

Sherwood Road Geometric Upgrade Project

Willits, Mendocino County
01-Men-101 (PM 47.1 / 47.3)
EA 26204/EFIS 0112000203

Initial Study with Proposed Negative Declaration



Prepared by the
State of California Department of Transportation

June 2015



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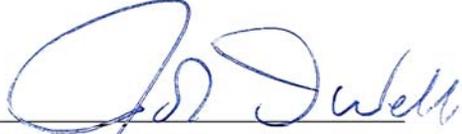
Sherwood Road Geometric Upgrade Project
01-Men-101 (PM 47.1 / 47.3)
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INITIAL STUDY with Proposed Negative Declaration

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

THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA
Department of Transportation

6/30/2014
Date of Approval


John D. Webb, Chief
North Region Environmental Services
California Department of Transportation
CEQA Lead Agency

Negative Declaration

Pursuant to: Division 13, Public Resources Code

Project Description

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) proposes to realign the existing Sherwood Road intersection with U.S. 101 in Willits. Currently, Sherwood Road intersects U.S. 101 at a horizontal angle with a 12% grade, with two 12 foot lanes, no shoulders, and short left and right turn pockets. The proposed project will re-align Sherwood Road to intersect U.S. 101 perpendicularly, add a 4-foot wide right shoulder and include an 8-foot wide vehicle pullout along the east side of the road, include a retaining wall along the west side of the new road, reduce the grade on Sherwood Road to 10%, increase the length of the left and right turn lanes on Sherwood Road from about 15 feet to 200 feet, and improve the signalized intersection with Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance. The acquisition of new State right of way will be required (approximately 0.55 acres).

Determination

Caltrans has prepared an Initial Study for this project, and following public review, has determined from this study that the proposed project would not have a significant effect on the environment for the following reasons:

- Based on the results of environmental analysis completed for this project, the proposed project would have no effect on: Agricultural Resources, Cultural Resources, Geology/Soils, Land Use/Planning, Mineral Resources, Population/Housing, Public Services, Recreation, Transportation/Traffic, and Utilities/Service Systems.
- In addition, the proposed project would have less than significant effects on Aesthetics, Air Quality, Biology, Hazards and Hazardous Materials, Hydrology and Water Quality, and Noise. Impacts were further reduced by utilizing the following standards, best management practices and design modifications as follows:
 - Aesthetics:
 - Hydro-seed and restore all areas disturbed (including all staging areas) to its natural condition.
 - The proposed retaining wall will be a soil nail wall consisting of shotcrete. The shotcrete will be colored to match the earth tones of the surrounding environment.
 - Determine and delineate erosion control measures on the construction documents.
 - Replant container shrubs and trees to reestablish the landscape that has been removed.
 - Remove the old Sherwood Road alignment and re-vegetate with native grasses, shrubs and trees.
 - Air Quality:
 - The construction contractor must comply with the Caltrans' Standard Specifications in Section 14-9:
 - Section 14-9.02 specifically requires compliance by the contractor with all applicable laws and regulations related to air quality, including air pollution control district and air quality management district regulations and local ordinances.
 - Section 14-9.03 is directed at controlling dust. If dust palliative materials other than water are to be used, material specifications are described in Section 18.
 - Water or dust palliative will be applied to the site and equipment as often as necessary to control fugitive dust emissions. Fugitive emissions generally must meet a "no visible dust" criterion either at the point of emissions or at the right-of-way line depending on local regulations.
 - ESA (Environmentally Sensitive Area)-like areas or their equivalent will be established near sensitive air receptors (schools, hospitals, etc.). Minimize idling time within these areas by either shutting equipment off when not in use or reducing the time of idling to 5 minutes (as required by the state airborne toxics control measure [Title 13, Section 2485 of the California Code of Regulations]).
 - Portable diesel engines and certain other types of equipment used at the project work site may require registration with California Air Resources Board (ARB) Portable Equipment Registration Program (PERP) with the State or a local district permit. The owner/operator shall be responsible for arranging appropriate consultations with the ARB or the District to determine registration and permitting requirements prior to equipment operation at the site.
 - Construction equipment and vehicles will be properly tuned and maintained. All construction equipment will use low sulfur fuel as required by CA Code of Regulations Title 17, Section 93114.

- All transported loads of soils and wet materials will be covered before transport, or adequate freeboard (space from the top of the material to the top of the truck) will be provided to minimize emission of dust (particulate matter) during transportation.
- Dust and mud that are deposited on paved, public roads due to construction activity and traffic will be promptly and regularly removed to decrease particulate matter.
- To the extent feasible, construction traffic will be scheduled and routed to reduce congestion and related air quality impacts caused by idling vehicles along local roads during peak travel times.
- Biology:
 - Establish environmentally sensitive areas, use containment measures/construction site best management practices (BMPs), restrict timing of woody vegetation removal, conduct nesting bird surveys prior to construction, limit vegetation removal, and incorporate weed free erosion control treatments.
 - To off-set the loss of California black oak trees on the project site, oaks trees will be planted on-site at a ratio determined by the Caltrans landscape architect (at least 1 to 1).
- Hazards and Hazardous Materials:
 - Test removed traffic markings for levels of lead and chromium to determine proper disposal methods.
 - Test for asbestos, heavy metal contamination and ADL as appropriate.
 - Evaluate any acquired new right of way for potential soil contamination.
 - A Hazardous Substances Disclosure Document (HSDD) attached to the Certificate of Sufficiency (COS) would be required before acquiring new right of way.
 - Include the following Standard Special Provisions (SSP) into the final plans, specifications, and estimates: SSP 15-305 (yellow thermoplastic/paint striping removal), SSP 15-301 (white thermoplastic/paint removal), SSP 14-001 (yellow paint/thermoplastic removal), and SSP 7-1.02K(6)(i)(iii) (earth material containing lead).
 - Regarding soil and/or groundwater potentially containing petroleum hydrocarbon, removal of the petroleum contaminated material is required
- Hydrology and Water Quality:
 - Incorporate appropriate pollution prevention BMPs. Comply with standard requirements of the Caltrans Statewide National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit and Construction General Permit.
- Noise:
 - Include Caltrans Standard Specification, Section 14-8.02 "Noise Control" in the bid package. Noise will not exceed 86 dBA LMax at 50 feet from the job site activities from 9 p.m. to 6 a.m. Also, the contractor will not be allowed to operate an internal combustion engine on the job site without the appropriate manufacturer-recommended muffler.
- Traffic/Transportation
 - Prepare a detailed Traffic Management Plan that includes
 - Work will occur both during the day and at night.
 - Daytime work will involve construction activities off of existing Sherwood Road. No lanes on either Sherwood Road or US 101 will be closed during daytime work.
 - Roadwork will occur at night, between the hours of 9 p.m. and 6 a.m., when traffic volumes are low.
 - Restrictions on when lanes may be closed to minimize effects during planned events.
 - A public awareness campaign.
 - Working with emergency services to reduce delays during construction.
 - Paid advertising in local newspapers prior to major stage or traffic shifts.
 - A Construction Zone Enhanced Enforcement Program (COZEEP) with the CHP during major construction that affects traffic, such as stage changes and traffic shifts.
 - Changeable message signs to alert motorists to unusual or new conditions and any delays that develop.
 - Prepare a detailed Stage Construction Plan that will carry out the construction phase of the project with as little impact as is possible to the traveling public.



 John Webb, Chief
 North Region Environmental Services
 California Department of Transportation

6-1-15

 Date

Initial Study

Project Title

Sherwood Road Geometric Upgrade Project

Lead Agency Name, Address and Contact Person

California Department of Transportation (Caltrans)
2379 Gateway Oaks Drive, Suite 150
Sacramento, CA 95833
Kendall Schinke, Environmental Branch Chief
(916) 274-0610

Project Location

The project is located along U.S. 101 in the City of Willits in Mendocino County, CA, post mile 47.1/47.3 (see Figure 1).

Project Sponsor's Name and Address

California Department of Transportation (Caltrans)
2379 Gateway Oaks Drive, Suite 150
Sacramento, CA 95833

Purpose and Need

The purpose of this project is to improve the operation of the existing non-standard Sherwood Road/U.S. 101 intersection by redesigning the intersection to reduce queuing and increase the storage on Sherwood Road. The existing Sherwood Road intersects US 101 at a horizontal angle with a 12% grade and a 36-foot radius horizontal curve, with two 12 foot lanes, no shoulders, and short left and right turn pockets. Left turn queues from northbound US 101 onto Sherwood Road and peak hour queues along the uphill gradient are long since this is the only access into the Brooktrails subdivision and to the Willits Municipal Airport. This project includes the construction of a retaining wall approximately 30 feet tall that allows for an improved standard geometric design of the Sherwood Road approach and intersection with U.S. 101. Caltrans studies indicated that constructing the improvements would be feasible.

Description of Project

This project involves realigning the existing Sherwood Road intersection with U.S. 101 in Willits from PM 47.1- 47.3 (Figure 1). Currently, Sherwood Road intersects U.S. 101 at a horizontal angle with a 12% grade, with two 12 foot lanes, no shoulders, and short left and right turn pockets. The proposed project will re-align Sherwood Road to intersect U.S. 101 perpendicularly, add a 4-foot wide right shoulder and include an 8-foot wide vehicle pullout along the east side of the road, include a retaining wall along the west side of the new road, reduce the grade on Sherwood Road to 10%, increase the length of the left and right turn lanes on Sherwood Road from about 15 feet to 200 feet, and improve the signalized intersection with Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance. The acquisition of new State right of way will be required (approximately 0.55 acres).

Caltrans anticipates that there will be an excess of material that will require disposal. Approximately 50 feet by 20 feet of hillside material, for about 350 linear feet, will be removed. About 32,000 cubic yards of material will be excavated. This material will be disposed of at an approved contractor disposal site.

Surrounding Land Uses and Setting

Land uses along U.S. 101 include commercial (Tower Mart) and Willits High School (approximately 450 feet away). Land uses along Sherwood Road include rural residential and open space.

Zoning

Residential, commercial.

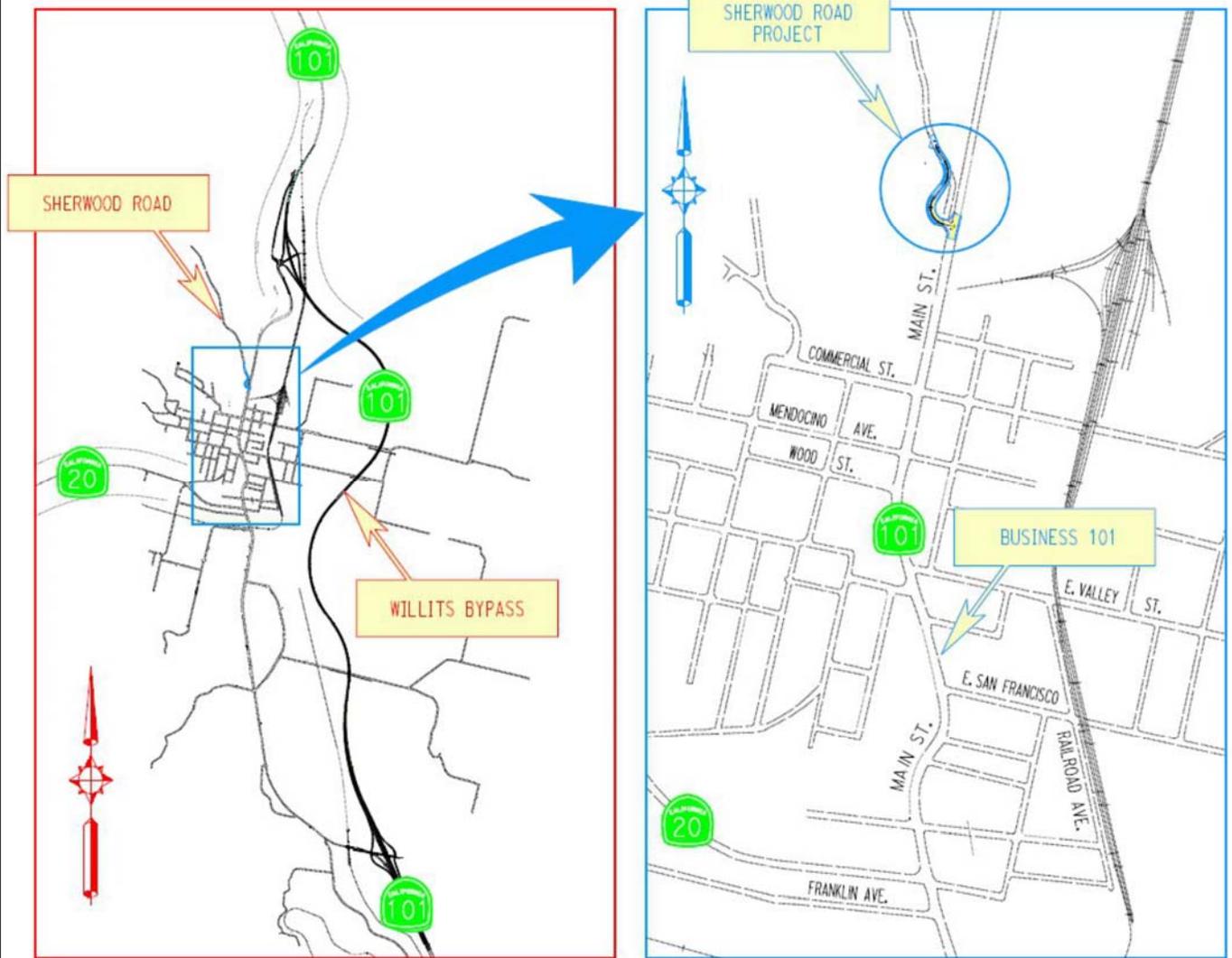


Figure 1
Project Location

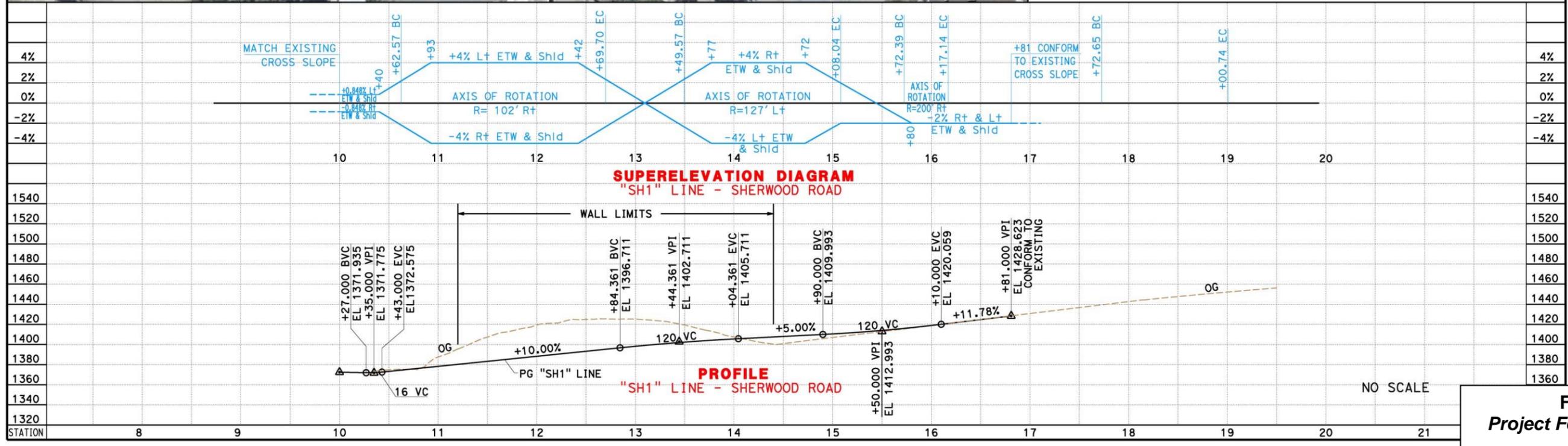
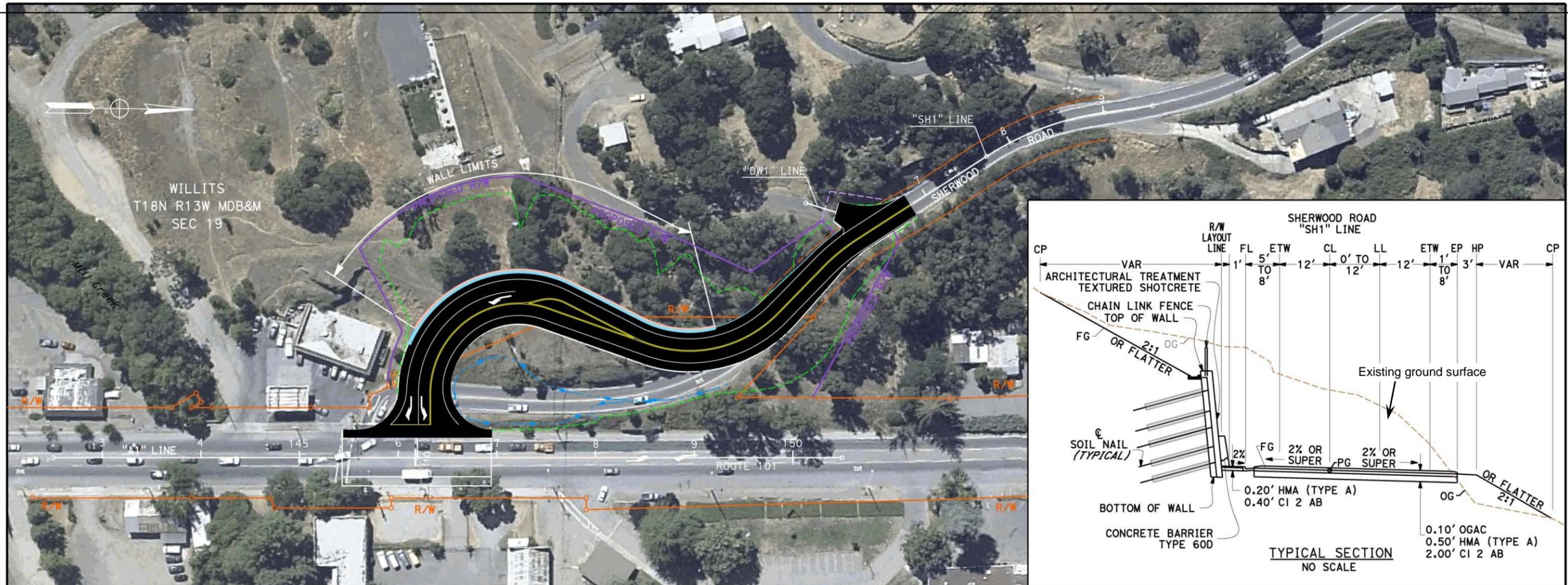


Figure 2
Project Features

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Impacts Checklist

The impacts checklist starting below identifies physical, biological, social, and economic factors that might be affected by the proposed project. The California Environmental Quality Act impact levels include “potentially significant impact,” “less than significant impact with mitigation,” “less than significant impact,” and “no impact.”

