

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

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5/11/2020

Governor's Office of Planning & Research

MAY 11 2020**STATE CLEARINGHOUSE**

May 11, 2020

Kevin Smith
Environmental Science Associates
626 Wilshire Boulevard, Suite 1100
Los Angeles, CA 90017

RE: Castaic Dam High Intake Tower Bridge
Retrofit Project – Mitigated Negative
Declaration (MND)
SCH # 2020049025
GTS # 07-LA-2020-03230
Vic. LA-5/PM: R60.646L

Dear Kevin Smith:

Thank you for including the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) in the environmental review process for the above referenced MND. The proposed project would seismically retrofit the tower bridge at Castaic Lake, the terminal reservoir of the State Water Project's West Branch located within the Castaic Lake State Recreation Area. Construction would occur at the tower bridge, high tower abutment, Piers 2 through 4, and Abutment 5. The tower bridge retrofit would include installing restrainer cables to transfer longitudinal seismic forces to the adjacent spans or frames and the piers would be jacketed with carbon fiber reinforcement. Project implementation would require the lake's surface elevation be lowered from the normal operation elevation of approximately 1,505 feet above mean sea level (amsl) to 1,380 feet amsl to access project components, such as the piers and abutment structures holding the tower bridge above water level. Construction staging areas would only be located in unvegetated areas near the dam's right abutment. Existing paved and dirt roads would be used for hauling and transporting materials within the project area. Project construction is anticipated to take 15.5 months, with the drawdown of Castaic Lake taking approximately 10 months. Construction work hours would generally range between 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. The California State Department of Water Resources is the Lead Agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

According to the MND, "The project site would be accessed from I-5, along Lake Hughes Road to Ridge Route Road to West Ramp Road, which ends at the West Boat Launch Ramp parking lot." However, "Once the equipment and materials are on-site there would be minimal construction trips required during the retrofitting project." Also, "Once operational, existing staff would periodically maintain and access the high tower similar to existing conditions." Based on this information, Caltrans does not expect this project to have a direct adverse effect on its facilities, including the Interstate 5 (I-5).

The following information is included for your consideration.

The mission of Caltrans is to provide a safe, sustainable, integrated and efficient transportation system to enhance California's economy and livability. Furthermore, Caltrans encourages the Lead Agency to integrate transportation and land use in a way that reduces Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) and Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions, as well as facilitates a high level of non-motorized travel and transit use. Caltrans

also supports the implementation of Transportation Demand Management (TDM) to decrease VMT. For more information on TDM options that could be incorporated into this project, please refer to:

- The 2010 *Quantifying Greenhouse Gas Mitigation Measures* report by the California Air Pollution Control Officers Association (CAPCOA), available at <http://www.capcoa.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/11/CAPCOA-Quantification-Report-9-14-Final.pdf>, or
- *Integrating Demand Management into the Transportation Planning Process: A Desk Reference* (Chapter 8) by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), available at <https://ops.fhwa.dot.gov/publications/fhwahop12035/index.htm>.

As a reminder, any transportation of heavy construction equipment and/or materials which requires use of oversized-transport vehicles on State highways will need a Caltrans transportation permit. Caltrans recommends that the project limit construction traffic to off-peak periods to minimize the potential impact on State facilities. If construction traffic is expected to cause delays on any State facilities, please submit a construction traffic control plan detailing these delays for Caltrans' review.

If you have any questions about these comments, please contact Emily Gibson, the project coordinator, at Emily.Gibson@dot.ca.gov, and refer to GTS # 07-LA-2020-03230.

Sincerely,



MIYA EDMONSON
IGR/CEQA Branch Chief
cc: Scott Morgan, State Clearinghouse