

DIST	COUNTY	ROUTE	POST MILES TOTAL PROJECT	SHEET TOTAL SHEETS
01	DN	101	35.8/36.5	

**FOR DESIGN STUDY ONLY**

REGISTERED CIVIL ENGINEER DATE \_\_\_\_\_

PLANS APPROVED DATE \_\_\_\_\_

THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA OR ITS OFFICERS  
THE STATE ENGINEERS REGISTRATION BOARD  
THE ACCURACY OR COMPLETION OF PLANNED  
COPIES OF THIS PLAN SHEET.

REGISTERED PROFESSIONAL ENGINEER  
No. \_\_\_\_\_ Exp. CIVIL  
STATE OF CALIFORNIA



**EXHIBIT NO. 3**  
**APPEAL NO.**  
 A-1-DNC-11-019  
 CALTRANS  
 DRILLING PLAN MAP



**GRAVEL ACCESS PAD**

**ACCESS ROAD**

**WEST BRIDGE ALTERNATIVE BORE HOLE LOCATIONS**

**EAST BRIDGE ALTERNATIVE BORE HOLE LOCATIONS**

**OHW = ORDINARY HIGH WATER**

**NOTES:**

1. LOCATIONS OF BORE HOLES ARE ONLY APPROXIMATE.
2. LOCATION OF ACCESS ROADS WILL VARY, AND DEPENDS ON FINAL LOCATION OF BRIDGE COLUMNS

**PLATE 1**



**DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**

DISTRICT 1, NORTH REGION ENVIRONMENTAL

P.O. Box 3700

EUREKA, CA 95502-3700

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FEB 14 2011

Engineering  
County of Del Norte

February 7, 2011

James Barnts, County Engineer  
County of Del Norte  
981 H Street, Suite 110  
Crescent City, CA 95531

<b>EXHIBIT NO. 4</b>
<b>APPEAL NO.</b> A-1-DNC-11-019 - CALTRANS CALTRANS PROJECT DESCRIPTION FOR SMITH RIVER GEOTECHNICAL DRILLING (1 of 16)

File: 01-DN-101  
PM – 35.8/36.5  
EA 01-436401  
Dr. Fine Bridge  
Replacement

Subject: County Coastal Grading Permit and Fee for Geotechnical Drilling at Dr. Fine Bridge, Del Norte County

Dear Mr. Barnts:

Enclosed please find a Del Norte County Grading Permit Application, Notice of Exemption and Categorical Exemption, geotechnical drilling plan, agency correspondence, and plates for the subject activity.

Geotechnical drilling is proposed in support of the replacement of the Dr. Fine Bridge over the Smith River. Drilling is anticipated to begin late in the fall of 2011 and would proceed intermittently for a three year period. Drilling is expected to be concluded by December of 2014.

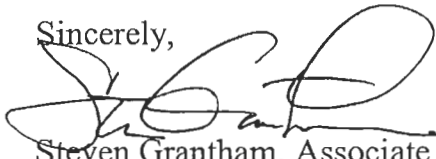
Geotechnical drilling would be done in the Smith River and in the right-of-way of US 101 on the north and south bound approaches to the bridge. These latter locations are above ordinary high water and are considered to be in the County's Grading Permit jurisdictional limits. Vegetation clearing at terrestrial locations, if needed, would be done between September and March to avoid potential impacts to nesting birds.

In stream drilling from a barge is proposed during high flow periods, typically considered to be the months of March and April. The gravel bar located on the north side of the river would be accessed during the low flow months from June until October 15. If in stream conditions are not conducive to the drilling operation, the work would be done through the existing bridge deck.

In the enclosed Phase 2 Drilling Plan the season and hours of work indicated that permits would be obtained in October 2010 with the intention to drill over a three year period. This expectation was not met, as permit applications were not submitted. The Drilling Plan was finalized in April 2010 with an anticipated start and stop date. The actual start and end dates for drilling are dependent on the acquisition of Del Norte County's Grading Permit and the California Coastal Commission's permit.

If you have questions or require additional information, please contact the project's Environmental Coordinator Steven Grantham at (707) 445-7815 or [steve\\_grantham@dot.ca.gov](mailto:steve_grantham@dot.ca.gov).

Sincerely,

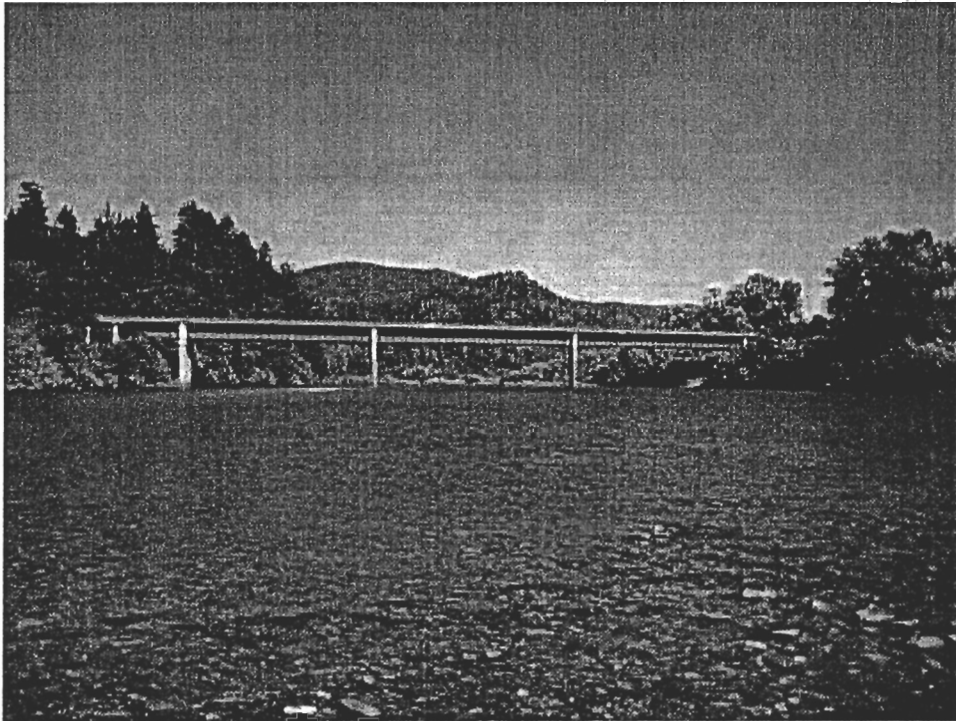


Steven Grantham, Associate Environmental Planner  
North Region Environmental Services Branch E1

Enclosures

2/9/11

# Phase 2 Drilling Plan for the proposed Smith River (Dr. Fine) Bridge Replacement spanning the Smith River in Del Norte County on Route 101



## Introduction

Conceptual alternatives are currently being considered for the proposed Smith River (Dr. Fine) Bridge (Br. No. 01-0020) replacement project. The preliminary alternatives developed thus far propose to widen the highway and shift the Route 101 alignment either to the west or east of the existing alignment. The roadway and bridge alignment alternatives will likely shift a minimum of approximately 20 feet to a maximum of approximately 50 feet.

The Office of Geotechnical Design-North (OGD-N), Branch A is preparing and planning to drill for the proposed replacement Smith River Bridge replacement project. OGD-N proposes to collect subsurface data necessary in the preparation of the foundation recommendations and design procedures, developing the Environmental Document and to provide information for future construction procedures. The information from the subsurface data will generate a "Log of Test Boring" (LOTB). The LOTB is a contractual document that provides the subsurface and geological information for the project site. The LOTB sheets are signed by a State of California Registered Civil Engineer or Registered Geologist and are included in Caltrans Contract Plans.

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This drilling plan outlines the procedures to obtain the subsurface information at the proposed replacement bridge location. Drilling will be performed on the most likely alignments at or near the preliminary design pile/pier/foundation locations (Plate 1). The exact number and locations of the borings will be determined once the General and Foundation Plans are received indicating the new proposed foundation locations. Plate 1 shows the approximate locations of the borings and does not include all potential borings. This drilling plan is also intended to provide the District with the necessary information to obtain the necessary permits and approvals for the drilling.

## **Drilling Operation**

Caltrans Drilling Services or Consultant contract drill crews will perform the drilling operation. The information included in the drilling plan will apply to the drilling operation for both Caltrans Drilling Services and the Consultant contract drill crews.

The drilling operation will be performed along the two most likely preferred alternative alignments, one east and one west, parallel to the existing Smith River Bridge and will be performed at locations at or near the predicted bridge foundation perimeters. Based on District planning studies, the proposed structure will likely consist of a maximum of six spans (with five piers and two abutments). A minimum of one boring and a maximum of five borings will be drilled at each proposed pier support location for both alignments, a maximum total of 50 borings. The number of borings to be drilled in the active water channel will be dependent upon the number of piers located in the active water channel, less than 30 borings are anticipated. Four to eight borings will be drilled at the proposed abutment locations and a maximum of 10 borings will be drilled in the approach fill embankment. Each boring takes approximately seven to ten working days to complete whether on the barge or on land. The maximum depth of borings for the structure will not likely exceed 250 feet (this would depend on pile size, design loads and strength of the subsurface materials), it is anticipated that most of the borings will be 200 feet deep or less. Based on the scope of the current project, the drilling operation may take two or three seasons to complete. We would like to start the drilling operation in 2010 and extend the operation to December of 2013, in case the scope or schedule changes. The drilling operation will be conducted intermittently over this three-year period.

## **Drilling Equipment**

The drilling equipment required to be onsite for all drilling operations is typically a truck-mounted, trailer-mounted drill rig or all terrain drill rig equipped with a Standard Penetration Test (SPT) hammer and support equipment including; water tenders (water trucks), crew cab with trailer, and one or two geologist/engineer's vehicles.

The SPT is an in-situ dynamic penetration test designed to provide geotechnical engineering properties of the soil. The test uses a thick-walled sample tube, with an outside diameter of two inches and an inside diameter of 1.4 inches, and a length of approximately 25.6 inches. This tube is driven into the ground at the desired sampling interval in the borehole by blows from a slide hammer with a weight of 140 lbs., free falling a distance of 30 inches. The tube is driven 18 inches into the ground or until refusal is achieved with the hammer.

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Caltrans Drilling Services has performed a noise study for the noise levels typically produced by a Mobile B-47 trailer mounted drill rig, equipped with a standard penetration test safety hammer. The noise levels are listed in the table below. The table below includes the results of the noise study made at the Caltrans Maintenance yard in Vallejo on April 23, 1999, to determine the potential noise effects at various distances. The District 4 Environmental Engineering Branch conducted the test.

Distance from rig (meters/ft)	Drilling	Hammering
1.5/5	92.1 dB	93.4 dB
7.5/25	73.3 dB	79.9 dB
15/50	69.0 dB	72.8 dB
23/75	65.5 dB	69.3 dB
30/100	64.2 dB	No Data Available

### Drilling Procedures

In order to obtain quality soil and rock samples at the extended depths needed, advancement of the test borings will require the use of the mud rotary self-casing drilling system. This drilling system requires the use of drilling fluid to maintain the hole stability, bring drill cuttings to the surface, as well as lubricate and cool the drill bit. Drilling fluid would be made up of water mixed with bentonite clay, liquid polymer or a mixture of both.

The drilling fluid is contained and recirculated through a closed system utilizing a drill rod and a mud tank. The mud tank will be positioned on the ground surface or barge, and serves as a settlement tank for the soil cuttings, which are periodically removed and placed in 55-gallon steel drums. Once the desired boring depth has been reached, the hole will be flushed with clear water to displace the drilling fluid back into the mud tank. The drilling fluid and water will then be pumped from the mud tank into 55-gallon steel drums for disposal. The onshore boreholes will be backfilled with cement slurry or bentonite chips. If the boring is located in the active river channel, the boring will not be backfilled, allowing native stream gravels to fill the hole. The 55-gallon steel drums will be removed from the job site and transferred to an appropriate staging area, usually a nearby Caltrans Maintenance yard.

### Spill Prevention

A spill prevention plan will be implemented for the drilling operations whether the drilling is performed by Caltrans or a Contract drill crew (Attachment A). In the event of an unexpected fluid spill, the driller will immediately stop the drilling, contain the escaping fluids and mitigate any further potential fluid loss. Petroleum based fluid will be cleaned by placing with sorbent pads and sorbent material if located on the barge deck. Drilling fluids will be cleaned by placing absorbent product. The resulting contaminated pads and sorbent material will be swept, shoveled and placed in 55-DOT drums for lawful disposal. If required, plastic sheeting and straw waddles may be placed under and around the drill rig, the mud tub, and the borehole for onshore and barge drilling to contain accidental fluid spills for the borings.

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## Onshore Drilling

Truck mounted drill rigs, trailer mounted drill rigs, all terrain drill rigs or similar type of drill rigs weighing from approximately 35,000 to 48,000 lbs will be utilized for the onshore subsurface investigation. Photos 1 and 2 show onshore drilling operations. Photo 1 shows the typical set up with a drill rig backed up to the water tender. Photo 2 shows an alternative set up with the drill rig parked next to the water tender. The onshore drilling operations will be similar set ups to those shown below in Photos 1 and 2. The work area required for the equipment and crew needs to have a minimum width of fourteen feet, eight feet wide for the drilling equipment, plus three feet on either side for the crew work area. The onshore work area will most likely require the clearance of vegetation in order to access the boring locations and set up the drilling equipment. Each location will be reviewed and a set up will be chosen that will reduce any impact to the vegetation. Water drafting (pumping water from the river) will not be used for drilling onshore borings.



Photo 1. Onshore drilling operation.



Photo 2. Onshore drilling operation.

## Barge Drilling

If the river channel water depth is sufficient and the current minimal, a barge will be needed to complete the proposed drilling in the active river channel. The barge operation requires a minimum water depth of 24 inches and may periodically come in contact with the bottom of the channel. The barge will require an access road and a 30 feet x 30 feet work area contiguous with the river for barge assembly and launching. The barge will consist of nine sections (Photos 3 and 4). Each section will be 6 feet x 15 feet, giving the barge an overall size of 18 feet x 45 feet. The barge will support a Christensen 500 trailer rig with dimensions of 8 feet x 22 feet with a weight of 12,000 lbs (Photo 6), a Mobile B-47 rig with dimensions of 8 feet x 17 feet with a weight of 11,000 lbs or a similar type of drill rig. In addition to the drill rig, the support equipment mentioned above in the Drilling Equipment section of this report will need to be on site to support the barge work (Photos 4 and 5). Four anchors (one at each corner of the barge) will be used to keep the barge stationary during the drilling at each boring location. It may be necessary to anchor (tie-off) to the existing piers for additional stabilization. Buoys with reflective tape will be attached to the anchor ropes for nighttime visibility purposes to designate anchor lines just beneath the water surface. A 17-foot Boston Whaler boat powered with a 90 HP four cycle engine or a similar type of boat will be used throughout the barge operation to maneuver the barge in the active channel and to transport equipment or people (Photo 5). In addition to the Boston Whaler boat, a small 10 foot Zodiac raft powered with a 10 HP four cycle engine or a similar type

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of boat will be used to transport people and small supplies (Photo 5).

