot.ca.gov.

Please indicate the project name and project identifying code (under the project name on the cover of this document) and specify the technical report or document you would like a copy of. Provide your name and email address or U.S. postal service mailing address (street address, city, state and zip code).