

# SOUTHBOUND INTERSTATE-405 (SAN DIEGO FREEWAY) TO THE U.S. HIGHWAY-101 (VENTURA FREEWAY) CONNECTOR IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

Alternatives to Reduce Congestion at America's Most Traveled Interchange

LOS ANGELES COUNTY, CALIFORNIA  
07-LA-405 [PM 39.4/40.5] / 07-LA-101 [PM 17.0/19.4]  
EA 07-199610  
SCH No. 2008-04-1100

## ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT / INITIAL STUDY [EA/IS]

Finding of No Significant Impact / Mitigated Negative Declaration and Final Section 4(f) Evaluation

Prepared by the California Department of Transportation

This environmental review, consultation, and any other action required in accordance with applicable Federal laws for this project is being, or has been, carried out by Caltrans under its assumption of responsibility pursuant to 23 U.S.C. 327.



JUNE 2008

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**CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT (FONSI)**

FOR

Southbound Interstate-405 (San Diego Freeway) to the U.S.Highway-101 (Ventura Freeway)  
Connector Improvement Project in the City of Los Angeles, California

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) has determined that Selected Alternative 1 will have no significant impact on the human environment after mitigation. This FONSI is based on the attached EA and Section 4(f) Evaluation which has been independently evaluated by Caltrans and determined to adequately and accurately discuss the need, environmental issues, and impacts of the proposed project and appropriate mitigation measures. It provides sufficient evidence and analysis for determining that an EIS is not required. Caltrans takes full responsibility for the accuracy, scope, and content of the attached EA and Section 4(f) Evaluation.

Caltrans proposes to replace the existing non-standard connector, from the southbound San Diego Freeway (Interstate-405) to the north-and-southbound Ventura Freeway (U.S. Highway-101), with an upgraded connector. The new 50 mph two-lane connector would replace the current 20 mph single-lane connector.

The Department has selected Alternative 1 on the basis that it is the Least Environmentally Damaging Practicable Alternative (LEDPA), the only practicable alternative pursuant to E.O. 11988 – Floodplain Management, and the most reasonable and prudent alternative. Alternative 1 is the least environmentally disruptive build alternative possible, given the environmental, community, right-of-way, and engineering constraints.

The environmental review, consultation, and any other action required in accordance with applicable federal laws for this project is being, or has been, carried-out by Caltrans under its assumption of responsibility pursuant to 23 U.S.C. 327.

Notwithstanding any other provision of law, a claim arising under federal law seeking judicial review of a permit, license or approval issued by a federal agency for a highway or public transportation project shall be barred unless it is filed within 180 days after publication of a notice in the Federal Register announcing that the permit, license, or approval is final pursuant to the law under which the agency action is taken, unless a shorter time is specified in the federal law pursuant to which judicial review is allowed.

6/30/08  
Date

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
DOUGLAS R. FAILING  
District Director  
District 7  
California Department of Transportation

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## MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION

STATE OF CALIFORNIA  
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

SCH No. 2008-04-1100

DISTRICT 7– LA – 405, PM 39.4/40.5  
LA – 101, PM 17.0/19.4  
EA 07-199610

### MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION

Pursuant to: Division 13, Public Resources Code

#### Description:

The California Department of Transportation (the Department, or “Caltrans”) proposes to replace the existing non-standard connector, from the southbound San Diego Freeway (Interstate-405) to the northbound Ventura Freeway (U.S. Highway-101), with an upgraded connector. The new 50 mph two-lane connector would replace the current 20 mph single-lane connector. This would be accomplished by constructing a new bridge structure spanning over the spillway of the Sepulveda Dam.

The Department has considered nine (9) alternatives, eight (8) of which are variations on this connector improvement proposal. The Department has selected Alternative 1 on the basis that it is the Least Environmentally Damaging Practicable Alternative (LEDPA), the only practicable alternative pursuant to E.O. 11988 – Floodplain Management, and the most reasonable and prudent alternative. Alternative 1 is the least environmentally disruptive build alternative possible, given the numerous environmental, community, right-of-way, and engineering constraints: Alternative 1 has the smallest project impact footprint of any possible build alternative, and would result in the least overall harm.

- Alternative 1 would result in by far the least biological impacts of any reasonable and prudent alternative
- Alternative 1 would result in the least residential right-of-way and community impacts of any possible alternative

#### Determination:

An Initial Study has been prepared by the California Department of Transportation (Department), District 7 – Los Angeles. On the basis of this study it is determined that the proposed action with the incorporation of the identified mitigation measures will not have a significant effect on the environment for the following reasons:

- Selected Alternative 1 requires the construction of new connector/bridge structures that would create some visual distraction in views toward the Sepulveda Dam (eligible for listing on the NHRP), especially to motorists using the southbound I-405 and northbound US-101 freeways, but this will be mitigated to a level below significance through design. The bents or piers of the new elevated structures should be similar in shape to the Streamline Modern gates of the Sepulveda Dam.
- Selected Alternative 1 will have impacts to a small identified wetland area west, and adjacent to the shoulder of the I-405 freeway. Caltrans proposes to mitigate for these impacts by providing additional funding to the Bull Creek Restoration Project and Sepulveda Wetlands Park Project. Funding is specified at roughly twenty percent of the total budget for each project. These proposals are, however, subject to change at any time, after further coordination of a final mitigation plan in cooperation with the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), the California Department of Fish

and Game (CDFG), and the Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) during the permitting phase of the project.

- Selected Alternative 1 calls for the construction of connector bridges to cross the spillway outlet area of the Sepulveda Dam in order to connect to the US-101. As mitigation, a portion of the earthfill embankment of the dam adjacent to northbound US-101 will be modified to accommodate the change. These encroachments would not substantially affect the dam's operations, but will require mitigation measures like the aforementioned to replace the dam's storage volume. Mitigation measures for the selected alternatives are strictly based upon reservoir water surface elevation criteria, irrespective of downstream channel conditions. The project has been conceptually approved by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Los Angeles District) which has regulatory responsibility for the Dam, and the reservoir lands. It is possible that other solutions could be provided by the USACE in the forthcoming phases of this project.
- A noise study and abatement feasibility study was performed for Selected Alternative 1. It revealed that the site represented by noise receptor #N2 (Sherman Oaks Castle Palace—a miniature golf course) would be impacted by traffic noise associated with the project and that a soundwall would be feasible in this location. A soundwall was proposed to provide 6 dBA noise attenuation, but concerns emerged about the blocking of the view from the freeway at the northeastern quadrant of I-405 and U.S.-101 Interchange. An offer has been extended to management of the facility, but the decision and implementation of the measure are still pending and in coordination at this time.
- Selected Alternative 1 entails the loss of access to the US-101 freeway from Burbank Boulevard. This will pose traffic impacts on streets and intersections in the project area. Proposed mitigation measures are in place to minimize these impacts that have been devised in coordination with the Los Angeles Department of Transportation, but coordination is continuing. Reference Section 2.1.5 for additional details.

06-30-2008  
Date

  
Aziz Elattar, Office Chief  
Division of Environmental Planning  
California Department of Transportation

## Summary

The California Department of Transportation (the Department, or “Caltrans”) proposes to replace the existing non-standard connector, from the southbound San Diego Freeway (Interstate-405) to the northbound Ventura Freeway (U.S. Highway-101), with an upgraded connector. The new 50 mph two-lane connector would replace the current 20 mph single-lane connector. This would be accomplished by constructing a new bridge structure crossing over the spillway of the Sepulveda Dam. The Department has considered nine (9) alternatives, eight (8) of which are variations on this connector improvement proposal. At draft of this environmental document, four (4) alternatives remained under consideration, including the No-Build Alternative. As of June 2, 2008, Alternative 1 has been formally selected as the “Preferred Alternative.”

The existing non-standard connector experiences extensive congestion, delays, and queue lengths throughout the day. The purpose of the project is to improve safety, operation, capacity, and traffic flow through the interchange by replacing the existing 20 mph single-lane connector, with a new 50 mph two-lane connector.

The “No Build” alternative calls for the existing connector to remain as is. The remaining three (3) “Build” alternatives, that remain under consideration, each share the following common features:

- Each calls for the replacement of the existing 20 mph single-lane connector (from the southbound I-405 to the northbound U.S.-101), with a new 50 mph two-lane connector bridge that encroaches upon and spans over the spillway of the Sepulveda Dam.
- Each eliminates the existing erratic and conflicting traffic weaving patterns between the Burbank Boulevard on-ramp traffic seeking to access the southbound I-405 mainline, versus the traffic attempting to access the U.S.-101 connectors from the southbound I-405 mainline.
- Each requires the realignment/reconstruction of the Burbank Boulevard on-ramp to the southbound I-405 and/or the U.S.-101.
- Each requires the realignment and reconstruction of the current U.S. Army Corps of Engineers service road (on the northwest side of the interchange) related to the operation and maintenance of the Sepulveda Dam, to allow space for the new, upgraded connector.
- Each poses a visual impact to the historic Sepulveda Dam, which is a Section 4(f) resource. For more information about this visual impact, please reference Section 2.1.8, entitled, “Cultural Resources.”

As discussed in the body of this document, there would be various alternative-specific permanent impacts, as well as, short-term impacts associated with construction such as noise, dust, and access problems around the project site. This document discusses measures to minimize these impacts. Since these construction-related impacts would not be permanent, they are considered below the level of significance as defined by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

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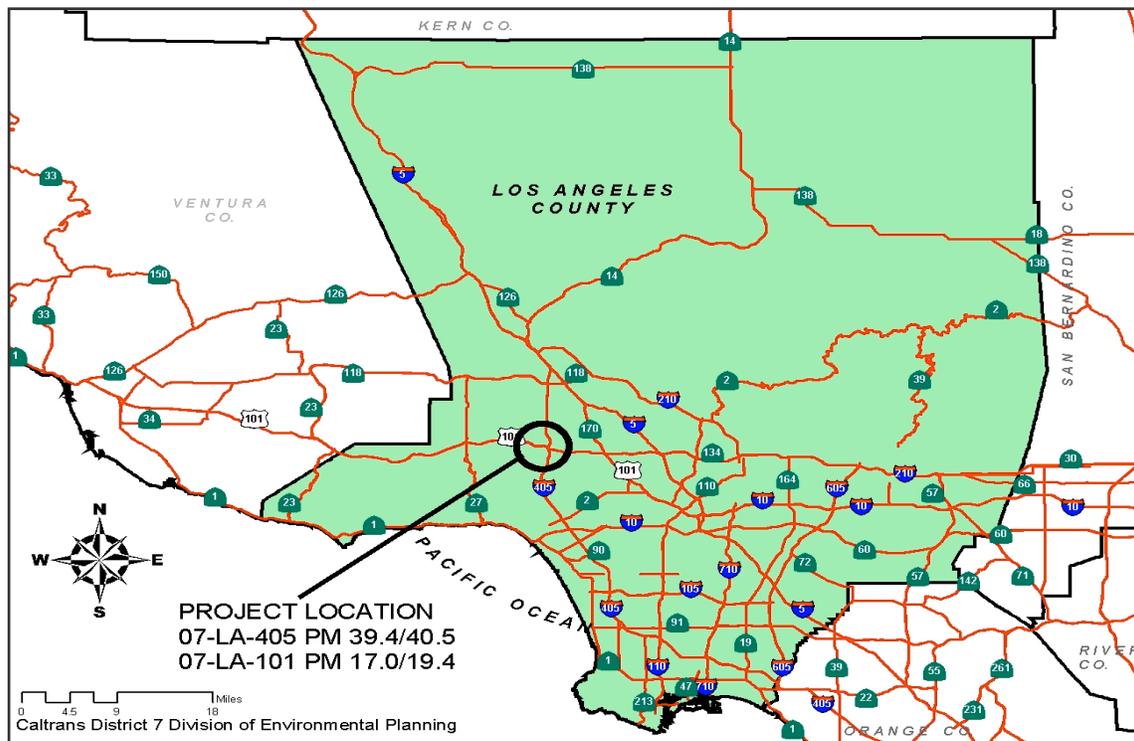
## CHAPTER 1 | PROPOSED PROJECT

### The Southbound Interstate-405 (San Diego Freeway) to the U.S. Highway-101 (Ventura Freeway) Connector Improvement Project

#### 1.1 INTRODUCTION

The Interstate Route-405 (I-405) also known as the San Diego Freeway is an interstate/interregional commuter freeway that originates at Interstate Route-5 (I-5) in the City of Irvine, in Orange County and ends at I-5 near the community of Mission Hills in the City of Los Angeles, the County of Los Angeles. I-405 is part of the National Highway System and is a north/south route that is classified as an Urban Principle Arterial. The US Highway 101 (US-101) corridor is a major north-south route beginning in Downtown Los Angeles area and continues north toward San Francisco through the Counties of Los Angeles and Ventura. Within the study area of this proposed project, this particular stretch of the northbound/southbound (NB/SB) US-101 freeway traverses in an east-west direction, serving the San Fernando Valley community of Sherman Oaks in City of Los Angeles, in the County of Los Angeles.

**Figure 1. Regional Project Location**



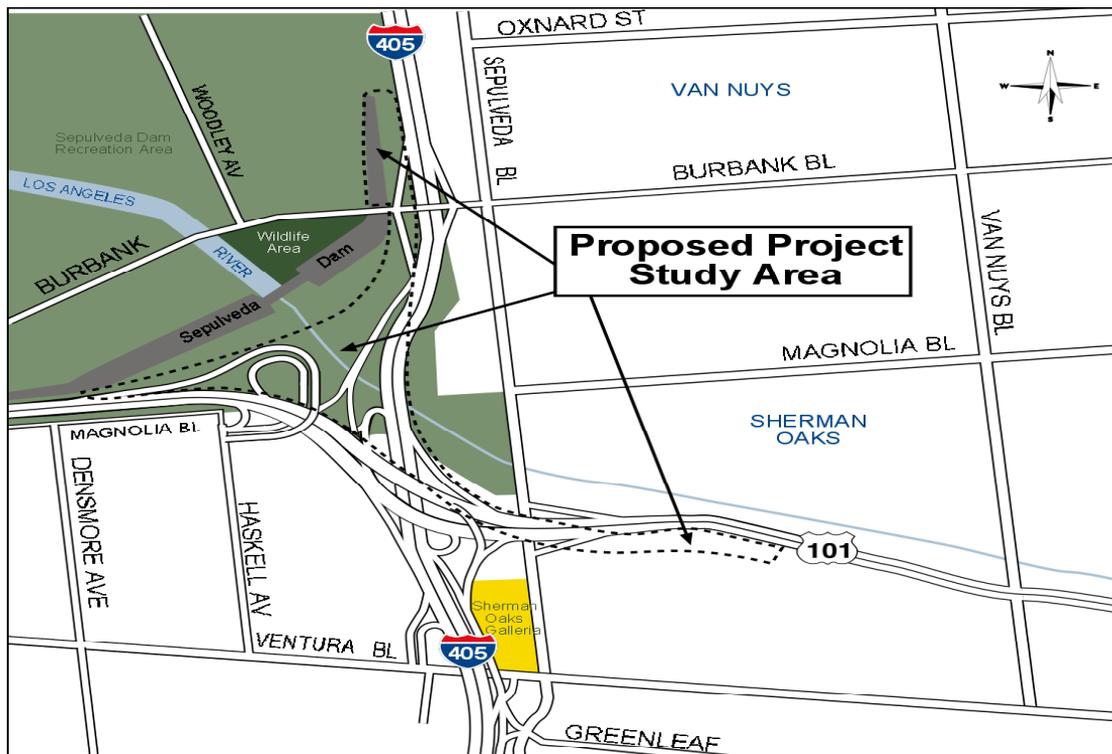
Map created by Sarah Berns/Caltrans District 7 Division of Environmental Planning

The California Department of Transportation (the Department, or “Caltrans”) proposes to replace the existing non-standard connector, from the SB San Diego Freeway (Interstate-405) to the NB Ventura Freeway (U.S. Highway-101), with an upgraded connector. The new 50-mph two-lane connector would replace the current 20-mph single-lane connector. This would be accomplished by constructing a new, fly-over bridge structure crossing over the spillway of the Sepulveda Dam. Initially, Caltrans considered nine (9) project alternatives, eight (8) of which were variations on this connector improvement proposal: the No-Build Alternative, Build Alternatives 1-4, and Build

Alternatives A-D. At the time of circulation of the draft environmental document, Alternative 4, and Alternatives A-D were rejected, and four (4) alternatives remained under consideration; the No-Build Alternative, and Alternatives 1-3. **As of June 2, 2008, Alternative 1 has formally been selected as the “Preferred Alternative” that Caltrans intends to implement, and the No-Build and Alternatives 2 and 3 have since been rejected and eliminated from further consideration.**

The proposed project was initiated by U.S. Congressman Brad Sherman and has the support of other elected officials. At this time, this project is programmed only through the Project Approval/Environmental Document [PA/ED] phase (the current phase). There is currently no funding programmed for the construction of this proposed project. If approved, the project will be funded from the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) and the Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP).

**Figure 2. Proposed Project Study Area**



## 1.2 THE PROPOSED PROJECT: PURPOSE AND NEED

The existing non-standard connector experiences extensive congestion, delays, and queue lengths throughout the day. The purpose of the project is to improve safety, operation, capacity, and traffic flow through the interchange by replacing the existing 20-mph single-lane connector, with a new 50-mph two-lane connector.

### 1.2.1 DISCUSSION OF PURPOSE

The Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG), along with the Offices of Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa and U.S. Congressman Brad Sherman have identified this interchange as in need of improvement to relieve congestion and improve safety, operation, capacity, and traffic flow.

The I-405/US-101 interchange is critical to the effective operation of the entire freeway system in the San Fernando Valley and the Los Angeles region as a whole. The SB I-405 to the NB US-101 connector is considered one of the busiest in the nation. The purpose of this project is to:

- To transfer through-vehicle trips to the regional highway system
- To provide congestion relief in order to improve traffic flow
- To provide a balanced circulation system and reduce out of direction travel
- To improve the operational and safety design to meet current standards to the greatest extent possible
- To enhance the safety throughout the project area while minimizing environmental and socioeconomic impacts

The following discussion summarizes the present and future conditions of the existing I-405/US-101 project area that constitutes the need for action. Several project alternatives have been developed to meet the purpose and need. If no improvements are made, the I-405/US-101 project area will continue as a “bottleneck” condition during peak hour traffic.

**Improvements to Safety, Operation, Capacity, and Traffic Flow.** In the existing condition, the SB I-405 to NB US-101 connector is considered to be one of the busiest in the world, and experiences heavy congestion, long delays, and high accident rates. Undesirable conditions on the SB I-405 freeway in the vicinity of the US-101 connector are attributable to a number of factors, including high volumes, low ramp design speed, and limited ramp capacity. All of the proposed build alternatives result in improved conditions on the freeway mainline, and produce similar operational improvements. The existing single-lane connector from SB I-405 to NB US-101 has a sharp, non-conventional curve with a design speed of 20 miles-per-hour. Replacing the existing connector with a two-lane, 50 mile-per-hour ramp is expected to improve flow through the area and reduce the spillback from the ramp queue on to the I-405 freeway mainline. This connector improvement is included in all of the proposed alternatives.

A weaving segment is a length of highway over which traffic streams cross paths through lane-changing maneuvers, formed between merge and diverge points. In all build alternatives, the new configuration would eradicate the weaving segment between the existing Burbank Boulevard on-ramp and the US-101 connector diverge. Weaving areas are attributable to significant disruption in traffic flow, particularly with high metering volumes, as opposing movements compete for merge space. Elimination of the weaving segment will provide improved average speed and level of service, as well as enhance safety, operation, capacity, and flow along the SB I-405 freeway in this area.

**1.2.2 DISCUSSION OF NEED**

The I-405 freeway carries an average of 115,000 to 160,000 vehicles per day in the vicinity of the Sepulveda Basin, and the US-101 carries an average of 160,000 to 165,000 vehicles per day in this area. The connector between the SB I-405 freeway and the US-101 carries over 50,000 vehicles per day, with just over half of those vehicles heading to the NB US-101 freeway and the remaining heading to SB US-101. The existing connector is a non-standard, single-lane structure with an operational speed of 20 miles-per-hour, and the facility is not sufficient to handle the traffic demand. As previously mentioned, vehicles form a queue at this location that frequently backs up onto the I-405 mainline, with a weaving segment between the existing Burbank Boulevard on-ramp and the US-101 connector diverge that contributes to high accident rates.

**Accident Rates at Interchange versus the State Average.** Accident data and three-year average accident rates for segments of I-405 and US-101 within the project study area are summarized in Table 1 below. The following rates are derived from the Traffic Accident Surveillance and Analysis System (TASAS) database from July 1, 2004 to June 30, 2007.

**Table 1. Summary of Accident Rate Data within Project Limits**

Segment Description	Total Number of Accidents	Actual Accident Rates (per million vehicle miles)		State Average Accident Rates (per million vehicle miles)		Times above state average for accidents that "at least" involved injuries (F+I)	% above state average for All Reported Accidents
		F+I	All Reported Accidents	F+I	All Reported Accidents		
Southbound I-405 Mainline (PM 39.5-40.28)	142.00	0.38	1.45	0.34	1.09	1.10	33.00
Burbank Boulevard On-Ramp to Southbound I-405 (PM 40.081)	11.00	0.10	1.12	0.32	0.80	0.00	40.00
Southbound I-405 to US-101 Connector (PM 39.754)	34.00	0.22	0.63	0.06	0.25	3.70	152.00

Source: Caltrans TASAS (Traffic Accident Surveillance and Analysis System), Table B Rates Summary

Notes: F = Fatal  
 I = Injury  
 F+I = Accidents involving either a fatality or injury  
 PM = Post Mile

According to TASAS Selective Record Data, (142) accidents occurred on the SB I-405 mainline within the project limits. From the total of (142) accidents, 55.6 percent were rear end collisions, 33.1 percent were sideswipes, 9.2 percent were object collisions and the remaining involved broadsides or overturns. The primary collision factor for 40.8 percent of all accidents was speeding, and 11.3 percent involved improper turns. The total accident rate record for the time reveals actual accident rates higher than the state average for similar facilities [1.45 accidents per million vehicle miles (MVM) compared to state averages of 1.09 accidents per MVM respectively]. Implementation Alternative 1 will aid in the reduction of these accident rates, through an elimination of weaving segments and an improvement of traffic flow through the interchange .

### Capacity, Transportation Demand, and Safety

**Existing Access and Freeway Connector Capacity and Volume.** A Traffic Analysis Report (IBI Group, 2007) was prepared that analyzed (19) access and freeway connector ramps in the project area. The SB I-405 connector ramp to the NB US-101 was flagged as it currently operates at capacity, and will likely require improvements as travel demand and congestion is only expected to increase in the coming years. The existing connector is designed to carry a capacity of 1,500 vehicles per hour (veh/hr), but AM peak period volume through the connector exceeds that number at 1,792 veh/hr, and PM peak is approaching capacity at 1,374 veh/hr. If no improvements are made to this interchange, volume is projected to approach 2,073 veh/hr during the AM peak, and 1,590 veh/hr during the PM peak in the year 2015. Year 2030 projections show AM peak volumes approaching 2,580 veh/hr and PM peak volumes approaching 1,979 veh/hr.

**Existing Freeway Mainline – Level of Service (LOS) in the Project Area.** Basic freeway segments within the study area have been analyzed using capacity and Level of Service (LOS) concepts from the Highway Capacity Manual (HCM) 2000, Chapter 23 – Basic Freeway Segments. The measure used to provide an estimate of level of service is density, where density is calculated from the average vehicle flow rate per lane and the average speed. Level of Service (LOS) thresholds for basic freeway segments are summarized in Figure 3.

Figure 3. Level of Service Thresholds for Freeways

<b>LEVELS OF SERVICE</b> for Freeways			
Level of Service	Flow Conditions	Operating Speed (mph)	Technical Descriptions
<b>A</b>		70	Highest quality of service. Traffic flows freely with little or no restrictions on speed or maneuverability. <b>No delays</b>
<b>B</b>		70	Traffic is stable and flows freely. The ability to maneuver in traffic is only slightly restricted. <b>No delays</b>
<b>C</b>		67	Few restrictions on speed. Freedom to maneuver is restricted. Drivers must be more careful making lane changes. <b>Minimal delays</b>
<b>D</b>		62	Speeds decline slightly and density increases. Freedom to maneuver is noticeably limited. <b>Minimal delays</b>
<b>E</b>		53	Vehicles are closely spaced, with little room to maneuver. Driver comfort is poor. <b>Significant delays</b>
<b>F</b>		<53	Very congested traffic with traffic jams, especially in areas where vehicles have to merge. <b>Considerable delays</b>

Source: Highway Capacity Manual (HCM) 2000, Chapter 23 – Basic Freeway Segments

**Table 2. Level of Service and Density**

LOS	Density Range (pc/mi/ln)
A	0-11
B	>11-18
C	>18-26
D	>26-35
E	>35-45
F	>45

Source: Highway Capacity Manual (HCM) 2000, Chapter 23 – Basic Freeway Segments  
 Pc/mi/ln = passenger cars per mile, per lane

Failure, breakdown, congestion, and LOS F occur when queues begin to form on the freeway. Density—expressed as pc/mi/ln, or passenger cars per mile, per lane—tends to increase sharply within the queue and may be considerably higher than the maximum density value listed above. The results of study area freeway mainline facilities are summarized in Tables, 3, 4, and 5.

**Table 3. Southbound I-405 Mainline LOS and Density**

Segment Description	Segment Type	Lanes	AM Peak		PM Peak	
			Density (pc/mi/ln)	LOS	Density (pc/mi/ln)	LOS
North of Victory Blvd	Basic	5	32.3	D	31.0	D
From Victory to Burbank Blvd	Basic	5	35.1	E	33.4	D
Burbank Blvd Overcrossing	Basic	5	34.4	D	31.5	D
South of US-101 connector	Basic	4	55.7	F	51.0	F
Below US-101 facility	Basic	4	71.6	F	66.5	F

Note: Level of Service (LOS) based on HCM 2000 analysis methodology.  
 Pc/mi/ln = passenger cars per mile per lane

**Table 4. Northbound US-101 Mainline LOS and Density**

Segment Description	Segment Type	Lanes	AM Peak		PM Peak	
			Density (pc/mi/ln)	LOS	Density (pc/mi/ln)	LOS
Van Nuys Blvd under-crossing	Basic	5	50.5	F	52.7	F
Van Nuys Blvd to Sepulveda Blvd	Basic	6	47.6	F	50.2	F
Sepulveda Blvd to NB-405 connector	Basic	5	57.2	F	60.3	F
Northbound US-101	Basic	4	74.9	F	79.0	F
NB-101 over I-405 freeway structure	Basic	6	56.3	F	59.4	F
Between Haskell Ave off-ramp and on-ramp	Basic	6	53.4	F	62.0	F
Haskell Ave to Hayvenhurst Ave	Basic	6	43.6	E	50.6	F
Hayvenhurst Ave to Balboa Blvd	Basic	5	47.9	F	57.3	F
Balboa Blvd under-crossing	Basic	5	47.9	F	57.3	F
North of Balboa Blvd	Basic	5	53.0	F	62.7	F

Note: Level of Service (LOS) based on HCM 2000 analysis methodology.  
 Pc/mi/ln = passenger cars per mile per lane

**Table 5. Southbound US-101 Mainline LOS and Density**

Segment Description	Segment Type	Lanes	AM Peak		PM Peak	
			Density (pc/mi/ln)	LOS	Density (pc/mi/ln)	LOS
Balboa Blvd under-crossing	Basic	5	55.3	F	54.4	F
Balboa Blvd to Hayvenhurst Ave	Basic	5	64.4	F	63.0	F
Hayvenhurst Ave to Haskell Ave	Basic	6	51.1	F	50.9	F
Southbound US-101	Basic	6	51.1	F	50.9	F
SB-101 over I-405 freeway structure	Basic	4	54.6	F	60.9	F
SB-101 over Sepulveda Blvd	Basic	7	48.1	F	38.5	E
Auxiliary lane segment	Basic	7	43.3	E	36.1	E
Sepulveda Blvd to Van Nuys Blvd	Basic	6	50.5	F	42.1	E

Note: Level of Service (LOS) based on HCM 2000 analysis methodology.  
 Pc/mi/ln = passenger cars per mile per lane

For a more in-depth discussion of traffic data within the project study area, please reference Section 2.1.5, entitled “Traffic and Transportation/Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities.”

### 1.2.3 SOCIAL DEMANDS AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

This project will enhance public safety and security through the improvement of driving conditions with a complementary reduction in accidents, and will also enhance environmental conditions through an improvement of traffic flow (see Section 2.1.5) and a reduction of auto emissions (see Section 2.2.6). Additionally, improvements in the transportation infrastructure at the I-405/ US-101 interchange will support continued economic vitality in the surrounding communities by improving conditions for the movement of people and goods. Overall, the project is anticipated to improve mobility and accessibility to one of the world’s most congested interchanges, and serve as a benefit to the surrounding communities and future land use goals.

**The Project Within the Context of the Transportation System, Existing Land Use Planning, and Regional Growth.** The City of Los Angeles Department of City Planning has developed the Transportation Element of the general plan in conjunction with the 35 communities that make up the city planning area. The purpose of the transportation element is to present a guide for further development of a citywide transportation system which provides for the efficient movement of people and goods (City of Los Angeles 2007f). It also recognizes that primary emphasis must be placed on maximizing the efficiency of existing and proposed transportation infrastructure, in which the SB I-405 to US-101 Connector Improvement Project is completely consistent with.

Accommodation of future growth is also a high priority for the City of Los Angeles (growth projections are referenced later in the Growth section of this document). While accommodating future residential growth is a high priority, ensuring quality of life in vibrant and livable neighborhoods is just as important. Improving mainline flows at the I-405/US-101 interchange may assist in reducing the excessive amount of traffic spill onto city streets and districts, and aid in achieving city goals in improving circulation in the surrounding neighborhoods; creating safer, pedestrian-oriented environments; and accommodating new growth.

In California, transportation projects are rarely designed to encourage or facilitate growth, rather, most Caltrans capacity-increasing projects are proposed as a response to traffic congestion that is a result of growth that has already occurred or will soon occur. Because of the highly urbanized setting in the project location, and a predominantly built-out environment, this project does not have the potential to adversely induce growth beyond existing regional growth projections. For a more in-depth discussion of growth, please reference Section 2.1.2 of this document, entitled “Growth.”

**Projected Land Use Planning Changes in the Area.** The project study area is primarily a built-out environment with limited possibilities in land use zoning changes and little room for geometrical improvements at or near the proposed connector improvement location. For a more in depth discussion on land use planning within the project study area, please reference Section 2.1.1 of this document, entitled “Land Use and Planning.”

#### **1.2.4 IS THE PROPOSED PROJECT A COMPONENT OF A LARGER PROJECT?**

No. The proposed project is a stand-alone project intended to improve the safety, operation, capacity, and flow of southbound I-405 traffic through the interchange. This project is independent of other Caltrans projects on the I-405 and its Need and Purpose cannot be fulfilled by any other Caltrans project. Furthermore, the proposed project is in no way dependent on whether other Caltrans projects on the I-405 are implemented prior or subsequent to the implementation of this project. The proposed project begins on the southbound I-405 just north of Burbank Boulevard, and ends at the U.S.-101. This environmental document studies the entire project area, and is in no way dependent on the environmental document or mitigation proposals of any other project. Lastly, the proposed project does not restrict consideration of alternatives for other reasonably foreseeable transportation improvements.

Therefore, based on the above and pursuant to 23 CFR 771.111(f), this project has independent utility and logical termini.

## **Other Caltrans Improvement Projects on Interstate-405**

### **EA 19590 | Southbound Interstate 405 Carpool Lane**

Mile Marker: 29.2/32.1

From I-10/I-405 Interchange to Waterford Street

Add auxiliary lane, add carpool lane

Construction: 4/2005-9/2008

### **EA 1667U | Southbound Interstate 405 Carpool Lane**

Mile Marker: 31.9/39.7

From Waterford Street to I-405/US-101 Interchange

Construct southbound carpool lane

Construction completed

### **EA 19100 | Northbound Interstate 405 Auxiliary Lane**

Mile Marker 37.0/39.0

Add auxiliary lane from Mulholland Drive

Construction completed

### **EA 20120 | Northbound Interstate 405 Gap Closure**

Mile Marker : 38.7/39.4

Carpool gap closure with structure

Construction: 3/2005-8/2008

### **EA 19130 | Northbound Interstate 405 to Southbound US Route 101 Widening**

Mile Marker: 39.0/39.4

Widen northbound I-405 to southbound US-101 connector

Construction completed

### **EA 19962 | Northbound Interstate 405 Carpool Lane**

Mile Marker: 38.8/40.1

Construct carpool lane from Greenleaf to Burbank Boulevard

Construction completed

### **EA 12030 | Northbound Interstate 405 Carpool Lane**

Mile Marker: 17.14

Construct carpool lane from National Boulevard to Greenleaf Street

Construction: 12/2008-4/2013

### **EA 1178U | Southbound & Northbound Interstate 405 Carpool Lane**

Mile Marker: 25.9/29.5

Construct carpool lane from Route 90 to Interstate 10

Construction: 10/2004-3/2010

### 1.3 THE PROPOSED PROJECT: PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Within the limits of the proposed project, the SB I-405 freeway consists of one High-Occupancy Vehicle lane (HOV), four mixed-flow lanes (MFL), one auxiliary lane from Burbank Blvd to the US-101 connector and the Burbank Blvd on-ramp. There is approximately 1500 feet of weaving area between the Burbank Blvd. on-ramp and the US-101 connector to allow drivers to merge from SB I-405 to the US-101 connectors and from Burbank Blvd on-ramp to the SB I-405 mainline freeway. This is a major bottleneck as previously discussed. The purpose of the project is to upgrade the SB I-405 connector to the NB US-101 freeway to current design standards to improve safety and correct operational problems incurred as a result of the traffic queues formed by slow moving vehicles and a curve with an operational speed of 20 miles-per-hour.

This section describes the design alternatives that were developed by a multi-disciplinary team to achieve the project purpose and need while avoiding or minimizing environmental impacts. Initially, Caltrans considered nine (9) project alternatives: the No-Build Alternative, Build Alternatives 1-4, and Alternatives A-D. At the time of circulation of the draft environmental document, Alternative 4, and Alternatives A-D had already been rejected, and therefore four (4) alternatives remained under consideration; the No-Build Alternative, and Alternatives 1-3. As of June 2, 2008, Alternative 1 has formally been selected as the Preferred Alternative that Caltrans intends to implement, and the No-Build and Alternatives 2 and 3 have since been rejected and eliminated from further consideration. This section will elaborate on the process and discussion that led to the formal selection of Alternative 1 as the build-alternative Caltrans intends to implement.

