



Ritchie Creek Bridge Replacement Project for Fish Passage Improvement

State Route 29 | Napa County | Post Mile 33.13



Virtual Public Meeting
December 15, 2020
5:30 pm

Speaker Notes:

Hello and welcome to the Caltrans District 4's virtual public meeting for the Ritchie Creek Bridge Replacement for Fish Passage Improvement Project on State Route 29. The purpose of this meeting is to provide an overview of the Draft Environmental Document for the Ritchie Creek project, including impacts to the natural and physical environment, and provide the community an opportunity to ask Caltrans questions about the project.

Meeting Protocol

- Type questions in the chat box during the presentation or raise your hand to provide verbal comments during the Q&A session.
- Be respectful of other community members' concerns and input.
- Oral comments will not be captured in the environmental document. These must be submitted separately in writing or via email.
- Written comments and responses to those comments will become part of the final environmental document.



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Speaker Notes:

Before we start to discuss the project, let's first establish the meeting protocol.

We welcome you to submit your questions or comments in the chat box anytime during the presentation. We will respond to all questions during the Q&A section at the end of the presentation. During Q&A, Please click on "raise your hand" to request to speak. The moderator will also monitor the chat box, read your questions, or call on you when it's your turn.

When contributing, please be respectful of other community members' concerns and input.

Please note that comments made orally and in the chat function during this meeting will not be captured in the environmental document. For comments to be included in the environmental document, please submit your comments via email or mail. Instructions on how to submit comments will be provided at the end of the presentation.

Meeting Purpose

- Public Review Period: December 1, 2020 through January 8, 2021.
- Provide an overview of the Project, disclose environmental impacts and for the public to ask Caltrans questions.
- Public comments will be accepted until the close of the public review period.



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Ritchie Creek Bridge Replacement Project for Fish Passage Improvement

NAPA COUNTY, CALIFORNIA
DISTRICT 4 – NAPA-29 (PM 33.13)
EA 04-4J990/EFIS 0416000037

Initial Study with Proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration/Environmental Assessment



Prepared by the
State of California, Department of Transportation

The environmental review, consultation, and any other actions required by applicable Federal environmental laws for this project are being, or have been, carried out by Caltrans pursuant to 23 USC 327 and the Memorandum of Understanding dated December 23, 2016 and executed by Federal Highway Administration and Caltrans.



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Speaker Notes:

The document available for your review during the December 1, 2020, to January 8, 2021, public review period is an Initial Study with Proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration and Environmental Assessment for the Ritchie Creek Bridge Replacement Project for Fish Passage Improvement. The purpose of this meeting is to provide an overview of the proposed project, disclose environmental impacts, and provide the public an opportunity to ask Caltrans project questions. Written comments to the environmental document will be accepted by Caltrans until the close of the public review period and will be responded to in the final environmental document. At the close of the public comment period, Caltrans will determine whether to adopt the Build Alternative or No-Build Alternative for this project.

Now, on to the meeting agenda.

Virtual Public Meeting Agenda

- Project Location, Purpose and Need
- Project Alternatives
- Environmental Review
- Project Schedule
- Review/Comment Instructions
- Questions & Answers (Q&A)



