

Notice of Exemption

To: Office of Planning and Research
P.O. Box 3044, Room 113
Sacramento, CA 95812-3044

County Clerk
County of San Benito
1601 Lana Way
Hollister, CA 95023

From: Caltrans District 5
50 Higuera Street
San Luis Obispo, CA 93401

Project Title: San Benito Wildlife Crossing

Project Applicant: Caltrans District 5

Project Location - Specific: On US 101 in the Aromas Hills between Post Mile 0 to 2.8

Project Location - City: N/A

Project Location - County: San Benito

Description of Nature, Purpose, and Beneficiaries of Project:

The purpose of the project is to improve wildlife connectivity and reduce wildlife-vehicle collisions on US 101 between post mile 0 and 2.8 in San Benito County. The Project occurs within a critical habitat linkage between the Santa Cruz Mountains and Gabilan Range. The project includes construction of an overcrossing structure over both directions of US 101 at post mile 1.4 as well as wildlife exclusion fencing on either side of the highway to direct wildlife to the crossing.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: Caltrans District 5

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: Caltrans District 5

Exempt Status (**check one**):

- Ministerial (Sec. 21080(b)(1); 15268);
- Declared Emergency (Sec. 21080(b)(3); 15269(a));
- Emergency Project (Sec. 21080(b)(4); 15269(b)(c));
- Categorical Exemption. State type and section number:
- Statutory Exemptions. State code number: 21080.56 subdivisions (a) to (d) inclusive.

Reasons why project is exempt:

The Project is exclusively a project to conserve, restore, protect, and assist in the recovery of California native wildlife, and the habitat upon which they depend, will result in long-term net benefits to climate resiliency, biodiversity, and sensitive species recovery, includes procedures and ongoing management for the protection of the environment, and project construction activities are solely related to habitat restoration.

Lead Agency Contact Person: Dianna Beck

Phone number: (805) 459-9406

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: Dianna Beck Date: 3/25/2026 Title: Senior Environmental Planner

Signed by Lead Agency Signed by Applicant

Date Received for filing at OPR: _____

Authority cited: Sections 21083 and 21110, Public Resources Code.

Reference: Sections 21108, 21152, and 21152.1, Public Resources Code.