The three "Build" Alternatives (1, 2 and 3) that were considered at the time of circulation of the draft environmental document each shared the following common features:

- Replacing the existing 20 mph single-lane connector from the SB I-405 to the NB U.S.-101 with a new 50 mph two-lane connector bridge that encroaches upon and spans over the spillway of the Sepulveda Dam
- Eliminating the existing erratic and conflicting traffic weaving patterns between the Burbank Blvd on-ramp and the SB I-405 mainline as well as the traffic weaving patterns with SB I-405 mainline traffic attempting to access the US-101 connectors
- Realignment and reconstruction of the Burbank Boulevard on-ramp to the SB I-405 and/or the US-101
- Realignment and reconstruction of the current U.S. Army Corps of Engineers service road (northwest side of the interchange) for the operation and maintenance of the Sepulveda Dam
- Each poses an adverse impact to the historic Sepulveda Dam, which is a Section 4(f) resource

After the EA/IS public circulation period ended on May 28, 2008, the Department considered all formal comments received, formally selected Alternative 1 as the Preferred Alternative, and made a final determination on the project's effect on the environment. In accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the Department has prepared a Negative Declaration (ND). As assigned by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), the Department has also determined that the action will not significantly impact the environment, and has issued a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

## **Summary of Decision-Making Process and “Only Practicable Finding” Pursuant to Executive Order 11990**

Caltrans carefully weighed:

- the entire public comment record
- all available traffic data
- all associated engineering data
- and of course, all environmental impact data

Caltrans has selected Alternative 1 as the Preferred Alternative, which is not only the Least Environmentally Damaging Practicable Alternative (LEDPA), but the only practicable alternative pursuant to Executive Order 11988—Floodplain Management (more details on the determination of the LEDPA process can be found in Section 2.3.2, entitled, “Wetlands and Other Waters). The Preferred Alternative is the least environmentally disruptive build alternative possible, given the numerous environmental, community, right-of-way, and engineering constraints. There exists no other practicable alternative, no other alternative that is less environmentally damaging, less disruptive to the community, or more reasonable and prudent than Alternative 1 because:

- Alternative 1 has the smallest project impact footprint of any possible build alternative, and would result in the least overall harm
- Alternative 1 would result in, by far, the least biological impacts of any reasonable and prudent alternative
- Alternative 1 would result in the least residential right-of-way and community impacts of any possible alternative
- Alternative 1 would result in the best freeway operational improvement, thereby achieving the best congestion relief, and best commute savings as vehicles on the southbound I-405 freeway would travel quicker and more efficiently through the busiest interchange in the nation
- Caltrans and the Los Angeles Department of Transportation (LADOT) have coordinated extensively, and successfully identified mitigation to the local city street impacts posed by Alternative 1

The Executive Order for the Protection of Wetlands (E.O. 11990) regulates the activities of federal agencies with regard to wetlands. Essentially, this executive order states that a federal agency, such as the Federal Highway Administration, cannot undertake or provide assistance for new construction located in wetlands unless the head of the agency finds: 1) that there is no practicable alternative to the construction and 2) the proposed project includes all practicable measures to minimize harm.

## **ALTERNATIVE 1 (THE PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE)**

This alternative calls for a new, elevated, connector bridge structure that spans over the spillway of the Sepulveda Dam, from the SB I-405 to the NB U.S.-101. It will eliminate the sharp turn radius curve of the existing connector, thereby accomplishing the project's Need and Purpose.

The Burbank Boulevard on-ramp to the SB I-405 would need to be reconstructed to pass beneath the new connector structure. Furthermore, to implement this new Burbank Boulevard on-ramp structure, both of the existing connectors from the SB I-405 to the U.S.-101 would need to be removed, and traffic from Burbank Boulevard would lose access to both directions of the U.S.-101.

Additionally, with both of the existing connectors from the SB I-405 to the U.S.-101 requiring removal, this alternative will also require the construction of a new connector from the SB I-405 to the SB U.S.-101, in order to maintain that particular access.

### **PROS/CONS Summary**

#### **These are the pros of Alternative 1:**

- Of the "Build" alternatives, this proposal has the smallest impact footprint
- This alternative requires no residential right-of-way acquisition
- This alternative requires no encroachment onto the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Refuge within the Sepulveda Flood Control Basin

#### **These are the cons of Alternative 1:**

- Loss of access from Burbank Boulevard to the U.S.-101
- Due to the loss of access, this alternative increases the traffic congestion to the immediately adjacent City of Los Angeles streets and intersections
- For this reason, the City of Los Angeles Department of Transportation is opposed to this alternative

### **Project Alternative Cost Estimates:**

These are the estimates for costs associated with this alternative only, which are subject to change and revision:

- Roadway Items: \$34,900,000
- Structure Items: \$46,300,000
- Right-of-Way Cost: \$200,000
- Mitigation Cost: \$5,000,000

### **Size and Location of Impact Area/Volume:**

The Preferred Alternative will require an additional 5.12 acres of highway easement adjacent to existing facilities. 10.20 acres of temporary construction easement will be required for construction staging, storage of equipment, and other related activities. The new, elevated structure in the design of this alternative will occupy approximately 3.08 acres on existing USACE-managed land. The footings that support the new, elevated structure will occupy approximately 0.45 acres of a permanent easement.

Encroachment on the reservoir will only occur on the south end of the Sepulveda Dam, and occupy approximately 49,014 ft<sup>3</sup>. Additionally, the new structure will occupy 1.07 acres of the upstream dam embankment and 0.59 acres of fill. The length and width of the structure that spans over the dam will be 550 and 42 feet, respectively. Dimensions of the structure that encroach into the spillway will be 1660 feet in length, with varying widths from 42 to 14 feet. 1670 feet of USACE service road will be realigned due to the connector encroachment, with all 1670 feet of the realigned road on structure.

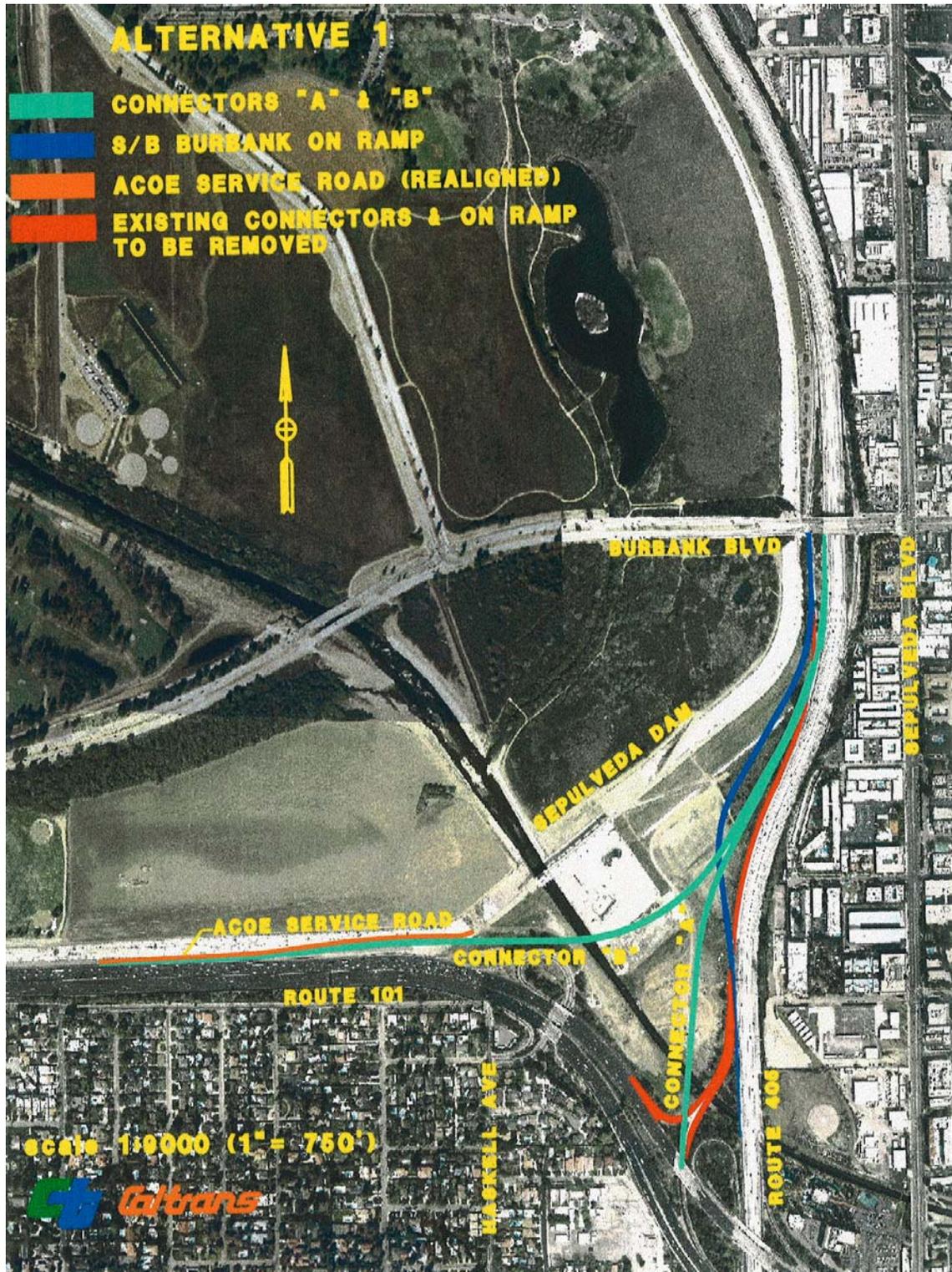
**Delay Cost Analysis for the No-Build Condition (2015) versus Alternative 1:**

A delay cost analysis has been performed by the Division of Operations for the No-Build Condition in the year 2015 and the selection and construction of Alternative 1. By 2015 and based on the foregoing discussion, the annual savings in travel delay cost associated with Alternative 1 over the No-Build Condition is anticipated to be approximately \$38.3 million/year. It is obvious from this analysis that Alternative 1 provides the highest travel delay savings over the other alternatives.

**Table 6. Identification and Justification of the Preferred Alternative**

Balancing Factors	NO BUILD Alternative	Alternative 1	Alternative 2	Alternative 3	Preferred Alternative: ALTERNATIVE 1
Project Purpose and Need	FAILS to meet the project Purpose and Need	BEST meets the project Purpose and Need	Meets the Purpose and Need, but fails to remove the weaving segment on the SB I-405	Meets the Purpose and Need, but fails to remove the weaving segment on the SB I-405	Alternative 1 is the Preferred because it BEST meets the project Purpose and Need
Encroachment Upon the Floodplain and Flood Control Basin	ZERO Encroachment	Least Encroachment of the Build Alternatives: L=1660ft W=42ft	Same as Alternative 1, plus an additional encroachment of L=2,850ft W=500ft	Same as Alternative 1, plus an additional encroachment of L=2,880ft W=560ft	Alternative 1 is the least encroaching Build Alternative
Biological Impacts	ZERO Biological Impacts	Least Biological Impacts of the Build Alternatives because it does not encroach upon the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve	Encroaches upon the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve: L=2,850ft W=500ft	Encroaches upon the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve: L=2,880ft W=560ft	Alternative 1 is the least biologically disruptive Build Alternative
Encroachment Upon the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve	ZERO Encroachment	ZERO Encroachment	An encroachment upon the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve of: L=2,850ft W=500ft	An encroachment upon the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve of L=2,880ft W=560ft	Alternative 1 poses zero encroachment upon the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve
Least Impact to Section 4(f) Resources	ZERO Impacts to Section 4(f) Resources	Impacts ONE Section 4(f) Resource: the Sepulveda Dam	Impacts TWO Section 4(f) Resources: the Sepulveda Dam and the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve	Impacts TWO Section 4(f) Resources: the Sepulveda Dam and the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve	Alternative 1 poses the least impacts to Section 4(f) Resources, of the Build Alternatives
Project Impact Footprint (right-of-way encroachment upon USACE land)	ZERO Impact Footprint	Smallest Impact Footprint of the Build Alternatives: L=1660ft W=42ft	Same as Alternative 1, plus an encroachment upon the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve of: L=2,850ft W=500ft	Same as Alternative 1, plus an encroachment upon the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve of: L=2,880ft W=560ft	Alternative 1 has the smallest impact footprint, of the Build Alternatives
Public Comment Record	Some support	Received the most support	By far the most opposition	By far the most opposition	Alternative 1 received the most support
Cost (Socioeconomic Considerations)	Not a factor: \$0	Not a factor: \$112,320,000	Not a factor: \$152,100,000	Not a factor: \$115,440,000	Not a factor: Alternative 1 is the least expensive Build Alternative

Figure 4. Alternative 1 Aerial Map



### 1.3.1 THE THREE (3) RECENTLY REJECTED ALTERNATIVES

#### THE REJECTED “NO-BUILD” ALTERNATIVE

The “No Build” or “Do Nothing” alternative would have called for the existing connector, from the SB I-405 to the NB U.S.-101, to remain as is. The No-Build alternative would have done nothing to improve the present day, or projected congestion and related problems, thereby leading to a progressive deterioration of the issues identified in the Purpose and Need of this project. Therefore, the Purposed and Need of this project would have remained unaddressed and its objectives unrealized.

#### REJECTED ALTERNATIVE 2

Like Alternative 1, this alternative would have called for a new, elevated, connector bridge structure spanning over the spillway of the Sepulveda Dam, from the SB I-405 to the NB U.S.-101. However, unlike Alternative 1, this alternative would have maintained access from Burbank Boulevard to the U.S.-101 via the construction of a constricted loop on-ramp, but at the cost of encroaching onto the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Refuge (within the flood control basin). The structure would have been located immediately north of Burbank Boulevard, and west of the I-405.

The constricted on-ramp loop design would have also required the reconstruction of the Burbank Boulevard/I-405 over-crossing bridge would have been required in order to meet vertical clearance requirements. This would have resulted in an additional increase in temporary construction-related traffic congestion. At the same time, this alternative would not have required the removal of the existing connector from the SB I-405 to the SB U.S.-101 and would not have carried the added burden of constructing a new connector structure.

#### PROS/CONS Summary

##### These were the pros of Alternative 2:

- This alternative would have retained access from Burbank Boulevard to the U.S.-101
- This alternative would not have required any residential right-of-way acquisition
- The constricted loop on-ramp design would have minimized encroachment onto the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Refuge in comparison to the loop radius design specified in Alternative 3

##### These were the cons of Alternative 2:

- This alternative would have required an encroachment onto the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Refuge. For this reason, many environmental groups and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers have consistently been opposed to this alternative
- Due to the constricted loop on-ramp design, a reconstruction of the existing Burbank Boulevard/I-405 over-crossing bridge would have been required, resulting in an increase in temporary construction related traffic congestion

#### Project Alternative Cost Estimates:

The following cost estimates are associated with this alternative only. All cost estimates are subject to change and revision, but there is no need to pursue this further as this alternative has recently been rejected.

- Roadway Items: \$42,700,000
- Structure Items: \$69,100,000
- Right-of-Way Cost: \$200,000
- Mitigation Cost: \$5,000,000

**Size and Location of Impact Area/Volume:**

This alternative would have occupied approximately 0.28 Acres of the spillway outlet area, 1.07 acres of the upstream dam embankment, 0.79 acres of footing easement, 0.59 acres of fill, 0.16 acres of the downstream embankment into the basin north of Burbank Boulevard, and 76,950 ft<sup>3</sup> of the dam reservoir. The south end (49,014 ft<sup>3</sup>) and northeast section (27,936 ft<sup>3</sup>) of the Sepulveda Dam would have been affected. Length and width of the structure on the dam would have totaled 550 and 41 feet, respectively. The encroachment of the new connector structures onto the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Refuge would have been 2,850 feet long by 500 feet wide, which is approximately 7% of the 225-acre Wildlife Reserve.

**Delay Cost Analysis for the No-Build Condition (2015) versus Alternative 2:**

A delay cost analysis was performed by the Division of Operations for the No-Build Condition in the year 2015 and the potential selection and construction of Alternative 2. By 2015, the annual savings in travel delay cost associated with Alternative 2 over the No-Build Condition was anticipated to be approximately \$29.4 million/year. While Alternative 1 provides the highest travel delay savings over all other alternatives, Alternative 2 would have provided a better operational level for the freeway system in the vicinity of the project, leading to a relatively substantial amount in travel delay savings.

**Basis for Rejection:** Like Alternative 1, Alternative 2 would have posed an adverse impact to the historic Sepulveda Dam, which is a protected resource pursuant to Section 4(f) of the U.S. Department of Transportation Act. However, unlike Alternative 1, Alternative 2 would have also impacted the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve, which is also a Section 4(f) protected resource. Since Alternative 1 was deemed by CALTRANS to be feasible, prudent, and least harmful in light of the preservation purpose of Section 4(f), Alternative 2 was rejected.

Figure 5. Rejected Alternative 2 Aerial Map



### REJECTED ALTERNATIVE 3

Alternative 3 is identical to Alternative 2, except that this alternative sought to eliminate the need for the reconstruction of the existing Burbank Boulevard/I-405 over-crossing. To accomplish this, the design of the on-ramp loop specified a larger radius, thereby increasing the encroachment onto the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Refuge to 2,880 feet long by 560 feet wide, which is approximately 8% of the 225-acre Wildlife Reserve.

#### PROS/CONS Summary

##### These were the pros of Alternative 3:

- This alternative would have retained access from Burbank Boulevard to the U.S.-101
- This alternative would not have required any residential right-of-way acquisition
- This alternative would not have required a reconstruction of the Burbank Boulevard/I-405 over-crossing as specified in Alternative 2

##### These were the cons of Alternative 3:

- While similar in design to Alternative 2, this alternative would have required an additional 50ft encroachment onto the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Refuge
- Correspondingly, many environmental groups and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers were also strongly opposed to the implementation of this alternative

#### Project Alternative Cost Estimates:

The following cost estimates are associated with this alternative only. All cost estimates are subject to change and revision, but there is no need to pursue further as this alternative has recently been rejected.

- Roadway Items: \$26,400,000
- Structure Items: \$57,300,000
- Right-of-Way Cost: \$100,000
- Mitigation Cost: \$5,000,000

#### Size and Location of Impact Area/Volume:

This alternative would have occupied approximately 0.25 acres of the spillway outlet area, 1.07 acres of the upstream dam embankment, 76,950 ft<sup>3</sup> of the dam reservoir, 0.80 acres of footing easement, 0.59 acres of fill, and 1.90 acres of the downstream embankment into the basin north of Burbank Boulevard. The south end (49,014 ft<sup>3</sup>) and northeast section (27,936 ft<sup>3</sup>) of the Sepulveda Dam would have been affected. The length and width of the structure on the dam would have totaled 550 and 41 feet, respectively. The encroachment of the new connector structures onto the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Refuge would have equaled 2.92 acres of the 225 total acreage (1.30%).

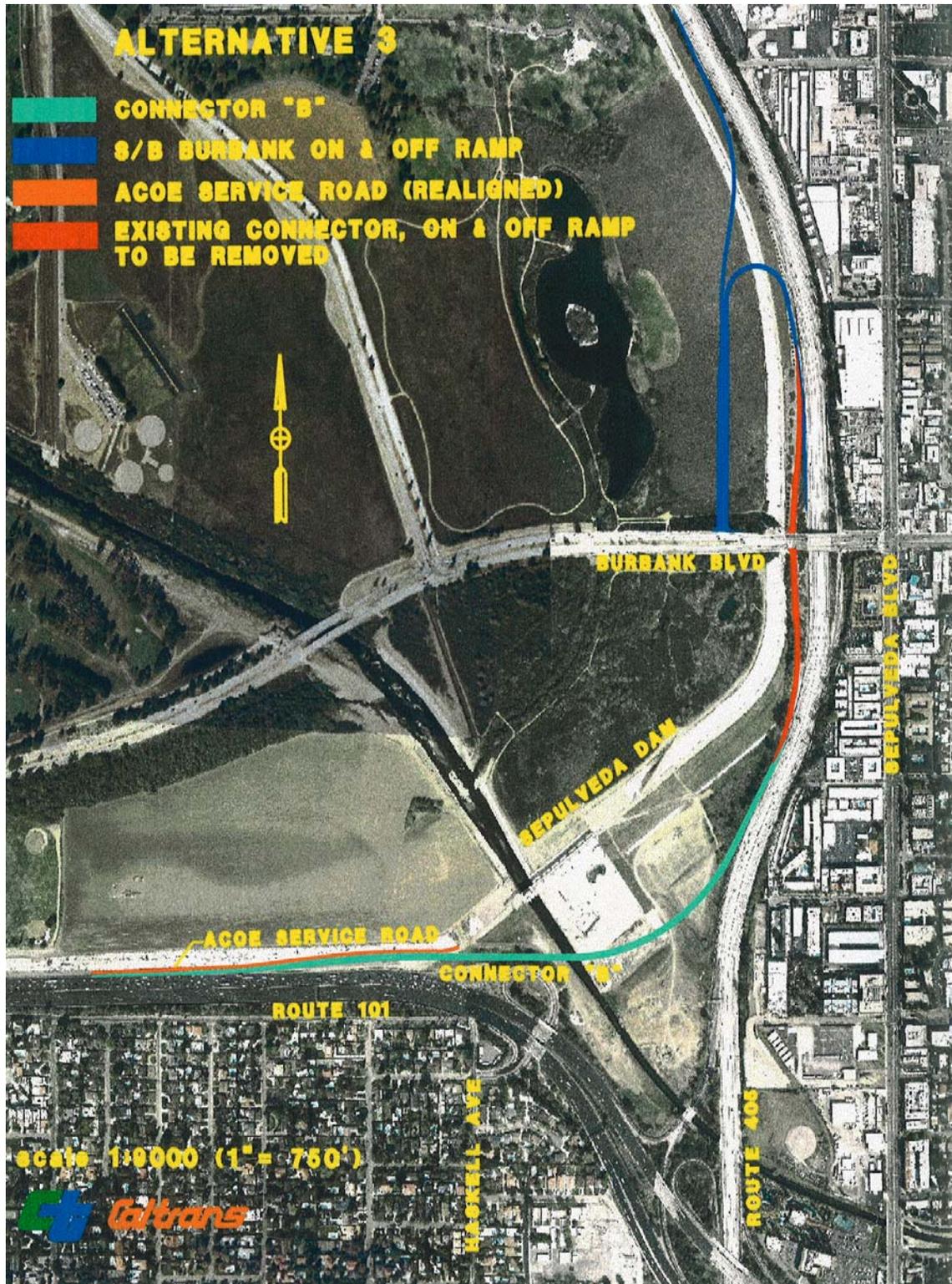
#### Delay Cost Analysis for the No-Build Condition (2015) versus Alternative 3:

A delay cost analysis was performed by the Division of Operations for the No-Build Condition in the year 2015 and the potential selection and construction of Alternative 3. By 2015, the annual savings in travel delay cost associated with Alternative 3 over the No-Build Condition was anticipated to be approximately \$28.4 million/year. While Alternative 1 provides the highest travel delay savings over all other alternatives, Alternative 3—which calls for the reconstruction of the Burbank Boulevard ramps with full standard features—would have represented the best operational improvement to the interchange. Please reference section 2.1.6 for more detailed supporting traffic data.

**Basis for Rejection:** Like Alternative 1, Alternative 3 would have posed an adverse impact to the historic Sepulveda Dam, which is a protected resource pursuant to Section 4(f) of the U.S. Department of Transportation Act. However, unlike Alternative 1, Alternative 3 would have also impacted the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve, which is also a Section 4(f) protected resource.

Since Alternative 1 was deemed by CALTRANS to be feasible, prudent, and the least harmful alternative in light of the preservation purpose of Section 4(f), Alternative 3 was also rejected.

Figure 6. Rejected Alternative 3 Aerial Map



### 1.3.2 THE FIVE (5) PREVIOUSLY REJECTED ALTERNATIVES

#### REJECTED ALTERNATIVE 4

This alternative is similar to Alternative 1, except it sought to completely avoid the impacts posed by Alternative 1, as well as, the impacts posed by Alternatives 2 and 3. Unlike Alternative 1, this alternative would have retained access from Burbank Boulevard to the U.S.-101 by allowing traffic to use a new on-ramp to the SB I-405 (as required by Alternative 1) to access the U.S.-101 via the existing connectors from the SB I-405 to the U.S.-101 (rather than removing these connectors as is required by Alternative 1). This would have been accomplished by constructing the new Burbank Boulevard on-ramp to the SB I-405 so that it would also connect with the existing connectors at its terminus (unlike Alternative 1).

Since this alternative would have retained access to the U.S.-101 from Burbank Boulevard, it would not require an encroachment upon the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Refuge (as is required by Alternatives 2 and 3). However, the consequence of not closing and removing the existing connectors (as required by Alternative 1) is that this alternative would not only require the construction of a new connector from the SB I-405 to the SB U.S.-101, but also face the added challenge/burden of having to “go around” the existing connectors, and therefore, would have to be more than five times as long as the same connector required per Alternative 1. Consequently, this would have required (3) full and (10) partial right-of-way acquisitions of residential property on the southeast side of the interchange.

#### PROS/CONS Summary

##### These were the pros of Alternative 4:

- This alternative would have retained access from Burbank Boulevard to the U.S.-101
- This alternative would not have required an encroachment upon the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Refuge
- Prior to its elimination, this alternative was highly favored because: a) Unlike Alternative 1, Alternative 4 would have maintained access to the U.S.-101 from Burbank Boulevard, and thereby would have avoided adverse impacts to the adjacent City streets, and b) Unlike Alternatives 2 and 3, Alternative 4 would have required the improvement of BOTH SB I-405 Connectors to the U.S.-101

##### These were the cons of Alternative 4:

- Prior to its elimination, this alternative had the largest impact footprint of the four “Build” alternatives
- This alternative would have posed a residential right-of-way impact to residents of the City of Los Angeles who reside on the southeast side of the interchange
- The City of Los Angeles Department of Transportation is opposed to this alternative
- This alternative would have provided the least amount of travel delay savings and freeway operation improvement

#### Project Alternative Cost Estimates:

The following cost estimates are associated with this alternative only. All cost estimates are subject to change and revision, but there is no need to pursue further as this alternative has previously been rejected.

- Roadway Items: \$56,235,672
- Structure Items: \$83,834,200
- Right-of-Way Cost: \$5,747,200
- Mitigation Cost: \$5,000,000

**Size and Location of Impact Area/Volume:**

This alternative would have occupied approximately 5.04 acres of the spillway outlet area, 0.45 acres of permanent footing easement and 0.59 acres of fill, in addition to 0.98 acres of the upstream dam embankment, and 49,014 ft<sup>3</sup> of the dam reservoir. The dam reservoir would have been affected only on the south end of the Sepulveda Dam. Length and width of the structure on the dam would have measured 550 and 41 feet, respectively.

**Delay Cost Analysis for the No-Build Condition (2015) versus Alternative 4:**

A delay cost analysis was performed by the Division of Operations for the No-Build Condition in the year 2015 and the selection and construction of Alternative 4. By 2015 and based on the foregoing discussion, the annual savings in travel delay cost associated with Alternative 4 over the No-Build Condition was anticipated to be approximately \$20 million/year.

**Basis for Rejection:**

Alternative 4 would have made the eastbound U.S.-101 less safe by creating a new weave segment on the eastbound U.S.-101 between the interchange, and the Van Nuys Boulevard off-ramps. In other words, traffic from the output of the new connector from the southbound I-405 to the eastbound U.S.-101 would have needed to criss-cross past eastbound U.S.-101 mainline traffic seeking to exit at the Haskell Boulevard off-ramps. This defeats the safety component of the project's Purpose and Need. Therefore, Alternative 4 was rejected for its incompatibility with the project's Purpose and Need.

**Figure 7. Rejected Alternative 4 Aerial Map**



## ALTERNATIVE A

Alternative A was considered during the Project Initiation Phase. This alternative, which is similar to Alternative 4, was withdrawn from further consideration due to the use of slip ramps, which would have connected the new Burbank Boulevard on-ramp to the U.S.-101 via slip ramp connections to the new connectors (thereby retaining access unlike Alternative 1).

As previously discussed, slip ramps are not in conformity with Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) design standards. FHWA has already once denied Caltrans' request for a slip ramp design exemption.

FHWA states that: 1) Local connections within interchanges – especially on freeway-to-freeway ramps – violate driver expectancy and introduce additional decision points in an area where the information processing task is already complex. They also create a high potential for traffic queuing back onto the through freeway lanes (which defeats the Need and Purpose of this project). In addition, such ramps seldom provide for full directional services, thus creating the possibility of wrong-way movements by drivers who wish to return or continue in the same direction. 2) It is poor public policy as well as poor engineering practice to allow additional access to existing freeway ramps. 3) FHWA does not support any type of slip ramp. For more information on FHWA policy pertaining to slip ramps, please reference Appendix E.

Additionally, Section 502.3 of the Highway Design Manual (HDM) states that “local traffic service interchanges should not be located within freeway-to-freeway interchanges unless geometric standards and level of service will be substantially maintained.”

Therefore, since Alternative A would have called for slip ramps to connect to the NEW connectors, per FHWA, this would have created a high potential for traffic queuing back onto the through freeway lanes. For this reason, Alternative A defeats the purpose of the project's “Need and Purpose.” Hence, Alternative A was rejected on the basis of its incompatibility with the project's Need and Purpose.

### **Project Alternative Cost Estimates:**

The following cost estimates are associated with this alternative only. All cost estimates are subject to change and revision, but there is no need to pursue further as this alternative has previously been rejected.

- Roadway Items: \$44,169,213
- Structure Items: \$48,279,800
- Right-of-Way Cost: \$68,008,337
- Mitigation Cost: \$5,000,000

Figure 8. Rejected Alternative A Aerial Map



## **ALTERNATIVE B**

This alternative was proposed by the City of Los Angeles during the Scoping phase of this project back in 2006. The City was seeking to achieve the objectives of Alternative 1 and 4, minus the impacts of each. Alternative B is essentially a hybrid between Alternative 1 and Alternative 4, without the loss of access to the U.S.-101 from Burbank Boulevard, and without the residential right-of-way acquisition impacts to the southeast side of the interchange.

Unfortunately, the proposal has been deemed fatally flawed. Like Alternative 4, Alternative B calls for the existing connectors to remain as is. The consequence of not closing and removing the existing connectors (as required by Alternative 1) is that this alternative (like Alternative 4) would have also required the construction of a new connector from the SB I-405 to the SB U.S.-101.

The new connector, however, would not have met grade and vertical clearance standards. It would not have been feasible to design connector "A" to pass over the new Burbank Boulevard on-ramp, and subsequently under the NB US-101 mainline, in order to tie into the SB US-101 mainline.

### **Project Alternative Cost Estimates:**

The following cost estimates are associated with this alternative only. All cost estimates are subject to change and revision, but there is no need to pursue this further as this alternative has previously been rejected.

- Roadway Items: \$41,960,752
- Structure Items: \$45,865,810
- Right-of-Way Cost: \$791,829,108
- Mitigation Cost: \$5,000,000

Figure 9. Rejected Alternative B Aerial Map



## ALTERNATIVE C

This alternative would have avoided ALL encroachment upon land managed and operated by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (i.e. Sepulveda Dam), as well as the floodplain and Section 4(f) resources on that land. Unlike Alternatives 1, 2, 3, 4, A, and B, this Alternative would NOT have called for a new connector bridge from the SB I-405 to the NB U.S.-101 that would encroach upon and span over the spillway of the Sepulveda Dam.

Instead, Alternative C would have called for the complete relocation of the improved SB I-405/U.S.-101 connectors to the northeast, southeast, and southwest of the existing connectors, thereby completely avoiding any encroachment upon the northwest side of the interchange, where the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers land is located.

This non-conventional configuration would have required that both new connectors “connect” to the U.S.-101 freeway from the south side, and would have consequently posed right-of-way acquisition impacts to the northeast, southeast, and southwest corners of the interchange. Right-of-way acquisitions for this alternative would have involved (329) total properties.

Compared to Alternatives 1, 2, 3, 4, A and B, Alternative C would have posed:

- The largest project impact footprint
- The largest and most disproportionate right-of-way acquisition impact requirements
- The most adverse temporary and permanent community disruption impacts

When compared to Alternatives 1, 2, 3, 4, A and B, the community impacts posed by Alternative C would have been of extraordinary magnitude. Therefore, the Department has concluded that continuing to pursue Alternative C as a viable option is not reasonable, nor prudent.

Per the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ), as part of its oversight of implementation of NEPA, CEQ Regulations 40 CFR Sec. 1502.14 requires that all reasonable alternatives be examined. In **determining the scope of alternatives to be considered**, the emphasis is on what is “reasonable”. The Department has concluded that Alternative C is not a reasonable alternative, and therefore, not fit for further consideration.

### **Project Alternative Cost Estimates:**

The following cost estimates are associated with this alternative only. All cost estimates are subject to change and revision, but there is no need to pursue further as this alternative has previously been rejected.

- Roadway Items: \$128,881,234
- Structure Items: \$214,895,731
- Right-of-Way Cost: \$791,829,108
- Mitigation Cost: \$5,000,000

Figure 10. Rejected Alternative C Aerial Map



## ALTERNATIVE D

This alternative would have also avoided ALL encroachment upon land managed and operated by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (i.e. Sepulveda Dam), as well as the floodplain and Section 4(f) resources on that land. Unlike Alternatives 1, 2, 3, 4, A, and B, this Alternative did NOT call for a new connector bridge from the SB I-405 to the NB U.S.-101 that would have encroached upon and spanned over the spillway of the Sepulveda Dam.

Instead, Alternative D called for a complete relocation of the new SB I-405/NB U.S.-101 connector toward the far northwest, completely “going around and behind” U.S. Army Corps of Engineers land. This configuration would not have required alteration of the existing SB I-405/NB U.S.-101 connector, and therefore, it would have remained as is.

The new SB I-405/NB U.S.-101 connector would have originated from the SB I-405, just south of Saticoy Street, and connected to the NB U.S.-101 just east of Tampa Avenue via a 5.2-mile long fly-over connector bridge structure. Consequently, this alternative would have required (2422) full right-of-way property acquisitions. The Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Refuge would not have been impacted, nor any other part of the Sepulveda Flood Control Basin.

