

SCH NO.

NOTICE OF PREPARATION

To: Office of Planning and Research
1400 Tenth Street, Room 121
Sacramento, CA 95814

From: California Dept. of Transportation
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: Albion River Bridge Rehabilitation/Replacement Project

Project Location: State Route 1 in Mendocino County from post mile (PM) 43.3 to 44.2.

Project Description: This project proposes to either replace or rehabilitate the Albion River Bridge (No. 10-0136).

This is to inform you that the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) will be the lead agency and will prepare an environmental impact report (EIR) for the project described below. 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.

The project description, location map, and the potential environmental effects are contained in the attached materials.

A copy of the Initial Study 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 via U.S. mail to Adele Pommerenck, Environmental Branch Chief, Caltrans District 3, Office of Environmental Management, 703 B Street, Marysville, CA 95901 or e-mail to adele.pommerenck@dot.ca.gov.

Please supply us with the name of a contact person in your agency.

Date 4/1/15

Signature


Adele Pommerenck, Branch Chief
Office of Environmental Management, M-2

Project Description

Caltrans proposes to replace or rehabilitate the Albion River Bridge in Mendocino County.

The proposed replacement structure consists of two 12-foot travel lanes, two eight-foot shoulders, and a six-foot pedestrian walkway (with barrier) on the east and/or west sides of the structure. Two four-foot shoulders are proposed for the approach roadway.

All replacement alternatives consist of ADA improvements, asphalt concrete overlays, new structural section off the existing centerline, and new structural section at locations where the vertical profile is raised or lowered to accommodate improved vertical curvature.

All replacement alternatives improve the existing two-way left turn pocket storage length at PM 43.40 to 43.69 from approximately 360 feet to 435 feet. In addition, all replacement alternatives provide paved access from the east-side and west-side pedestrian walkways to the roadway shoulder.

The proposed rehabilitation alternatives either propose to rehabilitate and upgrade the bridge rails, rehabilitate, widen the bridge and upgrade the bridge rails, or rehabilitate the bridge as a pedestrian bridge as an option to the east alignment and west alignment alternatives described in the replacement alternatives section below. The rehabilitation alternative that includes widening proposes two 12-foot lanes and two eight-foot shoulders. All rehabilitation alternatives include earthquake retrofit.

Project Alternatives

Provided below are the alternatives being considered for this project, including the No-Build Alternative.

Replacement Alternatives

- Replacement on the West Alignment: This alignment is located west and clear of the existing bridge and includes one retaining wall.
- Replacement on the East Alignment: This alignment is located east and clear of the bridge and includes three retaining walls.
- Replacement to the West on the Existing Alignment: This alignment is located somewhat westerly and on the existing bridge and includes two retaining walls.

Rehabilitation Alternatives

- Rehabilitation of the bridge and bridge rail upgrade;
- Rehabilitation and widening of the bridge and bridge rail upgrade;
- Rehabilitate as a pedestrian bridge as an option to the rehabilitation alternatives for the “West Alignment” and “East Alignment” alternatives described above.

No Build Alternative

The no build alternative proposes to maintain the existing conditions without any improvements.

Potential Environmental Effects

As part of the scoping and preliminary environmental analysis conducted for the project, no adverse impacts were identified for the following resources: geology and soils, mineral resources, and population and housing. Resources that would be potentially affected by the project include aesthetics, agriculture and forest resources, air quality, biological resources, cultural resources, hazards and hazardous materials, hydrology and water quality, land use and planning, noise, public services, recreation, transportation/traffic, and utilities and service systems.

Visual/Aesthetics

Replacement alternatives could result in significant impacts. The current visual quality along the existing alignment is highly scenic. This section of State Route 1 has been found eligible for scenic highway designation on the California Scenic Highway System.

Agriculture and Forest Resources

Farmlands are within the project limits. The Community Impact Assessment being prepared will determine whether there are project-related impacts to farmlands.

Air Quality

Construction of the project could result in temporary impacts to air quality. Project-related impacts to air quality will be evaluated.

Biological Resources

There are several sensitive species, communities, and other resources within the project limits, including Behren's silverspot butterfly, lotis blue butterfly, western snowy plover, Howell's spineflower, anadromous fish, marine mammals, migratory birds, environmentally sensitive habitat areas, jurisdictional waters, and wetlands will be studied and evaluated during botanical and general biological surveys conducted for this project.

