Appendix G California State Clearinghouse Notice of Preparation (SCH #:2017022027)





NOTICE OF PREPARATION

Date: February 10, 2017

To: State Clearinghouse, Responsible Agencies, Trustee Agencies, Interested

Parties, and Organizations

Subject: Notice of Preparation of an Environmental Impact Report/Environmental

Assessment and Public Scoping Meeting for the Humboldt County Public Works Department Honeydew Bridge Replacement Project, Humboldt

County, California

Contact: Mr. Andrew Bundschuh, Environmental Permitting & Compliance Manager

Humboldt County Public Works Department – Natural Resources Division

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Public Comment Period: February 15, 2017 to March 15, 2017

Scoping Meeting: March 1, 2017, 5-7 p.m., Mattole Grange #569

Purpose of the Notice

Humboldt County (County) is the lead agency for preparation of an environmental impact report (EIR) under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) for the Honeydew Bridge Replacement Project. Since the project is receiving federal funding through the Highway Bridge Program (HBP) administered by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), the environmental document must also comply with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). FHWA is the NEPA lead agency. To comply with NEPA, an Environmental Assessment (EA) will be prepared to allow FHWA to make a determination on whether the project would constitute a major federal action that would significantly affect the human environment. The two lead agencies have agreed to prepare a joint EIR/EA which satisfies the requirements of both CEQA and NEPA. In its role as the NEPA agency, FHWA will participate in the environmental review in a manner that satisfies federal requirements under NEPA and ensures that the EIR/EA, and underlying administrative record supports FHWA's decision on the proposed project. The Draft EIR/EA will include elements to ensure it is fully compliant with FHWA NEPA requirements and Federal executive orders.

The purpose of this Notice of Preparation (NOP; 14 CCR 15082) is to inform responsible and trustee agencies and interested parties about the proposed project and to solicit comments on the scope and content of the environmental information to be included in the EIR/EA. We are seeking your views on any significant environmental issues or concerns you may have about the project or project area, reasonable alternatives to the proposed project, and mitigation measures that may alleviate significant impacts. Please contact Andrew Bundschuh at the number or e-mail listed above for any questions about the project or environmental review process.

Project Location

The project is located on Mattole Road where it crosses the Mattole River near the community of Honeydew, Humboldt County, CA (refer to Figure 1 – Project Location and Vicinity). The project study area consists of approximately 25 acres of rural residential lands located within the boundaries of unincorporated Humboldt County (refer to Figure 2 – Project Study Area). The project study area includes the following zoning: AG-B-6 (Agricultural General – Special Building Site); AE-U (Agricultural Exclusive - Unclassified); C-2 (Community Commercial); and FR-B-5 (2.5) (Forestry Recreation – Special Building Site). Additional details are presented below:

Adjacent Roadways: Wilder Ridge Road, Burrel Road

APNs: 107-272-012; 107-271-001, -002; 107-102-016; and 107-102-013 USGS Quad: Section 1, Township 3 South, Range 1 West, HB&M, *Honeydew* 7.5'

