NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

NAPA COUNTY PLANNING, BUILDING, & ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT
1195 THIRD STREET, SUITE 210, NAPA, CA 94559

To: ☐ Office of Planning and Research
PO Box 0334
1400 Tenth Street, Room 121
Sacramento, CA 95814

☒ Napa County Clerk
900 Coombs St
Napa, CA 94559

PROJECT TITLE: ROSSI BRIDGE REPAIR

PROJECT PERMITS: RDS 25-25

PROJECT LOCATION - SPECIFIC: The project is located on Rossi Road, 0.1 mile northeast of Conn Valley Road in St. Helena, Napa County, California. The project location is identified on the St. Helena, California 7.5-minute quadrangle U.S. Geological Survey (USGS). The corresponding latitude and longitude of the subject parcel is 38.513881° north latitude and -122.414653° west longitude.

PROJECT LOCATION – CITY (NEAREST): St. Helena **PROJECT LOCATION - COUNTY:** Napa

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: The proposed fix involves removing the impoundment and concrete box culvert and clear spanning Conn Creek. Permits have been applied for with CDFW, RWQCB and the Army Corp however they may not be processed in time to remove the impoundment this coming winter. The County hopes to acquire permits this year so the impoundment can be removed before it fails and pollutes the creek but at a minimum plan to drill 3-36" holes beyond each top of bank and construct the concrete abutments this year while staying outside of top of bank and if needed complete remaining work in the channel once permits are received. Working in the channel will require dewatering and it is anticipated that material will be removed from the roadway by an excavator as it retreats. The channel will be blended to match the geometry just beyond the up and downstream faces of the impoundment. This area will be replanted and monitored after project completion. The final stage of the project will involve launching a prefabricated steel truss bridge across the roadway and paving new approaches to the bridge.

The project area encompasses approximately 1.72 acres which includes the Rossi Road Bridge over Conn Creek as well as adjacent private lands, which are primarily agricultural and vineyard properties. The project site and surrounding area is primarily riparian vegetation as well as vineyards. Best Management Practices and erosion control measures will be implemented, as well as environmental commitments noted in the Biological Report to protect environmental resources, including any potential special-status species or cultural resources that may occur in the proposed area of work. The County is actively working with the United State Army Corp of Engineers to obtain the necessary 404 permit, as well as with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife on the necessary 1602 permit, and the California State Water Resources Control Board for the necessary 401 permit.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: County of Napa, PBES, 1195 Third Street, Suite 201, Napa, Ca 94559

NAME OF PERSON OR AGENCY CARRYING OUT PROJECT: Dewey Phan, Napa County Public Work Department
ADDRESS: 1195 Third Street, Suite 101, Napa, Ca 94559 **PHONE:** (707) 259-8279

EXEMPT STATUS (CHECK ONE):

☐ Ministerial (Sec. 21080(b)(1); 15268);
☐ Declared Emergency (Sec. 21080(b)(3); 15269(a));
☐ Emergency Project (Sec. 21080(b)(4); 15268(b)(c));
☒ Categorical Exemption. State type and California Environmental Quality Act Guidelines (CEQAG) section number:
Section 15301 Class 1-Existing Facilities and Section 15302 Class 2-Replacement or Reconstruction.
☐ Statutory Exemptions. State code number:

REASONS WHY PROJECT IS EXEMPT: The proposed improvements would be considered Categorically Exempt from CEQA pursuant to Section 15301 Class 1-Existing Facilities, which includes the operation and repair of existing public or private structures or facilities involving negligible or no expansion of existing of former use. The proposed improvements would also

be considered Categorically Exempt pursuant to Section 15302, Class 2- Replacement or Reconstruction, which consists of replacement or reconstruction of existing structures and facilities where the new structure will be located on the same site as the structure replaced and will have substantially the same purpose and capacity as the structure replaced. A key consideration in the appropriateness of using these Categorical Exemptions is whether the project would be located on the same site, have substantially the same purpose and involves negligible or no expansion of an existing use. In terms of negligible expansion, the proposed project will generally take place within the existing facility's footprint and does not include significant expansions beyond existing conditions. The proposed project would allow repair work and improve public safety and ensure the bridge remains safe for use by the Napa County residents and visitors to the area. Therefore, it has been determined that the proposed project qualifies for both a Class 1 and Class 2 Categorical Exemption and has no reasonable possibility of having a significant effect on the environment.

