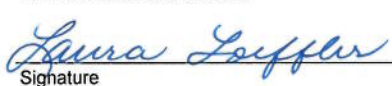



CATEGORICAL EXEMPTION/CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION DETERMINATION FORM

03-SAC-Connector JPA	N/A	N/A	STPL 6498(003)
Dist.-Co.-Rte. (or Local Agency)	P.M./P.M.	E.A/Project No.	Federal-Aid Project No. (Local Project)/Project No.
PROJECT DESCRIPTION: (Briefly describe project including need, purpose, location, limits, right-of-way requirements, and activities involved in this box. Use Continuation Sheet, if necessary.)			
<p>The Capital SouthEast Connector Joint Powers Authority (Connector JPA), in cooperation with the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), propose to reconstruct White Rock Road on a new alignment as a four lane expressway with a center earth median and an adjacent Class 1 bike/pedestrian trail on the north side of the alignment, between Prairie City Road and Carson Crossing Road. Between Carson Crossing Road and Latrobe Road the surrounding area has been developed into a residential zone and the existing White Rock Road will be widened to a four lane thoroughfare with curb, gutter, and sidewalk and an on street Class II bike facility.</p>			
CALTRANS CEQA DETERMINATION (Check one)			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable – Caltrans is not the CEQA Lead Agency		<input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable – Caltrans has prepared an Initial Study or Environmental Impact Report under CEQA	
Based on an examination of this proposal, supporting information, and the above statements, the project is:			
<input type="checkbox"/> Exempt by Statute. (PRC 21080[b]; 14 CCR 15260 et seq.)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Categorically Exempt. Class . (PRC 21084; 14 CCR 15300 et seq.)			
Based on an examination of this proposal and supporting information, the following statements are true and exceptions do not apply:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If this project falls within exempt class 3, 4, 5, 6 or 11, it does not impact an environmental resource of hazardous or critical concern where designated, precisely mapped, and officially adopted pursuant to law. • There will not be a significant cumulative effect by this project and successive projects of the same type in the same place, over time. • There is not a reasonable possibility that the project will have a significant effect on the environment due to unusual circumstances. • This project does not damage a scenic resource within an officially designated state scenic highway. • This project is not located on a site included on any list compiled pursuant to Govt. Code § 65962.5 ("Cortese List"). • This project does not cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource. 			
<input type="checkbox"/> Common Sense Exemption. (This project does not fall within an exempt class, but it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the activity may have a significant effect on the environment (14 CCR 15061[b],[3].))			
N/A		N/A	
Print Name: Senior Environmental Planner or Environmental Branch Chief		Print Name: Project Manager	
Signature	Date	Signature	Date
NEPA COMPLIANCE			
In accordance with 23 CFR 771.117, and based on an examination of this proposal and supporting information, the State has determined that this project:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • does not individually or cumulatively have a significant impact on the environment as defined by NEPA, and is excluded from the requirements to prepare an Environmental Assessment (EA) or Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), and • has considered unusual circumstances pursuant to 23 CFR 771.117(b). 			
CALTRANS NEPA DETERMINATION (Check one)			
<input type="checkbox"/> 23 USC 326: The State has determined that this project has no significant impacts on the environment as defined by NEPA, and that there are no unusual circumstances as described in 23 CFR 771.117(b). As such, the project is categorically excluded from the requirements to prepare an EA or EIS under the National Environmental Policy Act. The State has been assigned, and hereby certifies that it has carried out the responsibility to make this determination pursuant to Chapter 3 of Title 23, United States Code, Section 326 and a Memorandum of Understanding dated May 31, 2016, executed between the FHWA and the State. The State has determined that the project is a Categorical Exclusion under:			
<input type="checkbox"/> 23 CFR 771.117(c): activity (c)(___)			
<input type="checkbox"/> 23 CFR 771.117(d): activity (d)(___)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Activity ___ listed in Appendix A of the MOU between FHWA and the State			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 23 USC 327: Based on an examination of this proposal and supporting information, the State has determined that the project is a Categorical Exclusion under 23 USC 327. The environmental review, consultation, and any other actions required by applicable Federal environmental laws for this project are being, or have been, carried out by Caltrans pursuant to 23 USC 327 and the Memorandum of Understanding dated December 23, 2016 and executed by FHWA and Caltrans.			
Laura Loeffler		Ross Foon	
Print Name: Senior Environmental Planner or Environmental Branch Chief		Print Name: Project Manager/DLA Engineer	
	10/23/19		10/23/19
Signature	Date	Signature	Date
Date of Categorical Exclusion Checklist completion: 10/18/19 Date of ECR or equivalent : 10/18/19			