A brief explanation of each California Environmental Quality Act checklist determination follows each checklist item. The checklist is followed by a focused discussion of hazardous waste issues relating to this project.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
I. AESTHETICS: Would the project:				
a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) Substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>A "Less Than Significant Impact" is based on the measures recommended in the Avoidance and Minimization section.</u>				
d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

"No Impact" determinations for a, b, and d are based on the Visual Impact Assessment prepared for the project.

II. 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 Dept. 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:

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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))?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d) Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

"No Impact" determinations are based on review of aerials and planning documents that show that there are no agricultural resources affected by the project.

III. AIR QUALITY: Where available, the significance criteria established by the applicable air quality management 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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Violate any air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) 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 (including releasing emissions which exceed quantitative thresholds for ozone precursors)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

A "Less Than Significant Impact" is based on the short-term temporary construction-related impacts, and measures discussed in the Avoidance and Minimization section.

e) Create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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"No Impact" determinations for a, b, c, and e are based on the June 2013 Air Quality Assessment and the Aug. 2014 revised Air Quality Assessment.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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IV. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES: 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 Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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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 Game or US Fish and Wildlife Service?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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A "Less Than Significant Impact" is based on the amount of the impact (removal of under 10 California black oak trees, or 0.46 acres of native upland oak woodland) and that the removed oaks will be replanted on-site at a ratio determined by the Caltrans landscape architect (at least 1 to 1).

c) Have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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"No Impact" determinations for a, c, d, e, and f are based on the May 2014 Natural Environment Study.

V. CULTURAL RESOURCES: Would the project:

a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in §15064.5?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to §15064.5?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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c) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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d) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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"No Impacts" determinations are based on the conclusions of the August 2014 Historic Property Survey Report and the August 2014 Architectural Survey Report.

Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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VI. GEOLOGY AND SOILS: Would the project:

- | | | | | |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| a) Expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving: | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 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? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| ii) Strong seismic ground shaking? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| iv) Landslides? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| b) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| c) Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| d) Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial risks to life or property? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 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? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

"No Impact" determinations are based on the January 2014 Preliminary Foundation Report and with conversations with Caltrans geotechnical staff.

VII. 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?

An assessment of the greenhouse gas emissions and climate change is included in the body of environmental document. While Caltrans has included this good faith effort in order to provide the public and decision-makers as much information as possible about the project, it is Caltrans determination that in the absence of further regulatory or scientific information related to GHG emissions and CEQA significance, it is too speculative to make a significance determination regarding the project's direct and indirect impact with respect to climate change. Caltrans does remain firmly committed to implementing measures to help reduce the potential effects of the project. These measures are outlined in the body of the environmental document.

Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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VIII. 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? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 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? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| c) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 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? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

A "Less Than Significant Impact" is based on the requirement of removing any petroleum contaminated material.

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|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 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 for people residing or working in the project area? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| f) For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| g) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| h) Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires, including where wildlands are adjacent to urbanized areas or where residences are intermixed with wildlands? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

"No Impact" determinations for a, b, c, e, f, g, and h are based on the October 2013 Initial Site Assessment.

IX. HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY: Would the project:

- | | | | | |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|

As discussed in the hydrology/water quality section, the implementation of water quality BMPs would reduce the potential to impact water quality.

- | | | | | |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| b) Substantially deplete groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that there would be a net deficit in aquifer volume or a lowering of the local groundwater table level (e.g., the production rate of pre-existing nearby wells would drop to a level which would not support existing land uses or planned uses for which permits have been granted)? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
c) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, in a manner which would result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

As discussed in the hydrology/water quality section, the implementation of water quality BMPs would reduce the potential to impact water quality.

d) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, or substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or off-site?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
e) 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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
f) Otherwise substantially degrade water quality?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

As discussed in the hydrology/water quality section, the implementation of water quality BMPs would reduce the potential to impact water quality.

g) Place housing within a 100-year flood hazard area as mapped on a federal Flood Hazard Boundary or Flood Insurance Rate Map or other flood hazard delineation map?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
h) Place within a 100-year flood hazard area structures which would impede or redirect flood flows?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
i) Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving flooding, including flooding as a result of the failure of a levee or dam?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
j) Inundation by seiche, tsunami, or mudflow	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

"No Impact" determinations for b, d, e, g, h, i, and j are based on the Dec. 2013 Water Quality Assessment Report and discussions with Caltrans engineers.

X. LAND USE AND PLANNING: Would the project:

a) Physically divide an established community?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project (including, but not limited to the general plan, specific plan, local coastal program, or zoning ordinance) adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) Conflict with any applicable habitat conservation plan or natural community conservation plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

"No Impact" determinations are based on reviews of local planning documents, including the Brooktrails Township Specific Plan.

Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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XI. 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? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 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? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

"No Impact" determinations are based on reviews of the August 2009 Mendocino General Plan and the Feb. 2009 General Plan Update Final EIR.

XII. NOISE: Would the project result in:

- | | | | | |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| a) Exposure of persons to or generation of noise levels in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| b) Exposure of persons to or generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| c) A substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| d) A substantial temporary or periodic increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

As discussed in the noise section, implementation of construction Standard Special Provisions (SSPs) will reduce temporary noise impacts.

- | | | | | |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 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 expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| f) For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

"No Impact" determinations for a, b, c, e and f are based on the June 2013 Noise Assessment.

XIII. POPULATION AND HOUSING: Would the project:

- | | | | | |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| a) Induce substantial 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)? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| b) Displace substantial numbers of existing housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
c) Displace substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

"No Impact" determinations are based on the project's scope and location.

XIV. 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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	-------------------------------------	--------------------------

A "Less Than Significant" determination is based on the project Traffic Management Plan, which includes provisions regarding allowing only one lane closed and contacting all emergency service agencies, including fire responders, prior to any lane closures.

Police protection?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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A "Less Than Significant" determination is based on the project Traffic Management Plan, which includes provisions regarding allowing only one lane closed and contacting all emergency service agencies, including fire responders, prior to any lane closures.

Schools?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Parks?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Other public facilities?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

"No Impact" determinations are based on traffic information, construction timing, and the project's scope and location.

XV. 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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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"No Impact" determinations are based on the project's scope and location.

Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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XVI. TRANSPORTATION/TRAFFIC: Would the project:

- | | | | | |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| a) Conflict with an applicable plan, ordinance or policy establishing measures of effectiveness for the performance of the circulation system, taking into account all modes of transportation including mass transit and non-motorized travel and relevant components of the circulation system, including but not limited to intersections, streets, highways and freeways, pedestrian and bicycle paths, and mass transit? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| b) Conflict with an applicable congestion management program, including, but not limited to level of service standards and travel demand measures, or other standards established by the county congestion management agency for designated roads or highways? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| c) Result in a change in air traffic patterns, including either an increase in traffic levels or a change in location that results in substantial safety risks? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| d) Substantially increase hazards due to a design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| e) Result in inadequate emergency access? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| f) Conflict with adopted policies, plans or programs regarding public transit, bicycle, or pedestrian facilities, or otherwise decrease the performance or safety of such facilities? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

"No Impact" determinations are based on the project's Traffic Management Plan and input of Caltrans Traffic Operations staff.

XVII. UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS: Would the project:

- | | | | | |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| a) Exceed wastewater treatment requirements of the applicable Regional Water Quality Control Board? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| b) Require or result in the construction of new water or wastewater treatment facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| c) Require or result in the construction of new storm water drainage facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| d) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project from existing entitlements and resources, or are new or expanded entitlements needed? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| e) 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? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
f) Be served by a landfill with sufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the project's solid waste disposal needs?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
g) Comply with federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

"No Impact" determinations are based on the project's scope and location.

XVIII. MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE

a) Does the project have the potential to 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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) Does the project have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Affected Environment, Environmental Consequences, and Avoidance/Minimization Measures

Environmental studies were prepared by Caltrans specialists for the following topics: air quality, biological resources, community impacts, cultural resources, hazards and hazardous materials, noise, traffic/transportation, visual resources (aesthetics), and water quality/hydrology. As part of the scoping and environmental analysis carried for the project, the following environmental issues were considered but no adverse impacts were identified. As a result, there is no further discussion about these issues in this document:

Agricultural resources, cultural resources, geology/soils, land use/planning, mineral resources, population/housing, public services, recreation, transportation/traffic, and utilities/service systems.

Construction avoidance and minimization measures for cultural resources and transportation/traffic are also discussed.

Aesthetic Resources

Caltrans completed a Visual Impact Study in July 2013.

Affected Environment

The visual environment is defined through location, physical setting, natural communities and urban development. Every landscape type has distinct visual characteristics defining the natural and visual environment.

The City of Willits is known as the “Heart of Mendocino County-Gateway to the Redwoods,” where one leaves the wine country and enters the Redwood forests to the north. The location of the proposed project is in the northern portion of Willits which is in the Little Lake Valley. This valley is surrounded by views of the foothills and mountains; the visual quality is pleasantly memorable.

Natural communities in the valley range from grassy wetlands on the north end to an oak woodland matrix with irregular patches of grasslands on higher grounds near the edge of the valley. There are also linear patterns of woodlands that follow man made riparian corridors and land ownership boundaries. This is most noticeable near the northern wetlands. The uplands surrounding the valley provide the viewer with a more forested vista with oak woodlands being the dominant vegetation. Smaller patches of true forest grow on the more shaded slopes.

The immediate area surrounding the proposed project is urbanized with commercial and residential development. As a result, the natural setting in this area has been altered, which has diminished the visual quality. The east side of US 101 is flat with predominantly commercial and retail properties. The west side of the highway, where Sherwood Road will be realigned, begins to ascend in elevation to upland vegetation consisting of natural grasslands and large groves of oak woodlands interspersed with residential development.

Environmental Consequences

The proposed project will impact the visual quality of the area due to the changes in the environment caused by project construction. Approximately 15-20 trees, mainly oaks, will be removed from the hillside west of the existing Sherwood Road in order to allow for the new roadway alignment. These trees are a visual resource of the area and removing them will expose the hillside and potentially open up views of the residences that are

presently screened. However, since the natural setting is altered by urban and commercial uses in the area, the visual quality is already diminished. As noted in the avoidance/minimization section below, removed trees and shrubs will be replaced at a ratio determined by the Caltrans landscape architect (at least 1 to 1). Portions of the old Sherwood Road alignment will also be re-vegetated. These measures will replace the screening lost from the removal of vegetation.

This new alignment will cut into the slope requiring the construction of a retaining wall (refer to Figure 2 for the location of the wall and retaining wall details). The wall will introduce a structure to an area that is presently natural in character and will produce a more urban look. The wall will be a soil nail wall consisting of shotcrete. Soil nailing is an earth retention technique using grouted tension-resisting steel elements (nails) that can be design for permanent or temporary support. Shotcrete is concrete conveyed through a hose and pneumatically projected at high velocity onto a surface. The shotcrete will be colored to match the earth tones of the surrounding environment, reducing its visibility (see minimization measures, below). The wall be about 50 feet tall in the center, tapering down to 0 feet tall at the ends; overall the wall will be 150 feet long. This wall will be visible to the traveling motorist along Sherwood Road. Several visual simulations were presented at the July 30, 2014 public workshop in Willits (see Figure 3). These simulations showed the existing view and the view with the retaining wall. Public response was positive.

Avoidance and Minimization Measures

Although no significant impacts were identified, the following minimization measures will avoid or minimize impacts to visual resources.

- Hydro-seed and restore all areas disturbed (including all staging areas) to its natural condition upon completion of the project. This can best be accomplished by re-contouring areas (especially the area of the cut slope) and applying permanent erosion control.
- Color the shotcrete used for the soil nail retaining wall with a shade that represents the shade of the natural cut slope (shades of brown and/or earth tones). This will help to blend the wall with the surrounding natural environment. The wall, in addition to the added color, should be finished to resemble a textured natural looking slope.
- Determine, and delineate, all permanent erosion control measures on the construction documents during the design phase of the project. This work shall be under the guidance of a landscape architect.
- Replace all mature trees and shrubs removed from the slope to reestablish the landscape that has been removed. Replacement ratios will be determined by the Caltrans landscape architect.
- Remove the old Sherwood Road (including the road rock sub-base) and re-vegetate with native grasses, shrubs and trees. The work to restore this area will be determined by the Caltrans landscape architect.



Existing view, looking west at the intersection of Sherwood Road and US 101.



Visual simulation, with grey colored retaining wall.



Visual simulation, with earth-tone colored retaining

Figure 3
Visual Simulations

Biological Resources

Caltrans completed a Natural Environment Study (NES) in October 2013. [The NES analyzes the impacts of the project on the natural environment, including plant and animal species and wetlands.](#)

Affected Environment

Willits and the Little Lake Valley lie within the northern Coast Range of California. The area ranges in elevation from approximately 1,440 feet at the southeast end of Little Lake Valley down to approximately 1,320 feet at the northeast end of the valley (Willits USGS 7.5-Minute Quadrangle).

The following vegetation communities and land uses have been recorded within or adjacent to the project: upland annual grasslands, upland oak, and ruderal.

All waters within the project are contained within the Little Lake Valley Basin and are therefore tributary to the Eel River watershed via Outlet Creek, a major tributary to the Eel River. The Eel River is considered as a “Traditionally Navigable Water” and a “Reasonably Permanent Water.” The Little Lake Valley is part of the Outlet Creek Hydrologic Shed Area (HSA), which encompasses approximately 163 square miles, and the Outlet Creek HSA is within the Eel River Hydrologic Unit which encompasses approximately 3,614 square miles. The Eel River flows northwest and discharges into the Pacific Ocean.

Sensitive Biological Resources Considered

In order to comply with the provisions of various state and federal environmental statutes and executive orders, the potential impacts to natural resources of the project area were investigated and documented. The project site was reviewed to 1) identify habitat types; 2) identify potential wetlands; 3) identify factors indicating the potential for rare species; 4) identify rare species present; 5) identify potentially sensitive water quality receptors and 6) identify potential problems for the study.

Sensitive Habitats Considered:

Jurisdictional Waters of the United States, including Wetlands

The project area was surveyed to determine if jurisdictional waters of the United States, including wetlands, were present within the environmental study limits (ESL). A positive determination for jurisdictional wetlands in the project area was made based on the presence of hydrophytic vegetation, hydric soils, and wetland hydrology. However, no areas meeting this three-parameter determination were located in the ESL.

The position of the ordinary high water mark (OHWM) delineates the limits of the United States Army Corps of Engineers’ (USACE) jurisdiction at “other waters of the United States (OWUS; ephemeral, intermittent, and perennial drainages) within the project area.

Oak Woodlands

[Upland oak woodlands occur primarily on moderate to steep slopes with well-drained soils. Upland oak associations in the Little Lake Valley are dominated by Oregon white oaks \(*Quercus garryana*\) and black oak \(*Quercus kelloggii*\). Upland oak woodland types occurring in Little Lake Valley include the Oregon oak association, Oregon white oak-Douglas fir \(*Psuedotsuga menziesii*\) association, black oak-Douglas fir association and associated grassland habitat.](#)

[The project area was surveyed to determine if individual oak trees or oak woodlands were present within the environmental study limits \(ESL\). For the purposes of this analysis, “oak woodlands” followed the California State Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 17 \(Oak Woodlands\) definition of “oak woodland”: a five-acre circular](#)

area containing five or more oak trees per acre. Because the project's 3.4-acre ESL contained more than 5 oak trees, the undeveloped portions of the ESL were considered as oak woodland habitat. Approximately 0.46 acres of native upland California black oak canopy coverage was determined to be present within the ESL.

Construction of the project is expected to remove native upland "California black oak woodland". The removal of native upland oak trees is expected to result in a loss of approximately 0.46 acre of black oak woodland canopy provided by individual oak trees.

Sensitive Plant and Animal Species Considered:

A list of sensitive plant and animal species potentially occurring within the project vicinity was developed based on information compiled from the United States Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS) lists (April 2015), California Department of Fish & Wildlife (CDFW) California Natural Diversity Database ("CNDDDB" Rarefind, 2012 Willits 7.5-minute USGS quadrangle), the California Native Plant Society ("CNPS" Electronic Inventory, accessed in July 2013), and from the current literature. No sensitive plant species were identified within the project limits. Several sensitive animal species, including the yellow warbler and fisher, had a low potential to be adversely affected by the project (see Table 1 and 2)

Environmental Consequences

Plant and Animal Species

Due to the project area being located outside the range of the species, the lack of suitable habitat or habitat components in the project area, the lack of detection during recent Caltrans surveys or because the project would not harm individuals or alter the species' habitat, the proposed project will have "no effect" on Federally or State listed species, California species of concern, or sensitive plant or animal species tracked by the CNDDDB.

Although the potential for nesting birds within the ESL is low, it is recommended that the removal of any woody vegetation (trees and shrubs) required for the project is completed between September 1st and January 31st, prior to project construction, outside of the predicted nesting season for raptors and migratory birds in this area. Vegetation removal outside this time period may not proceed until a survey by a qualified biologist determines no nests are present or in use. Please refer to the avoidance and minimization measures below.

Jurisdictional Waters of the United States, including Wetlands

Because the ESL of the proposed project does not contain jurisdictional wetlands, OWUS or waters of the State of California, and because the project has been designed to avoid discharges, including excavation and/or fill activities, into jurisdictional resources, the proposed project will have no direct or indirect effects on jurisdictional wetlands and other waters of the United States or jurisdictional waters of the State of California.

Oak woodlands

Construction of the project is expected to remove approximately 0.46 acres of native upland oak woodland. The California black oak is a common species in the area. Removal of under 10 oak trees or 0.46 acres of oak habitat would not have a significant impact on oak woodlands/habitat. However, to off-set the loss of trees on the projects site, oaks trees will be planted on-site at a ratio determined by the Caltrans landscape architect (at least 1 to 1), as described in the Aesthetic Resources section of this document.

Avoidance and Minimization Measures

Although no significant impacts were identified, the following measures- will avoid or minimize impacts to biological resources.

