Appendix F Comments and Responses on Draft Environmental Document

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

BILL POWERS, DISTRICT 1
ROBERT A. MEACHER, DISTRICT 2
SHERRIE THRALL, DISTRICT 3
ROSE COMSTOCK, DISTRICT 4
OLE OLSEN, DISTRICT 5

February 20, 2007

Ms. Cindy Anderson
Environmental Management
Office of Environmental Management—MS 30
P.O. Box ~~496973~~ 496073
Redding, CA 96049

RE: Spanish Creek Bridge Project on SR 70
Plumas County, 02-PLU-70-PM-35.1/35.5 373100
Draft Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Assessment
And Section 4(f) Evaluation

Dear Ms. Anderson:

This letter follows the Public Information Meeting that was conducted by your agency on January 25, 2007 in the Quincy Public Library in regard to the above captioned project.

The Board of Supervisors for Plumas County considers the bridge project to be of high importance and necessity. Accordingly, the Board opposes Alternative D (No Build).

Furthermore, the Board concurs that elimination of Alternative C (Rehabilitate Existing Bridge)
is appropriate for the reasons cited in the subject report/assessment.

The Board of Supervisors does not favor Alternative A (Build New Bridge and Seismic Retrofit Existing Bridge) and instead endorses Alternative B (Build New Bridge and Remove Existing Bridge) because Alternate B addresses and resolves many issues, such that the final constructed project will be in the best long-term interest of the County as well as the State and Federal Highway programs.

Sincerely,

Ole Olsen

Ole Olsen, Chairman

Cc: Bob Perreault, Director of Public Works
Marty Byrne, Plumas County Transportation Commission

520 MAIN ST., ROOM 309 • QUINCY, CALIFORNIA 95971 • (530) 283-6170 • FAX (530) 283-6288

STATE OF CALIFORNIA—BUSINESS, TRANSPORTATION AND HOUSING ARNOLD SCHWARZENEGGER, *Governor*
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
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FAX (530)225-3019
TELEPHONE (530) 225-3308

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September 21, 2007

Mr. Ole Olsen, Chairman
Plumas County Board of Supervisors
520 Main Street, Room 309
Quincy, CA 95971

03-172-02-373100
PLU-70-PM 35.1/35.5
Spanish Creek Bridge Replacement
(Bridge No. 09-0015)

Dear Mr. Olsen:

Thank you for providing comments relative to the Draft Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Assessment for the proposed Spanish Creek Bridge replacement project on State Route 70, in Plumas County, near Keddie.

Your letter of February 20, 2007 indicates that the Plumas County Board of Supervisors endorses Alternative B (Build New Bridge and Remove Existing Bridge). Caltrans had anticipated project approval, which includes selection of a project alternative, in July 2007. However, due to the development of recent design and construction issues that warrant further evaluation, it will be necessary to postpone the project approval date until mid-2008. At this time, construction remains on schedule for 2009.

We appreciate your participation in the project development process. If you have additional comments or questions regarding this project, please contact the project's Environmental Coordinator, Chris Quiney at (530) 225-3174.

Sincerely,

Edward Espinoza, Chief
Environmental Management Office R1 – Redding

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To
chris_quiney@dot.ca.gov

Subject
Gold claim access

History:

This message has been forwarded.

Christopher,

I'm writing this as per your request from our conversation the other day. As I stated then, I own gold claims along Spanish Creek where the proposed bridge replacement is planned. In one of the plans it is proposed that the Spanish Creek campgrounds be closed. As I explained when we talked the only access that I have two to Creek because of the terrain is through the campgrounds. My request is that during the construction I be allowed to do enter the lower area of the campgrounds to access the river downstream from where the work will be performed. My plans currently are to only be in the area one to two weeks at a time possibly once or twice through the year. Any and all help you can give me in accomplishing this task will be greatly appreciated! If you have any questions or need more information please feel free to contact me.
Thanks again;
David Gerrer

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September 21, 2007

Mr. David Gerrer

03-172-02-373100
PLU-70-PM 35.1/35.5
Spanish Creek Bridge Replacement

Dear Mr. Gerrer:

This is to respond to your comments pertaining to the Draft Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Assessment (EIR/EA) for the proposed Spanish Creek Bridge replacement project on State Route 70 in Plumas County, California.

