

MEMORANDUM

To: CHAIR AND COMMISSIONERS
CALIFORNIA TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

CTC Meeting: March 24-25, 2021

From: STEVEN KECK, Chief Financial Officer

Reference Number: 2.2c.(7), Action Item

Prepared By: Philip J. Stolarski, Chief
Division of Environmental Analysis

Subject: **APPROVAL OF PROJECT FOR FUTURE FUNDING CONSIDERATION
RESOLUTION E-21-37**

ISSUE:

Should the California Transportation Commission (Commission), as a responsible agency, approve the attached Resolution E-21-37?

RECOMMENDATION:

The California Department of Transportation (Department) recommends that the Commission, as a responsible agency, approve the attached Resolution E-21-37.

BACKGROUND:

05-SB-101, PM R36.0/R37.0 RESOLUTION E-21-37

The attached resolution proposes to approve for future funding consideration the following project for which a Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR) has been completed:

- United States (US) 101 in Santa Barbara County. Replace the Refugio Road Bridges on US 101 in Santa Barbara County. (PPNO 2448)

This project is located in Santa Barbara County. The project would replace the existing Refugio Road undercrossing bridges at post mile 36.6 on U.S. Highway 101, at Refugio State Beach. The project would also remove the concrete-grouted rock slope protection from the bed of Cañada del Refugio Creek to remove a fish passage barrier, upgrade the nonstandard bridge railings on the Cañada Del Refugio northbound on-ramp bridge, replace the degraded lighting system through the project limits, and rehabilitate a pedestrian pathway. This project is currently programmed in the 2020 State Highway Operation and Protection Program (SHOPP) for a total of \$48,942,000 which includes Construction (capital

*“Provide a safe, sustainable, integrated and efficient transportation system
to enhance California’s economy and livability”*

and support) and Right of Way (capital and support). Construction is estimated to begin in Fiscal Year 2023-24. The scope, as described for the preferred alternative, is consistent with the project scope programmed by the Commission in the 2020 SHOPP.

A copy of the FEIR has been provided to Commission staff. Resources that may be impacted by the project include cultural resources and tribal cultural resources, air quality, and biological resources.

Potential impacts associated with the project can all be mitigated to below significance with the exception of cultural resources and tribal cultural resources, for which a Statement of Overriding Considerations was prepared. As a result, an FEIR was prepared for the project.

Attachments

CALIFORNIA TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

Resolution for Future Consideration of Funding 05-SB-101, PM R36.0/R37.0 Resolution E-21-37

- 1.1 WHEREAS**, the California Department of Transportation (Department) has completed a Final Environmental Impact Report pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the CEQA Guidelines for the following project:

 - United States (US) 101 in Santa Barbara County. Replace the Refugio Road Bridges on US 101 in Santa Barbara County. (PPNO 2448)
- 1.2 WHEREAS**, the Department has certified that a Final Environmental Impact Report has been completed pursuant to CEQA and the State CEQA Guidelines for its implementation; and
- 1.3 WHEREAS**, the California Transportation Commission, as a responsible agency, has considered the information contained in the Final Environmental Impact Report.
- 1.4 WHEREAS**, the project will have a significant effect on the environment.
- 2.1 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the California Transportation Commission does hereby support approval of the above referenced project to allow for consideration of funding.

NOTICE OF DETERMINATION

To: Office of Planning and Research
1400 Tenth Street, Room 121
Sacramento, CA 95814

From: California Transportation Commission
Attn: Jose Oseguera
1120 N Street, MS 52
Sacramento, CA 95814
(916) 653-2094

Subject: Filing of Notice of Determination in compliance with Section 21108 of the Public Resources Code.

Project Title: Refugio Road Undercrossing Bridges Replacement Project

2019011050	Lara Bertaina	(805) 542-4610
State Clearinghouse Number	Lead Agency Contact Person	Area Code/Telephone

Project Location (include county): United States (US) 101 in Santa Barbara County.

Project Description: Replace the Refugio Road Bridges on United States (US) 101 in Santa Barbara County.

