SR-710 North Project
07-LA-710 (SR-710)
EA: 187900
EFIS ID: 0700000191

FINDINGS

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION FINDINGS

FOR THE STATE ROUTE 710 NORTH PROJECT

IMPROVEMENTS ON STATE ROUTE 710 AND/OR THE SURROUNDING AREA

FROM NORTH TO INTERSTATE 210, SOUTH TO INTERSTATE 10,

EAST TO INTERSTATE 605 AND WEST TO INTERSTATE 5 AND STATE ROUTE 2

The following information is presented to comply with State CEQA Guidelines (Title 14 California Code of Regulations, Division 6, Chapter 3, Section 15091) and the Department of Transportation and California Transportation Commission Environmental Regulations (Title 21, California Code of Regulations, Division 2, Chapter 11, Section 1501 et seq.). Reference is made to the Final Environmental Impact Report (Final EIR) for the project, which is the basic source for the information.

The following effects have been identified in the Final EIR as resulting from the Preferred Alternative, the Transportation Systems Management/Transportation Demand Management Alternative (TSM/TDM Alternative). Effects found not to be significant have not been included.

Paleontological Resources

Adverse Environmental Effects:

Excavation for the larger-scale improvements (e.g., Other Road Improvements T-1 [Valley Boulevard to Mission Road Connector Road] and T-2 [SR 110/Fair Oaks Avenue Hook Ramps]) could reach native deposits, which in most areas are considered to be highly sensitive for paleontological resources. Potentially significant direct impacts to paleontological resources could result from ground-disturbing activities associated with the clearing of vegetation and soil, excavation, and construction. Although construction would be a short-term activity, the loss of some fossil remains and fossil-bearing rocks would be a permanent potentially significant impact based on the scientific significance of potential paleontological resources in formations in the project area.

Findings:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project, which avoid or substantially lessen the significant environmental effect as identified in the Final EIR.

Statement of Facts:

A Paleontological Mitigation Plan (PMP) and Paleontological Resources Impact Mitigation Program (PRIMP) will be implemented during final design. The PRIMP will follow the guidelines of the Society of Vertebrate Paleontology (2010). Preparation of a PMP or PRIMP, as appropriate, during Plans, Specifications, and Estimates (PS&E) will follow the guidelines provided in the Caltrans Standard Environmental Reference Environmental Handbook, Volume 1, Chapter 8, and includes the measures listed below.

- A qualified paleontologist or representative will attend the preconstruction meeting. At this meeting, the paleontologist will conduct paleontological resources awareness training, including describing the likelihood of encountering paleontological resources during grading and excavation, what types of resources might be discovered, the roles and authorities of the paleontological resources monitors, the methods used to assess and recover discovered resources, and other information relevant to paleontological resources and the monitoring that will be conducted during project construction.
- A preconstruction field survey will be conducted in areas with deposits of high paleontological sensitivity after vegetation and paving have been removed, and any observed surface paleontological resources salvaged prior to the beginning of additional grading.
- In general, a qualified paleontological monitor will initially be present on a full-time basis whenever excavation would occur within the sediments that have a high paleontological sensitivity rating, and on a spot-check basis when excavating in sediments that have a low sensitivity rating. No monitoring is generally necessary in deposits with no paleontological sensitivity, such as Artificial Fill and Holocene Alluvial Fan Deposits. However, the specific monitoring levels and locations will be developed according to the final design plans and take into account the excavation methods and depths, the thickness of any Artificial Fill and/or Holocene Alluvial Fan Deposits present in the project area, and the sensitivity of the deposits underlying those two geologic units.
- Full-time monitoring may be reduced to a part-time or spot check basis if no resources are being discovered in sediments with a high sensitivity rating. Monitoring reductions, when they occur, will be determined by the qualified Principal Paleontologist in consultation with the Resident Engineer.
- The monitor will inspect fresh cuts and/or spoils piles to recover paleontological resources and/or screen wash for smaller fossils, depending on the material available for inspection. The monitor will be empowered to temporarily divert construction equipment away from the immediate area of the discovery. The monitor will be equipped to rapidly stabilize and remove fossils to avoid prolonged delays to construction schedules. If large mammal fossils or large concentrations of fossils are encountered, heavy equipment will be used to assist in the removal and collection of large materials.
- Native sediments of high and low sensitivity will occasionally be spot-screened on site through 1/8- to 1/20-inch mesh screens to determine whether micro vertebrates or other small fossils are present. If small fossils are encountered, sediment samples (up to 3 cubic yards, or 6,000 pounds) will be collected and processed through 1/20-inch mesh screens to recover additional fossils.

