

**DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**

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Governor's Office of Planning & Research

MAY 23 2019

STATE CLEARINGHOUSE

SCH: 2019049143  
 04-MRN-2019-00133  
 GTS ID 15411  
 Post Mile: MRN-101

May 23, 2019

Jon Campo  
 Marin County  
 3501 Civic Center Drive, Room 308  
 San Rafael, CA 94903

**Ponti Fire Road to Trail Project – Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND)**

Dear Jon Campo:

Thank you for including the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) in the environmental review process for the above-referenced project. In tandem with the Metropolitan Transportation Commission's (MTC) Regional Transportation Plan (RTP)/Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS), Caltrans mission signals a modernization of our approach to evaluating and mitigating impacts to the State Transportation Network (STN). Caltrans' *Strategic Management Plan 2015-2020* aims to reduce Vehicle Miles Travelled (VMT) by tripling bicycle and doubling both pedestrian and transit travel by 2020. Our comments are based on the MND.

***Project Understanding***

The project proposes to:

- Realign the 1.2-mile long, 14-foot wide upper segment of the Ponti Fire Road into a 2.8-mile long, five-foot wide sustainable multi-use trail with an average grade of ten percent; Change fire road designation to multi-use trail.
- Maintain and improve the 0.5-mile long, 14-foot wide lower segment of the Ponti Fire Road within the existing footprint to improve stability, drainage, and the overall sustainability of the fire road for visitor use and to maintain access for emergency vehicles.
- Construct a new 0.4-mile long, five-foot wide connector trail from Ponti Fire Road to Pacheco Hill Pathway, and construct a new connector trail from the lower segment of the Ponti Fire Road to the Pacheco Hill Pathway.
- Decommission approximately four miles of non-designated trail, redundant road, and trail segments.

Access to the site is provided at Chicken Shack Fire Road. Regional access is provided at the US 101/Alameda del Prado interchange, about 0.1 miles away.

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***Hydraulics***

A portion of the alignment of the proposed Pacheco Pathway Connector Trail includes a switchback that appears to be near the top of the slope above the existing Pacheco Pathway. Portions of this slope have been subject to erosion in storm events. The alignment of the Connector Trail should be designed to avoid any grading or vegetation removal from the slope above the Pacheco Pathway.

***Lead Agency***

As the Lead Agency, Marin County is responsible for all project mitigation, including any needed improvements to the STN. The project's financing, scheduling, implementation responsibilities and monitoring should be fully discussed for all proposed mitigation measures, prior to the submittal of an encroachment permit. Potential mitigation measures that include the requirements of other agencies—such as Caltrans—are fully enforceable through permit conditions, agreements, or other legally-binding instruments under the control of the Lead Agency.

Should you have any questions regarding this letter, please contact Andrew Chan at (510) 622-5433 or [andrew.chan@dot.ca.gov](mailto:andrew.chan@dot.ca.gov).

Sincerely,



PATRICIA MAURICE  
District Branch Chief  
Local Development - Intergovernmental Review

c. State Clearinghouse