This is to advise that the California Transportation Commission has approved the above described project on

(Lead Agency/ Responsible Agency)

March 24-25, 2021, and has made the following determinations regarding the above described project:

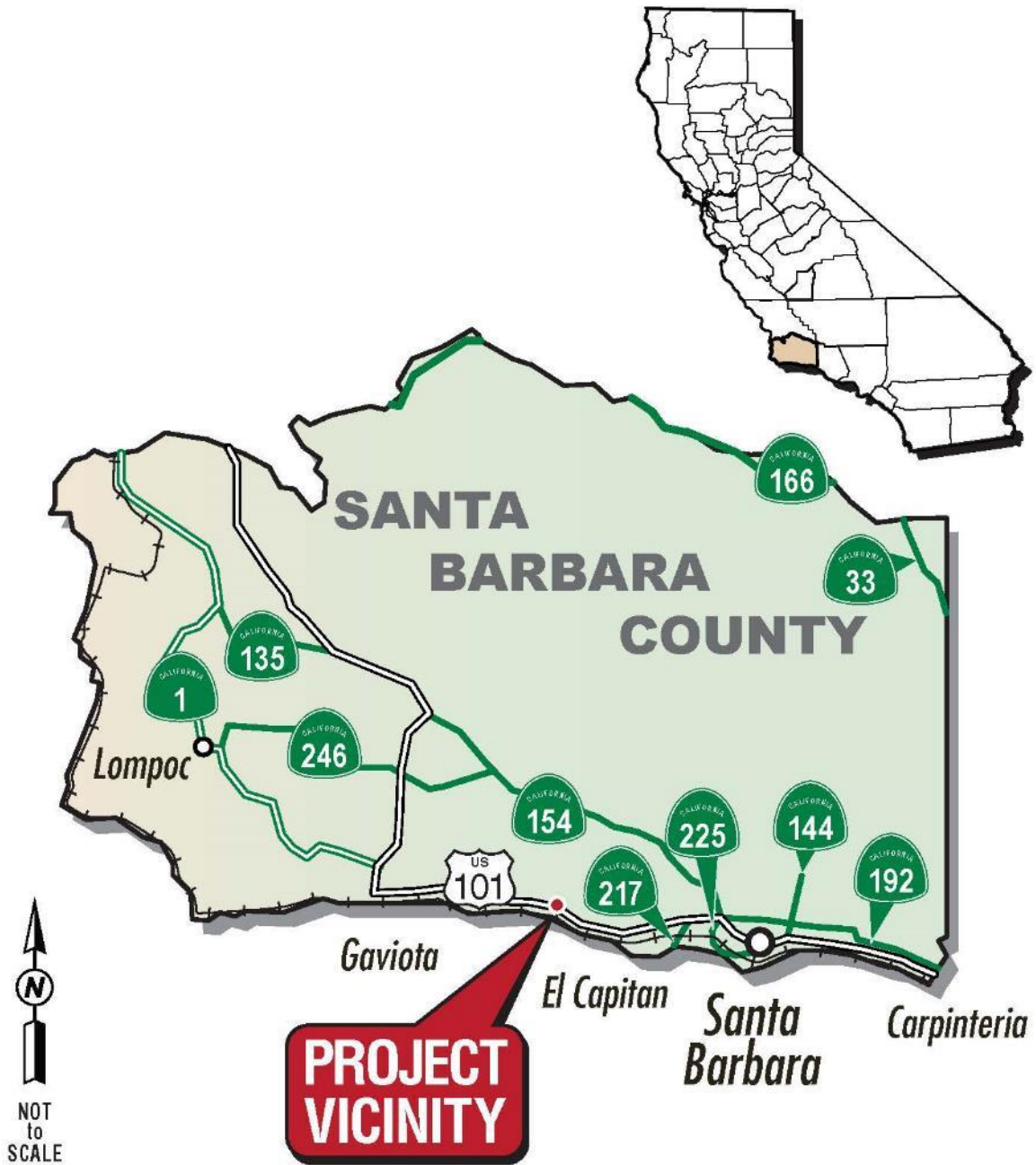
1. The project (will/ will not) have a significant effect on the environment.
2. An Environmental Impact Report was prepared for this project pursuant to the provisions of CEQA.
 A Mitigated Negative Declaration was prepared for this project pursuant to the provisions of CEQA.
3. Mitigation measures (were/ were not) made a condition of the approval of the project.
4. Mitigation reporting or monitoring plan (was / was not) adopted for this project.
5. A Statement of Overriding Considerations (was / was not) adopted for this project.
6. Findings (were/ were not) made pursuant to the provisions of CEQA.