LEAD AGENCY CONTACT PERSON: Dana Morrison, Supervising Planner **PHONE:** (707) 253-4437

IF FILED BY APPLICANT:

1. Attach certified document of exemption finding.
2. Has a Notice of Exemption been filed by the public agency approving the project? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Signature: _____ Title: Supervising Planner Date: 8/26/2025

☒ Signed by Lead Agency Date received for filing at OPR: N/A.

☐ Signed by Applicant

A Tradition of Stewardship
A Commitment to Service

Planning, Building & Environmental Services

1195 Third Street, Suite 210
Napa, CA 94559
www.countyofnapa.org

Brian D Bordona
Director

To:	Frank Lucido, Engineering Manager Department of Public Works	From:	Dana Morrison, Supervising Planner Conservation Division
Date:	June 25, 2025	Re:	Rossi Bridge Repair RDS 25-25

This memo is in response to a request for a determination of compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines for a proposed bridge repair for the existing Rossi Bridge, which spans Conn Creek in Napa County, California.

The proposed repair work is located in rural Napa County, California, with the site surrounded predominantly by open space, with some residences and agricultural development nearby. The project is located on Rossi Road, 0.1 mile northeast of Conn Valley Road in St. Helena, Napa County, California. The project location is identified on the St. Helena, California 7.5-minute quadrangle U.S. Geological Survey (USGS). The corresponding latitude and longitude of the subject parcel is 38.513881° north latitude and -122.414653° west longitude.

As indicated by the County of Napa Division of Public Works precipitation that started late last year and continued into the start of 2025 saturated the County. In early February of 2025 County Roads received a call from CHP that the crossing/impoundment over Conn Creek at Rossi Road partially collapsed and was impassable. The County closed the road, and the Board of Supervisors later declared a local emergency for the site and a few others that were damaged around the County. After letting the site dry out for a couple months, the County was able to remove a collapsed round culvert and bring in rock and soil to temporarily restore the crossing. In 1906 local farmers placed 3 culverts that are about 4 feet in diameter in Conn Creek. These culverts were topped with soil to facilitate vehicle and pedestrian traffic. At the end of the 1920's residents petitioned the County to take over Rossi Road which eventually took place. The County constructed a concrete box culvert beyond the top of the west bank and excavated from the outlet and inlet into the new channel when it was completed. A concrete headwall was placed across the face of the 3 existing culverts and tied to the new box culvert. In 2007 heavy flows in Conn Creek overtopped the entire impoundment, destroyed the roadway and damaged the banks. In 2005, it appears that a large tree or some sort of debris rammed and destroyed the concrete headwall, allowing water to penetrate the earthen impoundment and contributing to the partial collapse of the structure. As it sits today, the impoundment is not expected to survive a storm with a recurrence interval greater than about a 5-year event.

The proposed fix involves removing the impoundment and concrete box culvert and clear spanning Conn Creek. Permits have been applied for with CDFW, RWQCB and the Army Corp however they may not be processed in time to remove the impoundment this coming winter. The County hopes to acquire permits this year so the impoundment can be removed before it fails and pollutes the creek but at a minimum plan to drill 3-36" holes beyond each top of bank and construct the concrete abutments this

year while staying outside of top of bank and if needed complete remaining work in the channel once permits are received. Working in the channel will require dewatering and it is anticipated that material will be removed from the roadway by an excavator as it retreats. The channel will be blended to match the geometry just beyond the up and downstream faces of the impoundment. This area will be replanted and monitored after project completion. The final stage of the project will involve launching a prefabricated steel truss bridge across the roadway and paving new approaches to the bridge.

The project area encompasses approximately 1.72 acres which includes the Rossi Road Bridge over Conn Creek as well as adjacent private lands, which are primarily agricultural and vineyard properties. The project site and surrounding area is primarily riparian vegetation as well as vineyards. Best Management Practices and erosion control measures will be implemented, as well as environmental commitments noted in the Biological Report to protect environmental resources, including any potential special-status species or cultural resources that may occur in the proposed area of work. The County is actively working with the United State Army Corp of Engineers to obtain the necessary 404 permit, as well as with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife on the necessary 1602 permit, and the California State Water Resources Control Board for the necessary 401 permit.

A Biological Resource Assessment Report was prepared for the project by Kleinfelder in May 2025. The proposed project area is not located within potential northern spotted owl (*Strix occidentalis caurina*) habitat. Of the 34 special-status wildlife species initially evaluated only 9 were determined to have moderate potential to occur. The species include the pallid bat (*antrozous pallidus*), oak titmouse (*baeolophus inornatus*), nuttall's woodpecker (*dryobates nuttallii*), western screech-owl (*megascops kennicottii cardonensis*), purple martin (*progne subis)*, allen's hummingbird (*selasphorus sasin*), northwestern pond turtle (*actinemys marmorata*), foothill yellow-legged frog (rana boylii), and the California giant salamander (*dicamptodon ensatus*). It should be noted that the project proposes minimal disturbance of vegetation with no trees or plants expected to be removed as a result of the project.

