



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

Project Information

Project Name: Install Traffic Signals SR-38/Bryant St.

DIST--CO-RTE: 08-SBD-38

PM/PM: 8.1/8.9

EA: 08-1R100 **PN:** 824000226 **Federal-Aid Project Number:** N/A

Project Description

Caltrans proposes to install Traffic Signals at the intersection of State Route 38 (SR-38) and Bryant Street in the City of Yucaipa and the unincorporated community of Mentone in San Bernardino County. The work will consist of installing multiple traffic signal poles with foundations, vehicle detection systems, a service cabinet, and a controller cabinet. For flashing beacons, the work will involve installing poles that will be placed approximately 1500 feet from the intersection. The proposed project involves 12 potholes to identify underground utilities within the project limits. Maximum pothole depth is 1ft to 6 ft, with a diameter of 4 inches. All work will be done within the State's Right of Way, including USFS/SBNF easement.

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

Kourtney Graves

Print Name

Kourtney Graves

Signature

1/20/2026

Date

Project Manager

Samer Georges

Print Name

Samer Georges

Signature

01/20/2026

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)(8)

23 CFR 771.117(d): activity (d)(N/A)

Activity 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

Kourtney Graves (Print Name), Kourtney Graves (Signature), 1/20/2026 (Date)

Project Manager/ DLA Engineer

Samer Georges (Print Name), [Signature] (Signature), 01/20/2026 (Date)

Date of Categorical Exclusion Checklist completion (if applicable): 1/20/2026
Date of Environmental Commitment Record or equivalent: 1/20/2026

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 and Need of the project are as follows: Purpose: The purpose of the project is to reduce the number of broadside type collisions at the intersection by installing multiple traffic signals and flashing beacons. Need: The current configuration of the intersection has resulted in numerous collisions that warrant the traffic signal criteria, which are based on crash experience.

The following technical documentation was prepared in conjunction with determining and addressing applicable California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), and National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) documentation and compliance requirements.

CULTURAL RESOURCES

Screened Undertaking Memorandum: November 24, 2025.

In coordination with District Cultural Studies, the studies for this undertaking were carried out in a manner consistent with Caltrans' regulatory responsibilities under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (36 CFR Part 800) and pursuant to the December 2024 Programmatic Agreement among the Federal Highway Administration, the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, the California State Historic Preservation Officer, the United States Army Corps of Engineers' Sacramento District, San Francisco District, and Los Angeles District, and the California Department of Transportation Regarding Compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act as it Pertains to the Administration of the Federal-Aid Highway Program in California (Section 106 PA).

The provisions of Section 106 PA, Attachment 2, have been applied to this project. This project falls under Class 6, "Minor utility installation, maintenance, or relocation.", and Class 20, "Modification of traffic control systems or devices utilizing existing infrastructure, including installation, removal, or modification of regulatory, warning, or informational signs or signals."

Based on this review of materials, resources, and analyses, the undertaking, as currently proposed, has no potential to affect Historic Properties eligible for or listed on the NRHP. As a result, this undertaking is exempt from further review, no additional archaeological or built environment studies are required at this time and the Section 106 compliance process, CEQA cultural resources CEQA cultural resources component, and PRC 5024 compliance are complete. This memorandum documents compliance with the agreed upon historic preservation procedures.

Screened Undertaking Memorandum for Potholing: July 15, 2025

The studies for this undertaking were carried out in a manner consistent with Caltrans regulatory responsibilities under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (36CFR Part 600) and pursuant to the December 2024 Programmatic Agreement among the Federal Highway Preservation Officer, the United States Army Corp of Engineers Sacramento District, and the California Department of Transportation Regarding Compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act as it pertains to the Administration of the Federal Aid Highway Program in California (Section 106 PA).

The provisions of the Section 106 PA, Attachment 2, have been applied to this project. This project falls under Class 29, "Preliminary engineering tests, such as seismic, geologic, or hazardous materials testing that involve building or structures or require trenching or ground boring."

As a result, this undertaking is exempt from further review, no additional archaeological or built environmental studies are requested at this time and the Section 106 compliance process, CEQA cultural resources component, and PRC 5024 compliance are complete. This memorandum documents compliance with the agreed upon historic preservation procedures.

