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**NEVADA COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**  
**Board Agenda Memo**

**MEETING DATE:** August 13, 2019

**TO:** Board of Supervisors

**FROM:** Jessica Hankins, Public Works Project Manager

**SUBJECT:** **Resolution Adopting the Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration for the Hirschdale Road Bridges Project – District 5**

**RECOMMENDATION:** Approve the attached Resolution adopting the Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND) for the Hirschdale Road Bridges Project, pursuant to Section 15074 of the California Environmental Quality Act Guidelines, based on the findings contained in the Resolution.

**FUNDING:** This project is primarily funded by the Highway Bridge Program (HBP) and is budgeted in the 2019 Capital Improvement Plan. No budget amendment is needed and there is no impact on the General Fund.

**BACKGROUND:** The Truckee River Bridge and the Hirschdale Road Overhead were constructed in 1926 on Hirschdale Road in eastern Nevada County, approximately 1.2 miles south of Interstate 80. The Truckee River Bridge spans the Truckee River, while the Hirschdale Road Overhead spans two tracks of the Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR) approximately 850 feet to the east of the river bridge. Hirschdale Road has two travel lanes (24 feet wide) west of the river bridge and changes to one travel lane (approximately 20 feet wide) east of the bridge. The existing Truckee River Bridge is a 5-span reinforced concrete girder bridge with concrete piers and abutments. Caltrans maintenance inspection records show that the bridge is structurally deficient and requires superstructure replacement to address load rating deficiencies. Hydraulic analysis also shows potential river scour below the foundations.

The Hirschdale Road Overhead is a 4-span reinforced concrete girder bridge with concrete piers and abutments. Hirschdale Road is a 20-foot-wide one-lane unstriped road at this location. Caltrans maintenance inspection records show that Hirschdale Overhead Bridge is functionally obsolete and requires substructure and superstructure rehabilitation to extend its useful life.

In February of 2014, an Initial Study with Proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration was circulated for the project, which included removal of both bridges as Hirschdale Road ends 1.1 miles past the bridge, with no other public outlets. However, Hirschdale Road provides access to the Truckee River, UPRR, U.S. Forest Service land, several private properties, and is an important link in the Nevada County portion of the Tahoe-Pyramid Bike Trail. Due to public comments regarding maintaining access to this part of the County, the project was subsequently changed to replacement of the Truckee River Bridge and rehabilitation of the Hirschdale Road Overhead. The Initial Study with Proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration was thereafter revised and is now being recirculated.

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION:** The Department of Public Works is proposing to replace the five-span Truckee River Bridge on Hirschdale Road with a two-span bridge. The Truckee River Bridge would be narrowed from 21 feet (2 narrow travel lanes of 10.5 feet each) to 16 feet (one wider travel lane with room with cyclists) with a 6-foot-wide sidewalk to accommodate pedestrians. The project would also rehabilitate and seismically retrofit the one-lane Hirschdale Road UPRR Overhead to address major deterioration in the substructure and superstructures. No changes to Overhead Bridge section is proposed. Cross sections of both bridges are shown in Appendix F of the IS/MND.

It is anticipated that temporary construction easements from some adjoining property owners would be needed for the project. The project would provide an additional 30 to 40 years of service life to support public access and use of this section of Hirschdale Road and to improve safety as these bridges make up the only public access to Hirschdale Road beyond the Truckee River crossing.

**PROJECT SCHEDULE:** Once the proposed IS/MND is adopted, additional project milestone delivery dates are anticipated as follows. These subsequent project phases will not begin until the CEQA/NEPA processes have been completed.

1.	Right of Way Certification	Winter 2019-20
2.	Request for Authorization Construction	Summer 2020
3.	Board Approval to Advertise Construction	Winter 2020-21
4.	Award Construction Contract	Spring 2021
5.	Begin Construction	Summer 2021
6.	Complete Construction	Fall 2022

**ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW:** A number of technical studies were prepared for the project and used in the analysis of environmental impacts in the IS/MND. These include an Initial Site Assessment, an Archaeological Survey Report/Historic Property Survey Report, a Biological Assessment, a Natural Environment Study, an Environmentally Sensitive Area Action Plan, a Hydraulic Study Report, and others as listed in Appendix A to the IS/MND.

The environmental review identified the following environmental issues and mitigations. All impacts can be mitigated to a less-than-significant level. A Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (which includes all mitigation measures for the project) is included in Section 4.0 of the IS/MND.

