



**CEQA EXEMPTION / NEPA CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION
DETERMINATION FORM**

Project Information
Project Name (if applicable): Replace/install new transportation management systems in various counties and various state routes
DIST-CO-RTE: 10/AMA/CAL/MER/MPA/SJ/TUO/49,88,99,108,120,140 **PM/PM:** Various
EA: 10-1K670/1021000200 **Federal-Aid Project Number:** N/A
Project Description
 The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) proposes in Tuolumne, Amador, Calaveras, Merced, Mariposa, and San Joaquin counties, on Routes 49, 88, 99, 108, 120 and 140 at various locations, to replace existing and install new Traffic Management System (TMS) elements, and construct maintenance vehicle pullouts.
 The proposed work at each location is described in Table 1-1. There are 12 total locations. Ground disturbance will occur with a maximum depth of 10ft and may require vegetation clearing at each location. Excess soil produced from construction activity will be reused as much as possible in the development of the maintenance vehicle pullouts (MVP). Construction will include night work. All locations are within existing right of way as they are established TMS areas and heavily disturbed roadways.

- 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(f).** (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

Jonathan Coley		06/24/2025
Print Name	Signature	Date

Project Manager

Qingmeng Li		6-24-2025
Print Name	Signature	Date



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Caltrans NEPA Determination (Check one)

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)(21)
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

Jonathan Coley Signature Date 06/24/2025

Project Manager/ DLA Engineer

Qingmeng Li Signature Date 6-24-2025

Date of Categorical Exclusion Checklist completion (if applicable): 6/20/2025
Date of Environmental Commitment Record or equivalent: 6/23/2025

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:

Purpose and Need:

The purpose of this project is to enhance the performance and reliability of existing TMS elements, minimize operation and maintenance costs, and provide designated maintenance areas.

This project is needed due to outdated or failing TMS elements and a lack of designated maintenance areas in the project area.

General:

The proposed project is Categorical Exempt under the California Environmental Quality Act and Categorical Excluded under the National Environmental Policy Act unless: (1) the scope of the project changes to include additional activities or areas; or (2) there is unforeseen discovery of sensitive or cultural resources. If either condition is met, environmental reevaluation will be required.

Air:

Locations 4, 8A, 8B, and 12 in Merced and San Joaquin counties are within the San Joaquin Valley Air Basin (see Table 1-1), which is in non-attainment for Particulate Matter 2.5 and attainment/maintenance for Particulate Matter 10. This would typically require hot-spot analysis per 40 Code of Federal Regulations Section (CFR) 93.123 (b), however the project is exempt from all project-level conformity requirements per Table 2 of 40 CFR 93.126 under project type "shoulder improvements". See Air Quality memo for additional details.

Amador, Calaveras, Mariposa, and Tuolumne counties are all within the Mountain Counties Air Basin, which is in unclassified/attainment for the Particulate Matter 10 standard and unclassified/attainment for the Particulate Matter 2.5 standard. The Mountain Counties Air Basin is exempt from conformity because it does not violate any National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS). As the project locations in these counties are located in an attainment areas for all current NAAQS, conformity requirements do not apply.

Standard Specifications

The provisions of Caltrans Standard Specifications Section 14-9.02 "Air Pollution Control" and Section 10-5 "Dust Control" require the contractor to comply with the air pollution control rules, ordinances, regulations, and statutes that apply to work performed under the contract, including those in California Government Code Section 11017.

Caltrans Standard Specifications pertaining to dust control and dust palliative requirements are a required part of all construction contracts and should effectively reduce and control emission impacts during construction.



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Non-Standard Special Provisions (NSSPs)

A Section 14-9.04 Dust Control Plan approved by the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District is needed if a minimum of 2,500 cubic yards of material are moved in a day for at least three days of the project, or 5 or more acres of land will be disturbed during construction.

The Disturbed Surface Area for the project is 0.42 acres. The project will not require a Dust Control Plan.

