

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: White Sulphur Springs Road

PROJECT PERMITS: RDS 26-37

PROJECT LOCATION - SPECIFIC: The slide is located along White Sulphur Springs Road approximately 1.4 miles west of the City of St Helena's city limits. White Sulphur Springs Road runs alongside Sulphur Creek, a blue line stream, which is a tributary to the Napa River, located in the Upper Napa River watershed. The slide occurred on rural vacant land. The surrounding area predominantly consists of open space within a fire impacted forested landscape with some residential and agricultural uses. Downslope of the slide there is a private wooden fence with a dirt shoulder which leads to Sulphur Creek and upslope there are trees, grasses, and shrubs. The project is specifically located in the Public Right of Way between the Assessor Parcel Numbers (APNs): 027-020-026-000 and 027-020-040-000. Adjacent land uses consist primarily of rural residences and small vineyards within a forested landscape. The study area is in Township 7 North, Range 6 West, Section 3, which occurs on the 7.5-minute U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) Sonoma quadrangle. The corresponding latitude and longitude at the approximate center of the study area is 38°29'42.52" north latitude and -122°30'23.245" west longitude.

PROJECT LOCATION – CITY (NEAREST): St Helena

PROJECT LOCATION - COUNTY: Napa

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: The proposed repair for the 3260 White Sulphur Spring Rd slide includes construction of a 192-foot-long soldier pile retaining wall where significant settlement and damage occurred. The retaining wall will stabilize the steep slope on the south side of the roadway and help prevent future slope failures. The structural steel soldier piles are embedded in 30-inch diameter holes filled with lean concrete. The cast-in-drilled hole piles are spaced at 8 feet on center. Precast Concrete lagging is placed between the soldier piles. Relatively closely spaced soldier piles will transfer lateral soils loads to deeper and stronger materials. Filling and repaving the roadway will be required to restore the asphalt surface and pre-slide drainage patterns. The wall height is approximately 10 feet high. Additional work includes hydroseeding, lining a roadside ditch with concrete to help deter water from the base of the wall and discarding of surplus slide material. All work will be in accordance with Napa County Storm Water Program requirements utilizing Best Management Practices and erosion control measures.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: County of Napa, 1195 Third Street, Room, 101, Napa, Ca 94559

NAME OF PERSON OR AGENCY CARRYING OUT PROJECT: Roberto De La Torre Real, Napa County Public Works Dept.
ADDRESS: 1195 Third Street, Room 101, Napa, Ca 94559 **PHONE:** (707) 259-8369

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:

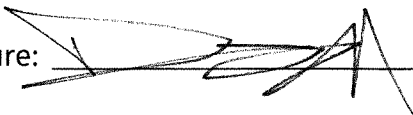
REASONS WHY PROJECT IS EXEMPT: Pursuant to CEQA Section 15300, the proposed project would be considered Categorically Exempt based on at least one Exemption Class. The project site is not recognized as an important wildlife corridor by any regional or state agency or jurisdiction and, is not considered 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 who utilize White Sulphur Springs Road. 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. 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 slide repair 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 restore the travel lane width and legal load capacity of the existing facility to improve public safety. Therefore, it has been determined that the proposed project qualifies for 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
PBES, 1195 Third Street Napa, Suite 210, Napa, Ca

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: 6/25/2026

- ☒ Signed by Lead Agency
☐ Signed by Applicant

Date received for filing at OPR: ~~N/A~~
6/25/2026



Planning, Building & Environmental Services

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

Brian Bordona
Director

To: Roberto De La Torre Real, Jr. Engineer Department of Public Works	From: Dana Morrison, Supervisor Conservation Division
Date: June 24, 2026	Re: White Sulphur Springs Road Slide Repair Project RDS 26-37

This memo is in response to your request for a determination of compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines for the proposed reconstruction of a section of White Sulphur Springs Road that sustained damage from storms occurring in Napa County during the 2025-2026 winter season. Intense rainfall saturated the upslope embankment, resulting in a landslide approximately 100 feet in length. The landslide caused significant damage along the roadway, which is currently covered by mud and standing water. The proposed White Sulphur Springs Road Slide Repair Project (Project) involves the repair and stabilization of White Sulphur Springs Road located in Napa County, California.