Compared to Alternatives 1, 2, 3, 4, A, B and C, Alternative D would have posed:

- By far, the largest project impact footprint of ALL alternatives.
- The largest and most disproportionate right-of-way acquisition impact requirements.
- The most adverse temporary and permanent community disruption impacts.

When compared to Alternatives 1, 2, 3, 4, A, B and C, Alternative D would have also posed community impacts of extraordinary magnitude, which are avoidable by simply eliminating Alternative D from further consideration. Therefore, the Department has concluded that continuing to pursue Alternative D as a viable option is neither reasonable, nor prudent.

Per the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ), as part of its oversight of implementation of NEPA, CEQ Regulations 40 CFR Sec. 1502.14 requires that all reasonable alternatives be examined. In **determining the scope of alternatives to be considered**, the emphasis is on what is “reasonable”. The Department has concluded that Alternative D is not a reasonable alternative, and therefore, not fit for further consideration.

Per Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act of 1966, the Department has deemed Alternative C as neither a feasible, nor a prudent (due to the severity of its community disruption impacts) alternative to the “Build” Alternatives 1, 2, 3, or 4, which require adverse impacts to Section 4(f) resources.

### **Project Alternative Cost Estimates:**

The following cost estimates are associated with this alternative only. All cost estimates are subject to change and revision, but there is no need to pursue further as this alternative has previously been rejected.

- Roadway Items: \$67,314,401
- Structure Items: \$329,982,051
- Right-of-Way Cost: \$3,360,600,304
- Mitigation Cost: \$5,000,000

Figure 11. Rejected Alternative D Aerial Map



## 1.4 TSM, TDM, AND MASS TRANSIT

Transportation System Management (TSM) and Transportation Demand Management (TDM) alternatives are usually only relevant in urban areas over 200,000 population. A Mass Transit Alternative is considered on all proposed major highway projects in urban areas over 200,000 population.

TSM strategies consist of actions that increase the efficiency of existing facilities; they are actions that increase the number of vehicle trips a facility can carry without increasing the number of through lanes. Examples of TSM strategies include: ramp metering, auxiliary lanes, turning lanes, reversible lanes and traffic signal coordination. TSM also encourages automobile, public and private transit, ridesharing programs, and bicycle and pedestrian improvements as elements of a unified urban transportation system.

Modal alternatives integrate multiple forms of transportation modes, such as pedestrian, bicycle, automobile, rail, and transit.

TDM focuses on regional strategies for reducing the number of vehicle trips and vehicle miles traveled as well as increasing vehicle occupancy. It facilitates higher vehicle occupancy or reduces traffic congestion by expanding the traveler's transportation choice in terms of travel method, travel time, travel route, travel costs, and the quality and convenience of the travel experience. Typical activity within this component is providing contract funds to regional agencies that are actively promoting ridesharing, maintaining rideshare databases and providing limited rideshare services to employers and individuals.

At first glance, TSM, TDM, and modal alternatives (including rail and transit) may seem like reasonable and attractive strategies/alternatives for such a congested interchange. However, such strategies are outside the scope of this particular project for the following reasons:

- 1) Those strategies do not meet the proposed project's Need and Purpose, specifically, the safety component. The Department seeks to remove the tight, non-standard radius of the existing connector from the SB I-405 to the NB U.S.-101. Currently, the accident rate at the project location exceeds the state average.
- 2) The proposed project size (just north of Burbank Boulevard to the U.S.-101) and focus is too small for any meaningful implementation and integration of TSM, TDM, and modal alternatives.
- 3) TSM, TDM, and modal alternatives would best serve as stand alone projects to be implemented not only at the interchange, but along both the entire I-405 and U.S.-101 corridors. The political will and funding must be adequate to allow Caltrans to successfully pursue and implement an endeavor of such a magnitude.

## 1.5 PERMITS AND APPROVALS NEEDED

The following approvals and permits would be required for project implementation:

### Approvals

The proposed project build alternatives require an encroachment upon U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) managed lands related to the operation of the Sepulveda Dam and Flood Control Basin. The USACE must grant an easement to Caltrans and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) before construction could take place on USACE-managed lands. Before easements are granted, the USACE is required to comply with Federal statutes and regulations governing its Civil Works projects and real estate activities.

### Permitting Requirements

- Section 402 of the Clean Water Act: Caltrans has already obtained from the Storm Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Construction General Permit No. CAS000003
- Section 404 of the Clean Water Act: Nationwide or Individual Permit (to be determined, coordination ongoing) from the USACE (as applicable)
- Section 401 of the Clean Water Act: Water Quality Certification from the Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB)
- Fish and Game Code 1602: Streambed Alteration Agreement from the California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG)
- California Endangered Species Act (CESA) mandates that State agencies should not approve a project that would jeopardize the continued existence of threatened or endangered species if reasonable and prudent alternatives are available that would avoid jeopardy. A species list obtained from CDFG's California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDDB) showed an occurrence of State listed least Bell's vireo (*Vireo bellii pusillus*) within the project area. For projects that affect both a state and federal listed species, compliance with the Federal Endangered Species Act (FESA) will satisfy CESA if the Department of Fish and Game (DFG) determines that the federal incidental take authorization is "consistent" with CESA under F&G Code Section 2080.1. For projects that will result in a take of a state only listed species, Caltrans must apply for a take permit under section 2081(b). With the formal selection of Alternative 1 and the elimination of Alternatives 2 and 3 from consideration, impacts to the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve have been avoided. Therefore, impacts to state and/or federal listed species will not occur. CESA permitting will not be needed.
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Federal Endangered Species Act (FESA) Consultation: Due to the presence of least Bell's vireo, a Federally endangered species, informal consultation with Fish and Wildlife Service will be required for this project. A request for a species list was sent to the Fish and Wildlife Service on January 4, 2008. This request effectively started this informal consultation process. In coordination with Steve Kirkland with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), a No Effect Determination to least Bell's vireo (*Vireo bellii pusillus*) was prepared and sent to the USFWS on June 9, 2008.

**Table 7. Required Permits by Alternative**

	Section 404 Permit (USACE)	Section 401 Water Quality Certification	Section 402 NPDES Permit (SWRCB)	Fish and Game 1602 Streambed Alteration Agreement	USACE Easement	FESA Informal Consultation with USFWS	FESA Formal Consultation with USFWS	CESA take permit pursuant to Section 2081(b)
No Build Alternative (Rejected)	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO
<b>Preferred Alternative</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>	<b>NO</b>
Rejected Alternative 2	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES	YES
Rejected Alternative 3	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES	YES

## **CHAPTER 2 | AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT, ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES, AND AVOIDANCE, MINIMIZATION AND/OR MITIGATION MEASURES**

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### **2.1 HUMAN ENVIRONMENT**

The Interstate Route 405/US Highway 101 (I-405/US-101) interchange is largely considered as one of America's worst freeway bottlenecks, and is located in Caltrans District 7, quad 83, in Los Angeles County, and within the City of Los Angeles. There is substantial need for improvements to the connector from the southbound (SB) I-405 freeway to southbound (SB) and northbound (NB) US-101 freeway, as the existing structures were built in the 1950s and insufficient in accommodating current and future capacity. The purpose of this project would fulfill that need, and improve overall safety, operation, and traffic flow by replacing the existing 20 mile-per-hour, single-lane connector with a new 50 mile-per-hour, two lane connector.

The current design presents challenges to the human environment that manifest in circulation issues on the mainline, on-and-off ramps, and at signalized intersections surrounding the interchange, especially during peak travel times. Construction associated with the project would have a significant, yet temporary effect on surrounding communities, especially those adjacent to the interchange, but the end result of the project will likely alleviate extremely poor circulation issues that exist in the project area. Immediately affected areas would include the Sepulveda Basin Recreation Area (northwest of interchange) and the communities of Van Nuys (northeast), Sherman Oaks (southeast), and Encino (southwest).

The ensuing analysis of the human environment has been extracted from the Community Impact Assessment Report as prepared by Caltrans (Caltrans 2007d) or other technical reports as cited.

#### **Considered Human Environment Issues with No Identifiable Adverse Impacts**

As part of the scoping and environmental analysis conducted for the project, the following human environment issues were considered, but no adverse impacts were identified. Consequently, there is no further discussion regarding these particular issues in this document. Nevertheless, the regulatory setting and framework for each is provided below:

##### **Coastal Zone**

**Regulatory Setting.** The Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972 (CZMA) is the primary federal law enacted to preserve and protect coastal resources. The CZMA sets up a program under which coastal states are encouraged to develop coastal management programs. States with an approved coastal management plan are able to review federal permits and activities to determine if they are consistent with the state's management plan.

California has developed a coastal zone management plan and has enacted its own law, the California Coastal Act of 1976, to protect the coastline. The policies established by the California Coastal Act are similar to those for the CZMA; they include the protection and expansion of public access and recreation, the protection, enhancement and restoration of environmentally sensitive areas, protection of agricultural lands, the protection of scenic beauty, and the protection of property and life from coastal hazards. The California Coastal Commission is responsible for implementation and oversight under the California Coastal Act.

## Wild and Scenic Rivers

**Regulatory Setting.** Projects affecting Wild and Scenic Rivers are subject to the National Wild and Scenic Rivers Act (16 USC 1271) and the California Wild and Scenic Rivers Act (Pub. Res. Code sec. 5093.50 et seq.).

There are three possible types of Wild and Scenic Designations:

1. Wild: undeveloped, with river access by trail only
2. Scenic: undeveloped, with occasional river access by road
3. Recreational: some development is allowed, with road access

## Farmlands/Timberlands

**Regulatory Setting.** The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and the Farmland Protection Policy Act (FPPA, 7 USC 4201-4209; and its regulations, 7 CFR Part 658) require federal agencies, such as FHWA, to coordinate with the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) if their activities may irreversibly convert farmland (directly or indirectly) to nonagricultural use. For purposes of the FPPA, farmland includes prime farmland, unique farmland, and land of statewide or local importance.

The California Environmental Quality Act requires the review of projects that would convert Williamson Act contract land to non-agricultural uses. The main purposes of the Williamson Act are to preserve agricultural land and to encourage open space preservation and efficient urban growth. The Williamson Act provides incentives to landowners through reduced property taxes to deter the early conversion of agricultural and open space lands to other uses.

## 2.1.1 LAND USE AND PLANNING

### Existing and Future Land Use

**Sepulveda Basin and Dam.** The Sepulveda Basin is located just northwest of the project area, and is utilized as a flood control basin with the Sepulveda Dam and its appurtenant facilities managed by the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE). The Sepulveda Basin and its recreational facilities provide much needed visual and spatial relief in a surrounding environment that is highly urban and predominantly built-out.

The Sepulveda Dam flood control project was authorized as part of the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1936. The USACE maintains Sepulveda Dam and appurtenant flood control facilities. Under the authority of the Flood Control Act of 1941, the Secretary of the Army granted the City of Los Angeles a license to develop part of the Sepulveda Basin for recreational purposes. That Act was subsequently supplemented by the more encompassing Flood Control Acts of 1944 and 1946, which provided nationwide guidelines for recreational developments at USACE projects. Under the authority of the Flood Control Act of 1944, as amended by the Flood Control Act of 1946, two leases for recreational development were granted - one to the City of Los Angeles and one to a non-profit corporation. The Flood Control Act of 1944, as amended by the Flood Control Acts of 1946, 1954, 1960, and 1962, authorizes the Corps of Engineers to construct, maintain, and operate public park and recreational facilities at water resources development projects and to permit local interests to construct, maintain, and operate such facilities.

The Sepulveda Dam Master Plan (SMDP) includes a provision that recommends that it be updated every five years, or revised to suit changing needs and conditions, but the plan has not been overhauled since 1981. In July of 1995, the USACE issued a supplement to the 1981 SDMP that highlighted land use changes primarily to the southeast portion of the recreation area, with proposals for wetlands and a

wildlife refuge. Those proposals have since come to fruition, and the Sepulveda Basin has been developed to include several large recreation areas and parks, a water reclamation plant, an armory, sports facilities, gardens, golf courses, and a locally and regionally significant wildlife reserve.

The Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve plays an important role in providing wildlife habitat and opportunities for exploration in an extremely urbanized and built-out part of the Los Angeles Basin. The wildlife reserve was developed with the following objectives: to develop a wetlands system; enhance habitat for wildlife; and to increase wildlife interpretive opportunities within the eastern portion of the Sepulveda Dam Flood Control Basin.

Improvements to the area have been made through several initiatives, including improvements that were undertaken as mitigation for impacts from increased recreational plans within the Basin. A court order required the formation of the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Areas Consortium to oversee the allocation of fines levied on two local companies that discharged hazardous materials into Haskell Creek. Both the USACE and the City of Los Angeles have dedicated substantial funds to the area through other cooperative improvements such as the creation of a wildlife lake, plantings, and the implementation of restoration measures. Local conservation and community groups have also invested substantial time and resources. As a result of these improvements, the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve has developed into a truly unique open space with biodiversity not found in all urban areas. It is a riparian, grassland, woodland, and aquatic habitat for numerous species of plants and animals, including a variety of resident and migratory bird species. In addition to its function as a wildlife habitat, it is also a place for recreation and to commune with nature.

**Community of Van Nuys.** Van Nuys lays just northeast of the project area, bound by the I-405 freeway on the west and Magnolia Boulevard on the south. Primary land use within (1) mile of the project area is zoned “low and medium-density residential, with “community commercial” zoning at the intersections of Burbank and Sepulveda Boulevards, and at Magnolia and Sepulveda Boulevards. A portion of land south of Magnolia Boulevard (between I-405 and Sepulveda Boulevard) is dedicated to City of Los Angeles public facilities, and a small swath of land between Oxnard Street and Burbank Boulevard (on Sepulveda Boulevard) is dedicated to commercial manufacturing uses.

Primary land use within (2) to (3) miles of the project area is zoned “low-density and medium-density residential, with the mixed-use Van Nuys Central Business District (CBD) in the vicinity. The Van Nuys CBD is bound by Vanowen and Calvert Streets on the north and south sides, Cedros and Vesper Avenues to the west, and Sylmar and Tyrone Avenues to the east.

The Van Nuys CBD Specific Plan aims to make the Van Nuys CBD the focus of community activity through the Van Nuys CBD Streetscape Plan. More specifically, it aims to create more pedestrian-friendly environments that enhance community identity through design considerations that include landscape architecture, street lighting schemes, public art installations, street furniture, and infrastructure and signage specifications (City of Los Angeles 2007a).

Efforts at promoting Transit Oriented Development (TOD) and compatible uses are evident around the intersection of Sepulveda Boulevard and Erwin Street, at the Metro Orange Line Transit Station. Plans recommend changing existing areas zoned as “industrial” to “commercial,” and the creation of mixed-use zones that integrate single-family and multi-family residential development within the vicinity (City of Los Angeles 2007b). This particular area lies within about (1.5) miles of the project area, and is likely to experience some effects during construction.

**Community of Sherman Oaks.** Sherman Oaks is located just southeast of the project area and is bound by I-405 on the west, Van Nuys and the US-101 freeway on the north, and Fulton Avenue on the east. A designated regional commercial center (Sherman Oaks Galleria) is located adjacent to the I-405/ US-101 interchange, with Van Nuys and Sepulveda Boulevards serving as focal points for the community. Land use within (1) mile of the project area, and along the immediate Ventura Boulevard corridor between Sepulveda and Van Nuys Boulevards is zoned as “community commercial.” Commercial development along this corridor and between major and secondary arterials is buffered by “low-medium” and “medium”

density residential zoning. The majority of single family, “low density residential” zoning is located just beyond this buffer and south of Ventura Boulevard within the adjacent hillside areas.

The portion of the Ventura Boulevard corridor between I-405 and Fulton Avenue are part of the Ventura-Cahuenga Boulevard Corridor (VCBC) Specific Plan (a component of the Sherman Oaks-Studio City-Toluca Lake-Cahuenga Pass Community Plan). The VCBC Specific Plan seeks to achieve the following (pp. I-2, City of Los Angeles 2007c):

- Address the unique development problems associated with commercial and residential development within the area
- Assure an equilibrium between the transportation infrastructure and land use development
- Provide for an effective local circulation system
- Promote attractive and harmonious site design for multifamily and commercial development
- Provide compatible and harmonious relationships between commercial and residential areas when adjacent to each other
- Promote and encourage the development of pedestrian activity, while reducing traffic congestion
- Maintain district character

Serious traffic and circulation issues plague this portion of the Ventura Boulevard corridor, with development and growth exceeding the capacity of the existing transportation infrastructure. Traffic spill from the I-405 and US-101 freeways, in combination with intense existing and new commercial development, continues to stifle circulation along this corridor, and project construction at the I-405/ US-101 interchange will likely have a significant, yet temporary, effect on this area.

**Community of Encino.** The community of Encino exists just southwest of the project area, and is bound by the community of Winnetka and the Sepulveda Basin Recreation Area on the north, the I-405 freeway and the community of Sherman Oaks to the east, and Topanga State Park and the community of Tarzana to the west. Land use specifications for the Ventura-Cahuenga Boulevard Corridor (VCBC) Specific Plan also apply to the portion of Ventura Boulevard that traverses the community of Encino east-west and in parallel to US-101.

The majority of land use on Ventura Boulevard is zoned commercial, with most areas south of the thoroughfare zoned as “single family residential.” North of the Ventura Boulevard commercial corridor, and on both sides of US-101 between Wilber and White Oak Avenues are zoned at a higher density and “multiple family residential.” A small swath of land on Oxnard Avenue, between Wilbur and Etiwanda Avenues is zoned as industrial. Oxnard Avenue is also a major corridor for the Metropolitan Transit Authority (MTA) Orange Line busway, which starts at the last MTA Red Line light rail station in North Hollywood (at Lankershim and Chandler Boulevards), and provides service to communities throughout the San Fernando Valley to Canoga Park.

The following summarizes the most significant future planning and development opportunities as identified in the Encino-Tarzana Community Plan (pp. I-5 to I-6, City of Los Angeles 2007d):

- Promote more residential and mixed-use development along commercial corridors to provide more access to employment
- Create pedestrian-friendly shopping areas by incorporating street trees, benches, convenient parking/access, and maintaining retail frontage at ground level
- Create more access to regional freeways and rail services in industrial zoned areas
- Increase intensity, density, and design of development in proximity to transit station stops
- Integrate the development of MTA right-of-way along Oxnard Avenue with adjacent properties

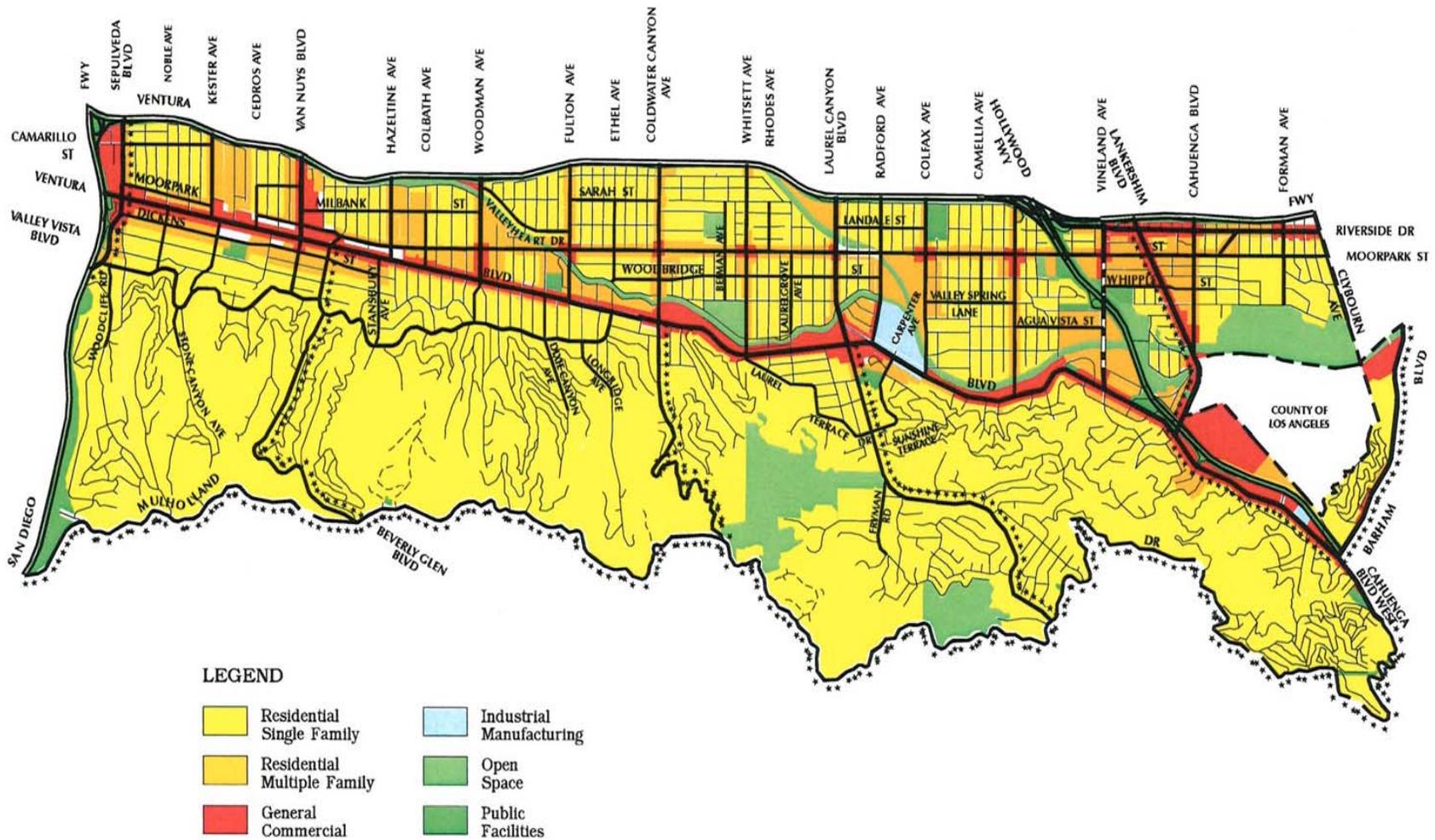
## Existing and Planned Land Use in Vicinity – Maps/Projections

Figure 12. Generalized Land Use – Van Nuys-North Sherman Oaks



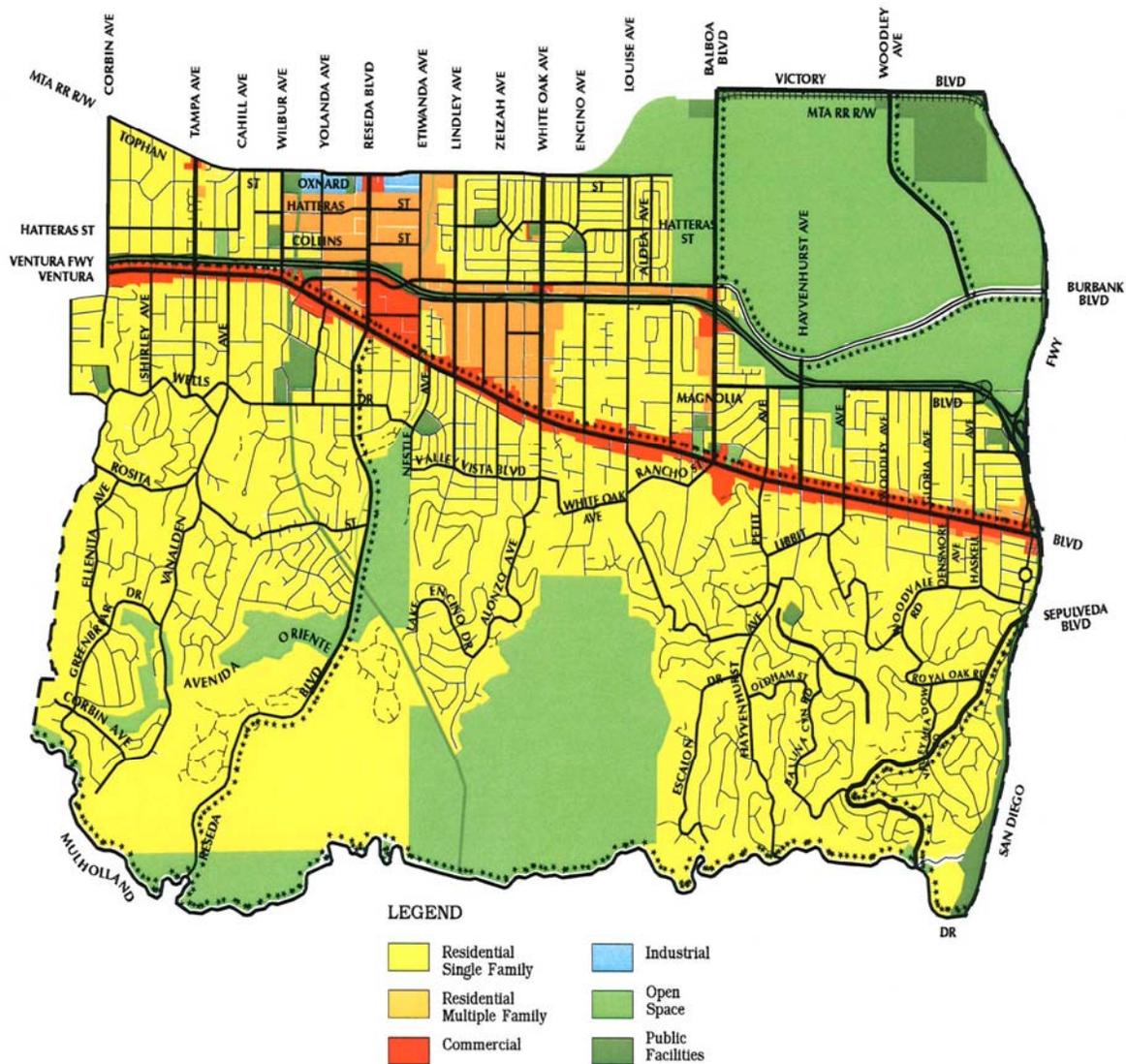
Source: City of Los Angeles General Plan, Van Nuys-North Sherman Oaks Community Plan. Accessed October 18, 2007, from the City of Los Angeles, Department of City Planning website at: <http://cityplanning.lacity.org/complan/pdf/vnycptxt.pdf>.

Figure 13. Generalized Land Use – Sherman Oaks-Studio City-Toluca Lake-Cahuenga Pass



Source: City of Los Angeles General Plan, Sherman Oaks-Studio City-Toluca Lake-Cahuenga Pass Community Plan. Accessed October 18, 2007, from the City of Los Angeles, Department of City Planning website at: <http://www.ci.la.ca.us/PLN/complan/valley/pdf/genlumap.shr.pdf>.

Figure 14. Generalized Land Use - Encino-Tarzana



Source: City of Los Angeles General Plan, Encino-Tarzana Community Plan. Accessed October 18, 2007, from the City of Los Angeles, Department of City Planning website at <http://cityplanning.lacity.org/complan/pdf/encnctxt.pdf>.



**Table 8. Development Trends in Project Vicinity**

Community Plan Area	Name and/or Address	Jurisdiction	Proposed Use	Floor Area (sq. ft.)	Status
Encino	16350 W. Ventura Blvd	Los Angeles	New (131) unit apartment building with retail and subterranean parking	336,501	Permit ready to issue
Sherman Oaks	4500 N. Van Nuys Blvd.	Los Angeles	New retail store with attached parking garage	54,457	Permit ready to issue
Sherman Oaks	13946 W. Ventura Blvd.	Los Angeles	New two-story office building	3,951	Permit ready to issue
Van Nuys	6714 N. Balboa Blvd.	Los Angeles	New (4) unit apartment building	5,444	Permit ready to issue
Van Nuys	In-N-Out Burger 7220 N. Balboa Blvd.	Los Angeles	One-story fast food restaurant with drive-through	1,387	Permit ready to issue
Van Nuys	14116 W. Burbank Blvd.	Los Angeles	New three-story, (13) unit apartment building over basement garage	12,252	Permit ready to issue
Van Nuys	14242 W. Burbank Blvd.	Los Angeles	New three-story apartment building over basement garage	38,979	Permit ready to issue
Van Nuys	15206 W. Burbank Blvd.	Los Angeles	New (42) unit apartment building	59,737	Permit ready to issue
Van Nuys	14550 W. Burbank Blvd.	Los Angeles	New (6) unit apartment building over basement garage	6,626	Permit ready to issue
Van Nuys	14702 W. Magnolia Blvd.	Los Angeles	New three-story, (5) unit apartment building with subterranean garage	7,928	Permit ready to issue
Van Nuys	14212 W. Vanowen St.	Los Angeles	New two-story, (4) unit apartment building with (8) open, on-site parking spaces	3,844	Permit ready to issue
Van Nuys	5750 N Woodman Ave.	Los Angeles	New (6) unit apartment building over basement garage	10,228	Permit ready to issue
Van Nuys	5338 N. Woodman Ave.	Los Angeles	New auto body shop	5,492	Permit ready to issue

Source: City of Los Angeles - Department of Building and Safety; New Building Permits, January 2005-October 2007

## Consistency with State, Regional, and Local Plans

**State Transportation Plan Consistency.** The State of California is faced with some urgent transportation challenges. With one of the largest economies in the world, economic health is highly dependent on a safe, efficient, and functional transportation infrastructure. In 2006, the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) published the California Transportation Plan 2025, which was developed in coordination with the California Transportation Commission (CTC) and 45 regional transportation planning agencies, including the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG), the metropolitan planning organization responsible for regional planning in the greater Los Angeles area. In consideration of general guidelines for sustainable development (encompassing economy, social equity, and environment), the following state transportation goals were developed in consultation with numerous public and private transportation providers and system users, and are outlined in the California Transportation Plan 2025 (pp. X, State of California 2007a):

- **Goal 1. Improve Mobility and Accessibility:** Expanding the system and enhancing modal choices and connectivity to meet the State's future transportation demands.
- **Goal 2. Preserve the Transportation System:** Maintaining and rehabilitating California's extensive transportation system to preserve it for future generations.
- **Goal 3. Support the Economy:** Ensuring the State's continued economic vitality by securing the resources needed to maintain, manage, and enhance the transportation system, while providing a well organized and managed goods movement system.
- **Goal 4. Enhance Public Safety and Security:** Ensuring the safety and security of people, goods, services, and information in all modes of transportation.
- **Goal 5. Reflect Community Values:** Finding transportation solutions that balance and integrate community values with transportation safety and performance, and encourage public involvement in transportation decisions.
- **Goal 6. Enhance the Environment:** Planning and providing transportation services while protecting our environment, wildlife, and historical and cultural assets.

Within this context, the I-405/US-101 interchange improvement project is very much consistent with state goals and plans, and highly reflective of the goals and values of the surrounding communities. Improvements in the transportation infrastructure at the I-405/ US-101 interchange will support continued economic vitality in the surrounding communities by improving conditions for the movement of people and goods. The project will also enhance public safety and security through the improvement of driving conditions with a complementary reduction in accidents, and will also enhance environmental conditions through an improvement of traffic flows and a reduction of auto emissions. Overall, the project is anticipated to improve mobility and accessibility to one of the nation's most congested interchanges, and serve as a benefit to the surrounding communities and future land use goals.

**Regional Transportation Consistency.** The Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG), in cooperation with Caltrans and Congressman Brad Sherman's office, is advancing traffic improvement alternatives for the I-405/ US-101 interchange. Existing traffic circulation problems due to high peak hour and daily traffic volumes, coupled with SCAG's model projection of suburban housing and population growth in Los Angeles and Ventura counties, make this undertaking a high priority. The interchange is frequently cited as the worst freeway bottleneck in the United States, and SCAG has been designated as the metropolitan planning organization responsible for developing the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP).

In 2004, SCAG published the Destination 2030 RTP, which laid out a plan to address the transportation challenges and issues arising from a region expected to experience unprecedented growth and demand from new residents, jobs, and an increase in the movement of goods. Regional growth estimates in the metropolitan area forecast a population increase of 38 percent (or 6.3 million people), and an employment growth increase of 36 percent (or 2.7 million jobs) by the year 2030 (p.13, SCAG 2007a). The region, as a whole, must find a way to accommodate this growth, and plan for transportation infrastructure accordingly. SCAG acknowledges the difficulty in adding lanes to a freeway or building new ones, and as

it becomes more difficult, maximizing the potential capacity of existing arterials becomes a viable solution to increasing overall system capacity, especially in built-out, urban areas. The I-405/US-101 interchange improvement project will assist in the attainment of these goals by maximizing mainline capacities at the interchange and improving conditions for the movement of goods, while providing a complementary increase in productivity hours lost to existing traffic congestion and circulation issues. The proposed project is included in the 2006 RTIP and referenced in the Plan. It is listed in Section II of Volume II of the 2006 RTIP, state highway section, Los Angeles County. The following project information is excerpted from the 2006 RTIP:

Lead Agency – Caltrans

Project ID # - LA0D77

Air Basin - SCAB

Model # - L393

Program Code – CAN40

Route – 405

Begin Post Mile – 39.4

End Post Mile – 40.5

Description – City of L.A. – At Route 405 and US 101 interchange. Construct freeway connector from southbound Route 405 to northbound and southbound US-101 and add auxiliary lane from Burbank Boulevard to northbound US 101 connector (EA #199610, PPNO 2787)

**Local Plan Consistency.** The City of Los Angeles Department of City Planning has developed the Transportation Element of the general plan in conjunction with the 35 communities that make up the city planning area. The purpose of the transportation element is to present a guide for further development of a citywide transportation system which provides for the efficient movement of people and goods (City of Los Angeles 2007f). It also recognizes that primary emphasis must be placed on maximizing the efficiency of existing and proposed transportation infrastructure, in which the Southbound I-405 to US-101 Connector Improvement Project is completely consistent with.

Accommodation of future growth is also a high priority for the City of Los Angeles (growth projections are referenced in Section 2.1.2 of this document, entitled “Growth”). While accommodating future residential growth is a high priority, ensuring quality of life in vibrant and livable neighborhoods is just as important. Improving mainline flows at the I-405/US-101 interchange will surely assist in reducing the excessive amount of traffic spill onto city streets and districts, and aid in achieving city goals in improving circulation in the surrounding neighborhoods; creating safer, pedestrian-oriented environments; and accommodating new growth.