Briefly list environmental commitments on continuation sheet. Reference additional information, as appropriate (e.g., CE checklist, additional studies and design conditions).

CATEGORICAL EXEMPTION/CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION DETERMINATION FORM
Continuation Sheet

Continued from page 1:

This Project will also include landscaping, lighting, signage, utility relocation, drainage facilities including drainage basins, or linear basins along the roadway. The primary intersections located within Sacramento County are Prairie City Road, Oak Avenue Parkway, East Bidwell Street, Placerville Rd, Wilson Ranch/Payen Road and Empire Ranch Road. Intersections will be four lanes with necessary turn lanes and the intersections will be signalized. Scott Road will be realigned to connect with Prairie City Road. The project includes a crossing with the Sacramento-Placerville (Southern Pacific railroad tracks) Transportation Corridor. The primary intersections located within El Dorado County are Carson Crossing Road, Stonebriar/4 Seasons Dr, Bailey, Manchester, Windfield, and Latrobe Rd. Depending upon funding, all or part of the project could be constructed. If limited funding is available, the first phase of the project would likely consist of construction of the Prairie City Road/White Rock Road intersection to East Bidwell Street intersection with the other improvements to follow once additional funds are secured. Additional right-of-way is required.

Purpose and Need:

The primary **purpose** of the Capital SouthEast Connector – D3/E1 Project is to:

- Accommodate travel demand due to planned and approved growth;
- Improve traffic operations;
- Reduce congestion;
- Enhance mobility options within the Project corridor and support planned growth;
- Aid economic vitality by improving accessibility to existing and planned job centers and commercial areas;
- Provide a Limited-access, multi-modal facility;
- Improve access to all modes of travel including bicycles and pedestrians;
- Construct an all-weather transportation facility that enables normal mobility and emergency vehicle access; and,
- Provide wildlife crossings at key locations within the project area.

The Capital SouthEast Connector – D3/E1 Project is **needed** because:

- Existing roadways between the City of Folsom and the Counties of Sacramento and El Dorado are insufficient to meet existing and forecasted traffic demand;
- Existing White Rock Road will exceed its capacity and will have unacceptable levels of service due to planned and approved growth indicated in both counties' and the City of Folsom's General Plans;
- Existing roadways are insufficient for local east-west circulation;
- Existing roadways are insufficient for pedestrian and bicycle traffic;
- Local streets are increasingly subject to congestion and use by nonlocal traffic;
- Improvements are also needed to address the lack of multimodal transportation infrastructure, including bicycle and pedestrian.
- The Project area needs an all-weather transportation facility to enable normal mobility and emergency vehicle access; and,
- Increasing development encroaches on open space and wildlife habitat and there is a lack of wildlife crossing along throughout the Project area.

ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITMENTS: The Connector JPA or implementing agency is responsible for acquiring any necessary permits and authorizations from any jurisdictional resource and permitting agencies.

Air Quality:

This project is in an area designated as non-attainment for ozone and PM2.5 and designated as a maintenance area for CO. The project is in SACOG's Amendment #20 to the 2017/2020 Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program (MTIP) (SACOG ID SAC24250, ELD19468). Interagency Consultation was initiated, and the EPA concurred on March 02, 2018 and FHWA concurred on March 05, 2018 that the project is not a POAQC. The FHWA issued their conformity determination on August 21, 2018.