The Draft EIR/EA indicates that the campground road would be utilized for construction access, if the bridge were to be replaced, and consequently the campground would be closed to the public during that time due to safety reasons. Recreational activities on Spanish Creek, from the existing bridge location to the proposed temporary construction trestle site downstream, would also be closed to the public. The proposed trestle location is near the bottom campground loop. Construction of a new bridge would be expected to take approximately three years. Based on the information in the Draft EIR/EA, you have indicated a concern regarding your ability to access a mining claim on Spanish Creek in the vicinity of the U.S. Forest Service Spanish Creek Campground. Due to the steep terrain in this area, access is usually gained via use of the campground road.

In the event that the campground road is utilized for construction access, Caltrans would include contract provisions which would require the bridge contractor to accommodate specific access rights for situations such as yours. The project is currently scheduled to begin construction during the fall of 2009. As the project development process progresses, Caltrans' Right-of-Way Office will contact you to determine your access needs.

If you have any questions, please contact the project's environmental coordinator, Chris Quiney, at (530) 225-3174 or via e-mail at chris.quiney@dot.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

Edward Espinoza, Branch Chief
Office of Environmental Management (R1)

CC: Office of Right-of-Way

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United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
Pacific West Region
1111 Jackson Street, Suite 700
Oakland, California 94607-4807

IN REPLY REFER TO:
L7619 (PWRO-P)
4(f) ER-07\0014

APR 18 2007

Lanh T. Phan, P.E.
Project Development Engineer
FHWA California Division
650 Capitol Mall (Suite 4-100)
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Mr. Phan:

Provided below for your consideration are comments concerning the Draft Environmental Assessment and 4(f) Evaluation for the Spanish Creek Bridge Replacement on State Route 70, Plumas County, CA (ER-07\0014). No responses nor review comments were received from any other Department of the Interior bureaus or offices.

Our understanding is that this 4(f) evaluation noted potential historic resource effects from proposed work on Spanish Creek Bridge in the Feather River Highway Historic District. This bridge services SR-70 which is a conventional two-lane highway connecting U.S. Route 395 in southeastern Lassen County and SR-99 in Sutter County near Sacramento.

The proposed work project is located approximately 30 miles southeast of the nearest unit of the National Park System - Lassen Volcanic National Park. This national park would not be affected by the proposal, and we are unaware of any other parklands or refuges within the area of potential effect. However, since SR-70 transits considerable area within Plumas National Forest, it may be desirable to contact their staff to determine if they may have any concerns.

There will be no impacts to archeological sites. However, the 1930s bridge is a contributing element to the Feather River Historic District and there would be adverse impacts to it from either demolition or retrofitting. To avoid or minimize affecting this contributing element to the Historic District, consultation with State Historic Preservation Office should be completed prior to selecting a final design or finalizing commitments for measures to minimize harm.

For further information or clarification of these points as needed, please contact Mr. Mark Rudo, Archeologist, Pacific West Region, National Park Service at (510) 817-1405.

Jonathan B. Jarvis

Attachment

cc:
REO-Oakland
WASO-EQD

Received
APR 23 2007
FHWA

TAKE PRIDE IN AMERICA

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May 10, 2007

Mr. Jonathan B. Jarvis
U.S. Department of the Interior
National Park Service – Pacific West Region
1111 Jackson Street, Suite 700
Oakland, CA 94607-4807

03-172-02-373100
PLU-70-PM 35.1/35.5
Spanish Creek Bridge Replacement

Dear Mr. Jarvis:

Thank you for providing comments relative to the Draft Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Assessment (EIR/EA) for the proposed Spanish Creek Bridge replacement project on State Route 70 in Plumas County, California.