## **Parks and Recreational Facilities**

**Sepulveda Basin Recreation Area.** Located in the Sepulveda Basin, just northwest of the project area, the 2150-acre Sepulveda Basin Recreation Area serves as a regional recreational facility complete with two parks (Hjelte and Woodley Parks), an 80-acre sports field, an archery range, three 18-hole golf courses, Balboa Lake, Balboa Park and Sports Center, playgrounds, a velodrome, bike paths, hiking trails, tennis courts, a Japanese Garden, a dog park, and a designated wildlife reserve. The wildlife reserve is a 225-acre joint project of the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) and the Los Angeles Department of Recreation and Parks, in partnership with community groups. It features a lake with a bird-refuge island, extensive native plant revegetation, and some of the best bird-watching opportunities in the Los Angeles Basin. Migratory birds gather here in the fall and winter, and are strongly attracted to water within the basin.

The Donald C. Tillman Reclamation Plant is located on a 90-acre site within the basin, leased to the City of Los Angeles by the USACE. It is a project of the Los Angeles City Department of Public Works, funded by grants from the United States Environmental Protection Agency and the State Water Resources Control Board, as well as by funds from the city’s Sewer Construction and Maintenance Fund. The water

reclamation process generates 65 million gallons of reclaimed water per day, and is distributed to Balboa Lake, the wildlife reserve, the Japanese Garden, Sepulveda Basin sprinkling system, the Department of Water and Power pumping station, and the Los Angeles River (City of Los Angeles 2007e).

Aside from water reclamation, the basin and its appurtenant facilities serve first and foremost, as a flood control mechanism. The Sepulveda Dam—located within the property—is also managed by the USACE, for the purposes of collecting floodwater runoff from the uncontrolled drainage upstream, storing it temporarily, and releasing it at a rate that does not exceed the downstream channel capacity. The dam was determined eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) under criteria A (history of Los Angeles water systems) and C (distinctive type, period, and construction method), at the local level, with 1941-1949 as the period of significance. This is discussed in more detail in Section 2.1.7, entitled, “Cultural Resources.” The new, elevated connector structure associated with the Preferred Alternative will pose right-of-way impacts to the spillway and apron of the Sepulveda Dam. Now that Alternatives 2 and 3 have been rejected, no right-of-way impacts are anticipated to the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Refuge.

**Section 4(f) Evaluation of Resources.** Codified in federal law at 49 U.S.C. §303, Section 4(f) of the United States Department of Transportation Act of 1966 declares that “it is the policy of the United States government that special effort should be made to preserve the natural beauty of the countryside and public park and recreation lands, wildlife and waterfowl refuges, and historic sites.” Section 4(f) specifies that the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and other DOT agencies cannot approve the use of land from a significant publicly owned public park, recreation area, wildlife or waterfowl refuge, or any significant historic site unless there is no feasible and prudent alternative to the use of land; and the action includes all possible planning to minimize harm to the property resulting from use. A Section 4(f) evaluation has been prepared for the (3) aforementioned resources, pursuant to the FHWA regulations for Section 4(f) compliance codified at 23 CFR Section 771.135. Additional guidance has been obtained from the FHWA Technical Advisory T 6640.8A (1987), the FHWA Section 4(f) Policy Paper (2005), and the FHWA Western Resource center Section 4(f) Checklist (1997). A brief discussion of the potential impacts to Section 4(f) resources follows, but a more detailed discussion of the evaluation and impacts to Section 4(f) resources, can be found in Appendix B, “Section 4(f) Evaluation.”

**Brief Discussion of Alternatives with Potential Impacts to Section 4(f) Resources.** Section 4(f) specifies that the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and other DOT agencies cannot approve the use of land from a significant publicly owned public park, recreation area, wildlife or waterfowl refuge, or any significant historic site unless the following conditions apply:

- There is no feasible and prudent alternative to the use of land; and
- The action includes all possible planning to minimize harm to the property resulting from use

Each project proposal must include a Section 4(f) avoidance alternative, and in the case of the Preferred Alternative, coordination with the State Historic Preservation Officer is required as the Sepulveda Dam is a historic resource. Section 4(f) further requires consultation with the Department of the Interior and, as appropriate, the involved offices of the Department of Agriculture and Department of Housing and Urban Development in developing transportation projects and programs that use lands protected by Section 4(f).

On March 12, 2008, FHWA/Federal Transit Administration (FTA) published their final rule on Section 4(f). It became effective on April 11, 2008. This final rule modifies the procedures for granting Section 4(f) approvals as follows:

1. Clarifies the factors to be considered and the standards to be applied when determining if an alternative for avoiding the use of Section 4(f) property is feasible and prudent.
2. Clarifies the factors to be considered when selecting a project alternative in situations where all alternatives would use some Section 4(f) property.
3. Establishes procedures for determining that the use of a Section 4(f) property has a *de minimis* impact on the property.

4. Updates the regulation to recognize statutory and common sense exceptions for uses that advance Section 4(f)'s preservation purpose, as well as the option of applying a programmatic Section 4(f) evaluation.
5. Moves the Section 4(f) regulation out of the agencies' National Environmental Policy Act regulation, "Environmental Impact and Related Procedures," into its own part with a reorganized structure that is easier to use.

This Section 4(f) evaluation has been prepared pursuant to the FHWA regulations for Section 4(f) compliance codified at 23 CFR Section 774. Additional guidance has been obtained from the FHWA Technical Advisory T 6640.8A (1987), the FHWA Section 4(f) Policy Paper (2005), and the FHWA Western Resource Center Section 4(f) Checklist (1997).

A Section 4(f) "use" occurs when one or more of the following conditions are met:

- Land that is permanently acquired for a transportation project by partial or full acquisition is considered a "**Direct Use**"
- Temporary occupancy of the protected resource that is considered adverse in terms of the preservationist purposes of Section 4(f) is referred to as a "**Temporary Occupancy.**"
- If there is no permanent incorporation of land, but the project's proximity impacts are so severe that the protected activities, features, or attributes qualify the resource for protection under Section 4(f), such a substantial impact is considered as a "**Constructive Use**"

**Section 4(f) and the Preferred Alternative.** This alternative proposes to acquire land by permanent easement on the spillway and apron of the Sepulveda Dam for incorporation into the proposed transportation facility. The design features elevated connector structures that will cross the dam spillway outlet area to connect to NB and SB US-101 and encroach upon the aforementioned resource. A portion of the earthen embankment of the dam adjacent to NB US-101 will be modified to accommodate the change. A retaining wall would be erected to minimize the volume loss of the reservoir as a result of realigning the USACE service road. As such, these actions would constitute a **Direct Use** of the Section 4(f) resource. Specifically, the Preferred Alternative would impact 4.93 acres of the spillway outlet area, 0.45 acres of permanent footing easement, and 1.07 acres of upstream dam embankment.

This alternative would remove the existing connector ramps from the southbound I-405 to northbound and southbound US-101, along with the existing southbound I-405/US-101 on-ramp from Burbank Boulevard. New two-lane US-101 connector ramps (structures) would be constructed over the Sepulveda Dam spillway connecting southbound I-405 with northbound (connector B) and southbound (connector A) US-101, and Burbank Boulevard with southbound I-405. The elevated connectors that pass through the dam spillway will be approximately fifty (50) feet high, the same approximate height as the Sepulveda Dam gates. The USACE service road adjacent to northbound 101 will be realigned to accommodate the new connector which would drop down on top of the earthen embankment as it merges with northbound 101. The proposed encroachment on the embankment is approximately 550 feet long and 42 feet wide. A retaining wall will be built along the earthen embankment (northbound US-101) to mitigate for a loss of volume in the reservoir due to the realigned service road.

This alternative would constitute an Adverse Effect on the Sepulveda Dam under Adverse Effect Criterion 2(i) as the dam embankment along northbound US-101 will be excavated for footings for the descending ramp structure, the retaining wall and the realigned USACE access road (1.07 acres). This alternative would constitute an Adverse Effect on the Sepulveda Dam under Adverse Effect Criterion 2(i) because it would entail the physical destruction of or damage to all or part of the property. This alternative would constitute an Adverse Effect on the Sepulveda Dam under Adverse Effect Criterion 2(ii) as the elevated structures to be built through the dam spillway (4.93 acres) and upon the earthen embankment, as well as the proposed retaining wall, are alterations of the property that is not consistent with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties (36 CFR part 68) and applicable guidelines. This alternative would constitute an Adverse Effect on the Sepulveda Dam under Adverse Effect Criterion 2(iv) as the addition of elevated freeway connector ramps through the dam spillway, and the utilization of the earthen embankment for the descending freeway connector ramp, change the character of the

Sepulveda Dam's use (flood control) and physical features within the dam setting that contribute to its historic significance. The earthen embankment, spillway and reservoir are character defining features of the Sepulveda Dam. This alternative would constitute an Adverse Effect on the Sepulveda Dam under Adverse Effect Criterion 2(v) by introducing a visual element (elevated connector ramps) into the spillway area and on top of the embankment that diminishes the integrity of the property's significant historic features. The Dam is eligible because it was designed in a straightforward engineering approach prevalent in Southern California at the time. The earth fill dam was constructed during a time when accelerated changes in construction equipment allowed for larger and faster excavations. The work also involved a massive pile driving operation, reportedly one of the largest undertaken in the region at the time. The dam is also notable for the PWA Moderne design of the outlet works and spillway.

**Section 4(f) and the Preferred Alternative—Avoidance Alternatives.** As stated previously, each project proposal must include a Section 4(f) avoidance alternative. Each project proposal must be evaluated as defined in 23 CFR 774.17 (effective April 11, 2008), and in consideration of the following six factors. An avoidance alternative is not prudent if (23 CFR 774.117):

1. Compromises the project so that it is unreasonable given the purpose and need;
2. Results in unacceptable safety or operational problems;
3. After reasonable mitigation, still causes:
  - a. Severe social, economic, or environmental impacts;
  - b. Severe disruption to established communities;
  - c. Severe environmental justice impacts; or
  - d. Severe impacts to other federally protected resources;
4. Results in additional construction, maintenance, or operational costs of an extraordinary magnitude;
5. Causes other unique problems or unusual factors; or
6. Involves multiple factors listed above that while individually minor, cumulatively cause unique problems or impacts of extraordinary magnitude.

A summary of the findings follows, but the full analysis and determination can be referenced in the complete Section 4(f) Evaluation in Appendix B of this environmental document. Each avoidance alternative has been fully evaluated in accordance with 23 CFR 774.17 and in consideration of the aforementioned factors. A determination of prudence has been made for each of the following avoidance alternatives:

#### **No-Build Alternative**

The No Build alternative would result in the connectors between the freeways remaining as they are. The Sepulveda Dam would remain intact without further encroachments on the spillway, earthen embankment and reservoir. No direct use would occur, however the project's purpose and need would remain unfulfilled and the project's objectives unrealized. **The No-Build Alternative is considered feasible, but not prudent because it fails to meet the project's stated purpose and need, and results in unacceptable safety and operational problems.**

#### **Alternative C**

This alternative would completely avoid the Sepulveda Dam Basin by moving the 405/101 Interchange Connector to southeast and then southwest from the existing location. It would not result in a use of the Section 4(f) resource. However, it would require full and partial acquisition of approximately 50 privately owned properties, and displace a substantial number of families or businesses. In addition, it would result in a serious disruption of established travel patterns on local streets in the area. The cost of this avoidance alternative has been estimated at seven hundred million dollars. **Given the very high costs for acquisition of right-of-way, relocation costs, lost tax base for the City, disruption of local traffic and the substantial adverse community impacts to an entire community, Alternative C is considered feasible, but not a prudent alternative.**

#### **Alternative D**

This alternative also would completely avoid the Sepulveda Dam Basin by moving the 405/101 Interchange Connector northwest from the existing location. It would not result in a use of the Section 4(f) resource, but this connector would be approximately 5.2 mile long and would require full and partial acquisition of approximately 100 privately owned properties, and displace a substantial number of families or businesses. In addition, it would result in a serious disruption of established travel patterns on local streets in the area. The estimated cost of this avoidance alternative would be one billion dollars. **Given the very high costs for acquisition of right-of-way, disruption of local traffic and the substantial adverse community impacts to an entire community, Alternative D is considered feasible, yet not a prudent alternative.**

**Section 4(f) Least Harm Analysis and Conclusions.** 23 CFR 774.3 states that if there is no feasible and prudent avoidance alternative, then the Administration may approve only the alternative that causes the least overall harm in light of the statute's preservation purpose. The least overall harm is determined by balancing the following factors:

- i. The ability to mitigate adverse impacts to each Section 4(f) property (including any measures that result in benefits to the property);
- ii. The relative severity of the remaining harm, after mitigation, to the protected activities, attributes, or features that qualify each Section 4(f) property for protection;
- iii. The relative significance of each Section 4(f) property;
- iv. The views of the official(s) with jurisdiction over each Section 4(f) property;
- v. The degree to which each alternative meets the purpose and need for the project;
- vi. After reasonable mitigation, the magnitude of any adverse impacts to resources not protected by Section 4(f); and
- vii. Substantial differences in costs among the alternatives.

Additionally, the selected alternative must include all possible planning, as defined in 23 CFR 774.17, to minimize harm to Section 4(f) property. Based on the above considerations, there is no feasible and prudent alternative to the use of land from the Sepulveda Dam. As required by 23 CFR 774.3, all proposed build alternatives were analyzed to determine the alternative that causes the least overall harm. The detailed results can also be referenced in the full Section 4(f) analysis in Appendix B of this environmental document. It was determined that Alternative 1 includes all possible planning to minimize harm to the Sepulveda Dam resulting from such use and causes the least overall harm in light of the statute's preservation purpose.

## 2.1.2 GROWTH

**Regulatory Setting.** The Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations, which implement the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, require evaluation of the potential environmental consequences of all proposed federal activities and programs. This provision includes a requirement to examine indirect consequences, which may occur in areas beyond the immediate influence of a proposed action and at some time in the future. The CEQ regulations, 40 CFR 1508.8, refer to these consequences as secondary impacts. Secondary impacts may include changes in land use, economic vitality, and population density, which are all elements of growth.

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) also requires the analysis of a project’s potential to induce growth. CEQA guidelines, Section 15126.2(d), require that environmental documents “...discuss the ways in which the proposed project could foster economic or population growth, or the construction of additional housing, either directly or indirectly, in the surrounding environment...”

**Regional Growth Projections.** The Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) region encompasses Imperial, Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, and Ventura counties. Los Angeles County consists of eight subregions; the Arroyo Verdugo Cities Subregion, Gateway Cities Council of Governments Subregion, Las Virgenes Malibu Council of Governments (LVMCOG) Subregion, City of Los Angeles Subregion, North Los Angeles County Subregion, San Gabriel Valley Council of Governments (SGVCOG) Subregion, South Bay Cities Council of Governments Subregion, and the Westside Cities Subregion. The communities surrounding the project area (Van Nuys, Sherman Oaks, and Encino) all fall within the City of Los Angeles Subregion, which has the largest population and most households in the region.

Based on the SCAG 2004 RTP Socioeconomic Forecast, the City of Los Angeles Subregion is expected to grow at a slower pace than other subregions in Los Angeles County, by adding 624,000 people to the county, and increasing population to 4.4 million by 2030 (pp. 26, SCAG 2007b). The same study also indicates that the number of households will increase customary to the Los Angeles County average (0.9 percent), with an average annual increase of 40,000 new jobs in the next 30 years (pp. 27, SCAG 2007b). Below is a snapshot of growth statistics for the communities surrounding the project area:

**Table 9. Community Population and Household Growth Projections for 2010**

Projection	Van Nuys/North Sherman Oaks	Sherman Oaks/Studio City/Toluca Lake	Encino	Citywide
Total Population	165,973	86,863	79,352	4,306,564
Growth Rate	10.6%	13.7%	9.8%	10.6%
Total Households	63,995	45,090	32,626	1,474,514
Growth Rate	8.6%	15.1%	9.4%	11.4%

Source: City of Los Angeles General Plan; Van Nuys/North Sherman Oaks, Sherman Oaks/Studio City/Toluca Lake, and Encino Community Plans

**Project Related Growth Inducement.** In California, projects are rarely designed to encourage or facilitate growth, rather, most Caltrans capacity-increasing projects are proposed as a response to traffic congestion that is a result of growth that has already occurred or will soon occur. Because of the highly urbanized setting in the project location, and a predominantly built-out environment, this project does not have the potential to adversely induce growth beyond existing regional growth projections as outlined above.

### 2.1.3 COMMUNITY IMPACTS

#### Community Characteristics and Cohesion

**Regulatory Setting.** The National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 as amended (NEPA), established that the federal government use all practicable means to ensure for all Americans safe, healthful, productive, and aesthetically and culturally pleasing surroundings [42 U.S.C. 4331(b)(2)]. The Federal Highway Administration in its implementation of NEPA [23 U.S.C. 109(h)] directs that final decisions regarding projects are to be made in the best overall public interest. This requires taking into account adverse environmental impacts, such as, destruction or disruption of human-made resources, community cohesion and the availability of public facilities and services.

Under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), an economic or social change by itself is not to be considered a significant effect on the environment. However, if a social or economic change is related to a physical change, then social or economic change may be considered in determining whether the physical change is significant. Since this project would result in physical change to the environment, it is appropriate to consider changes to community character and cohesion in assessing the significance of the project's effects.

#### Affected Environment

Community profiles and analysis was performed in the project study area as defined by all census tracts within (6) surrounding postal zip codes, and utilizing 2000 U.S. Census data. They are represented as follows:

91316 (Encino)	91403 (Sherman Oaks)	91423 (Van Nuys/North Sherman Oaks)
91401 (Van Nuys)	91411 (Van Nuys)	91436 (Encino)

Together, the population for the study area totals approximately 156,166 residents. There will be no community or demographic discussion of the Sepulveda Basin Recreation Area as it is primarily zoned recreational. A typical demographic study of the project study area would provide a generalized profile for the area as a whole, but because of the diverse nature of each neighborhood surrounding the I-405/US-101 interchange, individual profiles are presented in the following subsections.

#### Zip Code 91316 – Community of Encino

**Community Character and Cohesion.** This particular community exists mostly southwest, but not immediate to the I-405/US-101 interchange. It is home to roughly 27,595 residents, which represent approximately 18 percent of the population in the project study area. In comparison to data for Los Angeles County, Census 2000 data for all tracts within this zip code show a relatively lower percentage of the population under the age of 5 (5.1 % vs. 7.7%), and much higher percentages of the population within the ages of 18-56 (82.9% vs. 72.0%) and over the age of 65 (18.5% vs. 9.7%). This data creates a profile of a community that largely consists of working professionals with fewer children, and amenities that may be attractive and hospitable to the elderly. Racially, this community is rather homogeneous, with 83.1 percent of the population declaring race as “White,” and minority populations well below county averages. The percentage of owner-occupied versus renter-occupied housing units is distributed fairly evenly (52.9% vs. 47.1%), and not too far off county averages. Median value of single-family, owner-occupied homes in this area are noticeably higher than the county average (\$331,800 vs. \$209,300). In consideration of all the aforementioned demographic characteristics and the following socioeconomic characteristics, community cohesion—or the perceived degree to which residents have a “sense of belonging” to their neighborhood, a level of commitment to the community, or a strong attachment to—is considered to be moderate-to-high.

**Socioeconomic Characteristics.** Census data for this community shows a population with relatively high levels of educational attainment. 88.6 percent of the population are high school graduates (as opposed to 69.9 percent in Los Angeles County), and 41.2 percent hold a bachelor's degree or higher (versus 24.9 percent for the county). This could explain a relatively high median household income of \$49,131, and per capita income of \$39,148, which are somewhat higher than the county average, and much higher than other communities within the project study area. The level of educational attainment in this community may also explain the lower-than-county percentage of families below poverty level at 7.5 percent (versus 14.4 percent for the county). As expected within this context, only a small portion of the population utilizes public transportation as a means to commute to work at 2 percent (versus 6.6 percent for the county), with a mean travel time to work of 31.1 minutes. Commuters will likely experience some project-related effects during the construction phases, and post-construction with the loss of access to the US-101 freeway associated with the Preferred Alternative, however, the end result of this project will likely enhance circulation in the area as mitigation measures are implemented (please reference Section 2.1.5, entitled, "Traffic and Transportation/Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities for more information on these mitigation measures).

### Zip Code 91401 – Community of Van Nuys

**Community Character and Cohesion.** This particular community exists on the northeast side of the project area, but not immediately adjacent to the I-405 or US-101 freeways. It is home to 40,372 residents, which represent roughly 26 percent of the population in the study area. Census data for this community shows a slightly higher-than-county percentage of the population under the age of 5 (8.1% vs. 7.7%), but relatively average numbers in all other age demographics. In comparison to Los Angeles County, the community has a slightly higher percentage of the population declaring race as "White" (60.0% vs. 48.7%), a comparatively low percentage of the population declaring race as "Black or African-American" (5.2% vs. 9.8%), and an interestingly low percentage of the population declaring race as "Asian" (4.5% vs. 11.9% for the county).

An examination of housing characteristics in this particular community reveals that renters occupy the majority of the supply, at 63.4 percent. The high level of renter-occupied units relative to the percentage of owner-occupied units is often indicative of the degree of belonging or attachment residents hold toward the community in which they live. In these instances, the degree of community cohesion the residents hold may be significantly lower than a district with a majority of owner-occupied housing supply. On the whole, community cohesion in this area is considered to be low-to-moderate.

**Socioeconomic Characteristics.** According to 2000 U.S. Census data, 70.3 percent of the population in this community have graduated from high school, which is right in line with numbers for the county (69.9 percent). The percentage of those holding a Bachelor's degree or higher (25.7 percent) is somewhat consistent (if not slightly higher) with numbers for Los Angeles County at 24.9 percent. Median household income at \$35,403, and per capita income at \$19,610 are much lower than county averages (\$42,189 and \$20,683, respectively), which may explain the higher percentage of the population utilizing public transportation as a means to commute to work (7.7 percent versus 6.6 percent for the county). Higher public transportation ridership may also be attributed to the relatively high percentage of families living below poverty level (19.9 percent versus 14.4 percent for Los Angeles County). In fact, this particular community has the highest percentage of families living in poverty in the project study area.

The definition of “poverty,” or “low income” populations in the project study area is based on the Department of Health and Human Services poverty guidelines. For census year 2000, this was \$17,050 for a family of four.

**Table 10. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Poverty Guidelines**

Size of Family Unit	2000	2007
1	\$8,350	\$10,210
2	\$11,250	\$13,690
3	\$14,150	\$17,170
4	\$17,050	\$20,650
5	\$19,950	\$24,130
6	\$22,850	\$27,610
7	\$25,750	\$31,090
8	\$28,650	\$34,570
For each additional person, add	\$2,900	\$3,480

Source: United States Department of Health and Human Services

Mean travel time to work for commuters in this area is roughly 31.4 minutes, in which a temporary increase will be seen during the construction phases of the proposed project. A permanent increase in mean travel time to work may occur in this community, and commuters will likely experience some project-related effects during the construction phases of the project. This community may also experience some project related effects post-construction with the loss of access to the US-101 freeway associated with the Preferred Alternative, however, the end result of this project will likely enhance circulation in the area as mitigation measures are implemented (please reference Section 2.1.5, entitled, “Traffic and Transportation/Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities for more information on these mitigation measures).

### Zip Code 91403 – Community of Sherman Oaks

**Community Character and Cohesion.** This particular community exists immediately southeast of the project area, and is bound by the US-101 freeway and the community of Van Nuys to the north, and the I-405 freeway and the community of Encino to the west. According to 2000 U.S. Census data, this district is home to 22,079 residents, which represent approximately 15 percent of the population within the study area.

In terms of age demographics, the data for this community shows a profile similar to zip code 91316—a lower-than-county percentage of the population under the age of 5, accompanied by a higher percentage of the population between the ages of 18-65, and a higher percentage of the population over the age of 65. As with that zip code, this data represents a community that likely consists of working professionals with fewer children, and amenities that are attractive and hospitable to the elderly. Racial distribution in this zip code is also homogeneous, with 81.9 percent of the population declaring race as “white.” Data on housing characteristics show that distribution of owner and renter-occupied units is almost evenly split, but the median housing value in this district is more than double the average for Los Angeles County (\$458,100 vs. \$209,300). Community cohesion in this particular area is considered to be moderate-to-high.

**Socioeconomic Characteristics.** Educational attainment in this particular community is strikingly higher than numbers for the county and for other communities in the project study area. 93.4 percent of the population are high school graduates (versus 69.9 percent in Los Angeles County), and just over half of the population holds a Bachelor’s degree or higher (versus 24.9 percent for the county). As expected, median household income (\$53,596) and per capita income (\$43,146) are also markedly higher than county and surrounding communities. The percentage of families below poverty level (5.6 percent) is minute in comparison to other communities in the project study area and the county as a whole (14.4

percent). Public transit ridership as a means of commuting to work is well below the county average (2.6 percent vs. 6.6 percent for the county, but slightly higher than in zip code 91316 (Encino). Mean travel time to work (31.2 minutes) is on par with other communities in the project study area, and only slightly above the county average. Commuters will likely experience some project-related effects during the construction phases, and post-construction with the loss of access to the US-101 freeway associated with the Preferred Alternative, however, the end result of this project will likely enhance circulation in the area as mitigation measures are implemented (please reference Section 2.1.5, entitled, "Traffic and Transportation/Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities for more information on these mitigation measures).

### Zip Code 91411 – Community of Van Nuys

**Community Character and Cohesion.** This particular community exists immediately northeast of the project area, adjacent to both the I-405 freeway and the easternmost side of the Sepulveda Basin Recreation Area. There is concern that this community, in particular, may experience the most significant project related effects on surface streets surrounding the project area with the Preferred Alternative as access to the US-101 freeway from Burbank Boulevard will be completely lost. Mitigation has been set forth, and can be referenced in Section 2.1.5, entitled, "Traffic and Transportation/Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities." This community is home to 23,641 residents, which represent approximately 15 percent of the population in the study area.

Age demographics show a community slightly younger than other communities in the project area, with a median age of 30.9 years. In comparison to Los Angeles County, there is also a higher percentage of the population under the age of 5 (8.8% vs. 7.7% for the county) and a noticeably lower percentage of the population over the age of 65 (7.8 % vs. 9.7% for Los Angeles County). Racially, there appears to be a higher-than-county percentage of those declaring race as "White" and "Hispanic or Latino." This community also appears to follow a trend that is consistent throughout other communities in the project study area with an "Asian" population that is nearly half the county average (5.4% vs. 11.9%), and a "Black or African-American" population that comprises only 5.4 percent of the community (versus 9.8 percent for Los Angeles County).

In terms of housing supply, renters occupy the majority at 72.2 percent, and the community's relatively low number of persons over the age of 65 only further supports the notion that residential sentiment in this community is decidedly transitional. This assessment appears to be acknowledged by the Van Nuys Community Plan in its guidelines for the Van Nuys Central Business District (CBD), which exists largely within this particular community. It outlines specifications and development goals aimed at improving community development, activities, and aesthetics. Community cohesion in this particular area is considered to be low-to-moderate.

**Socioeconomic Characteristics.** The socioeconomic characteristics in this community stand in sharp contrast to the profile presented in zip code 91403 (Sherman Oaks). Only 65.1 percent of the population in this community are high school graduates (versus 93.4 percent in Zip Code 91403, and 69.9 percent in Los Angeles County), and just 20.8 percent of the population hold a Bachelor's degree (versus 50.9 percent for Zip Code 91403, and 24.9 percent for the county). Median household income (\$34,266) and per capita income (\$17,415) are the lowest in the project study area, and well below county numbers at \$42,189 and \$20,683, respectively. 16.7 percent of families in this community are living in poverty, which is well above the county at 14.4 percent. As expected, public transit ridership as a means of commuting to work is highest within the project study area at 10.1%, and also higher than Los Angeles County at 6.6 percent. Interestingly, this particular community has the highest mean travel time to work in the project study area. A permanent increase in mean travel time to work will likely occur in this community with the Preferred Alternative which includes the complete loss of access to the US-101 freeway from Burbank Boulevard. This community is closest to the I-405/Burbank Boulevard interchanges and commuters will likely experience the most project-related effects during the construction phases. Additionally, commuters may experience project-related effects post-construction with the loss of access to the US-101 freeway associated with the Preferred Alternative. The end result of this project will likely enhance circulation in

the area as mitigation measures are implemented (please reference Section 2.1.5, entitled, "Traffic and Transportation/Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities for more information on these mitigation measures).

### **Zip Code 91423 – Community of Van Nuys/North Sherman Oaks**

**Community Character and Cohesion.** This community exists just east of the project area, but not adjacent to the I-405 freeway. It largely straddles the US-101 freeway between Van Nuys Boulevard and Coldwater Canyon Avenue, and is bound by the 91401 zip code on the north, and Sherman Oaks on the south. This community is home to 29,370 residents, which represent roughly 19% of the population in the study area.

Like zip code 91403 (Sherman Oaks) to the south, this community and environment are hospitable to working professionals and the elderly, with a median age of 38.2, and higher-than-county percentages of persons between the ages of 18-65, and 65 and older. Racially, those declaring race as "White" are the majority that constitute 82.5 percent of the community population. As with many of the other communities in the project area, "Hispanic or Latino" and "Asian" populations are well below county averages. A slightly higher-than-county percentage of renter-occupied units may reflect a mildly transitional sentiment within the community. It is worth noting that median property value of single-family, owner-occupied homes is approximately 54 percent higher than the county average (\$388,500 versus \$209,300 for Los Angeles County). Community cohesion in this area is considered to be moderate-to-high.

**Socioeconomic Characteristics.** Socioeconomic data for this community is not indifferent from Sherman Oaks zip code 91403, which is expected, because of its close proximity (just due south). 92.6 percent of the population are high school graduates, and 46.1 percent hold a Bachelor's degree or higher. Median income (\$52,662) and per capita income (\$40,797) are relatively high in comparison to other communities in the project study area and the county as a whole. As a result, the percentage of families living in poverty (5.7 percent) is not as extreme as in zip code 91401 (Van Nuys). Mean travel time to work (29.9 minutes) is on par with county numbers (29.4 minutes), but much lower than other communities in the vicinity, and only 1.9 percent of the population use public transportation to commute to work. Commuters will likely experience some project-related effects during the construction phases, and post-construction with the loss of access to the US-101 freeway associated with the Preferred Alternative, however, the end result of this project will likely enhance circulation in the area as mitigation measures are implemented (please reference Section 2.1.5, entitled, "Traffic and Transportation/Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities for more information on these mitigation measures).

### **Zip Code 91436 – Community of Encino**

**Community Character and Cohesion.** This community lies just southwest of the project area, and adjacent to the I-405 and US-101 freeways and interchange. It is home to approximately 13,109 residents, which constitute nearly 8 percent of the population in the study area.

Median age in this community is slightly higher than other communities in the project area at 45.5 years, with 79.3 percent of the population between the ages of 18-65. At the same time, persons over the age of 65 make up 20.9 percent of the population. This community, in particular, is racially homogeneous with 89.9 percent of the population declaring race as "White." Owner-occupied housing, constitutes 85.9 percent of the housing supply in this community, with a relatively high percentage of the supply being single-family units. Median property values are more than double the county average at \$583,400. Community cohesion in this area is considered to be moderate-to-high.

**Socioeconomic Characteristics.** 2000 U.S. Census data for this community show relatively high levels of educational attainment, with 94.5 percent of the population graduating from high school, and 56.8 percent holding a Bachelor's degree or higher. Median household income (\$102,652) and per capita income (\$61,336) are the highest in all communities within the project study area, and customarily, the percentage of families living in poverty (5.2 percent) is the lowest. As expected, this community also has

the lowest percentage of individuals using public transportation to commute to work at 1.1 percent. Mean travel time to work is similar to other communities and the county at 29.9 minutes. Commuters in the northeast portion of this community should expect to experience some project-related effects during the construction phases, and post-construction with the loss of access to the US-101 freeway associated with the Preferred Alternative, however, the end result of this project will likely enhance circulation in the area as mitigation measures are implemented (please reference Section 2.1.5, entitled, "Traffic and Transportation/Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities for more information on these mitigation measures).

## Environmental Consequences

**Potential Project-Related Traffic Impacts.** As mentioned previously, vehicles may no longer access the northbound or southbound US-101 from the Burbank Boulevard on-ramp to southbound I-405 in the configuration associated with the Preferred Alternative. Traffic that currently utilizes the Burbank Boulevard on-ramp to access the US-101 freeway is expected to be redistributed to the Balboa and Hayvenhurst Boulevard on-ramps, and other facilities surrounding the project area. These locations carry high volumes in the existing condition, and with ambient growth and the addition of redistributed traffic associated with the Preferred Alternative, conditions are expected to worsen in the future. A federally mandated environmental justice analysis of potential Preferred Alternative impacts to the community of Van Nuys is carried out later in this section. More information on potential traffic impacts associated with Alternative 1 and all other proposed alternatives can be found later in this document in Section 2.1.5, entitled, "Traffic and Transportation/Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities.

**Potential Right-Of-Way/Private Property Impacts.** The Preferred Alternative and the (3) recently rejected alternatives all had similarities in the required encroachment upon the spillway of the Sepulveda Dam. Recently Rejected Alternatives 2 and 3 had the potential to encroach upon the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Refuge, and would have attracted ever-stronger public resistance than what is already evident. Previously Rejected Alternative 4 would have required the partial or full acquisition of up to (12) residential properties on the southeast side of the interchange in the community of Sherman Oaks, between Sepulveda and Van Nuys Boulevards. A federally mandated analysis of community demographics in the interests of environmental justice was also performed for this particular community, but there was no potential to impact any minority or low-income populations in that area. More details on this environmental justice analysis can be found later in the in the section. More information in regard to relocations associated with Previously Rejected Alternative 4 acquisitions was retained in this environmental document, and can be found in later the Relocations section. The following table has been prepared to highlight the potential right-of-way impacts associated with the Preferred Alternative, and the (3) Recently Rejected Alternatives.

**Table 11. Description of Alternatives and Potential Right-of-Way Impacts**

	Description	Impact
<b>Preferred Alternative</b>	This alternative proposes realignment of the existing southbound I-405 to southbound US-101 connector, and realignment of the Burbank Boulevard on-ramp to accommodate such.	This alternative poses right-of-way impacts to the spillway of the Sepulveda Dam south of Burbank Boulevard.
<b>Recently Rejected Alternative 2</b>	As with Alternative 1, this alternative proposed the realignment of the existing southbound I-405 to southbound US-101 connector, but the Burbank Boulevard on-and-off-ramps would have been reconfigured into a non-standard loop alignment in order to minimize right-of-way impacts to the Sepulveda Dam and areas adjacent to the project area. This alternative would have also required that the existing Burbank Boulevard/I-405 over-crossing be rebuilt to accommodate the Burbank Boulevard on-and-off-ramp realignment.	This alternative would have posed right-of-way impacts to the spillway of the Sepulveda Dam south of Burbank Boulevard, and the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Refuge to the north.
<b>Recently Rejected Alternative 3</b>	This alternative was similar to Alternative 2, with the exception of a standard realignment for the proposed Burbank Blvd on-and-off-ramp loops, which would have increased the encroachment onto the spillway of the Sepulveda Dam and areas adjacent to the project area. But, It would have eliminated the need for reconstruction of the Burbank Boulevard/I-405 over-crossing.	This alternative would have posed right-of-way impacts to the spillway of the Sepulveda Dam south of Burbank Boulevard, and the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Refuge to the north.