**Air Quality:** The project's construction emissions were estimated using the Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District's Roadway Construction Emission Model, Version 6.3.2, which is the accepted model for roadway projects throughout California. The model results were compared to the NSAQMD significance thresholds, and it was found that project construction would not exceed emission thresholds established by the NSAQMD during project construction. Air quality impacts could occur from the release of diesel exhaust and PM<sub>10</sub> dust concentrations in the construction area,

but would be *less than significant with mitigation* with implementation of Mitigation Measures AIR-1 and AIR-2, which include implementing dust control measures during construction, using alternatives to open burning when feasible, providing traffic control during construction to improve traffic flow, directing generator and compression exhaust away from residences, and maintaining construction equipment.

**Biological Resources:** Database searches identified numerous regional species of special concern with potential to occur within the project vicinity. An analysis of habitat requirements and recorded occurrences determined that only some of these species have the potential to occur within the project impact area. Project biologists conducted focused plant surveys in October 2011, July 2012, and November 2016 to search for the special-status plants with the potential to occur in the project area. These species were not found during the surveys and were therefore assumed absent from the area. Several special status wildlife species were determined to have a reasonable likelihood of occurring in the area and to have the potential to be affected by the project, including Lahontan cutthroat trout (LCT) (*Oncorhynchus clarkia hensawi*), yellow warbler (*Dendroica petechia brewsteri*), willow flycatcher (*Empidonax traillii*), and bald eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*). A number of non-special status bat species were identified as roosting within the Hirschdale Road Overhead, structure, whereas no determination could be made for roosting within the Truckee River Bridge. Species identified through visual and audio confirmation include big brown bat (*Eptesicus fuscus*), silver-haired bat (*Lasionycteris noctivagans*), little brown bat (*Myotis lucifugus*), long-legged myotis (*M. volans*), Yuma myotis (*M. yumanensis*), and Brazilian free-tailed bat (*Tadarida brasiliensis*). Additionally, swallow nests were identified on both bridges. The project would also permanently impact 0.04 acres and temporarily affect 0.48 acres of montane riparian habitat due to the approach roadway of the temporary trestle, bridge replacement processes, and rock slope protection. The proposed project would minimize impacts to species and habitats with measures including but not limited to pre-construction staking and fencing, BMPs, pre-construction surveys, environmental awareness training for construction personnel, work timing exclusions outside the wet season, implementation of a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP), the dedication of mitigation credits through a US Army Corps-approved wetland mitigation bank, and humane eviction protocols for bats. With these measures as identified in Mitigation Measures BIO-1 through BIO-5, the project will have impacts to biological resources that are *less than significant with mitigation*.

**Cultural Resources:** There are two historical resources for purposes of CEQA within the project area: the Clinton Townsite and a segment of the Central Pacific Transcontinental Railroad. The railroad segment will not be significantly impacted by the project because the track will not be impacted by the project. Although no unique archaeological resources were identified within the area of the Clinton Townsite, project activity could disturb or damage archaeological deposits associated with the townsite. Additionally, paleontological and human remains could potentially be disturbed by the project. The project includes mitigation to reduce these potential impacts by excluding personnel and equipment from the Clinton Townsite; halting work if any historic, prehistoric, or paleontological resources or human remains are encountered during construction; and notifying the appropriate entities if such resources are encountered. With implementation of Mitigation Measures CULT-1 through CULT-4 the project would have impacts that are *less than significant with mitigation*.

**Geology/Soils:** The project would remove vegetation on the bridge approaches and include fill slope grading, fill placement, and compaction. Implementation of mitigation measures BIO-2, and BIO-3, as well as BMPs identified in the SWPPP would reduce the potential for soil erosion during project construction activities; therefore, impacts would be *less than significant with mitigation* incorporated.

**Hazards/Hazardous Materials:** According to the updated ISA Addendum (Dokken Engineering 2018), the 2017 Phase II site investigation did not identify naturally occurring asbestos (NOA) or Asbestos Containing Materials (ACM) within the project limits. Site investigations did find concentrations of aerially deposited lead (ADL), but the total lead in soil was not at concentrations that would classify the soil as hazardous waste. Specific soil handling procedures are required pursuant to the Statewide Agreement (DTSC 2016) when ADL is present. Additionally, paint on the guardrails of both bridges contains lead. Mitigation to reduce impacts associated with hazardous materials includes the preparation of a lead compliance plan, lead awareness training, proper placement of soil excavated during the project, dust control measures, meeting OSHA requirements, and preparation of a spill and leak prevention plan. With the implementation of Mitigation Measures HAZ-1 through HAZ-5 impacts would be *less than significant with mitigation* incorporated.