Project Location:

The slide is located along White Sulphur Springs Road approximately 1.4 miles west of the City of St Helena's city limits. White Sulphur Springs Road runs alongside Sulphur Creek, a blue line stream, which is a tributary to the Napa River, located in the Upper Napa River watershed. The slide occurred on rural vacant land. The surrounding area predominantly consists of open space within a fire impacted forested landscape with some residential and agricultural uses. Downslope of the slide there is a private wooden fence with a dirt shoulder which leads to Sulphur Creek and upslope there are trees, grasses, and shrubs. The project is specifically located in the Public Right of Way between the Assessor Parcel Numbers (APNs): 027-020-026-000 and 027-020-040-000. Adjacent land uses consist primarily of rural residences and small vineyards within a forested landscape. The study area is in Township 7 North, Range 6 West, Section 3, which occurs on the 7.5-minute U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) Sonoma quadrangle. The corresponding latitude and longitude at the approximate center of the study area is 38°29'42.52" north latitude and -122°30'23.245" west longitude.

Project Description:

The proposed repair for the 3260 White Sulphur Spring Rd slide includes construction of a 192-foot-long soldier pile retaining wall where significant settlement and damage occurred. The retaining wall will stabilize the steep slope on the south side of the roadway and help prevent future slope failures. The structural steel soldier piles are embedded in 30-inch diameter holes filled with lean concrete. The

cast-in-drilled hole piles are spaced at 8 feet on center. Precast Concrete lagging is placed between the soldier piles. Relatively closely spaced soldier piles will transfer lateral soils loads to deeper and stronger materials. Filling and repaving the roadway will be required to restore the asphalt surface and pre-slide drainage patterns. The wall height is approximately 10 feet high. Additional work includes hydroseeding, lining a roadside ditch with concrete to help deter water from the base of the wall and discarding of surplus slide material. All work will be in accordance with Napa County Storm Water Program requirements utilizing Best Management Practices and erosion control measures.

Biological Resources:

A Biological Resource Assessment Report was prepared for the project by Kleinfelder (June 2026). A total of 5 plant species were initially evaluated for their potential to occur in the Study Area; Cleveland's milkvetch (*Astragalus clevelandii*), Pink star-tulip (*Calochortus uniflorus*), Streamside daisy (*Erigeron biolettii*), Redwood lily (*Lilium rubescens*), and Lobb's aquatic buttercup (*Ranunculus lobbii*). All of the 5 identified species were determined to have a low potential to occur in the study area. A rare plant survey is recommended for special-status plant species with moderate potential to occur, for which there were none identified for this project.

A total of 31 special-status wildlife species were initially evaluated for their potential to occur in the Study Area. Based on the site assessment and desktop review, 13 of these species are not expected to occur within the Study Area based on a lack of suitable habitat, and 18 were found to have a low-to-moderate potential to occur. Species of special concern include the following: Bald eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*), Golden eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos*), American peregrine falcon (*Falco peregrinus anatum*), Oak titmouse (*Baeolophus inornatus*), Wrentit (*Chamaea fasciata*), Northern Harrier (*Circus hudsonius*), Olive-sided Flycatcher (*Contopus cooperi*), Nuttall's woodpecker (*Dryobates nuttallii*), Bullock's oriole (*Icterus bullockii*), Western screech-owl (*Megascops kennicottii cardonensis*), Allen's Hummingbird (*Selasphorus sasin*), Northern spotted owl (*Strix occidentalis caurina*), Northwestern pond turtle (*Actinemys marmorata*), California red-legged frog (*Rana draytonii*), Foothill yellow-legged frog (*Rana boylei*), California giant salamander (*Dicamptodon ensatus*), Monarch butterfly (*Danaus plexippus*), and Central California Coast steelhead (*Oncorhynchus mykiss irideus* pop. 8). Due to the presence of suitable habitat and the number of occurrence records for NSO, limited operation period (LOP) for project work would be observed from February 1 through July 31, unless protocol-level surveys for this species are conducted. Additionally, focused surveys for special-status species and nesting birds are also included as BMPs and will occur prior to the start of Project activities. To reduce the possibility that any of the special-status species with potential to occur in the Study Area are impacted, focused preconstruction surveys, daily clearance surveys, and monitoring of construction are being prescribed. An environmental awareness training will also be provided to all workers on the Project. This training should include information on the habits and identification of the special-status wildlife species identified in the Project's Biological Assessment report as having the potential to occur in the area, as well as other appropriate measures to ensure the Project minimizes any potential environmental impacts.

