

Notice of Exemption

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

County Clerk
County of Santa Cruz
701 Ocean St #310
Santa Cruz, CA 95060

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

Project Title: SR-1 Wildlife Crossing

Project Applicant: California Department of Transportation

Project Location - Specific: SR-1, PM 5.11

Project Location - City: Watsonville Project Location - County: Santa Cruz

Description of Nature, Purpose, and Beneficiaries of Project:

Caltrans Geotechnical Design proposes a geotechnical site investigation for the SR-1 Wildlife Crossing, located on State Route 1 (SR-1) at PM 5.11 in Santa Cruz County. Trenchless culvert installation requires a subsurface investigation to evaluate subsurface site conditions by drilling vertical borings, performing in-situ soil testing, and confirming soil and rock conditions for use in design.

A total of six borings will be advanced: five through pavement into soil and rock, and one through a dirt road in the median into soil and rock. The proposed borings would be four to six inches in diameter and extend between 30 and 40 feet below the ground surface, depending on the location. Once the borings are completed, each hole will be backfilled following appropriate procedures. Typically, the backfill material is a neat cement and/or bentonite (clay). It may take up to three weeks to complete the investigation. Work is anticipated to occur at night. Drilling activities will occur during dry weather only, June through October. Precautions during drilling will be employed to minimize the potential for equipment leaks or drilling fluid spillage. All borings will be drilled within State Right-of-Way (ROW), accessible from the northbound and southbound travel lanes of SR-1, the median, or in the paved or unvegetated shoulder.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: California Department of Transportation

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: California Department of Transportation

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: Class 4, Section 15304
- ☐ Statutory Exemptions. State code number: _____

Reasons why project is exempt:

The proposed geotechnical site investigation has been reviewed and would have no significant environmental impacts. Appropriate avoidance and minimization measures for biological and visual resources will be implemented.

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: 6/3/2026 Title: Senior Environmental Scientist Supervisor

☒ 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.