- Oak woodlands will be avoided or minimized by designating areas outside of the construction impact area as “Environmentally Sensitive Areas” (ESAs) on project plans and in project specifications. Specifically, ESAs for this project are intended to provide protection for native oak trees that are not intended to be removed by the project. ESA provisions may include, but are not necessarily limited to, the use of temporary orange fencing to identify the proposed limit of work in areas adjacent sensitive resources or to locate and exclude sensitive resources from potential construction impacts. Contractor encroachment into ESAs will be prohibited (including the staging/operation of heavy equipment or casting of excavated materials). ESA provisions will be implemented as a first order of work and remain in place until all construction activities are complete.
- Measures will be employed to prevent any construction material or debris from entering surface waters or their channels. Best management practices (BMPs) for erosion control will be implemented and in place prior to, during, and after construction in order to ensure that no silt or sediment enters surface waters. BMPs include but are not limited to:
 1. Where working areas encroach on live or dry streams, lakes, or wetlands, North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board (NCRWQCB)-approved physical barriers adequate to prevent the flow or discharge of sediment into these systems shall be constructed and maintained between working areas and streams, lakes, and wetlands. During construction of the barriers, discharge of sediment into streams shall be held to a minimum. Discharge will be contained through the use of NCRWQCB-approved measures that will keep sediment from entering protected waters.
 2. Oily or greasy substances originating from the Contractor's operations shall not be allowed to enter or be placed where they will later enter a live or dry stream, pond, or wetland. Appropriate BMPs will be determined by Caltrans and/or the contractor.
 3. Asphalt concrete shall not be allowed to enter a live or dry stream, pond, or wetland. Appropriate BMPs will be determined by Caltrans and/or the contractor.
- Removal of any woody vegetation (trees and shrubs) required for the project would be completed between September 1st and January 31st prior to project construction and outside of the predicted nesting season for raptors and migratory birds in this area. Vegetation removal outside this time period may not proceed until a survey by a qualified biologist determines no nests are present or in use (see below).
- If woody vegetation removal, construction, grading, or other project- related improvements are scheduled during the nesting season of protected raptors and migratory birds (February 1st to August 31st), a focused survey for active nests of such birds shall be conducted by a qualified biologist within 15 days prior to the beginning to project-related activities. If active nests are found, Caltrans shall consult with USFWS regarding appropriate action to comply with the Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918 and with CDFW to comply with provisions of the Fish and Game Code of California. If a lapse in project related work of thirty days or longer occurs, another survey and, if required, consultation with USFWS and CDFW will be required before the work can be reinitiated.
- Vegetation removal shall be limited to the absolute minimum amount required for construction.
- To minimize the risk of introducing additional non-native species into the area, only native plant species appropriate for the project area will be used in any erosion control or revegetation seed mix or stock. Certified weed-free straw shall be required where erosion control straw is to be used. In addition, any hydro-seed mulch used for revegetation activities must also be certified weed-free.
- To off-set the loss of California black oak trees on the project site, oaks trees will be planted on-site at a ratio determined by the Caltrans landscape architect (at least 1 to 1).

Table 1: Sensitive Plant Species Considered for Environmental Review

<u>Scientific Name</u>	<u>Common Name</u>	<u>Status</u>	<u>Habitat/ Notes</u>	<u>Bloom Period</u>	<u>Potential to be Adversely Affected by Project</u>
<u><i>Alisma gramineum</i></u>	<u>grass alisma</u>	<u>CNPS 2B.2</u>	<u>Known in CA from Lassen, Mendocino, Modoc, Siskiyou Co.s. Inhabits marshes and swamps.</u>	<u>June-Aug</u>	<u>None. Marsh and seep habitat not available within ESL. Botanical studies did not detect this species in the ESL</u>
<u><i>Gilia capitata ssp. pacifica</i></u>	<u>Pacific gilia</u>	<u>CNPS 1B.2</u>	<u>Known in CA from Del Norte, Humboldt, and Mendocino Co.s. Inhabits Coastal bluff scrub, chaparral openings, coastal prairie and valley and foothill grasslands</u>	<u>Apr-Aug</u>	<u>None. Botanical studies did not detect this species in the ESL.</u>
<u><i>Hesperolinon adenophyllum</i></u>	<u>glandular western flax</u>	<u>CNPS 1B.2</u>	<u>North and central Coast Ranges, especially Lake and Mendocino Counties, Serpentine soils in chaparral and grasslands</u>	<u>May- Aug</u>	<u>None. This species was observed in foothills west of Little Lake Valley in 1991 and 1998. Botanical studies did not detect this species in the project area.</u>
<u><i>Lasthenia burkei</i></u>	<u>Burke's Goldfields</u>	<u>FE, CE, CNPS 1B.1</u>	<u>Meadows, seeps, vernal pools, LAK, MEN (Ukiah area), SON and NAP Counties</u>	<u>Apr-June</u>	<u>None. Meadow, seep, or vernal pool habitat is not available within ESL. Botanical studies did not detect this species in the ESL.</u>
<u><i>Lasthenia conjugens</i></u>	<u>Contra Costa Goldfields</u>	<u>FE,</u>	<u>Vernal pools in annual grasslands and woodlands. Occurrence in MEN County (Point Arena) is considered extirpated.</u>	<u>March-June</u>	<u>None. Vernal pool habitat is not available within ESL. Botanical studies did not detect this species in the ESL.</u>
<u><i>Limnanthes bakeri</i></u>	<u>Baker's meadowfoam</u>	<u>CA Rare CNPS 1B.1</u>	<u>Mendocino County, including Little Lake Valley and near Laytonville, Vernal pools, swales, other seasonal wetlands</u>	<u>Apr-May</u>	<u>None. Known to occur in the Little Lake Valley, but seasonal wetland habitat not available within ESL. Botanical studies did not detect this species in the ESL.</u>
<u><i>Navarretia leucocephala ssp. bakeri</i></u>	<u>Baker's navarretia</u>	<u>CNPS 1B.1</u>	<u>Interior north Coast Ranges and western Sacramento Valley. Oak woodlands, conifer forests, wet meadows, grasslands, vernal pools.</u>	<u>Apr-July</u>	<u>None. This species was observed on the eastern side of Little Lake Valley. Seasonal wetland habitat not available within ESL. Botanical studies did not detect this species in the ESL</u>

Table 1, continued

<u>Scientific Name</u>	<u>Common Name</u>	<u>Status</u>	<u>Habitat/ Notes</u>	<u>Bloom Period</u>	<u>Potential to be Adversely Affected by Project</u>
<u><i>Pleuropogon hooverianus</i></u>	<u>North Coast semaphore grass</u>	<u>CT CNPS 1B.1</u>	<u>Mendocino, Marin, Sonoma Counties, Marshes, meadows, and other types of seasonal wetlands where water ponds during the wet season</u>	<u>Apr-June</u>	<u>None. Known to occur in the Little Lake Valley, but seasonal wetland habitat not available within ESL. Botanical studies did not detect this species in the ESL.</u>
<u><i>Potamogeton epihydrus</i></u>	<u>Nuttall's ribbon-leaved pondweed</u>	<u>CNPS 2.2</u>	<u>Coast Ranges of Mendocino County, Several Sierra Nevada Counties; Oregon and Washington, Marshes, swamps, slow moving streams, ponds, lakes, and irrigation ditches</u>	<u>June-Sept</u>	<u>None. Known to occur in the Little Lake Valley, but seasonal wetland habitat not available within ESL. Botanical studies did not detect this species in the ESL.</u>
<u><i>Trifolium amoenum</i></u>	<u>Showy Indian Clover</u>	<u>FE, CNPS 1B.1</u>	<u>Coastal bluff scrub, grasslands, serpentine soils, MRN, NAP, SCL, SMT, SOL, SON Counties</u>	<u>Apr-June</u>	<u>None. This species is not known to occur in MEN County. Botanical studies did not detect this species in the ESL.</u>
	<u>Valley Oak Woodland</u>	<u>CNDDB</u>			

Table 2: Sensitive Animal Species Considered for Environmental Review

<u>Scientific Name</u>	<u>Common Name</u>	<u>Status</u>	<u>Habitat</u>	<u>Potential to be Adversely Affected by Project</u>
<u><i>Aborimus pomo</i></u>	<u>Sonoma Tree Vole</u>	CSC	<u>Occurs along the north Coast Range from Del Norte County south to Sonoma County, California. Inhabits old-growth forest of Douglas-fir, redwood, or montane hardwood-conifer forests</u>	<u>None. Forested habitat suitable for denning or foraging for this species will not be affected by the proposed project.</u>
<u><i>Brachyramphus marmoratus</i></u>	<u>Marbled murrelet</u>	FT	<u>Nesting sites from the Oregon border to Eureka and between Santa Cruz and Half Moon Bay; winters near shore and offshore along the entire California coastline. Mature, coastal coniferous forests for nesting; forages in nearby coastal water and nests in conifer stands greater than 150 years old and may be located up to 56 km inland.</u>	<u>None. Forested habitat suitable for nesting or foraging for this species will not be affected by the proposed project.</u>
<u><i>Charadrius nivosus nivosus</i></u>	<u>Western Snowy Plover</u>	FT	<u>Breeds above high tideline on coastal beaches, sand spits, dune-backed beaches, sparsely-vegetated dunes, beaches at creek and river mouths, and salt pans at lagoons and estuaries. Less common nesting habitats include bluff-backed beaches, dredged material disposal sites, salt pond levees, dry salt ponds, and river bars.</u>	<u>None. Beach habitat suitable for nesting and foraging for this species is not available within or adjacent to ESL.</u>
<u><i>Coccyzus americanus</i></u>	<u>Western yellow-billed cuckoo</u>	FC	<u>Currently the only known populations of breeding Western Yellow-billed Cuckoos are in California, Arizona, and western New Mexico. Riparian forest with dense vegetation, along the broad, lower flood-bottoms of larger river systems. Nests in riparian jungles of willow often mixed with cottonwoods, with understory of blackberry, nettles, or wild grape.</u>	<u>None. Riparian habitat suitable for nesting and foraging for this species is not available within or adjacent to the ESL.</u>
<u><i>Dendroica petechia brewsteri</i></u>	<u>Yellow Warbler</u>	CSC	<u>Nests over most of California except the Central Valley, the Mojave Desert region, and high elevations in the Sierra Nevada; winters along the Colorado River and in parts of Imperial and Riverside Counties. Nests in riparian areas dominated by willows, cottonwoods, sycamores, or alders, or in mature chaparral; may also use oaks, conifers, and urban areas near stream courses.</u>	<u>Low. Project proposes to remove oak trees that may provide suitable for nesting and foraging for this species. Adverse impacts to this species will be avoided by observing mitigation measures #3 and #4 in section 5.0</u>
<u><i>Icteria virens</i></u>	<u>yellow-breasted chat</u>	CSC	<u>Uncommon migrant in California; nests in a few locations with appropriate habitat such as Sweetwater Creek, El Dorado County; along the Russian River, Sonoma County; Little Lake Valley, Mendocino County; and Putah Creek, Yolo County. Nests in dense riparian habitats dominated by willows, tall weeds, blackberry vines, and grapevines</u>	<u>None. Riparian habitat suitable for nesting is not available within or adjacent to the ESL.</u>

Table 2, continued

<u>Scientific Name</u>	<u>Common Name</u>	<u>Status</u>	<u>Habitat</u>	<u>Potential to be Adversely Affected by Project</u>
<u><i>Martes pennanti</i></u>	<u>Fisher</u>	<u>FC, CSC,</u>	<u>Coastal mountains from Del Norte to Sonoma Counties; east through Cascades to Lassen County, south in Sierra Nevada to Kern County. Mixed conifer habitats with high overstory cover preferring riparian habitat.</u>	<u>Low. A fisher was recently observed at the north end of Little Lake Valley. Project is not expected to adversely affect foraging or denning habitat.</u>
<u><i>Oncorhynchus kisutch</i></u>	<u>S. OR/N. CA coho salmon</u>	<u>FT</u>	<u>Anadromous. Associated with small to moderately sized streams with perennially flowing reaches of cool, high-quality water; dense riparian canopy; deep pools with abundant overhead cover; and gravel or cobble substrates.</u>	<u>None. No aquatic areas will be affected by the proposed project.</u>
<u><i>Oncorhynchus mykiss</i></u>	<u>Central California coast steelhead</u>	<u>FT</u>	<u>Anadromous. Spawn in cool, clear streams featuring suitable water depth, gravel size, and current velocity. Intermittent streams may be used for spawning.</u>	<u>None. No aquatic areas will be affected by the proposed project.</u>
<u><i>Oncorhynchus mykiss</i></u>	<u>Northern California steelhead</u>	<u>FT</u>	<u>Anadromous. Spawn in cool, clear streams featuring suitable water depth, gravel size, and current velocity. Intermittent streams may be used for spawning.</u>	<u>None. No aquatic areas will be affected by the proposed project.</u>
<u><i>Oncorhynchus tshawytscha</i></u>	<u>CA coastal chinook salmon</u>	<u>FT</u>	<u>Anadromous. Spawning generally occurs in mainstream or lower tributary channels in swift, relatively shallow riffles, or along the edges of fast runs at depths greater than 24 cm in stream areas with suitable gravel composition</u>	<u>None. No aquatic areas will be affected by the proposed project.</u>
<u><i>Rana draytonii</i></u>	<u>California Red Legged Frog</u>	<u>FT</u>	<u>Inhabits slow-moving or standing deep ponds, pools and streams Occurs in northern and southern Coast Ranges from Elk Creek, Mendocino County southward, and in isolated areas in the foothills of the Sierra Nevada</u>	<u>None. Project area is outside of species range. No aquatic areas will be affected by the proposed project.</u>
<u><i>Strix occidentalis caurina</i></u>	<u>northern spotted owl</u>	<u>FT</u>	<u>A permanent resident throughout its range; found in the north Coast, Klamath, and western Cascade Ranges, from Del Norte to Marin Counties. Dense, old growth forests dominated by conifers, with topped trees or oaks available for nesting crevices</u>	<u>None. Forested habitat suitable for nesting or foraging for this species will not be affected by the proposed project.</u>

Hazardous Wastes

Caltrans completed an Initial Site Assessment in October 2013.

Affected Environment

Project work will include drainage improvements, lane modifications and retaining walls. Approximately 32,000 cubic yards of material will be excavated (including pavement and soil), and soil and vegetation disturbance will occur during construction and staging. The acquisition of approximately 1.03 acres of new right of way will be required, including a portion of Towermart #166, a "Cortese" listed site. Based on technical review by Caltrans hazardous waste staff, the project as propose will not disturb areas of known soil and/or groundwater contamination.

Environmental Consequences

Based on the ISA, three minor potential hazardous waste/material issues were identified: the removal of thermoplastic/paint striping, the disturbance of soil containing aerially deposited lead soil (ADL) and though unlikely, contingencies for the potential disturbance of soil and/or groundwater potentially containing petroleum hydrocarbons from underground storage tanks.

Avoidance and Minimization Measures

Although no significant impacts were identified, the following measures will avoid or minimize impacts due to hazardous waste.

- Test removed traffic markings for levels of lead and chromium to determine proper disposal methods.
- Test for asbestos, heavy metal contamination and ADL as appropriate.
- Evaluate any acquired new right of way for potential soil contamination.
- A Hazardous Substances Disclosure Document (HSDD) attached to the Certificate of Sufficiency (COS) would be required before acquiring new right of way.

To address these potential hazardous waste/material issues, the following Standard Special Provisions (SSP) are required:

SSP 15-305 (yellow thermoplastic/paint striping removal)

SSP 15-301 (white thermoplastic/paint removal)

SSP 14-001 (yellow paint/thermoplastic removal)

SSP 7-1.02K(6)(i)(iii) (earth material containing lead)

These provisions will be included in the final plans, specifications, and estimate (PS&E).

Hydrology and Water Quality

Caltrans completed a Water Quality Assessment Report in December 2013.

Affected Environment

Hydrology

The project is located adjacent to Mill Creek (also known as Willits Creek) in Mendocino County. It is situated in the Outlet Creek Hydrologic Sub-Area (HSA) No. 111.61 in the Upper Main Eel River Hydrologic Area in Eel River Hydrologic Unit. The project is located in the Mill Creek watershed. Average annual precipitation in the project area is 53.7 inches.

Mill Creek and the other drainages within Mill Creek watershed discharge into Outlet Creek, which is a tributary to the Eel River. The major receiving water body (Eel River) is listed as impaired for sedimentation/siltation and temperature pursuant to Section 303(d) of the Clean Water Act (SWRCB 2010). These constituents are typically associated with construction activities, agriculture, erosion, streambank modification, removal of riparian vegetation, channelization, and non-point sources. Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs) for sedimentation/siltation and temperature have been developed and approved by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) and adopted for the Eel River by the NCRWQCB.

Surface Water Quality Objectives/Standards and Beneficial Uses

Narrative and numeric water quality objectives (WQOs) for all surface waters within the North Coast Region are established for coliform bacteria, biostimulatory substances, chemical constituents, color, dissolved oxygen, floating materials, oil and grease, pesticides, pH, radioactivity, sediment, settleable materials, suspended materials, taste and odor, temperature, toxicity, and turbidity. WQOs for surface waters within the Outlet Creek HSA are established for specific conductance, total dissolved solids, dissolved oxygen, and pH. Refer to the North Coast Region Basin Plan (NCRWQCB 2011) for the specific WQO limitations. The beneficial uses designated for the Outlet Creek HSA are as follows:

- MUN: Municipal and Domestic Supply
- AGR: Agricultural Supply
- IND: Industrial Service Supply
- GWR: Groundwater Recharge
- NAV: Navigation
- REC-1: Water Contact Recreation
- REC-2: Noncontact Water Recreation
- COMM: Commercial and Sportfishing
- WARM: Warm Freshwater Habitat
- COLD: Cold Freshwater Habitat
- WILD: Wildlife Habitat
- RARE: Preservation of Rare and Endangered Species
- MIGR: Migration of Aquatic Organisms
- SPWN: Spawning, Reproduction, and Development
- AQUA: Aquaculture

Groundwater Quality Objectives/Standards and Beneficial Uses

The proposed project site is entirely underlain by the Eel River Valley groundwater basin. The potential beneficial uses of the underlying groundwater within the North Coast Region include municipal supply, agricultural supply, and industrial service supply. All groundwaters are subject to narrative and quantitative WQOs for bacteria, chemical constituents, radioactivity, and tastes and odors, as described in the North Coast Basin Plan. Impacts to groundwater are not anticipated to occur as a result of the proposed project.

Disturbed Soil Area

At this time, the exact disturbed area at the road realignment/intersection improvement project location is unknown. It may be necessary to update the Water Quality Assessment Report when the disturbed area information becomes available.