The general vicinity of the proposed project likely supports local movement patterns of terrestrial and aquatic wildlife species and provides food and cover resources for common and some special-status wildlife species. However, temporary effects due to noise and increased human activity during project implementation would not interfere with these local movement patterns over time or affect the ability of these species to forage or reproduce, due to the fact that the proposed project is not a

development; the proposed project would not remove terrestrial habitat, rather, it is a public safety project intended to ensure stability of the damaged road (repair an existing feature).

As noted earlier in this memo, additional project recommendations noted in the Biological Resources Assessment will be implemented to address potential biological resource constraints, this will specifically consist of the following:

1. **Wildlife Exclusion Fencing.** All work areas, including staging areas, will be separated from aquatic resources and sensitive habitats by temporary reinforced silt fence keyed in by at least four inches.
2. **Vehicle Use.** Vehicles and equipment must use pavement, existing roads and trails, and previously disturbed areas to the extent practicable. Off-road vehicular access will be restricted to as needed and within the temporary construction access area to conduct Project work. Visual checks for wildlife under vehicles and equipment which have been stationary will be performed prior to moving them.
3. **Minimize Disturbance.** Project duration and disturbance should not exceed the minimum necessary to complete operations.
4. **Best Management Practices.** Project construction will include best management practices to protect native habitat. This includes, but is not limited to, storm water management, trash control, firearm and pet prohibitions, and dust control.
5. **Worker Environmental Awareness Training.** All Project personnel will attend a mandatory environmental awareness training delivered by a biologist prior to work. The training will include a description of northern spotted owl, golden eagle, California red-legged frog, California giant salamander, pallid bat, and nesting birds. The training will include a discussion of the potential for occurrence of these species within the Study Area; an explanation of the status of these species and their protection under the FESA, CESA, and other applicable laws; the measures to be implemented to conserve listed species and their habitats as they relate to the work; a review of all AMMs; and the Project activity boundaries.
6. **Construction Monitoring.** The biologist(s) would be on-site during initial ground disturbing activities, tree trimming or removal, and thereafter as needed. The biologist(s) would have the authority to stop Project activities to minimize take of listed species.
7. **Pre-construction Surveys.** Prior to any ground disturbance, pre-construction surveys will be conducted by a qualified biologist in and adjacent to the Project area. If any suspected special-status animal species is seen during work, then any work that could result in injury, disturbance, or harassment will stop in the area and a designated biologist will be notified immediately. The animal will be allowed to move out of the area on its own volition. If listed species are identified, the County may (re)initiate consultation with CDFW and further protective measures may be established.
8. **Water Quality Inspection.** Water quality inspector(s) will inspect the site after a rain event to ensure that the stormwater best management practices are adequate.
9. **Northwestern Spotted Owl Operation Period.** It is recommended that a limited operation period (LOP) for Project work be observed from February 1–July 31. This date is derived from the Forest Service Wildlife 17 (Spotted Owl) Measure, which states: “A seasonal restriction from February 1st through July 31st prohibits all activities that are not in suitable NSO habitat but could produce loud and continuous noise above ambient levels or above-ambient smoke within 0.25 miles of a historic or current NSO nest or activity

center, or un-surveyed suitable nesting/roosting/foraging habitat. The LOP may be lifted if protocol surveys determine NSOs are not nesting in the year of action. By this time, nestlings are expected to have fledged, with wing feathers developed enough for flight and therefore not restricted to a nest site.”