The above identified document with comments and responses and record of project approval is available to the General Public at: Caltrans District 5, 50 Higuera Street, San Luis Obispo, CA 93401.

MITCH WEISS		Executive Director California Transportation Commission
<i>Signature (Public Agency)</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Title</i>

Date received for filing at OPR:

Project Vicinity Map, Refugio Road Undercrossing Bridges Replacement





Project Name: Refugio Road Undercrossing Bridges Replacement Project
District-County-Route-Post Mile: 05-SB-101-36.0/37.0
Expenditure Authorization Number: 05-1C950
EFIS ID Number: 0513000018

**CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
STATEMENT OF OVERRIDING CONSIDERATIONS**

FOR

**Replacement of the Existing Refugio Road Bridges
on U.S. Highway 101 at Post Mile 36.6 in Santa Barbara County**

The following information is presented to comply with State California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines (Title 14 California Code of Regulations, Division 6, Chapter 3, Section 15093), and the Department of Transportation and California Transportation Commission Environmental Regulations (Title 21 California Code of Regulations, Division 2, Chapter 11, Section 1501 et seq.). Reference is made to the Final Environmental Impact Report for the project, which is the basic source for the information.

The following impacts have been identified as significant and not fully mitigable:

Cultural Resources and Tribal Cultural Resources: individual impact and cumulative impact. The project would impact the archaeological site CA-SBA-87, a Chumash ethnographic and ethnohistoric village known as *Qasil*. Direct impacts would include the physical destruction of intact pockets of archaeological deposits due to ground disturbance, which may compromise the integrity of the site and affect the site's eligibility for the National Register. Several other current and reasonably foreseeable future projects may affect archaeological resources in the northern Santa Barbara Channel region. Though each project would incorporate avoidance, minimization, and mitigation measures to address individual project impacts, the cumulative effect to archaeological resources would be considerable.

Overriding considerations that support approval of this recommended project are as follows:

Alkali-silica reactivity is present within the concrete of both the left and right Refugio Road undercrossing bridges. Alkali-silica reactivity is a widespread problem affecting Portland cement concrete that causes the concrete to swell and crack, which can ultimately lead to concrete failure and corrosion of the embedded steel reinforcement bars. The reactive aggregate in the Refugio Road undercrossing bridges has led to cracking and spalling of concrete on the bridge decks and bridge abutments, which have been repaired to temporarily extend the service life of the bridges. It is not possible to permanently repair a concrete bridge structure with alkali-silica reactivity, so to


ensure the safety and reliability of the U.S. 101 corridor, the presence of reactive aggregate in the Refugio Road undercrossing bridges must be addressed.

The project would replace the existing Refugio Road undercrossing bridges with new bridges at about the same location and with the same profile as the existing bridges. The U.S. 101 alignment near the project is constrained by the steep slopes of the Santa Ynez Mountains to the north and the Pacific Coast to the south. Refugio State Beach and the Southern Pacific Railroad also occur immediately south of the project. Therefore, the replacement bridges cannot be relocated to avoid impacts to archaeological resources present within Refugio Canyon, and project-related earthwork that is necessary for bridge construction cannot be relocated to avoid site CA-SBA-87.

Potential impacts to archaeological resources were a consideration when identifying the preferred build alternative for the project (Alternative 3, clear-span bridges). Build Alternative 2 (three-span bridges) was removed from consideration early in the project development process, prior to completion of the Draft Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Assessment, in part because the larger excavation footprint required for the three-span bridge design would have had a greater effect to site SBA-CA-87.

Timothy M. Gubbins

District Director (or designee)



Signature

02/05/2021

Date