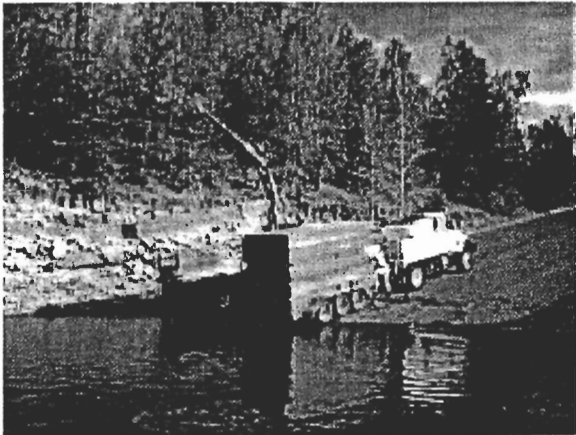


Photo 3. Launching trailer with barge sections.

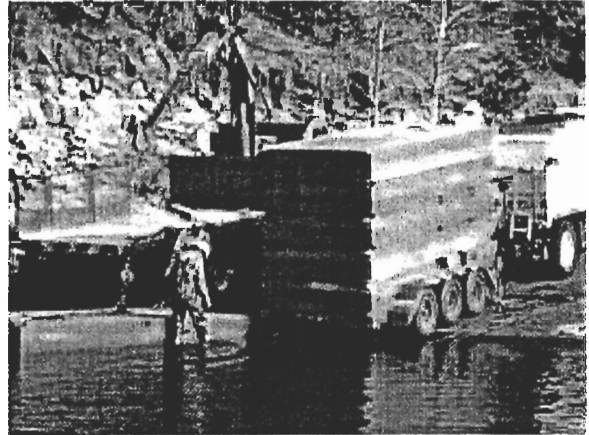


Photo 4. Craning in barge sections.

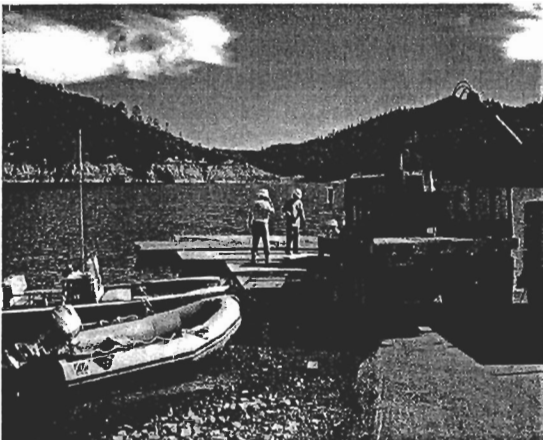


Photo 5. Barge assembly.

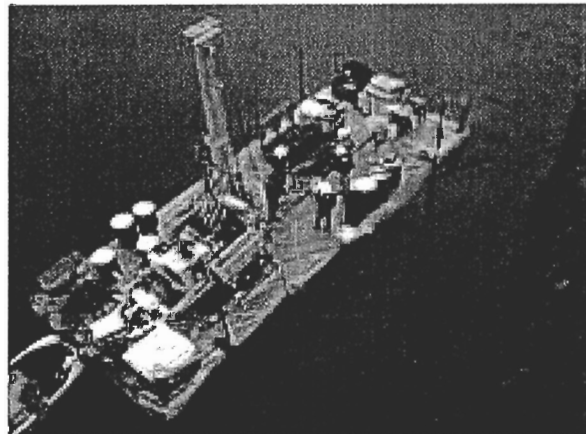


Photo 6. Overview photo of barge drilling.

If the active channel is dry (as shown in Photos 7 and 8), an all terrain drill rig will be used to access and drill at the boring locations. Plastic sheets will be placed under the drill rig and surrounded by waddles in the work area.



Photo 7. Dry area next to existing Pier 15. Photo taken facing south.



Photo 8. Dry area next to existing Pier 15. Photo taken facing west.

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## Bridge Deck Drilling

Three to four borings will be drilled through the existing Smith River bridge deck. The same type of equipment and equipment set-up discussed in the onshore drilling section of this plan will be required for the bridge deck drilling. Water drafting (pumping water from the river) will not be used for the bridge deck drilling.

## Water Drafting

Water will be drafted from the Smith River to support the drilling at the locations requiring the use of the barge or in the river channel. Water drafting will help to greatly reduce the duration of the drilling operation and will not introduce foreign water to the Smith River.

Caltrans Drilling Services has been provided with the National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG) water drafting specifications (italicized below). Caltrans Drilling Services has indicated they will comply with Operating Guidelines 1 through 6 of the specifications. Guideline 7 appears to relate to drafting water from the river to a water truck, which is not the case; instead, the water will be periodically drafted from the river to a storage container on the barge. This process will be repeated until the barge drilling is complete. Caltrans Drilling Services has indicated they will comply with the Screen Construction Criteria included in the specifications. Also, Caltrans Drilling Services has indicated they will be using a contractor's pump with an estimated pumping rate that will not exceed 50 gallons per minute that will provide from 0 to 5000 gallons per day. If a Contract drilling operation is used instead of Caltrans Drilling Services, the Contract drill crew will be required to comply with the water drafting specifications.

*NOAA Fisheries and CDFG has provided Caltrans with the following specifications to follow for drafting water from the Smith River.*

### *Operating Guidelines*

- 1. Operations are restricted to one hour after sunrise to one hour before sunset.*
- 2. Pumping rate shall not exceed 350 gallons per minute.*
- 3. The pumping rate shall not exceed ten percent of the stream flow.*
- 4. Seek streams and pools where water is deep and flowing, as opposed to streams with low flow and small isolated pools.*
- 5. Pumping shall be terminated when the tank is full. The effect of single pumping operations, or multiple pumping operations at the same location, shall not result in obvious draw-down of either upstream or downstream pools.*
- 6. Each pumping operation shall use a fish screen. The screen face should be oriented parallel to flow for best screening performance. The screen shall be designed and used such that it can be submerged with at least one-screen-height-clearance above and below*

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*the screen.*

- 7. Operators shall keep a log on the truck containing the following information: Operator's Name, Date, Time, Pump Rate, Filling Time, Screen Cleaned (Y or N), Screen Condition, Comments. These guidelines should be included as instructions in a logbook with serially numbered pages. This assures each truck operator easy access to this information.*

### Screen Construction Criteria

#### 1. Surface Area:

*The total (unobstructed) surface area of the screen shall be at least 2.5 square feet, based on the upper limit of pumping of 350 gpm. Larger surface areas are recommended where debris buildup is anticipated, and where stream depth is adequate to keep the screen submerged at approximately mid-depth.*

The surface area of the screen used by Caltrans Drilling Services is shown below in Photo 9 and 10.

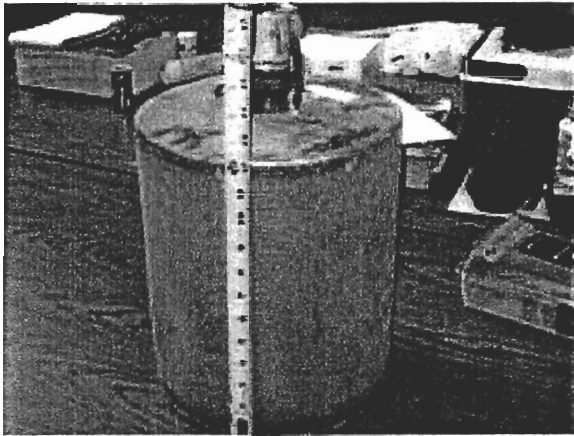


Photo 9. Screen height is 12 inches.

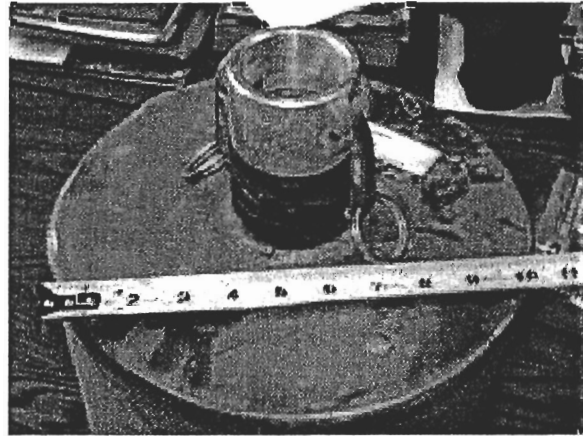


Photo 10. Screen diameter is 10 inches.

#### 2. Screen Mesh:

*Screen Mesh must be in good repair and present a sealed, positive barrier- effectively preventing entry of the "design fish" into the intake. The design fish in this case is an immature (20-30mm) salmon or steelhead fry.*

*The screen mesh size shall be:*

*Round openings - maximum 3/32 inch diameter (0.09 inch)*

*Square openings - maximum 3/32 inch diagonal (0.09 inch)*

*Slotted openings - maximum 1/16 inch width (0.07 inch)*

The screen mesh used by Caltrans Drilling Services is shown below in Photos 11 and 12. The screen openings are round and are 1/16 inch in diameter.

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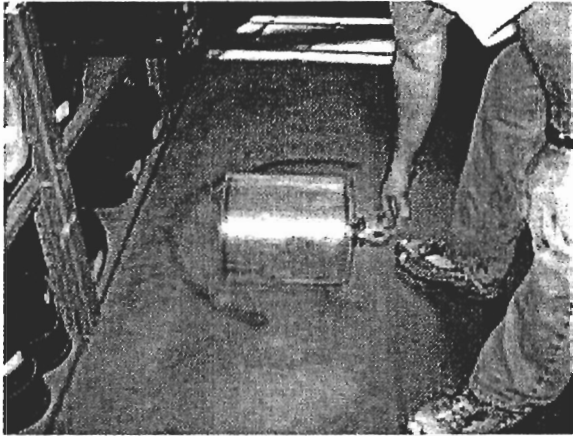


Photo 11. Photo of Screen Mesh

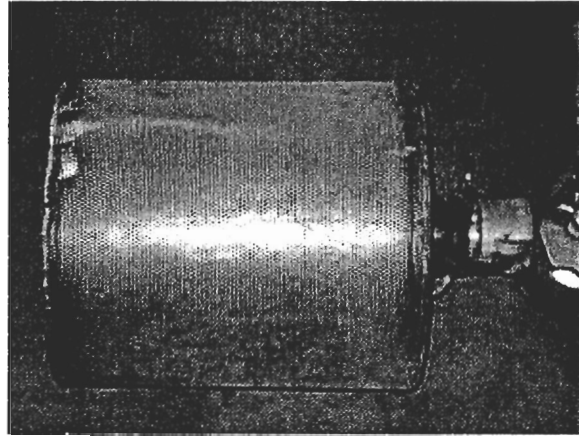


Photo 12. Close up of Screen Mesh

If water drafting is not allowed, then the water will need to be pumped from a tanker onshore through a hose or pipeline. The tanker will need to be refilled periodically. If the tanker runs out of water at an inopportune time, excessive caving conditions may occur in the boring. Caving conditions may require having to abandon, redrill, or adding a new boring. The addition of a boring will require moving the barge. Therefore, the duration of the barge drilling could be greatly be increased.

### Access

The first order of work is to construct the access roads, drilling pads for the approximate boring locations and the launch pad for the barge shown on Plate 1. The access road locations shown on Plate 1 are approximate locations and may be slightly adjusted once the design pile/pier/foundation locations are determined. Tress and shrubs that need to be removed for the drilling access, onshore or offshore, will be cut or removed between September 1 and March 1 to avoid impacts to nesting migratory birds. Bird surveys may need to be conducted if work needs to be performed outside of this period. The access roads and launch pad will be constructed closer to the drilling start date. Access roads are necessary for the drilling equipment to enter the proposed onshore drilling locations and will be necessary for launching of the barge. Right of Way agreements will be in place with property owners northwest or southeast of the bridge. These roads will be the minimum needed, approximately 12 feet wide, as the drilling equipment is 8 feet wide. Caltrans Maintenance, District 1, will construct the access roads and barge work areas and will provide support for removing the vegetation. Caltrans Structure Maintenance, District 1, will provide the temporary supports for crossing the streams and drainage ditches (Plates 2, 3, 4 and 5).

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South Access

The access road located to the south side of the channel below the existing structure is an unpaved dirt road (Photos 13 and 14). This road parallels the east side of the existing bridge within the Caltrans Right-of-Way and can be accessed from South Bank Road. This access road may need some preparation, such as dozer/grader leveling to provide a path for the drilling equipment.



Photo 13. Access road facing North.



Photo 14. Access road facing South.

The dirt road ends at the bank of the Smith River. This area will be designated as a work area for constructing the barge. The work area for the barge shown on Plates 2 and 3 will need to be 30 feet x 30 feet, will require dozer/grader leveling and will require the removal of small brush and soil (Photo 15 and 17) that may be stockpiled at the site. The work area should extend 15 to 20 feet to the west and east from the centerline of the existing bridge and up to 30 feet from the rivers edge. Currently at the site, there exists a cleared area under the bridge (Photo 16). Next to the cleared area, there are what appears to be two slopes located to the west and east side. The slopes are approximately as high as 4 feet and are approximately 8 feet wide. The slopes will need to be leveled and or removed so that the final work area looks similar to Photo 16. The maximum cut will be approximately 4 to 5 feet down from the ground surface. The material generated from the cut will be spread out over the barge work area.



Photo 15. Brush west of bridge (facing north).

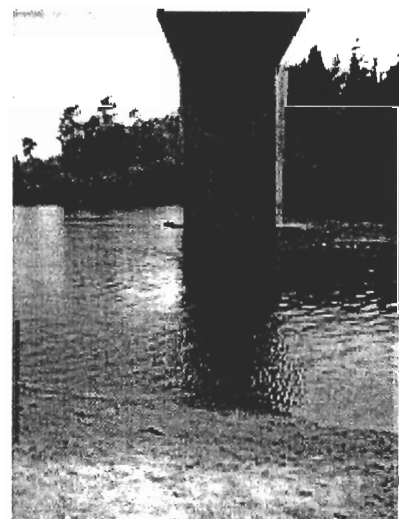


Photo 16. Cleared area under bridge (facing north).

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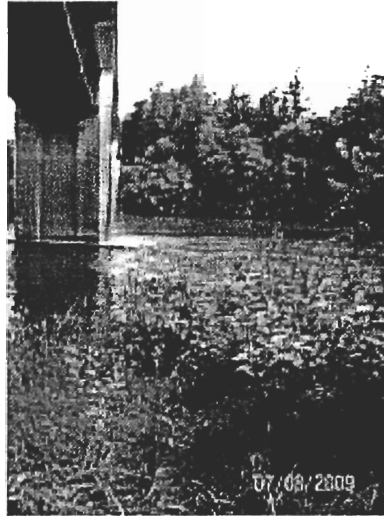


Photo 17. Brush east of bridge (facing north).

