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

Project Information

Project Name (if applicable): Encroachment Permit #11-26-6-US-0726

DIST-CO-RTE: 11-SD-79 **PM/PM:** 35.44 - 35.24

EA: 93770 / EP#11-26-6-US-0726 **Federal-Aid Project Number:** N/A

Project Description

The applicant, SDG&E, proposes to perform overhead reconductor work on 5 poles along SR-79 in Warner Springs; 4 within Caltrans ROW and 1 on private property. Crews to string cables between pole P116439 (on private property) and pole P518024 (within Caltrans ROW) crossing over SR-79. Cables between Poles P518024, P815119, P3187766 and P116437 (all within Caltrans ROW) will be strung along the Westside of the SR-79. Pole P318766 (within Caltrans ROW), to be replaced wood to steel.

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 5.** (PRC 21084; 14 CCR 15305[b])
  ☒ 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

Koji Tsunoda	Koji Tsunoda	10/02/2026
Print Name	Signature	Date

Project Manager

Luis Z. Medina	Luis Z Medina	10/02/2026
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 (c)(Enter activity number)**
- ☐ **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: Commitments on p.3-4

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:

Visual

- Replacement poles must be made of weathered steel.
- If tree pruning or root-zone work is necessary, tree pruning or root-zone work shall be done in accordance with sections 5-1.36E and 20-2.03E. Prior to any tree pruning or root zone work, notify the Project Permitting Engineer.

Cultural

- If archaeological resources are inadvertently discovered within or near construction limits, do not disturb the resource/s and immediately stop all work within a 60-foot radius of the discovery. Secure the area and notify the Engineer so that a qualified archaeologist can assess the significance of the discovery. Do not move or disturb the resource/s. Do not resume work within the 60-foot radius around the discovery until authorized.
- In the event that human remains are found, State Health and Safety Code (HSC) Section 7050.5 states that ALL construction activities within 60-feet of the discovery shall stop, and the county coroner should be contacted. Pursuant to Public Resource Code Section 5097.8, if the remains are thought to be Native American, the coroner will notify the Native American Heritage Committee (NAHC) who will then notify the Most Likely Descendent (MLD). The person who discovered the remains will contact the District 11 District Native American Coordinator: Juliette Meling, at (858) 289-1283. Further provisions of PRC 5097.98 are to be followed as applicable.

Hazardous Waste/Materials

Aerially Deposited Lead

A hazardous waste concern for this project is aerially deposited lead (ADL). Elevated levels of ADL are common in the soil adjacent to State highways and can also be found underneath some existing road surfaces due to past construction activities. According to the encroachment permit package and per the guidance described in Section 407 of Caltrans Encroachment Permit Manual, this project is categorized as "Minimal Disturbance", which are projects that result in minimal soil disturbance, and all disturbed soil can be placed back within work limits in the immediate area from which it was excavated. The following Special Provision must be included:

> *"Permittee must reuse the soil within the work limits in the immediate area from which it was excavated. If any excess soil is generated, it becomes the property of the permittee. Permittee must transport all excess soil outside of Caltrans' right of-way and dispose of excess soil in accordance with all applicable environmental laws and regulations."*

Treated Wood Waste

Deteriorated wooden poles have been treated with preserving chemicals that may contain hazardous concentrations of arsenic, chromium, copper, creosote, and pentachlorophenol. These poles may be disposed of at a Class I landfill which is specifically permitted to accept this type of hazardous waste.

Discovery of Unanticipated Asbestos and Hazardous Substances

Upon discovery of unanticipated asbestos or a hazardous substance, immediately stop working in the area of discovery:

1. You reasonably believe the substance is asbestos as defined in Labor Code § 6501.7 or a hazardous substance as defined in Health & Safety Code § 25316 and § 25317.
2. Its presence is not described in the Plans.
3. The substance has not been made harmless.

Hazardous Waste Management

Handle, store, and dispose of hazardous waste under 22 CA Code of Regulations Division 4.5.

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Final Audit Report 2026-10-02

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