Environmental Consequences

There is the potential for temporary water quality impacts to occur during the intersection improvement activities due to work adjacent to Mill Creek. Tree and vegetation removal from the hillside west of the existing Sherwood Road is necessary to allow for the new roadway alignment. Without implementation of best management practices (BMPs), construction activities associated with the proposed road realignment have the potential to impact water quality through the release of pollutants such as sediment, soil stabilization residues, oil and grease, trash and debris, and metals. Any type of soil disturbance would expose soil to erosion from wind and water that could result in sedimentation to receiving surface waters. Permanent water quality impacts may also occur as a result of the increase in impervious surface and potential for increased runoff velocity and volume. The increase in impervious surface is not known at this time; however, pollutants typically generated from transportation-related projects include sediment/turbidity, nutrients, organic compounds, trash and debris, oxygen-demanding substances, oil and grease, and metals.

Avoidance and Minimization Measures

To prevent potential pollution to receiving waters as a result of construction activities and/or operations related to this project, pollution prevention BMPs would be incorporated into the project specifications. Compliance with the standard requirements of the Caltrans Statewide National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit and Construction General Permit would be required to minimize potential short-term construction-related and permanent impacts. The minimum anticipated temporary BMP measures for this project are described below.

1. The Eel River TMDL for sedimentation is in effect, which requires sediment-control BMPs to avoid further impairment. Anticipated temporary sediment and erosion control measures for this project include the following:
 - Silt fence
 - Fiber rolls
 - Sandbag barrier
 - Gravel bag berm
 - Rolled erosion-control product (e.g., netting)
2. Specific pollution prevention measures would be implemented for the project to help minimize pollution in storm water runoff, including preservation of existing vegetation as much as possible, slope/surface protection systems (permanent soil stabilization), and designated outdoor material storage areas.
3. The project would be regulated by North Coast RWQCB through Caltrans Statewide NPDES Permit (Order No. 2012-0011-DWQ). Caltrans would implement the programs specified in its approved Storm Water Management Plan to minimize potential temporary and permanent impacts.
4. If the total disturbed soil area is equal to or greater than 1 acre, a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) would be prepared and implemented in accordance with the Construction General Permit to address all construction-related activities, equipment, and materials that have the potential to impact water quality. The SWPPP would identify the sources of pollutants that may affect the quality of storm water; include construction site BMPs to control sedimentation, erosion, and potential chemical pollutants; provide for construction materials management and non-storm-water BMPs, and include routine inspections and a monitoring and reporting plan.

5. All construction site BMPs would follow the latest edition of the Storm Water Quality Handbook: Construction Site Best Management Practices Manual to control and minimize the impacts of construction-related activities, materials, and pollutants on the watershed.
6. The project would comply with Caltrans Standard Specifications for Water Pollution Control and Job Site Management (Caltrans 2010). The project would implement storm water and water pollution control training, routine BMP inspections, spill prevention and control, materials and waste management, and non-storm water management. Caltrans' Standard Specifications require the Contractor to submit a Water Pollution Control Plan if the disturbed soil area is less than one acre. This plan would meet the standards and objectives to minimize water pollution impacts set forth in section 7-1.01G of Caltrans' Standard Specifications. The Water Pollution Control Plan would also be in compliance with the goals and restrictions identified in the North Coast Basin Plan.

By implementing the BMPs as described above and in compliance with applicable permits and regulations, the Sherwood Road realignment/intersection improvement project would meet federal, state, and local storm water management and water quality protection regulations by minimizing the potential for pollutant transport.

Cultural Resources

Avoidance and/or Minimization Measures

No cultural resources were identified in the project environmental study limits.

If cultural materials (e.g., bones, stone implements, old bottles, etc.) are encountered during the project construction, Caltrans policy requires that all work in the area (within a 60 meter [200 feet] radius) must immediately halt until a qualified archaeologist can evaluate the nature and significance of the material and determine an appropriate course of action in consultation with the State Historic Preservation Office (Stipulation XV, Post Review Discoveries, Section B.1-3 in the Section 106 PA).

If human remains are discovered or recognized during construction, there shall be no further excavation or disturbance of the location (within a 60 meter [200 feet] radius), or any nearby area reasonably suspected to overlie adjacent remains, until a qualified archaeologist has contacted the appropriate county coroner and they have determined that the remains are not subject to provisions of Section 27491 of the Government Code. If the coroner determines the remains to be Native American, they shall contact the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) within 24 hours. The NAHC will appoint a Most Likely Descendent for disposition of the remains (Health and Safety Code Sect. 7050.5, Public Resources Code Sect. 5097.24).

Climate Change

Climate change refers to long-term changes in temperature, precipitation, wind patterns, and other elements of the earth's climate system. An ever-increasing body of scientific research attributes these climatological changes to greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, particularly those generated from the production and use of fossil fuels. Research from such establishments as the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) are primarily concerned with the emissions of GHGs generated by human activity including carbon dioxide (CO₂), methane (CH₄), nitrous oxide (N₂O), tetrafluoromethane, hexafluoroethane, sulfur hexafluoride (SF₆), HFC-23 (fluoroform), HFC-134a (s, s, s, 2-tetrafluoroethane), and HFC-152a (difluoroethane).

In the U.S., the main source of GHG emissions is electricity generation, followed by transportation. In California, however, transportation sources (including passenger cars, light duty trucks, other trucks, buses, and motorcycles make up the largest source (second to electricity generation) of GHG emitting sources. The dominant GHG emitted is CO₂, mostly from fossil fuel combustion.

There are typically two terms used when discussing the impacts of climate change. "Greenhouse Gas Mitigation" is a term for reducing GHG emissions in order to reduce or "mitigate" the impacts of climate change. "Adaptation," refers to the effort of planning for and adapting to impacts resulting from climate change (such as adjusting transportation design standards to withstand more intense storms and higher sea levels)¹.

There are four primary strategies for reducing GHG emissions from transportation sources: 1) improving the transportation system and operational efficiencies, 2) reducing growth of vehicle miles traveled (VMT), 3) transitioning to lower GHG emitting fuels, and 4) improving vehicle technologies. To be most effective all four strategies should be pursued collectively. The following Regulatory Setting section outlines state and federal efforts to comprehensively reduce GHG emissions from transportation sources.

Regulatory Setting

State

With the passage of several pieces of legislation including State Senate and Assembly bills and Executive Orders, California launched an innovative and pro-active approach to dealing with GHG emissions and climate change. Relevant legislation include the following policies:

- Assembly Bill 1493 (AB 1493), Pavley.
- Executive Order (EO) S-3-05: (signed on June 1, 2005, by former Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger)
- AB 32, the Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006, Núñez and Pavley
- Executive Order S-20-06: (signed on October 18, 2006 by former Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger)
- Executive Order S-01-07: (signed on January 18, 2007 by former Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger)
- Senate Bill 97 (SB 97) Chapter 185, 2007
- Caltrans Director's Policy 30 (DP-30) Climate Change (approved June 22, 2012): is intended to establish a Department policy that will ensure coordinated efforts to incorporate climate change into Departmental decisions and activities. This policy contributes to the Department's stewardship goal to preserve and enhance California's resources and assets.

Federal

Although climate change and GHG reduction is a concern at the federal level; currently there are no regulations or legislation that have been enacted specifically addressing GHG emissions reductions and climate change at the project level. Neither the United States Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) nor the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) has promulgated explicit guidance or methodology to conduct project-level GHG analysis. As stated on FHWA's climate change website (<http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/hep/climate/index.htm>), climate change considerations should be integrated throughout the transportation decision-making process—from planning through project development and delivery. Despite the lack of Federal GHG regulations and legislation, FHWA as well as the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) and U.S. EPA are taking steps to lessen climate change impacts by improving transportation system efficiency, creating cleaner fuels, reducing the growth of vehicle hours travelled, and enabling the production of a new generation of clean vehicles with reduced GHG emissions and improved fuel efficiency from on-road vehicles and engines.

Project Analysis

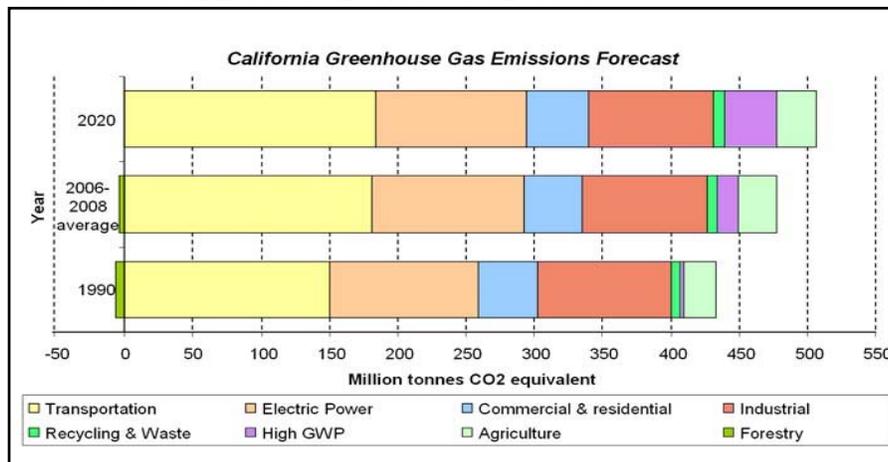
An individual project does not generate enough GHG emissions to significantly influence global climate change. Rather, global climate change is a cumulative impact. This means that a project may contribute to a

¹ http://climatechange.transportation.org/ghg_mitigation/

potential impact through its *incremental* change in emissions when combined with the contributions of all other sources of GHG.² In assessing cumulative impacts, it must be determined if a project’s incremental effect is “cumulatively considerable” (CEQA Guidelines sections 15064(h)(1) and 15130). To make this determination the incremental impacts of the project must be compared with the effects of past, current, and probable future projects. To gather sufficient information on a global scale of all past, current, and future projects in order to make this determination is a difficult, if not impossible, task.

The AB 32 Scoping Plan mandated by AB 32 contains the main strategies California will use to reduce GHG emissions. As part of its supporting documentation for the Draft Scoping Plan, ARB released the GHG inventory for California (forecast last updated: October 28, 2010). The forecast is an estimate of the emissions expected to occur in the year 2020 if none of the foreseeable measures included in the Scoping Plan were implemented. The base year used for forecasting emissions is the average of statewide emissions in the GHG inventory for 2006, 2007, and 2008.

California GREENHOUSE GAS FORECAST



Source: <http://www.arb.ca.gov/cc/inventory/data/forecast.htm>

Caltrans and its parent agency, the California State Transportation Agency (CalSTA), have taken an active role in addressing GHG emission reduction and climate change. Recognizing that 98 percent of California’s GHG emissions are from the burning of fossil fuels and 40 percent of all human made GHG emissions are from transportation, the Department has created and is implementing the Climate Action Program at Caltrans that was published in December 2006.³

This project involves realigning the existing Sherwood Road intersection with U.S. 101 in Willits from PM 47.1- 47.3. Currently, Sherwood Road intersects US 101 at a severe horizontal angle with a 12% grade, with two 12 foot lanes, no shoulders, and short left and right turn pockets. The proposed project will re-align Sherwood Road to intersect U.S. 101 perpendicularly, add 4-foot shoulders, include a retaining wall along the west side of the new road, reduce the grade to 10%, increase the length of the left and right turns from about 15

² This approach is supported by the AEP: *Recommendations by the Association of Environmental Professionals on How to Analyze GHG Emissions and Global Climate Change in CEQA Documents* (March 5, 2007), as well as the South Coast Air Quality Management District (Chapter 6: The CEQA Guide, April 2011) and the US Forest Service (Climate Change Considerations in Project Level NEPA Analysis, July 13, 2009).

³ Caltrans Climate Action Program is located at the following web address: http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/tpp/offices/ogm/key_reports_files/State_Wide_Strategy/Caltrans_Climate_Action_Program.pdf

feet to 200 feet, and improve the signalized intersection with Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance. The project improves improve access between Sherwood Road and U.S. 101, and improves the operation of the intersection.

The operation of this project would result in low-to-no potential for an increase in GHG emissions.

Construction Emissions

Greenhouse gas emissions for transportation projects can be divided into those produced during construction and those produced during operations. Construction GHG emissions include emissions produced as a result of material processing, emissions produced by onsite construction equipment, and emissions arising from traffic delays due to construction. These emissions will be produced at different levels throughout the construction phase; their frequency and occurrence can be reduced through innovations in plans and specifications and by implementing better traffic management during construction phases.

In addition, with innovations such as longer pavement lives, improved traffic management plans, and changes in materials, the GHG emissions produced during construction can be mitigated to some degree by longer intervals between maintenance and rehabilitation events.

CEQA Conclusion

Although construction emissions are unavoidable and are expected to be minimal, the proposed project will not increase capacity and is not expected to result in additional operational CO₂ emissions. However, it is Caltrans determination that in the absence of further regulatory or scientific information related to greenhouse gas emissions and CEQA significance, it is too speculative to make a determination regarding significance of the project's direct impact and its contribution on the cumulative scale to climate change. However, Caltrans is firmly committed to implementing measures to help reduce the potential effects of the project. These measures are outlined in the following section.

Greenhouse Gas Reduction Strategies

There are typically two terms used when discussing the impacts of climate change. "Greenhouse Gas Mitigation" is a term for reducing GHG emissions in order to reduce or "mitigate" the impacts of climate change. "Adaptation," refers to the effort of planning for and adapting to impacts resulting from climate change (such as adjusting transportation design standards to withstand more intense storms and higher sea levels)⁴.

Greenhouse Gas Mitigation

AB 32 Compliance

Caltrans continues to be actively involved on the Governor's Climate Action Team as ARB works to implement Executive Orders S-3-05 and S-01-07 and help achieve the targets set forth in AB 32. Many of the strategies Caltrans is using to help meet the targets in AB 32 come from the California Strategic Growth Plan, which is updated each year.

The following measures will be included in the project to reduce the GHG emissions and potential climate change impacts from the project:

1. Landscaping reduces surface warming, and through photosynthesis, decreases CO₂. The project proposes planting in the slopes and drainage improvements. Caltrans has committed to replace all removed trees

⁴ http://climatechange.transportation.org/ghg_mitigation/

based on replacement recommendations provided by the Caltrans landscape architect. These trees will help offset any potential CO₂ emissions increase. Based on a formula from the Canadian Tree Foundation⁵, it is anticipated that the planted trees will offset between 7-10 tons of CO₂ per year.

2. According to Caltrans' Standard Specifications, the contractor must comply with all of rules, ordinances, and regulations regarding to air quality restrictions.
3. Compliance with Title 13, California Code of Regulations §2449(d)(3)—Adopted by the Air Resources Board on June 15, 2008, this regulation would restrict idling of construction vehicles to no longer than 5 consecutive minutes. The Contractor must comply with this regulation in order to reduce harmful emissions from diesel-powered construction vehicles.

Adaptation Strategies

“Adaptation strategies” refer to how Caltrans and others can plan for the effects of climate change on the state’s transportation infrastructure and strengthen or protect the facilities from damage. Climate change is expected to produce increased variability in precipitation, rising temperatures, rising sea levels, variability in storm surges and intensity, and the frequency and intensity of wildfires. These changes may affect the transportation infrastructure in various ways, such as damage to roadbeds from longer periods of intense heat; increasing storm damage from flooding and erosion; and inundation from rising sea levels. These effects will vary by location and may, in the most extreme cases, require that a facility be relocated or redesigned. There may also be economic and strategic ramifications as a result of these types of impacts to the transportation infrastructure.

Interim guidance has been released by The Coastal Ocean Climate Action Team (CO-CAT) as well as Caltrans as a method to initiate action and discussion of potential risks to the states infrastructure due to projected sea level rise.

All projects that have filed a Notice of Preparation as of the date of EO S-13-08, and/or are programmed for construction funding from 2008 through 2013, or are routine maintenance projects may, but are not required to, consider these planning guidelines. The proposed project is outside the coastal zone and direct impacts to transportation facilities due to projected sea level rise are not expected.

Executive Order S-13-08 also directed the Business, Transportation, and Housing Agency (now the California State Transportation Agency) to prepare a report to assess vulnerability of transportation systems to sea level rise affecting safety, maintenance and operational improvements of the system, and economy of the state. Caltrans continues to work on assessing the transportation system vulnerability to climate change, including the effect of sea level rise.

Construction Impacts

Discussion of construction impacts associated with air quality and noise are discussed below.

Noise

Caltrans completed a technical noise memo in June 2013.

Affected Environment

This project is a Type III project and it is exempt from traffic noise impact analysis under Title 23, Part 772 of

⁵ Canadian Tree Foundation at http://www.tcf-fca.ca/publications/pdf/english_reduceco2.pdf. For rural areas the formula is: # of trees/360 x survival rate = tonnes of carbon/year removed for each of 80 years.

the Code of Federal Regulations (23CFR772.7(f)). Night construction will be allowed.

Environmental Consequences

Because the project is exempt from noise impact analysis, noise abatement measures are not considered.

Caltrans noise staff evaluated the project scope and the vicinity of noise sensitive receivers, and determined that construction noise analysis, such as “before” and “after” noise measurements, was not necessary for this particular project. No substantial noise impact is anticipated during construction phase. Caltrans requires the Contractor to conform to the provisions of Standard Specification, Section 14-8.02 “Noise Control”: Do not exceed 86 dBA LMax at 50 feet from the job site activities from 9 p.m. to 6 a.m. Above 86 dBA LMax at 50 feet is considered an adverse construction noise level. The 86 dBA is the threshold for construction noise from 9 p.m. to 6 a.m. However, most equipment would generate less than 86 dBA at 50 feet. Also, the contractor will not operate an internal combustion engine on the job site without the appropriate manufacturer-recommended muffler.

The nearest night-time sensitive receptor are the residents west of the project. However, these residents are about 250 feet away, and located above and away from the project. Noise levels would drop by 6 dBA with doubling distance from the job site'. For example: At 100' noise would drop 6 dBA; at 200' noise would drop 12 dBA; and at 400' noise levels drop 18 dBA, and so on. As a result, construction noise is not expected to affect nearby residences.

Air Quality

Caltrans completed a technical air quality memo in June 2013. As a result of comments received from the Mendocino County Air Quality District, a revised air quality assessment was completed on August 22, 2014.

Affected Environment

Due to the scope of the work and the proposed improvements, the project is exempt from all air quality conformity analysis requirements per Table 2 of 40 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) §93.126, subsection “Safety”: no further analysis is required.

Willits High School is located approximately 450 feet north of the project. The length of this project is 0.15 miles and covers approximately 1.95 acres. The construction schedule for this project is estimated to be one construction season (6 months).

Environmental Consequences

Operationally, the proposed project would not directly result in increased traffic capacity or air quality impacts. Therefore, no long-term operational emissions or adverse effects are associated with the project. No mitigation is required.