Gravel will be imported and spread along the dirt road and work area shown on Plates 2 and 3 to provide stability and support for the equipment and to help reduce the possibility of siltation of the river. Caltrans District Environmental recommends the gravel should range between  $\frac{3}{4}$  inch to  $1 \frac{1}{2}$  inch with a fine content of no more than 20% passing the No. 200 sieve. The road is approximately 200 feet in length and circles around the pier giving an approximate total length of 230 feet and has a width of 10 feet. It is anticipated that gravel (approximately 100 cubic yards) will need to be imported and spread along the dirt road and barge launch area. The gravel will be left in place following the completion of the drilling operations.

South and west of the existing bridge is a small drainage ditch that may need to be crossed by the drilling equipment to access boring locations (Photo 18). Structure Maintenance will provide temporary supports for spanning the streams (Plates 2 and 3). The temporary supports will be similar to those shown on Plate 5 and will provide the necessary support for the drilling equipment.



Photo 18. Drainage ditch southwest of the south side of the bridge (facing north).

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### North Access

On the north side of the river there is an existing access road that was used for the Dr. Fine bridge retrofit in 1993. This access road parallels the west side of the existing bridge and will be accessed from the private property located on the west side of the existing bridge and south of Fred D. Haight Drive (Plate 1). The access road will be used to transport drilling equipment, supplies and materials for the drilling operation. This access road will need some minor preparation, such as minor dozer/grader leveling and some minor rock/vegetation clearing. The drilling equipment will need to cross two small streams (Photos 19 and 20) to access the drilling locations. A small pedestrian wood bridge currently spans one of the streams and will need to be removed (Photo 19). Structure Maintenance will provide temporary supports for spanning the streams (Plates 4 and 5). The temporary supports will provide the necessary support for the drilling equipment. The small pedestrian wood bridge will be returned to the same location following the completion of the drilling operation.

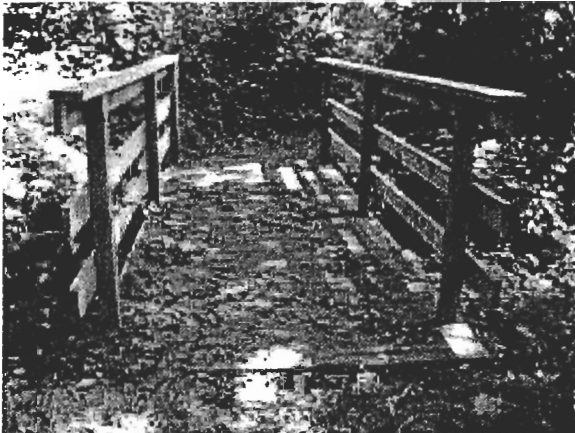


Photo 19. Small pedestrian bridge crossing small stream.



Photo 20. Board overlying one of two small streams.

### **Erosion Control Measures**

Caltrans Drilling Services, Consultant drill crews and Geotechnical Services does not provide erosion control measures for the drilling operations. The erosion control measures have been provided by the District 1 Office and are included below in this section of the drilling plan. The District will be responsible for implementing the erosion control measures.

Erosion control measures will include weed free mulch on exposed soil to prevent erosion and siltation of the river. Staging, storage, and parking will not be done in wetlands unless the area is identified as a support location and is part of the drilling operation. Once the drilling operation is completed, the access routes and drilling pad sites would be treated for erosion control.

Soil stabilization and sediment control techniques, temporary and permanent BMPs, are proposed to control and minimize erosion from all drilling activities, including barge launching. Erosion control activities will take place prior to June 15<sup>th</sup> and after October 15<sup>th</sup> on any year. Monitoring and maintenance of the sediment treatment controls will continue throughout the drilling operations.

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Water, fluids, and spoils generated by drilling or incidentally found within boats, barges or equipment shall be captured, retained in drums and removed to an approved disposal location.

To permanently control the erosion, all freshly exposed onshore surfaces and disturbed areas will be seeded with perennial grasses, legume seed mix and mulched with straw or hay to create a stabilizing ground cover. Other BMP strategies to help dissipate erosive velocities will include weed free straw bale barriers placed at critical points of flow concentration, interceptor trenches and silt fences.

Maintenance of the sediment treatment controls will include on-going repairs to any damaged or insufficient control measures to maintain vegetative and non-vegetative soil stabilization controls in good condition. Debris and litter will be periodically removed, and follow-up applications of seed and mulch would be applied to cover weak spots or other disturbances.

### **Public Access**

Caltrans will not permanently block public access to roads, trails or boat launches, during the drilling operation. The proposed drilling operation will be undertaken from onshore and the barge. Public access may be temporarily blocked for a short duration to construct and launch the barge. Once construction and launching of the barge is completed, public access will resume. Public access may be temporarily blocked for a short duration to perform the onshore drilling operations. Once the onshore drilling operations are complete, public access will resume. The activity would not at any time interfere with the flowing water areas of the river. The proposed drilling effort will, therefore, not result in any permanent impacts to public access or recreational use of the Smith River, and would not significantly recreational users. Caltrans boat/barge crews would follow accepted boating "rules of the road" and would give way to public craft at the launch and in the river.

### **Right-of-Way**

It is anticipated that the access roads on the north side of the river will need to pass through private property to access onshore drilling sites (Plate 1). Therefore, right-of-entry permits will be needed. Work on the south side of the bridge (using the existing access road) and work on the north side of the bridge (using the old construction road) may require the State Lands Commission consultation since work will be performed below the ordinary high water (OHW) line.

### **Season and Hours of Work**

Based on the scope of the current project, the drilling operation may take one to three seasons to complete. It would be optimal to obtain the permits by October 2010 and extend the permits to December of 2013, in case the scope or schedule changes. The duration of the drilling is anticipated to last approximately 35 weeks. The drilling will be performed intermittently throughout the three years. Based on the current project schedule, we need to complete the drilling operation prior to March 2012 to meet the current due date. We need to clear the trees and shrubs between September 1, 2010 and March 1, 2011. If we miss this window of opportunity, the bridge replacement project will be delayed. We would like to extend the permits

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through December of 2013, in case additional drilling is necessary at a later date. The water in the river channel fluctuates and is anticipated to be at lower levels towards the end of the year (October through December). To optimize the drilling in the channel, the drilling operation will need to begin in June and extend through December. All work would be conducted during daylight hours from Monday through Sunday. To make the drilling operations more efficient and reduce the duration, ten-day workweeks may be necessary.

## **Equipment Storage**

Equipment storage for the drilling operation is typically located at the local Caltrans Maintenance yard. Typically, the water tender and trailer are stored at the yard at the end of each workday. Typically the crew cab and geologist/engineer's vehicles will be transported off site at the end of each workday. For the onshore drilling operations, the drill rig and some of the small support equipment will remain on site until the borings are completed. For the barge drilling operations, the barge will be launched in the river in June and may remain in the river until the drilling operation is complete or until December of each season.

## **Evacuation Plan for Barge Drilling**

### Drilling Personnel Evacuation Plan

Emergency conditions may warrant the evacuation of the drilling barge personnel. These conditions may include lightning or flash flood, or a severe accident on the bridge structure. When an emergency evacuation is warranted, the party chief shall notify the District and the Office of Drilling Services, ODS. The barge will be secured for evacuation by shutting off all engines and equipment. Loose pipe will be racked and secured. If time permits, the mud tank will be drained into 55-gallon barrels with sealing lids secured. The drill chuck shall be opened to allow the barge and pipe to rise/fall with river level. The crew will leave on the ODS boat transported to the ramp. The evacuation and roll call shall be documented on the tailgate safety meeting form and retained by the party chief. The barge shall be monitored if visible from the shore or the bridge and the condition documented.

### Drilling Barge Evacuation Plan

The drilling barge may be moved from the drilling location if conditions warrant and sufficient time exists. The drilling barge with drill rig will be prepared for re-location by pumping drill fluids from the drill bore, if applicable, and the drill pipe and casing removed. The pipe and casing will be racked and secured on the barge. Drilling fluids from the mud tank will be pumped into drums and sealed. Headspace will be left in the drums to allow flotation in the event of a capsizing. The barge will be moved to a downstream pier location and secured to a bridge pier. The evacuation of personnel will be completed as described above.

## **Traffic Control**

Drilling through the existing bridge deck will require the closure of one traffic lane and a pilot car. The estimated time for each boring to be drilled through the bridge deck is seven days. Three to four borings are proposed for the bridge deck drilling which will require three to four weeks of lane closures.

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# Attachment A

16 of 16

DEL NORTE COUNTY COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPAR  
981 H STREET, SUITE 110  
CRESCENT CITY, CA 95531

EXHIBIT NO. 5
APPEAL NO. A-1-DNC-11-019 CALTRANS NOTICE OF FINAL ACTION AND STAFF REPORT - DEL NORTE COUNTY (1 of 7)

NOTICE OF ACTION

I. Notice is hereby given that the **Planning Commission** of Del Norte County took the following action on **April 6, 2011** regarding the application for development listed below:

Action:  Approved \_\_\_ Denied \_\_\_ Continued \_\_\_ Recommended EIR  
\_\_\_ Forwarded to Board of Supervisors

Application Number: CGP2011-05C

Project Description: Coastal Grading Permit for Geotechnical Drilling

Project Location: Dr. Fine Bridge, Smith River

Assessor's Parcel Number: 105-020-87, 105-700-01, 105-020-14 and 105-020-02

Applicant: Caltrans District 1 North Region Environmental

Applicant's Mailing Address: 1656 Union Street, Eureka, CA 95501

Agent's Name & Address: , ,

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APR 08 2011

CALIFORNIA  
COASTAL COMMISSION

A copy of any conditions of approval and/or findings adopted as part of the above action is attached.

II. If Approved:

This County permit or entitlement serves as a Coastal permit. No further action is required unless an appeal is filed in which case you will be notified.

This County permit or entitlement DOES NOT serve as a Coastal permit. Consult the Coastal Zone Permit procedure section of your NOTICE OF APPLICATION STATUS or the Planning Division of the Community Development Department if you have questions.

III. Notice is given that this project:

Is not appealable to the California Coastal Commission, however, a local appeal period does exist.

Is appealable to the California Coastal Commission.

Any appeal of the above decision must be filed with the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors by April 18, 2011 for consideration by the Board of Supervisors.

Any action of the Board of Supervisors on this item may be appealed to the California Coastal Commission within 10 working days or 21 calendar days subject to the requirements of Chapter 21.52 DNCC and Coastal Regulations.

Must be forwarded to the California Coastal Commission for final action. You will be notified of its status by the Coastal Commission Office.

(Continued on the next page)

Is not subject to Coastal Commission regulations, however, a local appeal process is available. Written appeals must be filed with the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors by N/A. Consideration will be by the Board of Supervisors.

Requests for deferment of road improvement standards or for modification of road improvement standards must be filed in writing with the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors by N/A, with a copy provided to the Secretary of the Planning Commission. Consideration will be by the Board of Supervisors.

- N/A { Parcel map must be filed within 24 months of the date of approval.
- Record of Survey and new deeds must be filed within 24 months of the date of approval.
- New deeds must be filed within 24 months of the date of approval.

**EXTENSIONS – MAJOR & MINOR SUBDIVISIONS OR BOUNDARY ADJUSTMENTS** – Maps (or Records of Survey/Deeds) must be filed within 12 months after the original date of expiration.

**NOTICE – SECTION 1.40.070**

The time within which review of this decision must be sought is governed by the California Code of Civil Procedure, Section 1094.6, and the Del Norte County Ordinance Code, Chapter 1.40. Any petition seeking judicial review must be filed in the appropriate court not later than the 90<sup>th</sup> day following the date on which this decision was made; however, if within 10 days after the decision was made, a request for the record of the proceedings is filed and the required deposit in an amount sufficient to cover the estimated cost of preparation of such record is timely deposited, the time within which such petition may be filed in court is extended to no later than the 30<sup>th</sup> day following the date on which the record is either personally delivered or mailed to you or your attorney of record.

**FISH AND GAME FILING FEES**

N/A Projects subject to CEQA are also subject to the following fees as required by the California Department of Fish and Game:

Applicable Fee - \_\_\_ Neg. Dec. (\$2060.25) \_\_\_ EIR (\$2842.25) \_\_\_ Exempt

This fee is due and payable to the County Clerk's Office. The applicant or agent is responsible for paying the current Fish and Game fee, which is subject to change. If not paid within 5 working days of the date of action of the Planning Commission, your project may be invalid by law (PRC 21089(b)) and will be referred to Fish and Game's Department of Compliance and External Audits in the Clerk's monthly deposit and report to Fish and Game.

**ATTENTION APPLICANT**

As a subdivider or adjuster of property, this notice is to advise you that **all taxes** must be paid in full prior to the recordation of your map or deeds. If the map or deeds are filed **after December 16<sup>th</sup>, you must pay all taxes due PLUS NEXT YEAR'S TAXES** before the map or deeds can be recorded.

If you have any questions regarding the payment of taxes, call the Del Norte County Tax Collector's Office at (707) 464-7283. 207

Agent: None

APP# CGP2011-05C

**STAFF REPORT**

APPLICANT: CALTRANS

APPLYING FOR: Coastal Grading Permit for Geotechnical Drilling for the Replacement of the Dr. Fine Bridge

AP#: 105-020-87, 105-700-01, 105-020-14 and 105-020-02      LOCATION: Caltrans right-of-way (Dr. Fine Bridge)

PARCEL(S) SIZE: N/A                      EXISTING USE: Highway 101                      EXISTING STRUCTURES: N/A

PLANNING AREA: 2, 21                      GENERAL PLAN: Vis. Serv. Com., RCA, Gen. Ind., Riparian Corridor, Prime Ag.

ADJ. GEN. PLAN: Same, RR(1/1), Gen. Ind., Ag Prime (non-coastal), A5

ZONING: CR-C(A), RCA-2(r), RCA 2(e), AR, CR                      ADJ. ZONING: Same, RR1, A

- |  |                               |                              |
|--|-------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. <u>PROCESSING CATEGORY:</u>             | <u>NON-COASTAL</u>            | <u>APPEALABLE COASTAL X</u>  |
|  | <u>NON-APPEALABLE COASTAL</u> | <u>PROJECT REVIEW APPEAL</u> |
| 2. <u>FIELD REVIEW NOTES:</u> DATE: 3/4/11 | HEALTH DEPT X                 | BUILDING INSP X              |
|  | PLANNING X                    | ENGINEERING/SURVEYING X      |

ACCESS: Hwy 101, Lake Earl Dr., S. Bank Rd., Hwy 197, Fred Haight Dr.  
ADJ. USES: Res., Manuf., Ag.      TOPOGRAPHY: Relatively Flat                      DRAINAGE: Smith River

DATE OF COMPLETE APPLICATION: March 10, 2011

3. ERC RECOMMENDATION: Application complete. CEQA Class 6 Categorical Exemption. Post public hearing notice. Approve with conditions.

4. STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

The California Department of Transportation, in conjunction with the Federal Highway Administration, is proposing to replace the Dr. Fine Bridge over the Smith River in Del Norte County between post mile 35.8 and 36.5 on U.S. Highway 101. The applicant has applied for a Coastal Grading Permit to perform geotechnical drilling. The geotechnical drilling results will be used to determine the alignment of the proposed bridge replacement. The project will consist of drilling at 29 identified locations both east and west of the existing bridge. Some of the drilling locations are within the permit jurisdiction of Del Norte County and others are within the permit jurisdiction of the California Coastal Commission. The project is proposed to begin immediately and continue intermittently until December 2014. The General Plan Land Use designation within the Coastal portion of the project area includes Visitor Serving Commercial, Resource Conservation Area, and Prime Agriculture. Corresponding Zone designations are also noted

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including Commercial Recreation with a Coastal Combining District overlay for access, Designated Resource Conservation Area for riparian and estuarine habitat, and Agriculture Exclusive.

Proposed Project:

As stated earlier, the existing bridge will be demolished and a new bridge built either on the same or on an adjacent alignment depending on the final geotechnical studies conducted by Caltrans. As currently planned, the roughly linear Area of Potential Effect (APE) for the proposed project is approximately .65 miles long, .15 miles wide and is roughly centered on the Dr. Fine Bridge.

Because the project involves a federal agency, Caltrans is required to comply with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (36 CFR800, revised 2004), which mandates federal agencies consider the effects of the project on historic projects. As such, agencies must document that a reasonable and good faith effort was made to identify archaeological resources that may be impacted by project-related earth disturbances, including those that may be buried. The identification of cultural resources within the APE warranted the need for a geoarchaeological study to assess the potential for buried archaeological sites within the proposed APE and to develop a research strategy, field approach, and work plan, to identify potentially buried sites in advance of proposed construction. The geoarchaeological field study was completed in Summer 2010. Caltrans has begun the permitting phase for geotechnical drilling which will be used to determine bridge alignment alternatives.

The geotechnical drilling locations will be north of Lake Earl Drive and south of Highway 197 in the U.S. Highway 101 right-of-way. Approximately 15 of the drilling sites will be located in the western portion and 14 will be located in the eastern portion of the U.S. Highway 101 right-of-way. The Phase 2 Drilling Plan for the proposed Smith River (Dr. Fine) Bridge Replacement spanning the Smith River in Del Norte County on Route 101 prepared by Caltrans identifies the proposed geotechnical drilling locations, Exhibit A. Drilling locations in the river are under the permit jurisdiction of the California Coastal Commission and will not be intimately discussed in this staff report.

Each boring should take between 7 and 10 days to complete. The borings will reach an average depth of 200 feet. In some locations drilling may go deeper than 200 feet but most likely will not exceed 250 feet.

Caltrans has decided to perform Standard Penetration Tests on the samples they collect. Samples are collected using a tube that is 25.6 inches in length with an outside diameter of 2 inches and an inside diameter of 1.4 inches. The tube is pounded into the ground by a Standard Penetration hammer at desired intervals. The hammer weighs 140 pounds and is dropped 30 inches. The Standard Penetration hammer pounds the tube to a depth of 18 inches or until the tube refuses to go any deeper. Then the sample is collected and analyzed.

The noise associated with the drilling and hammering should be around 90 dB within 5 feet of the equipment. The 90 dB range is equivalent to the noise produced by a modified motorcycle, lawnmower, or heavy traffic.

Onsite equipment storage should be minimal. During onshore drilling it is anticipated that a drill rig and some small support staff will remain onsite. The remainder of the equipment will be stored at the local Caltrans Maintenance yard.

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Geotechnical drilling produces drilling fluids that consist of water (not water from the Smith River), bentonite clay, and liquid polymer. All drilling fluids will be collected and stored in 55 gallon steel drums until they can be disposed of properly. A mud tank will also be used to settle out soil cuttings in the drilling fluid. The soil cutting will also be placed in 55 gallon steel drums until they can be disposed of properly. Caltrans has developed a spill prevention plan which requires work to stop immediately and fluid to be contained if a spill occurs. The spill prevention plan covers types of potential spills and accepted cleanup practices. Each boring hole will be filled with either cement slurry or bentonite chips after samples have been collected.

Onshore drilling will be performed using truck and trailer mounted drill rigs. Access will be reestablished by removing trees and vegetation that have grown over the access roads used during the 1996 seismic retrofit of Dr. Fine bridge, Exhibit B. The access roads will be at least 12 feet wide and 14 feet wide where drilling will occur to accommodate the drill rig and work area, Exhibit C and D. Should Caltrans need to cross private property for access they are required to obtain written permission from the property owner.

One of the property owners adjacent to the Caltrans right-of-way expressed written concern regarding this project and the potential for Caltrans to use their property for access, Exhibit E. The main concern was that Caltrans did not have the current property owner's information. Caltrans does not expect to cross said property but will obtain written permission from the property owner, if necessary.

A barge will need to be placed in the Smith River so that samples can be collected in the channel. The barge requires a 30 foot by 30 foot area for assembly. Caltrans is planning to locate the barge assembly area under the existing Dr. Fine bridge on the south side of the river, Exhibit C. The barge assembly area will require about a 4 to 5 foot cut and vegetation removal. The cut material will be distributed over the barge assembly area and the excess stockpiled.

Once all leveling and vegetation removal has been completed gravel will be spread over the access roads and barge assembly area. In total, Caltrans proposes to spread roughly 100 cubic yards of gravel. The graveled areas will remain upon project completion.

On the south side of the bridge one small stream will need to be crossed so that drilling can occur, Exhibit C. The proposed stream crossing method applicable to all stream crossing is shown on Exhibit F. On the north side of the bridge three small stream crossing will necessary, Exhibit D.

Caltrans has provided erosion and runoff control measures that are appropriate for grading and geotechnical drilling operations. The proposed erosion and runoff control measures include weed free mulch on exposed soil, no impacts to wetlands in the form of staging, storage, or parking unless identified as a support location or part of the drilling plan, and treatment of the access routes and drilling pad sites after the drilling operation is complete. Proposed erosion and runoff control measures will be monitored and maintained through out the drilling operation.

Public access may be interrupted for short durations while onshore drilling occurs or while the barge is being launched. Caltrans will not permanently block access to any trails, roads, or boat launches. Caltrans may interrupt traffic going over Dr. Fine bridge for up to 4 weeks while they complete 3 to 4 borings through the existing bridge deck, traffic will be reduced to one-lane with traffic control.

Caltrans proposed to drill during daylight hours Monday through Sunday. The Environmental Review

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Committee (ERC) reduced the proposed hours of operation to Monday through Friday from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. because of the projects proximity to residences and a church. Caltrans received the conditions produced by the ERC and responded with concern regarding the reduced working days and hours, Exhibit G.

The majority of the concerns presented by Caltrans were directly related to cost and convenience. Caltrans drill crews will most likely travel from Sacramento, CA to Del Norte County for this job. The crews are accustomed to working 10 days on and returning home for long weekends. In the midst of the current budget situation, Caltrans is trying to minimize expenses. Caltrans anticipates that working extended weeks will reduce travel expenses accrued by the crew.

5. FINDINGS:

- a) The project is consistent with the policies and standards of the General Plan and Title 21 Zoning;
- b) The project is exempt from the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (Class 6 Exemption);
- c) The applicant has provided written verification that the project will have no impact on biological resources;
- d) Conditions have been incorporated into the project approval to ensure that water quality is maintained pre- and post drilling activities;
- e) Conditions have been incorporated into the project approval to ensure that representatives of the local rancheria will have the opportunity to participate in any earth disturbing activities related to the project; and
- f) The project will not result in impacts to visual coastal resources nor will it eliminate access to coastal resources.

6. CONDITIONS:

- 1) This permit shall remain valid until December 31, 2014;
- 2) The subject coastal grading permit is for geotechnical drilling at Dr. Fine Bridge in Del Norte County. This permit is valid for up to 29 boring holes, approximate location shown on the Drilling Plan dated 4/27/10. This permit shall only apply to geotechnical drilling done within Del Norte County's permit jurisdiction as shown on the "Post LCP Certification Permit and Appeal Jurisdiction, County of Del Norte, Map 1";
- 3) The applicant shall strictly adhere to the Phase 2 Drilling Plan for the proposed Smith River (Dr. Fine) Bridge Replacement spanning the Smith River in Del Norte County on Route 101 prepared by Caltrans;
- 4) Prior to the issuance of a coastal grading permit the applicant shall provide written permission from owners of private property upon which geotechnical drilling will occur or access will be necessary;
- 5) The applicant or their representative shall contact the Smith River Rancheria two weeks prior to geotechnical drilling in order to allow the Rancheria to have a Cultural Resource Monitor present during excavation. The applicant is responsible for any charge buy the Rancheria for the time and expenses (if any) of the Cultural Resource Monitor. Should the Rancheria determine that they do not wish to have a Cultural Resource Monitor present; a written statement to that effect will meet the intent of this condition. Verification of contact between the applicant and the Smith River Rancheria shall be provided to the Planning Division;

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- 6) The applicant shall be on notice that it is the policy of the County of Del Norte that should any archeological resources be found during the geotechnical drilling, the geotechnical drilling activities shall be halted until an evaluation of the find is made by a qualified archeologist or a representative of the local Rancheria;
- 7) Prior to the issuance of a coastal grading permit the applicant shall submit to the Planning Division for review and written approval, plans for the location of staging areas for the proposed drilling sites. No storage of equipment or excavated spoils shall occur within wetlands or native vegetation areas. Any stockpiles of graded spoils shall be located away from the Smith River and contained with runoff control measures until redistributed;
- 8) No grading activity shall be conducted between October 30 and April 30 in any given year without prior approval from the County Engineer;
- 9) The applicant shall use Best Management Practices (BMPs) to meet or exceed County and State environmental standards during the lifetime of the project. If environmental contamination does occur the applicant shall contact the Del Norte County Engineering Division and the North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board.;
- 10) This applicant shall perform all work between the hours of 7 a.m. and 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. No work shall be performed on holidays, weekends, or evenings; and
- 11) This entitlement is specifically conditioned on the applicant agreeing to indemnify and hold harmless the County of Del Norte, the Planning Commission of the County of Del Norte, the Board of Supervisors of the County of Del Norte, their officers, employees and agents against any and all claims arising out of the issuance of the entitlement and specifically against any expense arising from defending any legal action challenging the issuance of the entitlement, including but not limited to the value of time devoted to such defense by County officers, employees and agents and the amount of any judgment, including costs of suit and attorney fees, recovered against the County or any of its officers, employees or agent in such legal action. The County of Del Norte reserves the option to either undertake the defense of any such legal action or to tender such defense to the applicant. Should the County tender such defense to the applicant and the applicant fail or neglect to diligently defend such legal action, the County may consider such failure or neglect to be a material breach of this conditions and forthwith revoke this entitlement; and
- 12) \*\* Added per PC Mtg 4/6/11 \*\* Prior to issuance of the Coastal Grading Permit, the applicant shall provide a copy of the 1600 Permit from the California Department of Fish and Game and a Section 401 Permit from the State Water Resources Control Board. The applicant shall also provide a copy of any additional permits obtained for this project. If a 1600 Permit or Section 401 Permit is not required, please provide written documentation. \*\* Added per PC Mtg 4/6/11 \*\*

\*\* Added per PC Mtg 4/6/11 \*\*

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STATE OF CALIFORNIA - THE RESOURCES AGENCY  
**CALIFORNIA COASTAL COMMISSION**  
 NORTH COAST DISTRICT OFFICE  
 710 E STREET, SUITE 200  
 EUREKA, CA 95501  
 VOICE (707) 445-7833 FAX (707) 445-7877

**EXHIBIT NO. 6**  
**APPEAL NO.**  
 A-1-DNC-11-019  
 CALTRANS  
 APPEAL SUBMITTED BY  
 FRIENDS OF DEL NORTE,  
 APRIL 28, 2011 (1 of 5)

EDMUND G. BROWN JR., Governor



**APPEAL FROM COASTAL PERMIT DECISION OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT**

**Please Review Attached Appeal Information Sheet Prior To Completing This Form.**

**SECTION I. Appellant(s)**

Name: Friends of Del Norte  
 Mailing Address: P.O. Box 229  
 City: Gasquet, CA Zip Code: 95543 Phone: 707 465-8904 \*  
 707-954-2473

**SECTION II. Decision Being Appealed**

1. Name of local/port government: Del Norte County
2. Brief description of development being appealed: Grading for geo-technical drilling for replacement of Dr. Fine Bridge
3. Development's location (street address, assessor's parcel no., cross street, etc.): APN 105-020-87, 105-700-01, 105-020-02, near Dr. Fine Bridge, Smith River, Del Norte
4. Description of decision being appealed (check one.):

- Approval; no special conditions
- Approval with special conditions:
- Denial

**RECEIVED**

APR 28 2011

CALIFORNIA COASTAL COMMISSION

**Note:** For jurisdictions with a total LCP, denial decisions by a local government cannot be appealed unless the development is a major energy or public works project. Denial decisions by port governments are not appealable.

**TO BE COMPLETED BY COMMISSION:**

APPEAL NO: A-1-DNC-11-019

DATE FILED: 4/28/11

DISTRICT: North Coast

**APPEAL FROM COASTAL PERMIT DECISION OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT (Page 2)**

5. Decision being appealed was made by (check one):

- Planning Director/Zoning Administrator  
 City Council/Board of Supervisors  
 Planning Commission  
 Other

6. Date of local government's decision: April 6, 2011 hearing7. Local government's file number (if any): CGP 2011-05C**SECTION III. Identification of Other Interested Persons**

Give the names and addresses of the following parties. (Use additional paper as necessary.)

a. Name and mailing address of permit applicant:

California Dept of Transportation, District 1  
 P.O. Box 3700, Eureka, CA 95502-3700  
 Att: Steve Grantham

b. Names and mailing addresses as available of those who testified (either verbally or in writing) at the city/county/port hearing(s). Include other parties which you know to be interested and should receive notice of this appeal.

(1) Eileen Cooper  
 2644 Roy Ave  
 Crescent City, CA 95531

(2)

(3)

(4)

Section IV Reasons Supporting This Appeal -  
 as attached

**APPEAL FROM COASTAL PERMIT DECISION OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT (Page 4)**

**SECTION V. Certification**

The information and facts stated above are correct to the best of my/our knowledge.

E Signature on File ew, Vice President  
Signature of Authorized Agent

Date: April 28, 2011

Note: If signed by agent, appellant(s) must also sign below.