Biology:

Per the Biological Resources Evaluation (No Effect) Memo, dated June 6, 2025, the project will have "No Effect" on any on any state listed plant or animal species. No permits, certification, or agreements needed. No Clean Water Act Section 404 permit or Section 401 Certification is required. No California Fish and Game Code Section 1600 Agreement is required. No consultation under the FESA or CESA is required.

Effect Findings

Due to the project area being outside the range of the special status plant species considered for environmental review, the lack of suitable habitat or habitat components in the project area, the lack of detection during recent Caltrans surveys or because the project would not harm individuals or alter the species' habitat, it is Caltrans' determination that the proposed project will have "no effect" on any Federal Endangered Species Act (FESA)-listed, California Endangered Species Act (CESA)-listed plant species, California "rare" plant species, or plant species protected by the California Native Plant Protection Act considered for environmental review.

Due to the project area being outside the range of the special status communities and/or habitats considered for environmental view or because the special status communities and/or habitats were not detected at the project study areas during recent Caltrans surveys, it is Caltrans' determination that the proposed project will have "no effect" on any of the special status habitats or vegetation communities considered for environmental review.

In addition, the project would not affect essential fish habitat since no wetlands or other non-wetland water will be impacted.

Additional Notes/Avoidance Measures

Migratory Birds and Raptors: The Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) makes it unlawful to take, possess, buy, sell, purchase, or barter any migratory bird listed in Section 50 of the Code of Federal Regulations (C.F.R.) Part 10, including feathers or other parts, nests, eggs or products, except as allowed by



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implementing regulations (50 C.F.R. 21).

With the implementation of current Caltrans Standard Specification 14-6.03B (Bird Protection) or similar provisions, the proposed construction activities proposed for the TMS Repair/Replacement project are not expected to result in the “take” (as defined by the MBTA or as defined by California Fish and Game Code) of any migratory birds, raptors, or their active nests.

- For work that is scheduled for between February 1st and September 30th, a nesting migratory bird/nesting raptor survey would be performed 14 days before the proposed start date of any construction-related activities. Construction work would be approved if a survey of the job site within the 14 days before the proposed start of the construction activity shows an absence of nesting birds.
- If activities fail to commence within 14 days, or if there is a halt to the activities with a delay of more than 14 days, another migratory bird/nesting raptor survey must be performed before construction activities can recommence.

If nesting migratory birds or raptors are found during the preconstruction survey or during construction activities, the following Environmentally Sensitive Area (ESA) buffers will be required in accordance with Measure 14-06.03B (Bird Protection) of the Caltrans 2022 Standard Specification and/or Special Provisions:

- If any active migratory bird nest is observed, a 100-foot ESA buffer must be implemented and avoided until the young have fledged or a qualified biologist determines that construction may proceed.
- If an active raptor nest is observed, a 300-foot ESA buffer must be implemented and avoided around the nest until the young have fledged or a qualified biologist determines that construction may proceed.
- If an active burrowing owl burrow is observed, a 165-foot ESA buffer (for Sept 1 – Jan 31 due to non-breeding) and 250-foot (for Feb 1 – Aug 31 due to breeding) must be implemented and avoided around the nest until the young have fledged or a qualified biologist determines that construction may proceed.

Bumblebee Hives: Pre-construction surveys and/or biological monitoring for active bumblebee hives will be required under 14-6.03A (Species Protection)

- If an active bumblebee hive observed, a 50-foot buffer will be implemented around the hive until a qualified biologist determines that construction may proceed.

Conclusion

Based on the scope and description of the proposed project, no state, or federally listed species; designated critical habitat; state or federally recognized sensitive habitats, or potential waters of the U.S. associated with this geographic region will be impacted or affected by the proposed project.



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This project will have no effect since there are no watercourses within the project area. Additionally, Army Corps of Engineer, California Department of Fish and Wildlife, U.S Fish and Wildlife Service, or Regional Water Quality Board permits will not be required for the proposed project.

Cultural:

Per the Section 106, CEQA and Public Resources Code (PRC) 5024 Compliance-Screened Project Memo, this project has no potential to affect historic properties and no potential to affect historical resources. This project is exempt from further review at this time, and Section 106, CEQA cultural resources component and PRC 5024 compliance are complete.

