



**CEQA EXEMPTION / NEPA CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION
DETERMINATION FORM (rev. 06/2022)**

Project Information

Project Name (if applicable): Electrical Upgrades

DIST-CO-RTE: 10-MER-5, 152

PM/PM: 22.590, R10.763

EA: 10-1T820

Federal-Aid Project Number: N/A

Project Description

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) proposes electrical upgrades to the existing Changeable Message Signs (CMS) at two locations in Merced County. Location 1 is on Interstate (I) 5 at Post Mile (PM) 22.590 and Location 2 is on State Route (SR) 152 at PM R10.763. The scope of work includes replacing the existing CMS Type 500 electrical components to upgrade them to CMS Type 800. All work will occur in Caltrans Right of Way. The purpose of this project is to ensure reliable real-time communication with the traveling public. The project is needed to ensure motorists are properly and timely notified of traffic and road conditions.

Caltrans CEQA Determination (Check one)

- Not Applicable** – Caltrans is not the CEQA Lead Agency
- Not Applicable** – Caltrans has prepared an IS or EIR under CEQA

Based on an examination of this proposal and supporting information, the project is:

- Exempt by Statute.** (PRC 21080[b]; 14 CCR 15260 et seq.)
- Categorically Exempt. Class 1.** (PRC 21084; 14 CCR 15300 et seq.)
 - No exceptions apply that would bar the use of a categorical exemption (PRC 21084 and 14 CCR 15300.2). See the [SER Chapter 34](#) for exceptions.
- Covered by the Common Sense Exemption.** This project does not fall within an exempt class, but it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the activity may have a significant effect on the environment (14 CCR 15061[b][3].)

Senior Environmental Planner or Environmental Branch Chief

Elizabeth Hummel

Elizabeth Hummel

05/30/2025

Print Name

Signature

Date

Project Manager

Jose Alicea

JA Alicea II

05/30/2025

Print Name

Signature

Date



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Caltrans NEPA Determination (Check one)

[X] Not Applicable

Caltrans has determined that this project has no significant impacts on the environment as defined by NEPA, and that there are no unusual circumstances as described in 23 CFR 771.117(b). See SER Chapter 30 for unusual circumstances. As such, the project is categorically excluded from the requirements to prepare an EA or EIS under NEPA and is included under the following:

[] 23 USC 326: Caltrans has been assigned, and hereby certifies that it has carried out the responsibility to make this determination pursuant to 23 USC 326 and the Memorandum of Understanding dated April 18, 2022, executed between FHWA and Caltrans. Caltrans has determined that the project is a Categorical Exclusion under:

- [] 23 CFR 771.117(c): activity (c)(Enter activity number)
[] 23 CFR 771.117(d): activity (d)(Enter activity number)
[] Activity Enter activity number listed in Appendix A of the MOU between FHWA and Caltrans

[] 23 USC 327: Based on an examination of this proposal and supporting information, Caltrans has determined that the project is a Categorical Exclusion under 23 USC 327. The environmental review, consultation, and any other actions required by applicable Federal environmental laws for this project are being, or have been, carried out by Caltrans pursuant to 23 USC 327 and the Memorandum of Understanding dated May 27, 2022, and executed by FHWA and Caltrans.

Senior Environmental Planner or Environmental Branch Chief

Print Name Signature Date

Project Manager/ DLA Engineer

Print Name Signature Date

Date of Categorical Exclusion Checklist completion (if applicable): N/A
Date of Environmental Commitment Record or equivalent: 05/30/2025

Briefly list environmental commitments on continuation sheet if needed (i.e., not necessary if included on an attached ECR). Reference additional information, as appropriate (e.g., additional studies and design conditions).



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Continuation sheet:

General:

- Environmental reevaluation will be required if the scope of the project changes to include additional areas or activities, or if previously unknown sensitive resources are discovered. Contact the Environmental Office if project changes occur or sensitive resources discovered.
- Contact the Environmental Office to attend the pre-construction meeting.

Cultural:

- If cultural materials are discovered at the job site, do not disturb the resources and immediately:
 1. Stop all work within a 60foot radius of discovery
 2. Protect the discovery area
 3. Notify the Engineer
 4. The Department Investigates. Do not move cultural materials or take them from the job site. Retain a qualified archaeologist to assess the significance of the find. Do not resume work within the discovery area until authorized.
- If human remains are discovered, State Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5 states that further disturbances and activities shall cease in any area or nearby area suspected to overlie remains, and the County coroner contacted. Pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 5097.98. If the remains are thought to be Native American, the coroner will notify the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) who will then notify the Most Likely Descendent (MLD). At the same time the landowner will work with the MLD on the respectful treatment and disposition of the remains. Further provisions of PRC 5097.98 are to be followed as applicable.

Haz Waste:

- Adhere to Standard Specifications 14-11.15 for handling and disposal of electrical equipment containing materials.

Biology:

- All food-related trash will be disposed of in closed containers and removed from the project area at least once per day. Caltrans Standard Special Provision 14-10.01 must be included in the construction contract and adhered to.
- All work at Location 1 and Location 2 will be restricted to between sunrise and sunset only. Include SSP 10-1.03 in the construction contract.
- Project-related vehicles should observe a daytime speed limit of 20-mph throughout the site in all project areas, except on county roads and State and Federal highways. If night-time construction occurs, the night-time speed limit



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should be reduced to 10-mph. Off-road traffic outside of designated project areas should be prohibited. Include SSP 14-6.03A in the construction contract.

- No firearms shall be allowed at the project site.
- No pets, such as dogs or cats, should be permitted on the project site.
- The use of rodenticides or herbicides is not allowed. Include SSP 14-6.03A in the construction contract.
- Any contractor, employee, or agency personnel who inadvertently kills or injures a San Joaquin kit fox must immediately report the incident to the Resident Engineer and Caltrans District 10 Environmental Office. Include SSP 14-6.03A in the construction contract.

No permits required.