

## Notice of Preparation

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### Notice of Preparation

To: \_\_\_\_\_ From: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Address)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Address)

**Subject: Notice of Preparation of a Draft Environmental Impact Report**

\_\_\_\_\_ will be the Lead Agency and will prepare an environmental impact report for the project identified below. We need to know the views of your agency as to the scope and content of the environmental information which is germane to your agency's statutory responsibilities in connection with the proposed project. Your agency will need to use the EIR prepared by our agency when considering your permit or other approval for the project.

The project description, location, and the potential environmental effects are contained in the attached materials. A copy of the Initial Study ( ☐ is ☐ is not ) attached.

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 send your response to \_\_\_\_\_ at the address shown above. We will need the name for a contact person in your agency.

**Project Title:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Project Applicant, if any:** \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Title \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

**Reference:** California Code of Regulations, Title 14, (CEQA Guidelines) Sections 15082(a), 15103, 15375.

**To:** Responsible/Trustee Agency

**From:** California Dept. of Transportation  
Environmental Management/M2  
703 B Street  
Marysville, CA 95901

**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:** NEV-49 Corridor Improvement Project (EA: 03-4e170).

**Project Location:** The proposed project is located on State Route (SR) 49 in Nevada County, California between post miles (PM) 10.8/R13.3 near the City of Grass Valley.

**Project Description:** The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) proposes to improve safety, operations, and mobility on SR 49 in Nevada County from post mile 10.8 to R13.3 through the addition of northbound and southbound truck climbing lanes outside an urbanized area, 14'-22' median with barrier, 8'-10' shoulders, right turn lanes, and two at-grade access-controlled intersections. This project will be built in three phases of construction based on funding availability. This project will improve safety, operations, and mobility of vehicular traffic, pedestrians, and cyclists on SR 49 by: 1) Constructing northbound and southbound truck climbing lanes / segments of auxiliary lanes to improve operations, 2) Reducing the severity and frequency of collisions at public road intersections and roadways, 3) Reducing cross-centerline collisions, 4) Improving the roadway to meet current design standards and improve vertical curve sight distance, 5) Providing a 12' x 12' animal crossing that would assist in avoiding collisions between vehicles and animals, 6) Implementing identified improvements in the Nevada County Active Transportation Plan, which identifies SR 49 as needing Class III bicycle facilities and providing adequate shoulders for disabled vehicles and California Highway Patrol enforcement activities.

This is to inform you that the California Department of Transportation will be the lead agency and will prepare an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the project described in the following pages. Your participation as a responsible agency is requested in the preparation and review of this document.

We need to know the views of your agency as to the scope and content of the environmental information that is germane to your agency's statutory responsibilities in connection with the proposed project. Your agency will need to use the EIR prepared by our agency when considering your permit or other approval for the project.

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

A copy of the Draft Environmental Impact Report is not attached.

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 Kristen Stubblefield Telephone (530) 741-5124 at the address shown above or email: [kristen.stubblefield@dot.ca.gov](mailto:kristen.stubblefield@dot.ca.gov). Please supply us with the name for a contact person in your agency.

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: Supervising Environmental Planner

## **Notice of Preparation**

### **Project Title**

NEV-49 Corridor Improvement Project (EA: 03-4e170)

### **Project Location**

The proposed project is located on State Route (SR) 49 in Nevada County, California between post miles (PM) 10.8/R13.3 near the City of Grass Valley, California.

### **Overview of SR 49 in the Project Limits**

The scope of this project is encompassed by Segment 11 (NEV PM 0.00/R14.475) of the October 2017 Transportation Concept Report. The segment is a 14.48-mile-stretch of 2-lane and 4-lane conventional highway and freeway from the Placer/Nevada County line to the SR 20 junction in Grass Valley. This segment is a major roadway connecting Grass Valley and Nevada City with I-80 in Auburn to the south. It is the lifeline for much of Nevada County's freight traffic and provides access to recreational attractions. This segment of SR 49 experiences AM and PM Peak Hour congestion and is currently operating at Level of Service E.