**Section VI. Agent Authorization**

I/We hereby authorize E Signature on File ew - Vice President  
to act as my/our representative and me/us in all matters concerning this appeal.

E Signature on File ew  
Signature of Appellant(s)

Date: April 28 2011

## **Friends of Del Norte, *Committed to our environment since 1973***

*A nonprofit, membership based conservation group, advocating sound environmental policies for our region. PO Box 229, Gasquet, CA 95543 707-954-BIRD*

April 28, 2011

ATT: California Coastal Commission, Jim Baskin, FAX: 707-445-7877

REGARDING: Appeal of Coastal Grading Permit, Geo-tech drilling for Replacement of Dr. Fine Bridge  
CGP2011-05C – APN 105-020-87, 105-700-01, 105-020-02, Smith River, Del Norte Co.  
California Department of Transportation, District 1, 707-445-7815  
P.O. Box 3700, Eureka, CA 95502-3700, Steve\_Grantham@dot.ca.gov

We are happy to see important bridges upgraded but want environmental laws respected, so that impacts to our fragile river are minimized.

This drilling project is located in a biologically sensitive riparian and wetland coastal area, and within a Federally designated Wild and Scenic River. The identification and extent of these wetland and riparian habitats is important, because these areas are considered ESHA and are protected under Del Norte County Local Coastal Plan policies. The identification of and extent of Riparian habitat and Coastal Wetlands, as defined by California Coastal Standards or one criteria wetland delineation, have not yet been exhibited, and need to be provided before new disturbance occurs, for evaluation of mitigation measures and LCP consistency.

The grading permit should be conditioned so as to provide for a restoration plan and/or replacement plan of disturbed riparian and wetland areas upon the completion of the bridge replacement project. Wetland replacement at a minimum rate of 4 to 1 should be based on accurate delineations. We have visited the site with a biologist from Cal Trans last spring during phase 1 geo-tech drilling. The biologist confirmed that there are extensive wetlands and frog habitat throughout the access areas.

There is evidence of some previous grading disturbance of wetlands and riparian habitat. The wetlands and riparian habitat are now partially recovered. Red-legged Frogs, a listed species of concern, as well as numerous other amphibians (thousands of tree frogs) inhabit the high quality wetlands and ponded areas of the northwestern side that Caltrans intends to use for access.

Caltrans has previously disturbed these same access areas during a seismic bridge retrofit. However, the previous Coastal Permit for the seismic retrofit shows that Caltrans was required to fully restore these disturbed wetland/riparian areas. These documents were provided within Del Norte County Planning Commission Report, pages 72-76.

Black-capped Chickadee, and Willow Flycatchers are designated species of importance in these riparian habitats. The riparian and wetland habitat shows partial/limited disturbance, now a narrow trail. Stream crossings and significant clearing and grading will be necessary. Please provide adequate mitigation measures. Please include the previous mitigation measures taken for the seismic retrofit.

It is our understanding that Coastal Staff has commented on scoping for the Draft EIR for the Bridge Replacement project, and has suggested that drilling from the bridge deck would have less impacts. There appears to be other access alternatives to the proposed project. The barge could access some of the northern drill points. And the existing access along the northeast side of the bridge could provide access to the other points. Because Caltrans has fragmented the drilling project from the complete EIR process for the bridge, some exploration and evaluation of other drill alternatives should be provided. Accurate resource mapping is essential in determining an access route with least impacts.

1 of 2 4 of 5

We hope this project can be improved, and made consistent with our LCP. This project is inconsistent with the following LCP policies:

**LCP Policy, Marine and Water Resources,**

**LCP IV: Sensitive Coastal Habitats:**

*Under Table 1: Sensitive Habitat Types and Their Principle Locations: Wetlands and Riparian*

*LCP Policy, Marine and Water Resources,*

**LCP VII.D: Wetlands, 4: Policies and Recommendations**

*f.) Development in areas adjacent to environmentally sensitive habitat areas shall be sited and designed to prevent impacts which could significantly degrade such areas, and shall be compatible with the continuance of such habitat areas. The primary tool to reduce the above impacts around wetlands between the development and the edge of the wetland shall be a buffer of 100 feet in width. A buffer of less than 100 feet may be utilized where it can be determined that there is no adverse impact on the wetland. A determination to be done in cooperation with the California Dept. of Fish and Game and the County's determination shall be based on specific findings as to the adequacy of the proposed buffer to protect the identified resource.*

**LCP Policy, Marine and Water Resources, VII. D. Wetlands:**

*4. g. Due to the scale of the constraints maps, questions may arise as to the specific boundary limits of an identified environmentally sensitive habitat area. Where there is a dispute over boundary or location of an environmentally sensitive habitats area, the following may be requested of the applicant:*

- i.) A base map delineating topographic lines, adjacent roads, location of dikes, levees, flood control channels and tide gates.*
- ii.) Vegetation map*
- iii.) Soils map*

*Review of this information shall be in cooperation with the Dept. of Fish and Game and the County's determination shall be based upon specific findings as to whether an area is or is not an environmentally sensitive habitat area based on land use plan criteria, definition, and criteria included in commission guidelines for wetland and other wet environmentally sensitive habitat areas as adopted February 4, 1981. The Dept. of Fish and Game shall have up to fifteen days upon receipt of County notice to provide review and cooperation.*

**LCP VII.E: Riparian Vegetation, 4: Policies a:**

*Riparian vegetation shall be maintained along streams, creeks and sloughs and other water courses within the Coastal Zone for their qualities as wildlife habitat, stream buffer zones, and bank stabilization.*

**LCP Policy, Marine and Water Resources, VI. C:**

- 1. The County seeks to maintain and where feasible enhance the existing quality of all marine and water resources.*
- 3. All surface and subsurface waters shall be maintained at the highest level of quality to insure the safety of the public health and the biological productivity of coastal waters.*
- 4. Wastes from industrial, agricultural, domestic or other uses shall not impair or contribute significantly to a cumulative impairment of water quality to the extent of causing a public health hazard or adversely impacting the biological productivity of coastal waters.*
- 6. Environmentally sensitive habitat areas shall be protected against any significant disruption of habitat values, and only uses dependent on such resources shall be allowed within such areas. Development in areas adjacent to environmentally sensitive habitat areas shall be sited and designed to prevent impacts which would significantly degrade such areas, and shall be compatible with the continuance of such habitat areas.*

Thank you,

Eileen Cooper, Vice President, Board

Signature on File

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# Friends of Del Norte, *Committed to our environment since 1973*

A nonprofit, membership based conservation group, advocating sound environmental region. PO Box 229, Gasquet, CA 95543 707-954-BIRD

EXHIBIT NO. 7

APPEAL NO.

A-1-DNC-11-019 - CALTRANS

PREVIOUS CORRESPONDENCE  
FROM FRIENDS OF DEL NORTE  
SUBMITTED TO COUNTY PLANNING  
COMMISSION ON 4/6/11 AT THE  
SUBJECT PROJECT HEARING

March 25, 2011

ATT: Del Norte County Planning

REGARDING Project: Dr. Fine Bridge, Coastal Grading, Geotech drilling phase 2

Steven Grantham, Steve\_Grantham@dot.ca.gov

California Department of Transportation, District 1, 707-445-7815

P.O. Box 3700, Eureka, CA 95502-3700

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this project, located in a biologically sensitive riparian and wetland coastal area, and within a Federally designated Wild and Scenic River.

The identification and extent of wetlands and riparian habitat is important, and is considered ESHA under Del Norte County Local Coastal Plan

The identification of and extent of wetland areas, as defined by California Coastal Standards, or one criteria delineation, has not yet been exhibited, and needs to be provided. Wetland replacement at a rate of 4 to 1 should be based on accurate delineations. I have visited the site with a biologist from Cal Trans last spring during phase 1 geotech drilling. The biologist confirmed that there are extensive wetlands and frog habitat throughout the access area.

There is evidence of some previous grading disturbance of wetlands and riparian habitat on the northwest side of the bridge. However, the wetlands and riparian habitat are now partially recovered. Red-legged Frogs, a listed species of concern, as well as numerous other amphibians (thousands of tree frogs) inhabit the high quality wetlands and ponded areas of the northwestern side that Caltrans intends to use for access.

Since Caltrans claims to have previously disturbed this area during geotech retrofit, please provide the wetland delineation and wetland replacement mitigation measures that you should have provided with the previous seismic retrofit project.

Also, Black-capped Chickadee, and Willow Flycatchers are designated species of importance in these riparian habitats. The riparian habitat shows partial/limited disturbance, now a narrow trail. Stream crossings and significant clearing and grading will be necessary. Please provide adequate mitigation measures. Please include the previous mitigation measures taken for the seismic retrofit.

There appears to be less impactful access alternatives to the proposed project road on the northwest side of the bridge. The barge could access some of the northern drill points. And the existing access along the notheast side of the bridge could provide access to the other points.

Thank you,  
Eileen Cooper  
2644 Roy Ave  
Crescent City, CA 95531  
707-465-8904

Signature on File

Signature on File

HANDED OUT BY STAFF  
PLANNING COMMISSION  
MEETING OF

April 6, 2011

RECEIVED

APR - 5 2011

PLANNING  
COUNTY OF DEL NORTE

CALIFORNIA COASTAL COMMISSION  
 NORTH COAST AREA  
 REMONT, SUITE 2000  
 FRANCISCO, CA 94105-2219  
 (415) 904-5260

Page 1 of 4  
 Date: July 31, 1996  
 Permit No. 1-96-10



**COASTAL DEVELOPMENT PERMIT**

On July 10, 1996, the California Coastal Commission granted to  
**CALTRANS, DISTRICT 1**  
 this permit subject to the attached Standard and Special conditions, for  
 development consisting of

retrofitting the Highway 101 (Dr. Fine) Bridge over the Smith River to meet current seismic safety standards by: (1) constructing a temporary accessway on the north bank and two temporary accessways on the south bank of the river so that construction equipment can access the area under the bridge; (2) constructing infill walls at piers 5, 6, 9, 10, & 16 and enlarging the footings of these piers with additional concrete and steel piles; (3) installing 6-ft-diameter CIDH piles at the abutments; (4) installing confinement collars at piers 11 and 15; (5) providing additional longitudinal and transverse restraints at the deck level for span 12; (6) strengthening the joints between the approach spans and the girders of the bridge to reduce movement during an earthquake; and (7) mitigating for the disturbance to riparian habitat from the construction of the temporary access roads by removing the fill and/or wooden ramps used to access the work areas and by replanting riparian vegetation in selected areas,

more specifically described in the application file in the Commission offices.

The development is within the coastal zone in Del Norte County at Highway 101 (Dr. Fine) Bridge over the Smith River, 8 miles north of Crescent City.

Issued on behalf of the California Coastal Commission by

<b>EXHIBIT NO. 8</b>
APPEAL NO. A-1-DNC-11-019 CALTRANS CDP PERMIT 1-96-010 (CALTRANS, SEISMIC RETROFIT OF BRIDGE) APPROVED BY COASTAL COMM. 7/10/96 & ACKNOWLEDGED BY CALTRANS STAFF REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE ON 8/12/96 (1 of 4)

PETER DOUGLAS  
 Executive Director

By: James J. Muth  
 Title: Coastal Planner

**ACKNOWLEDGMENT**

The undersigned permittee acknowledges receipt of this permit and agrees to abide by all terms and conditions thereof.

The undersigned permittee acknowledges that Government Code Section 818.4 which states in pertinent part, that: "A public entity is not liable for injury caused by the issuance. . . of any permit. . ." applies to the issuance of this permit.

**IMPORTANT:** THIS PERMIT IS NOT VALID UNLESS AND UNTIL A COPY OF THE PERMIT WITH THE SIGNED ACKNOWLEDGEMENT HAS BEEN RETURNED TO THE COMMISSION OFFICE. 14 Cal. Admin. Code Section 13158(a).

August 12, 1996  
 Date

Deborah A. Hirsch  
 Signature of Permittee

COASTAL DEVELOPMENT PERMIT

Page 2 of 4  
Permit No. 1-96-10

STANDARD CONDITIONS:

1. Notice of Receipt and Acknowledgment. The permit is not valid and development shall not commence until a copy of the permit, signed by the permittee or authorized agent, acknowledging receipt of the permit and acceptance of the terms and conditions, is returned to the Commission office.
2. Expiration. If development has not commenced, the permit will expire two years from the date on which the Commission voted on the application. Development shall be pursued in a diligent manner and completed in a reasonable period of time. Application for extension of the permit must be made prior to the expiration date.
3. Compliance. All development must occur in strict compliance with the proposal as set forth in the application for permit, subject to any special conditions set forth below. Any deviation from the approved plans must be reviewed and approved by the staff and may require Commission approval.
4. Interpretation. Any questions of intent or interpretation of any condition will be resolved by the Executive Director or the Commission.
5. Inspections. The Commission staff shall be allowed to inspect the site and the project during its development, subject to 24-hour advance notice.
6. Assignment. The permit may be assigned to any qualified person, provided assignee files with the Commission an affidavit accepting all terms and conditions of the permit.
7. Terms and Conditions Run with the Land. These terms and conditions shall be perpetual, and it is the intention of the Commission and the permittee to bind all future owners and possessors of the subject property to the terms and conditions.

SPECIAL CONDITIONS:

1. California Dept. of Fish and Game Review.

PRIOR TO THE COMMENCEMENT OF CONSTRUCTION, the applicant shall submit to the Executive Director evidence of an approved 1601 streambed alteration agreement for the project from the California Department of Fish and Game.

2. U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Review.

PRIOR TO THE COMMENCEMENT OF CONSTRUCTION, the Applicant shall submit to the Executive Director evidence that the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has granted permission for the project authorized herein.

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COASTAL DEVELOPMENT PERMIT

Page 3 of 4  
Permit No. 1-96-10

3. Disposal of Construction Debris.

All construction debris shall be removed from the site upon completion of the project. Disposal of any of this material in the coastal zone at a location other than in a licensed landfill will require a coastal development permit.

4. State Lands Commission Review.

PRIOR TO ISSUANCE of the coastal development permit, the applicant shall submit to the Executive Director a written determination from the State Lands Commission that:

- a. No State lands are involved in the development; or
- b. State lands are involved in the development and all permits required by the State Lands Commission have been obtained; or
- c. State lands may be involved in the development, but pending a final determination an agreement has been made with the State Lands Commission for the project to proceed without prejudice to that determination.