During construction, short-term impacts to air quality may occur due to the release of particulate emissions (airborne dust) generated by excavation, grading, hauling, and other construction-related activities. The main sources of pollutant emissions are fugitive dust (PM₁₀) and engine exhaust from construction equipment. However, both fugitive dust and construction equipment exhaust emissions would be temporary and transitory in nature. Also, construction will occur mainly during the summer months, when the high school isn't in session. Implementation of the following measures will reduce construction emissions. For these reasons, significant impacts to air quality are not anticipated.

Avoidance and Minimization Measures

Implementation of the following measures, some of which may also be required for other purposes such as storm water pollution control, will reduce any air quality impacts resulting from construction activities:

- The construction contractor must comply with the Caltrans' Standard Specifications in Section 14-9 (2010).
 - Section 14-9.02 specifically requires compliance by the contractor with all applicable laws and regulations related to air quality, including air pollution control district and air quality management district regulations and local ordinances.
 - Section 14-9.03 is directed at controlling dust. If dust palliative materials other than water are to be used, material specifications are described in Section 18.
- Water or dust palliative will be applied to the site and equipment as often as necessary to control fugitive dust emissions. Fugitive emissions generally must meet a "no visible dust" criterion either at the point of emissions or at the right-of-way line depending on local regulations.
- ESA (Environmentally Sensitive Area)-like areas or their equivalent will be established near sensitive air receptors (schools, hospitals, etc.). Minimize idling time within these areas by either shutting equipment off when not in use or reducing the time of idling to 5 minutes (as required by the state airborne toxics control measure [Title 13, Section 2485 of the California Code of Regulations]).
- Portable diesel engines and certain other types of equipment used at the project work site may require registration with California Air Resources Board (ARB) Portable Equipment Registration Program (PERP) with the State or a local air district permit. The owner/operator shall be responsible for arranging appropriate consultations with the ARB or, in this case, the Mendocino County Air Quality Management District, whichever is appropriate, to determine registration and permitting requirements prior to equipment operation at the site.
- Construction equipment and vehicles will be properly tuned and maintained. All construction equipment will use low sulfur fuel as required by CA Code of Regulations Title 17, Section 93114.
- All transported loads of soils and wet materials will be covered before transport, or adequate freeboard (space from the top of the material to the top of the truck) will be provided to minimize emission of dust (particulate matter) during transportation.
- Dust and mud that are deposited on paved, public roads due to construction activity and traffic will be promptly and regularly removed to decrease particulate matter.
- To the extent feasible, construction traffic will be scheduled and routed to reduce congestion and related air quality impacts caused by idling vehicles along local roads during peak travel times.

Applying the dust control measures mentioned above will considerably reduce fugitive dust emissions generated during construction activities.

Traffic/Transportation

Affected Environment

The existing intersection configuration at Sherwood Road and existing US 101 lacks sufficient storage on Sherwood Road to separate left turning vehicles from right turning vehicles. Because of this, it is impossible for many vehicles on Sherwood Road to have ability to make unrestricted right turns during the a red light due to being blocked by left turning vehicles waiting for green phase to make their turn. The result is that some vehicles have to wait several light cycle to pass through the intersection. This project straightens and widens the Sherwood Road intersection and slightly realigns the intersection to allow for better separation and

increased storage of right and left turning vehicles on Sherwood Road. This will allow for more efficient traffic signal timing at the intersection, and will improve traffic flow and reduce traffic delay on both Sherwood Road and existing US 101 (Main Street).

The 2013 peak hour traffic volumes at the Sherwood Road / U.S. 101 intersection are as follows:

South of the Intersection:

Northbound U.S. 101: 285

Southbound U.S. 101: 278

North of the Intersection

Northbound U.S. 101: 330

Southbound U.S. 101: 210

West of the Intersection

Westbound Sherwood Road: 410

Eastbound Sherwood Road: 255

Environmental Consequences

This is an operational improvement project that will better facilitate traffic flow and reduce delay at the intersection. As no additional through lanes will be added to either Sherwood Road or existing US 101 (Main Street), the project is not considered “capacity increasing.” Project features (re-align Sherwood Road to intersect U.S. 101 perpendicularly, add 8-foot-wide shoulders, reduce the grade on Sherwood Road to 10%, increase the length of the left and right turn lanes on Sherwood Road from about 15 feet to 200 feet, and improve the signalized intersection with Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance) will improve traffic flow at the intersection.

During construction, motorists may experience traffic delays on both Sherwood Road and Main Street (U.S. 101) of 10 to 30 minutes during the night time construction hours. More specific details will be included in the project’s Transportation Management Plan at phase of the project development stage.

Avoidance and Minimization Measures

The project will be constructed after the Willits Bypass is open to traffic. This will move traffic away from the construction zone. A detailed Traffic Management Plan has been developed. Elements of Traffic Management Plan that will be considered include:

- Work will occur both during the day and at night.
- Daytime work will involve construction activities off of existing Sherwood Road. No lanes on either Sherwood Road or US 101 will be closed during daytime work.
- Night work will involve conforming the existing Sherwood Road to the new alignment. One lane will be open to traffic at all times. Night work will occur between the hours of 9 p.m. and 6 a.m., when traffic volumes are low.
- Restrictions on when lanes may be closed will be coordinated to provide road capacity during planned events.
- A public awareness campaign.
- Working with emergency services to reduce delays during construction.
- Paid advertising in local newspapers prior to major stage or traffic shifts.
- A Construction Zone Enhanced Enforcement Program (COZEEP) with the CHP during major construction

that affects traffic, such as stage changes and traffic shifts.

- Changeable message sign to alert motorists to unusual or new conditions and any delays that develop.

Stage Construction

A detailed Stage Construction Plan will be developed during the design phase of this project to carry out the construction phase of the project with as little impact as is possible to the traveling public.

Public Participation

On July 8, 2014, Caltrans released a draft Initial Study (IS) for the Sherwood Road Geometric Upgrade Project for public review and comment. The public review period extended for 30 days until August 7, 2014. Caltrans sent a notice of availability of the draft IS to approximately six adjacent property owners. A notice of availability of the draft IS was sent to approximately 21 agencies and organizations. A copy of the draft IS was sent to five organizations and the local library in the City of Willits. The notice appeared in the Willits News on July 9, 2014.

Caltrans received nine comments from the public workshop held at the Willits Community Center (111 East Community Street, Willits) on July 30, 2014. Caltrans also received nine emails and three letters. Copies of the comments, with Caltrans responses, follows.

Workshop Comments

**Sherwood Road Geometric Upgrade Project
PUBLIC WORKSHOP – Willits Community Center, July 30, 2014, 5 – 7 PM**

Comments

"Rock" retaining wall should be the same charcoal grey ~~instead of~~ to match existing rock color

W1

For more comments, use reverse side.

Completing and signing this document is voluntary. The Department of Transportation may use this information for statistical purposes, to notify you of any future hearings, or to assist in providing you with further information. This document is a public record and may be subject to inspection and copying by other members of the public.

Name: _____
Street Address: _____
City: _____
State: _____
Zip: _____

Sherwood Road Geometric Upgrade Project
PUBLIC WORKSHOP – Willits Community Center, July 30, 2014, 5 – 7 PM

Comments

I would like to see someone in charge of the project to come and discuss when and how the work will begin, and to show you exactly where the new property line will be.

W2

For more comments, use reverse side.

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Name: Aurora Camp 707-459-5061
Street Address: 295 Bittenbender Lane
City: Willits,
State: CA
Zip: 95490

**Sherwood Road Geometric Upgrade Project
PUBLIC WORKSHOP – Willits Community Center, July 30, 2014, 5 – 7 PM**

Comments

This should be done - as a start - before any of CalTrans latest Bypass Around Willits, as this will in-theory increase safety. CalTrans' Bypass Around Willits - the "parent" project of this supposedly - will not: any traffic that ever attempts to use its \$2-1 Billion project will get stuck, behind Any slowing/stopping, in which - in Both cases - all 3 lanes (yes, there are "2" technically) of asphalt/concrete - pavement - will be clogged with 1 way no-fight (like fire "control") and all-fight escapee traffic will fill it/them.

There should - is this a "sibling" - ? - also be a secondary Evacuation (as, again, from Fire) route - a maintained road (with pavement or not, and yes it matters: "get a horse;" then ask it) - also - ahead of a worthless boondoggle trashing Mendo. Cos. environment & remnants of "economy." Don't "build" it, save. make sense

W3

W4

W5

W6

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Name: Alex Harter
 Street Address: 150 E. Mendocino St.
 City: Willits
 State: CA
 Zip: 95490

Sherwood Road Geometric Upgrade Project
PUBLIC WORKSHOP – Willits Community Center, July 30, 2014, 5 – 7 PM

Comments

please consider extending sidewalks, expanding crosswalks, and adding a pedestrian walkway ^{or stairs} in an alternate location for pedestrian and school children safety. Please add guardrail at top of hill. Please use a grey retaining wall. Please limit traffic stops during construction to nighttime with no more than 10 minute delays. Please add speed bumps and rumble strips approaching the intersection to slow speeding Brooktrails traffic. Please provide care for biological mitigation (ie young trees) until they are fully established.

W7

W8

W9

For more comments, use reverse side.

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Name: Kate Maxwell
Street Address: 3001 Blackhawk Dr.
City: Willits,
State: CA
Zip: 95490

④

Sherwood Road Geometric Upgrade Project
PUBLIC WORKSHOP – Willits Community Center, July 30, 2014, 5 – 7 PM

Comments

CONCERNS ABOUT TRAFFIC CONGESTION DURING
CONSTRUCTION. ARE THERE CONTINGENCY PLANS TO
RE-ROUTE TRAFFIC IF THE HILLSIDE COLLAPSES?
MURPHY'S LAW HAS NOT BEEN REPEALED!

W10

THE DOWNHILL SHOULDER WIDTH SHOULD BE
WIDENED TO 8' TO ACCOMMODATE PEDESTRIANS

W11

SHOULDN'T THIS PROJECT BE POSTPONED
UNTIL THE BROOKTRAILS SECOND ACCESS IS
COMPLETE?

W12

ARE THERE DRAINAGE PROVISIONS TO ELIMINATE
SURFACE WATER QUICKLY DURING WINTER RAINS
TO REDUCE ICE BUILD-UP – A MAJOR CAUSE OF
ACCIDENTS.

W13

For more comments, use reverse side.

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Name:

DON MORRIS

Street Address:

1583 CRAWFORD DRIVE (P.O. BOX 1551)

City:

WILLITS

State:

CA.

Zip:

95490

Sherwood Road Geometric Upgrade Project
PUBLIC WORKSHOP – Willits Community Center, July 30, 2014, 5 – 7 PM

Comments

1) Is there a provision for a pedestrian crosswalk at the light where Sherwood Rd will intersect Main St (formerly Hwy 101)?

W14

2) Since Sherwood Rd is the only ingress/egress for approximately 4500 residents of Brooktrails and other subdivisions north, construction process is likely to seriously impact traffic during construction. Will work be done primarily at night? What ~~alternate~~ if any provisions will be made for handling traffic during earth removal for retaining wall, especially if the inevitable "unanticipated" problem occurs eg slides?

W15

For more comments, use reverse side.

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Name: Mary L. Morris
Street Address: 1583 Crawford Drive
City: Willits
State: CA
Zip: 95490

Sherwood Road Geometric Upgrade Project
PUBLIC WORKSHOP – Willits Community Center, July 30, 2014, 5 – 7 PM

Comments

My concerns are: 1) What time of day will the work be done. I see this as a huge commute tie-up between the hours of 6-8 am and 2:30-5:30 pm.

W16

2) Will there be a secondary access road while the work is being done to alleviate traffic + one way closures?

W17

3) The retaining wall is UGLY, can a mural be painted there?

W18

4) IF work is done at night, what about people who work night shifts who are arriving home? Will they be delayed? If so for how long.

W19

5) Will signs be plainly visible and very specific about the days and times there will be delays. No broad sweeps of time I want to know exactly when I will encounter delays so I can plan around it.

W20

6) WHAT ABOUT A PERMANENT 2ND ACCESS TO BROOKTRAILS???

W21

For more comments, use reverse side.

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Name: STACEY PATTON
Street Address: 2170 BUCKEYE DR
City: WILLITS
State: CA
Zip: 95490

Sherwood Road Geometric Upgrade Project
PUBLIC WORKSHOP – Willits Community Center, July 30, 2014, 5 – 7 PM

Comments

WALL: MAKE DARK GRAY.

W22

PLANS NEEDED; 1) SIDEWALKS FOR PEDESTRIANS WHO WALK SHERWOOD ROAD. CARS LITERALLY FLY DOWN THE ROAD SO SIDEWALKS SHOULD BE ON THE NORTH SIDE NEXT TO THE "UP" LANE FOR SAFETY.

W23

2) THERE ALSO NEEDS TO BE A PULL OUT AREA ON THE NORTH SIDE "UP" LANE TO PICK UP HITCHHIKERS (RESIDENTS WITHOUT VEHICLES OR TEENAGERS HEADING HOME). CURRENTLY THERE IS NOT ENOUGH ROOM FOR A CAR TO PULL OVER TO PICK SOMEONE UP.

W24

3) FOR KIDS WALKING TO SCHOOL OR TENNIS COURTS AT THE HIGH SCHOOL, CUT A SET OF STAIRS INTO THE HILLSIDE ACROSS FROM THE SCHOOL.

W25

4) DRIVERS IN LARGE TRUCKS FLY DOWN THE HILL IGNORING SPEED LIMITS AND CANNOT STAY WITHIN THEIR LANE, PUT A CENTER RUMBLE STRIP WHEN YOU LAY THE ROAD.

W26

For more comments, use reverse side.

Completing and signing this document is voluntary. The Department of Transportation may use this information for statistical purposes, to notify you of any future hearings, or to assist in providing you with further information. This document is a public record and may be subject to inspection and copying by other members of the public.

Name: STACEY PATTON
Street Address: 2170 BUCKEYE DR
City: Willits
State: CA
Zip: 95490

2 of 2

Workshop Responses

- W1 Care will be given to match the color of the retaining wall surface to the existing rock formations found at the intersection location as closely as possible.
- W2 Caltrans right of way staff will contact you regarding the location of property lines. Also, please refer to Response E6.
- W3 The Sherwood Road project will not be constructed until the completed Willits Bypass is opened to traffic. Please refer to the Traffic/Transportation section in the document for additional information.
- W4 The purpose of this environmental document and public workshop is to address issues and concerns specific to the Sherwood Road Geometric Upgrade Project only. The Willits Bypass Project is currently in the second year of construction. Concerns regarding the Bypass project were addressed during the circulation of the draft EIR/EIS in 2006, during completion of the Final EIR/EIS, during the US Army Corps of Engineers Section 404 permit process in 2012, and at various other occasions. Please access the project website at www.dot.ca.gov/dist1/d1/projects/willits/ for more information.
- W5 A secondary emergency evacuation route for Brooktrails is an important issue. Caltrans, however, is not the responsible public agency. Please contact the City of Willits, Mendocino County, or the Brooktrails Township Community Service District.
- W6 Please refer to Response W4.
- W7 The scope of work for this project is limited to improving the geometric design of the intersection of Sherwood Road and Redwood Highway (US 101), and was determined by the City of Willits in collaboration with Caltrans as part of the January 2012 US 101 Relinquishment Agreement.
- Care will be given to match the color of the retaining wall surface to the existing rock formations found at the intersection location as closely as possible.
- Eight-foot paved shoulders will be placed along both sides of the project to accommodate pedestrians. Metal beam guardrails will be placed along the majority of the north side of Sherwood Road.
- Adding a pedestrian walkway or stairs is beyond the scope and budget of the current project. Stairs will not be provided as part of this project because they do not address the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act and do not meet the needs of all potential users of this facility.
- W8 Traffic delays during construction will be kept to a minimum and night work will be utilized as required by the Traffic Management Plan. Speed bumps and/or rumble strips are not standard features of state highway intersections and will not be added to the project.
- W9 The contractor will maintain all newly installed plants during the construction season. The construction season in this region closes for the winter (approximately October to May), which is also the dormancy period of indigenous deciduous species. One season in most cases provides enough growth for newly installed plants to sustain themselves.
- W10 The potential for the hillside to collapse during the construction is not anticipated. The design is being carefully prepared, so that the roadway and hillside will remain stable during and after construction. The contractor is required to have contingency plans for emergencies. Also, please refer to Response E11.
- W11 The project design includes 8-foot paved shoulders along both sides of this section of Sherwood Road to accommodate pedestrians and bicyclists.

- W12 This is a stand-alone project approved in collaboration with the City of Willits and Caltrans as part of the January 2012 US 101 Relinquishment Agreement. A second access for Brooktrails is the responsibility of the City of Willits or Mendocino County.
- W13 Open graded asphalt concrete, dikes, curb and gutter and drainage inlets will be used to facilitate drainage of surface water.
- W14 An Americans with Disabilities Act compliant crosswalk with wheelchair ramps is part of the design. Please refer to Figure 2.
- W15 The Transportation Management Plan (TMP) for the project will restrict construction hours so that the public experiences minimum delays. Traffic Handling Plans and Traffic Staging Plans will allow for traffic to continue to pass through the intersection during the various phases of construction of the project, including the excavation and retaining wall work. Please refer to Response W10.
- W16 The TMP will address traffic delays, hours of work, and congestion management. The preferred construction hours in Willits are during the evening hours due to the lower traffic volumes. Some work, for safety or other reasons may need to be done during daylight hours.
- W17 There currently is not a secondary access point to Brooktrails, and there will be no secondary access point created during construction.
- W18 The concrete surface of the retaining wall will be sculpted and color matched to emulate the nearby rock formations. A painted mural may be used as an alternative, but introduces other factors such as vandalism and maintenance. These factors will substantially increase the life-cycle costs to the City of Willits, the owner Sherwood Road and future owner of US 101 at this location.
- W19 Please refer to Responses W16 and W17.
- W20 Portable Changeable Message Signs will be placed at all three approaches to the project location to provide traffic information. Articles will be placed in local newspapers regarding lane closures and traffic delays due construction activities at the project location. This information will also be posted on the Caltrans District 1 website (<http://www.dot.ca.gov/dist1/d1projects/willits/>).
- W21 Please refer to Response W12.
- W22 Care will be given to match the color of the retaining wall surface to the existing rock formations found at the intersection location as closely as possible.
- W23 Eight-foot paved shoulders will be placed along both sides of this section of Sherwood Road for pedestrians and bicyclists. Please refer to Response L5.
- W24 Please refer to Response W23.
- W25 Stairs will not be provided as part of this project because they do not address the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act and do not meet the needs of all potential users of this facility.
- W26 Traffic measures will be incorporated into this project to reduce the speed of traffic approaching the intersection from Sherwood Road. Specific measures to be implemented will be determined in the project design process.

