

## California Department of Transportation

OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT 10 PLANNING  
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October 20, 2026

Shannon Ciotti  
Grants & Reimbursements Unit Manager  
Sierra Nevada Conservancy  
11521 Blocker Drive #205  
Auburn, CA 95603

**CAL-4-PM 41.144 Arnold  
Avery Trail Reconciliation,  
Wayfinding, and Outdoor  
Literacy Project - Initial  
Study – SCH 2026091041**

Dear Shannon Ciotti,

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) appreciates the opportunity to review and comment on the Initial Study and Proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration for the Arnold Avery Trail Reconciliation, Wayfinding, and Outdoor Literacy Project. The Sierra Nevada Conservancy (SNC) has prepared this Initial Study to evaluate the potential environmental effects resulting from implementing the Project. The project site is in Calaveras County, and would consist of modifications to existing unauthorized routes, which would be implemented by the Arnold Rim Trail Association, a nonprofit citizen volunteer group of the Calaveras District of the Stanislaus National Forest. The intent of the project involves trails that would be modified as reroutes, new construction, reconstruction, and obliteration and restoration.

The Arnold Rim Trail system extends approximately 28 miles of existing, authorized National Forest System Trails, 12 miles of known existing, unauthorized non-system trails, and 17 miles of administrative-use only roads and connects the communities of Arnold, Avery, and Hathaway Pines in Calaveras County.

### **Caltrans has the following comments:**

Caltrans suggests that the Calaveras County continue to coordinate with Caltrans in identifying and addressing potential pedestrian safety and cumulative transportation impacts from this project and other developments near this location. This will assist Caltrans in ensuring that pedestrian, traffic safety, and quality standards are maintained for the traveling public on existing and future state transportation facilities in Calaveras County.

### **Environmental**

If there are any construction related activities that will encroach into Caltrans Right of Way (ROW) as a result of the project, the project proponent must apply for an Encroachment Permit with the Caltrans District 10 Encroachment Permit Office. All California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) documentation, including the Initial Study (IS), with supporting technical studies, must be submitted with the Encroachment Permit Application. These studies may include an analysis of potential impacts to any cultural sites, historic properties, biological resources, hazardous waste/materials, scenic highways, and/or other environmental resources within Caltrans Right of Way, at the project site(s).

### **Encroachment Permits**

If any project activities encroach into Caltrans ROW, the project proponent must submit an application for an Encroachment Permit to the Caltrans District 10 Encroachment Permit Office. Appropriate environmental studies must be submitted with this application. For more information, please visit the Caltrans Website at: <https://dot.ca.gov/programs/traffic-operations/ep/applications>

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Shiferaw Jemberie (209) 986-9635 (email: [Shiferaw.jemberie@dot.ca.gov](mailto:Shiferaw.jemberie@dot.ca.gov)) or me at (209) 639 -8832 (email: [Gregoria.ponce@dot.ca.gov](mailto:Gregoria.ponce@dot.ca.gov)).

Sincerely,

*Gregoria Ponce'*

Gregoria Ponce', Chief  
Office of Rural Planning

cc: Lorelie Oviatt, Director, Calaveras County Planning Department  
Wendy Johnson, General Counsel, Sierra Nevada Conservancy  
State Clearinghouse