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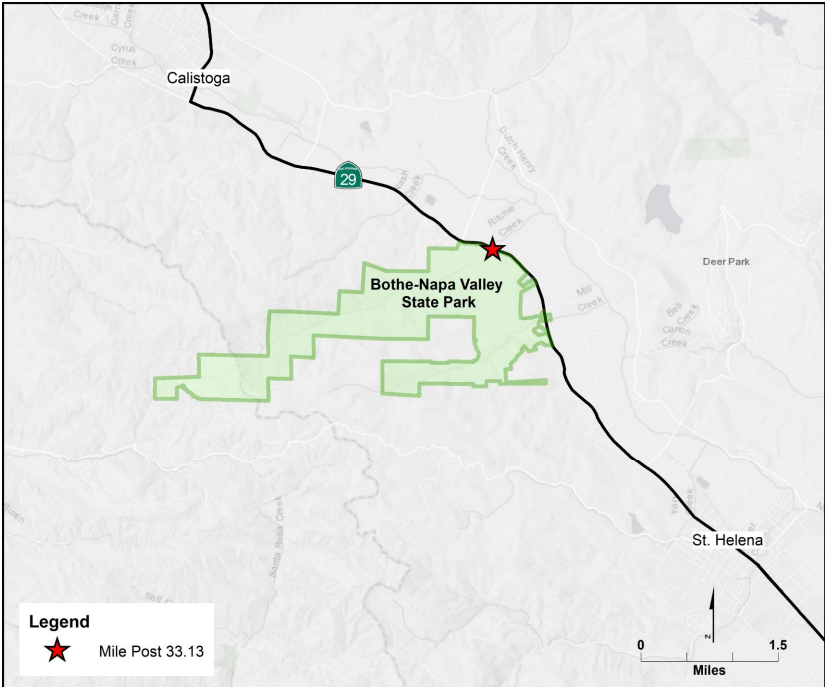


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Speaker Notes:

As stated on the agenda slide, the topics to be covered in this meeting include the project's location, purpose and need of the project, project alternatives, a summary of the environmental review, project schedule, instructions for submittal of public comments, followed by a Q&A session to conclude.

Project Location



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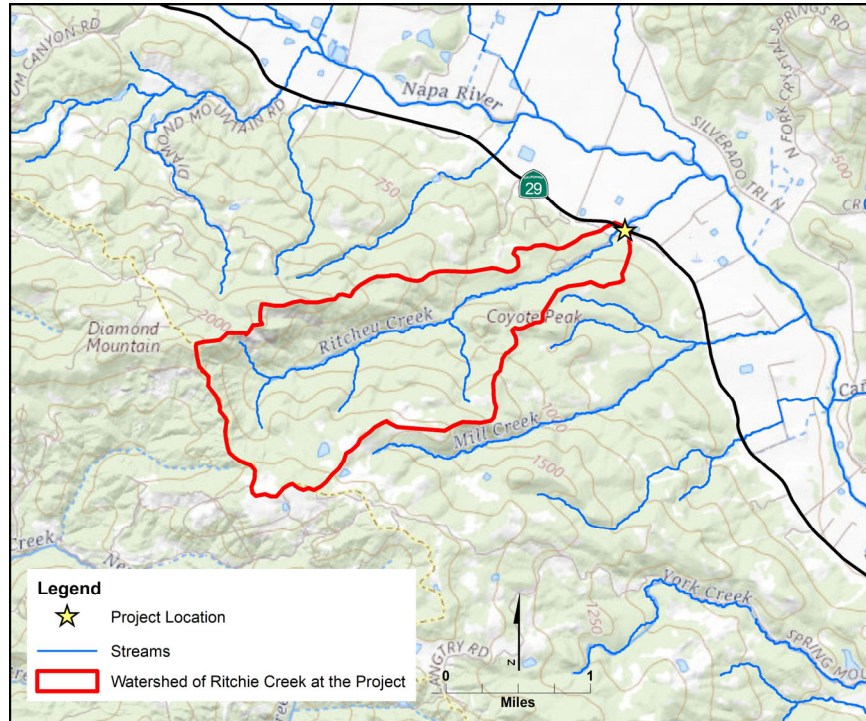


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Speaker Notes:

The proposed project is located at post mile 33.13 on State Route 29, approximately 4 miles southeast of the city of Calistoga and 3.5 miles north of the city of St. Helena in northwestern Napa County. State Route 29 links agricultural areas and the cities of Napa, Yountville, St. Helena, and Calistoga. The portion of State Route 29 within the project limits is a two-lane conventional highway with shoulders in each direction and no high-occupancy vehicle lanes.