USGS quadrangle map

Lat./Long.: Centroid of project site - 40.2438982° N / -124.1230673°W

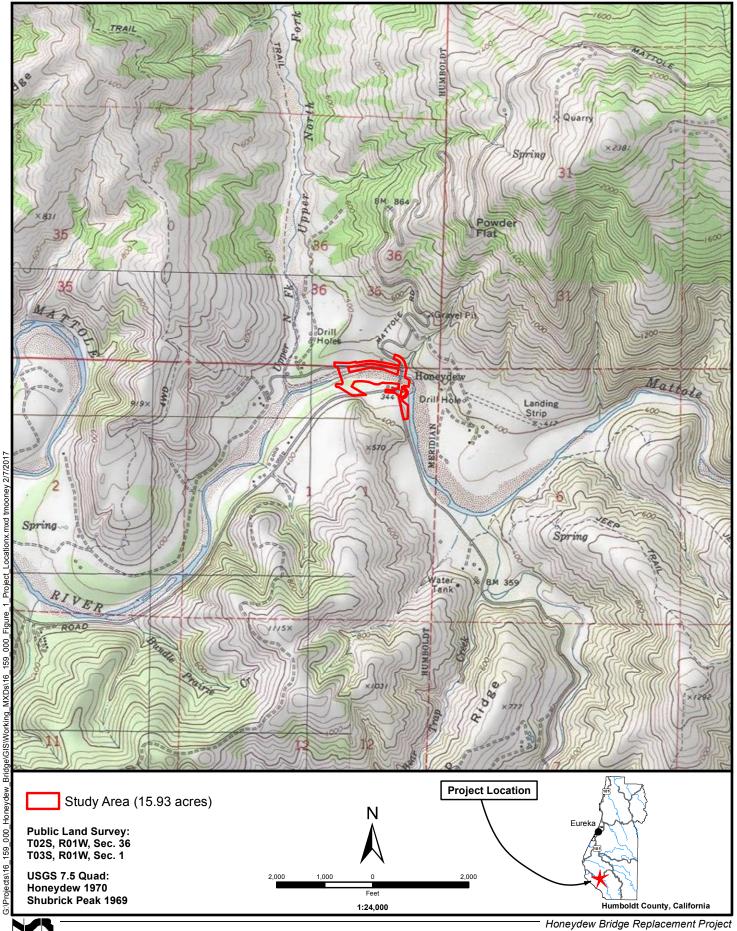
Elevation: 360 feet above mean sea level

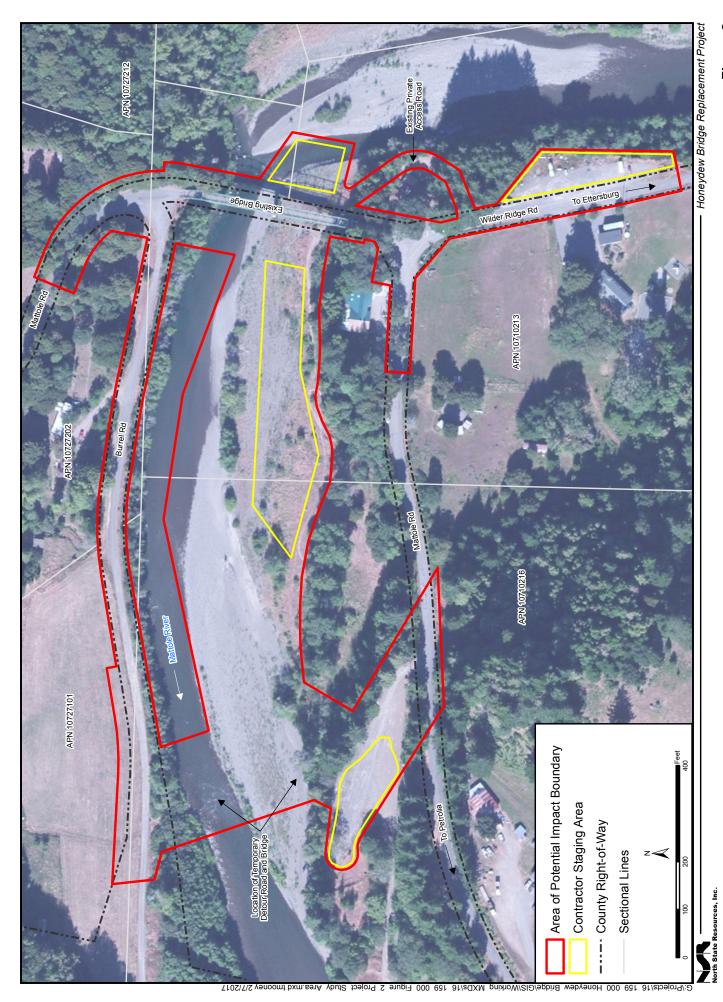
Project Background

The County is in the preliminary design and environmental approval phase for proposed replacement of the Honeydew Bridge (Bridge No. 04C-0055) along Mattole Road over the Mattole River, near the community of Honeydew. This bridge provides a critical transportation link across the Mattole River. The bridge is a single-lane structure comprised of two steel Camelback truss spans that was constructed in 1920; it was determined eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places in 2003 following a Caltrans Historic Bridge Inventory, under Criterion C (excellent example of its type, period, and method of construction as a rare Camelback truss).