The following are projects within or near the project area:

According to the Caltrans' North Region Data Library, the following Caltrans projects are in various stages of development, from early planning stages to construction: 3h510, 1j090, 0h420, 0e470, 1h250, and 1g760

<http://svgcesridvweb.ct.dot.ca.gov/arcgis/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=a050ffbb0d324017af02a3e7cf2f1a54>

### **Project Description**

There are three alternatives under consideration for this project: Alternative 3A, Alternative 3B, and the No-Build Alternative. The build alternatives will be built in phases, as funding becomes available. The initial phases are included in both alternatives:

- Phase 1: Construct a northbound truck climbing lane / auxiliary lane, continuous two-way-left-turn-lane (TWLTL) and widen existing exterior shoulders to 10.' Construct Southbound right-turn lanes at four intersections and a 12' X 12' animal crossing.
- Phase 2: Construct a Southbound truck climbing lane / auxiliary lane.

### **Alternative 3A: 22' Median with Barrier, Signalized Intersections, Frontage Roads**

In addition to the northbound and southbound truck climbing lanes / auxiliary lanes, continuous two way left turn lane, widened exterior shoulders and animal crossing constructed in phases 1 and 2, Alternative 3A proposes to construct a 22' wide median with a type 60M concrete barrier, two signalized intersections, frontage roads, sections of sound wall designed to be aesthetically pleasing between SR-49 and frontage roads. In addition, culverts and pavement will be rehabilitated, additional safety features will be provided, and Transportation Management Systems (TMS) and lighting elements will be upgraded.

### **Alternative 3B: 22' Median with Barrier, Roundabouts, Frontage Roads**

In addition to the northbound and southbound truck climbing lanes / auxiliary lanes, continuous two way left turn lane, and widened exterior shoulders constructed in phases 1 and 2, Alternative 3B proposes to widen the existing road by constructing a 22' wide median with a type 60M concrete barrier, two roundabouts, frontage roads, sections of sound wall designed to be aesthetically pleasing between SR-49 and frontage roads. All other elements of work are identical to Alternative 3A.

### **Initial Phases Included in Both Build Alternatives**

#### Phase 1 of Alternatives 3A & 3B: Additional Northbound Lane, TWLTL, 10' Shoulders

Phase 1 proposes to construct a Northbound truck climbing lane / auxiliary lane, 16' continuous two-way left-turn lane and widening existing exterior shoulders to 10'. Construct Southbound right-turn lanes at four intersections and a 12'x12' animal crossing.

#### Phase 2 of Alternatives 3A & 3B: Additional Southbound Lane

In addition to the elements constructed during phase 1 construction, phase 2 proposes to construct a Southbound truck climbing lane / auxiliary lane.

### **Probable Environmental Effects**

The proposed project is expected to result in temporary and permanent environmental effects. The draft Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Assessment (EIR/EA) will disclose what resources would be affected, the level of significance, and feasible measures to reduce impacts. Probable environmental effects of the proposed project are outlined below.

#### Aesthetics

The proposed project could degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings; however, the impacts are not expected to be substantial.

During the preparation of the EIR/EA, Caltrans will identify all feasible measures to avoid and minimize impacts to visual resources.

#### Agricultural and Forest Resources

No significant impacts anticipated.

### Air Quality

The proposed project is expected to result in temporary, short-term air quality impacts from construction activities; however, these impacts will be minimized with incorporation of avoidance and minimization measures. During the preparation of the EIR/EA, Caltrans will analyze project impacts to air quality including long-term impacts of criteria pollutants and mobile source air toxics.

### Biological Resources

The project will have no effect on any species identified as candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) or the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS).

The project will not have any effects on sensitive natural communities identified in local or regional plans, policies, and regulations or by the CDFW or USFWS.

A delineation of the aquatic resources has been performed in accordance with US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) guidance and the impacts of the proposed project will require filling in wetlands and other waters in order to widen SR-49. A preliminary jurisdictional determination (USACE concurred with the delineation) was received from USACE on May 16, 2019.

The project will affect federally protected wetlands and waters as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act through direct removal and filling. Caltrans proposes to mitigate for the impacts to these jurisdictional resources by purchasing in-lieu fee credits.