Ritchie Creek Watershed



Speaker Notes:

This project is located within the Ritchie Creek watershed which drains into the Napa River. Ritchie Creek is a perennial stream approximately 3.8 miles in length. The Ritchie Creek watershed drains an area of 2.6 square miles and joins the Napa River a half-mile northwest of Bale, California. The upper two-thirds of the watershed lies entirely within Bothe-Napa Valley State Park, which is located along Highway 29 between Saint Helena and Calistoga.

Project Purpose and Need

Purpose

- Address fish passage barriers at the State Route 29 crossing over Ritchie Creek to obtain TMDL credits under the National Pollution Discharge Elimination System permit.

Need

- Existing fish passage barriers along Ritchie Creek at the State Route 29 crossing.



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Speaker Notes:

The purpose of the proposed project is to improve fish passage within Ritchie Creek at the bridge crossing on State Route 29. Caltrans would receive 42 Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) compliance unit credits from the State Water Resources Control Board under Caltrans' Statewide National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) stormwater permit. TMDL is a calculation of the maximum amount of a pollutant allowed in a waterbody and serves as a planning tool to restore water quality. Ritchie Creek is a tributary to the Napa River, which is in exceedance of the maximum allowable nutrients, pathogens, sedimentation, and siltation. Caltrans is required to comply with the Statewide NPDES Permit.

The project is needed to improve fish passage and help Caltrans continue to comply with its NPDES Permit. The existing bridge and its downstream concrete apron are classified as depth and jump barriers to adult and juvenile salmonids, particularly Central California Coast steelhead. Steelhead is a federally threatened species. During low flows, the water depth within Ritchie Creek can make the creek crossing impassable. The depth barrier within the culvert is due to the smooth, wide, and flat surface crossing; the jump barrier is the result of ongoing erosion and scouring overtime at the concrete apron just downstream of the bridge crossing.

Project Alternatives

- **No-Build Alternative**
 - No improvements to fish passage
- **Build Alternative**
 - Improve fish passage and obtain TMDL compliance units



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Speaker Notes:

The environmental document evaluated two alternatives for this project: the No-Build Alternative and Build Alternative. The No-Build Alternative would not improve fish passage by replacing the bridge to obtain TMDL compliance unit credits. The Build Alternative would eliminate the depth and JUMP barriers to improve fish passage at the Ritchie Creek bridge location and help Caltrans obtain TMDL compliance unit credits.

Because the No-Build Alternative proposes to leave the bridge in place, no further discussion on this alternative is provided. Instead, the following slides discuss the Build Alternative.

Build Alternative

- Replace existing bridge with new, cast-in-place bridge
 - **Existing:** 16.4 feet long; 43.3 feet wide
 - **Proposed:** 35 feet long; 44 feet wide
- New bridge would have same capacity as existing bridge
 - Two 12-foot travel lanes, 8-foot shoulders



Visual simulation looking south on State Route 29



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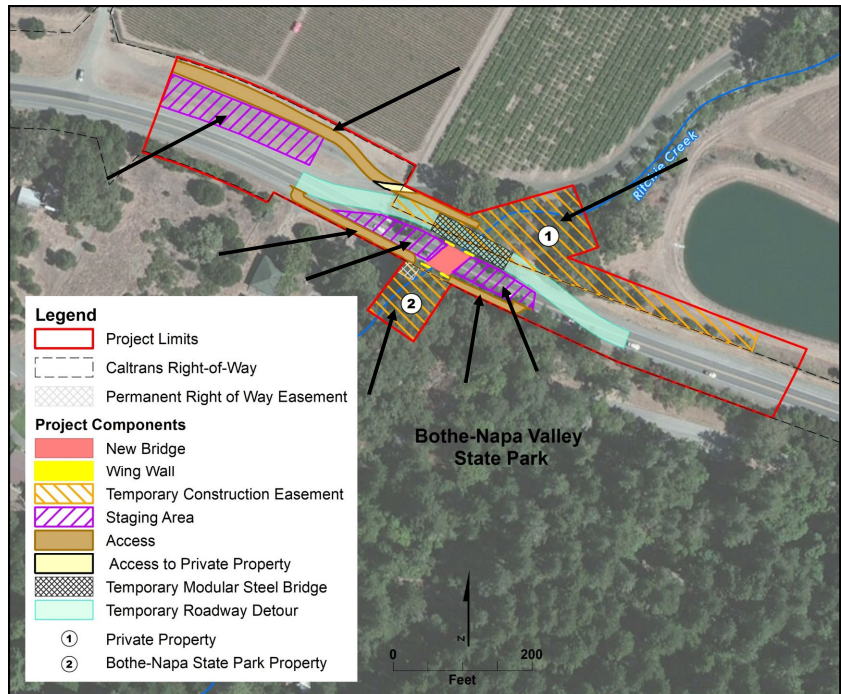
Speaker Notes:

The Build Alternative would replace the existing Ritchie Creek bridge with a new bridge of the same width and twice the length. Like the existing bridge, the new cast-in-place bridge would have two 12-foot travel lanes and 8-foot shoulders. The longer bridge would remove existing barriers to salmonids attempting to move through the project area.

The upcoming slides will provide more information on project activities.

Pre-Construction

- Site preparation
- Staging and temporary access
- Temporary construction easements
- Utility relocation



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Speaker Notes:

This slide will discuss the activities that would occur prior to construction activities. The project site would be prepared for construction activities by delineating construction work areas, installing environmentally sensitive area (ESA) fencing around sensitive habitats and cultural resources, installing wildlife exclusion fencing around staging areas, installing best management practices in accordance with the project's Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan and removing vegetations.

Staging areas, shown in purple on the map, would be established to store materials and equipment.

Three temporary access roads, shown in brown on the map, would be constructed to provide access to the creek during construction. Two temporary construction easements, shown in stripe orange on the northern and southern sides of State Route 29, would be needed on the Bothe-Napa Valley State Park and private property to provide sufficient space for construction activities. Additionally, electricity poles, a Comcast cable, a gas line, and a telephone conduit would be temporarily relocated within the project footprint prior to construction. Caltrans would coordinate with the utility service providers prior to construction. The utility providers would lead the utility relocation efforts and notify affected households of temporary service disruption.

In-Water Work

- Temporary creek diversion system
- Channel widening
- Fish passage improvements



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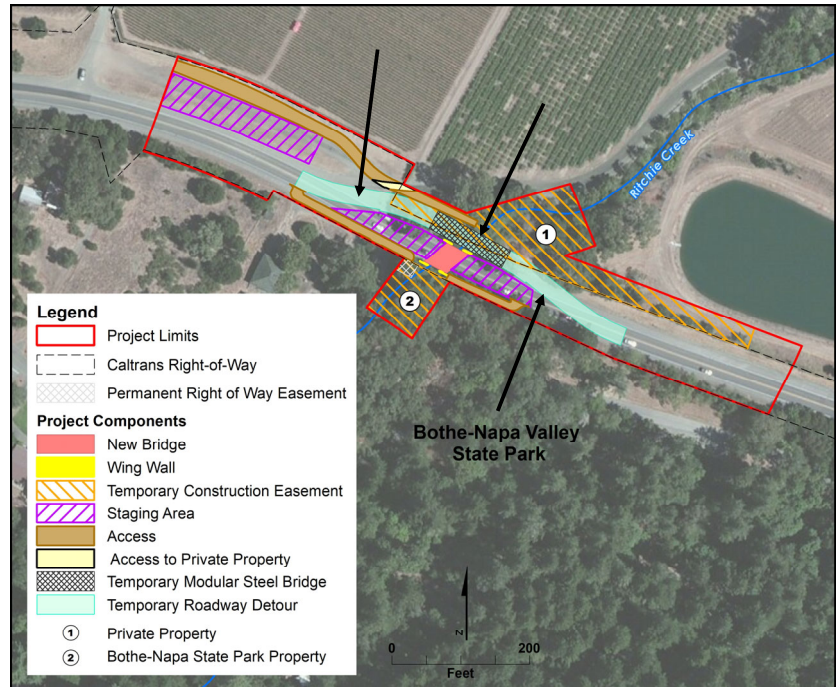
Speaker Notes:

The next four slides will discuss activities that would occur during construction.