Wetland and Waters of the U.S.

In 2014, USACE issued an Individual 404 Permit to the City of Folsom for the Backbone Infrastructure area portion of the Folsom Plan Area Specific Plan Project. The D3 portion of the Capital SouthEast Connector Project is included as part of the Backbone Infrastructure project and is covered under the Individual 404 Permit. In accordance with Special Condition 1 of the Individual 404 Permit, prior to construction the City/JPA shall submit final design plans to the USACE. At that time, USACE will determine how much of the previously authorized 13.651-acres of backbone infrastructure waters impacts are being affected by D3. The project is anticipated to have approximately 2.94-acres of impacts to Waters of the U.S.

CATEGORICAL EXEMPTION/CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION DETERMINATION FORM
Continuation Sheet

Biological Resources:

Under Federal Endangered Species Act, Section 7 take authorization was previously exempted under the Biological Opinion (Service File 81420-2010-F-0620) issued to the USACE (SPK 2007-02159) for project impacts (0.191-acre) to vernal pool invertebrate species. Prior to construction, the project sponsor will purchase 0.191-acre of vernal pool creation credits (1:1 ratio) and 0.382-acre of vernal pool preservation credits (2:1 ratio) at a Service-approved bank(s).

Environmental Commitments- Biology:

- Conduct an Environmental Awareness Training Program for Construction Crews. Before any work occurs in the project area, a qualified biologist will conduct a mandatory environmental awareness training program for all construction personnel working on the project. The training program will notify construction personnel of the sensitive biological resources occurring within the project area, their legal status, and penalties for not complying with the conditions of any permits issued for the project.

The JPA or implementing agency will implement the following actions either directly or through contract specifications to avoid and minimize impacts on wetlands and other waters by implementing the following measures:

- Re-design or modify the project to avoid direct and indirect impacts on wetland habitats, including water quality run-off, if feasible.
- Protect wetland habitats that occur near the project site by installing ESA fencing at least 20 feet from the edge of the wetland where feasible. Depending on site-specific conditions and permit requirements, this buffer may be wider than 20 feet (e.g., 250 feet for seasonal wetlands and vernal pools that are considered special-status shrimp habitat). The location of the fencing will be marked in the field with stakes and flagging and shown on construction drawings. Construction specifications will contain clear language that prohibits construction-related activities, vehicle operation, material and equipment storage, and other surface-disturbing activities within the fenced ESA.
- Avoid installation activities in saturated or ponded wetlands during the wet season (spring and winter) to the maximum extent possible. Where such activities are unavoidable, protective practices, such as use of padding or vehicles with balloon tires, will be used.
- Where determined necessary by resource specialists, use geotextile cushions and other materials (e.g., timber pads, prefabricated equipment pads, or geotextile fabric) in saturated conditions to minimize damage to the substrate and vegetation.
- Stabilize exposed slopes and streambanks immediately on completion of installation activities. Other waters of the United States and waters of the state will be restored in a manner that encourages vegetation to reestablish to its pre-project condition and reduces the effects of erosion on the drainage system.
- In highly erodible stream systems, stabilize banks using a nonvegetative material that will bind the soil initially and break down within a few years. If the project engineers determine that more aggressive erosion control treatments are needed, use geotextile mats, excelsior blankets, or other soil stabilization products.
- During construction, remove trees, shrubs, debris, or soils that are inadvertently deposited below the ordinary high-water mark of drainages in a manner that minimizes disturbance of the drainage bed and bank.