### Cultural Resources

There is potential for cultural resources to be located within the project area. Analysis of the design will be conducted during preparation of the EIR/EA to determine the potential impacts to these resources, as well as potential avoidance, minimization, and/or mitigation measures.

### Energy

The project may result in short- and/or long-term impacts to energy resources during project construction and/or operation. Analysis will be conducted during preparation of the EIR/EA to evaluate impacts to Energy.

### Geology and Soils

No impacts anticipated.

### Greenhouse Gas Emissions

The project may contribute to carbon dioxide equivalent (CO<sub>2</sub>e) emissions. During the preparation of the EIR/EA, Caltrans will analyze impacts to CO<sub>2</sub> emissions.

### Hazards/Hazardous Materials

There are hazardous materials located within the project area, such as, Aerial Deposited Lead (ADL), thermoplastic paint striping, Treated Wood Waste (TWW) and assumed asbestos containing materials in existing structures. During preparation of the EIR/EA, further analysis will be conducted to determine potential avoidance, minimization, and/or mitigation impacts.

### Hydrology and Water Quality

Due to the anticipated quantity of soil disturbance during construction, the project will be regulated under the Construction General Permit (CGP). The CGP contains specific requirements meant to address potential erosion, sedimentation, and the transportation of potential pollutants to receiving waters. In accordance with the CGP, it is anticipated that field Best Management Practices (BMPs) will be implemented, monitored, and evaluated to the maximum extent practicable to reduce or prevent potential impacts to water bodies within the project limits.

An analysis will be conducted during subsequent project phases to further evaluate potential water quality impacts, within the project limits, and potential adverse impacts to receiving waters that may occur as the result of project activities.

### Land Use/Planning

The proposed project would not conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation of any agencies with jurisdiction over the project (including, but not limited to the general plan, specific plan, or zoning ordinance) adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect.

### Mineral Resources

No impacts anticipated.

### Noise

The proposed project could result in 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. Analysis will be conducted during preparation of the EIR/EA to evaluate the potential noise impacts.

### Population/Housing

The proposed project will displace existing residential housing and non-residential/commercial properties. For both build alternatives, approximately 37 residential housing units and 24 commercial properties will require relocation. During the design phase, all efforts will be made to minimize impacts to housing.

### Public Services

No significant impacts anticipated.

### Recreation

No impacts anticipated.

### Transportation/Traffic

The project is not anticipated to conflict with any applicable plan, ordinance or policy establishing measures of effectiveness for the performance of the circulation system, or conflict with an applicable congestion management program or conflict with adopted policies, plans or programs regarding public transit, bicycle or pedestrian facilities, or otherwise decrease the performance or safety of such facilities.

### Tribal Cultural Resources

No impacts anticipated.

### Utilities/Service Systems

The proposed project could require the relocation of existing facilities, including, but not limited to gas, electric and fiber optic. Through the design of the project, Caltrans will identify feasible measures to avoid and minimize impacts to utilities and service systems.

### Wildfire

The addition of wider shoulders, median and additional travel lanes would increase the width of the road as a firebreak and provide additional areas for emergency response vehicle staging. No other impacts are anticipated.