Hazardous Waste:

Per the Hazardous Waste Initial Site Assessment (ISA), the findings are as follows:

Remediation Sites:

There are no open remediation cases within or adjacent the project areas with the potential to affect this project. All sites have been appropriately remediated and received No Further Action Required letters from the Regional Water Quality Control Board.

Furthermore, the work at these locations will be confined to the existing infrastructure and ground disturbance will be minimal. Therefore, the potential for encountering contaminated soil is considered minimal.

Hazardous Waste:

Due to the proposed work for this project, there is a minimal potential to encounter asbestos containing material and lead based paint. There is no anticipated work that will remove striping or encounter treated wood waste. See Hazardous Waste Initial Site Assessment for details.

Noise:

Per the Noise memo, dated 5/22/2024, the project is a Type III, and noise analysis is not required. The project will have temporary impacts from construction. Any impacts or adverse effects during construction periods will be minimized. Construction noise impacts will be regulated and minimized by Caltrans Standard Specifications Section 14-8.02 "Noise Control".

The following measures will minimize temporary noise impacts from construction:

- Do not exceed 86 dBA Lmax at 50 feet from the job site activities from 9:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m.



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- Equip an internal combustion engine with the manufacturer-recommended muffler. Do not operate an internal combustion engine on the job site without the appropriate muffler.

Visual:

Per the Visual Impact Assessment (VIA), there are no visual resources related to regulatory requirements and there are no or negligible visual changes to the environment.

Water:

This project is not expected to result in long-term water quality impacts on nearby surface water and groundwater. Short-term potential impacts to a nearby surface and groundwater could occur due to accidental spills or poor management of handling hazardous materials, fuels, and other potential chemicals used during construction activities.

By incorporating proper and accepted engineering practices and BMPs, the proposed project will not have significant impacts on water quality during construction or its operation.

If the project disturbs less than one acre of soil, a Water Pollution Control Plan (WPCP) is required to be prepared by the contractor following the Caltrans 2022 Standard Specification Section 13-1 – Water Pollution.

If the project disturbs one acre or more of soil, the following requirements would be required:

1. A Notification of Intent (NOI) is to be submitted to the appropriate Regional Water Quality Control Board at least 30 days before the start of construction.
2. A Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) is to be prepared and implemented during construction to the satisfaction of the Resident Engineer.
3. A Notice of Termination (NOT) shall be submitted to the Regional Board upon completion of construction and site stabilization. A project will be considered complete when the criteria for final stabilization in the Construction General Permit are met.

No further investigation concerning water quality is needed to proceed with the project. If the scope of work changes, please request an additional assessment for this project.

Hydraulics:

Per the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), the project is not located within a 100-year base floodplain. One location, 8, is near Mormon Slough but is still located outside of the potential flood areas identified by FEMA.



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Climate Change/GHG Measures (CEQA only)

The D10 Environmental Division has evaluated this non-capacity increasing project for GHG emissions and other climate change impacts.

The proposed project is not expected to increase vehicle capacity; however, greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions are still expected due to construction activities, including materials selection and implementation in addition to fossil fuels and energy used for construction equipment. A preliminary GHG estimate using the FHWA ICE tool indicates a potential for 197 metric tons of CO₂e. Measures to reduce emissions are listed below.

The central valley is expected to increase in overall temperatures of 4-5 degrees which could lead to potential extreme heat impacts. In addition, work locations in and near the Stanislaus National Forest are vulnerable to high fire hazard severity. Locations in high-risk areas include 1 and 5. Locations with very high risk include 3, 7, 9, 10, and 13. TMS systems proposed will be evaluated for potential susceptibility to extreme heat impacts and possible wildfire impacts and measures to insulate or use heat- and fire-resistant materials should be included if necessary to ensure useful life is achieved.