In 1997, the County Board of Supervisors passed a resolution stating that the bridge needed to be replaced due to a local sufficiency rating identified as part of a Caltrans Structure Maintenance inspection. Funding was secured through the federal Highway Bridge Program (HBP) that is administered by Caltrans. In 2011, the County Public Works Department initiated technical studies and retained the services of Morrison Structures, Inc. as their engineering design consultant. Work completed to date includes the hydraulic analysis, geotechnical evaluation, and preliminary design for the bridge and road approaches. A public meeting was held in the Honeydew community on January 23, 2013 to discuss bridge alternatives. In reviewing some of the public meeting comments provided as an attachment to the Section 106 documentation, it appears there was a high level of local interest in the project, with concerns primarily associated with locating the bridge on the existing alignment and potential for speeding with a new, two-lane bridge.

Based on multiple design considerations (e.g., hydraulics, line of sight for vehicles, etc.), the existing bridge alignment was identified as the preferred alignment for the new bridge. Three bridge type configurations were identified in Morrison Structures, Inc.'s April 12, 2013 Recommended Bridge Type memorandum: two-span, steel Camelback through truss; two-span, composite welded steel girder; and two-span, precast-pre-stressed concrete spliced girder. The proposed project also includes a temporary detour crossing over the Mattole River located 1,300 feet downstream, removal of the existing bridge and pier, and construction of a new pier and bridge abutments. Two construction seasons are anticipated due to the limited in-river work window (i.e., June-October). In Season 1, deep foundations for the new pier and south abutment will be constructed; the new bridge pier centerline is 11 feet north of the existing pier, which will allow for cast-in-drilled-hole (CIDH)





installations without needing to close the existing bridge to through traffic. In Season 2, the downstream detour would be constructed and temporary supports installed to support both bridge demolition and new bridge construction.

Purpose and Need

The purpose of the project is to provide a road crossing that meets modern highway design standards, accommodates local and regional transportation needs, and provides an increased level of public safety (vehicles, pedestrians, and cyclists). The existing Honeydew Bridge was constructed in 1920 and is at or near the end of its service life. The bridge exhibits signs of significant structural fatigue; does not comply with modern geometric and seismic standards; contains only one travelable lane; lacks standard shoulder width; is unsafe for pedestrians; is cost prohibitive in terms of long term life cycle maintenance and repair costs; and cannot accommodate large permit loads due to lane width, height and structural limitations for weight loading. The County of Humboldt resolves that:

- Honeydew Bridge (4C-055) is critically needed for emergency vehicle access for local residents and for fire access to forested areas.
- Honeydew Bridge (4C-055) is critically needed since there is no available detour nor alternate access route to serve the needs of existing residences.
- Honeydew Bridge (4C-055) is significant to the local economy in that it provides access to important timber and agricultural lands.
- Honeydew Bridge (4C-055) has restricted vertical clearance which prohibits the transport of critically-needed heavy equipment to repair and reopen roads during severe storms and disasters. The replacement of the bridge will alleviate this problem and improve the response time during emergencies.

Over the last few decades, the population density in the Mattole Valley has steadily increased. Current ADT numbers at the bridge crossing are estimated around 350-400 with an anticipated increase to 500 near 2020. These traffic numbers on a one-lane bridge contribute to the unsafe nature of the bridge. The lack of a pedestrian lane makes travel across the bridge by both pedestrians and bicyclists unsafe. Although interim improvements have been conducted on the bridge since 1980; however, the bridge still presents safety concerns for pedestrians and vehicular traffic.

Logical Termini and Independent Utility

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) regulations outline three general principles in Title 23 CFR 771.111(f) that are to be used to frame a highway project. In order to ensure meaningful evaluation of alternatives and to avoid commitments to transportation improvements before they are fully evaluated, a project must meet these three criteria:

- Connect logical termini and be of sufficient length to address environmental matters on a broad scope.
- Have independent utility or independent significance, i.e., be usable and be a reasonable expenditure even if no additional transportation improvements are made in the area.
- Not restrict consideration of alternatives for other reasonably foreseeable transportation improvements.