The JPA or implementing agency will require the following actions as part of construction contract specifications:

- Before discharging any dewatered effluent to surface water the contractor will determine whether the volume of water from the dewatering operation is covered under the NPDES Construction General Permit. If it is deemed that the volume is greater than the Construction General Permit allows, the contractor will obtain coverage under an NPDES Low Threat Discharge and Dewatering Permit from the Central Valley RWQCB. The NPDES Low Threat

CATEGORICAL EXEMPTION/CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION DETERMINATION FORM

Continuation Sheet

Discharge and Dewatering Permit will require the water from the dewatering operation to be treated prior to discharge to any local water way.

- Avoid or minimize construction impacts on special-status plants near the project site by installing ESA fencing (orange construction barrier fencing) around special-status plant populations at least 20 feet from the edge of the population where feasible. Wider buffer zone widths set by site-specific conditions and permit requirements, such as those for seasonal wetlands and vernal pools that are considered special-status shrimp habitat, will take precedence over this requirement. The location of the fencing will be marked in the field with stakes and flagging and shown on construction drawings. Construction specifications will contain clear language that prohibits construction-related activities, vehicle operation, material and equipment storage, and other surface-disturbing activities within the fenced ESA.

The JPA or implementing agency will implement a combination of the following mitigation measures to avoid and minimize impacts on special-status wildlife and their habitats:

- Re-design or modify the Project to avoid direct and indirect impacts on special-status wildlife or their habitats, including interruption of migration corridors, if feasible.
- Protect special-status wildlife and their habitat near the Project site by installing ESA fencing around habitat features, such as vernal pools, seasonal wetlands, burrows, and nest trees. The ESA fencing or staking will be installed at a minimum distance from the edge of the resource as determined through coordination with state and federal agency biologists (USFWS and CDFW). The location of the fencing will be marked in the field with stakes and flagging and shown on construction drawings. Construction specifications will contain clear language that prohibits construction-related activities, vehicle operation, material and equipment storage, and other surface-disturbing activities within the fenced ESA.
- When feasible, restrict construction-related activities near sensitive resources to the nonbreeding season or other periods of activity for special-status wildlife species that could occur in the Project area. Typical timing restrictions include, but are not limited to:
 - Swainson's hawk nesting season – generally February 1 to August 31
 - Burrowing owl nesting – generally February 1 to August 31
 - Other nesting migratory birds and raptors – generally January 1 to August 31
- Conduct biological construction monitoring of Action Areas where work occurs in proximity to sensitive wildlife or their habitat. The JPA or implementing agency will hire a qualified wildlife biologist approved by USFWS and CDFW to monitor construction activities to ensure that no wildlife is harmed during construction and no wildlife habitat outside of the Action Area is unintentionally affected by Project construction.
- As an improvement to the region and in compliance with the Draft SSHCP, at a minimum, the Project will incorporate a formalized wildlife crossing large enough to allow passage of native canids along existing natural drainage locations into the Project design. The crossing will be designed to include wildlife ledges wide enough to accommodate canids, with open bottoms and sized to span one and a half times the full bank width.

Cultural Resources:

The proposal to widen White Rock Road, originally identified as part of the Backbone Infrastructure Project, currently overlaps a majority of the roadway area in the project limits for the SouthEast Connector D3/E1 Project. Caltrans defers to the Programmatic Agreement executed on July 6, 2011 between the USACE and the SHPO for the FPASP for a portion of the SouthEast Connector in Sacramento County. For the portion outside of USACE jurisdiction, Caltrans prepared an HPSR and ASR in compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. Caltrans determined to have a "Finding of No Adverse Effect without standard conditions for the portion within Caltrans' APE. For this Finding of No Adverse Effect without Standard Conditions, there is one historic property, White Rock Station a locus as part of the Placerville Sacramento Valley Railroad (PSVR) (P-34-000455/CA_SAC-428H) within the Caltrans' APE, and one prehistoric site (P34-002181/CA-SAC-1104) that is considered eligible for the purposes of this project only because it can be avoided through the establishment of an Environmentally Sensitive Area (ESA) exclusion fencing. The SHPO concurred with this determination on October 18, 2019.