The Federal Highway Administration and Caltrans have coordinated with Plumas National Forest and the State Office of Historic Preservation as recommended in your letter of April 18, 2007.

Should you have any questions or additional comments, please contact the project's environmental coordinator, Chris Quiney, at (530) 225-3174.

Sincerely,

Edward Espinoza, Chief
Office of Environmental Management (R1)

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California Regional Water Quality Control Board
Central Valley Region

Redding Branch Office
415 Knollcrest Drive, Suite 100, Redding, California 96002
(530) 224-4845 • Fax (530) 224-4857
http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralvalley

Linda Adams
Secretary for
Environmental Protection

Arnold Schwarzenegger
Governor

9 January 2007

Cindy Anderson, Environmental Branch Chief
California Department of Transportation
P.O. Box 496073
Redding, CA 96049-6073

COMMENTS ON ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT FOR SPANISH CREEK BRIDGE REPLACEMENT PROJECT, STATE ROUTE 70, PLUMAS COUNTY

On 29 December 2006, our office received a Draft Environmental Impact Report and Environmental Assessment from your office requesting comments regarding the project referenced above. The Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board (Regional Water Board) is a responsible agency for this project, as defined by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), in cooperation with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), proposes to replace Spanish Creek Bridge on State Route 70, post mile 35.3. The purpose of the project is to provide a road crossing that meets modern highway design standards and accommodates interregional transportation needs. The bridge was constructed in 1932 and is approaching the end of its service life. The preferred alternative includes constructing a new open spandrel concrete arch box girder bridge and removal of the existing bridge; this would minimize construction costs, unsightly cuts and fills, vegetation removal, and disturbed area subject to erosion.

The following comments are provided to help outline the potential permitting required by the Regional Water Board s agency, policy issues concerning the project, and suggestions for mitigation measures. Our present comments focus primarily on discharges regulated under our CWA §401 and storm water programs.

Required Water Board entitlements include:

• Fill or dredged material discharges	Clean Water Act (CWA) §401 water quality certification for federal waters; or Waste Discharge Requirements for non-federal waters
• Storm water and other wastewater discharges	CWA §402 NPDES permit

The following summarizes project permits that may be required by our agency depending upon potential impacts to water quality:

Water Quality Certification (401 Certification) – Permit issued for activities resulting in dredge or fill within waters of the United States (including wetlands). All projects must be evaluated for the presence of jurisdictional waters, including wetlands and other waters of the state. Destruction of, or impacts to these waters should be avoided. Under the Clean Water Act Section 401 and 404, disturbing these waters requires a Corp permit and a State 401 permit. The Section 404 and 401 permits are required for activities involving a discharge (such as fill or dredged material) to Waters of the United States. "Waters" include wetlands, riparian zones, streambeds, rivers, lakes, and oceans. Typical activities include any modifications to these waters, such as stream crossings, stream bank modifications, filling of wetlands, etc. If required, the Section 404 and 401 permits must be obtained prior to site disturbance.

General Permit for Storm Water Discharges Associated with Construction Activity (General Permit) – Land disturbances on proposed projects of 1 acre or more requires the landowner to obtain coverage under the General Permit. As the land disturbance for the Spanish Creek Bridge Replacement Project will be in excess of 1 acre, the owner of the property will need to file a Notice of Intent (NOI), along with a vicinity map, a Storm water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP), and appropriate fees to the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB), prior to the commencement of activities on site. The owner may call our office to receive a permit package or download it off the Internet at http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/stormwtr/index.html.

If you have any questions or comments regarding this matter please contact me at (530) 224-4784 or by email at szaitz@waterboards.ca.gov.