**Potential Impacts to Property Values or Local Tax Base.** In general, the issue of whether or not the proposed project will create a significant impact to property values or the local tax base in the project study area is based purely on speculation. Property values, as well as the local tax base, can be affected by multiple external variables, not necessarily attributed to the proposed project. These external variables include, but are not limited to; the constantly changing local, regional, and national economic status, public policies, changing fuel and energy costs, community image and aesthetics, land and housing availability, and location. Additionally, the type and number of surrounding businesses, basic city services, city planning, and the ever fluctuating real estate market also have an influence on property values and the local tax base. There would have been some potential for impacts to general property values and the local tax base if Previously Rejected Alternative 4 was selected, which would have included (1) partial and (2) full acquisitions of residential properties on the southeast side of the interchange in the community of Sherman Oaks, but these impacts would have been minimal in consideration of the scenario on a larger, regional scale. Where partial property acquisitions or easements would have been necessary, these impacts to property values would have been nominal, as those properties already exist immediately adjacent to the US-101 freeway. Owners of properties where full acquisition would have been required would be fully compensated for any loss as detailed in Section 2.4.2 of this document, entitled, “Relocations.”

**Potential Regional Economic Impacts.** The I-405/US-101 interchange is largely considered as one of America’s worst freeway bottlenecks, and there is a substantial need for improvements as the existing structures were built in the 1950s and insufficient in accommodating both current and future capacity. As it is, the region—the San Fernando Valley—continues to suffer from economic and cumulative impacts that are a direct result of the extreme traffic congestion and circulation issues at this important regional freeway interchange. From an economic standpoint, the extreme traffic congestion and circulation issues at the I-405/US-101 interchange create regional impacts in terms of the cost of moving goods and lost productivity hours. Productivity is typically a system efficiency measure, and reflects the degree to which the transportation system performs during peak demand conditions. The efficiency of any transportation system is directly related to the cost of the movement of not just goods, but people as well. During construction, some businesses may experience minor economic effects that are a result of temporary circulation and/or access issues related to traffic redistribution, but the overall economic benefit of the

improved conditions post-construction will be significant. Current conditions already make it difficult for citizens in the surrounding communities to access neighborhood amenities and services, so any improvement to circulation or access would create more positive, rather than negative, regional economic impacts.

**Potential Impacts to Local Businesses.** The Preferred Alternative does not pose any right-of-way impacts to local business. As discussed in the previous section, local businesses surrounding the project area may experience minor effects that are a result of temporary circulation and/or access issues related to traffic redistribution, but there is no potential for acquisition or relocation of local businesses per a Relocation Impact Report prepared by Caltrans (Caltrans 2006a). This report also indicates that there is no potential for impacts to businesses that are minority owned. Government can often be classified as a type of business, and in this instance, there is potential for the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) and the City of Los Angeles to be impacted, as the Preferred Alternative will impact the spillway of the Sepulveda Dam. Recently Rejected Alternatives 2 and 3 would have posed impacts to the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve, but these design alternatives have since been rejected and are no longer being considered. The Sepulveda Basin Recreation Area and the two aforementioned facilities are managed by the USACE and the City of Los Angeles Department of Recreation and Parks.

**Table 12. Estimated Nonresidential Displacement Units by Alternative/Alignment**

	Alternative 1	Rejected Alternative 2	Rejected Alternative 3
<b>NONRESIDENTIAL</b>			
Commercial Business	0	0	0
Industrial/Manufacturing Businesses	0	0	0
Nonprofit Organizations	0	0	0
Agricultural/Farms	0	0	0
TOTAL NONRESIDENTIAL UNITS	0	0	0
TOTAL UNITS	0	0	0

Source: State of California-Department of Transportation, Relocation Impact Report, 2/23/2006

**Potential Impacts on Economic Vitality, Established Business Districts, and Employment.** During the construction phases, established business districts immediate to the interchange, and along Sepulveda and Ventura Boulevards may experience minimal economic effects that are a result of temporary circulation and/or access issues related to traffic redistribution, but the overall economic benefit of the improved conditions post-construction will be significant. Existing conditions already make it difficult for citizens in the surrounding communities to access neighborhood amenities and services, so any improvement to circulation or access would create more positive, rather than negative, end results.

Improvements to traffic, flow and capacity on the freeway mainline and connectors will also translate to signalized intersections throughout communities surrounding the project area. Serious traffic and circulation issues plague both the Van Nuys Central Business District and the Ventura/Cahuenga Boulevard Corridor with development and growth exceeding the capacity of the existing transportation infrastructure. Any improvements in traffic flow and circulation will aid in the revitalization of these business districts that the City of Los Angeles is currently focused on. The project is not anticipated to adversely affect employment in these areas, and none of the proposed project alternatives include the displacement of any businesses or the acquisition of any nonresidential or business properties.

**Potential Visual/Aesthetic Impacts.** A Visual Impact Assessment (VIA) has been prepared by the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), Division of Landscape Architecture according to guidelines set forth by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). While the project does not have the potential to affect any officially designated scenic highways, a VIA was performed, nevertheless, and is discussed in more detail in Section 2.1.6 of this document, entitled, "Visual/Aesthetics."

**Potential Air Quality Impacts.** An Air Quality Assessment has been prepared to assess the potential of air quality impacts in the project study area, and in the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) region. A comprehensive analysis of potential air pollutants has concluded that the proposed project alternatives do not pose any significant operational impact on the ambient air quality in the project vicinity. A more detailed discussion and analysis is presented in Section 2.2.6 of this document, entitled, "Air Quality."

## **Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Compensation Measures**

**Measures to Minimize/Compensate for Potential Project-Related Traffic Impacts.** A Traffic Analysis Report has been performed that examines traffic operations for the existing condition, future No Build condition, and the Preferred Alternative. It also presents proposals to minimize or compensate for any project-related traffic impacts not just on the freeway mainlines and on-and-off-ramps, but also to signalized intersections within communities surrounding the project area. A more detailed discussion and analysis of traffic is presented in Section 2.1.5 of this document, entitled "Traffic and Transportation/Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities."

**Measures to Minimize/Compensate for Potential Right-Of-Way/Private Property Acquisition Impacts.** Project funds for relocations are adequately budgeted to cover expenses associated with any right-of-way or property acquisitions associated with the Preferred Alternative. If Rejected Alternatives 2 or 3 were selected, an agent would have been assigned to handle all residential or business relocations within an estimated time frame (normally 6-9 months), but these alternatives have since been rejected and are no longer being considered. More information and relocations can be found in the following "Relocations" section.

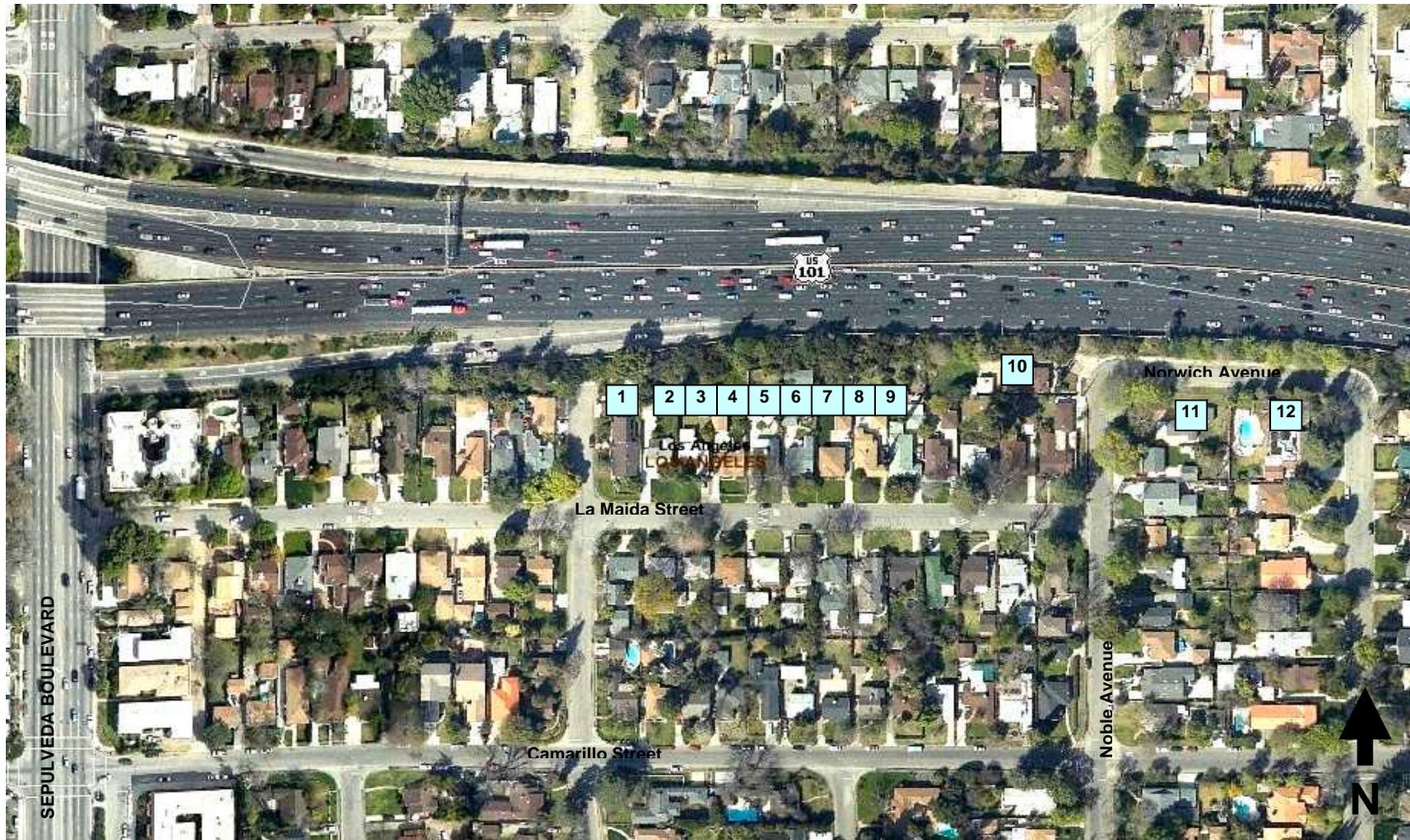
**Measures to Minimize/Compensate for Potential Visual/Aesthetic Impacts.** Caltrans and the FHWA mandate that a qualitative/aesthetic approach should be taken to minimize any impacts to visual quality in the project area, which include, but are not limited to; implementation of architectural enhancements and landscaping with ornamental vegetation to minimize and/or compensate for any loss in visual quality. More details are highlighted in Section 2.1.6 of this document, entitled, "Visual/Aesthetics."

## **Relocations**

**Regulatory Setting.** The Department's Relocation Assistance Program (RAP) is based on the Federal Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970 (as amended) and Title 49 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 24. The purpose of RAP is to ensure that persons displaced as a result of a transportation project are treated fairly, consistently, and equitably so that such persons will not suffer disproportionate injuries as a result of projects designed for the benefit of the public as a whole. All relocation services and benefits are administered without regard to race, color, national origin, or sex in compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act (42 U.S.C. 2000d, et seq.).

**Right-Of-Way Impacts and Relocations Associated with Previously Rejected Alternative 4.** While Rejected Alternative 4 is no longer being considered, the discussion of potential right-of-way impacts and relocations associated with the rejected alternative is retained in this document in an effort to ensure the public of sufficient consideration. Rejected Alternative 4 proposed a widening of the existing US-101 freeway and a new southbound US-101 connector that traverses the I-405/US-101 interchange, and joins southbound US-101 just west of Van Nuys Boulevard. Relocations would have been necessary if this alternative was selected, with (2) of (12) potentially impacted residences requiring full acquisition. Impacts to the remaining (10) would have involved either partial right-of-way acquisition or easements from private property. After a demographic analysis of the potentially affected census tracts, it was determined that there are no minority or low-income populations of concern that would have triggered environmental justice protections. For a more detailed analysis, please reference the Caltrans Relocation Impact Report (Caltrans 2006a) which is available for public review.

Figure 16. Location of Potential Property Right-Of-Way Impacts - Sherman Oaks (Rejected Alternative 4)



Source: California Department of Transportation, Digital Highway Inventory Photography Program. Map created by Anthony Baquiran/Division of Environmental Planning, November 19, 2007

**Table 13. Estimated Full Residential Displacement Units by Alternative/Alignment**

	Alternative 1	Rejected Alternative 2	Rejected Alternative 3	Rejected Alternative 4
<b>RESIDENTIAL</b>				
Owner Occupants of Single Family Residences	0	0	0	2
Tenant Occupants of Single Family Residences	0	0	0	0
Tenant Occupants of Multiple Family Residences	0	0	0	0
Owner Occupants of Mobile Homes	0	0	0	0
Tenant Occupants of Mobile Homes	0	0	0	0
<b>TOTAL RESIDENTIAL UNITS</b>	0	0	0	2
<b>TOTAL PERSONS</b>	0	0	0	*4

\*Based on 2000 US Census demographic profile for displacement area - "average family size of occupied housing units" = 1.98  
 Source: State of California-Department of Transportation, Relocation Impact Report, 2/23/2006

**Project-Related Relocation Expenses.** Relocations were to be expected with the implementation of Alternative 4, but it has since been rejected and is no longer being considered. Nevertheless, it is Caltrans’ policy to earmark project funds for relocations and to adequately budget to cover all associated costs and compensation. Agents are typically assigned to handle all relocations within an estimated time frame, normally 6-9 months. Depending on the number of displacees, a determination is typically made in regard to the feasibility of relocations within the community.

Preliminary studies in the project area indicated that the availability of safe and sanitary replacement housing in the area was more than sufficient, and comparable in terms of amenities, public utilities, and accessibility to public services, transportation, and shopping. Market availability is expected to remain adequate and there are no other pending Caltrans or public projects in the area that would affect or compete with available housing. For more information regarding the State’s relocation program, please reference Appendix D of this document, entitled, “Summary of Relocation Benefits.”

**Environmental Justice**

**Regulatory Setting.** All projects involving a federal action (funding, permit, or land) must comply with Executive Order (EO) 12898, Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations, signed by President Clinton on February 11, 1994. This Executive Order directs federal agencies to take the appropriate and necessary steps to identify and address disproportionately high and adverse effects of federal projects on the health or environment of minority and low-income populations to the greatest extent practicable and permitted by law. Low income is defined based on the Department of Health and Human Services poverty guidelines. For census year 2000, this was \$17,050 for a family of four.

All considerations under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and related statutes have also been included in this project. The Department’s commitment to upholding the mandates of Title VI is evidenced by its Title VI Policy Statement, signed by the Director.

As discussed in the previous sections, Previously Rejected Alternative 4 had the potential to adversely impact residents in zip code 91403 in the community of Sherman Oaks through partial and full acquisition of private residential property that included (2) residential relocations, but there were no significant minority or low-income populations in that area.

Of the six community zip codes analyzed in this community impact assessment, two emerged as communities of concern because of disproportionately high percentages of minority and low-income populations in comparison to numbers for Los Angeles County and the project area, in general. This

project involves federal actions, which require that Caltrans take appropriate measures to identify and address project effects on communities like these. As previously discussed, 19.9 percent of families in zip code 91401 are living below poverty level, which is a much higher proportion in comparison to Los Angeles County at 14.4 percent. In the same zip code, 22.4 percent of individuals are living below poverty levels, which exceed county numbers at 17.9 percent. In zip code 91411 (also in Van Nuys), 16.7 percent of families and 20.7 percent of individuals are living below poverty level. Additionally, this zip code has relatively high numbers of those declaring race as minority—particularly “Hispanic or Latino,” “Some other race,” and “Two or more races”—in comparison to Los Angeles County. This is presented in the following table:

**Table 14. Racial Characteristics for Zip Code 91411**

Racial Characteristics	Number	Percent	L.A. County (number)	L.A. County (percent)
One race	22,285	94.3%	9,049,557	95.1%
White	13,097	55.4%	4,637,062	48.7%
Black or African American	1,273	5.4%	930,957	9.8%
American Indian and Alaska Native	150	0.6%	76,988	0.8%
Asian	1,286	5.4%	1,137,500	11.9%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	38	0.2%	27,053	0.3%
Some other race	6,441	27.2%	2,239,997	23.5%
Two or more races	1,356	5.7%	469,751	4.9%
Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	12,414	52.5%	4,242,213	44.6%

Source: U.S. Census 2000

**Determination of Disproportionate Effects to Minority and Low-Income Populations**

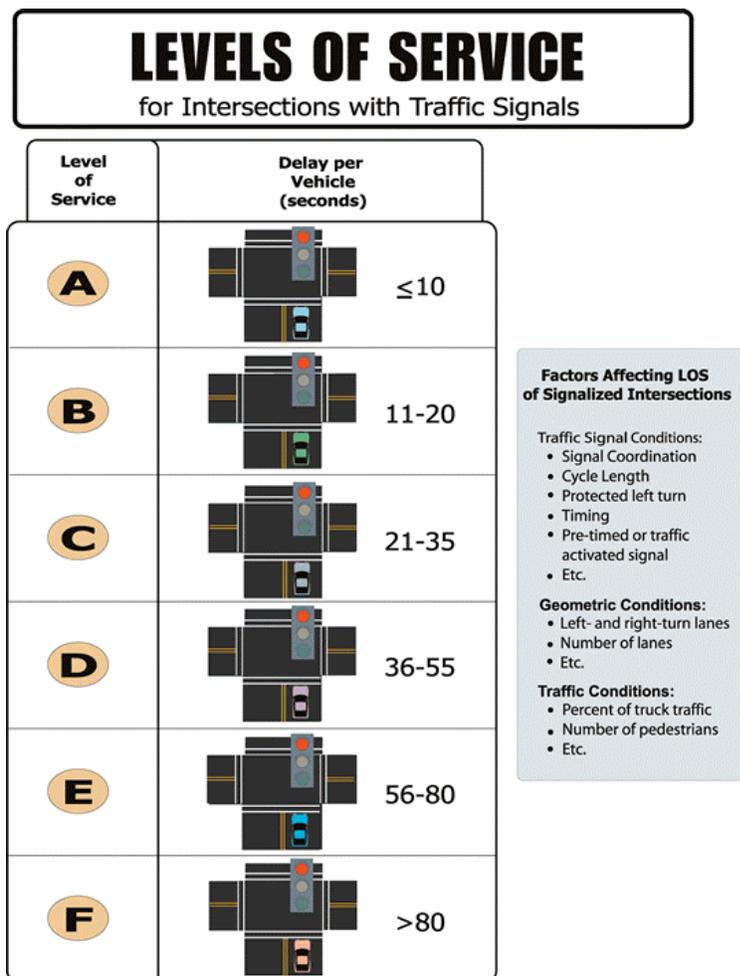
A number of potential discussion points have been considered within the context of environmental justice such as:

- History of other projects or actions that may have disproportionately impacted the local residents
- A permanent reduction of access to various services or cultural destinations
- Reduction in access to transit services
- Project-related property acquisitions and relocations

There is no potential for adverse impacts concerning the aforementioned points, but a need has emerged to study any adverse effects related to an increase in traffic in zip codes 91401 and 91411 as access to the US-101 freeway from Burbank Boulevard would be eliminated. Commuters would be forced to find other points of access to the US-101 freeway utilizing the surrounding roadway network, which currently is operating at or above peak levels and specifications.

The roadway network surrounding the I-405/US-101 interchange carries very high volumes of traffic throughout the day, and there is little room for geometrical improvements. Some of the existing traffic, circulation, and access issues can be attributed to traffic spill off the I-405 and US-101 freeway mainlines because of extreme congestion and commuters who are forced to exit the mainline and navigate to their destinations using surface streets. A Traffic Analysis Report was prepared for this project (IBI Group 2007) that studied the potential effects of all proposed alternatives through the horizon years of 2015 and 2030, measuring traffic at a total of (22) intersections in the project study area. Traffic operations were analyzed using the capacity Level of Service (LOS) analysis methodology published in the 2000 Highway Capacity Manual (HCM) for signalized intersections. The following graphic illustrates this analysis methodology:

Figure 17. Levels of Service (LOS) for Intersections with Traffic Signals



Source: 2000 HCM, Exhibit 16-2, Level of Service Criteria for Signalized Intersections

Of the (22) intersections measured and analyzed in the IBI Group Traffic Analysis Report, the following intersections were selected for environmental justice analysis as they fall within the 91401 and 91411 postal zip codes:

- Burbank Boulevard & Sepulveda Boulevard
- Burbank Boulevard & Van Nuys Boulevard
- Magnolia Boulevard & Sepulveda Boulevard
- Magnolia Boulevard & Van Nuys Boulevard

In an examination of traffic volume studies and forecasts for year 2015 and 2030, any decreases in LOS at these intersections were identified through all proposed project alternatives. While these assessments alone do not constitute violations of environmental justice protections, they have provided great insight into the existing level of service conditions and the possible project-related effects of the Preferred Alternative. The results by year and alternative are presented in the following tables with any decreases in level of service highlighted in yellow:

**Table 15. Year 2015 AM Peak Level of Service (LOS)**

Intersection	Level of Service (LOS)			
	No build	ALT 1	Rejected ALT 2	Rejected ALT 3
Burbank Boulevard & Sepulveda Boulevard	F	F	F	F
Burbank Boulevard & Van Nuys Boulevard	F	F	F	F
Magnolia Boulevard & Sepulveda Boulevard	E	E	E	E
Magnolia Boulevard & Van Nuys Boulevard	D	E	D	D

Source: IBI Group Traffic Analysis Report for the SB I-405-US-101 Connector Improvement Project

**Table 16. Year 2015 PM Peak Level of Service (LOS)**

Intersection	Level of Service (LOS)			
	No build	ALT 1	Rejected ALT 2	Rejected ALT 3
Burbank Boulevard & Sepulveda Boulevard	F	F	F	F
Burbank Boulevard & Van Nuys Boulevard	E	E	E	E
Magnolia Boulevard & Sepulveda Boulevard	F	F	F	F
Magnolia Boulevard & Van Nuys Boulevard	F	F	F	F

Source: IBI Group Traffic Analysis Report for the SB I-405-US-101 Connector Improvement Project

**Table 17. Year 2030 AM Peak Level of Service (LOS)**

Intersection	Level of Service (LOS)			
	No build	ALT 1	Rejected ALT 2	Rejected ALT 3
Burbank Boulevard & Sepulveda Boulevard	F	F	F	F
Burbank Boulevard & Van Nuys Boulevard	E	F	F	F
Magnolia Boulevard & Sepulveda Boulevard	F	F	F	F
Magnolia Boulevard & Van Nuys Boulevard	F	F	F	F

Source: IBI Group Traffic Analysis Report for the SB I-405-US-101 Connector Improvement Project

**Table 18. Year 2030 PM Peak Level of Service (LOS)**

Intersection	Level of Service (LOS)			
	No build	ALT 1	Rejected ALT 2	Rejected ALT 3
Burbank Boulevard & Sepulveda Boulevard	F	F	F	F
Burbank Boulevard & Van Nuys Boulevard	F	F	F	F
Magnolia Boulevard & Sepulveda Boulevard	F	F	F	F
Magnolia Boulevard & Van Nuys Boulevard	F	F	F	F

Source: IBI Group Traffic Analysis Report for the SB I-405-US-101 Connector Improvement Project

Based on the aforementioned findings, it has been determined that there will be no adverse effects on zip codes 91401 and 91411 related to an increase in traffic. The Preferred Alternative shows a decrease in LOS at Magnolia and Van Nuys Boulevard in the year 2015, but existing operating conditions are already at low levels, so the presented increases in traffic delay are not considered to be adverse in relation. For a more detailed discussion of traffic on freeway mainlines, access ramps, and intersections, please reference Section 2.6 of this document, entitled, "Traffic and Transportation/Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities."

## 2.1.4 UTILITIES, COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND EMERGENCY SERVICES

### Utilities

The Preferred Alternative is expected to impact existing utilities and right-of-way associated with such, requiring easements and special agreements from managing agencies. The following details were obtained from the Caltrans Division of Project Development, and all costs and specifications are subject to change. More information will be available during the next Project, Specifications, and Estimates phase. The estimated utilities relocation costs for the Preferred Alternative are \$50,000, with the possibility of escalation to \$99,614. These costs include the drilling of (4) potholes to determine the possible relocation of a Southern California Edison natural gas line to run under the I-405 mainline, and the relocation of (2) overhead electrical poles to cross over the I-405 mainline.

For Recently Rejected Alternatives 2 and 3, the estimated utilities relocation costs were also \$50,000 and could have escalated to \$99,614 to pay for the same activities that affect utilities in the Preferred Alternative. Recently Rejected Alternative 3 had much lower estimated relocation costs of \$3,000 that could have escalated to \$5,979. Previously Rejected Alternative 4 had estimated utilities relocation costs of \$7,000 and could have escalated to \$13,952.

### Community Facilities and Emergency Services

Community facilities and services include the schools, police stations, fire stations, and parks and recreational facilities in the area. There will be no discussion of parks and recreation in this section as a more detailed discussion on this topic occurs earlier in the document in its own section entitled, "Parks and Recreation." The Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) provides primary and secondary public education services, along with a host of private institutions throughout Van Nuys, Sherman Oaks, Encino, and the neighboring communities. Protection and law enforcement is provided by the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) through (2) police stations serving the communities in the project area. Further protection is provided by (7) Los Angeles Fire Department (LAFD) neighborhood stations through fire protection and firefighting, emergency medical care, hazardous materials and disaster response, and community service. The California Highway Patrol (CHP) has jurisdiction over the I-405 and US-101 freeways for matters involving both traffic and emergency services. Parks and recreational facilities are planned, developed, and managed by the City of Los Angeles Department of Recreation and Parks.

**Schools.** The proposed project alternatives do not pose any relocation or adverse impacts to any schools in the project area, but facilities immediate to the project area may experience temporary effects during construction in terms of associated accessibility and/or noise issues. During the construction phases of the project, noise from construction activities will temporarily and intermittently dominate the noise environment in the immediate area of construction. Construction noise is regulated by Caltrans Standard Specifications, Section 7-1.011, "Sound Control Requirements." These requirements state that noise levels generated during construction shall comply with applicable local, state, and federal regulations that all equipment shall be fitted with adequate mufflers according to the manufacturers' specifications. A list of schools within (4) miles of the project area is provided below, complete with their approximate distance from the project area (as determined by distance from the intersection of Burbank and Sepulveda Boulevards).

**Table 19. Community Schools Within Four Miles of Project Area**

Name	Address	Community	Zip Code	Miles from Project Area
<b>PRE-K / KINDERGARTEN</b>				
Kindergarten Learning Academy	6555 Sylmar Avenue	Van Nuys	91401	2.35
Child S World School	6100 Lindley Avenue	Encino	91316	4.81
Encino Presbyterian Children's Center	4963 Balboa Boulevard	Encino	91316	3.38
<b>ELEMENTARY/MIDDLE SCHOOLS</b>				
Bethel Lutheran Elementary	17500 Burbank Boulevard	Encino	91316	3.98
C.E. Merdianian Armenian Evangelical	13330 Riverside Drive	Sherman Oaks	91423	3.87
Chandler Elementary	14030 Weddington Street	Van Nuys	91401	1.97
Children's Community School	14702 Sylvan Street	Van Nuys	91411	1.90
Dixie Canyon Elementary	4220 Dixie Canyon Avenue	Sherman Oaks	91423	4.18
Emelita Elementary	17931 Hatteras Street	Encino	91316	4.25
Emek Hebrew Academy	15365 Magnolia Boulevard	Sherman Oaks	91403	0.59
Encino Elementary	16941 Addison Street	Encino	91316	3.39
Erwin Elementary	13400 Erwin Street	Van Nuys	91401	3.13
Hester Oaks School	15530 Hesby Street	Encino	91436	1.49
Holy Martyrs Elementary	5300 White Oak Avenue	Encino	91316	4.01
Ivy Bound Academy	15355 Morrison Street	Sherman Oaks	91403	0.89
Kester Elementary	5353 Kester Avenue	Van Nuys	91411	0.81
Kittridge Elementary	13619 Kittridge Street	Van Nuys	91401	3.36
Lanai Elementary	4241 Lanai Road	Encino	91436	2.88
Los Encinos School	17114 Ventura Boulevard	Encino	91316	3.03
Millikan Middle School	5041 Sunnyslope Avenue	Sherman Oaks	91423	4.00
Our Lady of Grace School	17720 Ventura Boulevard	Encino	91316	4.34
Riverside Elementary	13061 Riverside Drive	Sherman Oaks	91423	4.58
Sherman Oaks Elementary	14755 Greenleaf Street	Sherman Oaks	91403	2.13
St. Cyril of Jerusalem School	4548 Haskell Avenue	Encino	91436	2.32
St. Francis De Sales School	13368 Valleyheart Drive	Sherman Oaks	91423	4.03
Sylvan Park Elementary	6238 Noble Avenue	Van Nuys	91411	1.06
Valley Beth Shalom Day School	15739 Ventura Boulevard	Encino	91436	1.82
Van Nuys Elementary	6464 Sylmar Avenue	Van Nuys	91401	2.22
Van Nuys Middle School	5435 Vesper Avenue	Van Nuys	91411	1.08
Village Glen School	13130 Burbank Boulevard	Sherman Oaks	91401	2.71
Westmark School	5461 Louise Avenue	Encino	91316	2.84
<b>HIGH SCHOOL</b>				
Buckley School	3900 Stansbury Avenue	Sherman Oaks	91423	3.65
Crespi Carmelite High School	5031 Alonzo Avenue	Encino	91316	4.50
Grant Senior High	13000 Oxnard Street	Van Nuys	91401	3.38
Ferrahian High School	5300 White Oak Avenue	Encino	91316	4.01
Laurence School	13639 Victory Blvd.	Van Nuys	91401	3.09
London High School	1224 Oxnard Street	Van Nuys	91401	3.48
Notre Dame High School	13645 Riverside Drive	Sherman Oaks	91423	3.48
Rogers High School	14711 Gilmore Street	Van Nuys	91411	1.82
Van Nuys Senior High School	6535 Cedros Avenue	Van Nuys	91411	1.95

**Emergency Services.** No long-term impacts are anticipated for fire, police, and emergency response services as a result of the proposed project. While project construction may create temporary, yet minimal impacts in regard to emergency response times, the end result will improve traffic and circulation issues on both freeway mainlines and on surface streets, which could possibly yield quicker response times for fire, police, and emergency services. Appropriate detours will be implemented, as well as plans for proper fire, police, and emergency access during construction. Funds have been allocated in order to provide a Traffic Management Plan (TMP), which is developed and incorporated as part of the project design prior to the onset of construction and to minimize disruption to the existing traffic flow conditions. More information on the TMP can be found in following Section 2.1.5 of this document, entitled, “Traffic and Transportation/Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities.”

**Table 20. Police and Fire Stations Serving Communities in the Project Area**

Station	Address	Community	Zip Code	Distance from Project Area
<b>COMMUNITY POLICE STATIONS</b>				
Van Nuys Community Police Station	6240 Sylmar Avenue	Van Nuys	91401	2.03
West Valley Community Police Station	19020 Vanowen Street	Reseda	91335	6.77
<b>NEIGHBORHOOD FIRE STATIONS</b>				
Fire Station 39	14415 Sylvan Street	Van Nuys	91401	1.98
Fire Station 83	4960 Balboa Boulevard	Encino	91316	3.39
Fire Station 88	5101 Sepulveda Boulevard	Sherman Oaks	91403	0.69
Fire Station 90	7921 Woodley Avenue	Van Nuys	91406	4.66
Fire Station 100	6751 Louise Avenue	Van Nuys	91406	3.80
Fire Station 102	13200 Burbank Boulevard	Van Nuys	91401	2.61
Fire Station 109	16500 Mulholland Drive	Encino	90049	5.39

## 2.1.5 TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORTATION/PEDESTRIAN AND BICYCLE FACILITIES

### Traffic

The purpose of this project is to improve safety, operation, capacity, and traffic flow through the interchange by replacing the existing 20 mile-per-hour, single-lane connector, with a new 50 mile-per-hour, two-lane connector. The I-405/US-101 interchange is largely considered as one of America’s worst freeway bottlenecks, and there is substantial need for improvements as the existing structures were built in the 1950s and insufficient in accommodating both current and future demand.

These infrastructure deficiencies result in the formation of a queue that backs up onto the I-405 mainline. There are also many weaving areas along the connector route, which contribute to relatively high accident rates (discussed in this section, and in more detail in Chapter 1 of this document). In general, analysis indicates that the Preferred Alternative will provide a significant and reasonable improvement over the No Build condition. Although volumes on certain ramps and adjacent intersections may increase as a result of the different build alternatives due to traffic redistribution, mitigation is in place to alleviate such, and the overall benefits of the improved condition will be significant.

A Traffic Analysis Report has been prepared that examines the traffic operations for the existing condition, future No Build condition, the Preferred Alternative, and Rejected Alternatives 2,3, and 4 within the project area. This analysis serves as a supporting document to the Environmental Assessment/Initial Study (EA/IS) for the I-405/US-101 Connector Improvement Project, in which this Community Impact

Assessment (CIA) is a component of. The following subsections present information extracted from the Traffic Analysis Report (IBI Group 2007), and other contributing studies related to traffic impacts.

## Affected Environment

The I-405 freeway carries an average of 115,000 to 160,000 vehicles per day in the vicinity of the Sepulveda Basin, and the US-101 carries an average of 160,000 to 165,000 vehicles per day in this area. The connector between the southbound I-405 freeway and the US-101 carries over 50,000 vehicles per day, with just over half of those vehicles heading to the northbound US-101 freeway and the rest heading to southbound US-101. The existing connector is a non-standard, single-lane structure with an operational speed of 20 miles-per-hour, and the facility is not sufficient to handle the traffic demand. As mentioned earlier, vehicles form a queue at this location that frequently backs up onto the I-405 mainline, with many weaving areas along the connector route, which contribute to high accident rates. At each of the weaving segments from the southbound I-405 onto the northbound US-101, the accident rates range from 33 percent to 197 percent higher than the state average. On the connector from the southbound I-405 to the southbound US-101, the accident rate is 13 percent higher than the average for facilities of that type.