Email Comments

From: Frisbie Jr, Phil N@DOT
Sent: Wednesday, July 30, 2014 11:32 AM
To: Lastufka, Ken G@DOT; Schinke, Kendall@DOT; Jones, Douglas S@DOT
Cc: Serrano, Mauricio R@DOT
Subject: Question on Sherwood Road

This came in on Facebook:



I live on Bittenbender, the little private road that is accessed through the convenience store parking lot at the corner of Sherwood Road and Main Street. So I turn off and onto Main Street on a regular basis in the close vicinity to the Sherwood Road-Main Street intersection. There is a lot of traffic going in and out of the convenience store parking lot, besides the Bittenbender Lane residents. What consideration in the above design is given to that aspect of the traffic problem at the intersection of Sherwood Road and Main Street?

E1

Jim King [jfk@willitsonline.com]

7-30-14

Dear Ken,

Thank you for speaking with me this evening.

I reside at 290 Bittenbender Lane, Willits. I have lived there for 27 years. I support Caltrans' bypass project, and I also support the design concept for modifying the intersection of Sherwood Road and North Main Street.

Bittenbender Lane is a private road. It runs from Highway 101 (N Main Street) in a westerly direction to the top of the hill where I reside. The Village Market is at the intersection of Sherwood and N. Main. In order to reach my house from town, it is necessary to make a LEFT turn across N. Main Street in order to enter Bittenbender Lane. It is hard to distinguish Bittenbender Lane from the parking lot associated with the Village Market.

During peak traffic hours, particularly in the late afternoon or evening, it is often difficult to make the L turn because of (1) southbound traffic on 101, and (2) downhill traffic from Sherwood Road emptying onto Main Street. No sooner does traffic from N. Main clear than Sherwood Road traffic jets onto 101. Meanwhile, I must sit in the L turn lane that also feeds into uphill Sherwood Road, with traffic backed up behind me. At times, this is quite difficult and I believe it presents a dangerous condition.

I am asking Caltrans to study the traffic flow carefully before completing design of the project, and also, before designing the timing for the stoplight and turn arrows at Sherwood/N Main.

There is quite a lot of traffic that enters the Village Market from NB Highway 101. It is not just Bittenbender Lane traffic.

There is also a problem with people exiting the Village Market lot and making L turns across SB 101 traffic, in order to enter onto NB 101.

This is a very congested intersection and it will take careful planing to eliminate or reduce the problem. I would be happy to discuss this with you or anyone from Caltrans at your convenience. I can be reached during the day at my office in Ukiah (707-468-9151) or in the evening at home (707-459-2341).

Thank you for listening to my concerns.

Jim King

E2

From: Macedo, Richard@Wildlife
Sent: Friday, August 01, 2014 9:46 AM
To: Schinke, Kendall@DOT
Cc: Dunn, JoAnn@Wildlife; Liebenberg, Angela@Wildlife
Subject: Draft Initial Study for the Sherwood Road Geometric Upgrades Project; 01-MEN-101 (PM 47.1/47.3)

Kendall:

JoAnn Dunn from my office asked that I review the subject draft Initial Study. JoAnn is away and will not return before the August 8, 2014 deadline for receiving comments.

My comments on the subject draft Initial Study are as follows:

1. It's unclear if a focused, protocol-level botanical study was completed for this specific site within the last 5 years. If so, the survey should be included with the draft mitigated negative declaration. If not, a focused, protocol-level botanical survey should be completed for this site.
2. The Initial Study proposes that woody vegetation removal (trees and shrubs) occur during the period September 1 through January 31. This period should apply to any vegetation removal considering there are ground-nesting birds that occupy this general area.
3. Proposed mitigation for the loss of 0.46 acres of "native upland oak woodland" resulting from this project will rely on the 43+ acres of upland oak woodland that has been placed under permanent preservation as part of the comprehensive Willits Bypass Project. While this proposed mitigation has merit, on-site mitigation should also be included in the overall mitigation plan for this project.

E3

E4

E5

This concludes my comments. Please contact me or JoAnn Dunn if you would like to discuss these comments.

Regards,

Rick

Richard Macedo
Coastal Conservation Planning
Northern Region
California Department of Fish and Wildlife
(707) 928-4369

From: Richard Scott [<mailto:rscotty8@icloud.com>]
Sent: Wednesday, August 06, 2014 1:41 PM
To: Schinke, Kendall@DOT
Subject: Sherwood Rd Improvement at Main Street Public Comment

Hi Kendall, Please also hold a public workshop ASAP at the Brooktrails Community Center, since Sherwood Road primarily serves Brooktrails residents and their public comment is vital to the success of the project.

E6

Instead of such a lengthy loop, why not move the intersection further north (closer the bypass northern interchange)?

E7

Sincerely,

Richard Scott

From: Kevin McConnell [<mailto:kevincmccconnell@yahoo.com>]
Sent: Friday, August 08, 2014 8:54 AM
To: Schinke, Kendall@DOT
Subject: Sherwin Road intersection project comments

My family and I live in Brooktrails at 2414 Bear Place and have reviewed the project. We support it and ask that CalTrans goes forward with it.
Thanks

| E8

From: Richard Scott [<mailto:rscotty8@icloud.com>]
Sent: Friday, August 08, 2014 10:49 AM
To: Schinke, Kendall@DOT
Subject: Re: Sherwood Rd Improvement at Main Street Public Comment

There is no public transportation or safe walking access between Brooktrails and Willits, so another reason why a public workshop needs to be held in Brooktrails.

E9

Also, suggest a new round-about intersection, further north of the current intersection. Current intersection could remain completely operational during construction of the new one, so traffic management plan would be much less complicated.

E10

From: Maria Steffen [<mailto:mariasteffen@ymail.com>]
Sent: Friday, August 08, 2014 1:26 PM
To: Schinke, Kendall@DOT
Subject: EIR report on Sherwood Rd./101 intersection

To: Kendall Schinke, Environmental Branch Chief

Regarding the EIR of Caltrans Sherwood Rd./101 intersection project

The stated purpose of the Sherwood Rd/101 intersection project is to improve it. I live out Sherwood Rd. and come through the intersection many times each week at varying times a day (mornings-evenings). I believe that this new intersection is not necessary and that its impact will be more negative than positive.

First of all, how can this construction go on without any permits or approvals needed? The leveling of land and building a retaining wall that is 50ft. tall in the middle and 150ft. long seems like asking for trouble down the line concerning slides, earthquakes and long-term upkeep. This Caltran impact list says there is "no impact" on landslides. Who determines this if there are no permits or approvals needed.

E11

Under the "Aesthetics" section of the project it states that there is "no impact". I don't consider leveling an entire hillside area, along with native oak woodlands and putting in a huge retaining wall and chain-link fence "no aesthetic impact". Also it states that the impact on the character or quality of the site and its surrounding is "less than significant".

E12

Other impacts that are addressed are the habitat modification on any species ("no adverse effect") and the riparian habitat ("less than significant"). The list goes on, "less than significant" degradation of water quality, "will not substantially alter" existing drainage patterns on the site or area, I would like to know how these potential impacts to the natural resources of the project area were investigated and determined and how Caltran can say that there is "no effect on Federally or State listed species".

E13

This whole project seems to be just another expensive, unnecessary, poorly planned and mostly destructive endeavor. Please do all you can to stop this project. If the whole idea of the Willits bypass is to alleviate traffic coming through Willits, why do we need this new intersection?

Sincerely,
Maria Steffen

From: Madge Strong [<mailto:mstrong@willitsonline.com>]
Sent: Friday, August 08, 2014 10:04 PM
To: Schinke, Kendall@DOT
Cc: 'Adrienne Moore'
Subject:

August 8, 2014

Kendall Schinke, Environmental Branch Chief
California Department of Transportation, Environmental Planning
2379 Gateway Oaks Dr., Suite 150
Sacramento, CA 95833
Email: kendall_schinke@dot.ca.gov

Re: Sherwood Road Upgrade Project, Initial Study & Proposed Negative Declaration

Dear Mr. Schinke:

I have reviewed the Initial Study and Proposed Negative Declaration on this project and find it unsatisfactory in several respects.

Most importantly, one of the main objectives of CEQA is to consider less environmentally damaging alternatives to any proposed project. This initial study does not mention any other potential solutions to achieve an improvement of this intersection. I have previously requested (see my letter of Feb. 8, 2012 attached) and hereby reaffirm the request that CalTrans analyze the feasibility and possible advantages of creating a roundabout at the intersection of Sherwood Road and Main St./Hwy 101 in Willits.

E14

One of the major concerns I have with the Initial Study/Proposed ND is the area of Geology. The report states that there is no impact regarding “exposing people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects...including rupture of a known existing earthquake fault...[or from] landslides [or] erosion, loss of topsoil.” It also claims no impact from being located in a geologic unit or soils that are “unstable or that would become unstable as a result of the project.”

E15

Have there been any studies of the potential for instability of the large excavation of the hillside and proposed 30' high retaining wall required for this project? What about underground water drainage? This site is also very close to a known earthquake fault. I believe these factors could indeed pose a risk of failure that could expose people to serious risks (not to mention a potential ongoing maintenance challenge for the road itself). I see no documentation in the Initial Study to support the claim of “no significant impact.”

I recognize that improvement of the Sherwood Road intersection is desirable and becomes even more so when the 101 Bypass is completed, since it is expected that there will be a significant increase in traffic from Brooktrails using the northern interchange.

That said, it is also clear that the construction of this project would involve severe disruption of traffic, potential impacts on Mill Creek, aesthetic impacts, dust, noise, etc. – in addition to the geologic risks noted above. Thus it is imperative that potentially less risky and possibly more effective alternatives be considered.

E16

In terms of effectiveness, buying out the Tower Mart and building a roundabout intersection would be much safer and provide more efficient traffic flow than the proposed project. Please see my comments regarding safety hazards in the Feb. 8, 2012 letter.

E17

As a Willits resident and City Council person, I am also concerned about the potential future costs to the City of maintaining the road itself, particularly if it is subject to instability or slide damage, as well as the signalized intersection.

E18

Even if buying out Tower Mart is more expensive than the 30' retaining wall, the advantages for safety, reduced risk and impact, reduced long-term maintenance costs, and improved traffic flow should be

E19

weighed in the decision. This alternative to the proposed realignment (or possibly in conjunction with a revised alignment) should be considered in the Study and proposed ND.

Sincerely,

Madge Strong
39 Mill Creek Dr.
Willits CA 95490

CC: Willits City Council c/o Adrienne Moore

From: Josephine Silva [<mailto:josilvajo@netscape.net>]
Sent: Friday, August 08, 2014 5:25 PM
To: Schinke, Kendall@DOT
Subject: Willits Sherwood Rd - 101 intersection comments

I would like an option for the Sherwood Rd - 101 intersection in Willits , to be considered. This would be to have Sherwood Rd come to 101 perpendicular and then cross over and continue through what are now the school bus yards and then continue to connect with the end of the parking lot for the Skunk line which if one made a right would connect with Railroad avenue. This has the great advantage of helping internal traffic in Willits and taking a load off of the Commercial intersection during Willits traffic times. It also could provide another entrance to the high school towards the east. I believe some of the right of way may be owned by the railroad but perhaps some arrangement could be made.

E20

The intersection would be best served by a roundabout. The one on Hwy 20 near Lucerne certainly carries more traffic than one in Willits would. The need for a crosswalk for the high school could be set half a block away from the roundabout and probably on the east side of 101.

E21

Sincerely,
Josephine Silva, Willits

Email Responses

- E1 Traffic has difficulty turning left onto Bittenbender Lane and into the Tower Mart because of signal timing. Vehicles are not able to turn left prior to the signal changing. With the additional length of storage on Sherwood Road and the reduced traffic volumes due to the bypass, signal timing will be adjusted, facilitating left turns onto Bittenbender Lane and into the Tower Mart.
- E2 Current traffic volume data will be used in both the design and timing of the traffic signals at the reconfigured intersection of Main Street and Sherwood Road. Left hand turns in and out of the convenience store parking lot are allowed traffic movements and will remain so after project completion. The reconfigured Main Street/Sherwood Road intersection will separate left and right turning traffic on Sherwood Road, allowing for better traffic flow at the intersection and relieving some of the congestion currently experienced on Sherwood Road. Please refer to Response E1.
- E3 Caltrans biological staff conducted pre-field investigations to determine the potential for sensitive plant species and sensitive habitats/vegetation communities based on information compiled from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife (USFWS) lists, the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) California Natural Diversity Database ("CNDDDB" Rarefind, 2012 Willits 7.5-minute USGS quadrangle), the California Native Plant Society ("CNPS" Electronic Inventory, 2013), and from the current literature. Based upon the pre-field investigation, only Pacific Gilia (*Gilia capitata* ssp. *pacifica*) was identified as potentially occurring within habitat types (valley and foothill grasslands) available within the Sherwood Road environmental study limit (ESL). Pacific gilia has a bloom period between April and August; a preliminary site visit and survey for target plant species at the US 101 and Sherwood Road intersection occurred on July 31, 2013.

During the preliminary site visit, Caltrans confirmed that habitat for the majority of the target sensitive plant species appearing on USFWS and CNDDDB lists is not available within the Sherwood Road intersection ESL. Any plant specimen appearing to be a potential taxon listed as a sensitive plant species was identified to the extent necessary to determine sensitivity status. No target sensitive plant species were detected within the Sherwood Road ESL during the survey. Oak woodland vegetation was detected within Sherwood Road ESL.

No overall botanic inventory has been conducted within the Sherwood Road ESL as of this date. Project construction is scheduled to begin in 2017. Caltrans or contractor staff will conduct a pre-construction botanical inventory of the Sherwood Road ESL, as per the recommendation of CDFW.

- E4 Caltrans agrees with this comment and is ultimately responsible for compliance with the Migratory Bird treaty Act (MBTA) as the lead federal agency. Caltrans will implement a nesting bird survey protocol similar to the CDFW-approved nesting bird survey protocol currently implemented on the Willits Bypass project, should any vegetation removal or ground-disturbing activities occur within the migratory bird nesting season.
- E5 Native plants will be planted on-site as part of the design for this project.
- E6 Caltrans will contact the Brooktrails Community Services District regarding attending a future director's meeting in order to present the project and answer any questions. Please check the BCSD's website at www.btcasd.org/ for information concerning any future meetings.
- E7 This design recommendation is beyond the scope and programmed cost of the intersection improvement project required for study by the January 25, 2012 Relinquishment Agreement between the City of Willits and the State of California.
- Any secondary access into Brooktrails should be discussed with Mendocino County and/or the City of Willits.
- E8 Your support for the project is noted.

E9 Sherwood Road is a City of Willits facility. Public transportation on Sherwood Road is the responsibility of the Mendocino Transit Authority. Please contact the Mendocino Transit Authority concerning public transportation options and opportunities for residents of Brooktrails.

Regarding a public meeting, Please refer to Response E6.

E10 Caltrans investigated using a single-lane roundabout design accommodating a California Legal Design Vehicle (a vehicle with a 67-foot wheel base). This design incorporated the same geometric upgrades to Sherwood Road as outlined in the environmental document, including the downhill grade change from 12% to 10% and adding paved shoulders. A retaining wall further west is needed to accommodate the larger footprint of the roundabout. A roundabout would require the acquisition of additional right of way from adjacent properties, including the Tower Market and fuel station. The preliminary construction estimate for the single-lane roundabout design is \$6.9 million. This estimate includes roadway work, a retaining wall, and right of way acquisition. The current programmed construction amount for the current project is \$3.8 million. An additional source of funding would be required to further develop the design and construct this alternative.

E11 This project is still in the early stages of design. All necessary and required permits and approvals will be obtained prior to the construction of the intersection. Caltrans structural engineers and geotechnical engineers are a vital part of the design team and are currently studying the wall design to ensure a stable and well-engineered final product.

The retaining wall and cut slopes will be designed based on the soil conditions from subsurface investigations and seismicity to ensure stability of the hillside. The proposed retaining wall will be a soil nail wall. Soil nail walls are constructed starting at the top of the wall, excavating a vertical section (typically around 5 feet in height), installing soil nails (closely spaced grouted steel rods) into the hillside and connecting it to a structural facing. After each vertical section is completed, another vertical section is excavated and the process is repeated until the bottom of the wall is reached. Unreinforced vertical excavations will be relatively small to ensure stability. The soil nail wall is designed to create a stable retained soil mass, which is also designed as a gravity block to resist global rotation, sliding, or bearing capacity failure. Cut slopes will be analyzed and designed to ensure long-term stability.

As stated in this environmental document, the project will not impact geologic resources; measures will be included during final design to ensure safety and stability.

E12 The hillside is not being leveled. Every effort is being made to keep the roadway parallel to the existing hillside contours. As stated in the project description, approximately 50 feet by 20 feet of hillside material, for about 350 linear feet, will be removed. As stated in the environmental document, planting native vegetation and designing the retaining wall with a surface that emulates surrounding rock formation patterns and color will reduce visual impacts. The chain link fence at the top of the wall is a safety feature, and will be painted to reduce its color contrast against the hillside above the wall.

E13 Caltrans determined that there are no effects to riparian habitat because no riparian habitat is located within the Sherwood Road environmental study limit (ESL). The existing US 101 bridge at Mill Creek is located approximately 100 feet south of the southern boundary of the Sherwood Road ESL and therefore no project activities are proposed to occur within the riparian zone, below the top of bank, or below the ordinary high water mark of Mill Creek. Best management practices (BMPs) are proposed to prevent encroachments and discharges of sediment to any areas outside of the Sherwood Road ESL, including Mill Creek.

As described in the Biological Resources, Environmental Consequences section of this document, Caltrans determined that there are no effects to Federally or State listed plant or animal species based upon pre-field investigations. These investigations determined the potential for sensitive and listed plant and animal species and sensitive habitats/vegetation communities based on information compiled from the USFWS lists, CDFG California Natural Diversity Database ("CNDDDB" Rarefind, 2012 Willits 7.5-minute USGS quadrangle), the California Native Plant Society ("CNPS" Electronic Inventory, 2013), and from the current literature, and based upon a preliminary site visit and survey for target plant species to the US-101 and Sherwood Road intersection on July 31, 2013. The potential for sensitive and listed species to be adversely

affected by the proposed project is discussed in the project's May 2014 Natural Environment Study (NES). A copy of the NES is available from Caltrans upon request.