Community Impacts

A Community Impact Assessment (CIA) will be completed for this project. The CIA will evaluate items such as land use, impacts within the coastal zone, affects to wild and scenic rivers, and community character.

Cultural Resources

The area is of high sensitivity for prehistoric and historic resources. Surveys and studies for cultural resources within the project limits will be completed. The Albion River Bridge is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places and will be evaluated as if the bridge is actually listed.

Hazardous Materials

The levels of hazardous materials, including asbestos, lead-containing paint, and treated wood waste, will be evaluated during project studies.

Hydrology and Water Quality

The North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board considers the Albion River as impaired for sediment. Project impacts upon the river will be evaluated. Treatment best management practices will be required to address pollutant loading and hydromodification.

Wild and Scenic River

The Albion River flows under the bridge and is designated as a wild and scenic river. Coordination with the river's responsible managing agency will take place once impacts, if any, are determined.

Land Use and Planning

The Mendocino County General Plan and Local Coastal Plan will be evaluated. There are numerous policies related to the protection of biological, recreational, community and water resources that need to be considered for this project.

Noise

Construction of the project would temporarily increase noise levels in the vicinity of the work zone and may result in impacts to nearby residents and sensitive animal species. Studies will be completed to evaluate construction-related noise impacts.

Recreation

The Albion River Campground and Marina lies directly below and to the east of the existing structure with beach access to the west. Temporary construction impacts would affect visitors access to the campground and restrict/reduce access to the Albion River and beach.

Transportation/Traffic/Public Services

One-way traffic control will be recommended during construction, creating a minimal impact to motorists. Bicyclists will be accommodated through the work zone. Emergency services could be affected during construction of the project. It is expected that construction-related impacts to traffic would be in effect for up to three construction seasons.

Cumulative Impacts

A Cumulative Impacts Analysis will be completed for this project. The Cumulative Impact Analysis will evaluate the impacts of the proposed project in combination with the impacts of other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable projects.

Scoping Process

The scoping process for the project includes early consultation with public agencies and the general public. A public scoping meeting will be held to provide interested parties the opportunity to learn about the proposed project and to submit written comments to assist the project team in the Draft EIR development process. The details of the meeting are as follows:

Tuesday, April 14, 2015
6:00 P.M. to 8:00 P.M.
Albion Elementary School
30400 Albion Ridge Road
Albion, CA

Written comments may be mailed to:

Caltrans
Attn: Adele Pommerenck
Office of Environmental Management
703 B Street
Marysville, CA 95901

Your comments can also be emailed to adele.pommerenck@dot.ca.gov. Your response must be sent by May 7, 2015.

Potential Responsible and Trustee Agencies

This Notice of Preparation serves as a request for comments from the responsible and trustee agencies listed in the following table regarding environmental issues, reasonable alternatives, and reasonable mitigation measures that need to be discussed in the Draft EIR in order to address each agency's specific concerns in their areas of responsibility.

Potential Responsible and Trustee Agencies

| Agency | Permits/Approvals |
|--|---|
| North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board | Clean Water Act Section 401 Water Quality Certification |
| California Department of Fish and Wildlife | Section 1602 Streambed Alteration Agreement California Endangered Species Act Coordination – Section 2080.1 Consistency Determination or Section 2081(b) Incidental Take Permit Coordination with the Marine Environmental Review Water Quality Project Unit |
| State Office of Historic Preservation | Section 106 Consultation for Historic Resources Section 4(f) Consultation |
| U.S. Army Corps of Engineers | Clean Water Act Section 404 Permit Rivers and Harbors Act, Section 10 |
| U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service | Section 7 Endangered Species Act Consultation – Biological Opinion |
| NOAA Fisheries | Section 7 Endangered Species Act Consultation – Biological Opinion Marine Mammal Protection Act Consultation – Incidental Take Authorization |
| California Natural Resources Agency | Wild and Scenic River Act Consultation |
| U.S. Coast Guard | Rivers and Harbors Act, Section 9 |
| California Coastal Commission | Federal Consistency Coastal Development Permit |
| State Lands Commission | Lease of State Lands |
| Mendocino County Planning and Building Services | Local Coastal Plan Coastal Development Permit |

Project Location Map

EA 401100

01-MEN-01-PM 43.3/44.2

