



CEQA EXEMPTION / NEPA CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION DETERMINATION FORM

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

Project Information

Project Name (if applicable): I-8 Pavement Rehabilitation, Culverts, & Lighting

DIST-CO-RTE: 11-SD-8

PM/PM: R43.8/50.1

EA/PID: 11-43156/1122000159

Federal-Aid Project Number: N/A

Project Description

Caltrans proposes a SHOPP asset management project located on I-8 Post Miles (PM) R43.8 to R50.1 in San Diego County. The scope would include: 1) pavement rehabilitation including individual slab replacements; 2) replacement of one drainage system (PM 48.8R), partial replacement of one drainage (PM 44.7), and invert paving rehabilitation of one drainage (PM 44.6); 3) replacement of Metal Beam Guard Rail with Midwest Guardrail at 11 locations; 4) replacement of 14 lighting structures; and 5) update roadway signs in-kind. All environmental commitments are included in the Environmental Commitments Record (ECR). All work would occur within Caltrans ROW. Any project changes would require further environmental analysis.

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

Matthew Voss

Matthew Voss

9/18/2026

Print Name

Signature

Date

Project Manager

Jorge Antonio Perez Valdes

Jorge Perez-Valdes

9/28/2026

Print Name

Signature

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)(26)**

☐ **23 CFR 771.117(d): activity (d)(i)**

☐ **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

Matthew Voss

Print Name

Matthew Voss

Signature

9/18/2026

Date

Project Manager/ DLA Engineer

Jorge Antonio Perez Valdes

Print Name

Jorge Perez-Valdes

Signature

9/28/2026

Date

Date of Categorical Exclusion Checklist completion (if applicable): 9/16/2026

Date of Environmental Commitment Record or equivalent: 9/9/2026



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Continuation sheet:

The original scope of work on I-8 proposed to include full trench replacement of 24-inch CSP Drainage System 2, including the down drain at Post Mile 33.74. Additionally, the original scope proposed the use of haul and access paths to access Drainage System 1 at Post Mile 44.65. This work would include clearing, grubbing and soil disturbance.

During biological surveys conducted in Summer of 2026, suitable dispersal and estivation habitat for the Arroyo toad (*Anaxyrus californicus*), an endangered species protected by the Federal Endangered Species Act (FESA), was identified at the outlets of Drainage Systems 1 and 2. These channels connect to a documented breeding pool located outside of the Biological Study Area and may facilitate movement between the breeding pool and other estivation sites. The Project Biologist concluded that the proposed access paths and construction work at the outlets of both Drainage Systems 1 and 2 may impact soils suitable for burrowing and estivation. Therefore, the biologist determined that the mentioned scope is likely to adversely affect arroyo toad. While Section 7 consultation with USFWS is already anticipated, conducting the work at the outlets of these drainage systems would require elevating the CEQA environmental document to an Initial Study.

Additionally, the Archaeologist initiated tribal and SHPO consultation for the project in early 2026 prior to the addition of access paths to Drainage Systems 1 and 2 or scope updates. Therefore, the Archaeologist would be required to reinitiate consultation in the Design phase to review any additional or updated scope.

Based on the information above and project cost and schedule constraints, the Project Development Team determined that the work for the down drains, outlets of DS 1 and 2, and any access paths would be removed from the project approval document. This removed scope will be added back to the project during the Design phase where studies will be updated and a higher level CEQA document (Initial Study) will be developed.

Therefore, the removed scope on I-8 has not been cleared by this CEQA Categorical Exemption or NEPA Categorical Exclusion for project EA 11-43156.

Please see the attached ECR for commitments based off the cleared scope. The ECR is anticipated to change in Design phase.