**Hydrology/Water Quality:** The project would disturb greater than one acre; therefore, a Construction Storm Water General Permit is required to address storm water runoff. The permit will address clearing, grading, grubbing, and disturbances to the ground, such as stockpiling, or excavation. This permit will also require the County to prepare and implement a SWPPP with the intent of keeping all products of erosion from moving off site into receiving waters. The SWPPP would include BMPs to prevent construction pollutants from entering storm water runoff. The project will also follow permits acquired from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) for Section 401 of the Clean Water Act (CWA) and CDFW Section 1602 Streambed Alteration Agreement. Mitigation Measures WQ-1 to WQ-7 require that project grading will conform to State Water Resources Control Board standards and in doing so will ensure the project impacts will be *less than significant with mitigation*.

**Noise:** The closest sensitive receptors are residential land uses located as close as approximately 200 feet from the Truckee River Bridge project limits and approximately 1,000 feet from the Hirschdale Road Overhead project limits. Replacement, rehabilitation, debris removal, and roadway approach improvement activity noise would be short-term and intermittent. Mitigation Measure NOISE-1 would minimize these temporary noise impacts on any sensitive receptors in the project vicinity by requiring mufflers, directing noise from stationary equipment away from sensitive receptors, locating staging areas the maximum possible distance from sensitive receptors, and limiting construction hours to between 7 AM and 6 PM Monday through Saturday. With these measures in place, impacts would be *less than significant with mitigation*.

**Recreation:** During construction, access to vehicular, pedestrian, and bicyclist traffic over the Truckee River Bridge will remain open to recreationists through the use of the project temporary trestle. Access to and from the eastern and western banks of the Truckee River will continue through construction with temporary closures for construction activities taking place for short durations only. The project will require some restrictions of pedestrian or recreational access, including for rafting companies, for safety purposes directly under and within the surrounding construction areas of the Truckee River Bridge during construction activities, but these restrictions will only be temporary. Mitigation Measure REC-1 would reduce this impact to *less than significant with mitigation* with the implementation of a notification process for rafting and recreational companies, as well as accommodation of river access for rafting and boating when possible.

**Transportation/Traffic:** The project will not result in additional permanent traffic to the area. However, to remain consistent with existing traffic operations and avoid residential neighborhoods, Mitigation Measure TRAF-1 would be implemented to require staging areas and construction traffic to avoid using the roads within Hirschdale to the extent possible, and to use the temporary trestle as

primary access to and from the project site during construction. With this measure in place, project impacts would be *less than significant with mitigation*.

**Tribal Cultural Resources:** To determine if any tribal cultural resources are located in the project area, a record search was conducted through the North Central Information Center, the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) reviewed the Sacred Lands File, an archaeologist conducted a pedestrian surface survey of the project site, and local Native American tribes were contacted for input on potential project impacts to tribal resources. An additional request was sent to the NAHC in late 2016 for a new Sacred Lands File search and a new contact list of Tribal Governments with whom to consult. New notification letters were sent out, and no Tribal Cultural Resources were identified in any of these investigations. However, as with any project that involves subsurface excavation, there is the potential for accidental discovery of previously unidentified resources. Measure TCR-1 addresses accidental discovery of cultural resources to reduce potential project-related impacts to tribal resources to a level that is *less than significant with mitigation*.

**COMMENTS RECEIVED:** The IS/MND was circulated to various agencies and surrounding property owners for comment for a 30-day period, from April 26, 2019 to May 27, 2019, with an additional two weeks (extended deadline of June 10, 2019) provided based on requests from local residents. Comments were received from local residents concerning topics including the following: additional public review time and public outreach; construction noise, traffic, and air pollution; the visual impacts of new bridges; the historic qualities of the existing bridges; impacts to vacation rental income; drainage issues; public access to the river; septic system impacts on private property; traffic from Boca Quarry; and additional visitation and traffic encouraged by new bridges in this location. The IS/MND addresses all concerns as shown in Appendix G of the IS/MND. Mitigation Measure AIR-2 was changed to require the construction contractor to direct any stationary equipment exhaust away from sensitive receptors. Mitigation Measure NOISE-1 was modified to reduce construction work hours from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. Monday through Friday and 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Saturday to Sunday, to 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Monday through Friday and 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Saturdays only. This change should reduce construction noise impacts as well as construction air quality and traffic impacts. In addition, Mitigation Measure REC-1 was added to the IS/MND, which requires the County and/or Contractor to notify recreational companies that use the Truckee River prior to construction, and to develop a plan to accommodate river access when possible and provide upstream notification regarding planned closures.

Staff recommends that the Board of Supervisors adopt the final version of the IS/MND, as shown in Exhibit A to the Resolution.

**Item Initiated by:** Jessica Hankins, Public Works Project Manager  
**Approved by:** Trisha Tillotson, Director of Public Works

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Submittal Date: July 16, 2019