CATEGORICAL EXEMPTION/CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION DETERMINATION FORM
Continuation Sheet

Environmental Commitments – Cultural Resources

- Prehistoric site (P-34-002181/CA-SAC-1104) will be protected in its entirety through the establishment of an Environmentally Sensitive Area (ESA) exclusion fencing.
- Placerville Sacramento Valley Railroad was previously determined eligible for the NRHP. The portion of the railroad property (White Rock Station (archaeological deposits), AKA Locus A) within the project's Area of Direct Impact does not contribute to the characteristics that qualify the property as eligible under Criterion D. However, background research revealed the possibility of buried remains of maintenance buildings. These deposits (located south of the construction limits) will be protected through the Environmentally Sensitive Area (ESA) exclusion fencing.
- Pre-construction measures include approval of cultural resource documentation, the implementation of a Post-Review Discovery Plan and Monitoring Plan, installation of ESA fencing and archaeological monitoring during construction activities taking place inside the recorded site boundaries of P-34-000455/CA-SAC-428H or within 100-feet of the ESA fencing.
- If previously unidentified cultural materials or deposits are unearthed during construction, work shall be halted in that area until a qualified archaeologist can assess the significance of the find and develop a plan for documentation and removal of resources, if necessary.
- If human remains are encountered, work should halt in that vicinity and the county coroner should be notified immediately. At the same time, an archaeologist should be contacted to evaluate the situation. If the human remains are of Native American origin, the coroner must notify the Native American Heritage Commission within twenty-four hours of such identification.

Hazards and Hazardous Waste:

An Initial Site Investigation was done to identify potential toxic and hazardous waste materials. The evaluation included a review of history aerial photograph, field investigation, and database searches. Based on the findings within this research, a Phase II ISA is required to be included, but not all inclusively, naturally occurring asbestos, pressure treated wood posts, yellow traffic paint for lead content, deposition of aerially deposited lead, and leaks from the utility company's electrical transformers. Geotechnical borings and soil testing for contamination will be conducted during PS&E near Prairie City Road and White Rock Road due to the proximity of Aerojet's inactive waste disposal facility as part of the Phase II ISA. Any borings that encounter ground water in that area of the Project will be tested for contamination and documented as part of the Phase II ISA.

Environmental Commitment – Hazardous Waste

- Based on the need to purchase additional right-of-way, the disturbance of soil, and the potential contamination identified adjacent to the project, the project sponsor will coordinate and conduct any necessary soil or groundwater site investigations. In addition, a contingency plan will be developed in the event if construction uncovers unforeseen contamination. Soil testing will be conducted to characterize the extent and concentration of aerially deposited lead, and testing to evaluate the potential to invoke the exception for acquisition of contaminated properties.

Noise:

This project meets the FHWA definition of a Type 1 project because the proposal to add through-traffic lanes from a two-lane facility to a four-lane facility. Existing noise levels were characterized by conducting eleven noise measurements at sensitive receiver locations. The design year traffic noise modeling results for the Build Alternative range from 52 to 75 dBA. However, noise levels for the build option would not approach or exceed their respective NAC Activity criteria at any sensitive receptors in 2035 as a result of the proposed project. Therefore, noise abatement evaluation (Noise Abatement Decision Report) is not required and noise abatement measures (sound walls) are not required under federal regulations.

Growth, Farmlands, Cumulative Impacts:

Farmlands – Farmland Protection Policy Act: The project will not convert any agricultural crops classified as prime or unique farmlands, or statewide and local importance; however, 138-acres of grazing land/general agriculture will be converted. The Form NRCS-CPA-106 documents the system of numerical weights assigned to the grazing land parcels identified for land conversion. The Form NRCS-CPA-106 points totaled 109, less than 160. Based on the numerical weight score, less than 160 points indicates that alternative actions do not need to be considered for the reduction in farmland conversion. Design measures to the greatest extent practicable, such as retaining walls, cut and fill slope ratios, and continued access to adjacent farmlands will minimize the direct conversion of farmlands.