Project-level measures to reduce GHG related to construction activities include:

- Schedule truck trips outside of peak commute hours in the morning and evening.
- Improved full efficiency from construction equipment by maintaining equipment in proper tune and working condition, use of right sized equipment for the job and new technologies.
- Reduce the need for transport of earthen materials by balancing cut and fill quantities.
- Supplement existing construction environmental training with information on methods to reduce GHG emissions related to construction.
- Recycle existing project features on-site. (Salvage cabinets, enclosures and poles on site.)

Community Impacts

Per the Community Impact Assessment Memo, there are no anticipated community impacts. There are no identified significant and/or adverse impacts to the surrounding communities.

4(f)

Per the 4(f) memo, the project would not result in the temporary or permanent use of a Section 4(f) resource.

Cumulative Impacts

Per the cumulative impacts' memo, there are no anticipated cumulative impacts.



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Attachments

Attachment A: Table 1-1 Location Descriptions

Attachment B: Vicinity Map

Attachment C: Environmental Commitment Record (ECR)



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Attachment A

Table 1-1 Location Descriptions

TMS ELEMENT	CO	RTE	PM	Urban/ Rural	LOCATION DESCRIPTION	PROPOSED WORK
1	TUO	108	L0.90	Rural	Approximately 0.9 miles to the east of SR 108 and SR 120 junction	Remove all of the components of the existing Hazard Advisory Radio (HAR). Install a new HAR.
2	CAL	49	8.54	Urban	Angels Camp maintenance yard	HAR is located inside the Angels Camp maintenance yard. Remove all of the components of the existing HAR. Install a new HAR.
3	TUO	108	7.46	Urban	Approximately 7.66 miles to the east of the east junction of SR 108 and SR 49	Remove all of the components of the existing HAR. Install a new HAR and MVP.
4	MER	99	13.00	Urban	Merced maintenance yard	This HAR is located inside the Merced maintenance yard. Remove all of the components of the existing HAR. Install a new HAR. The HAR uses a phone line but alternative methods of communication need to be looked into.
5	MPA	140	22.01	Rural	Approximately 0.07 miles to the south of the north junction of SR 49 and SR 140	Remove all components of the existing HAR. Install a new HAR.
	MPA	140	22.01			Remove the existing CCTV camera and install a new CCTV camera in front of the CMS per D10 standard.
6	Removed from scope- Other TMS locations prioritized					
7	MPA	120	43.69	Rural		



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	MPA	120	43.69		Approximately 0.06 miles to the west of the end of MPA county line in Buck Meadows	Remove all of the components of the existing HAR. Install a new HAR and a VDS.
8A	SJ	4	R17.93	Urban	Stockton maintenance yard (address 1604 South B Street)	Remove all components of the existing HAR in the Stockton maintenance yard.
8B	SJ	4	16.30	Urban	Approximately 0.05 miles to the east of Lincoln St. on EB SR 4 near top of abutment.	Install a new HAR and MVP. This HAR needs to be integrated into the fiber optic system being installed with 10-1F400x.
9	TUO	108	6.935	Rural	Approximately 6.99 miles to the east of the east junction of SR 108 and SR 49	Old EMS in very poor condition. Replace the EMS, posts, pull boxes, conduit, and all the equipment. Install a new VDS and MVP. Install new EMS near MVP.
	TUO	108	6.935			
10	TUO	108	R9.40	Rural	Approximately 9.39 miles to the east of the east junction of SR 108 & SR 49	Old EMS in very poor condition. Replace EMS, posts, pull boxes, conduits and all the equipment. Install a new CCTV camera. Look into consolidating all the elements and installing a field fit access gravel path to access utilities on top of berm.
	TUO	108	R9.40			
11	AMA	88	7.371	Rural	SW corner of SR 88 & SR 104	Remove all of the components of the existing HAR. Install a new HAR.
12	SJ	99	5.328	Urban	Approximately 0.71 miles to the SR 99/120 bridge separation.	Remove and replace all of the components of the existing HAR except for the tower.



