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

Project Information

Project Name (if applicable): Clearlake Oaks School Crossing

DIST-CO-RTE: 01-LAK-20 **PM/PM:** 28.4/28.5

EA: 01-0P230 **Federal-Aid Project Number:** n/a

Project Description

The proposed project would upgrade existing pedestrian facilities on State Route 20 at the intersection of High Valley Road from Post Mile (PM) 28.4 to PM 28.5 in Lake County. The project is proposed because the existing school crosswalk has limited sight distance, lighting, and drainage conditions, which may contribute to pedestrian-vehicle conflicts. (continued on page 3)

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**. (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

Julie East	Julie East	09/08/2026
Print Name	Signature	Date

Project Manager

Brenda Howell	Brenda Howell	09/08/2026
Print Name	Signature	Date

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**
- ☐ **23 CFR 771.117(d): activity (d)(Enter activity number)**
- ☐ **Activity Enter activity number 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

n/a	n/a	n/a
Print Name	Signature	Date

Project Manager/ DLA Engineer

n/a	n/a	n/a
Print Name	Signature	Date

Date of Categorical Exclusion Checklist completion (if applicable): n/a
Date of Environmental Commitment Record or equivalent: 08/27/2026

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).

Continuation sheet:

Input has been received from members of the public, participants at Eastern Region Town Hall, and staff from East Lake School regarding conditions affecting children traveling to and from school. Proposed work would include installation of Pedestrian Hybrid Beacons, intersection lighting improvement, crosswalk realignment, sidewalk realignment and improvement, ADA curb ramp with detectable warning surfaces, drainage facility improvement, tree removal, and replacement of an existing 4-foot-high retaining wall, and utility relocation.

Scope of Work:

- Install two Pedestrian Hybrid Beacons, one facing eastbound and one facing westbound, and a separate push-button pole
- Install two overhead crosswalk lights
- Remove previous crosswalk striping
- Remove oak tree (within existing Caltrans right of way) which is blocking sight distance
- Modify existing sidewalk by straightening existing sidewalk
- Modify curb and gutter slopes to provide better drainage
- Install drainage inlets into existing system
- Remove existing retaining wall and replace with an upsized retaining wall
- Install tactile ADA crossing pads
- Use miscellaneous hot mix asphalt to repair roadway back to operational level
- Stripe needed areas and new pedestrian crossing

Permits: Caltrans does not anticipate environmental permits would be required.

ROW: Temporary Construction Easements would be required for three parcels; 035-372-06, 035-372-07, 035-372-36. No permanent right of way would be acquired.

Climate Change Assessment:
The Environmental Division has evaluated this non-capacity increasing project for GHG emissions and other climate change impacts. It has been determined that the project would not cause a significant impact on GHG emissions because this project would not increase roadway capacity or induce new vehicle miles traveled (VMT).
In addition:

- This project includes construction greenhouse gas reduction measures.
- The project design includes adaptation or climate resilience features.

- The project is not located in a floodplain or other location at risk of riverine flooding.
- The project is not located in the Coastal Zone or Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta or a location at risk of future sea level rise impacts.
- This project would not increase wildfire conditions and is in a high Fire Hazard Severity Zone.
- By nature of the project's safety improvements, it would improve pedestrian accessibility.

Environmental technical studies to evaluate potential impacts to air quality, biological resources, hazardous waste, noise, water quality, and visual resources were completed between April 2026 and July 2026. No impacts to resources are expected from the project by implementing the following measures:

AIR QUALITY

AQ-1: The construction contractor would comply with all applicable air-pollution control rules, regulations, ordinances, and statutes related to air quality.

AQ-2: Construction activities would adhere to the most recent emissions reduction regulations mandated by the California Air Resources Board (CARB).

AQ-3: Construction equipment and vehicles would be properly tuned and maintained. All construction equipment would use low sulfur fuel as required by California Code of Regulations (CCR) Title 17, Section 93114.

AQ-4: The contractor would be required to control dust resulting from work activities. Measures could include applying dust palliatives, temporary soil stabilization, or stockpile management.

AQ-5: The United States Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) has established the National Emission Standards for Hazardous Air Pollutants (NESHAP). Under Health & Safety Code § 39658(b)(1), demolition and rehabilitation activities must comply with 40 Code of Federal Regulations [CFR] 61, Subpart M (National Emission Standard for Asbestos). The U.S. EPA and the California Air Resources Board would be notified of demolition activities even if the activities would not disturb asbestos-containing material.

BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

BR-1: Animal Species

A. To protect migratory and nongame birds, including raptors (occupied nests and eggs), if possible, vegetation removal would be limited to the period outside of the bird nesting season (removal would occur from September 15 to February 1). If vegetation removal is required during the nesting season, a nesting bird survey would be conducted by a qualified biologist within five days prior to vegetation removal. If an active nest is located, an appropriate species-specific buffer and any monitoring requirements would be identified.

The buffer would be delineated as necessary to protect the active nest and certain construction activities would be excluded from these areas until birds have fledged, or the nest is determined to be unoccupied.

B. To prevent attracting corvids (birds of the *Corvidae* family, which include jays, crows, and ravens), no trash or food stuffs would be left or stored on-site. All trash would be deposited in a secure container daily and disposed of at an approved waste facility at least once a week.

C. Use of artificial lighting would be limited to comply with California Division of Occupational Safety and Health (Cal/OSHA) work area lighting requirements.

CULTURAL RESOURCES

CR-1: All personnel who stay at the job site longer than 8 hours total must complete cultural sensitivity training prior to beginning work. These include laborers, tradesmen, material suppliers, equipment maintenance staff, supervisors, foremen, office staff, and food vendors. Work would not begin until cultural sensitivity training has been conducted.

CR-2: Caltrans would coordinate with the Elem Indian Colony Pomo Tribe to document potential work windows associated with tribal ceremonies.

CR-3: An archaeological monitor or Elem Indian Colony Pomo Tribe tribal monitor would be onsite during ground-disturbing activities.

CR-4: If archaeological materials are discovered during construction, work activity within a 60-foot radius of the discovery would be stopped and the area secured until a Caltrans professionally qualified staff (PQS) can assess the nature and significance of the find in consultation with the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO).

CR-5: If human remains and related items are discovered on private or State land, they would be treated in accordance with State Health and Safety Code (H&SC) § 7050.5. Further disturbances and activities would cease in any area or nearby area suspected to overlie remains, and the County Coroner contacted. Pursuant to California Public Resources Code (PRC) § 5097.98, if the remains are thought to be Native American, the coroner would notify the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) who would then notify the Most Likely Descendent (MLD).

Human remains and related items discovered on federally-owned lands would be treated in accordance with the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act of 1990 (NAGPRA) (23 USC 3001). The procedures for dealing with the discovery of human remains, funerary objects, or sacred objects on federal land are described in the regulations that implement NAGPRA 43 CFR Part 10.

All work in the vicinity of the discovery would be halted and the administering agency's archaeologist would be notified immediately. Project activities in the vicinity of the discovery would not resume until the federal agency complies with 43 CFR Part 10 regulations and provides notification to proceed.

GEOLOGY, SOILS, AND PALEONTOLOGY

PAL-1: In the unlikely event that paleontological resources (fossils) are encountered, all work within a 60-foot radius of the discovery would stop, the area would be secured, and work would not resume until appropriate measures are taken.

GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

GHG-1: The construction contractor would comply with all applicable air-pollution control rules, regulations, ordinances, and statutes related to air quality.

GHG-2: Construction activities adhere to the most recent emissions reduction regulations mandated by the California Air Resources Board (CARB).

GHG-3: Transportation management strategies would be used to minimize vehicle delays and idling emissions. As part of this, traffic would be scheduled and directed to reduce congestion and related air quality impacts caused by idling vehicles along the highway. Pedestrians and bicycles would be accommodated or detoured during construction activities.

HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

HW-1: The contractor(s) would prepare a project-specific Lead Compliance Plan (CCR Title 8, § 1532.1) to reduce worker exposure to lead-impacted soil. The plan would include protocols for environmental and personnel monitoring, requirements for personal protective equipment, and other health and safety protocols and procedures for the handling of materials containing lead.

HW-2: When residue from grinding or cold planing contains lead from paint and thermoplastic and the average lead concentrations are less than 1,000 mg/kg total lead and 5 mg/L soluble lead, these lead concentrations are not a hazardous waste and would be removed and disposed of in accordance with Standard Special Provision Section 36-4 *Residue Containing Lead from Paint and Thermoplastic*.