Identification of Logical Termini

This project connects at logical termini and is of sufficient length to address environmental matters on a broad scope. Logical termini for a project are defined as (1) rational end points for a transportation improvement, and (2) rational end points for a review of the environmental impacts. Mattole Road, 200 feet west and 200 feet east of the Mattole River, are rational end points since the project, as contained within these limits, fully addresses the identified need for improving public safety along Mattole Road at the Mattole River crossing.

Independent Utility of the Project

This project will be usable and be a reasonable expenditure even if no additional transportation improvements are made in the area. The project will provide substantial benefits to the public (i.e., improve public safety), regardless of whether or not other transportation improvement projects are implemented.

Effect on Other Reasonably Foreseeable Transportation Projects

The Honeydew Bridge Replacement Project would not prevent or obstruct implementation of other transportation projects in the area. The schedule for the project allows for three phases of design and construction to space out the activities. The project will not restrict consideration of alternatives for other reasonably foreseeable transportation improvements in the project area.

Project Description

General

The existing structurally deficient and functionally obsolete bridge will be replaced with a modern structure that will meet current design criteria. The proposed bridge types are all two-span structures with equal span lengths of 187 feet - 7 ½ inches for a total bridge length of 375 feet - 3 inches. It will carry two lanes of traffic with each lane width 11-foot plus a 2-foot shoulder, for a clear width of 26 feet.

Alternatives

Three replacement structure alternatives have been considered. Each of the three alternative configurations will be on existing alignment and consist of two equal spans. Additionally, all three alternatives will likely consist of a steel H-pile supported north abutment, and cast-in-drilled-hole (CIDH) supported pier and south abutment. Alternative 1 is a steel Camelback through truss similar in configuration to the existing bridge. Alternative 2 is a haunched, composite welded steel girder. The third alternative is a haunched, precast, prestressed, spliced girder, similar in geometry to Alternative 2.

Design

The replacement structure will be designed for the HL93, Tandem, and P15 Permit Design vehicle loadings as specified in Caltrans Bridge Design Specifications (BDS), Seismic Design Criteria V1.6, and AASHTO 6th Ed. The hydraulic Design Criteria established in the Caltrans Local Procedures Manual prescribe that the structure be capable of conveying the base or 100-year flood (Q100) and passing the 50-year flood (Q50) "without causing objectionable backwater, excessive flow velocities or encroaching on through traffic lanes." In addition, AASHTO requires at least 3 feet of freeboard (clearance) above the 50-year flood or flood or record. The minimum soffit elevation required to meet these criteria is 335.41 feet.

Detour

During the bridge replacement project, a temporary detour road and temporary bridge is proposed to be constructed 1,300 feet downstream from the existing bridge. The detour road will connect Mattole Road via Burrel Road and will also provide the main access to the bridge construction site. Detour road construction will consist of river run gravel fill over geotextile fabric, with an aggregate base topping. The temporary detour bridge will cross the main thalweg of the Mattole River and will most likely consist of a bailey bridge or other erectable bridge type. The temporary bridge will be installed at an elevation with sufficient freeboard so that small fluctuations in river levels can be accommodated. Figure 2 depicts the locations and extents of the planned detour route, staging areas, access routes, and work area boundaries (bridge and roadway).

Transportation Access

The existing bridge will be temporarily supported, disassembled, match marked, and transferred to the County for storage. Access to the bridge site is available from: (1) Highway 101 directly, (2) Highway 101 via Ettersburg, and (3) Highway 101 via Petrolia. Direct access from Highway 101 along Mattole Road passes through a state park, is a distance of 22 miles, and roadway geometry limits vehicular length to approximately 50 feet. Access via Ettersburg is along Wilder Ridge Road and Briceland Thorne Road, and is a total distance of 33 miles from Highway 101. Access along this route is limited by road geometry, but it provides a better alternative than the direct access from Highway 101. Using steerable trailers, bridge member lengths of up to 90 feet can likely be accommodated. The bridge site can also be accessed from the northwest, through Ferndale and Petrolia. Construction equipment and materials have historically been transported into the Honeydew area through this route, and the transport of bridge member lengths up to 90 feet may be possible. The George Lindley Memorial Bridge (4C-78) and the Dry Creek Bridge (4C-241) capacities will prevent permit trucks from using this third route.