- Recovered specimens will be prepared to the point of identification and permanent preservation. This includes the sorting of any washed mass samples to recover small invertebrate and vertebrate fossils, the removal of surplus sediment from around larger specimens to reduce the volume of storage for the repository and storage cost, and the addition of approved chemical hardeners/stabilizers to fragile specimens.
- Specimens will be identified to the lowest taxonomic level possible and curated into an institutional repository with retrievable storage. The repository institutions usually charge a one-time fee based on volume, so removing surplus sediment is important. The repository institution may be a local museum or university with a curator who can retrieve the specimens on request. Caltrans requires that a draft curation agreement be in place with an approved curation facility prior to the initiation of any paleontological monitoring or mitigation activities.

Hazardous Waste

Adverse Environmental Effects:

The Initial Site Assessment (ISA) (2014) indicated potentially significant impacts may result during construction, as there is the potential to encounter hazardous materials in the soils and existing road materials. The majority of the proposed improvements do not involve substantial ground-disturbing activities during construction. However, there would be disturbance of soils and removal of existing structures. Therefore, hazardous soil contaminants (such as aerially deposited lead [ADL]) and structural materials (e.g., polychlorinated biphenyls [PCBs], creosote and other wood-treating chemicals, lead chromate, lead-based paint [LBP], and asbestos containing materials [ACMs]) may be encountered during construction. In addition, soil and/or groundwater containing petroleum hydrocarbons, halogenated compounds, or other hazardous materials could be encountered at the properties that would be partially or fully acquired for the TSM/TDM Alternative.

Findings:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project, which avoid or substantially lessen the significant environmental effect as identified in the Final EIR.

Statement of Fact:

Additional site investigations will be conducted for the properties within the alignments of the TSM/TDM Alternative that have a history of hazardous waste, listed pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5, or are otherwise a recognized environmental concern. The results of the investigations will determine the steps to be followed with respect to handling and disposal of hazardous waste on these properties prior to project disturbance in these areas, consistent with local, state, and federal regulations.

Adherence to regulatory requirements would avoid substantial impacts related to transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials. Typical hazardous materials used during construction (e.g., solvents, paints, fuels) would be handled in accordance with standard procedures. California regulates hazardous materials, waste, and substances under the authority of the California Health and Safety Code. California law also addresses specific handling, storage, transportation, disposal, treatment, reduction, cleanup, and emergency planning of hazardous waste.

The Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act also restricts the disposal of wastes and requires the cleanup of wastes that are below hazardous waste concentrations but that could impact ground and surface water quality. California regulations that address waste management and prevention and clean up contamination include: Title 22 Division 4.5 Environmental Health Standards for the Management of Hazardous Waste; Title 23 Waters; and Title 27 Environmental Protection. These are standard regulations that must be followed with respect to the use, storage, handling, disposal, and transport of potentially hazardous materials during construction of the TSM/TDM Alternative to protect human health and the environment from upsets or accidents. Routine maintenance activities will be conducted during operation would be required to follow applicable regulations with respect to the use, storage, handling, transport, and disposal of potentially hazardous materials.

Land Use

Adverse Environmental Effects:

The TSM/TDM Alternative require permanent acquisition and conversion of land currently planned for non-transportation uses into transportation uses, which would result in potentially significant impacts and inconsistencies with land use designations in local jurisdictions' General Plans. These inconsistencies would exist until the applicable local General Plans are amended to reflect the use of the affected land for transportation improvements. Neither Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Metro) nor Caltrans has land use planning authority, and neither has the authority to require local jurisdictions to amend their General Plans. Therefore, it will be the decision of the affected local jurisdictions on how and when to address the identified General Plan land use inconsistencies.

Findings:

Such changes or alterations are within the responsibility and jurisdiction of another public agency and not the agency making the finding. Such changes have been adopted by such other agency or can and should be adopted by such other agency.

Statement of Fact:

Because it is generally desirable that the General Plans be consistent with existing conditions, Metro and Caltrans will request that the applicable local jurisdictions amend their General Plans to reflect the permanent use of land for the improvements included in the TSM/TDM Alternative. It is anticipated that these amendments could occur in the normal course of General Plan updates required in accordance with California law (e.g., a special amendment process specifically to address the SR-710 North Project would not be necessary). The timing of preparation and processing of such amendments would be at the discretion of each local jurisdiction and compliance with the standards in municipal codes of the Cities of Alhambra and Los Angeles was considered when making the significance determination.

District Director: (or designee)	John Bulinski		1/25/19
	Print name	Signature	Date