Scott A. Zaitz

Scott A. Zaitz, R.E.H.S.
Environmental Scientist
Storm Water & Water Quality Certification Unit

SAZ: cg

cc: Mr. Matt Kelly, U.S. Army Corp of Engineers, Redding
Department of Fish and Game, Region 2, Rancho Cordova
Federal Highway Administration, Lakewood, CO

STATE OF CALIFORNIA—BUSINESS, TRANSPORTATION AND HOUSING ARNOLD SCHWARZENEGGER, Governor

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May 2, 2007

Mr. Scott Zaitz
California Regional Water Quality
Control Board
415 Knollcrest Drive, Suite 100
Redding, CA 96002

03-172-02-373100
PLU-70-PM 35.1/35.5
Spanish Creek Bridge Replacement

Dear Mr. Zaitz:

Thank you for providing comments relative to Caltrans' Draft Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Assessment for the proposed Spanish Creek Bridge replacement project on State Route 70, in Plumas County, near the community of Keddie. Your letter of January 9, 2007 provides a summary of regulatory permit requirements and pertinent water quality information.

Implementation of the project may require the placement of temporary fill, access, diversions, and/or dewatering within the banks of Spanish Creek. The appropriate notifications and fees will be submitted to your agency in accordance with governing water quality regulations. It is acknowledged that the California Department of Fish and Game and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers also have jurisdiction in this matter.

Questions or comments regarding this project can be addressed to the project's Environmental Coordinator, Christopher Quiney, at (530) 225-3174.

Sincerely,

EDWARD ESPINOZA, Branch Chief
Environmental Management Office R1 - Redding

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01/12/2007 11:12 PM

To <chris.quiney@dot.ca.gov>
cc
bcc
Subject Comments concerning Draft EIR/EA for the Spanish Creek Bridge (02-PLU-70-PM 35.1/35.5 373100)

I only have two comments, both having to do with aesthetics.

1) While the Open Spandrel Concrete Arch Box Girder (the preferred design) is much better that the Concrete Box Girder and the Steel Plate Girder, my favorite is the Open Spandrel Concrete Arch Slab. I find the added vertical members between the arch and the decking more pleasing visually.
2) I believe that it would be a terrible decision to build the new bridge right next to the old bridge and leave the old bridge in place. Doing so would be a visual nightmare! Being located so close together, the two dissimilar bridges would clash visually when viewed from a distance as each bridge would obscure the aesthetics of the other (depending on which side they were being observed). In addition, the old bridge would appear as nothing more than two unused lanes next to traveled lanes when viewed while traveling on the new bridge. If it is not possible to separate the two bridges by a distance where each can be viewed 'as a whole' from the other or from other locations, then it is best that the old bridge be removed.

Gregory H. Henton

STATE OF CALIFORNIA—BUSINESS, TRANSPORTATION AND HOUSING ARNOLD SCHWARZENEGGER, Governor
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March 11, 2008

Mr. Gregory H. Henton

Quincy, CA 95971

03-172-02-373100
PLU-70-PM 35.1/35.5
Spanish Creek Bridge Replacement
(Bridge No. 09-0015)

Dear Mr. Henton:

Thank you for providing comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Assessment (EIR/EA) for the proposed Spanish Creek Bridge replacement project on State Route 70 in Plumas County near Keddie. Upon consideration of all comments, Caltrans will select a preferred alternative and make the final determination of the project's effect on the environment. We expect to make this decision in July 2008.

You provided the following comments:

1. "While the open spandrel concrete arch box girder (the preferred design) is much better than the concrete box girder and the steel plate girder, my favorite is the open spandrel concrete arch slab. I find the added vertical members between the arch and the decking more pleasing visually."

2. "I believe that it would be a terrible decision to build the new bridge right next to the old bridge and leave the old bridge in place. Doing so would be a visual nightmare! Being located so close together, the two dissimilar bridges would clash visually when viewed from a distance as each bridge would obscure the aesthetics of the other (depending on which side they were being observed). In addition, the old bridge would appear as nothing more than two unused lanes next to traveled lanes when viewed while traveling on the new bridge. If it is not possible to separate the two bridges by a distance where each can be viewed "as a whole" from the other or from other locations. Then it is best that the old bridge be removed."