5. Protection of Riparian Vegetation.

a. Field Flagging to Delineate Perimeter of Construction Areas. PRIOR TO THE COMMENCEMENT OF CONSTRUCTION, the Applicant shall delineate on the ground at the site with flags, or other obvious markers, the perimeter of the temporary accessways and construction areas which will be disturbed by the project as generally shown on the submitted site plans. The applicant shall maintain the markers in place during project construction. All construction operations shall be conducted in a manner that will minimize disturbance of any riparian vegetation that is adjacent to, and outside of, the project's accessway and construction areas. All construction workers who will be working at the site shall be instructed of the need to minimize disturbance to riparian vegetation.

b. Mitigation of Habitat Impacts From Construction of Access Road on the Southwest End of the Bridge. The applicant shall protect and restore the riparian habitat in the location of the temporary access road to be constructed off the southwest end of the bridge (at Location "A" on the site plan) in the manner described in the applicant's submittal dated May 10, 1996. Specifically, the vegetation that needs to be cleared shall be cut to ground level or crushed rather than grubbed out, a temporary wooden access ramp shall be constructed over the cleared area, and the ramp shall be removed upon project completion.

3 of 4

COASTAL DEVELOPMENT PERMIT

Page 4 of 4  
Permit No. 1-96-10

c. Revised Riparian Habitat Restoration and Mitigation Plan. PRIOR TO THE COMMENCEMENT OF CONSTRUCTION, the applicant shall submit, for the review and approval of the Executive Director, a revised riparian habitat restoration and mitigation plan for the habitat affected by the construction of temporary access roads in the area under the south side of the bridge structure identified as Location "B" on the site plan in the applicant's submittal dated May 10, 1996, and the area off of the northwest end of the bridge identified as Location "D" on the site plan, and the area under the north end of the bridge identified as Location "E" on the site plan. The revised plan shall provide for revegetating the project's temporary accessways and construction work areas with riparian vegetation at an equivalent, size of coverage, number, density, and species type that currently exists at the site. The revised plan shall provide for monitoring of the success of the replanted riparian vegetation in meeting these standards over at least a three year period. The revised plan shall provide that all gravel placed within the temporary accessways shall be removed from the site. The revised plan shall provide for the placement of topsoil at least one foot deep over the expanded and below grade footings at bents 5, 6, 9, 10, and 16. The revised plan shall be prepared by a biologist or botanist who is knowledgeable about riparian vegetation and its restoration. The revised plan shall be prepared in consultation with the Department of Fish and Game. The revised plan shall include: (1) a list of the riparian plant species which will be disturbed by the project; (2) a map of the area that shows where restoration will occur; (3) measurements of the size of coverage (in square feet), number, and average density of the existing populations of the riparian plant species which will be disturbed by the project; (4) measurements of the size of coverage (in square feet), number, and average density of the proposed populations of the riparian plant species which will replace the riparian plant species disturbed by the project; (5) a narrative describing all of the procedures to be followed in creating the required new area of riparian vegetation, including time of planting; (6) a planting plan that details the location, size, and species of all plants to be planted; (7) an erosion control element that details how the soil surface will be stabilized while the new riparian plantings are becoming established; (8) a monitoring schedule that provides for the submittal of yearly monitoring reports for the review and approval of the Executive Director; and (9) a procedure for redressing problems in reestablishing habitat values identified by future monitoring reports. The applicant shall implement the revised plan approved by the Executive Director.

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**EXHIBIT NO. 9**

**APPEAL NO. A-1-DNC-11-019  
CALTRANS**

**EXCERPT FROM NOTICE OF  
COMPLETION & ENVIRONMENTAL  
DOCUMENT, INCLUDING NOTICE OF  
PREPARATION OF DRAFT EIR FOR  
DR.FINE BRIDGE REPLACEMENT  
PROJECT, DATED 10/18/20 (1 of 16)**

**Notice of Completion & Environmental Document Transmittal**

Mail to: State Clearinghouse, P.O. Box 3044, Sacramento, CA 95812-3044 (916) 445-0613  
For Hand Delivery/Street Address: 1400 Tenth Street, Sacramento, CA 95814

**Project Title:** Dr. Fine Bridge Replacement

**Lead Agency:** California Department of Transportation

**Contact Person:** Steven Grantham

**Mailing Address:** P.O. Box 3700

**Phone:** 707-445-7815

**City:** Eureka

**Zip:** 95502

**County:** Humboldt

**Project Location:** County: Del Norte City/Nearest Community: Smith River

**Cross Streets:** Route 101 (U.S. 101), Lake Earl Drive, Route 197, and Fred P. Haight Drive Zip Code: 95567

**Longitude/Latitude (degrees, minutes and seconds):** 41 ° 52 ' 30 " N / 124 ° 07 ' 30 " W Total Acres: 10

**Assessor's Parcel No.:** various Section: 11 Twp.: 17N Range: 1W Base: HM

**Within 2 Miles:** State Hwy #: 101,197 Waterways: Smith River

Airports: \_\_\_\_\_ Railways: \_\_\_\_\_ Schools: Redwood Union School

**Document Type:**

- |   |  |                                    |  |
|---|--|------------------------------------|--|
| CEQA: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NOP | <input type="checkbox"/> Draft EIR                 | NEPA: <input type="checkbox"/> NOI | Other: <input type="checkbox"/> Joint Document |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Early Cons           | <input type="checkbox"/> Supplement/Subsequent EIR | <input type="checkbox"/> EA        | <input type="checkbox"/> Final Document        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Neg Dec              | (Prior SCH No.) _____                              | <input type="checkbox"/> Draft EIS | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mit Neg Dec          | Other: _____                                       | <input type="checkbox"/> FONSI     |  |

**Local Action Type:**

- |   |   |  |   |
|---|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> General Plan Update    | <input type="checkbox"/> Specific Plan            | <input type="checkbox"/> Rezone                            | <input type="checkbox"/> Annexation                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> General Plan Amendment | <input type="checkbox"/> Master Plan              | <input type="checkbox"/> Prezone                           | <input type="checkbox"/> Redevelopment              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> General Plan Element   | <input type="checkbox"/> Planned Unit Development | <input type="checkbox"/> Use Permit                        | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Coastal Reclaim |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Community Plan         | <input type="checkbox"/> Site Plan                | <input type="checkbox"/> Land Division (Subdivision, etc.) | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____               |

**RECEIVED**  
NOV 20 2010  
CALIFORNIA  
COASTAL COMMISSION

**Development Type:**

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Residential: Units _____ Acres _____                 | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Transportation: Type _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Office: Sq.ft. _____ Acres _____ Employees _____     | <input type="checkbox"/> Mining: Mineral _____                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial: Sq.ft. _____ Acres _____ Employees _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> Power: Type _____ MWD _____           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial: Sq.ft. _____ Acres _____ Employees _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> Waste Treatment: Type _____ MGD _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Educational: _____                                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Hazardous Waste: Type _____           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Recreational: _____                                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____                          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Water Facilities: Type _____ MGD _____               |  |

**Project Issues Discussed in Document:**

- |  |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Aesthetic/Visual         | <input type="checkbox"/> Fiscal                                | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Recreation/Parks     | <input type="checkbox"/> Vegetation                    |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Agricultural Land        | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Flood Plain/Flooding       | <input type="checkbox"/> Schools/Universities            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Water Quality      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Air Quality                         | <input type="checkbox"/> Forest Land/Fire Hazard               | <input type="checkbox"/> Septic Systems                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Water Supply/Groundwater      |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Archeological/Historical | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Geologic/Seismic           | <input type="checkbox"/> Sewer Capacity                  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Wetland/Riparian   |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Biological Resources     | <input type="checkbox"/> Minerals                              | <input type="checkbox"/> Soil Erosion/Compaction/Grading | <input type="checkbox"/> Growth Inducement             |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Coastal Zone             | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Noise                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Solid Waste                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Land Use                      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Drainage/Absorption                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Population/Housing Balance            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Toxic/Hazardous      | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Cumulative Effects |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Economic/Jobs                       | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public Services/Facilities | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Traffic/Circulation  | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____                  |

**Present Land Use/Zoning/General Plan Designation:**

Transportation/Coastal Zone/Smith River Planning Subarea/Resources Conservation Area designation

**Project Description:** (please use a separate page if necessary)

This project will replace the existing Highway 101 Bridge over the Smith River. The existing bridge is physically deficient and functionally obsolete. The existing 1050 feet long bridge was built in 1940. The bridge is approximately 32 feet wide, consisting of two 12' wide lanes, 1-foot wide shoulders, a 2-foot wide raised concrete sidewalk and concrete bridge rail on each side. The new bridge will be approximately 62' wide, consisting of two 12' wide through lanes, a 12' wide acceleration lane for southbound traffic merging from Route 197, standard 8-foot shoulders, a 5-foot wide pedestrian walkway, barriers and rails.

Note: The State Clearinghouse will assign identification numbers for all new projects. If a SCH number already exists for a project (e.g. Notice of Preparation or previous draft document) please fill in.

## Reviewing Agencies Checklist

Lead Agencies may recommend State Clearinghouse distribution by marking agencies below with and "X".  
If you have already sent your document to the agency please denote that with an "S".

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Air Resources Board                            | <input type="checkbox"/> Office of Emergency Services                        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Boating & Waterways, Department of             | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Office of Historic Preservation          |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> California Highway Patrol           | <input type="checkbox"/> Office of Public School Construction                |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Caltrans District # <u>1</u>        | <input type="checkbox"/> Parks & Recreation, Department of                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Caltrans Division of Aeronautics               | <input type="checkbox"/> Pesticide Regulation, Department of                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Caltrans Planning                              | <input type="checkbox"/> Public Utilities Commission                         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Central Valley Flood Protection Board          | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Regional WQCB # <u>1</u>                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Coachella Valley Mtns. Conservancy             | <input type="checkbox"/> Resources Agency                                    |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Coastal Commission                  | <input type="checkbox"/> S.F. Bay Conservation & Development Comm.           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Colorado River Board                           | <input type="checkbox"/> San Gabriel & Lower L.A. Rivers & Mtns. Conservancy |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Conservation, Department of         | <input type="checkbox"/> San Joaquin River Conservancy                       |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Corrections, Department of          | <input type="checkbox"/> Santa Monica Mtns. Conservancy                      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Delta Protection Commission                    | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> State Lands Commission                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Education, Department of                       | <input type="checkbox"/> SWRCB: Clean Water Grants                           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Energy Commission                              | <input type="checkbox"/> SWRCB: Water Quality                                |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Fish & Game Region # <u>1</u>       | <input type="checkbox"/> SWRCB: Water Rights                                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Food & Agriculture, Department of              | <input type="checkbox"/> Tahoe Regional Planning Agency                      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Forestry and Fire Protection, Department of    | <input type="checkbox"/> Toxic Substances Control, Department of             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> General Services, Department of                | <input type="checkbox"/> Water Resources, Department of                      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Health Services, Department of                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Housing & Community Development                | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Integrated Waste Management Board              |  |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Native American Heritage Commission |  |

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**Local Public Review Period (to be filled in by lead agency)**

Starting Date \_\_\_\_\_ Ending Date \_\_\_\_\_

-----

**Lead Agency (Complete if applicable):**

Consulting Firm: \_\_\_\_\_ Applicant: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_ City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Contact: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

-----

Signature of Lead Agency Representative:  \_\_\_\_\_ Date: 10.18.10

Authority cited: Section 21083, Public Resources Code. Reference: Section 21161, Public Resources Code.

2016

SCH NO. \_\_\_\_\_

# NOTICE OF PREPARATION

To: State Clearinghouse  
Office of Planning and Research  
P.O. Box 3044  
  
Sacramento, CA 95812

From: California Dept. of Transportation  
P.O. Box 3700  
Attn: Steven Grantham  
  
Eureka, CA 95502

**Subject: Notice of Preparation of a Draft Environmental Impact Report**  
*Reference: California Code of Regulations, Title 14, (CEQA Guidelines) Sections 15082(a), 15103, 15375.*

**Project Title:** Dr. Fine Bridge Replacement Project

**Project Location:** The proposed project is located north of Crescent City, in Del Norte County on US Route 101 (US 101) at post-miles 35.8 to 36.5. The project would replace the existing Smith River Bridge (Br. No. 1-20), commonly known as the Dr. Fine Bridge, which was built in 1940.

**Project Description:** The project would replace the physically deficient and functionally obsolete Dr. Fine Bridge with a two-lane structure. The structure would possess an acceleration lane and standard shoulders that meet current design standards and demands. The proposed bridge would include two through lanes (12-feet each), an acceleration lane for southbound traffic (12 feet wide), and two standard 8-foot shoulders to meet current design standards. Additionally, there would be a 5-foot wide pedestrian walkway added to the west side of the structure. There would also be see-through traffic barriers on each side of the travel way and a pedestrian handrail on the outside of the walkway. Depending on the width needed for the traffic barriers and hand railing, the total planned width of the new bridge would be approximately 62 feet.

**Purpose of Notice:** This Notice of Preparation indicates that the California Department of Transportation will be the lead agency for federal and state environmental review and will prepare an environmental impact report/environmental assessment (EIR/EA) for the project. Your participation as a responsible agency or interested member of the public is requested in the preparation and review of this document.

Caltrans seeks the views of agencies, public interest groups, and interested individuals with regard to the scope and content of the environmental documents as is relevant to statutory responsibilities and public interest. Agencies may refer to the EIR/EA when considering permit applications or other approvals for the project.

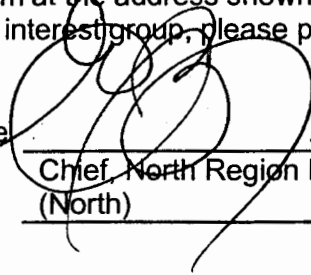
A more detailed project description, location map, and the potential environmental effects are contained in the attached materials.

Due to the time limits mandated by State law, your response must be sent at the earliest possible date but not later than 30 days after receipt of this notice.

Please direct your response to Steven Grantham at the address shown above or by telephone at (707) 445-7815. If responding for an agency or interest group, please provide a persons name and contact information.

Date 10.18.10

3 of 16

Signature   
Title Chief, North Region Environmental Services  
(North)

## **Dr. Fine Bridge Replacement Project**

**01-DN-101-PM 35.8-36.8**

**EA 01-43640**

### **Project Description**

This project would replace the Dr. Fine Bridge (Smith River Bridge Number 1-20) with a new bridge consisting of two through lanes (12-feet each), an acceleration lane for southbound traffic (12 feet wide), and standard 8-foot shoulders to meet current design standards. Additionally, there would be a 5-foot wide pedestrian walkway added to the west side of the structure. There would also be see-through traffic barriers on each side of the travel way and a pedestrian handrail on the outside of the walkway.