Please note that this assessment could change, and additional studies may be required if the project changes. Also, the following measures found in the Caltrans 2024 Standard Specifications (14-2.03A) and Estimated apply to this project and are to be included in the Environmental Commitments Record (ECR) in the Residential Engineer's (RE) File:



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Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures

- **CR-1:** If buried cultural resources are encountered during Project activities, it is Caltrans policy that work stop within 60 feet of the area until a qualified archaeologist can evaluate the nature and significance of the find.
- **CR-2:** In the event that human remains are found, the county coroner shall be notified and ALL construction activities within 60 feet of the discovery shall stop. Pursuant to the 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). The person who discovers the remains will contact the District 8 Division of Environmental Planning: Gabrielle Duff, Environmental Branch Chief: (909) 501-5142, and Julie Schrinver, DNAC (909)-260-8265. Further provisions of PRC 5091.98 are to be followed as applicable.

PALEONTOLOGICAL RESOURCES

Email to File: November 21, 2025.

Due to the nature of the project, no paleontological studies are anticipated for this project.

BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

Natural Environmental Study-No Effect Memorandum (NES/NEM): July 16, 2025.

A biological assessment is required for construction projects (or other undertakings having similar physical impacts) that are major Federal actions significantly affecting the quality of the human environment as defined in the National Environmental Policy Act (43 U.S.C. 4332(2) (C)). For projects other than major construction activities, the service suggests that a biological evaluation similar to a biological assessment be prepared to determine whether the project may affect listed or proposed species and/or designated or proposed critical habitat. Recommended contents of a biological assessment are described at 50 CFR 402.12.

If a Federal agency determines, based on the Biological Assessment or Biological Evaluation, that listed species and/or designated critical habitat may be affected by the proposed project, the agency is required to consult with the service pursuant to 50 CFR 402. In addition, the service recommends that candidate species, proposed species, and proposed critical habitat be addressed within the consultation. More information on the regulations and procedures for section 7 consultation, including the role of permit or license applications, can be found at the Fish and Wildlife's Endangered Species Consultation website.

Biological issues were identified. San Bernardino Merriam's kangaroo rat (*Dipodomys merriami parvus*) critical habitat for federally listed species was identified in the Information Planning and Consultation (IPaC) system (USFWS 2024) as well, it was found on the D8GIS portal. There are several species of birds that have nesting habitat nearby. The project does not overlap critical habitat for Coastal California Gnatcatcher (*Polioptila californica californica*), Least Bell's Vireo (*Vireo bellii pusillus*), or Southwest Willow Fly Catcher (*Empidonax traillii extimus*), and California Spotted Owl (*Strix occidentalis occidentalis*). There is habitat for several species of reptile (Southwestern Pond Turtle, *Actinemys pallida*), amphibians (Mountain Yellow-legged Frog, *Rana muscosa*) and (Western Spadefoot, *Spea hammondi*), insects (Monarch Butterfly, *Danaus plexippus*), one species of fish (Santa Ana Speckled Dace, *Rhinichthys gabriello*), and one species of plant (Slender-horned Spineflower, *Dodecahema leptoceras*) near this project. However, the project does not overlap any habitat or critical habitat for any of these species.

There are three habitats wholly or partially within the project area that are considered critical habitats. Species that have critical habitat include one mammal (San Bernardino Merriam's Kangaroo Rat, *Dipodomys merriami parvus*), one fish (Santa Ana Sucker, *Catostomus santaanae*), and one bird (Southwestern Willow Flycatcher, *Empidonax traillii extimus*). These species are endangered (San Bernardino Merriam's Kangaroo Rat, Southwestern Willow Flycatcher) or threatened (Santa Ana Sucker). Some Biological issues were identified. No permits are required. There are avoidance issues needed.

Natural Environmental Study – No Effect Memorandum (NES-NEM) for Potholing: July 11, 2025

San Bernardino Merriam's kangaroo rat Critical Habitat (CH) ends at PM 8.1 where the project begins. Creek Mill Road continues through chapparal, mountain shrub western hardwoods, Riversidian alluvial scrub habitat as well as roadside invasive species habitat. There are no residential buildings within 100 feet of the geotechnical boring area.



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Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures

- **Bio-1 Best Management Practices:** Maintenance and operation activities conducted for safety purposes, as described above, are subject to compliance with Caltrans standard Best Management Practices (BMPs)
- **Bio-General-1 - Equipment Staging, Storing & Borrow Sites:** All staging, storing, and borrow sites require the approval of the Caltrans biologist.
- **Bio-Avian-1 - Preconstruction Nesting Bird Survey:** If project activities cannot avoid the nesting season, generally regarded as Feb 1 – Sept 30, preconstruction nesting bird surveys must be conducted no more than 3 days prior to construction by a qualified biologist to locate and avoid nesting birds. If an active avian nest is located, a no construction buffer must be established and monitored by a Caltrans Stewardship Unit Biologist.

