

NOTICE OF INTENT TO ADOPT A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION FOR THE PROPOSED FORSYTHE CREEK BRIDGE (NO. 10C-0077) ON REEVES CANYON ROAD REPLACEMENT PROJECT

**Mendocino County Department of Transportation
340 Lake Mendocino Drive, Ukiah, California 95482, (707) 463-4622**

Introduction

This Notice of Intent serves as public notice that the Mendocino County Department of Transportation (County) has prepared an Initial Study and proposes to adopt a Mitigated Negative Declaration for the Reeves Canyon Road at Forsythe Creek Bridge (No. 10C-0077) Replacement Project (proposed project). A Mitigated Negative Declaration has been prepared because no substantial evidence exists that the proposed project may have a significant environmental effect that cannot be fully mitigated to a less-than-significant level. The proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration does not signify approval or disapproval of this project by the County's decision-making body. The County will consider the proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration together with any comments received during the public review process to determine whether the proposed project would have a heretofore unidentified significant impact on the environment.

Project Location

Reeves Canyon Road at the Forsythe Creek Bridge (No. 10C-0077) is located approximately 2 miles west of the unincorporated community of Redwood Valley, Mendocino County, California and about 0.5 mile northwest of U.S. Highway 101/State Route 20. The bridge crosses Forsythe Creek, a tributary to the Russian River, which ultimately empties into the Pacific Ocean approximately 60 miles north of the San Francisco Bay Golden Gate. The 1.82 acre project area is found on the *Laughlin Range, California 7.5* minute U.S. Geological Survey quadrangle, Township 16 North, Range 13 West, Section 1, Mount Diablo Base & Meridian. The project location is shown in Figure 1. The project area corresponds to a Mendocino County right-of-way (ROW) easement through portions of the following Assessor Parcel Numbers (APN): 106-160-3100 and 162-020-1400.

Project Description

The County proposes to replace the existing bridge (No. 10C-0077) on Reeves Canyon Road over Forsythe Creek and construct the necessary roadway approach improvements. The purpose of this project is to improve public safety by providing safe and cost effective solutions for traffic to cross Forsythe Creek. In 2010 the County identified the need for replacement after the bridge was found to be structurally deficient due to substandard load carrying capacity. The County has nominated this bridge for replacement under the federal-aid Highway Bridge Program administered by the Federal Highway Administration through the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) Local Assistance program. The new bridge will meet current design standards of Mendocino County, the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials, and Caltrans.

The bridge would be replaced with a longer structure aligned upstream (northeast) of the current alignment. The new bridge would be constructed of a three-span, cast-in-place, post-tensioned concrete slab. Reeves Canyon Road would be realigned and the new bridge would be located on the northeast side of the existing bridge. The new roadway alignment would remove the existing sharp horizontal curve located south of the existing bridge. Construction of the new bridge outside the current alignment would allow continued use of the existing bridge during construction. The new bridge would have a higher

profile than the existing bridge to ensure adequate clearance of 100-year flood event flows. The re-aligned roadway approaches would be graded to conform to the existing road and would be paved throughout the conform limits—whereas, the existing roadway is mostly an unpaved gravel surface—and the roadway would be widened to meet the County design standards for a Local Rural Roadway.

A temporary work area within the channel would be needed to construct the necessary falsework and to drop the existing bridge onto during its removal. It is anticipated that Forsythe Creek would have a relatively small amount of water flow during the construction season. Following completion of the work, the falsework, diversion, and gravel work pad would be removed, settling basins would be backfilled, and the stream would be allowed to naturally reform the channel through any fish rock left in place. The existing bridge would remain in operation throughout construction and be removed and disposed of off-site after the new bridge has been completed.

It is anticipated that the earliest that construction would start is May 2015. Construction is anticipated to require one construction season with project completion anticipated by October 2015. All instream activities, including bridge removal, and substructure and superstructure construction activities will be confined to a work period between June 15 through October 15 to minimize and avoid impacts on water quality. Construction activities below the ordinary high water mark of Forsythe Creek may be allowed outside of the June 15 through October 15 period if permitted by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife and the North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board, depending on weather conditions.

Review Period

As mandated by Public Resources Code § 21091, the minimum public review period for this Initial Study and proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration is 30 days. The document has been sent to the State Clearinghouse. This document is open to public review and comment from July 23, 2014 through August 22, 2014. **Comments must be received by 5 p.m. on the last day of the comment period, August 22, 2014.** Any comments on the document may be presented in writing to:

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Document Availability

Copies of the Public Draft Initial Study and Proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration and supporting technical studies are available for review on the Mendocino County Department of Transportation's website: **<http://www.co.mendocino.ca.us/dot>** (go to the "Environmental Documents" tab) and at the following locations:

Mendocino County Department of Transportation
340 Lake Mendocino Drive
Ukiah, California 95482

Willits Library
390 East Commercial Street
Willits, California 94590