In response to item number 1, Caltrans evaluated four bridge types based on foundation requirements, cost, and aesthetics. Preliminary estimates revealed that the concrete arch bridges were less expensive than the others and were more pleasing aesthetically. It was decided that based on its lower overall cost, the arch box girder bridge would be utilized if alternative A or B were selected.

In response to item 2, if Alternative A were selected, a new bridge would be located immediately west of the existing bridge, which would remain in place. Because this alternative would not address the structural condition of the existing bridge and would entail a substantial long-term maintenance commitment, Caltrans desires to remove the existing bridge (Alternative B). Regardless of whether Alternative A or B were selected, Caltrans would propose preparation of a Historic American Engineering Record (HAER) to document the bridge and construction of an interpretive kiosk within the entrance of the Spanish Creek Campground near the northern bridge abutment. The kiosk would include information about the Spanish Creek Bridge, Feather River Highway Historic District, Maxwell

Ditch segment, Utah Construction Road segment, and the Western Pacific Railroad.

Following approval of the Final EIR/EA, Caltrans will move forward with project implementation. Construction is scheduled to begin late in 2009 and will take approximately three years to complete.

We appreciate the time you have taken to provide input during the project development process. If you have any questions or comments about this project, please contact the project's Environmental Coordinator, Chris Quiney, at (530) 225-3174 or via e-mail at chris.quiney@dot.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

Edward Espinoza, Chief
Environmental Management Office – Redding R1

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Arnold Schwarzenegger
Governor

STATE OF CALIFORNIA FEB 2 8 2007
Governor's Office of Planning and Research
State Clearinghouse and Planning Unit

Cynthia Bryant
Director

February 14, 2007

Christopher Quiney
Department of Transportation, District 2
1667 Riverside Drive
Redding, CA 96001

Subject: Spanish Creek Bridge Replacement Project
SCH#: 2004092030

Dear Christopher Quiney:

The State Clearinghouse submitted the above named Draft EIR to selected state agencies for review. The review period closed on February 13, 2007, and no state agencies submitted comments by that date. This letter acknowledges that you have complied with the State Clearinghouse review requirements for draft environmental documents, pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act.

Please call the State Clearinghouse at (916) 445-0613 if you have any questions regarding the environmental review process. If you have a question about the above-named project, please refer to the ten-digit State Clearinghouse number when contacting this office.

Sincerely,

Terry Roberts

Terry Roberts
Director, State Clearinghouse

1400 TENTH STREET P.O. BOX 3044 SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA 95812-3044
TEL (916) 445-0613 FAX (916) 323-3018 www.opr.ca.gov

Document Details Report
State Clearinghouse Data Base

SCH# 2004092030
Project Title Spanish Creek Bridge Replacement Project
Lead Agency Caltrans #2

Type EIR Draft EIR
Description The preferred alternative entails removal of the existing bridge and construction of a new bridge on a different alignment.

Lead Agency Contact
Name Christopher Quiney
Agency Department of Transportation, District 2
Phone (530) 225-3174 **Fax**
email
Address 1667 Riverside Drive
City Redding **State** CA **Zip** 96001

Project Location
County Plumas
City
Region
Cross Streets US Forest Service Spanish Creek Campground entrance
Parcel No.
Township 25N **Range** 9E **Section** 15 **Base** Greenvil

Proximity to:
Highways 70
Airports
Railways
Waterways Spanish Creek
Schools
Land Use State Highway and National Forest

Project Issues Aesthetic/Visual; Air Quality; Archaeologic-Historic; Cumulative Effects; Forest Land/Fire Hazard; Landuse; Noise; Recreation/Parks; Soil Erosion/Compaction/Grading; Toxic/Hazardous; Vegetation; Water Quality; Wildlife

Reviewing Agencies Resources Agency; Regional Water Quality Control Bd., Region 5 (Redding); Department of Parks and Recreation; Native American Heritage Commission; Office of Historic Preservation; Department of Fish and Game, Region 2; Department of Water Resources; California Highway Patrol; Air Resources Board, Transportation Projects; Department of Toxic Substances Control

Date Received 12/28/2006 **Start of Review** 12/28/2006 **End of Review** 02/13/2007

Note: Blanks in data fields result from insufficient information provided by lead agency.