- E14 Please refer to Response E10.
- E15 There will be no large excavations of the hillside. The soil nail wall will be installed in small lifts. Please refer to Responses E11 and W13.
- E16 The project's Transportation Management Plan (TMP) will ensure that travel delay to the public is kept to a minimum. Please refer to Responses E13 and W15.
- E17 While roundabouts can provide some safety advantages, a roundabout at this location is not desirable due to the topography and high costs associated with purchasing the needed right of way. Also, please refer to Responses E10 and E18.
- E18 Caltrans will upgrade all of the signalized intersections in the segment of US 101 being relinquished to the City, including the Sherwood Road intersection. Once this segment is relinquished to the City, the City will take over the maintenance costs. The facilities will be turned over to the City in a state of "good repair". The City of Willits agreed to take over the maintenance of the relinquished US 101 in Section 1 of the signed January 2012 Relinquishment Agreement between Caltrans and the City. Please refer to Response E11 regarding slope stability.
- E19 Purchase of the Tower Mart would require more funding than the current programmed project scope and budget allow. An additional source of funding would be required to further develop the design and construct this alternative.
- E20 This commenter's proposed design would cause significant impacts to Willits High School and is beyond the scope and programmed cost of the intersection improvement project required for study by the January 25, 2012 Relinquishment Agreement between the City of Willits and the State of California.
- E21 The roundabout is outside of the scope of the project, therefore a signalized intersection will remain as it is with crosswalks in place. Please refer to Responses E10 and E17.

Letter Comments

ROBERT A. SCAGLIONE
Air Pollution Control Officer

DONNA ROBERTS NASH
Program Coordinator



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MENDOCINO COUNTY
AIR QUALITY MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

July 17, 2014

Ken Lastufka
Office of Environmental Management
Department of Transportation
2379 Gateway Oaks Drive, Suite 150
Sacramento, CA 95833

Subject: Sherwood Road Geometric Upgrades Project Draft Initial Study with Proposed Negative Declaration (Dated June 2014)

Dear Mr Lastufka:

The Air Quality Management District has reviewed the Draft Initial Study for the proposed Sherwood Road Geometric Upgrade Project and has the following comments at this time:

Impact Checklist III a) " Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?" No Impact.

The District does not agree that the project will not conflict with applicable air quality plans. Emissions from construction projects can have significant short-term impacts. Impacts from the proposed project could be significant on adjacent schools, businesses, and residences depending on the amount and frequency of construction activity.

L1

The District believes that the impacts could be less than significant with the use of appropriate mitigation measures.

Impact Checklist III b) " Violate any air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation?" No Impact.

The District does not agree. The California Air Resources Board has determined that particulate from diesel exhaust is an air toxic. The potential for diesel particulate exposure on adjacent schools, businesses, and residences during the construction phase of this project is of concern to the District. Mitigation measures include; compliance with California Code of Regulations, Section 2485 limiting heavy duty truck idling to less than 5 minutes, limiting off-road diesel engine idling time, and ensuring all portable and off-road equipment is compliant with ARB emission requirements and/or permitting/registration requirements. Portable diesel powered equipment that may be used during the proposed project must meet current ARB requirements for emissions under the Portable Equipment Registration Program (PERP) or obtain permits from the District.

L2

The District believes that impacts could be less than significant and significantly reduce potential exposures to air toxics with the use of appropriate mitigation measures.

Impact Checklist III c) “ Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment...” No Impact.

The District is designated “non-attainment” for the State Standard for Airborne Particulate Matter less than 10 microns in size (PM¹⁰) and “in attainment” for all other State and federal ambient air quality standards. The California Clean Air Act requires that any district that does not meet the PM¹⁰ standard make continuing progress to attain the standard at the earliest practical date. To ensure the District complies with the state mandate, certain regulations were adopted to address known sources of Particulate, including grading projects. In addition to compliance with Mendocino County Air Quality Management District Regulation 1, Rule 1-430 (Fugitive Dust Emissions), a Large Grading Project Permit would be required of Caltrans or its contractor if the project area were to exceed 1 acre in area or 1 mile of roadway.

L3

Impact Checklist III d) “ Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?” No Impact.

The District does not agree. The proposed project site is within 200 feet of Willits High School, a sensitive receptor and less than 100 feet from a business and residence. In addition, foot traffic to and from school as well as at lunch periods can potentially enhance exposures to diesel exhaust and particulate from excavating and grading operations during the construction phase of the project. Draft Initial Study –Construction Impacts, Environmental Consequences, Page 27 states “. . . both fugitive dust and construction equipment exhaust emissions would be temporary and transitory in nature.”

L4

Although temporary and transitory in nature the potential for impacts to sensitive receptors could be significant without appropriate mitigation measures as discussed above.

Please call the District office at (707) 463-4354 if you have any questions or comments.


Robert A. Scaglione
Air Pollution Control Officer

cc: John D. Webb, Chief
North Region Environmental Services
California Department of Transportation
703 B Street
Marysville, CA 95901

Smaug^Planning\2014\Caltrans-Sherwood Road Upgrade



BROOKTRAILS TOWNSHIP

COMMUNITY SERVICES DISTRICT

24860 Birch Street

Brooktrails, California 95490

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August 6, 2014

Ken Lastufka
Office of Environmental Management
California Department of Transportaion
2379 Gateway Oaks Drive, Suite 150
Sacramento, California 95833

Re: Sherwood Road Geometric Upgrades Project

I am writing to you on behalf of the Board of Directors of Brooktrails Township Community Services District concerning the Sherwood Road Geometric Upgrades Project.

The Brooktrails Township has worked with Caltrans on the Project Development Team over the past several years, as well as with the California Legislature, the County of Mendocino, the many citizens we represent here within the Township, and the Sherwood Road community of interest, concerning both the bypass and the realignment of Sherwood Road as a subsidiary project.

Beginning in 1988 the Board has worked diligently to ensure that if the bypass was built, that it would done in a way that improved evacuation and access routes for Brooktrails residents by:

- a) improving the Sherwood Road and Route 101 intersection, and
- b) facilitating the construction of a second access road to Brooktrails near the northern bypass interchange.

Both of the aforementioned projects are critical to the long-term viability of the community.

The Board of Directors enthusiastically supports the overall design as depicted in the Sherwood Road Geometric Upgrades Project. Sherwood Road is the only paved access road that serves the communities of Brooktrails, Spring Creek, Sylvandale and the Sherwood Valley Rancheria with a population of approximately 4,000 people.

However, while the overall plan seems feasible of particular concern to the Township is the inclusion of shoulders – at least on the ‘uphill side’ of the road - that are wide enough to accommodate pedestrians and bicycle traffic. As you may know many people, particularly children attempt to walk or ride up Sherwood Road and the conditions are unsafe. If the space is provided in this project for pedestrians it may encourage the County to review and

perhaps act on a way to accommodate non-vehicular traffic within its existing right-of-way for the remainder of Sherwood Road.

The Board is also concerned that the construction phase of the project, in as much as possible, accommodates the heavy vehicular traffic on Sherwood especially during peak hours. As you know from traffic studies of this area it does not take much to back up traffic into downtown on the north bound lane of Route 101 or up as far as the Smith Ranch on Sherwood Road. The Board suggests that you consider the installation of temporary traffic signalization with road sensors to minimize traffic backups.

I have attached two documents that discuss Brooktrails concerns regarding the realignment of Sherwood Road. The first document is an excerpt from the Specific Plan for Brooktrails concerning Traffic Circulation. The second document was submitted to your department in response to the Willits Bypass EIS/EIR on August 6, 2002.

Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Denise M. Rose

Denise Rose
General Manager

Comments on Draft Willits Bypass EIS / EIR

August 6, 2002

Chapter 1

1.1 CEQA and NEPA. This Draft EIR/DEIS is a streamlined treatment of both CEQA and NEPA, and we understand that NEPA would require a secondary treatment by Caltrans once a preferred U.S. 101 Willits bypass is selected, so as to allow full citizen comment and review. We note that Section 1.1 lacks disclosure of the trigger requirements that would cause a secondary draft to be distributed as allowed by CEQA and required by NEPA. Brooktrails Township has requested such a secondary treatment for the "L-C" Hybrid Alternative route, to allow for full disclosure and the public's ability to participate in the decision making process with review and comments.

1.2 Purpose of this Draft EIR/EIS. This DEIR/DEIS will not be used to demonstrate a "preferred" alternative, yet it assumes that a sufficient level of information is presented for the public to evaluate the proposed project. Brooktrails Township believes that the information presented is sufficient only so as to allow the public, and government agencies, to comment on a recommended "preferred" alternative. There is insufficient information to evaluate the L-C Hybrid Alternative, which needs to be further studied and described in terms of its elements and the mitigation plans required by CEQA and/or NEPA.

1.3 Project Decision Making. Brooktrails Township C.S.D., as a member of the Project Development Team (PDT), looks forward to the critical meeting in which a review that includes an evaluation of all comments received in this 60-day comment period will be available. Our comment on 1.1 should allow for a discussion of several options on the next treatment in this critical phase of CEQA and/or NEPA process.

1.5 Nodal Analysis. As a member of the PDT, Brooktrails Township accepted the nodal analysis treatment for this DEIS/DEIR. Using this approach has allowed the Township, in its review and with these comments, to recommend the L-C Hybrid Alternative as the best of the nodes proposed by Caltrans, that could meet the needs of Brooktrails for a seamless connection to the U.S. 101 Bypass as described in this DEIS/DEIR. Our further comments of record will identify our reasons for so recommending.

1.8 Public Hearing. Brooktrails Township staff and directors are pleased to have had this opportunity to meet with the Caltrans development team, particularly the District 1 Director, who operates as the decision maker in this review program. These comments reflect a decade of public meetings that the Township has held on this crucial project, including those leading to the preparation and adoption of the Brooktrails Specific Plan Element of the Mendocino County General Plan. A secondary draft treatment of the selected preferred route is essential to support a finding of "adequacy" in the final certification of this important project.

Chapter 2

2.0 Purpose and Need for Project. Brooktrails Township, by act of the State of California, was empowered to prepare a Brooktrails Specific Plan, which was adopted by the County of Mendocino Board of Supervisors in 1997, which caused it to become an element of the County General Plan. There are specific Goals and Policies contained in this General Plan Element, attached to these official comments as "Attachment A." These Goals and Policies need to be reviewed to identify any changes to the 1995 Willits Bypass Purpose and Need statement that might be expected if this DEIS/DEIR can be found to conform to local planning law.

2.1 Purpose of Proposed Bypass Project. Brooktrails Township believes that the L-C Hybrid Alternative could meet the Purpose and Need in relation to those Goals and Policies we must use in our review and comments on this DEIS/ DEIR. Level of Service “C” could be achieved with a “gateway” intersection as described for the Truck Scales Interchange, for a potentially seamless connection with a new Mendocino County road currently being planned, namely the Brooktrails Second Access project.

In contrast, the Quail Meadows Interchange has serious traffic and safety impacts to our community. As well, the E3 western alternative would have unacceptable noise and visual impacts and would not provide an intersection that could allow for a seamless connection to Brooktrails.

2.2 Need for the Proposed Bypass Project. As Brooktrails currently represents a significant interregional vehicle trip generator, and over the lifetime of the proposed Willits Bypass, Brooktrails is shown to have a growth potential several times that of the City of Willits, as disclosed in the Mendocino County General Plan. Brooktrails Township expects appropriate treatment in stating the need for this bypass project.

2.2.1 Existing Facility. While Brooktrails Township can recognize that the U.S. 101 / State Route 20 intersection has greater impact on the existing 101 facility, the failure to even describe the Sherwood Road intersection with U.S. 101 warrants further review. Sherwood Road is the only facility currently serving Brooktrails as a direct connection to U.S. 101.

2.2.4 Interregional Truck Traffic Interferes with Local Travel. Sherwood Road and the proposed Brooktrails Second Access road would generate an increasing need to facilitate safe merging and exiting operations on or off of the U.S. 101 Willits Bypass by heavy trucks that serve the Brooktrails corridor, as well as by lumber trucks from industrial land holdings beyond Brooktrails.

2.2.5 Noise and Vibration. This statement will not stand if the western E3 route is chosen. Brooktrails would have significant noise impacts, many times greater than any other proposed route. The Mendocino General Plan requires Brooktrails Township to notify more than 5,000 property owners of any DEIS/DEIR that selects the western E3 route as the “preferred” route.

2.3 Objectives of the Proposed Action. Brooktrails Township requires the Quail Meadows interchange to be studied, as it would be served by the proposed Brooktrails Second Access route. It seems apparent that a control signal would be required on the intersection of the final U.S. 101 and the Second Access road entry point onto a two-lane segment of Highway 101 as it tranverses the northern Truck Scales area. This new intersection could defeat the objectives of the proposed project.

2.4.2 Post 1987 History. Please identify the year the Project Development Team was established. Brooktrails Township was actively engaged in a CEQA program that led to the adopted Brooktrails Specific Plan Element in 1997. The Caltrans activity gap during the years 1994 through 1998 is precisely when the Township was most active in planning work that prepared us for this DEIS/DEIR, and we suspect this gap in bypass planning activity caused Caltrans to be inattentive to the change of conditions that our comments now reflect. Brooktrails Township has coordinated with Mendocino Council of Governments and the County of Mendocino, and we supported MCOG’s commitment of \$17.3 million of 1998 STIP funds under Senate Bill 45 for the Willits Bypass project.

2.6 Support for the Project. Brooktrails Township requests a secondary Draft EIS/EIR that studies the four-lane L-C Hybrid Alternative as shown in Attachment B. A secondary DEIS/DEIR should also treat a two-lane L-C Alternative for comparative analysis, as well as describe a U.S. 101 / SR 20 interchange that could become a future MCOG project in the service life of this proposed U.S. 101 segment. Such secondary treatment would allow Brooktrails Township to make its own “adequacy” finding as required under the Brooktrails Specific Plan Element.

Chapter 3

3.3.1.1 Revised Truck Scales Interchange (Alternative C1T). This revision represents the best potential for a “seamless Gateway interchange” for Brooktrails once a new county road, the “Brooktrails Second Access,” is constructed.

3.3.2 Estimated Cut and Fill Requirements – Designated Borrow Site. Brooktrails Township believes that the coordinated construction of the U.S. 101 Willits Bypass and the Brooktrails Second Access road could provide borrow soils for the valley construction, while creating cost savings to both projects. This should be considered.

3.3.3 Relinquishment of Existing Bypassed Portions of Existing U.S. 101. Brooktrails Township has safety and traffic congestion concerns as long as Sherwood Road is the sole access to U.S. 101. The City of Willits would need to redesign and construct a new Sherwood intersection, which could include elimination of a commercial lot and relocation of its business. This will become a major obstacle to reaching a relinquishment agreement between the California Transportation Commission and the City of Willits.

3.4.1 Alternative C1T. Please add a reference to the proposed Brooktrails Second Access when describing the north C1T segment.

3.4.2 Alternative E3. Brooktrails Township finds no advantages to the E3 Alternative and must notify each property owner of record if E3 becomes the “preferred alternative.” Visual and noise impacts would have unavoidable impacts to our community.

3.4.3 Alternative J1T. Brooktrails Township supports the City of Willits’ comments on its view of negative impacts the J1T Alternative would have on commercial and recreational facilities and on the jointly operated sewer plant. The Quail Meadows interchange takes prime potential residential land along the western hills in attempting to avoid wetlands. The J1T Alternative could worsen the Sherwood Road intersection problems and could require a controlled intersection on the two-lane U.S. 101 north segment when a Brooktrails Second Access road is constructed.

3.4.4 Alternative LT. The north segment of LT has the same issues with a Quail Meadows interchange and the difficulty in development of a Brooktrails Second Access intersection to north Highway 101.

3.5 Comparison of Alternatives. Brooktrails will not have equivalent project benefits with any alternative that cannot provide for an improved level of service or safety to our community of interest. Only the C1T northern segment with the Truck Scales interchange could provide a “seamless Gateway interchange” to a Brooktrails Second Access road.

The deficiencies of the Sherwood Road intersection in serving the commute trips to the Quail Meadows interchange need to be further studied. Only the C1T north segment avoids most impacts to land availability for residential and commercial uses, by using the flood plain where these types of uses are not feasible.

3.5.2 Level of Service. Currently Brooktrails has a direct connection to the existing U.S. 101, via Sherwood Road. Do any of the proposed Willits Bypass alternatives improve this direct connection? The timing of a new Mendocino County road connection from Sherwood Road to the selected Willits Bypass route is crucial to answering the Level of Service issue. Only a direct connection to a gateway interchange can provide the Level of Service shown to be required in the Brooktrails Township Specific Plan Element during the service life of these proposed U.S. 101 highway segments.

If the Quail Meadows interchange is selected, then traffic congestion on the two-lane north U.S. 101 segments could worsen when the County of Mendocino constructs a traffic control system to allow traffic to safely enter and exit the proposed Brooktrails Second Access intersection. Both the Purpose and Needs and Level of Service are defeated without a frontage road as planned for the Truck Scales interchange, as part of the Willits Bypass.

3.6.2 Two-Lane Alternative. Once the preferred alternative is selected for further study, a two-lane alternate project can be studied for comparative analysis. The funds needed to construct the final project might require a phased construction program, in which case a two-lane would be the first phase of a four-lane project. This analysis would satisfy NEPA and CEQA, and would allow full disclosure for public review and comment on the final project selection and mitigation plan. In recommending a secondary amended Draft EIS/EIR, however, Brooktrails Township remains focussed on the four-lane L-C Hybrid Alternative, for meeting the needs identified in our Specific Plan Element.

Chapter 4

4.3.1 Land Use Requirements. CEQA requires compliance with local land use regulations, as shown in the Mendocino County General Plan, the City of Willits General Plan, and the Brooktrails Specific Plan Element. Each must be given equal weight in this DEIS/DEIR review, as to their integration into the final project and its mitigation program. The Brooktrails Specific Plan Element contains land use requirements, as stated in Attachment A, that compel Caltrans to review and integrate into this and numerous other sections that relate to this DEIS/DEIR.

4.3.2 Existing Land Use. This section needs updating relative to Brooktrails. Please use the 2000 Census data for population. Also, narrative from the Brooktrails Specific Plan Element could be inserted here. The fact that Brooktrails is currently served with a direct connection to U.S. 101 at Sherwood Road is not mentioned in this DEIS/DEIR, nor is there any narrative found that is specific to current conditions at this crucial intersection serving interregional trips from the Sherwood Road corridor. Please correct this oversight.

4.5.2 Demographics. Please refer to the Brooktrails Specific Plan Element for updated demographics on Brooktrails. As a bedroom and retirement community of homes, without a core commercial service area, Brooktrails is a commuters' subdivision. The proposed Willits Bypass project, together with the proposed Hopland Bypass and the Hopland four-lane improvements to 101 now partially completed, are changing our local demographics. Commute trips to Sonoma County from Brooktrails is becoming the latest demographic factor, growing in direct relation to the 101 corridor improvements in Mendocino County.

When this section on demographics is expanded to include Brooktrails, the need for a four-lane Willit Bypass will be established even more fully.