Staging

Temporary staging areas will be available at three locations: (1) along Wilder Ridge Road, just southeast of the intersection with Mattole Road; (2) all along the south bank gravel bar near and beneath the existing bridge and; (3) at the north Mattole Road Bridge approach. The Wilder Ridge Road staging area is located along the east side of Wilder Ridge Road, approximately 300 feet south of the intersection with Mattole Road. The south bank gravel bar temporary staging area (primary construction staging area) will be located between the detour road located 1,300 feet to the west and the private access road a few hundred feet upstream from the bridge. The north approach staging area will be located on Mattole Road, immediately north of the existing bridge north abutment.

Falsework

Based upon field observations, no problems with falsework are anticipated during the construction season. Due to the types of bridge alternatives recommended, the amount of falsework required for the construction will be a minimum compared to that required for a standard cast-in-place concrete box girder. The existing truss demolition and new bridge construction will likely require clean gravel pads or work trestles in the active streambed. These trestles and work platforms will likely require H piles, probably in the 14x89 size range and driven about 30 feet deep, based on typical falsework requirements. Clean gravel pads will be placed as necessary in the channel margins in the active stream to provide work trestle access or work pads for construction equipment and temporary supports during bridge removal and construction. The trestle and gravel work pads will be removed prior to the October work deadline, and in-stream areas temporarily affected by construction will be returned to their pre-construction condition. The primary construction staging area to

remove and replace the existing bridge will be along the south bank gravel bar. There will be access to this construction staging area from the downstream detour road and also from Wilder Ridge Road along an upstream existing private access road.

Construction Sequencing

Because of the short time period of low flows for the Mattole River, two summer seasons will be required to construct the bridge replacement project regardless of the structure type alternative selected.

The first season of work will be to construct the deep foundations required for the new pier and south abutment. This will involve either using the private access road or constructing the portion of the detour road necessary to provide construction access. Large diameter CIDH pile foundations will likely be used for each alternative, at both the center pier and south abutment. The new bridge pier centerline is located 11 feet north of the existing pier centerline. This will allow for the CIDH installations without requiring closure of the existing bridge or impacting the existing bridge support.

The second season of work will be to construct the detour, temporary supports, dismantle and remove the old bridge and construct the pier wall, abutments, retaining walls, superstructure, and approaches. Temporary supports used to remove the existing bridge trusses could also be used to erect the new bridge. After completion of the second season of work, the detour bridge and roadbed material from the detour road, construction access road, and private access road will be removed.

Adequate de-watering at the pier location during construction will be achieved by means of diking/diversion of surface water and sump pumping. Imported embankment material will be required for the approach roadway at the south end of the bridge. This fill will be located outside of the ordinary high water channel of the Mattole River. The contractor will provide temporary water pollution control measures, including but not limited to, dikes, basins, and ditches, which may become necessary as a result of the construction process.

New rock slope protection (RSP), 1/4 to 1/2 ton method B, will be installed. The locations and extents are not yet decided. This will be placed by an excavator with a bucket/thumb attachment that would pick and place/fit together the RSP.

Construction Criteria and Methods

Construction specifications will be in accordance with the Special Provisions and the current Caltrans Standard Plans, Standard Specifications, and Standard Special Provisions at the time the construction contract is awarded. Equipment and materials will be staged in the three designated staging areas only and traffic will be maintained through the area during the first season on the existing bridge and during the second season on the detour bypass.

Temporary work platforms and detour route will be constructed of river run gravel fill or properly sized salmon spawning gravel "fish rock." Gravel will be uncrushed, rounded, natural river rock with no sharp edges. It will be washed at least once and have a cleanliness value of 85 or higher based on Caltrans Test No. 227. Gravel will also be completely free of oils, clay, debris, and organic material.

Because fish rock does not stay together under pressure of heavy equipment, clean crushed angular gravel will be placed on top of the fish rock with geotextile fabric to separate the crushed angular gravels from the fish

rock. Once the new bridge is completed, the crushed rock atop the gravel work platforms and temporary detour will be removed and disposed of offsite.