Sierra Pacific Industries
P.O. Box 750 • Quincy, California 95971 • (530) 283-2820

February 9, 2007

Cindy Anderson
Office of Environmental Management
P. O. Box 496073
Redding, California 96049-6073

Dear Cindy:

We support the proposed project bringing the Spanish Creek Bridge up to present day seismic standards and to accommodate larger permitted loads. Our company has a vested interest in the project with regards to possible delays to traffic going east and west on State Route 70 caused by the construction activities.

In your appendix A California Environmental Quality Act Evaluation under Community Resources you have stated less than significant impact associated with construction activities. Last year we had approximately 24000 log loads cross the bridge between April and November. Potential delays caused by construction might mean one less round trip for our log haulers on a daily basis. The resulting loss of loads will be significant to our mill. We have a narrow window of opportunity to move the logs needed to keep our mill running at full capacity. The planning process for the construction activities must facilitate the free flow of traffic during this period of time.

Thank you again for the allowing us to comment on the proposed project. If you have any questions or concerns about my comments, please call me at 530 283-6714.

Sincerely,

Tom Downing

Tom Downing
Timber Manager

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December 17, 2007

Mr. Tom Downing
Timber Manager
Sierra Pacific Industries
P.O. Box 750
Quincy, CA 95971

03-172-02-373100
PLU-70-PM 35.1/35.5
Spanish Creek Bridge Replacement
(Bridge No. 09-0015)

Dear Mr. Downing:

Thank you for providing comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Assessment (EIR/EA) for the proposed Spanish Creek Bridge replacement project on State Route 70 in Plumas County, California.

Your letter of February 9, 2007 indicates support for a project that would upgrade and improve the Spanish Creek Bridge. However, Sierra Pacific Industries is concerned that traffic delays during construction could significantly affect mill operations.

We had anticipated project approval, which includes selection of a project alternative, in July 2007. Due to the development of design and construction issues that warrant further evaluation, it will be necessary to postpone the project approval date until mid-2008. At this time, construction remains on schedule for 2009.

With regard to traffic delays during construction, if a new bridge were constructed, traffic would continue to utilize the existing bridge until the new bridge is operational. Construction staging would allow two lanes of traffic throughout much of the construction process. However, intermittent one-way traffic control would be required during normal construction operations such as staging setup and changes, concrete pours, material and equipment delivery, etc. During one-way traffic control, motorists would experience delays of less than ten minutes. Preparation of a traffic handling plan would consider peak traffic flows and maximum traffic delay criteria.

Blasting and high cut removal would result in longer delays. Blasting would be required to make a highway cut in rock at the south end of the project. Traffic delays of 20-40 minutes could be expected. Due to the type of rock, proximity of the existing highway to the rock, and safety concerns, these blasting delays would be unavoidable. Blasting would be scheduled for a specific time of day, taking into account railroad operations and peak traffic flows. The blasting schedule could be provided to you upon request so you could plan accordingly for these delays. Throughout construction, the public would be informed of traffic issues through press releases.

We understand the importance of minimizing traffic delays during construction and the specific concerns your company has relative to mill operations. We would be glad to meet with you to discuss possible measures that could be implemented during construction to avoid or minimize delays for log haulers.

We appreciate your interest in this project and the time you have taken to provide input. If you have additional questions or comments, please contact the project's environmental coordinator, Chris Quiney at (530) 225-3174.

Sincerely,

Edward Espinoza, Chief
Office of Environmental Management (R1)