CATEGORICAL EXEMPTION/CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION DETERMINATION FORM
Continuation Sheet

Growth-Related and Indirect Impact analysis: It is reasonable to suggest that growth, related to the project, is foreseeable; however, the project would not directly result in unplanned growth. The project was designed to accommodate and support future growth in areas already defined in approved General Plans and specific plans in Sacramento and El Dorado Counties, and the City of Folsom. Although benefits associated with this proposed transportation facility may influence the direction and rate of growth in the vicinity, growth surrounding in the project area will be bound and consistent with the associated General Plans and SACOG's 2036 MTP/SCS; therefore, the project will not result in a substantial impact to the location, rate, type, or amount of the growth in the project vicinity.

Cumulative Impacts:

Sacramento has experienced substantial losses of farmland over the past decades. Growth in the County will contribute to the regional conversion of agricultural lands, including important farmlands. The D3/E1 project is an independent component of the larger Capital SouthEast Connector Project, which is a 34-mile regional expressway between Interstate 5 (I-5) and Highway 50 in El Dorado Hills that would likely contribute to the long-term cumulative loss to agricultural lands and vernal pools; however, all potentially significant cumulative project impacts will be mitigated for through creation and preservation of resources to offset the potential cumulative loss in the region, no significant cumulative impacts are anticipated as a result of the D3/E1 project. Grazing land identified as grassland in the biology study (under the requirement of CEQA) will be mitigated at a 1:1 ratio. All impacts to sensitive biological resources will be mitigated through compensatory mitigation at a minimum ratio of 1:1. Similarly, impacts to vernal pools will not result in a significant cumulative impact because the project will mitigate for all impacts through creation of vernal pools at the Toad Hill Mitigation Bank.

Visual Impact Assessment (Minor Level): The setting of the surrounding landscape is characterized by agricultural and rural lands with future-planned and approved residential and commercial development. Land zones along the project area are rural-graze, open space, residential/commercial, recreational area for off-road motor vehicles, rock quarry, and Aerojet facility. The project would alter the visual character by introducing a major roadway by widening the existing road, changing the alignment and configurations of intersections; however, the project would not have a substantial effect on a scenic vista, and will not damage a scenic resource, including trees, rock outcroppings, or historic buildings.

Environmental commitments – Visual

- Vegetation removed to be replaced with appropriate vegetation that is indigenous to the area.
- Implement the Lightning Plan Memorandum for construction lighting, which includes specifications to minimize the release of light and glare either upward or toward properties and residences adjoining the construction site.

Water Quality/Floodplain:

The FEMA Flood Insurance Rate Map shows that the project area is in Zone X, which is defined as an area outside of the 500-year floodplain. Temporary impacts are anticipated to water quality; however, BMPs and implemented regulatory permit conditions will reduce erosion, control sediment, and manage runoff.

Environmental Commitments-Water Quality

- Implement the BMPs undertaken as part of the NPDES Permit and SWPPP requirements.
- Comply with conditions included in permits issued under Sections 404 and Section 401 of the federal Clean Water Act.

Section 4(f) De Minimis:

Prairie City State Vehicular Recreational Area (SVRA) is owned by State Parks and primarily managed for off-highway vehicles (OHV) that encompasses 1,115-acres total. This recreational area contains a variety of terrain types and trails, extensive selection of tracks, an array of OHV-related facilities, and host area for special events. Approximately 0.5-acre of right-of-way would be acquired from this Section 4(f) property. This acquisition would not affect any of the activities, features, or attributes. The public was afforded an opportunity to review and comment between July 25, 2018 – August 25, 2018 on the de minimis determination. Public comments were not received. State Parks provided written concurrence on September 14, 2018 that the project will not adversely affect the activities, features, or attributes. Therefore, Caltrans made a Section 4(f) de minimis finding for the Prairie City State Vehicular Recreational Area.