**Delay Cost Analysis for the No-Build Condition (2015) versus Build Alternatives.** Based on a delay cost analysis performed by the Caltrans Division of Traffic Operations and on the foregoing discussion, the annual savings in travel delay in 2015 associated with the build alternatives over the No-Build Alternative are anticipated to be approximately:

Preferred Alternative: \$38.3 million/year  
Recently Rejected Alternative 2: \$29.4 million/year  
Recently Rejected Alternative 3: \$28.4 million/year

It is obvious from the above analysis that the Preferred Alternative provides the highest travel delay savings over all other alternatives. With the Preferred Alternative, access to the US-101 freeway from Burbank Boulevard will be lost, which would divert and redistribute traffic to other ramps. A full analysis of these ramps and surface streets surrounding the project study area has been performed, and mitigation measures are in place to alleviate the modeled increase in demand. Rejected Alternatives 2 and 3 would have provided a better operational level for the freeway system in the vicinity of the project, and would have still lead to a substantial amount in travel delay savings, and Rejected Alternative 3—which calls for the reconstruction of the Burbank Boulevard on-and-off-ramps—would have represented the best operational improvement to the interchange. This option would have provided considerable savings in travel time and prevented unnecessary redistribution of traffic to other ramps, but this alternative has recently been rejected and is no longer being considered.

**Peak Period Performance.** Peak period performance shows modeled top speeds during the period(s) of highest demands. A slower speed during the peak period typically constitutes a strong indicator of need. Three segments were selected to monitor top speed during both AM and PM peak periods – I-405 southbound at Burbank Boulevard to the I-405/US-101 interchange main line, I-405 southbound at Burbank Boulevard to the US-101 northbound connector, and I-405 southbound at Burbank Boulevard to US-101 southbound connector. Findings are presented in the following tables.

**Table 21. Top Speed, I-405 SB/Burbank Boulevard to Interchange Main Line**

SCENARIO	SPEED	
	AM Peak (mph)	PM Peak (mph)
Existing Conditions	15	18
No Build - Year 2015	10	12
Preferred Alternative	12	14
Rejected Alternative 2	11	13
Rejected Alternative 3	11	13

In this segment on I-405 from Burbank Boulevard to the I-405/US-101 interchange mainline, commuters are already experiencing poor AM and PM peak period performance with speeds that do not exceed 20 miles per hour, which demonstrates the urgent need for this project and improvements to the interchange. If the no action is taken, peak period performance can be expected to continue to decline.

**Table 22. Top Speed, I-405 SB/Burbank Boulevard to US-101 NB Connector**

SCENARIO	SPEED	
	AM Peak (mph)	PM Peak (mph)
Existing Conditions	17	17
No Build - Year 2015	16	13
Preferred Alternative	45	43
Rejected Alternative 2	44	43
Rejected Alternative 3	40	36

The need for improvements at the I-405/US-101 interchange is best demonstrated along this particular segment. With existing conditions, speeds during the AM and PM peak periods do not exceed 20 miles per hour.

**Table 23. Top Speed, I-405 SB/Burbank Boulevard to US-101 SB Connector**

SCENARIO	SPEED	
	AM Peak (mph)	PM Peak (mph)
Existing Conditions	23	20
No Build - Year 2015	22	23
Preferred Alternative	42	23
Rejected Alternative 2	20	39
Rejected Alternative 3	20	39

This particular segment experiences the same issues in AM and PM peak period performance, but with minimal decreases in the No Build scenario.

**Volume/Capacity and Level of Service.** Basic freeway segments have uniform traffic conditions and roadway characteristics, such as the number of lanes, shoulder clearance, and grade. Basic freeway segments within the study area were analyzed using capacity and Level of Service (LOS) concepts from the Highway Capacity Manual (HCM2000). The figure below illustrates the concept of LOS and the associated conditions and technical descriptions, and the tables that follow present data for the southbound I-405 mainline, and the northbound and southbound US-101 freeway segments in the project area vicinity.

Figure 18. Level of Service Thresholds for Freeways

<b>LEVELS OF SERVICE</b> for Freeways			
Level of Service	Flow Conditions	Operating Speed (mph)	Technical Descriptions
<b>A</b>		70	Highest quality of service. Traffic flows freely with little or no restrictions on speed or maneuverability. <b>No delays</b>
<b>B</b>		70	Traffic is stable and flows freely. The ability to maneuver in traffic is only slightly restricted. <b>No delays</b>
<b>C</b>		67	Few restrictions on speed. Freedom to maneuver is restricted. Drivers must be more careful making lane changes. <b>Minimal delays</b>
<b>D</b>		62	Speeds decline slightly and density increases. Freedom to maneuver is noticeably limited. <b>Minimal delays</b>
<b>E</b>		53	Vehicles are closely spaced, with little room to maneuver. Driver comfort is poor. <b>Significant delays</b>
<b>F</b>		<53	Very congested traffic with traffic jams, especially in areas where vehicles have to merge. <b>Considerable delays</b>

**Table 24. Southbound I-405 Mainline V/C and Level of Service (LOS)**

Segment Description	Segment Type	Lanes	AM Peak		PM Peak	
			Density (pc/mi/ln)	LOS	Density (pc/mi/ln)	LOS
North of Victory Blvd	Basic	5	32.3	D	31.0	D
From Victory to Burbank Blvd	Basic	5	35.1	E	33.4	D
Burbank Blvd Overcrossing	Basic	5	34.4	D	31.5	D
South of US-101 connector	Basic	4	55.7	F	51.0	F
Below US-101 facility	Basic	4	71.6	F	66.5	F

Note: Level of Service (LOS) based on HCM 2000 analysis methodology.  
Pc/mi/ln = passenger cars per mile per lane

**Table 25. Northbound US-101 Mainline V/C and Level of Service (LOS)**

Segment Description	Segment Type	Lanes	AM Peak		PM Peak	
			Density (pc/mi/ln)	LOS	Density (pc/mi/ln)	LOS
Van Nuys Blvd under-crossing	Basic	5	50.5	F	52.7	F
Van Nuys Blvd to Sepulveda Blvd	Basic	6	47.6	F	50.2	F
Sepulveda Blvd to NB-405 connector	Basic	5	57.2	F	60.3	F
Northbound US-101	Basic	4	74.9	F	79.0	F
NB-101 over I-405 freeway structure	Basic	6	56.3	F	59.4	F
Between Haskell Ave off-ramp and on-ramp	Basic	6	53.4	F	62.0	F
Haskell Ave to Hayvenhurst Ave	Basic	6	43.6	E	50.6	F
Hayvenhurst Ave to Balboa Blvd	Basic	5	47.9	F	57.3	F
Balboa Blvd under-crossing	Basic	5	47.9	F	57.3	F
North of Balboa Blvd	Basic	5	53.0	F	62.7	F

Note: Level of Service (LOS) based on HCM 2000 analysis methodology.  
Pc/mi/ln = passenger cars per mile per lane

**Table 26. Southbound US-101 Mainline V/C and Level of Service (LOS)**

Segment Description	Segment Type	Lanes	AM Peak		PM Peak	
			Density (pc/mi/ln)	LOS	Density (pc/mi/ln)	LOS
Balboa Blvd under-crossing	Basic	5	55.3	F	54.4	F
Balboa Blvd to Hayvenhurst Ave	Basic	5	64.4	F	63.0	F
Hayvenhurst Ave to Haskell Ave	Basic	6	51.1	F	50.9	F
Southbound US-101	Basic	6	51.1	F	50.9	F
SB-101 over I-405 freeway structure	Basic	4	54.6	F	60.9	F
SB-101 over Sepulveda Blvd	Basic	7	48.1	F	38.5	E
Auxiliary lane segment	Basic	7	43.3	E	36.1	E
Sepulveda Blvd to Van Nuys Blvd	Basic	6	50.5	F	42.1	E

Note: Level of Service (LOS) based on HCM 2000 analysis methodology.  
Pc/mi/ln = passenger cars per mile per lane

**Access and Freeway Connector Volumes.** A summary of the existing ramp and connector lanes and volumes is presented in Table 27. The southbound I-405 connector ramp to the northbound US-101 freeway currently operates at capacity, and contains a mark in the “Flag” column of the table. All other ramps within the study area have sufficient capacity to satisfy existing demand, though improvements will need to be made in the future to meet projected volume/capacity increases.

**Table 27. Access and Freeway Connector Volumes – Existing Condition (Year 2004)**

Post Mile	Ramp Description	Type	Lanes	Capacity (veh/hr)	AM Volume (veh/hr)	PM Volume (veh/hr)	AADT	Flag
Southbound I-405								
39.8	SB 405 to 101 connector	Connector	3	4,500	3,362	2,722	49,200	
39.4	SB 405 to NB 101 connector	Connector	1	1,500	1,792	1,374	25,600	X
39.4	SB 405 to SB 101 connector	Connector	2, 1	3,000	1,570	1,348	23,600	
40.1	SB 405 on from Burbank Blvd	On-ramp	2, 1	3,000	745	485	8,900	
40.5	SB 405 off to Burbank Blvd	Off-ramp	1, 3	1,500	856	807	13,200	
41.3	SB 405 on from Victory Blvd	On-ramp	1	1,500	451	396	4,600	
Northbound US-101								
16.1	NB 101 on from Van Nuys Blvd	On-ramp	2, 1	3,000	1,067	1,211	17,200	
16.7	NB 101 off to Sepulveda Blvd	Off-ramp	1, 2	1,500	838	572	10,600	
17.1	NB 101 on from NB 405	Connector	2	3,000	2,520	2,761	48,700	
17.5	NB 101 off to Haskell Ave	Off-ramp	1	1,500	790	420	6,400	
17.6	NB 101 on from Haskell Ave	On-ramp	1	1,500	260	548	3,400	
18.5	NB 101 off to Hayvenhurst Ave	Off-ramp	1, 2	1,500	723	560	7,700	
19	NB 101 off to Balboa Ave	Off-ramp	1, 3	1,500	620	680	8,600	
19.4	NB 101 on from Balboa Ave	On-ramp	2, 1	3,000	843	887	10,000	
Southbound US-101								
16	SB 101 on from Van Nuys Blvd	On-ramp	2, 1	3,000	809	662	12,400	
16.8	SB 101 on from Sepulveda Blvd	On-ramp	2, 1	3,000	574	781	8,300	
17	SB 101 on from NB 405	Connector	2	3,000	2,069	2,018	32,700	
18.5	SB 101 on from Hayvenhurst Ave	On-ramp	2, 1	3,000	660	830	9,500	
19	SB 101 on from Balboa Ave	On-ramp	2, 1	3,000	648	592	9,600	

veh/hr = vehicles per hour

AADT = Average Annual Daily Traffic

### Arterial/Intersection Impacts

**The Preferred Alternative.** The ramp modifications associated with the Preferred Alternative do not result in any changes to study intersection geometry. Access to US-101 is no longer provided from the Burbank Boulevard on-ramp in this alternative, and vehicles traveling from southbound I-405 to northbound US-101 via the new connector can no longer exit at Haskell Avenue, which results in traffic redistribution through certain project study intersections compared to the No Build alternative.

**Recently Rejected Alternative 2.** The ramp modifications associated with Rejected Alternative 2 would not have resulted in any changes to study intersection geometry. The connector improvements would not have generated additional trips, and would not have changed the total number of trips through the system. However, the new connector from southbound I-405 to northbound US-101 would have precluded access to the Haskell Avenue off-ramp, resulting in traffic redistribution through certain project study intersections compared to the No Build alternative.

**Recently Rejected Alternative 3.** This alternative is similar to Rejected Alternative 2, and as with that alternative, the associated ramp modifications would not have resulted in any changes to study intersection geometry. Vehicles traveling from southbound I-405 to northbound US-101 via the proposed connector would be restricted from exiting at Haskell Avenue, which would have resulted in traffic redistribution through certain project study intersections compared to the No Build alternative.

## Environmental Consequences

The traffic analysis performed for this project focused on three key components of the roadway network that impact freeway performance. They are the freeway segments, access and connector ramps, and signalized intersections.

**Freeways.** In general, the Preferred Alternative will result in operational improvements and enhanced conditions on the freeway mainline. The existing single-lane connector from southbound I-405 to northbound US-101 has a sharp, nonstandard curve with a design speed of 20 miles per hour. Replacing the existing connector with a two-lane, 50 mile per hour ramp is expected to improve flow through the area and reduce the spillback from the ramp queue onto the I-405 mainline.

In the Preferred Alternative, the new southbound I-405 on-ramp from Burbank Boulevard bypasses the US-101 connector and joins the I-405 just north of the northbound US-101 overpass. The new configuration eliminates the weaving segment between the existing Burbank Boulevard on-ramp and the US-101 connector diverge, and provides improved speed and level of service along the southbound I-405 in this area.

The existing connector from southbound I-405 to northbound US-101 is removed in the Preferred Alternative, which also eliminates the weaving area on the northbound US-101 between the connector and the Haskell Avenue off-ramp. Speed and level of service on the northbound US-101 is also improved with this configuration. The Preferred Alternative modifications do not include any changes to the southbound US-101, and operations remain the same as in the No Build condition.

In Rejected Alternative 2, the new southbound I-405 on-ramp from Burbank Boulevard would have provided access the US-101 freeways, and eliminated the weaving areas on the southbound I-405 and northbound US-101. There were no anticipated negative impacts to freeway mainline service as a result of the Rejected Alternative 2 improvements. No changes would have been made to the southbound US-101, and the level of service would have remained the same as in the No Build condition.

In terms of mainline performance, Rejected Alternative 3 is the same as Rejected Alternative 2. The removal of weaving areas on the southbound I-405 and northbound US-101 would have resulted in operational improvements on those lines. In the Rejected Alternative 3 configuration, operations on the southbound US-101 would have been the same as in the No Build condition.

**Access Ramps.** In the existing condition, most of the freeway access and connector ramps have adequate capacity to handle typical service volumes. One location where ramp volumes exceed 1,500 vehicles per hour per lane is the southbound I-405 connector to northbound US-101. The single-lane connector has a nonstandard, sharp curve with an effective speed of 20 miles per hour. This location is a bottleneck, and queues commonly form that spill back onto the southbound I-405 freeway mainline. The objective of this project is to upgrade the southbound I-405 connector to US-101 to a two-lane, 50 mile per hour structure with standard design features. A summary of the changes to ramp access, configuration, and volumes for the Preferred Alternative, and Rejected Alternatives 2 and 3 is included in this section.

The Preferred Alternative includes new southbound I-405 connector ramps to northbound and southbound US-101, and a new Burbank Boulevard on-ramp to southbound I-405 that bypasses the US-101 connectors. With this configuration, vehicles can no longer access the US-101 freeway from the Burbank Boulevard on-ramp. These vehicles are expected to enter the northbound US-101 facility from

the Balboa Boulevard or Van Nuys Boulevard on-ramps instead, and to enter the southbound US-101 from the Sepulveda Boulevard or Van Nuys Boulevard on-ramps. Otherwise, the vehicles can enter the southbound I-405 from the Victory Boulevard on-ramp and use the new connector ramps. Another access change with the Preferred Alternative is that vehicles traveling southbound on the I-405 can no longer merge onto the northbound US-101 to exit at Haskell Avenue. These travelers are expected to use the Burbank Boulevard off-ramp from the I-405 or the Hayvenhurst Avenue off-ramp from the US-101 instead, with lower volumes on the Haskell Avenue off-ramp.

Rejected Alternatives 2 and 3 would have included a new southbound I-405 connector ramp to northbound US-101, and a new non-standard Burbank Boulevard on-ramp to southbound I-405 that would have provided access to southbound I-405, northbound US-101, and southbound US-101. With this configuration, vehicles traveling southbound on the I-405 would have been restricted from merging onto the northbound US-101 to exit at Haskell Avenue. These travelers would have been expected to use the Burbank Boulevard off-ramp from the I-405 or the Hayvenhurst Avenue off-ramp from the US-101 instead, with lower volumes on the Haskell Avenue off-ramp. The Rejected Alternative 3 configuration is the same as the Rejected Alternative 2 condition, except that the Burbank Boulevard on-ramp would have had full standard design and possibly higher ramp design speed. With respect to ramp operations, Alternative 3 has the same analysis conditions and results as Alternative 2.

In each of the build alternatives, the new connector from southbound I-405 to northbound US-101 bypasses the Haskell Avenue off-ramps, which would cause southbound I-405 traffic that currently exits at Haskell Avenue to be redistributed to the Burbank Boulevard off-ramp from the I-405 or the Hayvenhurst Avenue off-ramp from the US-101. The Hayvenhurst Avenue off-ramp is projected to carry high volumes in the future forecast years, particularly with the addition of the redistributed traffic from the new connector. The Hayvenhurst Avenue off-ramp should be reconfigured before the year of project completion.

**Intersections.** The project study area is a built environment, with little room for geometrical improvements. In the existing condition, eleven of the (22) study intersections operate at LOS F during one or both peak periods. By the year 2030, all (22) intersections are forecast to operate at LOS F due to ambient growth alone.

This project does not generate trips, but ramp access modifications associated with each project alternative may result in redistribution of traffic through local intersections. If the traffic redistribution results in lower volumes through an intersection, or adds volume to a movement that has available capacity, the average delay at that intersection may decrease. Locations that are forecast to carry higher volumes may experience an increase in delay. In general, the redistributed traffic is not expected to cause significant impacts in the project study area. The greatest volume change occurs at the intersection of Burbank and Sepulveda Boulevard, and the intersections created by the US-101 on-ramps and off-ramps at Hayvenhurst Avenue.

For the Preferred Alternative, there are (15) intersections with volume changes due to ramp modifications. Six of these locations experience a reduction in average delay per vehicle, and nine locations experience increased delay. For forecast year 2015 conditions, (5) intersections that operate at LOS F in the No Build condition will have increased average delays ranging from 1.7 seconds to 63.0 seconds per vehicle. For year 2030, ten intersections that operate at LOS F in the No Build condition will have increased average delays ranging from 0.5 seconds to 82.8 seconds per vehicle.

For Rejected Alternatives 2 and 3, volume changes were anticipated at (7) intersections as a result of ramp modifications. Three of these locations would have experienced a reduction in average delay per vehicle, and four locations would have experienced increased delay. For forecast year 2015 conditions, two intersections that operate at LOS F in the No Build condition would have increased average delays ranging from 18.1 seconds to 62.7 seconds per vehicle. For year 2030, six intersections that operate at LOS F in the No Build condition would have increased average delays ranging from 0.5 seconds to 82.8 seconds per vehicle.

**Concluding Comments About Environmental Consequences.** Travel demand and traffic congestion are expected to continue to increase in the future on the I-405/US-101 interchange. In general, analysis indicates that the Preferred Alternative will provide a significant and reasonable improvement over the No Build scenario. Improvements include reduced congestion, smoother operations, a decrease in weaving, and improved safety over the no-build. Although volumes on certain ramps and adjacent intersections will increase as a result of loss of access to the US-101 freeway and associated traffic redistribution, the overall benefits of the improved condition will be significant with the implementation of the Preferred Alternative.

**Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Compliance.** Caltrans has the responsibility to ensure that all projects that receive federal financial assistance from the US Department of Transportation, fully comply with 49 CFR (Code of Federal Regulations), Part 27 entitled, *Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Disability in Programs and Activities receiving or Benefiting from Federal Financial Assistance*. 49 CFR, Part 27 applies to each recipient of federal assistance from the US Department of Transportation, and to each program or activity that receives or benefits from such assistance.

Specifically, Caltrans' role is to ensure that all new and existing altered facilities such as, but not limited to highway rest area facilities, sidewalks, pedestrian cross walks, pedestrian over-passes, under-passes, and ramps shall be made accessible to disabled persons in accordance with federal and state (the state should provide equal or greater accessibility) standards on all federal-aid projects meeting the criteria for the ADA compliance. This project is not anticipated to impact any existing facilities in terms of ADA compliance, and any design changes that would have to potential to, are subject to review to ensure compliance with all federal and state standards.

**Traffic Impacts Related to Construction Activities.** It is expected that detailed construction staging plans will be completed for the project, and that a detailed analysis of how traffic will be impacted during the construction phase of the various build alternatives will be provided by Caltrans once these plans are available. The purpose of this section is to provide an overview or discussion of the expected traffic impacts related to construction activities. Similar projects have been constructed along Interstate 405 and other freeways within the Los Angeles metropolitan area in the recent past, and it is believed that this project will have similar impacts.

Construction of the planned improvements will probably require the narrowing of traffic lanes and a loss of shoulder areas for a prolonged period, thereby reducing the effective capacity of the freeway segments and/or ramps where construction is taking place. This can result in overall traffic delay increases by as much as 10 percent or more during peak traffic periods. The impact on traffic delays is particularly significant when construction starts, due to spectator slowing and the need for the average driver to adjust to changes in the roadway. However, within one-to-two weeks after construction starts, regular commuters usually become accustomed to driving through a construction zone and the amount of traffic delays caused by construction decreases accordingly. The following table details preliminary lane closure plans during construction by alternative.

**Table 28. Preliminary Lane Closures for the Preferred Alternative**

	Duration	Segment	Lane Number	Work Description
Stage 1	One weekend	Northbound US-101	6	Tie-in southbound I-405 connector to Northbound US-101.
Stage 2A	3-4 months	Southbound I-405	4	Tie-in southbound I-405 to US-101 northbound/southbound connectors.
Stage 2B	1-2 months	Southbound I-405 on-ramp at Burbank Boulevard	On-ramp	Full on-ramp closure to tie-in southbound I-405 to US-101 connector and tie-in with the re-aligned on-ramp.
Stage 2C	One Weekend	Southbound I-405 to US-101 Connector	Connector	Tie-in southbound I-405 connector to existing southbound US-101 connector.
Stage 3A	1-2 months	Southbound I-405 on-ramp at Burbank Boulevard	On-ramp	Full on-ramp closure - tie-in to southbound I-405.
Stage 3B	One weekend	Southbound I-405	3	Southbound I-405 onramp tie-in to southbound I-405.

### Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures

#### Measures to Lessen Impacts on the Freeway Mainline

No mitigation measures related to freeway mainline operations are required as each of the proposed alternatives result in comparable or improved operations in comparison to the No Build Alternative.

#### Measures to Lessen Impacts on Access Ramps and Connectors

By the year 2030, the southbound I-405 connector to southbound US-101 and the northbound I-405 connector to northbound US-101 are forecast to have demand volumes that exceed capacity due to ambient growth alone. Without the project improvements, deficient conditions on the southbound I-405 connector to northbound US-101 will continue to deteriorate. Each of the build alternatives provides increase capacity on the southbound I-405 connector segments to US-101 and to northbound US-101, which would provide sufficient capacity on these ramps through forecast year 2030.

**Preferred Alternative.** In this configuration, vehicles may no longer access the northbound or southbound US-101 from the Burbank Boulevard on-ramp to southbound I-405. Traffic that is forecast to utilize the Burbank Boulevard on-ramp to access the northbound US-101 connector is redistributed to the Balboa Boulevard on-ramp. Vehicles that would use the Burbank Boulevard on-ramp to get to the southbound US-101 connector are expected to use the Sepulveda Boulevard and Van Nuys Boulevard on-ramps instead. The new connector to northbound US-101 will bypass the Haskell Avenue off-ramp, so vehicles that would travel from southbound I-405 to northbound US-101 and exit at Haskell Avenue are expected to use the Burbank Boulevard off-ramp from southbound I-405 and the Hayvenhurst Avenue exit from the northbound US-101 instead. These locations carry high volumes in the existing condition, and capacity issues are observed at the Hayvenhurst Avenue off-ramp. With ambient growth and the addition of redistributed traffic due to Alternative 1, conditions are expected to worsen in the future. The Hayvenhurst Avenue off-ramp should be reconfigured to alleviate the existing deficiency before the year of project completion.

**Recently Rejected Alternatives 2 and 3.** In the Rejected Alternative 2 and 3 configurations, the new connector to northbound US-101 would have bypassed the Haskell Avenue off-ramp. Vehicles that would have traveled from southbound I-405 to northbound US-101 and exited at Haskell Avenue were expected to use the Burbank Boulevard off-ramp from southbound I-405 and the Hayvenhurst Avenue exit from northbound US-101 instead. Capacity issues have been observed at the Hayvenhurst Avenue off-ramp. With ambient growth and the addition of redistributed traffic due to these alternatives, conditions are expected to worsen in the future. The Hayvenhurst Avenue off-ramp should be reconfigured to alleviate the existing deficiency before the year of project completion.

### **Proposed Measures to Lessen Impacts on Intersections – Mitigation Devised in Coordination with the Los Angeles Department of Transportation (LADOT)**

The existing study area network carries high volumes through intersections with limited capacity. By the year 2030, all (22) intersections in the study area are forecast to operate at a Level Of Service (LOS) F during one or both peak periods in the No Build condition due to ambient growth alone. The southbound I-405 to US-101 connector improvement project is not a trip generator, and is not expected to increase the total number of trips through the study area. However, even a small number of redistributed peak hour trips through an intersection with LOS F can cause an increase in the average delay per vehicle.

Potential mitigation measures are provided for intersections that are forecast to operate at LOS F in the with-project condition, if the redistribution of traffic related to the project alternative results in an increase of four or more seconds to the average delay per vehicle. The measures described in this section would mitigate the project impacts only, and provide an average delay per vehicle for the intersection that is comparable to or lower than the No Build Condition. There may be other possible improvements that would provide an even lower average delay per vehicle, but these mitigation measures focus on adding capacity where trips redistributed by the project would travel.

The project study area is primarily a built-out environment. Geometrical improvements may require acquisition of property and incur purchase, relocation, and other compensation costs. In some cases, the cost of an improvement may far exceed the benefit received, to the detriment of businesses and property owners adjacent to the intersection. A cost-benefit analysis of each of these improvements should be performed before any of these mitigation measures are recommended or implemented.

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), in coordination with the Los Angeles Department of Transportation (LADOT) continue to work closely together to devise mitigation proposals to minimize any project-related impacts. While LADOT has been present and active in all coordination efforts concerning all project alternatives, the following mitigation measures have been proposed for the Preferred Alternative to mitigate impacts to a level below significance.

- 1) Add an additional left turn lane from westbound Burbank Boulevard to southbound Hayvenhurst Avenue
- 2) Add a right turn lane from eastbound Burbank Boulevard to southbound Hayvenhurst Avenue
- 3) Northbound US-101 off-ramp at Hayvenhurst Avenue – add left turn lane to southbound Hayvenhurst Avenue
- 4) Construct new northbound US-101 on-ramp from Hayvenhurst Avenue
- 5) Add an additional left turn lane from southbound Hayvenhurst Avenue to southbound US-101 on-ramp
- 6) Add additional lane on southbound US-101 on-ramp at Hayvenhurst Avenue
- 7) Add additional lane to eastbound Magnolia Boulevard at Hayvenhurst Avenue
- 8) Provide a traffic signal at the new intersection of the new connector, the southbound I-405 off-ramp, and Burbank Boulevard.
- 9) Modify the Burbank Boulevard roadway at the above location to provide adequate right-turn and left turn storage to the new connector.
- 10) Provide three lanes on the reconfigured southbound I-405 off-ramp at Burbank Boulevard.

- 11) Provide adequate improvements along Burbank Boulevard to accommodate increased traffic. This includes Burbank Boulevard/Woodley Avenue, and Burbank Boulevard/Hayvenhurst Boulevard intersections

## Transportation/Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities

**Regulatory Setting.** The Department, as assigned by FHWA, directs that full consideration should be given to the safe accommodation of pedestrians and bicyclists during the development of federal-aid highway projects (see 23 CFR 652). It further directs that the special needs of the elderly and the disabled must be considered in all federal-aid projects that include pedestrian facilities. When current or anticipated pedestrian and/or bicycle traffic presents a potential conflict with motor vehicle traffic, every effort must be made to minimize detrimental effects on all highway users who share the facility.

The Department is committed to carrying out the 1990 Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) by building transportation facilities that provide equal access for all persons. The same degree of convenience, accessibility, and safety available to the general public will be provided to persons with disabilities.

The accommodation of pedestrians and bicyclists, and full compliance with ADA standards will be an integral part in the development of the project and the Transportation Management Plan (TMP), which will outline specific design guidelines to ensure proper facilities and access during and after project construction. It is Caltrans' and the Contractor's responsibility to provide for the safety of the public during construction.

### 2.1.6 VISUAL/AESTHETICS

**Regulatory Setting.** The National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 as amended (NEPA) establishes that the federal government use all practicable means to ensure all Americans safe, healthful, productive, and *aesthetically* and culturally pleasing surroundings [42 U.S.C. 4331(b)(2)]. To further emphasize this point, the Federal Highway Administration in its implementation of NEPA [23 U.S.C. 109(h)] directs that final decisions regarding projects are to be made in the best overall public interest taking into account adverse environmental impacts, including among others, the destruction or disruption of aesthetic values.

Likewise, the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) establishes that it is the policy of the state to take all action necessary to provide the people of the state "with...enjoyment of aesthetic, natural, scenic and historic environmental qualities." [CA Public Resources Code Section 21001(b)]

**Visual Impact Assessment (VIA).** A VIA has been prepared by the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), Division of Landscape Architecture according to guidelines set forth by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). While the project does not have the potential to affect any officially designated scenic highways, a VIA was performed, nevertheless, that aims to:

- Define the project setting and viewshed
- Identify key views for visual assessment
- Analyze existing visual resources and viewer response
- Analyze attributes such as line, form, color, texture, dominance, scale, diversity, and continuity
- Analyze visual quality as measured by vividness, intactness, and unity
- Depict the visual appearance of project alternatives
- Assess the visual impacts of project alternatives
- Propose methods to avoid, minimize, and/or mitigate adverse visual impacts through enhanced plantings, texture, color coating for structures, and contour grading, for example

## Affected Environment

The following information in this section was derived from the Caltrans VIA prepared in November of 2007 (Caltrans 2007b). The regional landscape establishes the general visual environment in the project area, but the specific visual environment upon which the assessment is focused was determined by defining landscape units and the project viewsheds. Most of the land adjacent to the project area is highly developed and mostly residential, commercial, or open space. The I-405 freeway traverses the Sepulveda Pass in the Santa Monica Mountains, which are in clear view from the project area. The freeway landscape within this corridor consists of tall pines, Mexican fan palms, Eucalyptus, and other evergreen trees.

**Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve Landscape Unit.** A landscape unit is a portion of the regional landscape that can be thought of as an outdoor room with a distinct visual character. It will often correspond to place or district that is commonly known among local viewers. The Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve Landscape Unit is located west of the I-405 freeway and north of Burbank Boulevard. The Los Angeles Department of Recreation and Parks maintains the area, encompassing 225 acres, on Army Corps of Engineers property. Existing visual resources include established and newly planted willow, cottonwood, and sycamore trees, and various shrubs, nesting, and foraging areas for migratory waterfowl and shorebirds.

The viewshed in this landscape unit consists of the surrounding mountains and a wildlife reserve, complete with lush vegetation, a manmade lake, and the Sepulveda Dam rock wall. The adjacent Target store parking lot and one tall office building complete the picture. The wildlife reserve portion of the study area is used for recreational purposes, and by bird-watchers, walkers, and general park users.

**Sepulveda Dam Landscape Unit.** This unit exists within the Sepulveda Basin, but lies largely between Burbank Boulevard and the US-101 freeway, and west of the I-405 freeway. The structure was designed in the Art Moderne style, constructed in 1941 and is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. The most significant visual resources in this unit are the Sepulveda Dam itself, a bare area of dry grasses, and the white concrete spillway. The Santa Monica Mountains are the dominant view to the south of this landscape unit.

The viewshed in this particular landscape unit consists of the Sepulveda Dam, the dam spillway, the Los Angeles River channel, the I-405/US-101 freeway interchange, the US-101/Haskell Avenue on-and-off-ramps, and the mountains to the east and west. The Sepulveda Dam itself is frequently used for filming and photography shoots, and northbound US-101 users are able to view the structure and spill gates for approximately 0.1 miles.

**Residential Area Landscape Unit.** Special attention was focused on the residential area southeast of the interchange in the community of Sherman Oaks. The area consists primarily of one-story, single-family residential homes, with the exception of a few two-story structures. Dominant visual resources in this landscape unit include the homes and yards themselves, streets and sidewalks, and the freeway landscaping that screens the soundwall for the US-101 freeway. The viewshed within the residential landscape unit is rather limited, with views of mass plantings (trees and shrubs) and chain link fence.

**Viewer Response.** Viewer Response is comprised of two elements: viewer sensitivity and viewer exposure. These elements combine to form a method of predicting how the public might react to visual changes brought about by the I-405/US-101 interchange improvement project. Viewer sensitivity is defined as the viewers' concern for scenic quality and response to change in visual resources that make up a view. Viewer exposure is typically assessed by measuring the number of viewers exposed to the resource change, type of viewer activity, duration of their view, speed at which the viewer moves, and the position of the viewer.