10. **Work Window.** All work within suitable aquatic habitat for steelhead, California redlegged frog (CRLF), California giant salamander, and foothill yellow-legged frog (FYLF) would occur between June 1 and October 15, when there is less potential for an individual to enter the work area. During this time, California red-legged frog, California giant salamander, and foothill yellow-legged frog would have a lower potential for movements across upland habitat.
11. **Foothill Yellow-legged Frog Surveys.** Surveys for foothill yellow-legged frogs in Sulphur Creek and on the surrounding stream bands will be conducted prior to construction or other work.
12. **General Nesting Bird Surveys.** Any work during the bird nesting season (between February 1 and August 31) requires a nesting bird survey. The survey must be conducted by a qualified biologist no more than 72 hours prior to work occurring. If work ceases for longer than three days during the nesting season, a new survey will be performed.
13. **Active Bird Nest.** If work is to occur within 300 feet of active raptor nests or 50 feet of active passerine nests, a non-disturbance buffer will be established at a distance sufficient to minimize disturbance based on the nest location, topography, cover, species’ sensitivity to disturbance, and intensity/type of potential disturbance. If an active bird nest is observed within or near work sites, work should cease, care should be taken not to disturb the nest, and the work supervisor shall contact the designated biologist for guidance on how to proceed.
14. **Pollution Prevention.** Petroleum spill containment and clean-up materials must be available at the job site. Spills must be immediately cleaned up and contaminated materials disposed of properly. Spills greater than eight ounces on soil or spills that enter Sulphur Creek shall be reported immediately to the designated biologist for appropriate management.
15. **Stockpiles.** All stockpiled materials will be stored within previously disturbed areas, absent of sensitive habitat.
16. **Revegetation.** Any impacted trees will be replaced. Most vegetated areas are expected to recruit naturally. Impacted areas will be restored and reseeded or planted with native plant species to match or improve pre-existing conditions.
17. **Prevention of Wildlife Entrapment.** If excavations are left open during the day or overnight, the following measures will be implemented to prevent inadvertent entrapment of listed species during construction. All excavated holes or trenches more than one foot deep with walls steeper than 30 degrees will be covered at the close of each working day/night by plywood or similar materials. If it is not feasible to cover an excavation or provide a four-foot-high vertical barrier, independent of exclusionary fences, one or more escape ramps constructed of earth fill or wooden planks, and not steeper than 30 degrees, will be installed. Before such holes or trenches are filled, they will be thoroughly inspected for trapped animals by the work supervisor or designated biologist.
18. **Monofilament Erosion Control.** Plastic mono-filament netting (erosion control matting) or similar material will not be used for the Project because wildlife may become entangled or trapped in it. This includes products that use photodegradable or biodegradable

- synthetic netting, which can take several months to decompose. Acceptable substitutes include natural fibers, such as jute or twine, or tackified hydroseeding compounds.
19. Night Lighting. Artificial lighting of the proposed construction area during nighttime hours will be minimized to the maximum extent practicable and lights will be shielded to prevent spillover. Night work requires a biological monitor onsite during construction.
 20. Trash Control. All food-related trash items such as wrappers, cans, bottles, and scraps will be disposed of in closed containers and removed at least once a day from the work area.
 21. Firearms. No firearms will be allowed in the construction area except for those carried by authorized security personnel, or local, State, or Federal law enforcement officials.
 22. Pets. To prevent harassment, injury, or mortality of sensitive species, no pets will be permitted on the Project site.

Cultural Resources:

A Cultural Resources Survey Report was prepared by Kleinfelder in June 2026 for the proposed project. One historic resource, White Sulphur Springs Road, is located within the proposed project area and is assumed eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) and California Register of Historical Resources. Although work will be conducted on and within the vicinity of the road, the Project will not result in a significant loss of historic material that would compromise the historic integrity of the potential resource or result in a change in the road's alignment. The roadway will appear essentially the same as prior to the undertaking and storm damage. Kleinfelder's report recommended a finding of no adverse effects to historic properties for this undertaking. Additionally, the project would adhere to standard county measures to protect any previously unidentified archaeological deposits or human remains that may be discovered during construction.

CEQA Determination:

Since this a repair project of existing facilities that will not include new disturbance areas, a Biological Reconnaissance Survey and a Cultural Resource Survey will not be prepared for this project. Pursuant to CEQA Section 15300, the proposed project would be considered Categorical 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 who utilize White Sulphur Springs Road. 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. 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.

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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 restore the travel lane width and legal load capacity of the existing facility to improve public safety. Therefore, it has been determined that the proposed project qualifies for a Class 1 and Class 2 Categorical Exemption and has no reasonable possibility of having a significant effect on the environment.

This determination is solely based on information provided by Roberto De La Torre Real, Napa County Department of Public Works. Should the proposed project be modified, or new evidence be presented that environmental impacts have not been fully disclosed, this determination would not be valid.

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