In this slide, we will discuss in-water construction activities. First, the creek would be temporarily diverted around the work area using diversion plastic pipes and cofferdams. Next, the creek would be graded to accommodate the new bridge's longer crossing. To improve fish passage, the channel would be graded for approximately 100 feet to create a longitudinal 2.5 percent slope roughened channel; if this is not possible, a step-pool system would be created to allow for fish passage. Construction activities within the creek would be limited to the dry season, typically between June and October, to reduce downstream impacts to water quality.

Construction

- Construct temporary detour bridge
- Demolish existing bridge
- Construct abutment and new bridge
- Remove temporary bridge



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Speaker Notes:

This slide will discuss the construction of the temporary detour bridge and the new bridge. A temporary detour bridge, as shown in black in the map, would be constructed adjacent to the existing bridge to maintain traffic flow. This bridge would be assembled on-site to include two lanes with no shoulders. Next, traffic would be diverted to the temporary road detour, shown in light green on the map.

Once this happens, the existing bridge would be demolished, and construction on the new bridge would finish within 6 months.

Afterward, traffic would be shifted to the new bridge and the temporary bridge would be removed.

State Route 29 would remain open to traffic throughout construction. Some traffic-related delays are anticipated such as when nighttime work is required. These delays are expected to be minimal.

Construction

Nighttime Construction Activities

Months	Duration	Activity
April to June	6 days	Place temporary K-rails. Install the temporary detour bridge. Stripe and divert traffic to the temporary bridge.
October to November	6 Days	Pave, stripe, and divert traffic to the new bridge. Remove temporary K-rails. Remove the temporary detour bridge.



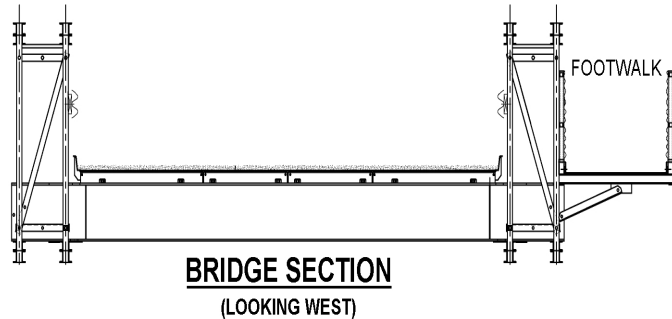
Speaker Notes:

This slide will specifically focus on nighttime construction.

It is anticipated for nighttime construction to occur over 12 days. Nighttime work would be needed for six days between April and June to place temporary K-rails, install the temporary detour bridge, and stripe and divert traffic to the temporary bridge. Another six days of nighttime work would be required between October and November to pave, stripe, and divert traffic to the new Ritchie Creek bridge, remove the temporary K-rails, and remove the temporary detour bridge.

Construction

- Implement transportation management plan
- Maintain bicycle and pedestrian access
- Maintain private and public driveway access



Conceptual Design of Bridge Cross-Section
with Cantilever Sidewalk



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Speaker Notes:

Next, let's talk about pedestrian and bicycle access and private and public driveway access.

During construction, a Transportation Management Plan (TMP) would be implemented. This plan would ensure that bicycle and pedestrian access through the project area is maintained. Included in this slide is a cross-section of a typical temporary detour bridge that is similar to the one that would be constructed for this project. As you can see, there is a 5-foot-wide footwalk on the far right of the bridge. The temporary bridge used during construction could have a pedestrian and bicycle footwalk on both sides or one side of the bridge. The number of footwalk paths would be determined during the design phase.

The TMP would also ensure that access to private and public driveways would remain available during construction.