4.5.3 Housing Characteristics. A reading of the Brooktrails Specific Plan Element will illustrate the extensive differences between the characteristics of Brooktrails housing and those of Willits. Brooktrails Township is well aware of its role in representing the vast majority of available Single Family Residences in the Mendocino County unincorporated area. The majority, when constructed, are owner occupied units. The Mendocino County Housing Element is due to be updated by December 31, 2003. On August 5, 2002, Mendocino Council of Governments (MCOG) released the Draft Regional Housing Needs Plan for public review and comment.

The State of California has placed the critical need for housing as a policy focus. These comments are meant to illustrate the need for this DEIS/DEIR to be amended so as to give equal CEQA treatment to the Brooktrails community of interest, whenever references to the Brooktrails Specific Plan Element require such coordinated treatment.

Chapter 5

5.2 Community Impacts. The Brooktrails Specific Plan Element specifies that this DEIS/DEIR project is a primary factor in Brooktrails Township's ability to support future growth. The taking of our community's only direct connection to the U.S. 101 highway facility, without providing for a new gateway intersection, will have dramatic community impacts on Brooktrails and on the Mendocino County as a whole.

5.2.2 Impact Thresholds. Some of the potential impacts each project alternative could cause include: 1) Alternative E3 would create a physical division between Willits and Brooktrails, and 2) the lack of a direct gateway connection between Brooktrails and any design alternative would constrict Brooktrails' ability to accommodate future growth, thus requiring new housing areas to be created in other areas of Mendocino County, to replace this taking.

5.2.5.9 Regional Economic Impacts. Any project alternative that cannot provide for a seamless gateway interchange connection to a Brooktrails Second Access road will have dramatic regional economic impacts. Only with the construction of the L-C Hybrid Alternative, as shown in Attachment B, and later the addition of the Brooktrails Second Access, can provide for the continued availability of Brooktrails to accommodate future growth as detailed in the Brooktrails Specific Plan Element.

5.3.1 Impact Thresholds. The proposed project will alter the design criteria of the current Sherwood Road / U.S. 101 intersection, by creating a new bypass intersection north of the existing intersection. Unless a Brooktrails Second Access is constructed with a seamless interchange connection, the proposed Willits Bypass will reduce current conditions, creating new negative values to the Brooktrails community of interest.

The foregoing comment includes issues of response time by emergency service providers, as their comments of record substantiate. The Sherwood Road intersection must be entered from the north by fire trucks. This condition will continue until the seamless gateway intersection at the Brooktrails Second Access is completed.

5.3.2.2 Streets and Roads. All of the proposed project alternatives eliminate the direct connection to U.S. 101 from Brooktrails by way of the Sherwood Road intersection. As a result of placing a new northern interchange to U.S. 101, the Sherwood Road-Main Street intersection must be redesigned and reconstructed prior to any relinquishment of this intersection to the City of Willits. The timely completion of a Brooktrails Second Access road and its connection to the new northern U.S. 101 interchange could eliminate this need.

5.3.3.1 Long Term Impacts. Please refer to comments made by emergency service providers to Brooktrails, concerning their abilities to respond from the various proposed alternatives.

5.4.1.1 Consistency with Local Plans & Policies. Please make this section comply with CEQA, concerning the Goals & Policies referenced in Attachment A.

5.4.1.2 Consistency with Regional Transportation Plan. The Brooktrails Second Access stands to be the highest priority County road backbone project in the latest Regional Transportation Plan, once adopted by MCOG. Brooktrails would request that Caltrans review the intent of Senate Bill 45 to ensure proper treatment of the Second Access project in coordination with the Willits Bypass project (refer to Attachment C).

5.10.5.4 Alternative E3. Concerning both the Little Lake Valley and the Brooktrails "landscape assessment units," hundreds of residential lots in Brooktrails would have visual impacts from this alternative route.

5.10.5.4 Alternatives C1T, J1T, and LT as Designated Borrow Site. Brooktrails Township believes significant project savings could be realized, with lesser environmental impacts, if a coordinated build program is reached between the Willits Bypass and the Brooktrails Second Access road project. Borrow soils from constructing the Second Access could be rolled across existing U.S. 101 into the Willits Bypass construction zone. This option should be studied.

5.11 Noise. Brooktrails will have a significant change in current conditions if the E3 Alternative is constructed (see Attachment A).

Chapter 6

6.1 Growth Inducement

6.1.1 As a result of the Willits Bypass project, Brooktrails Township can expect a measurable increase in population concentration, human use of the land (residential development), health and safety problems caused by physical changes, and other aspects of the resource base, such as water, scenic quality, and public services. Brooktrails Township is planning for new water storage, and for construction of an additional sewer main to increase capacity to the Willits sewer facility. The additional demands for new construction of single family units (SFRs) caused by the Willits Bypass project can be expected to accelerate the timing for these new facilities, creating a growth inducement impact on Brooktrails. Please refer to our comment on 4.5.2 Demographics and 4.5.3 Housing Characteristics.

6.1.2 Growth Inducement Analysis. In a related matter, in 1989 Brooktrails Township filed on the Federal Register a resolution in response to Offshore Oil and Gas Lease Sale 91 (copy attached). This resolution addressed the short-term demand on local infrastructure and the long-term result if the workforce to construct the project were to cause new single family home

construction just for a short term occupancy demand. Brooktrails Township did not yet have a specific plan at the time we submitted Resolution # _____, and by our due diligence now are

controlled by the Brooktrails Specific Plan Element. We can expect the Willits Bypass project to have a similar impact on our community. Brooktrails Township is now within a few hundred SFRs before we must act to provide additional water storage facilities. Our current growth rate has been less than the 20-year average, but has recently started a new upswing. (See comment 4.5.2 Demographics.) The Willits Bypass project cannot avoid triggering a measurable growth inducement impact on Brooktrails. It should be discussed as an unavoidable impact in the DEIS/DEIR.

6.1.3.2 Local Government Plans & Policies. The reference to the Brooktrails Specific Plan Element is correct in identifying two known constraints to development, water availability and the need for a Second Access road. However, the narrative goes on to assume no additional constraining impacts to Brooktrails. Other impacts to be discussed include those caused by an improperly designed Willits Bypass. Please make this section comply with CEQA, concerning the Goals & Policies referenced in Attachment A.

Figure 6-1 is fair and accurate in portraying foreseeable future projects.

6.2.2.1 Buildout in Brooktrails and in Willits. Because of the preparation of the Brooktrails Specific Plan Element, the cost to Caltrans of preparing a separate analysis of Brooktrails has been avoided. However, Brooktrails Township believes that eliminating our direct connection to U.S. 101 elevates Caltrans' responsibility to create a new U.S. 101 segment that meets the transportation Goals & Policies of the Brooktrails Specific Plan Element, so as to avoid negative impacts on Brooktrails.

6.2.2.6 Second Access to Brooktrails. Please update this section to reflect current standing of this project, as a selected Project Study Report is budgeted by MCOG and the County of Mendocino, and this project is listed first among major proposed projects for transportation improvements to the County Backbone Circulation System and Local Roads in the most recent Draft Regional Transportation Plan.

Attachment A
Brooktrails Township CSD Comments on
Draft Willits Bypass EIS/EIR

The Mendocino County General Plan authorizes the Brooktrails Township to act as one of the agencies responsible for implementing the Goals & Policies of the Brooktrails Specific Plan Element. As part of this responsibility, we are providing comments on the Draft U.S. 101 Willits Bypass EIS/EIR.

The following are excerpts of **Goals & Policies of the Mendocino County General Plan** that pertain to this matter.

Transportation and Circulation Goal FS-7.1-2

“Recognize the need for a U.S. Highway 101 Willits Bypass...Refer to the discussion of Implementation under Transportation and Circulation Policy FS-7.1-1A regarding the U.S. 101 Bypass project. Coordination with Caltrans will require a system of dialogue between the Township and Caltrans. Resolution No. 1989-16 adopted by the Brooktrails Township Board of Directors on July 27, 1989, in part, authorized the General Manager to establish and maintain a system for communicating in writing with other public agencies... typist to complete this section

Transportation and Circulation Policy FS-7.1-2A

“Coordinate Township growth and development with the California Department of Transportation to ensure the adequacy of U.S. 101 improvements.”

Transportation and Circulation Policy FS-7.1-1A

Brooktrails Specific Plan – Actions and Implementation of Circulation Element

by Tony Orth 12/6/2006

This preamble is assembled from our existing updated Brooktrails Specific Plan as adopted in 2005 by the County of Mendocino Board of Supervisors. The Brooktrails Township Board of Directors is assigned the role of implementing portions of the Specific Plan.

12.3 Administration (Implementation and Admin. – Sec. 12). “As set forth by state law, the Specific Plan establishes the goals and policies to guide the location, intensity and character of land uses, the circulation pattern, necessary infrastructure, improvements, and implementation actions required to realize Plan recommendations. The Plan also contains a financing program necessary to maintain community services and provide the infrastructure required to accommodate buildout of the Plan.”

Chapter 7, Community Facilities and Services (as amended 2005)

Transportation and Circulation Goal FS-7.1-1 – “Improve vehicular access/egress to/from the Township and ensure adequate circulation within the Township.”

Goal FS-7.2 – “Recognize the need for a U.S. 101 Willits Bypass.”

Policy FS-7, 1-2A – “Coordinate Township growth and development with the California Department of Transportation to ensure the adequacy of U.S. Highway 101 improvements.”

Implementation: Begin planning studies for a second access route in 1997.

Implementing Agency/Entity: Brooktrails Township in collaboration with the County of Mendocino, Department of Public Works [now Department of Transportation].

Policy FS-7.1A – “Construct a new second Brooktrails Township access road from Sherwood Road to the Highway 101 Bypass. With the U.S. 101 Bypass, a direct connection to U.S. 101 north of Willits is the preferred alternative.

“The Mendocino County Department of Transportation has prepared a draft second access study analyzing alternative alignments for the proposed Brooktrails second access. The preferred alternative would connect Sherwood Road with U.S. 101 near the northern interchange planned in association with the Willits Bypass. The second access alignment may be modified in the future depending upon factors including the selected highway bypass alignment, interchange locations and construction costs.

“Given the long-term nature of implementing a second access route (approximately four to six years), the Township should begin proceeding with implementation immediately, and work with Caltrans on implementation, funding and coordination with the U.S. 101 Willits Bypass project.

“At buildout, Brooktrails will be one of the largest communities in Mendocino County. Almost all traffic destined to or coming from Brooktrails will travel through Willits unless the U.S. 101 Bypass is constructed. While some shopping trips will be reduced by the presence of commercial land uses within the Township, virtually all other work related and discretionary trips will be via U.S. 101 and State Route 20. Coordination of improvements between Brooktrails and Willits is critical. Without improvements in Willits and the County, Brooktrails will not be able to reasonably accommodate future growth. The U.S. 101 Bypass project profoundly impacts the preferred second access route.”

Action Item:

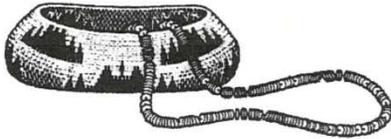
Make a finding that the Willits Bypass Environmental Impact Statement/Report (EIS/EIR) is adequate in identifying a project description that allows Brooktrails Township, the County of Mendocino, and Mendocino Council of Governments to advance the second access road project to full environmental and engineering studies, leading to its own EIR with the County of Mendocino acting as lead agency. Along with this action, we can also authorize the General Manager, as required by the Specific Plan, to actively help coordinate full funding for the Willits Bypass and the Brooktrails second access road.

Recommendation:

Before our next meeting, the Willits Bypass EIS/EIR, identifying the Least Environmentally Damaging Practicable Alternative (LEDPA) route, will be made final with a “record of decision.” The California Transportation Commission can now select from four funding alternatives:

- 1) Abandon the project as too expensive (no build)
- 2) Underfund the project to keep it resuscitated, but lacking funds to build two or four lanes (current condition)
- 3) Fund a phased two-lane to four-lane project
- 4) Fund the full and final four-lane project as designed.

The second option is equivalent to the first—“no build.” Brooktrails has recently reaffirmed its support for fourth option, full funding of the four-lane project, as it accommodates the traffic flows as required by the community size specified in the Brooktrails Specific Plan contained within the County of Mendocino General Plan.



SHERWOOD VALLEY BAND OF POMO INDIANS

July 31, 2014

Ken Lastufka
OEM
2379 Gateway Oaks Drive, Suite 150
Sacramento CA 95833

RE: Realignment of Sherwood Road, Willits CA

Dear Mr. Lastufka:

This letter is in response to the correspondence dated July 2014 regarding the above referenced project. The area of potential effect is within the indigenous territory boundaries of the Sherwood Valley Band of Pomo Indians (Tribe). Extensive and aggressive natural resources extraction activities and construction projects have occurred throughout these areas for over 150 years, leaving many culturally/archaeologically significant places desecrated.

The Tribe is not aware of any intact places of cultural significance located in the project area. Due to the heavy ground disturbance in the area a previous site may no longer be intact.

We would like to schedule a site visit with the archaeologist on the project. Additionally, if an archaeological survey has been done for this particular project please send a copy to the individual at the address listed below or via email.

Please contact Misty Cook, Cultural Resource Specialist at (707) 367-3225 or at sherwoodvalleycrm@gmail.com for any questions or further information. Thank you.

Respectfully,


Michael Fitzgerrall
Tribal Chairperson

cc: Sherwood Valley Cultural Committee
Scarlett Carmona, Tribal Administrator
Hillary Renick, Tribal Historic Preservation Officer
Misty Cook, Cultural Resource Manager

file

190 Sherwood Hill Drive • Willits, California 95490
(707) 459-9690 • Fax (707) 459-6936

L7

L8

Letter Responses

- L1 The air quality assessment for the project and text in this environmental document has been revised to address the Mendocino Air Quality Management District's concerns.

The length of this project is 0.15 miles. The construction schedule for this project is estimated to be one construction season (6 months).

During construction, short-term impacts to air quality may occur due to the release of particulate emissions (airborne dust) generated by excavation, grading, hauling, and other construction-related activities. The main sources of pollutant emissions are fugitive dust (PM₁₀) and engine exhaust from construction equipment. Currently, Mendocino County is in State attainment status for all pollutants except for PM₁₀ (dust). Implementation of the following measures, some of which may also be required for other purposes such as storm water pollution control, will reduce any air quality impacts resulting from construction activities:

Avoidance and/or Minimization Measures:

- The construction contractor must comply with the Caltrans' Standard Specifications in Section 14-9 (2010).
- Section 14-9.02 specifically requires compliance by the contractor with all applicable laws and regulations related to air quality, including air pollution control district and air quality management district regulations and local ordinances.
- Section 14-9.03 is directed at controlling dust. If dust palliative materials other than water are to be used, material specifications are described in Section 18.
- Water or dust palliative will be applied to the site and equipment as often as necessary to control fugitive dust emissions. Fugitive emissions generally must meet a "no visible dust" criterion either at the point of emissions or at the right-of-way line depending on local regulations.
- ESA (Environmentally Sensitive Area)-like areas or their equivalent will be established near sensitive air receptors (schools, hospitals, etc.). Within these areas of construction activities, minimize idling time either by shutting equipment off when not in use or reducing the time of idling to 5 minutes (as required by the state airborne toxics control measure [Title 13, Section 2485 of the California Code of Regulations]).
- Portable diesel engines and certain other types of equipment used at the project work site may require registration with California Air Resources Board (ARB) Portable Equipment Registration Program (PERP) with the State or a local district permit. The equipment owner/operator shall be responsible for arranging appropriate consultations with the ARB or the District to determine registration and permitting requirements prior to equipment operation at the site.
- Construction equipment and vehicles will be properly tuned and maintained. All construction equipment will use low sulfur fuel as required by CA Code of Regulations Title 17, Section 93114.
- All transported loads of soils and wet materials will be covered before transport, or adequate freeboard (space from the top of the material to the top of the truck) will be provided to minimize emission of dust (particulate matter) during transportation.
- Dust and mud that are deposited on paved, public roads due to construction activity and traffic will be promptly and regularly removed to decrease particulate matter.

- To the extent feasible, construction traffic will be scheduled and routed to reduce congestion and related air quality impacts caused by idling vehicles along local roads during peak travel times.

Applying the dust control measures mentioned above will considerably reduce fugitive dust emissions generated during construction activities.

This information has been added to the Negative Declaration.

L2 Please refer to Response L1.

L3 Please refer to Response L1.

L4 Please refer to Response L1.

L5 The project design has been modified to include 8-foot shoulders in both directions. These shoulders are wide enough to accommodate pedestrians and bicyclists. The 8-foot wide shoulders are the minimum shoulder width mandated by the County of Mendocino (www.co.mendocino.ca.us/dot/roadStandards.htm, Tab C, C.3.F)

1.1 *Improvements to Sherwood Road are also included in Section 11, Capital Improvements, of the Brooktrails Township-Specific Plan. Section 11.1, Circulation, states that improvements to Sherwood Road include shoulders, turn pockets, and signals. This project provides those improvements.*

L6 Traffic delays during construction will be kept to a minimum and night work will be utilized as required by the Transportation Management Plan. The project plans and specifications will contain specific information regarding temporary signals and road sensors.

L7 Comment noted.

L8 Caltrans conducted a field review with Mr. Michael Fitzgerral, Tribal Chairperson, Sherwood Valley Band of Pomo Indians, on March 26, 2014. Caltrans also sent the Historic Properties Survey Report (HPSR) and the Archaeological Survey Report (ASR) to Chairman Fitzgerral and Hillary Renick, Tribal Historic Preservation Officer, on July 17, 2014.

List of Preparers

The following Caltrans North Region staff contributed to the preparation of this Initial Study:

Mitch Andrus, Design; Contribution: Design.

Eric Brunton, Traffic Operations; Contribution: Traffic Analysis.

Alex Arevalo, NPDES Coordinator; Contribution: Water Quality Assessment Report

Benjamin Barnes, Transportation Engineer; Contribution: Geology

Joan Fine, Associate Environmental Planner, Architectural Historian; Contribution: Cultural Resources Study

Kathleen Grady, Associate Landscape Architect; Contribution: Visual Impact Assessment (VIA)

Douglas Jones, Design Senior; Contribution: Design.

Ken Lastufka, Associate Environmental Planner; Contribution: Environmental document preparation, Community Impact Assessment (CIA).

Jason Meigs, Associate Environmental Planner, Natural Resources; Contribution: Natural Environment Study (NES)

Mark Melani, Environmental Engineer (Hazardous Waste/Materials); Contribution: Initial Site Assessment (ISA)

Erick Wulf, Associate Environmental Planner, Archaeology; Contribution: Cultural Resources Study

Saied Zandian, Transportation Engineer (Noise Quality); Contribution: Noise Assessment