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13	TUO	108	7.511	Urban	Approximately 7.57 miles to the east of the east junction of SR 108 and SR 49	Repair APCS (Automated Pavement Condition Survey), traffic system controller, and software. Install a new IP camera. Replace the existing manual counter with an independent (separate from the signal) TCS.
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Acronyms:

- APCS - Automated Pavement Control Survey
- CCTV - Closed Circuit Television Camera
- CMS – Changeable Message Sign
- EMS - Extinguishable Message Sign
- HAR - Highway Advisory Radios
- IP- Internet Protocol Camera
- MVP - Maintenance Vehicle Pullouts
- VDS - Vehicle Detection System



Attachment C

Environmental Commitments Record (ECR)

DIST-CO-RTE: 10 - TUO - 108 **PM/PM:** -9.400/-9.400 **EA/Project ID:** 10-1K670_ / 1021000200
Project Description: Replace and install new Transportation Management System (TMS) elements in AMA, CAL, MPA, MER, SJ & TUO county on route 49, 88, 99, 108, 120 & 140 at VAR Locations
Date (Last modification): 6/24/2025
Environmental Planner: Elizabeth Lorz **Phone:** 209-944-3575
Construction Liaison: **Phone:**
Resident Engineer: **Phone:**

PERMITS

Permit	Agency	Application Submitted	Permit Received	Permit Expiration	Permit Requirements Completed by	Permit Requirements Completed on	Comments

ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITMENTS

PA&ED

Category	Task and Brief Description	Source	Included in PS&E Package	Responsible Branch/Staff	Action to Comply	Due Date	Task Completed by	Task Completed on	Remarks	Mitigation for significant impacts under CEQA
Hazardous Waste	7-1.02K(6)(iii)		n/a	Jessika Bryant	Ensure SSP is included in the PS&E.		Jessika Bryant	6/5/25		N/A

PRE-CONSTRUCTION

Category	Task and Brief Description	Source	Included in PS&E Package	Responsible Branch/Staff	Action to Comply	Due Date	Task Completed by	Task Completed on	Remarks	Mitigation for significant impacts under CEQA
Biology	For work that is scheduled between February 1st and September 30th, a pre-construction survey for migratory birds and raptors will be required fourteen (14) days prior to the start date of any construction-related activities.	Env Doc	SSP	Kayla Curtis/Biologist						N/A
Biology	If an active burrowing owl burrow is observed, a 165-foot ESA buffer (September 1-January 31 due to non-breeding) and 250-foot (for February 1-August 31 due to breeding) must be implemented and avoided around the nest until the young have fledged or a qualified biologist determines that construction may proceed.	Env Doc	SSP	Kayla Curtis/Biologist	14-6.03B SSPs (Bird Protection)					N/A
Biology	If any bumble bee nest is observed during the pre-construction survey, a 100-foot ESA buffer must be implemented and avoided until a qualified biologist determines that construction may proceed.	Env Doc	SSP	Kayla Curtis/Biologist	14-6.03A SSPs (Species Protection)					N/A

Environmental Commitments Record for Replace/install new TMS in VAR

Category	Task and Brief Description	Source	Included in PS&E Package	Responsible Branch/Staff	Action to Comply	Due Date	Task Completed by	Task Completed on	Remarks	Mitigation for significant impacts under CEQA
CONSTRUCTION										
Category	Task and Brief Description	Source	Included in PS&E Package	Responsible Branch/Staff	Action to Comply	Due Date	Task Completed by	Task Completed on	Remarks	Mitigation for significant impacts under CEQA
Biology	If an active raptor nest is observed, a 300-foot ESA buffer must be implemented and avoided around the nest until a qualified biologist determines that construction may proceed.	Env Doc	SSP	Kayla Curtis/Biologist	14-6.03B SSPs (Bird Protection)					N/A
Biology	If any active migratory bird nest is observed, a 100-foot ESA buffer must be implemented and avoided until a qualified biologist determines that construction may proceed.	Env Doc	SSP	Kayla Curtis/Biologist	14-6.03B SSPs (Bird Protection)					N/A
Category	Task and Brief Description	Source	Included in PS&E Package	Responsible Branch/Staff	Action to Comply	Due Date	Task Completed by	Task Completed on	Remarks	Mitigation for significant impacts under CEQA