### **Scope of Work Description**

Project features include:

- Approximately 75,000 cubic yards of imported borrow would be needed
- The project includes modifications to the existing drainage systems, involving new and/or modifications to cross culverts and down drains. Rock slope protection (RSP) may be needed at the abutments, and RSP would be installed at culvert outlets to help prevent scour. Concentrated flows would be collected in drains and channels.
- Underground and overhead communication and electric utility facilities would need to be relocated. Conduits would be provided on the new structure for communication lines.
- Staging areas would be needed both north and south of the river. Staging areas have yet to be determined.
- Right of way acquisition would be required. The area needed depends on the ultimate alignment of the preferred alternative. Temporary easements would be obtained along both sides of State Route 101 and State Route 197 for construction, access and staging areas.
- Traffic control would be needed occasionally, as some operations would be close to the existing traffic. Minor delays to the traveling public are anticipated. Bicycles and pedestrians would be accommodated thru the work zone. It is assumed that there would be some night work, but only during critical operations.
- Trestles would be used for access in and near the river. It is assumed the trestles would remain in the waterway through the year.
- Cofferdams would be used at the foundations for foundation construction and removal. It is assumed the cofferdams would remain in the waterway through the year.
- Falsework would be used to construct the new bridge. It is assumed the falsework would remain in the waterway through the year.
- The State Route 101/197 intersection (on the north) and the intersection with State Route 101/Lake Earl Drive (on the south) would need to be reconstructed.
- Lighting at the State Route 101/197 and Lake Earl Drive intersections would be improved.

- The project would incorporate re-establishment of the existing United States Geological Survey (USGS) river gage near the north side of the bridge.
- Geotechnical investigations would be done at each proposed column location and at approach fills.

### **Possible Highway Alignments**

There are four highway re-alignment alternatives that are being considered. They are:

- Construct a new bridge west (Alternative 1W) of the existing bridge.
- Construct a new bridge east (Alternative 1E) of the existing bridge.
- Construct a new bridge west (Alternative 2W) of the existing bridge in stages. Construct only the amount of roadway needed during Stage 1, then remove the existing bridge and construct the remaining portion of the bridge.
- Construct a new bridge west (Alternative 2E) of the existing bridge in stages. Construct only the amount of roadway needed during Stage 1, then remove the existing bridge and construct the remaining portion of the bridge.

### **Bridge Design Variations**

A concrete box girder bridge is proposed. Variations to the soffit shape, number of columns, span lengths, aesthetics, methods of construction and other design elements are being considered.

It is expected to take a minimum of three seasons to complete the bridge replacement. The foundation work would be done during the first season. Superstructure construction would be undertaken during the second season, and demolition and cleanup would be done during the third season. Depending on the type of structure, construction may take upwards of two additional seasons.

Typical equipment used for construction and demolition include: pavers, cranes, hoe rams, pile drivers, vibratory hammers, excavators, backhoes, hauling and dump trucks, compactors, portable generators, boom trucks, concrete trucks, saws, pumps, jackhammers, site trailers, storage boxes, and mobile filtration boxes.

### Purpose and Need

The project's purpose is to replace Dr. Fine Bridge on Highway 101 over the Smith River. The project is needed because the Dr. Fine Bridge is physically deficient and functionally obsolete. Its structural members are fracture critical, and its deck and rails do not meet current standard(s). The bridge is located in a scour and seismically vulnerable location.

The purpose of the project is to replace the physically deficient and functionally obsolete Dr. Fine Bridge with a two-lane structure, with an acceleration lane and standard shoulders to meet current design standards and demands. Dr. Fine Bridge, built in 1940, has exceeded its 50-year design life and is degrading by several mechanisms. The bridge was identified as having fracture critical steel members, a narrow deck, nonstandard bridge rail, is in a potentially scour and seismically vulnerable location.

This project is needed to address the physical deficiencies of the structure. Widening the shoulder to 8 feet will improve safety for motorists and bicyclists, as this portion of the Highway 101 is part of the Pacific Coast Bike Route. The proposed two-lane bridge with an acceleration lane will bring the highway up to current standards and facilitate the safe merging of traffic from Route 197 to southbound Route 101.

6 of 16



**Dr. Fine Bridge Replacement  
DN-101 Post Miles 35.8 – 36.5**

**Summary of potential environmental impacts:**

**PERMANENT IMPACTS:** Based on the current project description, there would be permanent environmental impacts resulting from the project.

**BIOLOGICAL IMPACTS**

Primarily due to a slight alignment shift as part of the bridge replacement, the project as currently designed is anticipated to have permanent wetland impacts. Design measures to minimize the footprint where feasible would be incorporated into the project plans.

Anadromous fish are expected to be harmed or killed during project construction and demolition.

**Wetland impacts:** Approximately 2.7 acres of permanent wetlands impacts are anticipated for the western alignment. Approximately 1.8 acres of permanent wetland impacts are anticipated for the eastern alignment.

**Riparian and Essential Fish Habitat:** Approximately 2.5 acres of permanent riparian impacts are anticipated for the western alignment. Approximately 1.7 acres of permanent riparian impacts are anticipated for the eastern alignment. Riparian area is a constituent of essential fish habitat.

**Anadromous fish impacts:** An indeterminate number of anadromous fish would be taken during the project.

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCES**

Archaeological analysis within the project's Area of Potential Effects (APE), including an archaeological survey and exploratory archaeological testing, has determined that no historic resources would be affected by any of the alignments.

**COMMUNITY IMPACTS**

**Agricultural land:** There is likely to be permanent loss of .2 acres prime agriculture land regardless of the alignment.

**Recreational access:** There is unlikely to be permanent loss of access to the Smith River for recreational purposes.

**Aesthetics:** There is unlikely to be permanent impacts to aesthetics in the project area.

### **PHYSICAL IMPACTS**

**Geology:** The new bridge would replace a bridge that is susceptible to earthquake.

**Hazards and Hazardous Waste:** There is unlikely to be permanent exposure to hazards or hazardous waste.

**Hydrology and Water Quality:** There is unlikely to be permanent degradation of the local hydrology and water quality.

**TEMPORARY and CONSTRUCTION IMPACTS:** Temporary impacts during construction are expected in the following areas:

**Biological impacts:** Incidental take of listed fish (coho salmon) could occur from exposure to turbidity and noise impacts during construction and demolition of the bridges. Construction and demolition methods that would minimize these impacts are being considered.

**Community Impacts:** Construction of the bridge over three to four construction seasons is expected to impact commuters. Ingress and egress at Lake Earl Drive, Route 197 and Fred D. Haight Drive would be provided throughout the duration of construction.

**Recreation:** Recreational fishing could be affected when the season overlaps with construction season.

**Water Quality:** Three to four years of construction would have temporary construction related impacts to the Smith Rivers water quality. Best management practices would be in place to ensure that these impacts are minimized.

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# CEQA Environmental Checklist

01-DN-101

35.8/36.5 P.M

E.A. 436400

This checklist identifies physical, biological, social and economic factors that might be affected by the proposed project. In many cases, background studies performed in connection with the projects indicate no impacts. A NO IMPACT answer in the last column reflects this determination. Where there is a need for clarifying discussion, the discussion is included either following the applicable section of the checklist or is within the body of the environmental document itself. The words "significant" and "significance" used throughout the following checklist are related to CEQA, not NEPA, impacts. The questions in this form are intended to encourage the thoughtful assessment of impacts and do not represent thresholds of significance.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<b>I. AESTHETICS:</b> Would the project:				
a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input 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"/>
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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>II. AGRICULTURE AND FOREST RESOURCES:</b> 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:				
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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input 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"/>

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

**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"/>
e) Create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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

**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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to §15064.5?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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"/>
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"/>

**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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
ii) Strong seismic ground shaking?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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

**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 type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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"/>
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 type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f) Otherwise substantially degrade water quality?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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

**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"/>

**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"/>

**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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Exposure of persons to or generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input 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"/>

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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"/>
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"/>
) 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"/>

**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"/>
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"/>

**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 type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Police protection?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
--	--------------------------------	---------------------------------------	------------------------------	-----------

**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"/> |
| 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"/> |

**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"/> |

**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"/> |

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

**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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input 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"/>

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**CALIFORNIA COASTAL COMMISSION**

NORTH COAST DISTRICT OFFICE  
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November 18, 2010

Steven Grantham, Associate Environmental Planner  
California Department of Transportation, District 1  
Environmental Management Branch  
Post Office Box 3700  
Eureka, CA 95502-3700

**EXHIBIT NO. 10****APPEAL NO.**

A-1-DNC-11-019

CALTRANS

**COMMENT LETTER TO  
CALTRANS ON NOP (EX. 9)  
DATED 11/18/10 (1 of 7)**

Regarding: Dr. Fine Bridge Replacement/Del Norte County/Hwy 101

Dear Mr. Grantham:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Notice of Preparation for the Dr. Fine Bridge Replacement Draft Environmental Impact Report. The NOP was received by the North Coast District Office on October 26, 2010, with additional notice from the Governor's Office of Planning and Research received on October 28, 2010. We have not yet received the Natural Environmental Study (NES) that we requested, which may have supplemented the NOP in a manner that addressed many of our concerns. We will look forward to reviewing the NOP when it does arrive, and thank you in advance for providing it when it becomes available.

The NOP is a very brief summary of potential project impacts and does not offer the degree of information that would allow the Commission staff to develop focused, detailed comments that would address all of the information that we require during the eventual coastal development permit application filing review. However, with the NES, and the draft EIR subsequently available, we look forward to a future opportunity to consider the project further.

When Caltrans requests comments from the Commission staff during Caltrans' environmental review process, the Commission staff attempts to identify possible concerns that typically emerge during the permit review process at a later date, so that Caltrans has the opportunity to address these concerns and to modify the proposed project to avoid impacts to coastal resources at the earliest stage possible. Caltrans has requested that the Commission staff offer this early feedback, and we agree that it is a mutually beneficial opportunity to resolve conflicts in favor of efficiency and the protection of the coastal environment.

The Commission staff comments must of necessity be very preliminary given the summary nature of the NOP. As the comments are general, and aimed at encouraging Caltrans to provide a comprehensive analysis of project alternatives, differential review of project components that may reduce impacts on coastal resources, etc., we hope that Caltrans staff will contact us if there

is any issue area that might benefit from a more comprehensive preliminary analysis as additional information is gathered.

Staff notes in particular that the Coastal Commission review process weighs the review of alternatives heavily, and the ultimate approvability of a project often hinges upon whether all options to avoid or reduce impacts to coastal resources have been identified and incorporated into a project. For this reason, Commission staff encourages Caltrans to show the details of the assessment process concerning designs, alternatives, construction processes (such as different pier designs and installation requirements and the differences in potential hydroacoustic impacts that might be associated with each) to ensure that an expansive range of alternatives is provided and that the analytical process of sifting the alternatives is transparent and comprehensive.

Staff recommends as well that the preparers of the environmental impact report refer to the information requirements of the coastal development permit application (available on the Coastal Commission's website) as an additional resource to ensure that the EIR provides maximum utility for Caltrans during the subsequent permit review process.

#### Range of alternatives and project components

Commission staff is concerned that the NOP has not included the full range of alternatives and options for bridge design and construction methods that may be available, nor has the NOP included sufficient information on alternatives for bridge support and related installation systems that have the potential to reduce short- and long-term impacts on coastal resources (both from construction and operations perspectives). The NOP does not identify the range of potential locations and limits of staging and access area alternatives. That information may provide a "feedback loop" that helps to better refine the *overall* impact profiles of each alignment alternative, for example.

#### Signalization/smart metering traffic control for rural location

The Commission staff also requests a detailed analysis of the option of signaling the intersection of 197 and 101 so that safer left turns are possible without the addition of a third 12-foot-wide acceleration lane on the bridge. There does not appear to be a high volume of traffic calling for such a turn, and the impact on traffic wait-time appears therefore to be of little concern. Adding 12 feet of width to the new bridge (which, as proposed, would be almost double the size of the existing bridge), is an impact that could possibly be eliminated by considering other management strategies. The EIR should consider this possibility. As the three-lane configuration is aimed primarily at achieving STAA oversized truck requirements, how many STAA trucks are arriving at that intersection from the east on a daily basis presently (cite traffic study data for the past 5 years or other STAA studies that have been prepared, and include the pertinent information in the EIR)? Upgrading to STAA requirements is a different

analysis under the Coastal Act than is the repair and/or replacement of a deficient structure. The purpose and need statement should more clearly address this component of the project.

Alternatives Analysis should provide side-by-side weighting of all impact differentials

The EIR should equally evaluate the varying alignment options (East or West, or Easterly Half-Width, or Westerly Half-Width), and should include the evaluation of differing potential designs and installation methods, access, and staging areas, as well as reduced design footprints pursuant to comments below (reducing shoulders, limiting number of lanes, etc.) – side-by-side for each alignment option.

Wetland impacts under the Coastal Act

Staff notes that half-width construction, while typically deemed more expensive by Caltrans due in part to the more complex traffic management that is typically required, also tends to reduce the impacts to wetland habitat. Coastal Act Section 30233 requires that the alternative that least impacts coastal resources, particularly wetlands, be implemented. Thus a comprehensive analysis of the overall impacts to coastal resources of each design alternative, considered on each alignment alternative, and weighed with respect to the support structures that each option requires (including number of piers in the water, overall width of the resultant bridge, etc.) must be provided in the EIR, and should specifically identify all types of habitat and any sensitive species that each comprehensively assessed alternative would affect. This portion of the analysis may be critical to eventual project approval under the Coastal Act requirements protective of wetlands.

Coastal Commission delineation requirements

Differential riparian corridor impacts of varying geotechnical investigations that each option would require should be included in the comprehensive analysis. As always, Caltrans must ensure that the Coastal Commission standards for wetland delineation and impact analysis are relied on in the environmental analysis so that the results will be valid for coastal development permit review purposes.

Summary comments

Commission staff requests that the EIR consider and fully analyze, without screening out prior to publication, a complete range of project options, including these requirements (which have been summarized from composite comments of various members of the Commission staff):

- Disclose and analyze all potential alternatives developed by Caltrans headquarters structure design during advance planning.