HAZARDOUS WASTE

Initial Site Assessment (ISA) Checklist: November 3, 2025.

In coordination with District Environmental Engineering, the hazardous materials maps showed no Recognized Environmental Conditions at or near the project site. An in-house ADL survey for the project conducted on October 22, 2025, showed that the soil within the project has low, non-hazardous concentrations of lead. Depending on the striping removal method, one or more of the following SSP's need to be included in the project's Special Provisions, and require a lead compliance plan and item 070030 LCP:

Preliminary Engineering Environmental Compliance (PEEC) Utility Potholing July 11, 2025

Environmental Engineering "A" completed review of the documents submitted with the subject request for hazardous waste concerns. We have the following comments:

1. Contractor is required to comply with the requirements of Section 7 "LEGAL RELATIONS AND RESPONSIBILITY TO THE PUBLIC,:" of the 2024 Caltrans Standard Specifications, and apply dust control measures throughout the entire potholing activities as required by the same above Specifications Section 10 "GENERAL," sub-section 10-5 "Dust Control."
2. It is the contractor's responsibility to test all excess excavated soil generated from potholing activities for hazardous contaminants prior to disposal.

Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures

- **HAZ-1 SSP 6-1.03:** Conditions for use of local material from non-commercial sources.
- **HAZ-2 SSP 7-1.02K(6)(j)(iii):** Earth material containing lead requires a lead compliance plan (LCP) and item 070030 for LCP in the cost of the estimate.
- **HAZ-3 SSP 36-4:** Residue Containing Lead from Paint and Thermoplastic.
- **HAZ-4 SSP 84-9.06B:** Removal of yellow traffic strip and pavement marking with non-hazardous residue.
- **HAZ-5:** Contractor is required to comply with the requirements of Section 7 "LEGAL RELATIONS AND RESPONSIBILITY TO THE PUBLIC,:" of the 2024 Caltrans Standard Specifications, and apply dust control measures throughout the entire potholing activities as required by the same above Specifications Section 10 "GENERAL," sub-section 10-5 "Dust Control."
- **HAZ-6:** It is the contractor's responsibility to test all excess excavated soil generated from potholing activities for hazardous contaminants prior to disposal.

NOISE

Per Memorandum to File: November 17, 2025.

This project is considered an exempt project. No noise study is needed.



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AIR QUALITY

Per Memorandum to File: November 17, 2025.

This project is exempt category under the Highway Safety Improvement Program found in Table 2 of 40 CFR 93.126. Thus, no Air Quality Study is needed.

GREENHOUSE GASES (GHG) / Climate Change

Greenhouse Gas – Climate Change Memorandum: December 5, 2025

Estimated daily construction emissions, calculated using CAL-CET, are below the applicable South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD) daily significance thresholds.

Construction of the project would temporarily increase GHG emissions during the construction phase of the project. Construction of the project is estimated to take place over 60 working days and generate a total of 1.27 lbs/day CO₂e/day, 76.2 metric tons CO₂e total for the project.

Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures

- **GHG/CC-1:** Limit idling to 5 minutes for delivery and dump trucks and other diesel [1] powered equipment (with some exceptions).
- **GHG/CC-2:** Schedule truck trips outside of peak morning and evening commute hours.
- **GHG/CC-3:** For improved fuel efficiency from construction equipment:
 - Maintain equipment in proper tune and working condition
 - Use right sized equipment for the job
 - Use equipment with new technologies

Permits and Agreements:

According to the Natural Environment Study – No Effect Memorandum (NES-NEM) no permits are required.

In conjunction with the results of the above technical documentation, the Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measure(s) included in the Environmental Commitments Record (ECR), are expected to be implemented, as applicable. Changes to the project's scope of work, will require that the District's Division of Environmental Planning be notified in a timely manner, to determine if an Environmental Re-Evaluation will be required to confirm that the environmental documentation for NEPA/CEQA compliance, remains valid.

Updates to the original Technical Studies, or preparation of new Technical Studies may be required, and/or a new CE/CE Determination Form may need to be completed, and/or an Environmental Document may need to be prepared and approved, to document the project's compliance with all applicable NEPA/CEQA requirements.