The Rossi Road Bridge is located within a riparian corridor of Conn Creek. The creek flows beneath the bridge through four culverts within a narrow cross-section. Conn Creek runs through the heart of the Napa Valley and is a tributary to the Napa River, contributing to the Napa River watershed's hydrology. It likely supports local movement patterns of terrestrial and aquatic wildlife species and provides food and cover resources for common wildlife species. Temporary effects due to noise and increased human activity during project activities would not interfere with these local movement patterns over time or affect the ability of these species to forage or reproduce. Furthermore, due to the fact that the proposed project is not a development only a replacement, the project would not remove terrestrial habitat, rather, it is a public safety project intended to ensure stability of the bridge.

Of the 37 special-status plant species initially evaluated only 3 were determined to have moderate potential to occur. The 3 species include the napa false indigo (*amorpha californica var. napensis*), jepson's leptosiphon (*leptosiphon jepsonii*), and napa lomatium (*lomatium repostum*). As noted earlier, the project proposes minimal disturbance of vegetation with no trees or plants expected to be removed, and new areas will be planted and reseeded with mitigation plantings as required by permits issued from the applicable state agencies such as CDFW and CSWRCB.

A Cultural Resources Survey Report was prepared by Kleinfelder (October 2022) for the proposed project. As detailed in the report, the record search included the area of potential effect (APE) and 0.5-mile radius surrounding the APE. The records search results found no cultural resource within the APE. Six cultural resources and four cultural resources studies were identified within the 0.5-mile radius of the APE. The

Native American Heritage Commission Sacred Lands File (NAHC SLF) records search had positive results for Sacred Lands within the vicinity of the APE, and the NAHC provided a list of Native American contacts for more information regarding cultural resources within the vicinity of the APE. An intensive pedestrian survey was conducted on April 25, 2025. One historic-era resource, the Rossi Bridge, was identified within the APE. The Rossi Bridge is not eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places, California Register of Historical Resources, or for local designation.

Pursuant to CEQA Section 15300, the proposed project would be considered Categorically Exempt based on at least one Exemption Class. The project site is not recognized as an important wildlife corridor by any regional or state agency or jurisdiction and is not considered critical to the ecological functioning of adjoining open space areas. However, the project site likely supports local movement patterns of terrestrial wildlife species and provides food and cover resources for common avian and amphibian species. Temporary effects due to noise and increased human activity during project construction would not interfere with these local movement patterns over time or affect the ability of these species to forage or reproduce. Current project design and only minor grubbing of vegetation at the edge of the roadway is proposed and appropriate permits from applicable agencies (ACOE, CDFW, RWQCB) are being attained by the County prior to project implementation. The project site is not listed on any hazardous waste sites enumerated under Government Code Section 65962.5. As a result, there is no reasonable possibility that the project will have a significant effect on the environment.

The proposed improvements would be considered Categorically Exempt from CEQA pursuant to Section 15301 Class 1-Existing Facilities, which includes the operation and repair of existing public or private structures or facilities involving negligible or no expansion of existing of former use. The proposed improvements would also be considered Categorically Exempt pursuant to Section 15302, Class 2-Replacement or Reconstruction, which consists of replacement or reconstruction of existing structures and facilities where the new structure will be located on the same site as the structure replaced and will have substantially the same purpose and capacity as the structure replaced. A key consideration in the appropriateness of using these Categorical Exemptions is whether the project would be located on the same site, have substantially the same purpose and involves negligible or no expansion of an existing use. In terms of negligible expansion, the proposed project will generally take place within the existing facility's footprint and does not include significant expansions beyond existing conditions. The proposed project would allow repair work and improve public safety and ensure the bridge remains safe for use by the Napa County residents and visitors to the area. Therefore, it has been determined that the proposed project qualifies for both a Class 1 and Class 2 Categorical Exemption and has no reasonable possibility of having a significant effect on the environment.

The proposed improvements would also be in conformity with the adopted Napa County General Plan (June 2008). Improvements proposed for County owned, operated or occupied buildings and facilities are consistent with General Plan Policy AG/LU-29 which allows governmental organizations to operate and use existing structures/facilities, and to expand in size and/or volume, in order to upgrade or modernize facilities to meet public needs.

If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact me by phone at (707) 253-4437 or by e-mail at dana.morrison@countyofnapa.org.