Final design has not been completed at this time, and the exact construction for the work pads and falsework trestles has not been selected. The actual number, size, types, and depth of piles to be driven for the complete project is indeterminate. The most likely option for the north abutment will be HP 10X57 driven about 30 feet. The pier will most likely be two 7-foot diameter CIDH. The south abutment will most likely be two 48-inch CIDH. In addition, sheet piles may be required for the construction of the pier cap.

Potential Environmental Effects and Scope of the EIR/EA

The EIR/EA to be prepared for the proposed project will provide a project-level analysis of the impacts pertaining to the resources area identified below. The EIR/EA will be prepared in accordance with CEQA Statutes, CEQA Guidelines, Caltrans' NEPA guidelines, and other applicable regulatory requirements. The impact analysis will consider impacts resulting directly from the proposed project, both direct and indirect, as well as the proposed project's contribution to cumulative impacts in the project area. The EIR/EA will identify feasible mitigation measures to reduce or avoid project-specific and cumulative impacts. To ensure the EIR/EA adequately addresses the full range of issues and alternatives to the proposed project and that all significant issues are addressed, comments and suggestions are invited from all interested parties during the NOP scoping process.

- Aesthetics Potential impacts to the visual character of the project site and surrounding public view areas along the Mattole River and adjacent roadways, including the removal of a historic bridge. The County and their consultant team will prepare a Visual Impact Assessment report, the results of which will be incorporated into the EIR/EA.
- Air Quality/Greenhouse Gas Emissions Potential impacts from fugitive dust emissions and equipment/vehicle emissions during construction.
- Biological Resources Potential impacts on special-status species, including threatened and endangered species and associated critical habitat (i.e., Northern California steelhead Distinct Population Segment [DPS], California Coastal Evolutionarily Significant Unit [ESU] Chinook salmon, and Southern Oregon/Northern California ESU coho salmon), nesting migratory birds and raptors, riparian vegetation, and waters of the state/United States as a result of proposed project construction activities. The County and their consultant team will be conduct a floristic inventory, special-status species habitat assessment, aquatic habitat characterization, and a delineation of waters of the state and United States. Technical reports include a wetland delineation report (if jurisdictional waters are present); northern spotted owl habitat assessment; Biological Assessment/Essential Fish Habitat Assessment, including a hydroacoustic analysis of proposed pile-driving activities, to evaluate potential impacts of the proposed project on listed salmonids and to support Section 7 Endangered Species Act consultation; and a Natural Environment Study report that will evaluate potential impacts to all biological resources.
- Cultural Resources Potential impacts to cultural resources, including the proposed removal of a historic bridge eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places, as a result of proposed project construction activities. The EIR/EA will also address potential impacts to tribal cultural resources in accordance with AB 52. The County retained Roscoe & Associates to complete an

Archaeological Survey Report/Historic Property Survey Report and JRP Historical Consulting LLC to complete the Historic Resources Evaluation Report (HRER) and Finding of Adverse Effect (FOAE) document. The FOAE needs to be approved by Caltrans and the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO), along with a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) that will identify measures to mitigate adverse effects on the historic bridge. This information will be summarized in the EIR/EA.

- Geology and Soils Potential impacts to soils, including soil erosion during construction, and the
 level of geologic and seismic risks. The level of risk to people and property will be determined based
 on analysis of the project study area soil properties and seismic hazard potential conducted as part of
 the geotechnical investigation.
- Hazards/Hazardous Materials Given the age of the existing bridge, there is potential for potentially hazardous materials such as lead-based paint, treated wood, and asbestos-containing materials to be present. If present, these would pose a risk to the construction workers and public during construction of the proposed project. The County and their consultant team will be conducting an Initial Site Assessment to determine if potentially hazardous materials are present. If they are, additional testing will be conducted to determine levels present and appropriate avoidance and minimization measures and mitigation measures. This information will be incorporated into the EIR/EA. Other potential hazards to be addressed include increased risk of fire and impediment to emergency routes during construction.
- Hydrology and Water Quality Potential impacts to water quality and associated beneficial uses
 within the Mattole River due to erosion/sedimentation and potential for accidental spills from
 construction equipment/vehicles during construction. Potential impacts to the hydrology of the
 Mattole River as a result of in-river construction activities.
- Recreation Potential impacts to recreational users along the Mattole River during the construction phase.
- **Noise/Vibration** Potential impacts on ambient noise levels during construction of the proposed project, including pile-driving activities, which may impact sensitive receptors (e.g., local residents).
- Traffic and Circulation Potential impacts to adjacent roadways due to increased construction vehicle and equipment traffic during the proposed project construction phase.
- **Growth-Inducing and Cumulative Impacts** Potential growth-inducing and cumulative impacts resulting from the proposed project pursuant to CEQA Guidelines 15126(d) and 15130.