Post-Construction

- Site clean-up
- Revegetation



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Speaker Notes:

The following activities would occur after construction activities are completed. All construction materials and debris would be removed. All temporarily disturbed areas, including the staging areas and access roads, would be restored to comparable or better than pre-construction conditions. All areas where vegetation and/or soil has been disturbed or removed would be revegetated with native plant species in accordance with requirements and coordination with Bothe-Napa Valley State Park.

Environmental Review

Resource Area – No Impact

Energy	Environmental Justice	Growth
Land Use and Planning	Mineral Resources	Paleontology
Population and Housing		

Resource Area – Less than Significant Impact

Aesthetics	Agricultural and Forest Resources	Air Quality
Floodplain	Geology and Soils	Greenhouse Gas Emissions
Hazards and Hazardous Materials	Hydrology	Noise
Public Services	Recreation	Transportation
Tribal Cultural Resources	Utilities and Service Systems	Water Quality
Wildfire		



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Speaker Notes:

Now that you have a good idea of what the project entails, let’s discuss the environmental review that has been conducted for this project. Summarized in this slide are the resource areas where the Build Alternative was determined to have no impact or a less than significant impact on environmental resources.

The Build Alternative would have No Impact on the following resources:
 Energy, Environmental Justice, Growth, Land Use and Planning, Mineral Resources, Paleontology, and Population and Housing.

The Build Alternative would have Less Than Significant Impact on the following resources:
 Aesthetics, Agricultural and Forest Resources, Air Quality, Floodplain, Geology and Soils, Greenhouse Gas Emissions, Hazards and Hazardous Materials, Hydrology, Noise, Public Services, Recreation, Transportation, Tribal Cultural Resources, Utilities and Services Systems, Water Quality and Wildfire.

Environmental Review – Less Than Significant with Mitigation

Resource Area	Impact Summary	Project Features/Measures
Biological Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tree removal • Habitat loss • Nighttime construction activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare Habitat Mitigation and Monitoring Plan • Conduct construction work during appropriate work windows • Conduct pre-construction surveys • Replant and reseed • Reduce spread of invasive species



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Speaker Notes:

The project would have a less than significant impact with mitigation on biological resources and cultural resources, as discussed in the next 2 slides.

The first of these is biological resources. Caltrans prepared a Natural Environment Study that assessed the project's impacts to biological resources in the project area.

Direct temporary impacts would occur in areas where vegetation clearing is required for construction. A total of 1.22 acres of riparian habitat is present within the project area. The Build Alternative would temporarily impact 0.37 acre and permanently impact 0.01 acre of riparian habitat. An estimated 15 to 25 trees would be removed or trimmed to provide sufficient space for construction activities.

Special-status animal species that may occur within the area include bat species, western pond turtle, California giant salamander, foothill yellow-legged frog, western bumblebee, raptors, other nesting birds, and migratory birds. Project activities would result in the temporary loss of habitat, nesting and foraging opportunities for these species. To avoid and minimize project impacts to these biological resources, Caltrans would implement avoidance and minimization measures and project features including those listed on this slide. Examples include conducting construction work during the appropriate work windows, conducting pre-construction surveys, and replanting and reseeding.

Another species that project activities would impact is the California freshwater shrimp, a federally and state endangered species. Installation of the temporary creek diversion system and work in the creek would result in temporary loss of shrimp habitat. So, during creek diversion, a qualified biologist would conduct relocation of any species observed. Additionally, to mitigate potential

project impact to the California freshwater shrimp, Caltrans will prepare a Habitat Mitigation and Monitoring Plan to mitigate impacts to the protected species. The mitigation measure will require Caltrans to recreate habitat for this species and compensate for temporary habitat impacts, resulting in permanent beneficial impact to this species.