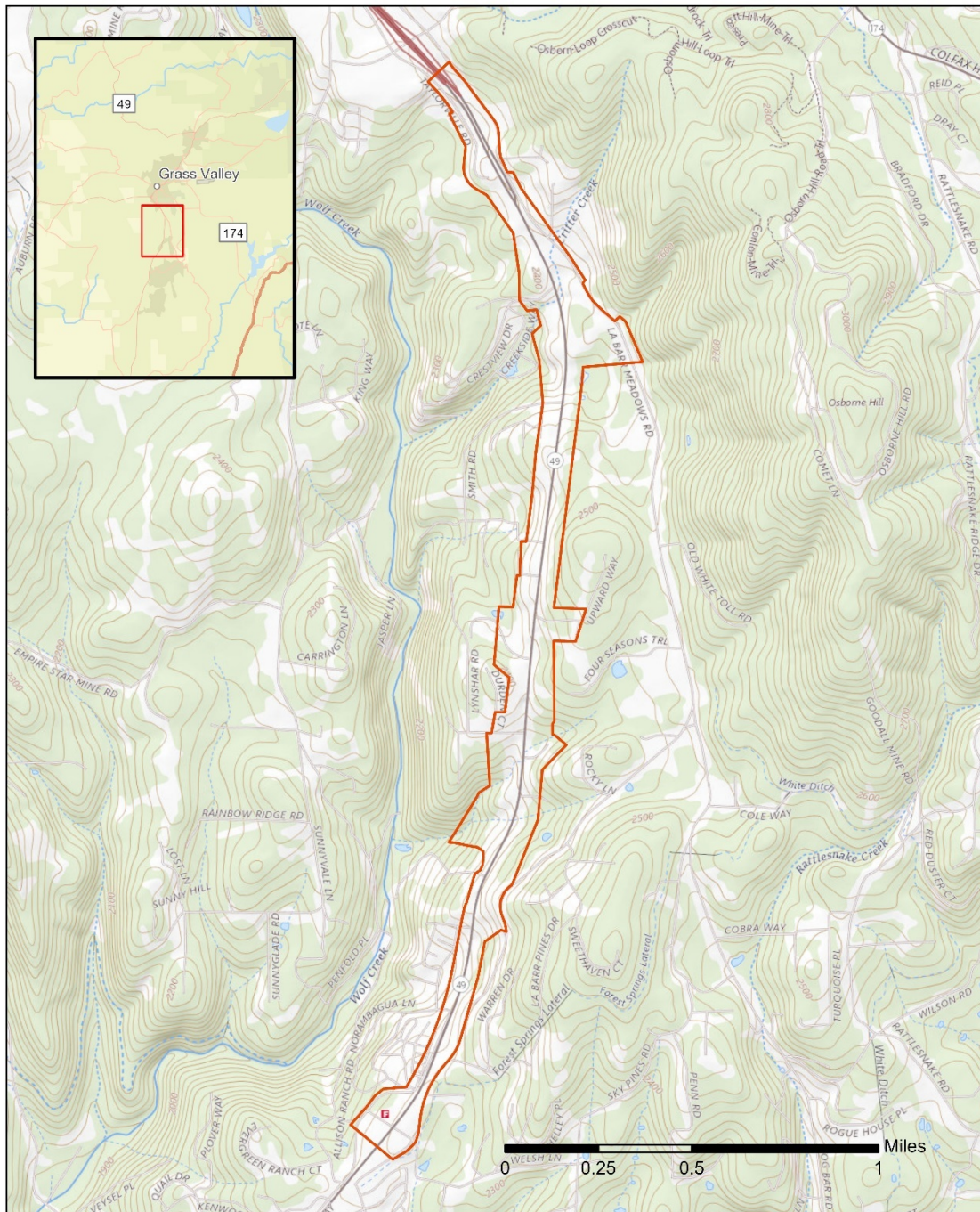
# 03-4e170 NOP Distribution List to SCH

Please include the following when distributing the NOP:

- Nevada County Transportation Commission
- Cal EPA
- City of Grass Valley
- City of Nevada City
- United Auburn Indian Community  
Attn: Mr. Gene Whitehouse, Chairperson



## Project Location Map



**Nev-49 Corridor Improvement Project**  
**Vicinity Map**  
**EA: 03-4E170**  
**EFIS: 0315000064**



ESL

**Grass Valley Quadrangle**  
**California**  
**7.5-Minute Series**

Sources: Esri, HERE, Garmin, FAO, NOAA, USGS, © OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community, USGS The National Map: National Boundaries Dataset, 3DEP Elevation Program, Geographic Names Information System, National Hydrography Dataset, National Land Cover Database, National Structures Dataset, and National Transportation Dataset; USGS Global Ecosystems; U.S. Census Bureau TIGER/Line data; USFS Road Data; Natural Earth Data; U.S. Department of State Humanitarian Information Unit; and NOAA National Centers for Environmental Information, U.S. Coastal Relief Model. Data refreshed May, 2020.