For this project, the County identifies the baseline as the environmental conditions in within the project study area and vicinity as they exist at the time the NOP is issued (CEQA Guidelines, Section 15125).

NEPA Compliance

Since Caltrans will use the EIR/EA document to demonstrate compliance with NEPA, the EIR/EA will include additional elements to ensure it is fully compliant with Caltrans/FHWA NEPA requirements and Federal executive orders. These include:

Purpose and Need Statement

- Environmental Justice
- Socio/Economics
- Section 4(f)
- Short-term uses and Long-term Productivity
- Irreversible and Irretrievable Commitments of Resources

Comments provided during the scoping process may identify additional environmental issues to be evaluated.

Discussion of Alternatives

CEQA Guidelines 15126.6(a) requires that an EIR describe a range of reasonable alternatives for the project. The EIR/EA will evaluate the comparative merits of the alternatives, which will include a No-Project/No-Action Alternative and may include alternative bridge type selections. The alternatives will be determined, in part, by public input received during the NOP comment period. To ensure that the EIR/EA adequately addresses the full range of issues and alternatives related to the proposed project and that all significant issues are identified, comments and suggestions are invited from all interested parties.

Responsible and Trustee Agencies

The following agencies may have statutory responsibilities in connection with approval of the proposed project:

- California Department of Fish & Wildlife (Region 1)
- California Regional Water Quality Control Board (North Coast Region)
- California Department of Transportation (District 1)
- California State Lands Commission
- State Historic Preservation Officer
- National Marine Fisheries Service (Santa Rosa Field Office)
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (San Francisco District)
- U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (Arcata Field Office)

Public Scoping Meeting

A public scoping meeting will be held on Wednesday, March 1, 2017 at 5:00 P.M, until 7:00 P.M. The meeting will occur at the following location:

Mattole Grange #569 36512 Mattole Road Petrolia, CA 95558

Note: Do not mail NOP comments to the above address.

The purpose of the scoping meeting is to present information about the proposed project, describe the State's CEQA process and the associated Caltrans NEPA process and timelines, and solicit input, including written comments, on the scope and content of the EIR/EA. The format of the meetings will be an open house style with stations set up for attendees to obtain information about the project and environmental process and discuss their concerns with the project staff. Comment forms will be available for those who wish to submit written comments at the meeting.

Interested parties, including public agencies, are encouraged to attend the meeting to learn more about the proposed project and the environmental review process and to express any concerns about the proposed project and offer suggestions regarding the environmental impacts, including any mitigation measures and alternatives. The public scoping meeting information has also been published in local newspapers.

Public Review Period

The Notice of Preparation is being circulated for public review and comment for a period of 30 days beginning February 15, 2017. Written comments will be accepted by the County through 5:00 P.M. on March 15, 2017. This information will be considered when preparing the EIR/EA.

You may submit comments in three ways: (1) by U.S. mail, (2) by electronic mail (e-mail), or (3) by attending the public scoping meeting and submitting written comments at that time. Comments provided by e-mail should include "Honeydew Bridge Replacement Project NOP Scoping Comments" in the subject line, and the name and physical address of the commenter should be contained in the body of the email.

Please send all comments via mail to:

Mr. Andrew Bundschuh, Environmental Permitting and Compliance Manager Humboldt County Public Works Department Natural Resources Division 1106 Second Street Eureka, California 95501

OR via e-mail to:

abundschuh@co.humboldt.ca.us

Your views and comments on how the project may affect the environment are welcomed and will be used to identify the issues to be analyzed in depth in the EIR/EA.

Sincerely,

Andrew Bundschuh

Andrew Burdschul

Environmental Permitting and Compliance Manager