Environmental Review – Less Than Significant with Mitigation

Resource Area	Impact Summary	Project Features/Measures
Cultural Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No adverse effect to Cavanaugh-Wright Property Impacts to three eligible archeological sites 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prepare Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) for Archaeological Treatment Plan Install Environmentally Sensitive Area (ESA) Fencing Incorporate discovery protocol



Speaker Notes:

This project would also have a less than significant impact with mitigation on cultural resources. Within the project footprint there are four cultural resources that are eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). These include the Cavanaugh-Wright Property, which is a historic property, and three previously recorded prehistoric archeological sites.

The Cavanaugh-Wright Property will be described in greater detail on the next slide, and the project would require removing and replacing two portions of the property’s retaining walls. However, such removal and replacement would not result in an adverse effect to the property because these portions of the retaining walls would be replaced in-kind.

The proposed project would have an adverse effect on the three archeological sites. To mitigate the adverse effect, Caltrans is conducting ongoing consultation with the State Historic Preservation Officer to resolve adverse effects through the preparation of a Memorandum of Agreement and the implementation of an Archaeological Treatment Plan.

Avoidance, minimization, and mitigation measures to address potential project impacts on these cultural resources include preparing an archeological treatment plan, installing ESA fencing, and incorporating discovery protocol. This means that if unknown cultural materials are found, construction would stop until a qualified archaeologist could assess the nature and significance of the find.

Cavanaugh-Wright Property

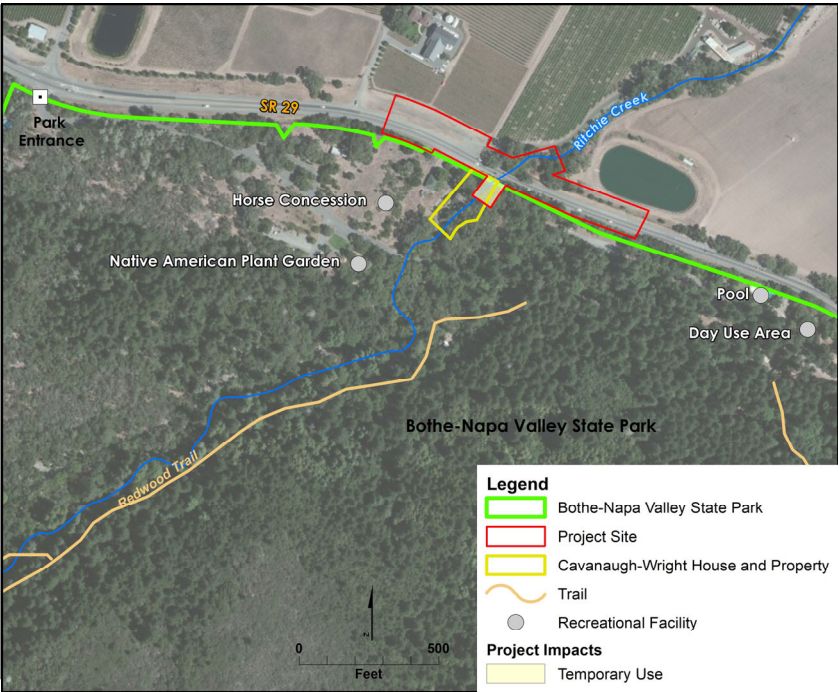


Speaker Notes:

Now we will talk about what makes the Cavanaugh-Wright Property unique. The Cavanaugh-Wright House and landscaping were built around 1919. The house embodies virtually all the characteristics of Craftsman-style architecture as practiced throughout California in the first two decades of the twentieth century. The property is in a rural setting and has unique elaborate landscaping surrounding it; therefore, the property possesses high artistic value.

In addition to being a historic property, The Cavanaugh-Wright Property is also a Section 4(f) Resource. Section 4(f) is a federal law that applies to projects undertaken by the U.S. Department of Transportation and protects Section 4(f) resources. Section 4(f) resources include publicly owned parks; recreational areas of national, state or local significance; publicly-owned school playgrounds, wildlife, or waterfowl refuges; or lands from a historic site of national, state, or local significance.