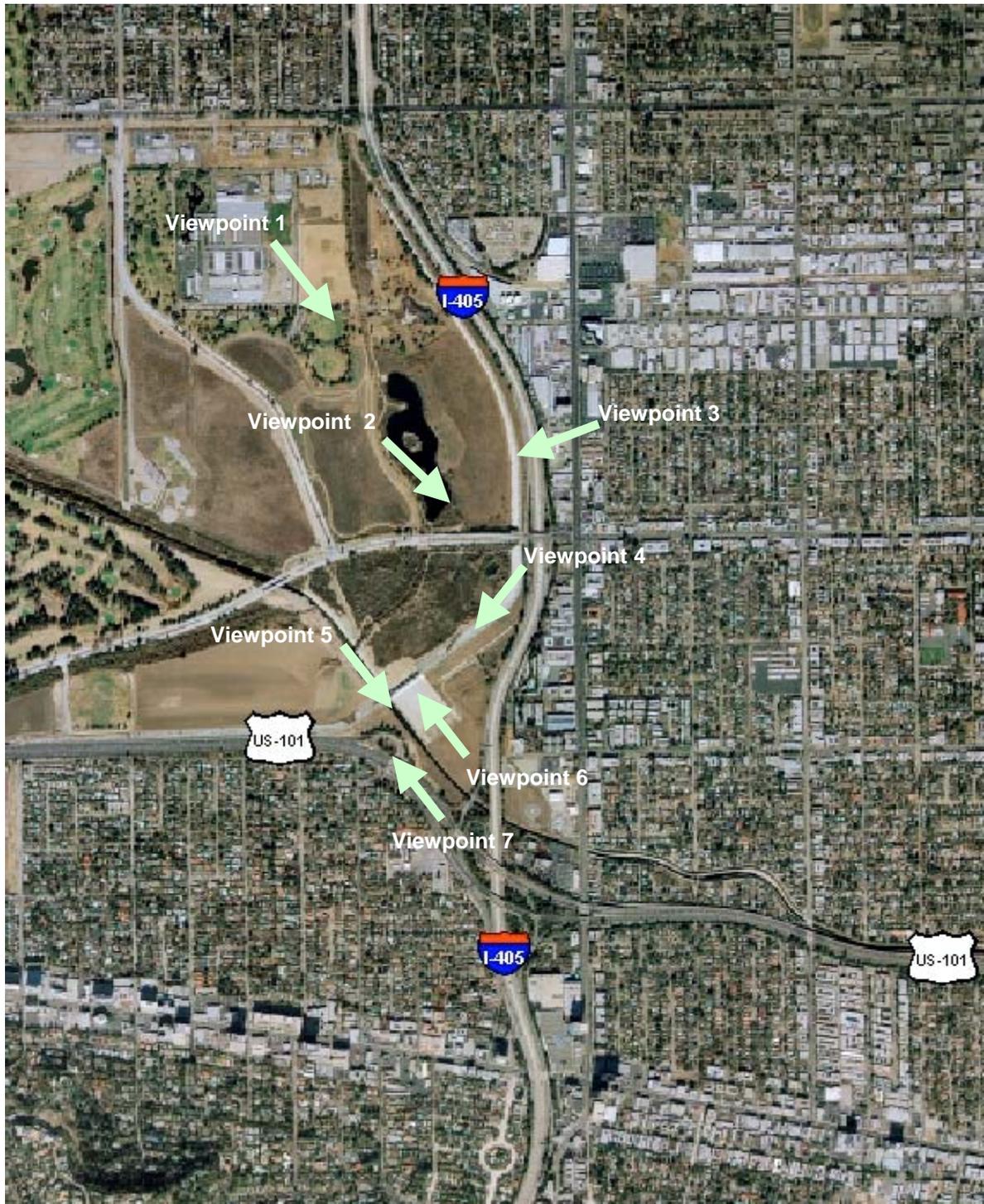
The Visual Impact Assessment identifies the resident viewer group as most sensitive to any impacts or disturbance to existing visual resources. The resident viewer group includes people who may have views of the project area from their homes or place of business/employment. Residents have a high level of

exposure to the visual environment and high visual awareness. The group tends to be stationary and have more time to take in the surrounding views. In addition, they become more familiar with the local environment than other groups and typically take more ownership in it. This group is considered to be highly sensitive to visual changes, particularly if important visual resources are lost as a result of relocation or acquisition of property in the project area.

## **Environmental Consequences**

Because it is not feasible to analyze all the views in which the proposed project would be seen, the Visual Impact Assessment (VIA) focuses on a select number of key viewpoints where potential for impacts to the existing visual environment is most clear. The following area map shows seven (7) selected viewpoints of study, followed by representations of the existing visual environments and post-construction visual simulations with the proposed structures in place.

**Figure 19. Selected Viewpoints of Study**



Source: California Department of Transportation, DHHP Aerial Photo Copyright 2003. Map created by Joel Bonilla/Division of Environmental Planning

**VIEWPOINT 1**

**Figure 20a. Existing Viewpoint 1 - Facing Southeast from Woodley Park**



Source: Caltrans Visual Impact Assessment, Reconstruct SB 405 Connector Ramp to N&S Bound 101. Division of Landscape Architecture, November 19, 2007.

**Figure 20b. Viewpoint 1 – Facing Southeast from Woodley Park with Post-Construction Visual Simulation**



Source: Caltrans Visual Impact Assessment, Reconstruct SB 405 Connector Ramp to N&S Bound 101. Division of Landscape Architecture, November 19, 2007.

In this simulation, the new ramp/viaduct structures have been added to the existing key viewpoint (facing southeast from Woodley Park). While the distant mountain views will remain unobstructed, the new ramp/viaduct structures would be the dominant landscape feature until new vegetation plantings mature. Users of Woodley Park would be most sensitive to these changes in the landscape and view. Additionally, landscape views from high-rise buildings across and adjacent to the I-405 freeway may be sensitive to these changes as well. Special mitigation may be necessary in the reduction of visual effects to the aforementioned viewer groups, which are discussed in more detail later, under the Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation subsection.

**VIEWPOINT 2**

**Figure 21a. Existing Viewpoint 2 - Facing Southwest from Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve**



Source: Caltrans Visual Impact Assessment, Reconstruct SB 405 Connector Ramp to N&S Bound 101. Division of Landscape Architecture, November 19, 2007.

**Figure 21b. Viewpoint 2 – Facing Southwest from Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve with Post-Construction Visual Simulation (Rejected Alternatives 2 and 3 only)**



Source: Caltrans Visual Impact Assessment, Reconstruct SB 405 Connector Ramp to N&S Bound 101. Division of Landscape Architecture, November 19, 2007.

In this simulation, the new ramp/viaduct structures as proposed in Rejected Alternatives 2 and 3 have been added to the existing key viewpoint (facing southeast from the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve).

While the distant mountain views would have remained unobstructed, the new ramp/viaduct structures would have been the dominant landscape feature until new vegetation plantings matured. Users of the Sepulveda Basin Recreation Area and Wildlife Reserve would have been most sensitive to these changes in the landscape and view. Additionally, landscape views from high-rise buildings across and adjacent to the I-405 freeway may have been sensitive to these changes as well. Special mitigation may have been necessary to reduce visual effects to the aforementioned viewer groups, which are discussed in more detail later, under the Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation subsection.

**Figure 22a. Viewpoint 3 – Existing View Facing Southwest from West Side of I-405, Adjacent to Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve**



Source: Caltrans Visual Impact Assessment, Reconstruct SB 405 Connector Ramp to N&S Bound 101. Division of Landscape Architecture, November 19, 2007.

**Figure 22b. Viewpoint 3 – Facing Southwest from the West Side of I-405, Adjacent to Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve with Post-Construction Visual Simulation (Rejected Alternatives 2 and 3 only)**



**VIEWPOINTS 4, 5, 6, AND 7**

**Figure 23a. Viewpoint 4 – Existing View Facing Southeast from Sepulveda Basin Recreation Area**



Source: Caltrans Visual Impact Assessment, Reconstruct SB 405 Connector Ramp to N&S Bound 101. Division of Landscape Architecture, November 19, 2007.

**Figure 23b. Viewpoint 4 – Facing Southeast from Sepulveda Basin Recreation Area with Post Construction Simulation**



**Figure 24a. Viewpoint 5 – Existing View Facing Southeast From Sepulveda Dam**



Source: Caltrans Visual Impact Assessment, Reconstruct SB 405 Connector Ramp to N&S Bound 101. Division of Landscape Architecture, November 19, 2007.

**Figure 24b. Viewpoint 5 – Facing Southeast from Sepulveda Dam with Post-Construction Visual Simulation (all alternatives, except “no-build”)**



Source: Caltrans Visual Impact Assessment, Reconstruct SB 405 Connector Ramp to N&S Bound 101. Division of Landscape Architecture, November 19, 2007.

The Preferred Alternative requires the construction of new bridge structures that will infringe upon the Sepulveda Dam spillway. The new structures would create some visual distraction, especially to motorists using the southbound I-405 and northbound US-101 freeways. Mountain views in the distance would remain intact, but the new, man-made structures would obstruct some views of existing, mature vegetation. Sensitivity to motorists utilizing the southbound I-405 and northbound US-101 freeways is expected to be high due to the loss of views of the Sepulveda Dam. The duration of views from the aforementioned freeways is short compared to the filming industry viewer group, in which sensitivity is expected to be low as the Sepulveda Dam is typically shot at a closer range view.

A Historic Property Survey Report (HPSR) for the I-405/US-101 Connector Improvement Project was completed in January 2007. On March 14, 2007, the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) concurred with the findings in the HPSR. The Sepulveda Dam was identified as a historic property, and found eligible for the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) at the local level of significance under Criteria A (history of the Los Angeles water systems) and Criteria C (distinctive type, period, and method of construction). Contributing elements include the outlet works structure, the spillway, the earthen embankment and the reservoir. Implementation of the Preferred Alternative would constitute an adverse visual effect on the Sepulveda Dam—more details and measures to mitigate this visual impact are discussed in the following section, entitled, “Cultural Resources.”

**Figure 25a. Viewpoint 6 – Existing View Facing Northwest from Sepulveda Dam Spillway**



Source: Caltrans Visual Impact Assessment, Reconstruct SB 405 Connector Ramp to N&S Bound 101. Division of Landscape Architecture, November 19, 2007.

**Figure 25b. Viewpoint 6 – Existing View Facing Northwest from Sepulveda Dam Spillway with Post-Construction Simulation**



**Figure 26a. Viewpoint 7 – Existing View Facing Northwest on US-101 at Sepulveda Dam**



Source: Caltrans Visual Impact Assessment, Reconstruct SB 405 Connector Ramp to N&S Bound 101. Division of Landscape Architecture, November 19, 2007.

**Figure 26b. Viewpoint 7 – Existing View Facing Northwest on US-101 at Sepulveda Dam with Post-Construction Simulation**



## Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures

Visual mitigation for adverse project impacts addressed in the visual assessments and summarized in the VIA will consist of adherence to the following design requirements in cooperation with the District Landscape Architect. All visual mitigation will be designed and implemented with the concurrence of the District Landscape Architect. Caltrans and the FHWA mandate that a qualitative/aesthetic approach should be taken to mitigate for visual quality loss in the project area. The following measures have been specified to minimize impacts:

- Retaining walls will be visually compatible with the surrounding community (i.e. architectural detail and style of the Sepulveda Dam)
- Architectural detailing will be specified appropriately; pilasters, wall caps, interesting block patterns, color, and materials to match existing color palette of surrounding area
- Visual interest will be created to reduce the apparent height of walls
- Slope pavement at undercrossings will be enhanced with texture to deter graffiti
- Where needed, vine plantings will be used on walls to deter graffiti to enhance visual quality
- Where slope pavement is not possible, vegetation will be planted at undercrossings as appropriate
- Native vegetation will be planted in disturbed areas and wildlife areas where space allows
- Ornamental vegetation will be utilized as necessary

### 2.1.7 CULTURAL RESOURCES

**Regulatory Setting.** “Cultural Resources,” as used in this document, refers to all historical and archaeological resources, regardless of significance. Laws and regulations dealing with cultural resources include:

The National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, (NHPA) sets forth national policy and procedures regarding historic properties, defined as districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects included in or eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. Section 106 of NHPA requires federal agencies to take into account the effects of their undertakings on such properties and to allow the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation the opportunity to comment on those undertakings, following regulations issued by the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (36 CFR 800). On January 1, 2004, a Section 106 Programmatic Agreement (PA) between the Advisory Council, FHWA, State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO), and the Department went into effect for Department projects, both state and local, with FHWA involvement. The PA implements the Advisory Council’s regulations, 36 CFR 800, streamlining the Section 106 process and delegating certain responsibilities to the Department. The FHWA’s responsibilities under the PA have been assigned to the Department as part of the Surface Transportation Project Delivery Pilot Program (23 CFR 773) (July 1, 2007).

The Archaeological Resources Protection Act (ARPA) applies when a project may involve archaeological resources located on federal or tribal land. ARPA requires that a permit be obtained before excavation of an archaeological resource on such land can take place.

Historic properties may also be covered under Section 4(f) of the U.S. Department of Transportation Act, which regulates the “use” of land from historic properties. See Appendix B for specific information regarding Section 4(f).

Historical resources are considered under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), as well as California Public Resources Code (PRC) Section 5024.1, which established the California Register of Historical Resources. PRC Section 5024 requires state agencies to identify and protect state-owned resources that meet National Register of Historic Places listing criteria. It further specifically requires the Department to inventory state-owned structures in its rights-of-way. 5024(f) and 5024.5 require state agencies to provide notice to and consult with the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) before altering, transferring, relocating, or demolishing state-owned historical resources that are listed on or are

eligible for inclusion in the National Register or are registered or eligible for registration as California Historical Landmarks.

## Affected Environment

**Area of Potential Effects (APE).** The Area of Potential Effects (APE) for the project includes parcels that could be affected by right of way acquisition, audible effects, or visual effects resulting from implementation of the proposed project. The limits of the APE run roughly from Victory Boulevard in the northeast quadrant of the Sepulveda Dam/Recreation area, south along southbound I-405 to Burbank Boulevard. Turning west it then partially follows Burbank Boulevard to Balboa Boulevard. The APE then runs south to southbound US-101 and extends to approximately Van Nuys Boulevard.

The results of an extensive records search of Caltrans District 7 files, the South Central Coastal Information Center at California State University, Fullerton, and other reference sources has revealed that there are no recorded archaeological resources within the Area of Potential Effect (APE). A field inspection was conducted to confirm the aforementioned. Based on this, no archaeological impacts are anticipated, and no further archaeological investigations are warranted at this time. An archaeological survey was completed on January 12, 2006 that confirms this.

**Historic Properties.** A Historic Property Survey Report (HPSR) for the I-405/US-101 Connector Improvement Project was completed in January 2007. On March 14, 2007, the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) concurred with the findings in the HPSR. The only historic property that was identified within the Area of Potential Effects is the Sepulveda Flood Control Dam (Sepulveda Dam), which was found eligible for the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) at the local level of significance under Criteria A (history of the Los Angeles water systems) and Criteria C (distinctive type, period, and method of construction). Contributing elements include the outlet works structure, the spillway, the earthen embankment and the reservoir.

The Sepulveda Dam is a structure that is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). A property is considered eligible for listing on the NRHP if it meets one or more of the following criteria:

The quality of significance in American history, architecture, archaeology, engineering, and culture is present in districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects that possess integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association, and:

- a) that are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns or our history; or
- b) that are associated with the lives of persons significant in our past; or
- c) that embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or
- d) that have yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history. (36 CFR § 60.4)

In addition to significance, a property must also have physical integrity to be listed on or eligible for listing on the NRHP. Integrity does not demand absolute purity, but the historic property must be a "preservable entity" that still communicates what makes it significant.

The Sepulveda Dam has protected lives and property, and has enabled the further development of the densely-populated area surrounding the dam, and the San Fernando Valley, as we know it. Because of this, the Sepulveda Dam is undoubtedly an integral part of the history of Los Angeles, and collectively, it satisfies Criterion "a," as listed above. The dam is a "preservable entity" that continues to convey what makes it significant, and its appearance remains distinctive and worthy of maintaining its physical integrity and functionality.

**Finding of Effect.** A Finding of Effect Report (FOE) for the Southbound Interstate 405 to US 101 Connector Improvement Project was submitted to the SHPO on February 28, 2008. On March 31, 2008, the SHPO concurred with the findings in the FOE. To improve traffic movements from southbound I-405 to US-101 freeway, the project proposes three build alternatives: The three proposed alternatives will encroach into the Sepulveda Dam by constructing elevated structures that cross the dam spillway outlet area to connect to northbound and southbound US-101. A portion of the earthen embankment of the dam adjacent to northbound US-101 will be modified to accommodate the change. A retaining wall would be erected to minimize the volume loss of the reservoir as a result of realigning the Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) service road. Additionally, alternatives 2 and 3 propose a new structural on-ramp and off-ramp north of Burbank Boulevard that will cross the dam maintenance access road at grade on the earthen embankment. All three build alternatives will result in an adverse effect on the Sepulveda Dam under Adverse Effect Criteria 2(i), 2(ii), 2(iv), and 2(v).

The No Build alternative would result in the connectors between the freeways remaining as they are. The Sepulveda Dam would remain intact without further encroachments on the spillway, earthen embankment and reservoir. This alternative would result in no effect on Historic Properties although the project's purpose and need would remain unfulfilled and the project's objectives unrealized.

Caltrans, as assigned by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) pursuant to 23 U.S.C. 327, has determined that the undertaking will have an adverse effect on a historic property pursuant to Section 106 PA Stipulation X. C, and is consulting SHPO regarding the resolution of adverse effects, pursuant to Section 106 PA Stipulation XI, 36 CFR 800.6(a), and 800.6(b)(1).

## Environmental Consequences

### **Preferred Alternative: Construct new US-101 connector ramps from southbound I-405. Construct Burbank Boulevard to southbound I-405 on ramp. Remove existing ramps.**

This alternative would remove the existing connector ramps from the southbound I-405 to northbound and southbound US-101, along with the existing southbound I-405/US-101 on-ramp from Burbank Boulevard. New two-lane US-101 connector ramps (structures) would be constructed over the Sepulveda Dam spillway connecting southbound I-405 with northbound (connector B) and southbound (connector A) US-101, and Burbank Boulevard with southbound I-405. The elevated connectors that pass through the dam spillway will be approximately fifty (50) feet high, the same approximate height as the Sepulveda Dam gates. The USACE service road adjacent to northbound 101 will be realigned to accommodate the new connector, which would drop down on top of the earthen embankment as it merges with northbound 101. The proposed encroachment on the embankment is approximately 550 feet long and 39 feet wide. A retaining wall will be built along the earthen embankment (northbound US-101) to mitigate for a loss of volume in the reservoir due to the realigned service road.

This alternative would constitute an Adverse Effect on the Sepulveda Dam under Adverse Effect Criterion 2(i) as the dam embankment along northbound US-101 will be excavated for footings for the descending ramp structure, the retaining wall and the realigned USACE access road (1.07 acres). This alternative would constitute an additional Adverse Effect on the Sepulveda Dam under Adverse Effect Criterion 2(i) because it would entail the physical destruction of or damage to all or part of the property. Additionally, this alternative would constitute an Adverse Effect on the Sepulveda Dam under Adverse Effect Criterion 2(ii) as the elevated structures to be built through the dam spillway (4.93 acres) and upon the earthen embankment, as well as the proposed retaining wall, are alterations of the property that are not consistent with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties (36 CFR part 68) and applicable guidelines. Moreover, this alternative would constitute an Adverse Effect on the Sepulveda Dam under Adverse Effect Criterion 2(iv) as the addition of elevated freeway connector ramps through the dam spillway, and the utilization of the earthen embankment for the descending freeway connector ramp, change the character of the Sepulveda Dam's use (flood control) and physical features within the

dam setting that contribute to its historic significance. The earthen embankment, spillway and reservoir are character-defining features of the Sepulveda Dam. Lastly, this alternative would constitute an Adverse Effect on the Sepulveda Dam under Adverse Effect Criterion 2(v) by introducing a visual element (elevated connector ramps) into the spillway area and on top of the embankment that diminishes the integrity of the property's significant historic features. The Dam is eligible because it was designed in a straightforward engineering approach prevalent in Southern California at the time. The earth fill dam was constructed during a time when accelerated changes in construction equipment allowed for larger and faster excavations. The work also involved a massive pile driving operation, reportedly one of the largest undertaken in the region at the time. The dam is also notable for the PWA Moderne design of the outlet works and spillway.

**Rejected Alternative 2: Construct new northbound US-101 connector ramp from I-405 southbound. Remove existing southbound I-405 on and off ramps from Burbank Boulevard and replace with new structures north of Burbank Boulevard.**

This alternative would have constituted an Adverse Effect on the Sepulveda Dam under the same Adverse Effect Criteria as were listed for the Preferred Alternative. Under this alternative only Connector B (S/B I-405 to N/B US-101) would have been constructed through the dam spillway. Under Rejected Alternative 2 there would have been additional adverse effects as a result of the construction of new structures that connect to Burbank Boulevard approximately 120 yards west of the current ramp intersection. The new on ramp would have extended north from Burbank Boulevard, and looped around to join the I-405 southbound just after the Burbank Boulevard Overcrossing. This alternative would have required 22,000 cubic feet of the dam reservoir and 0.79 acres of footing easement in the Wildlife Refuge for the ramp structure. Both the on-and-off ramps would have crossed over and sat on top of the earthen embankment of the dam north of Burbank Boulevard requiring 0.15 acres of embankment. The earthen embankment, spillway and the reservoir are character-defining features of the Sepulveda Dam.

**Rejected Alternative 3: Construct new northbound US-101 connector ramp from I-405 southbound. Remove existing southbound I-405 on and off ramps from Burbank Boulevard and replace with new structures north of Burbank Boulevard. Burbank Boulevard loop ramp would be of a standard design.**

This alternative would have constituted an Adverse Effect on the Sepulveda Dam under the same Adverse Effect Criteria as were listed for Alternatives 1 and 2. This alternative had the same general alignment as Alternative 2, except that the Burbank Boulevard loop on ramp would have been of a standard design requiring an additional 50 feet of encroachment onto the reservoir Wildlife Refuge. The earthen embankment and the reservoir are character-defining features of the Sepulveda Dam.

**Section 4(f) Evaluation of Resources.** Codified in federal law at 49 U.S.C. §303, Section 4(f) of the United States Department of Transportation Act of 1966 declares that "it is the policy of the United States government that special effort should be made to preserve the natural beauty of the countryside and public park and recreation lands, wildlife and waterfowl refuges, and historic sites." Section 4(f) specifies that the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and other DOT agencies cannot approve the use of land from a significant publicly owned public park, recreation area, wildlife or waterfowl refuge, or any significant historic site unless there is no feasible and prudent alternative to the use of land; and the action includes all possible planning to minimize harm to the property resulting from use. A Section 4(f) evaluation has been prepared for the (3) aforementioned resources, pursuant to the FHWA regulations for Section 4(f) compliance codified at 23 CFR Section 771.135. Additional guidance has been obtained from the FHWA Technical Advisory T 6640.8A (1987), the FHWA Section 4(f) Policy Paper (2005), and the FHWA Western Resource center Section 4(f) Checklist (1997).

**Brief Discussion of Alternatives with Potential Impacts to Section 4(f) Resources.** Section 4(f) specifies that the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and other DOT agencies cannot approve the use of land from a significant publicly owned public park, recreation area, wildlife or waterfowl refuge, or any significant historic site unless the following conditions apply:

- There is no feasible and prudent alternative to the use of land; and
- The action includes all possible planning to minimize harm to the property resulting from use

Each project proposal must include a Section 4(f) avoidance alternative, and in the case of the Preferred Alternative, coordination with the State Historic Preservation Officer is required as the Sepulveda Dam is a historic resource. Section 4(f) further requires consultation with the Department of the Interior and, as appropriate, the involved offices of the Department of Agriculture and Department of Housing and Urban Development in developing transportation projects and programs that use lands protected by Section 4(f).

On March 12, 2008, FHWA/Federal Transit Administration (FTA) published their final rule on Section 4(f). It became effective on April 11, 2008. This final rule modifies the procedures for granting Section 4(f) approvals as follows:

1. Clarifies the factors to be considered and the standards to be applied when determining if an alternative for avoiding the use of Section 4(f) property is feasible and prudent.
2. Clarifies the factors to be considered when selecting a project alternative in situations where all alternatives would use some Section 4(f) property.
3. Establishes procedures for determining that the use of a Section 4(f) property has a *de minimis* impact on the property.
4. Updates the regulation to recognize statutory and common sense exceptions for uses that advance Section 4(f)'s preservation purpose, as well as the option of applying a programmatic Section 4(f) evaluation.
5. Moves the Section 4(f) regulation out of the agencies' National Environmental Policy Act regulation, "Environmental Impact and Related Procedures," into its own part with a reorganized structure that is easier to use.

This Section 4(f) evaluation has been prepared pursuant to the FHWA regulations for Section 4(f) compliance codified at 23 CFR Section 774. Additional guidance has been obtained from the FHWA Technical Advisory T 6640.8A (1987), the FHWA Section 4(f) Policy Paper (2005), and the FHWA Western Resource Center Section 4(f) Checklist (1997).

A Section 4(f) "use" occurs when one or more of the following conditions are met:

- Land that is permanently acquired for a transportation project by partial or full acquisition is considered a "**Direct Use**"
- Temporary occupancy of the protected resource that is considered adverse in terms of the preservationist purposes of Section 4(f) is referred to as a "**Temporary Occupancy.**"
- If there is no permanent incorporation of land, but the project's proximity impacts are so severe that the protected activities, features, or attributes qualify the resource for protection under Section 4(f), such a substantial impact is considered as a "**Constructive Use**"

**Section 4(f) and the Preferred Alternative.** This alternative proposes to acquire land by permanent easement on the spillway and apron of the Sepulveda Dam for incorporation into the proposed transportation facility. The design features elevated connector structures that will cross the dam spillway outlet area to connect to NB and SB US-101 and encroach upon the aforementioned resource. A portion of the earthen embankment of the dam adjacent to NB US-101 will be modified to accommodate the change. A retaining wall would be erected to minimize the volume loss of the reservoir as a result of realigning the USACE service road. As such, these actions would constitute a **Direct Use** of the Section 4(f) resource. Specifically, the Preferred Alternative would impact 4.93 acres of the spillway outlet area, 0.45 acres of permanent footing easement, and 1.07 acres of upstream dam embankment.

### **Avoidance, Minimization and/or Mitigation Measures**

The Preferred Alternative will result in an Adverse Effect to the National Register eligible Sepulveda Dam. In order to mitigate adverse effects the following measures will be implemented in the design phase of the project:

- The bents or piers of the elevated structures that cross through the spillway should be similar in shape to the Streamline Modern gates of the dam
- The elevated structures/connectors should have as low a profile as current safety/design guidelines will allow in order to reduce the visual impacts and views of the dam
- All new concrete should match in color and texture to that of the dam outlet structure

As with any project that results in adverse effects to historic properties a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) will be prepared. The following list is a preliminary proposal of the types of mitigation commonly agreed to:

- HABS/HAER documentation—Historic American Building Survey photographic documentation and Historic American Engineering Record documentation as directed by the National Park Service
- Production of a documentary (video or movie) of broadcast quality, 30 minutes or more in length
- Dissemination of reports to various repositories and websites

This is only a preliminary proposal for mitigation. Further discussion and consideration is necessary as well as consultation with the State Historic Preservation Officer.

## 2.2 PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

### 2.2.1 HYDROLOGY AND FLOODPLAIN

**Regulatory Setting.** Executive Order 11988 (Floodplain Management) directs all federal agencies to refrain from conducting, supporting, or allowing actions in floodplains unless it is the only practicable alternative. The Federal Highway Administration requirements for compliance are outlined in 23 CFR 650 Subpart A.

In order to comply, the following must be analyzed:

- The practicability of alternatives to any longitudinal encroachments
- Risks of the action
- Impacts on natural and beneficial floodplain values
- Support of incompatible floodplain development
- Measures to minimize floodplain impacts and to preserve/restore any beneficial floodplain values impacted by the project

The base floodplain is defined as “the area subject to flooding by the flood or tide having a one percent chance of being exceeded in any given year.” An encroachment is defined as “an action within the limits of the base floodplain.”

#### Affected Environment

Caltrans has prepared a Floodplain Evaluation Report and a Location Hydraulic Study (LHS) for this project as the Preferred Alternative requires an encroachment on a floodplain via the construction of a connector structure over the spillway of the Sepulveda Dam. The Floodplain Evaluation Report was completed on February 14, 2007, and the Location Hydraulic Study (LHS) was finalized on May 12, 2008. The ensuing discussion is based on those technical studies as prepared by a registered engineer with hydraulics expertise.

The Los Angeles River drains the vast watershed of the San Fernando Valley and surrounding mountains—finally emptying into the Pacific Ocean at Long Beach. In years of heavy rainfall, this normally tame watercourse becomes a mighty force—as was the case in 1938 when torrential rains caused the river to flood adjacent farms and homes. Consequently, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) channelized the river and built the Sepulveda Dam in 1941 to capture and hold floodwaters for later gradual release down the river. Except for infrequent but dramatic flood episodes, this otherwise dry-land flood control basin, most of which is leased from the USACE by the City of Los Angeles Department of Recreation & Parks, plays host to diverse uses today including: athletic fields, agriculture, golf courses, a fishing lake, parklands, Japanese gardens, a model-airplane field, a sewage treatment facility, an armory, and a locally and regionally sufficient wildlife reserve – all behind the dam, in the south-central portion of the San Fernando Valley, just northwest of the junction of Interstate-405 and the U.S.-101.

The Sepulveda Dam consists of an earth-filled embankment with a reinforced concrete spillway and outlet works. The components of the Sepulveda Dam and Reservoir include: dam, outlet works, control house, and spillway. Reservoir lands are used as flood control/storage behind the Sepulveda Dam, and consist of 2,097 acres, extending from Interstate-405 on the east and the U.S.-101 on the south, to Victory Boulevard on the north, and to approximately 0.2 miles beyond Balboa Boulevard on the west, with a strip of flood control land about 0.4 miles wide extending westward on either side of the Los Angeles River to White Oak Avenue.

The Los Angeles River is regulated by the outlet works, which consist of 4 gated outlets and 4 un-gated outlets, and can allow a maximum discharge of 16,500 cubic-feet-per-second (cfs) at a reservoir water surface elevation of 710 feet, 1927 NGVD - the height of the spillway crest with spillway gates raised.

The spillway is a reinforced concrete ogee (a cornice-like architectural element with an S-shaped profile) section of the overflow gravity type, which has seven submersible drum gates operating as function of water surface elevation. For reservoir surface elevations between 710 and 712, the discharge over the top of the crest gates increases very slowly. At elevations between 712 and 715 feet, however, the rate of discharge increases very rapidly with elevation, as the crest gates lower from 710 to 700 feet. Water spilling over the raised crest gates would cascade down across the ogee onto the spillway apron. This apron is a large concrete slab with a gentle downward slope, extending 694 feet downstream of the ogee.

## Environmental Consequences

Hydraulic computer modeling has been performed that indicates an increase in the Base Floodplain Elevation (BFE) with the implementation of the Preferred Alternative, though the impact is considered insignificant at 0.01 percent. Mitigation to offset this impact is proposed, nevertheless, and the determination of floodplain encroachment impacts follows. Mitigation can be referenced in the following subsection entitled, "Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures."

**The Preferred Alternative.** This alternative calls for construction of a new connector bridge from the southbound I-405 to the northbound and southbound U.S.-101, crossing over the spillway outlet area of the Sepulveda Dam. This alternative will occupy approximately 4.93 acres of the spillway outlet area, and 0.45 acres of permanent footing easement, in addition to approximately 1.07 acres of the upstream dam embankment, 0.59 acres of fill, and 49,014 ft<sup>3</sup> of the dam reservoir. The reservoir will be affected only on the south end of the Sepulveda Dam. Length and width of the structure on the dam will be 550 and 41 feet, respectively. Dimensions of the structure that encroach into the spillway will be 1660 feet in length, with varying widths from 42 to 14 feet. A portion of the existing USACE service road (1670 feet) will be realigned due to the connector encroachment, with the full realignment on structure. This realignment, in tandem with the construction of a retaining wall, will aid in minimizing reservoir volume loss.

**Rejected Alternative 2.** This alternative would have called for the construction of new on-and-off-ramps to-and-from the US-101 freeway at Burbank Boulevard, and a widening of the existing southbound I-405 to southbound US-101 connector. This project alternative would have occupied approximately 0.28 acres of the spillway outlet area, 1.07 acres of the upstream dam embankment, in addition to 0.79 acres of footing easement, 0.59 acres of fill, 0.16 acres of the downstream embankment (into the basin north of Burbank Boulevard), and 76,950 ft<sup>3</sup> of the dam reservoir. The south end (49,014 ft<sup>3</sup>) and northeast section (27,936 ft<sup>3</sup>) would have been affected. Length and width of the structure on the dam would have been 550 and 41 feet, respectively. 2.64 acres of the 225 total acreage (or 1.17%) of the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Refuge would have been covered by the new I-405/US-101 connector structures.

**Rejected Alternative 3.** This alternative would have called for construction of the same on-and-off ramps to-and-from the US-101 freeway at Burbank Boulevard, and a widening of the existing southbound I-405 to southbound US-101 connector, as proposed in Rejected Alternative 2, but with a larger loop radius in the design of the on-ramp from Burbank Boulevard to the US-101 freeway. This project alternative would have occupied approximately 0.25 acres of the spillway outlet area, and 1.07 acres of the upstream dam embankment, 76,950 ft<sup>3</sup> of the dam reservoir, in addition to 0.80 acres of footing easement, 0.59 acres of fill, and 1.90 acres of the downstream embankment into the basin, north of Burbank Boulevard. The south end (49,014 ft<sup>3</sup>) and northeast section (27,936 ft<sup>3</sup>) of the Sepulveda Dam would have been affected. Length and width of the structure on the dam would have been 550 and 41 feet, respectively. 2.92 acres of the 225 total acreage (or 1.30%) of the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Refuge would have been covered by the new I-405/US-101 connector structures.

**Other impacts.** Rejected Alternatives 2 and 3 would have carried the potential to adversely impact beneficial floodplain values such as the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Refuge, but these project alternatives

are no longer being considered at this time. Please refer to the biological impact and mitigation section of this EA/IS for a thorough discussion of that impact, as well as, mitigation proposals.

**Coordination regarding impacts to the Sepulveda Dam.** Environmental Coordination with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) has been ongoing since 2003, and the Department submitted to the Corps the project Natural Environment Study Report (biological study) and the Floodplain Evaluation Report (including the 5 mitigation proposals) on June 19, 2007 for their input, review, and comment. As of the date of this Draft EA/IS, the Corps is still reviewing those materials.

Coordination, consultation, and presentation of the aforementioned Floodplain Evaluation Report must be presented to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) during circulation of the Draft EA/IS as sometimes an encroachment on a regulatory floodway, or an increase in the base flood elevation, or any subsequent actions may necessitate the need for a floodplain map revision. During the public comment period, Caltrans submitted to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) a copy of the Draft Environmental Assessment/Initial Study (EA/IS) and received a reply and comment letter dated April 21, 2008. Caltrans shall address and incorporate FEMA's comments into the design during the PS&E phase of the project.

