

California Department of Transportation

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September 1, 2026

1-MEN-101-49.599
Brooktrails Second Access
NOP of EIR
SCH # 2026080110

Mr. James Linderman
Department of Transportation
County of Mendocino
340 Lake Mendocino Drive
Ukiah, CA 95482

Dear Mr. Linderman:

Thank you for giving Caltrans the opportunity to review and comment on the County of Mendocino's Notice of Preparation of a draft EIR for a Brooktrails Second Access Project. The Brooktrails Second Access Project would construct a new public roadway, providing second public access between the Brooktrails community and the regional transportation system. The Project has been developed to improve transportation connectivity, provide an additional route for emergency response and evacuation, and enhance the overall reliability of the transportation network serving Brooktrails. The new roadway would be a rural Major Collector with two 12-foot travel lanes and 6-foot paved shoulders and extend approximately 2 miles between the existing Brooktrails roadway system and North Main Street. We have reviewed the proposal and offer the following advisory comments:

Frontage Road Development and Parcel Access to US 101

If the County chooses to move forward with constructing the Brooktrails Second Access by developing a frontage road along the western side of US 101, this action will require the acquisition of new County right of way immediately adjacent to the Caltrans right of way. As a result, each affected parcel would lose its direct abutment to Caltrans right of way, severing any existing access rights to US 101. Instead, these parcels would be granted abutment and direct access to the County's local road network, specifically the new frontage road, rather than US 101 itself.

The County must ensure that the design and construction of the frontage road immediately adjacent to US 101 complies with all applicable Caltrans standards. This includes, but is not limited to, requirements for:

- Clear Recovery Zone (CRZ),
- headlight glare shielding, and
- fencing to prevent illegal encroachment or unauthorized access to US 101

"Provide a safe and reliable transportation network that serves all people and respects the environment"

US 101 serves as a Principal Arterial, with its primary function being the movement of goods and people across interregional and interstate distances. Local access is considered the lowest priority for this type of highway. Therefore, actions that reduce local access points and minimize conflict locations are consistent with the intended purpose of US 101. For further details on highway classifications, please refer to the following resource:
<https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/planning/processes/statewide/related/hwy-functional-classification-2023.pdf>



Modification of Access at Former Mill Site

As part of the Brooktrails Second Access Project, consideration should be given to removing the former mill site's direct access to US 101. Once the County establishes a second access to Brooktrails that directly abuts the former mill site, it is recommended to

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explore removal of this existing access as a project condition. This action would eliminate two existing skewed roadway approaches to US 101, which currently present multiple potential conflict points for vehicles entering and exiting the highway. By reducing the number of conflict points, mobility and safety for travelers on US 101 can be significantly improved.

Again, thank you for including Caltrans in the County's review process for projects. Please contact me with questions or for further assistance with the comments provided at (707) 497-7742 or by email: <daniel.gjerde@dot.ca.gov>.

Sincerely,

Daniel Gjerde

DAN GJERDE
Local Development Review Coordinator
Caltrans District 1

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