HW-3: When residue from removal of yellow traffic stripes and pavement markings contains lead from paint or thermoplastic and the average lead concentrations are less than 1,000 mg/kg total lead and 5 mg/L soluble lead, these lead concentrations are not a hazardous waste and would be removed and disposed of in accordance with Standard Special Provision Section 84-9.03B *Remove Traffic Stripes and Pavement Markings Containing Lead*.

HW-4: If treated wood waste, such as sign posts or guardrail, is generated during construction, it would be managed under Health & Safety Code Section 25230 et seq. and Standard Special Provision Section 14-11.14 *Treated Wood Waste*.

HW-5: During all handling of aerially deposited lead-contaminating soil, including its initial excavation from roadsides, subsequent loading and unloading onto and from vehicles, and all handling related to stockpiling or burial, Caltrans would implement fugitive dust control measures using water or other palliatives. Caltrans must comply with any additional dust control requirements imposed by the local Air Quality Management District (AQMD) or Air Pollution Control District (APCD).

HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

WQ-1: The project would comply with the provisions of the Caltrans Statewide National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Permit (Order 2022-0033-DWQ). If the project results in a land disturbance of one acre or more, coverage under the Construction General Permit (CGP) (Order 2022-0057-DWQ) is also required.

Before any ground-disturbing activities, the contractor would prepare a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) (per the Construction General Permit Order 2022-0057-DWQ) or Water Pollution Control Program (WPCP) (projects that result in a land disturbance of less than one acre) that includes erosion control measures and construction waste containment measures to protect jurisdictional waters during project construction. For SWPPP/WPCP projects (which are governed according to both the Caltrans NPDES permit and the Construction General Permit), soil disturbance is permitted to occur year-round as long as the Caltrans NPDES and CGP and the corresponding requirements of those permits are adhered to.

The SWPPP or WPCP would identify the sources of pollutants that may affect the quality of stormwater; include construction site Best Management Practices (BMPs) to control sedimentation, erosion, and potential chemical pollutants; provide for construction materials management; include non-stormwater BMPs; and include routine inspections and a monitoring and reporting plan. All construction site BMPs would follow the latest edition of the *Caltrans Storm Water Quality Handbooks: Construction Site BMPs Manual* to control and reduce the impacts of construction-related activities, materials, and pollutants on the watershed.

The project SWPPP or WPCP would be continuously updated to adapt to changing site conditions during the construction phase.

WQ-2: The project would incorporate pollution prevention and design measures consistent with the *2024 Caltrans Storm Water Management Plan (SWMP)*. This plan complies with the requirements of the Caltrans Statewide NPDES Permit (Order 2022-0033-DWQ).

Permanent impacts to water quality would be prevented by adhering to the required permits, and the incorporation of Design Pollution Prevention (DPP) BMP strategies found in Table 5.1 of the 2024 SWMP. The DPP BMP categories listed below are designed to accomplish these objectives:

- Consideration of Downstream Effects Related to Potentially Increased Flow
- Preservation of Existing Vegetation
- Concentrated Flow Conveyance Systems
- Slope/Surface Protection Systems

It is anticipated that the inclusion of appropriate permanent BMPs would avoid potential impacts to water quality and meet the requirements of the Caltrans NPDES Permit, the CGP, and the Basin Plan. BMPs can be found in the Stormwater Quality Handbooks: "*Construction Site Best Management Practices (BMPs) Manual*" (Caltrans 2024) and "*Project Planning and Design Guide*" (Caltrans 2023).

NOISE AND VIBRATION

N-1: The contractor would be required to control and monitor noise. Noise from project activities would not exceed 86 dB Lmax at 50 feet from the job site from 9 p.m. to 6 a.m.

TRANSPORTATION

T-1: Transportation management strategies would be identified for the project. The contractor would be required to schedule and conduct work to avoid unnecessary inconvenience to the public and to maintain access to driveways, houses, and buildings within the work zones. Pedestrians and bicycles would be accommodated or detoured during construction activities, and boat access through navigable rivers would be maintained.

T-2: All emergency response agencies in the project area would be notified of the project construction schedule and would be accommodated throughout the construction period.

T-3: The contractor would be required to submit a *Fire Prevention Plan* as required by Cal/OSHA before starting jobsite activities. In the event of an emergency or wildfire, the contractor would cooperate with fire prevention authorities.

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