

CATEGORICAL EXEMPTION/CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION DETERMINATION FORM

01-MEN-101 **T 43.10 - 52.30** **01-26200/ 010000005**
 Dist.-Co.-Rte. (or Local Agency) P.M./P.M. E.A/Project No. Federal-Aid Project No. (Local Project)/Project No.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: (Briefly describe project including need, purpose, location, limits, right-of-way requirements, and activities involved in this box. Use *Continuation Sheet*, if necessary.)

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) intends to purchase the Jacobs Parcels (all of parcel 037-260-07-00 and a portion of the adjacent parcel 037-221-35-00) which are adjacent to state route 101 to the west and Reynolds Highway to the east, just north of Willits in Mendocino County. This parcel is 164 acres and is between post mile 43.10 and 52.30. The primary value of purchasing these parcels and integrating these parcels into the current mitigation project is to establish connectivity of the ecosystem. Caltrans will use this parcel to preserve and/or develop current habitat resources for use in mitigating impacts resulting from current and/or future Caltrans' projects located within the Eel River Watershed. (Continued on pg. 2)

CALTRANS CEQA DETERMINATION (Check one)

Not Applicable – Caltrans is not the CEQA Lead Agency **Not Applicable – Caltrans has prepared an Initial Study or Environmental Impact Report under CEQA**

Based on an examination of this proposal, supporting information, and the above statements, the project is:

Exempt by Statute. (PRC 21080[b]; 14 CCR 15260 et seq.)
 Categorically Exempt. Class 25. (PRC 21084; 14 CCR 15300 et seq.)

Based on an examination of this proposal and supporting information, the following statements are true and exceptions do not apply:

- If this project falls within exempt class 3, 4, 5, 6 or 11, it does not impact an environmental resource of hazardous or critical concern where designated, precisely mapped, and officially adopted pursuant to law.
- There will not be a significant cumulative effect by this project and successive projects of the same type in the same place, over time.
- There is not a reasonable possibility that the project will have a significant effect on the environment due to unusual circumstances.
- This project does not damage a scenic resource within an officially designated state scenic highway.
- This project is not located on a site included on any list compiled pursuant to Govt. Code § 65962.5 ("Cortese List").
- This project does not cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource.

Common Sense Exemption. [This project does not fall within an exempt class, but it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the activity may have a significant effect on the environment (14 CCR 15061[b][3].)]

Jeff Swindle

Print Name: Senior Environmental Planner or Environmental Branch Chief



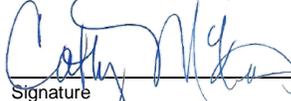
Signature

4/9/20

Date

Cathy McKeon

Print Name: Project Manager



Signature

4/9/20

Date

NEPA COMPLIANCE

In accordance with 23 CFR 771.117, and based on an examination of this proposal and supporting information, the State has determined that this project:

- does not individually or cumulatively have a significant impact on the environment as defined by NEPA, and is excluded from the requirements to prepare an Environmental Assessment (EA) or Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), and
- has considered unusual circumstances pursuant to 23 CFR 771.117(b).

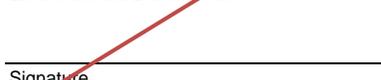
CALTRANS NEPA DETERMINATION (Check one)

23 USC 326: The State has determined that this project has no significant impacts on the environment as defined by NEPA, and that there are no unusual circumstances as described in 23 CFR 771.117(b). As such, the project is categorically excluded from the requirements to prepare an EA or EIS under the National Environmental Policy Act. The State has been assigned, and hereby certifies that it has carried out the responsibility to make this determination pursuant to Chapter 3 of Title 23, United States Code, Section 326 and a Memorandum of Understanding dated May 31, 2016, executed between the FHWA and the State. The State has determined that the project is a Categorical Exclusion under:

- 23 CFR 771.117(c): activity (c)(___)**
- 23 CFR 771.117(d): activity (d)(___)**
- Activity ___ listed in Appendix A of the MOU between FHWA and the State**

23 USC 327: Based on an examination of this proposal and supporting information, the State has determined that the project is a Categorical Exclusion under 23 USC 327. The environmental review, consultation, and any other actions required by applicable Federal environmental laws for this project are being, or have been, carried out by Caltrans pursuant to 23 USC 327 and the Memorandum of Understanding dated December 23, 2016 and executed by FHWA and Caltrans.

Print Name: Senior Environmental Planner or Environmental Branch Chief



Signature

Date

Print Name: Project Manager/DLA Engineer



Signature

Date

Date of Categorical Exclusion Checklist completion:

Date of ECR or equivalent :

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

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Continuation Sheet

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Continued from page 1:

Caltrans will work with other agencies to develop mitigation strategies to take advantage of the high value habitats found on this property. Caltrans will also preserve 27 acres of riparian woodland. The purchase and protection of this habitat would be a key component in connecting the mitigation lands thereby reducing habitat fragmentation. The mitigation potential for Caltrans would be to use this parcel to offset affects to wildlife crossing and fish passage that could not otherwise be mitigated. Mitigation to federal resources could also be mitigated with this land. The Jacobs Parcel is dominated by high value wetlands that have value for preservation with areas of lower value wetland habitat that could be enhanced as part of a mitigation strategy that would be consistent with USACE and RWQCB's "no net loss" mandate.

Hazardous Waste

No hazardous waste issues were identified according to the Hazardous Materials Disclosure Document (HMDD) for acquisition.

Biological Resources

Caltrans biological staff analyzed Jacobs Parcel site in March 2020 and it is characterized largely by wet meadow/marsh habitat with riverine and riparian habitats. State listed species currently exist on several acres within the parcel such as the critically rare Baker's meadowfoam (*Limnanthes bakeri*). This parcel may also be suitable for use as mitigation site and may add more significant value to wildlife habitat. According to CDFW's Area of Conservation Emphasis (ACE) database, the Jacobs Parcel is in an area of high biodiversity.

Cultural Resources

A field review was performed by Caltrans staff on January 22, 2020. The proposed acquisition does not have the potential to impact any archaeological sites or other cultural resources due to the non-physical nature of the purchase itself. However, subsequent proposed actions will require more comprehensive documentation and additional studies with varying degrees of complexity according to the screening memo.