

NOTICE OF INTENT TO ADOPT A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION FOR THE PROPOSED ROWES CREEK BRIDGE (NO. 10C-0123) ON SHERWOOD 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 Rowes Creek Bridge (No. 10C-0123) on Sherwood Road 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

Rowes Creek Bridge (No. 10C-0123) on Sherwood Road is located in a rural area approximately 5.6 miles northwest of Willits, California in Mendocino County, California. The bridge provides a link between Willits and the Brooktrails subdivision to the Sherwood Valley. The bridge crosses Rowes Creek, a tributary to Outlet Creek and eventually, to the Upper Main Eel River, which ultimately empties into the Pacific Ocean. The project area consists of a linear alignment approximately 1,000 feet long that includes portions of Sherwood Road on both sides of Rowes Creek and is found on the *Burbeck, California* 7.5 minute U.S. Geological Survey quadrangle, Township 19 North, Range 14 West, Section 22, 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): 037-640-19, 037-640-06, 037-640-07, 037-690-02, and 037-690-01.

Project Description

The County proposes to replace the existing Rowes Creek bridge (No. 10C-0123) on Sherwood Road and construct the necessary roadway approach improvements. The existing bridge is currently classified as structurally deficient due to substandard load carrying capacity and functionally obsolete. Although its sufficiency rating of 79.7 normally would not make it eligible for replacement under the Federal Aid Highway Bridge Program (HBP), the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) has approved its replacement because the Federal Highway Administration typically does not authorize widening of a functionally obsolete timber bridge. Bridge replacement would be funded through the HBP and Federal Toll Credits through the 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 new two-lane single span, reinforced concrete, box-girder bridge would be constructed upstream of the existing alignment. The new bridge would be 140-foot long and 28-feet wide and would be supported by reinforced concrete seat abutments founded on either spread footings, driven steel piles or cast-in-drilled-hole piles. Both roadway approaches to the bridge will be widened to accommodate two 10-foot-

wide travel lanes with 2-foot-wide unpaved shoulders on each side. The single-span bridge would minimize environmental impacts on Rows Creek by avoiding the need to construct bridge supports inside the active channel or below the 100-year flood (Q_{100}). The roadway approaches would be widened and realigned to conform to the new bridge. Sherwood Road would be realigned to remove the sharp reversing curves located on either end of the bridge and increase the roadway approach curve radius. The existing bridge would remain in operation during construction and would be removed and disposed of offsite after the new bridge has been completed.

It is anticipated that the earliest that construction would start is May 2016. Construction is anticipated to require one construction season with project completion anticipated by October 2016. All instream activities, including bridge removal, and substructure and superstructure construction activities will be confined to a work period between June 15 through October 31 to minimize and avoid impacts on water quality. Construction activities below the ordinary high water mark of Rows Creek may be allowed outside of the June 15 through October 31 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 February 4, 2015 through March 6, 2015. **Comments must be received by 5 p.m. on the last day of the comment period, March 6, 2015.** 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

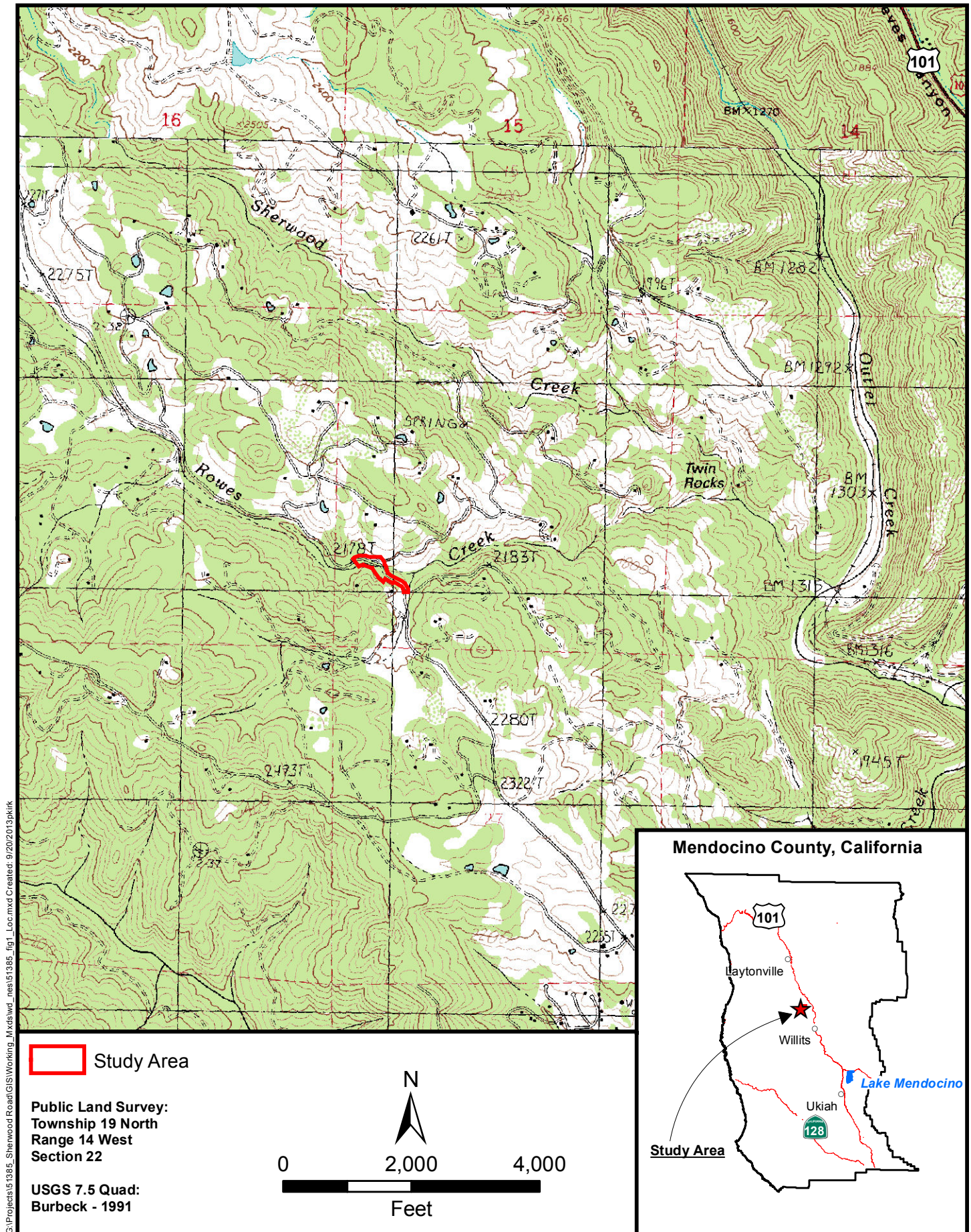


Figure 1. Location and Vicinity