Section 4(f) Resources



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Speaker Notes:

This slide shows the two Section 4(f) resources in the project area: these are Bothe-Napa Valley State Park, shown outlined in green, and the Cavanaugh-Wright Property, shown outlined in yellow, which is eligible for listing in the NRHP.

Environmental Review– Section 4(f) *De Minimis* Finding

Resource Area	Impact Summary	Project Features/Measures
<p>Section 4(f) Resource</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No adverse effect to Cavanaugh-Wright property • Temporary occupancy within Bothe-Napa Valley State Park, not near a public access point • No permanent or constructive uses • Permanent right-of-way easement use 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Install exclusion fencing on historic property • Remove construction waste • Implement dust control • Replant, reseed, and restore disturbed Areas • Replace trees • Install ESA fencing



Speaker Notes:

Within Bothe-Napa Valley State Park, the project would require a permanent right of way easement to access and maintain the new bridge. This permanent right-of-way easement on the State Park would not permanently or temporarily affect the use of the recreational facilities available for public enjoyment. Construction activities would not generate any constructive use, impair the features, or affect activities within the park in any ways. There may be minimal disruption related to construction activities inside the park, such as noise or dust, but construction activities would be located away from areas accessed by the public, and these uses would be temporary in nature. Therefore, the Build Alternative would have a de minimis use of this Section 4(f) resource.

Project activities would not have an adverse effect on the Cavanaugh-Wright Property. However, temporary access would be required within the boundary of the historic property. Construction would result in temporary visual impacts, increased noise levels, and increased air pollutants, such as dust and particulate matter, in areas adjacent to the Cavanaugh-Wright House. Project activities would not have an adverse effect on the Cavanaugh-Wright House. Therefore, the Build Alternative would have a de minimis use of this Section 4(f) resource.

In addition, Caltrans would implement several avoidance and minimization measures to reduce the use of these 4(f) resources.

Project Schedule

Milestone	Date
Public Review Period	December 1, 2020 – January 8, 2021
Final Environmental Document	Spring 2021
Finalize Bid Package	June 2022
Construction Begins	November 2022
Construction Complete	December 2023



Speaker Notes:

Now onto the project schedule. The public review period commenced on December 1, 2020, and will close on January 8, 2021. Within this period, Caltrans will accept written comments from the public. These comments will be responded to and incorporated into the final environmental document expected to be available to the public in Spring 2021. If the project is approved, the design phase will begin right after and end in June 2022, when the construction package will be ready for contractor bidding. Afterward, construction is expected to begin in November 2022 and be completed by December 2023.

How to Review

- **Online:**

https://dot.ca.gov/-/media/dot-media/district-4/documents/d4-environmental-docs/ritchie-creek-bridge/4j990_ritchie_creek_bridge_ismnd_11272020.pdf

- **In Person:**

St. Helena Public Library
1492 Library Lane
St. Helena, CA 94574



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Speaker Notes:

To review the document, we welcome you to visit the Caltrans District 4 Environmental Document webpage by following the link provided in this slide, or you can read the document in person at the St. Helena Public Library. Please follow any social distancing guidelines provided by the library.

How to Submit a Comment

- **Email:** Nathan.Roberts@dot.ca.gov [Preferred Due to COVID-19]
- **Postal mail:**
Caltrans District 4
Nathan Roberts
P.O. Box 23660, MS 8B
Oakland, CA 94623



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Speaker Notes:

To submit a public comment, please email Nathan Roberts at Nathan.Roberts@dot.ca.gov. This is the preferred communication method due to COVID-19. But you can also send your comment by postal mail to the address shown on this slide.

Questions or comments?
Thank you for your time!



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Speaker Notes:

Finally, we will have a question-and-answer session. Our moderator has been monitoring the chat box for questions you've sent during this presentation. If you wish to ask your questions now, you can also click on the "raise your hand" function on your screen to notify the moderator. One of our panelists today will address your questions or provide more information. We also welcome you to submit a written comment by January 8, 2021. Caltrans will respond to written comments – received via email or postal mail – in the final environmental document.