- Deployment of half-width construction strategy, potentially incorporating detour combinations outside of the bridge construction area, temporary signalization, one-way traffic management, etc., depending on season and specific project activities, to reduce the project's environmental footprint as the leading priority.
- Use of steel girders to eliminate falsework, reduce pile driving impacts, shorten construction time.
- Use of pre-cast girders to eliminate falsework, and include differential assessment of associated number of piers in the river.
- An option to signalize the State Route 197 Intersection.
- An option to reduce through-speeds to a more manageable and greenhouse gas emissions-reducing 55 mph. There is no reason for highway speeds greater than 55 mph in the constrained area of a bridge with T-intersection so close to the crossing. Possibly a speed limit of 35 or 45 mph should be considered for approaching traffic, in combination with a signal, and warning lights to slow approaching traffic when the signal for a left turn from 197 is triggered.
- Determine which alternative, including half-width construction, would best reduce impacts to wetlands and particularly impacts to mature, high-quality riparian habitat.
- Reduction of width to combine the bicycle shoulder and pedestrian corridor into one 5-foot-wide corridor on the west side of the bridge, reduce the shoulders otherwise to retain only a shoulder (width to be determined) on the east side (the third 12-ft. lane, likely occupied very infrequently, would be a surrogate shoulder for the west side, if it is included in the final design (bicyclists could share the rail-separated five-ft.-wide multi-modal corridor on the west side (a crash-tested guard rail separation is assumed).
- The STAA acceleration lane on the southbound side of the bridge deserves separate consideration. If that lane is ultimately cleared for inclusion in the bridge design, it could double as a shoulder buffer on the west side of the bridge so that part of its width would be compensated for. In the unlikely case of a stalled vehicle on that side, an occupied acceleration lane would simply require than merging traffic rely only on the regular southbound lane, and the rail-separated five-foot-wide multi-modal corridor would provide additional protection for southbound bicyclists as well as pedestrians, further reducing the need for a paved 8-ft-wide shoulder in addition to a third 12-ft.-wide traffic lane. As such, the considerable buffer provided by the left turn for STAA truck traffic acceleration, which would be minimally occupied by traffic), reduce the shoulder on the east side to six feet in width (with 12-ft-wide traffic lanes, this provides adequate effective width). If the STAA lane is eliminated from the design, a 6-ft-wide-shoulder on the west side should be sufficient, given the adjacency of the multi-modal corridor.
- Evaluate options to eliminate the acceleration lane on the bridge, such as through a combination of speed reductions, signage, smart traffic control technologies, etc. (how many STAA truck per day does Caltrans think will be turning left onto the Dr. Fine Bridge? This information and supporting analysis of the proposed acceleration lane

- should be provided, including information regarding the need to turn left at 197 instead of 199 – the route issues should be explained). Is this third 12-ft.-wide lane essential?
- Ensure that the pedestrian-accessible corridor is crash-rail separated from vehicles and that the takeoffs back to the point of conformity also provide adequate safe transition area for pedestrians.
  - Evaluate range of alternative foundation and pier support designs and installation requirements that would reduce the number of support structures within the waters of the Smith River, and that would reduce pile driving and other installation-related impacts.
  - Analyze a complete range of staging and access options that would reduce impacts to riparian vegetation (for example, the access from the staging area presently shown on the northwest side could be taken from Haight Drive instead of cut through the riparian corridor west of the existing bridge. Staging areas should be chosen on the basis of reducing impacts rather than optimizing contractor convenience, especially in this location where there are significant developed, disturbed areas close by, as well as nearby access roads for such use.
  - Produce enlarged plans to show various alternative development footprints in plan view – the one-sheet 11 X 17-inch size is nearly impossible to read for this purpose.
  - Because Caltrans has identified so many issues with the geotechnical investigation, including how to launch barges, whether to build pads, where to cut in access roads, etc., and because all of these considerations involve differential impacts on coastal resources, it appears that selection of the bridge design and support system alternatives should be paired with the geotechnical investigation impacts associated with each of these (pier locations would vary, for example) so that an assessment of the complete context of alternative environmental impacts can be made.

#### Detailed Construction Scenario and Schedule Necessary Part of Project Description

A detailed year-by-year, season-by-season construction schedule should be developed for all site preparation, construction, and restoration/mitigation components of the project. These should include wetland and other habitat mitigation requirements at a minimum of 4:1 ratio (the ratio could be higher depending on the quality of the habitat affected, and the quality and suitability of the wetland mitigation proposal).

#### Hydroacoustic Impacts

Fisheries impacts should be assessed on a worst-case planning analysis basis. Hydroacoustic impacts of pile driving (including sheet pile installation, and installation methods relying on vibratory hammers with or without “setting” piles with impact drive) or demolition activity (we recommend that the EIR take note of the hydroacoustic impact potential of impact-based demolition techniques such as the impacts that were recorded during the Ten Mile River Bridge demolition in 2009-2010), on land or in the water, or undertaken from the bridge deck must be

considered. An analysis by a qualified acoustician should be included in the EIR and the differential analysis of impacts on all sensitive aquatic species for various project alternatives and construction options should be prepared by a qualified biologist and included in the EIR. Measures to exclude aquatic species from areas that cannot be made safe from a hydroacoustic impact perspective must be disclosed and the measures to implement exclusion identified.

The choice of support structure/pier design in turn affects the potential impacts on fisheries of implementing construction methods required for installation of that design, which has potentially significant and distinct comparative potential consequences for aquatic species. As noted above, these factors must be distinctly identified and analyzed within the context of the consideration of a complete range of alternatives.

#### Bridge Nesting/Roosting Species

The impacts to bridge nesting and roosting species should be fully assessed and mitigation measures provided. The netting off of habitat on the bridge is not in itself a mitigation measure though Caltrans describes such practices as such. The exclusion measures may reduce impacts, but the exclusion itself is an impact and as such mitigation measures that improve habitat for the affected species should be evaluated and included in the EIR. The EIR should also analyze any other measures for excluding species from the work areas, including limiting the area excluded to the minimum necessary, limiting demolition of any existing bridge components to a temporal window outside of any seasonal use by sensitive species, etc. Alternative nesting/roosting habitat for use during the excluded season should be designed and measures to deploy the alternative habitat and to monitor its use should be included. This would not necessarily forestall the need for mitigation, but would be a measure to reduce the net adverse effects of the exclusion practices, should such practices be approved.

#### Geotechnical Investigation

The Commission staff also notes that the geotechnical investigation requirements and impacts for each design/construction alternative should be included in the analysis of the impacts of the respective alternative. Commission staff has previously noted that geotechnical investigation in a manner that allows staging off the existing bridge deck (even if this results in traffic management requirements and delays) rather than building pads that extend out into the river and thus altering stream hydrology, should be differentially evaluated for least impact to coastal resources. There has been a great deal of preliminary – but changed or retracted – information from Caltrans regarding the geotechnical investigations. The EIR should reconcile and evaluate all options, with an emphasis on keeping equipment out of the river by using the bridge deck, even if that is temporarily inconvenient for traffic management. The EIR should evaluate whether vehicles could be slowly and safely piloted through a segregated area of the bridge at



Mr. Steven Grantham  
November 18, 2010  
Dr. Fine Bridge Replacement Project Notice of Preparation  
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very low speed with adequate planning and supervision for the relatively short time that the geotechnical investigation requires.

STAA improvements; cumulative impacts; disclosure

The NOP does not discuss the role of STAA improvements as a driver of the overall project footprint. There appears to be little or no discussion of the basis (STAA) for the additional acceleration lane, although the PEAR clearly states that the purpose for the additional acceleration lane is for these large, slow-moving trucks (increasing the proposed bridge width for this purpose alone by about 20%). The cumulative impacts of this portion of the project should be considered together with the 199/197 STAA improvement project (which is also undergoing CEQA review?) Are these separate projects, or two parts of the same 199/197 STAA upgrade project?

Visual impact analysis; aesthetic comparisons of alternatives

A complete visual impact analysis that combines bridge rail design options, bridge silhouette options, permanent project area lighting (no architectural lighting or non-essential signage, digital information boards, etc., should be allowed due to the highly scenic context of the project and the sensitivity of the biological resources that would be affected by light pollution) should be included. Aesthetically, the variable depth bridge design option appears pleasing, but should be compared with other options, and all options should also be assessed for relationship to environmental impacts (should they differ in this regard).

This concludes the staff comments on the NOP. Thank you again for the opportunity to provide comments that may help to shape the content of the forthcoming environmental impact report. Please feel welcome to contact us for additional information or assistance as you undertake the preparation of the document. We look forward to reviewing the draft EIR.

Sincerely,

Melanie Faust  
Coastal Program Analyst III,  
& Statewide Transportation Program Liaison

**CALIFORNIA COASTAL COMMISSION**

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May 1, 2011

Gary Berrigan, Environmental Senior  
North Region Environmental Services Branch E-1  
District 1, P.O. Box 3700  
Eureka, CA 95502-3700

**EXHIBIT NO. 11**

**APPEAL NO. A-1-DNC-11-019**  
**CALTRANS**  
COMMENT LETTER TO CALTRANS  
REGARDING INCOMPLETE STATUS  
OF CDP APPLICATION 1-11-012 FOR  
GEOTECHNICAL DRILLING FOR  
THE SMITH RIVER (DR. FINE) BRIDGE  
REPLACEMENT(1 of 4)

Regarding: CDP Application No. 1-11-012, Dr. Fine Bridge, Del Norte Highway 101

Dear Mr. Berrigan:

The Commission staff has completed an initial review of the above-referenced permit application. We have determined that the information submitted in support of your application is not sufficient for complete analysis of all potential project impacts and for your application to be considered complete. Please submit the information requested below, so that we can file your application as complete and evaluate your permit application consistent with the requirements of the Coastal Act. The information must be provided before a public hearing on the application can be scheduled for Commission consideration. In addition, we continue to review the remainder of the application and will advise you if further information is necessary to complete the staff analysis of the proposed project.

1. Our preliminary analysis indicates that a previous Coastal Development Permit (CDP 1-96-010) for the seismic retrofit of the Dr. Fine Bridge required restoration of disturbed areas as a condition of approval of the subject permit and that Caltrans appears to propose to disturb this area for access to the river and to maintain the road thereby developed with gravel bed placement. The pending CDP application did not disclose the pertinent previous issuance of CDP 1-96-010 (the application acknowledges only that a permit application was submitted in 1993, though no permit number is provided, and references waiver 1-08-028-W (08/2008). In addition, the Notice of Preparation for the pending Environmental Impact Report for the replacement of Dr. Fine Bridge circulated by Caltrans last fall did not include notice that disturbance of a previous mitigation site would occur as part of the proposed project description. Staff notes that the proposed new access road would be used for the bridge construction as well as for the geotechnical investigation. Accordingly, staff requests that Caltrans clarify the relationship of the area subject to CDP 1-96-010, provide the correct information, and provide a complete and revised project description.

2. An initial review of CDP 1-96-010 indicates that Caltrans must submit an application to amend CDP 1-96-010 as the presently proposed project area appears to affect the mitigation site of the permit.

3. Provide a detailed site plan view at a 1":1200' or closer scale showing the location and limits of the proposed access road(s), and the location and limits of the mitigation area associated with the development authorized pursuant to CDP 1-96-10. We further request that Caltrans stake and label the location and limits of each in the field in anticipation of a site visit by Commission staff.

4. Provide a detailed analysis of alternatives to the disturbance to the previous mitigation site associated with CDP 1-96-10.

5. If the alternatives analysis requested pursuant to item #4 concludes that no other alternative access is feasible, provide a wetland mitigation plan that would mitigate not only for the new disturbance to the subject area (which appears to be a permanent conversion of habitat area to road use), as well as for the temporal and spatial loss of mitigation site. Further consultation with the Commission staff ecologist may be necessary to determine the appropriate mitigation ratio and program should the proposal ultimately be approved by the Coastal Commission.

6. The scope and potential adverse impacts on coastal resources of the proposed geotechnical investigation have evolved significantly since this conceptual proposal was discussed with Commission staff last year, and in ways that do not appear to have been considered in the Notice of Preparation for the pending EIR for the bridge replacement. Caltrans apparently has granted itself an exemption from CEQA for the geotechnical investigation, but there appears to be considerable overlap between the impacts to coastal resources that may arise from the development subject to this CDP application, and those that Caltrans has partitioned as being associated with the bridge construction for which the geotechnical investigation is intended. It is not clear that the two can be separated. Caltrans appears to be scoping the geotechnical investigation to suit a variety of potential bridge replacement alternative foundation locations and designs, which suggests that the environmental document need not await the specific outcome of the testing. Unlike typical geotechnical investigations, this proposal appears likely to cause permanent impacts on coastal resources that were the subject of previous permit approvals by the Coastal Commission. Staff requests therefore that Caltrans explain the decision to separate the environmental impact analyses and permit authorization requests associated with the geotechnical investigation from the rest of the subject project.

7. Provide a copy of the referenced noise study prepared by the Caltrans Drilling Services (in the Caltrans Maintenance Yard in Vallejo on April 23, 1999).

8. Provide a hydroacoustic impact analysis prepared by a qualified acoustician characterizing the hydroacoustic impacts of the proposed drilling operation within the

waters of the river pursuant to the professional practice protocols established for such analyses. In addition, provide an analysis of this information by a qualified fisheries biologist with pertinent education and experience that evaluates potential risks to the size classes and species of aquatic organisms likely to be present within the affected area of the Smith River. Provide the identity and qualifications of the acoustician(s) and fisheries biologist(s) preparing these analyses.

9. Provide all seasonal limitations proposed by Caltrans for the subject development that is the subject of the pending CDP application.

10. Provide a to-scale grading plan for all cut and fill operations proposed, including daylight lines, and cross sections.

11. Provide evidence that either the California State Lands Commission has authorized the development that is the subject of the pending CDP application, or that CSLC has determined that no authorization is necessary.

12. Provide a disposal plan for the used drilling fluid (drums), including the specifications for disposal and the location of the nearest appropriately licensed facility.

13. Provide specifications of the most protective spill prevention and containment methods available for the drilling operation (including on-land and in-water components of the operation).

14. Provide the location and limits of all proposed vegetation removal (including brushing, trimming, clearing, scraping, or any other disturbance of vegetation or soils).

15. Provide specific seasonal timing of all proposed vegetation removal.

16. Show the location and limits of the proposed onshore drilling sites (it is not a sufficient project description to allow the sites to be field-selected at a date subsequent to authorization of the requested permit).

17. Clarify whether NMFS and CDFG water drafting specifications are included in Caltrans' project description. As noted in #9 above, provide the seasonal windows within which Caltrans proposes to conduct water drafting operations; this information must be incorporated into Caltrans' project description. State the maximum daily and total gallonage of water extraction from the Smith River proposed by Caltrans during the specific seasonal window specified in response to this item and item #9 above. Caltrans should additionally incorporate into the proposed project description any other requirements or recommendations made by CDFG or NMFS (or other agencies with regulatory authority over the subject project) that have been received by Caltrans. Caltrans must clarify whether it is in fact Caltrans' proposed project description that pumping operations will be undertaken with equipment that cannot exceed a 50-gallons-

per-minute as stated in the April 23, 2010 Drilling Plan provided in the subject CDP application (see page 6 of 14).

18. Clarify Caltrans' proposal with regard to the extent, timing, and location of vegetation removal as noted above, with attention to the description in "access" section of the Drilling Plan, page 8 of 14. Contradictory-- and impermissible -- proposals are set forth in that section (for example, the regulatory period for vegetation clearance outside of the nesting season is noted but the section states "bird surveys may need to be conducted if work needs to be performed outside of this period.")

19. Provide the total length of time that public access to the subject river area would be blocked (page 12 of the Drilling Plan) and explain any measures that Caltrans proposes to provide alternative routes for pedestrians and haulouts/portage for boaters.

20. What is the release schedule for the Dr. Fine Bridge public draft EIR?

Staff continues to review the subject application and supporting materials, and may submit a request for additional information or clarifications. In addition, Caltrans' response to this letter may also result in further review and requests for information.

Please feel welcome to call me with any questions.

Sincerely,

Melanie Faust  
Coastal Program Analyst III