**Significance of Encroachment.** A "significant encroachment" on a floodplain is defined at 23 CFR 650.105 as a highway encroachment and any direct support of likely base floodplain development that would involve one or more of the following construction or flood related impacts:

- a significant potential for interruption or termination of a transportation facility that is needed for emergency vehicles or provides a community's only evacuation route
- a significant risk (to life or property), or
- a significant or adverse impact on natural and beneficial floodplain values

The purpose of this EA/IS, as well as its component Floodplain Evaluation Report and Hydraulic Studies is to identify the associated risks introduced by the proposed project, as well as their level of significance. There is no potential for significant interruption or termination of transportation facilities that are needed for emergency vehicles or community evacuation routes. The LHS indicates an estimated duration of traffic interruption for a 100-year flood at zero (0) hours at a "moderate" risk level. The LHS also indicates that there is a "low" risk to life and/or property as a result of construction and encroachment on the floodplain, with estimated roadway and property value damage costs of zero (0) dollars. Lastly, the study concludes that there is no potential for significant or adverse impacts to residences, other buildings, crops, and natural and beneficial floodplain values.

### **Avoidance, Minimization and/or Mitigation Measures**

The Department has made four (4) mitigation proposals with the goal of eliminating the aforementioned risks:

- To life or property as a result of dam structural failure due to implementation of the proposed project
- To life of property as a result of flood waters overtopping the dam due to implementation of the proposed project

Impacts to the Sepulveda Dam Maintenance Access Road shall be mitigated by realignment and reconstruction of the road. To avoid any potential risks associated with this action, the Department would ensure that the new service road is constructed before the current service road is impacted/removed. This would be done in full coordination with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

**Mitigation Proposals.** The sole purpose of Sepulveda Dam is flood control and its operating criteria were based strictly upon reservoir water surface elevation criteria, irrespective of downstream channel conditions. Also, no water is impounded by the dam for the purpose of recreation. The project has been

conceptually approved by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE—Los Angeles District), which has regulatory responsibility for the Dam, and the reservoir lands. While it is possible that solutions could be provided by the USACE in the forthcoming phases of this project, the following has been proposed in order to compensate for the volume loss by the proposed projects:

1. The project proposes realignment of the USACE service road by constructing a retaining wall that will allow excavating the upstream embankment to restore storage volume removed by realignment USACE service road.
2. Extension of existing Burbank Boulevard Bridge: Burbank Boulevard is closed during major storm events due to raising water in the basin (the lowest elevation is at Los Angeles River). The space under the bridge will compensate for the volume loss of the basin due to the project. This proposal will avoid closure of Burbank Boulevard during major storm events, however, it is not cost effective, and also requires study and cooperation with the City of Los Angeles.
3. Acquire residential private properties: acquiring some properties at risk, at the southeast corner of the basin, McLellan Avenue and Burbank Boulevard, where the front yards are still lower than the Probable Maximum Flood water surface elevation (712 feet).
4. Dredging of silt from basin to restore the volume of storage removed by additional roadway embankment.

### Floodplain Only Practicable Alternative Finding

When the Preferred Alternative causes an encroachment in a floodplain, a finding must be made that demonstrates that the Preferred Alternative is the only practicable alternative as required by 23 CFR 650, Subpart A. Table 29 details the analysis and determination in finding the Preferred Alternative as the Only Practicable Alternative

**Table 29. Floodplain Only Practicable Alternative Finding**

Balancing Factors	NO BUILD Alternative	Alternative 1	Alternative 2	Alternative 3	Only Practicable Alternative: ALTERNATIVE 1
<b>Encroachment Upon the Floodplain and Flood Control Basin</b>	ZERO Encroachment	<b>Least</b> Encroachment of the Build Alternatives: L=1660ft W=42ft	Same as Alternative 1, plus an additional encroachment of L=2,850ft W=500ft	Same as Alternative 1, plus an additional encroachment of L=2,880ft W=560ft	<b>Alternative 1 is the least encroaching Build Alternative</b>
<b>Project Purpose and Need</b>	<b>FAILS</b> to meet the project Purpose and Need	<b>BEST</b> meets the project Purpose and Need	Meets the Purpose and Need, but fails to remove the weaving segment on the SB I-405	Meets the Purpose and Need, but fails to remove the weaving segment on the SB I-405	<b>Alternative 1 BEST meets the project Purpose and Need</b>
<b>Biological Impacts</b>	ZERO Biological Impacts	<b>Least</b> Biological Impacts of the Build Alternatives because it does not encroach upon the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve	Encroaches upon the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve: L=2,850ft W=500ft	Encroaches upon the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve: L=2,880ft W=560ft	<b>Alternative 1 is the least biologically disruptive Build Alternative</b>
<b>Encroachment Upon the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve</b>	ZERO Encroachment	<b>ZERO</b> Encroachment	An encroachment upon the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve of: L=2,850ft W=500ft	An encroachment upon the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve of: L=2,880ft W=560ft	<b>Alternative 1 poses zero encroachment upon the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve</b>
<b>Least Impact to Section 4(f) Resources</b>	ZERO Impacts to Section 4(f) Resources	Impacts <b>ONE</b> Section 4(f) Resource: the Sepulveda Dam	Impacts <b>TWO</b> Section 4(f) Resources: the Sepulveda Dam and the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve	Impacts <b>TWO</b> Section 4(f) Resources: the Sepulveda Dam and the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve	<b>Alternative 1 poses the least impacts to Section 4(f) Resources, of the Build Alternatives</b>
<b>Project Impact Footprint (right-of-way encroachment upon USACE land)</b>	ZERO Impact Footprint	<b>Smallest</b> Impact Footprint of the Build Alternatives: L=1660ft W=42ft	Same as Alternative 1, plus an encroachment upon the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve of: L=2,850ft W=500ft	Same as Alternative 1, plus an encroachment upon the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve of: L=2,880ft W=560ft	<b>Alternative 1 has the smallest impact footprint, of the Build Alternatives</b>
<b>Public Comment Record</b>	Some support	<b>Received the most support</b>	By far the most opposition	By far the most opposition	<b>Alternative 1 received the most support</b>
<b>Cost (Socioeconomic Considerations)</b>	Not a factor: \$0	Not a factor: \$112,320,000	Not a factor: \$152,100,000	Not a factor: \$115,440,000	<b>Not a factor: Alternative 1 is the least expensive Build Alternative</b>

## 2.2.2 WATER QUALITY AND STORM WATER RUNOFF

**Regulatory Setting.** Section 401 of the Federal Clean Water Act (CWA) requires water quality certification from the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) or from a Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) when the project requires a CWA Section 404 permit. Section 404 of the CWA requires a permit from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) to discharge dredged or fill material into waters of the United States.

Along with CWA Section 401, CWA Section 402 establishes the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit for the discharge of any pollutant into waters of the United States. The federal Environmental Protection Agency has delegated administration of the NPDES program to the SWRCB and nine RWQCBs. The SWRCB and RWQCB also regulate other waste discharges to land within California through the issuance of waste discharge requirements under authority of the Porter-Cologne Water Quality Act.

The SWRCB has developed and issued a statewide NPDES permit to regulate storm water discharges from all Department activities on its highways and facilities. Department construction projects are regulated under the Statewide permit, and projects performed by other entities on Department right-of-way (encroachments) are regulated by the SWRCB's Statewide General Construction Permit. All construction projects over 1 acre require a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) to be prepared and implemented during construction. Department activities less than 1 acre require a Water Pollution Control Program (WPCP).

### Affected Environment

The proposed project is located within the Los Angeles River watershed, adjacent to and within the Sepulveda Basin. According to the L.A. River Project, the Los Angeles River is the heart of an 871-square mile watershed. The watershed encompasses the Santa Susanna Mountains to the west, the San Gabriel Mountains to the north and east, and the Santa Monica Mountains and Los Angeles coastal plain to the south.

The Los Angeles River Watershed has diverse patterns of land use. Forest or open space covers the upper half of the watershed, while the remaining watershed is highly urbanized with commercial, industrial, or residential uses. At the Sepulveda Basin, however, more than three miles of the river are all but undisturbed, allowing the growth of willows, reeds and other vegetation and giving us a glimpse of the natural river. The Sepulveda Basin is a dry reservoir, a 2.25-square mile emergency flood-control feature behind the 57-foot earthen Sepulveda Dam. Although much of this basin is used for recreation, with soccer, baseball, and playing fields, where the soft bottom channel of the river flows, mulefat, sagebrush, willow, and reeds cover the banks. Tributaries joining the river in the Basin are Bull Creek, Hayvenhurst Creek and Haskell Creek. Along Haskell Creek is a 225-acre Wildlife Reserve that serves as protected habitat for hundreds of species. From the Sepulveda Basin, the river flows as a concrete box channel east through the San Fernando Valley.

### Environmental Consequences

The Preferred Alternative calls for an encroachment onto the spillway of the Sepulveda Dam, and Rejected Alternatives 2 and 3 would have called for an encroachment into the Sepulveda Flood Control Basin itself. Therefore, the receiving water is the Sepulveda Basin Reservoir, a component of the Los Angeles River Watershed. The proposed project's disturbed soil area is larger than 1 acre, and therefore, will require a SWPPP pursuant to the Clean Water Act (Section 402).

Pursuant to the Clean Water Act (Sections 401 and 404), and potentially at the State level pursuant to Fish and Game Code 1602, Caltrans may need to obtain a Water Quality Certification from the Regional Water Quality Control Board, an Individual or Nationwide Permit from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers,

and a Streambed Alteration Agreement from the California Department of Fish and Game, respectively. This shall occur during the next phase of the project: the Project Specifications and Estimates (PS&E) phase. This NEPA/CEQA document shall be submitted during the application process.

### **Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures**

Pursuant to the Clean Water Act (Section 402), Caltrans has obtained from the SWRCB a NPDES permit that regulates storm water discharges from Caltrans facilities. This project must comply with NPDES Construction General Permit No. CAS000003 if disturbed soil is greater than (1) acre, in which the project fulfills. The permit requires Caltrans to maintain and implement an effective Storm Water Management Plan (SWMP) that identifies and describes the Best Management Practices (BMPs) used to reduce or eliminate the storm water runoff discharge of pollutants to waters of drainage conveyances and waterways. The SWMP is the framework for developing and implementing guidance to meet permit requirements for Caltrans' storm water discharges.

**Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) Requirements.** A TMDL or Total Maximum Daily Load is a calculation of the maximum amount of a pollutant that a waterbody can receive and still meet water quality standards, and an allocation of that amount to the pollutant's sources. Water quality standards are set by the California Regional Water Quality Control Board. They identify the uses for each waterbody, for example, drinking water supply, contact recreation (swimming), and aquatic life support (fishing), and the scientific criteria to support that use. A TMDL is the sum of the allowable loads of a single pollutant from all contributing point and nonpoint sources. The calculation must include a margin of safety to ensure that the waterbody can be used for the purposes the State has designated. The calculation must also account for seasonal variation in water quality. The Clean Water Act, Section 303, establishes the water quality standards and TMDL programs.

The project lies within the Los Angeles River Watershed and Nitrogen Compounds and Related Effects TMDL became effective March 23, 2004. The TMDL requires the Storm Water NPDES Permittees to submit a Monitoring Work Plan by March 23, 2005 to estimate nitrogen loadings associated with runoff from the storm drain systems. The County of Los Angeles has submitted the Monitoring Work Plan as required on behalf of Caltrans and other Storm Water NPDES Co-Permittees in the watershed. Targeted pollutants are Total ammonia as nitrogen (NH<sub>3</sub>-N), Nitrate-nitrogen (NO<sub>3</sub>-N), nitrite-nitrogen (NO<sub>2</sub>-N), and Nitrate nitrogen plus nitrite-nitrogen (NO<sub>3</sub>-N + NO<sub>2</sub>-N). The Department's monitoring data depicts Caltrans discharges to be below the TMDL limits, thus no additional measures are needed to be considered for meeting the conditions of the Nitrogen TMDL. Project Engineers shall consider treatment controls for the project and consult with the District NPDES Storm Water Coordinator.

**Best Management Practices (BMPs).** With respect to storm water quality, avoidance and minimization are accomplished by implementation of approved BMPs, which are generally broken down into four categories: Pollution Prevention, Treatment, Construction, and Maintenance BMPs. Certain projects may require installation and maintenance of permanent controls to treat storm water. Selection and design of permanent project BMPs is primarily refined in the next phase of the project: the Project Specifications and Estimates (PS&E) phase.

During construction activities, Caltrans has a comprehensive program for preventing water pollution via the preparation and implementation of the aforementioned SWPPP and WPCP. Caltrans has also developed and obtained the SWRCB approval of numerous BMPs for preventing water pollution during construction. Caltrans construction BMPs, SWPPP, and WPCP also incorporate the requirements of the SWRCB NPDES permit. This is all implemented jointly by both Caltrans, and the contractor hired to construct the project, prior to construction.

The following BMPs have been considered for use on this project, but are subject to change and revision:

#### **Treatment BMPs**

- Biofiltration Strips and Swales B-5
- Infiltration Devices B-11
- Detention Devices B-29
- Gross Solids Removal Devices
- Media Filters B-53
- Multi-Chamber Treatment Train (MCTT) B-65
- Wet Basin B-71

#### **Construction Site BMPs**

##### Soil Stabilization BMPs C-5

- Geotextiles, Mats/Plastic Covers and Erosion Control Blankets (SS-7) C-12

##### Sediment Control Practices C-18

- Silt Fence (SC-1) C-18
- Fiber Rolls (SC-5) C-19
- Gravel Bag Berm (SC-6) C-20
- Street Sweeping and Vacuuming (SC-7) C-20
- Sand Bag Barrier (SC-8) C-20
- Storm Drain Inlet Protection (SC-10) C-21

##### Tracking Control Practices C-21

- Stabilized Construction Entrance (TC-1) C-21
- Stabilized Construction Roadway (TC-2) C-21

##### Waste Management and Materials Pollution Control C-25

- Stockpile Management (WM-3) C-26
- Concrete Waste Management (WM-8) C-27

### **2.2.3 GEOLOGY / SOILS / SEISMIC / TOPOGRAPHY**

**Regulatory Setting.** For geologic and topographic features, the key federal law is the Historic Sites Act of 1935, which establishes a national registry of natural landmarks and protects “outstanding examples of major geological features.” Topographic and geologic features are also protected under the California Environmental Quality Act.

This section also discusses geology, soils, and seismic concerns as they relate to public safety and project design. Earthquakes are prime considerations in the design and retrofit of structures. The Department’s Office of Earthquake Engineering is responsible for assessing the seismic hazard for Department projects. The current policy is to use the anticipated Maximum Credible Earthquake (MCE), from young faults in and near California. The MCE is defined as the largest earthquake that can be expected to occur on a fault over a particular period of time.

A Preliminary Geotechnical Report (PGR) has been prepared by Caltrans for the four proposed alternatives, which includes information in regard to site reconnaissance, a literature search, and a review of the Log of Test Boring (LOTB), based on typical cross-sections and preliminary layouts as provided by the district. The following information has been extracted from the PGR completed February 15, 2006.

## Affected Environment

**Geology.** Based on the Geologic Map of California, Division of Mines and Geology (State of California 1997), the proposed site is mainly underlain by quaternary alluvial sediment and terrace deposits, unconsolidated and semi-consolidated, mostly non-marine deposits. The deposits consist of medium to dense, gravelly clayey sand, and soft to stiff sandy and clayey silt.

According to the previous LOTB performed in the past fifty years, ground water fluctuates between the approximate elevations of 558 feet and 659 feet, which is approximately 20-23 feet deep below the ground surface. The high water level of the Los Angeles River was recorded at approximately 663 feet in September of 1955. During a drill operation in May of 2000 for retaining walls along the connector between northbound I-405 and southbound US-101, groundwater was recorded at the approximate elevation of 667 feet. No surface water was observed in the area, but some perched water may exist temporarily due to frequent surface run-off.

**Topography.** As previously stated, the project area formed by alluvial sediment and terrace deposits, and is generally flat. According to our latest topographic layout plan, ground surface elevation varies from approximately 686 feet in the northern area of Burbank Boulevard, to approximately 673 and 653 feet in the southern and southeastern areas, respectively.

**Seismicity.** Maximum Credible Earthquake (MCE) is typically defined as the maximum earthquake predicted to affect a given location based on the known lengths of the active faults in the vicinity. Based on several memos prepared by Caltrans Geotechnical Services, and the Department's 1966 Seismic Hazard Map, the Maximum Credible Earthquake (MCE) is 7.5.

Peak Bedrock Acceleration (PBA) is another measure of seismic intensity that incorporates a number of uncertainties such as the strength of soil and rock materials at each point of the slip surface, and errors due to simplifying mechanical assumptions. The mean PBA in the project area is estimated at 0.5 g.

**Liquefaction.** Due to seasonal fluctuation in ground water levels, perched water near the Los Angeles River and the existence of medium-to-dense sands, liquefaction potential in this area is considered to be low-to-moderate.

## Environmental Consequences

**Potential for Impacts Related to project's susceptibility to erosion and geologic hazards such as earthquakes and liquefaction.** Based on the Department's 1966 Seismic Hazard Map, the Maximum Credible Earthquake (MCE) is 7.5. The mean Peak Bedrock Acceleration (PBA) is estimated as 0.5g at this site. The soil profile may be taken as type D for Seismic Design Criteria. Therefore, an ARS curve was developed and recommended for seismic design.

**Potential for Exposure of Workers to Hazards During Construction.** There are currently no special considerations of provisions recommended as a result of this project and the geologic conditions in the area, although, workers are subject to implementation and practice of general safety practices within construction zones.

**Potential for Impacts to Natural Geologic Landmarks and Landforms.** As part of the scoping and environmental analysis conducted for the project, potential impacts to natural geologic landmarks and landforms were considered, but no adverse impacts were identified. Consequently, there is no further discussion regarding these issues in this section.

## Avoidance, Minimization and/or Mitigation Measures

**Bridge Foundation Recommendations.** After a review of geotechnical data and information regarding all four proposed alternatives, the Caltrans Office of Geotechnical Design has made the following recommendations for bridge foundations:

- **Pre-cast Concrete Piles.** These are most favorable due to the presence of groundwater and soil condition that is not hard enough for driving piles. However, gravel with a maximum size of 3 inches may be encountered, and some difficulties in driving piles should be anticipated. This option would also minimize soil disturbance of environmental concern.
- **Steel Pipe Piles.** While still a practical application in these conditions, steel pipe piles can be especially useful with dense, gravelly, and clayey sand, provided that soils are not corrosive. H-Piles may also be used, however, corrosion is also a concern with this less favorable option.

**Proposed Foundation Investigations.** Subsurface investigation is required for the final. Geotechnical Design Report. Investigations with a minimum of one bored hole are recommended for each bent of the proposed bridges to verify the site conditions, and to evaluate the required design soil parameters for the project. Each hold should be at least 98 feet deep, and additionally, (4) Cone Penetration Tests (CPT) for each connector are recommended, with both dry auger and rotary wash borings for the drilling program.

## 2.2.4 PALEONTOLOGY

**Regulatory Setting.** Paleontology is the study of life in past geologic time based on fossil plants and animals. A number of federal statutes specifically address paleontological resources, their treatment, and funding for mitigation as a part of federally authorized or funded projects. (e.g., Antiquities Act of 1906 [16 USC 431-433], Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1935 [20 USC 78]). Under California law, paleontological resources are protected by the California Environmental Quality Act, the California Administrative Code, Title 14, Section 4306 et seq., and Public Resources Code Section 5097.5.

### Affected Environment

The Caltrans Division of Environmental Analysis, Office of Environmental Engineering, performed an investigation, utilizing geologic maps for the project area, and the Caltrans Preliminary Geotechnical Design Report (2005), and found that undifferentiated fill, and Quarternary Alluvium (alluvial fan and alluvial basin deposits) occur at the surface within the project area. These are underlain by the Modelo Formation (Monterey Formation and Unnamed Shale). These formations occur at the surface south of the project area in the Santa Monica Mountains, dip to the north and extend under the project area.

The fill and alluvium are unlikely to be of concern, however, the Monterey Formation is very fossiliferous. Some general information about the Monterey Formation is provided below:

- **From the UC Museum of Paleontology at University of California, Berkeley website.** The Monterey formation is a vast area of marine deposits rich in fossils. It covers both a large area of California and an extended period of time. Particularly exciting are the fossil whales and dolphins, as well as the large numbers of finely preserved crabs. The single most important find, however, is the collection of kelps and other large soft-bodied seaweeds, which are seldom found as fossils elsewhere.
- **From the “Paleontological Assessment Report for the Viejo Substation and the Transmission Line Project, Orange County, California,” as prepared by SWCA Environmental Consultants (2003).** The Monterey Formation has been assigned to a high paleontological sensitivity level due to the numerous invertebrate, fish and marine mammal fossils that have been recovered in Orange County (Cooper and Eisentraut, 2000). Limestone deposits in Aliso Viejo, the Pecten Reef and other Orange County localities have produced a wide array of fossils including coprolites, algae, plant fragments, pollen (pine, primrose, dune grass, willow), foraminiferans, diatoms, sponges, bryozoan colonies, serpulid worms, pectens, oysters, clams, marine snails, ostracods, barnacles, sand dollars, sharks, bat rays, fish, turtles, crocodiles, dolphins, baleen whales, sea lions, manatees, desmostylians, horses, primitive squirrels, primitive dogs, primitive deer and birds (Raschke, 1984).

### Environmental Consequences

The Monterey Formation has high paleontological sensitivity at least in some areas. Based upon evaluation and study of logs of test borings (ranging from more than 50 feet to 70 feet) in the project area dating from 1954 through 1969, there is no indication that the Monterey Formation was encountered in any of the borings. There are shale fragments in some of the borings which may have been derived from the Monterey Formation, but even if this is true, they were eroded out from the Santa Monica Mountains and redeposited, which eliminates potential paleontological significance. In evaluation of this data, it has been concluded that the Monterey Formation is deeper than 50 to 70 feet in this area. The piles for this project are approximately 24 feet below the surface, and when comparing this information to the available boring logs, it is highly unlikely that the Monterey Formation will be encountered during construction.

## **Avoidance, Mitigation, and/or Minimization Measures**

Because it is unlikely that significant paleontological resources will be encountered during construction of this project, no formal mitigation and monitoring plan is necessary. However, if paleontological resources are discovered during construction, the paleontologist (or paleontological monitor) will recover them. Construction work in these areas will be halted or diverted to allow recovery of fossil remains in a timely manner. Fossil remains collected during the monitoring and salvage portion of the mitigation program will be cleaned, prepared, sorted, and cataloged. Prepared fossils, along with copies of all pertinent field notes, photos, and maps, will then be deposited in a scientific institution with paleontological collections.

## **2.2.5 HAZARDOUS WASTE/MATERIALS**

### **Regulatory Setting**

Hazardous materials and hazardous wastes are regulated by many state and federal laws. These include not only specific statutes governing hazardous waste, but also a variety of laws regulating air and water quality, human health and land use.

The primary federal laws regulating hazardous wastes/materials are the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act of 1976 (RCRA) and the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act of 1980 (CERCLA). The purpose of CERCLA, often referred to as Superfund, is to clean up contaminated sites so that public health and welfare are not compromised. RCRA provides for “cradle to grave” regulation of hazardous wastes. Other federal laws include:

- Community Environmental Response Facilitation Act (CERFA) of 1992
- Clean Water Act
- Clean Air Act
- Safe Drinking Water Act
- Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSHA)
- Atomic Energy Act
- Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA)
- Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA)

In addition to the acts listed above, Executive Order 12088, Federal Compliance with Pollution Control, mandates that necessary actions be taken to prevent and control environmental pollution when federal activities or federal facilities are involved.

Hazardous waste in California is regulated primarily under the authority of the federal Resource Conservation and Recovery Act of 1976, and the California Health and Safety Code. Other California laws that affect hazardous waste are specific to handling, storage, transportation, disposal, treatment, reduction, cleanup and emergency planning.

Worker health and safety and public safety are key issues when dealing with hazardous materials that may affect human health and the environment. Proper disposal of hazardous material is vital if it is disturbed during project construction.

### **Affected Environment**

An Initial Site Assessment (ISA) was conducted (Ninyo & Moore Geotechnical and Environmental Services, 2005) for all build alternatives to identify, to the extent practical, contaminated, and potentially contaminated areas and hazardous waste problems within and adjacent to the Department right of way

and proposed project area. Sources of hazardous waste include the presence of active gas stations or old stations, automotive repair businesses, dry cleaning businesses, any industrial activity, car recyclers, landfills (permitted or unpermitted), and naturally occurring asbestos, which can be found in certain types of geologic formations. The ISA included a field reconnaissance of the subject area and adjoining properties, and a review of historical records, maps, telephone directories, aerial photographs, and regulatory databases.

Ninyo & Moore performed an environmental records search for properties located within the project study area (a search radius of ¼ mile on either side of the project site) which included the following federal and state databases:

### **Federal Databases**

**CERCLIS/NFRAP Database (Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act/No Further Remedial Action Planned)** – database that is a compilation of facilities which the United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) has investigated or is currently investigating for a release or threatened release of hazardous substances pursuant to the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act (CERCLA) of 1980. NFRAP refers to facilities that have been removed and archived from its inventory of CERCLA sites.

**ENRS Database (Emergency Response Notification System)** – Records and stores information on reported releases of oil and hazardous substances.

**NPL Database (National Priorities List)** – United States Environmental Protection Agency's database of uncontrolled or abandoned hazardous waste facilities that have been listed for priority remedial actions under the Superfund Program. This database is updated quarterly.

**RCRA Generators Database (Resource Conservation and the Recovery Act)** – Maintained by the USEPA, lists facilities that generate hazardous waste as part of their normal business practices.

**RCRA CORRACTS/TSD Database (Resource Conservation and the Recovery Act, Corrective Action Sites/Treatment, Storage and Disposal)** – The USEPA maintains a database of RCRA facilities associated with TSD of hazardous materials that are undergoing "corrective action." A "Corrective action" order is issued when there has been a release of hazardous waste or constituents into the environment from a RCRA facility.

**RCRA Non-CORRACTS/TSD Database (Resource Conservation and the Recovery Act, Non-Corrective Action Sites/Treatment, Storage and Disposal)** – A compilation by the USEPA of facilities that report storage, transportation, treatment, or disposal of hazardous waste. This database does not include RCRA facilities where corrective action is required.

### **State Databases**

**Cal Sites Database** – Maintained by the State of California Environmental Protection Agency, Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC), this database contains information on Annual Workplan Properties (AWP), and both known and potentially contaminated properties. Two-thirds of these properties have been classified, based on available information, as needed No Further Action by the DTSC. The remaining properties are in various stages of review and remediation to determine if a problem exists.

**LUST Database (Leaking Underground Storage Tank)** – Database of reported leaking underground storage tank facilities as maintained by the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) and the Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB).

**Spills-1990 Report** – The California RWQCB report of sites that have records of spills, leaks, investigation, and cleanups.

**SWLFs Database (Solid Waste Landfill)** – This database consists of open and closed solid waste disposal facilities and transfer stations. The data comes from the Integrated Waste Management Board's SWIS (Solid Waste Information System) database.

**UST Database (Underground Storage Tank)** – The UST Information System is maintained by the SWRCB (State Water Resources Control Board), which may include the owner and location of the USTs. This database may also include registered ASTs (Aboveground Storage Tanks).

### **Delineation of Study Area**

The ISA also addressed the right-of-way located along US-101 from White Oak Avenue to Woodman Avenue, along I-405 from Victory Boulevard to Ventura Boulevard, as well as (15) properties associated with the connector improvement project. The ISA report divides the I-405 and US-101 project area into five segments discussed below:

Segment A extends from Woodman Avenue on the east to Sepulveda Boulevard on the west. Land uses surrounding this segment consist mostly of residential but there are non-residential as well. Non-residential properties include commercial and office buildings, gasoline stations, and medical office buildings. The eastern section of the Department R/W (near Woodman Avenue) includes unpaved areas. The remainder of the R/W also contains unpaved areas, but these areas are behind sound walls on both the east and westbound US-101. The area behind the sound walls includes unpaved areas, the Los Angeles River, or residential areas.

Segment B extends east to west from Sepulveda Boulevard to Balboa Boulevard. Like Segment A, this segment is comprised mostly of residential uses. There are, however, non-residential properties including gasoline stations, office and medical buildings, and retail uses. The Department R/W consisted primarily of paved areas extending to a sound wall on both east and westbound US-101. The areas behind the sound walls included unpaved areas, the LA River, or residential areas.

Segment C also runs east to west and goes from Balboa Boulevard to White Oak Avenue. This segment is characterized by residential uses, both single and multi-family. Non-residential properties include gasoline stations, commercial and office properties, and medical buildings. The Department R/W consisted primarily of paved areas with a soundwall and unpaved areas beyond the walls on both the east and westbound US-101. The Department R/W near White Oak is unpaved. The area behind the sound wall consisted of unpaved areas, the LA River, or residential areas.

Segment D extends north to south from Victory Boulevard to Burbank Boulevard. Properties surrounding this segment on the west include the Sepulveda Recreational Area, a National Guard Training Facility, and the Tillman Water Reclamation Plant. Land uses to the east include residential, commercial, offices, and retail shops. A light industrial facility (Chevron-Texaco Van Nuys Terminal) and gasoline stations lie east of the site. The Department right of way consists of unpaved areas on both northbound and southbound I-405.

Segment E also runs north to south and goes from Burbank Boulevard to Ventura Boulevard. In general, residential areas consisting of single-family residences and apartment complexes, and the Sepulveda Dam and a golf course adjoin this segment to the west. To the east are additional residential areas, office and commercial properties, and the Sherman Oaks Galleria. The Department R/W consisted of paved areas with sound wall on both the north and southbound I-405. The areas behind the sound wall included unpaved areas (north of US-101), residences, or commercial areas.

**15 Additional Parcels of Study.** Fifteen additional parcels were studied, which are located along US-101 freeway between Balboa Boulevard and the I-405 freeway, and along the I-405 freeway between Victory Boulevard and the US-101 freeway. The following table lists and provides details regarding the parcels.

**Table 30. Description of 15 Parcels of Study**

Parcel	Address	Description
A	16936 Burbank Boulevard	Multi-family residences
B	16900 Burbank Boulevard	Commercial building that is currently occupied by Amber's Donut Shop, Hobby People, Assist U Sell, and offices
C	No address	Vacant land
D	5545 McLennan Avenue	Single-family residence
E	5546 McLennan Avenue	Single-family residence
F	No address	Vacant land
G	No address	Vacant land
H	No address	Vacant land associated with the Sepulveda Dam Recreational Area
I	No address	Portion of a golf course and vacant land associated with the Sepulveda Dam Recreational Area
J	No address	Vacant land associated with the Sepulveda Dam Recreational Area
K	No address	Vacant land associated with the Sepulveda Dam Recreational Area
L	No address	Vacant land associated with the Sepulveda Dam Recreational Area
M	No address	Vacant land associated with the Sepulveda Dam Recreational Area
N	No address	Vacant land associated with the Sepulveda Dam Recreational Area
O	No address	Vacant land associated with the Sepulveda Dam Recreational Area

No evidence of releases or environmental concerns were noted on the (15) parcels. The site reconnaissance revealed that Parcels H, I, J, K, M, N, and O were observed to be vacant/recreational use land associated with the Sepulveda Dam Recreation Area. The Encino Golf Course was observed on the southern portion of Parcel I. A commercial/office building, which included a donut shop, a retail shop, and a real estate office was observed on Parcel B. Apartment complexes were observed on Parcel A, and single-family residences were observed on Parcels D and E. Parcels C, F, G, and L were observed to be vacant land.

**Groundwater Sampling.** Groundwater sampling and testing in the Sepulveda Dam area will be performed during the Planning, Specifications, and Estimates (PS&E) Phase to determine the level of contaminants. If the water meets the surface water standards, it could be discharged into the Los Angeles River per National pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit from the Regional Water Quality Control Board. If the water is contaminated, it will require treatment before disposal.

## Environmental Consequences

**Aerially Deposited Lead (ADL).** ADL may exist at the project location in unpaved areas within Caltrans right-of-way. The top (2) feet of soil in unpaved areas (up to 25 feet from edge of pavement) requiring excavation can be considered contaminated and may require disposal at a Class I facility. A Site Investigation (SI) will be required for this project during the Plans, Specifications, and Estimates (PS&E)

phase to determine the levels and extent of contamination and provisions will be made for handling and disposal of the contaminated soils. The areas of primary concern are soils along routes with historically high vehicle emissions due to large traffic volumes, congestion, or stop and go situations. Most ADL due to vehicle emissions was deposited prior to 1986 when nearly all lead was removed from gasoline in California.

**Asbestos Containing Materials (ACM) and Lead Based Paint (LBP).** ACM and LBP may be present at on-site buildings and single-family residences. Prior to demolition of any on-site buildings/single-family residences (that might be acquired), ACM and LBP surveys will be required. If ACMs and/or LBP are/is detected, these materials must be removed and disposed of at an appropriate disposal facility by a licensed contractor prior to demolition.

**Asbestos Containing Materials (ACM) in Structures that Require Modification.** There is also a concern that ACM may be present in the structure that requires modification, relocation, or any work that impact existing structures. It is recommended that testing be done during construction to determine the presence of ACM. Testing of expansion joints at every approach and departure slabs being replaced is recommended. If the presence of ACM be determined by testing, the material will be disposed of at an appropriate disposal facility.

**Thermoplastic/Paint Striping Containing Lead and Chromium.** There is concern that yellow thermoplastic/pain striping that needs to be removed may contain lead and chromium at concentrations that are considered hazardous. If yellow thermoplastic/paint striping removed by itself, the residue must be disposed of at a Class I facility. In areas where the yellow traffic stripes are being removed along with asphalt or concrete, the lead concentration may be diluted in the project so that disposal at a Class I facility may not be necessary. We will be able to estimate the lead and chromium levels when data (length of yellow stripes and volume of asphalt to be removed) becomes available to determine whether the waste can be relinquished to the contractor for possible recycling or need to be disposed of at a Class I facility.

**Potential for Detrimental Impacts During Construction Activities.** The purpose of the ISA is to identify, to the extent feasible, hazardous and potential hazardous waste problems within and next to the right-of-way, and proposed project area. Based on the results of historical research, review of environmental databases, regulatory agency inquiries, and site reconnaissance, properties were evaluated and classified as High, Moderate, or Low with regard to the potential for detrimental impacts during construction activities for this project.

**High** – Property with known or probable contamination within the area of the project. An example of a property in this category would be a leaking underground storage tank (UST) site where remediation had not been started or was not yet finished.

**Moderate** – Property with potential or suspected contamination within the area of the project. Examples of properties in this category would be leaking UST sites in final stages of remediation or in post-remediation monitoring. A second example would be a property with known use and storage of hazardous materials which had received violation notices from an inspecting agency or where visual evidence of inadequate chemical and storage practices (such as significant staining) were observed but where no environmental assessments had occurred.

**Low** – Property which uses or store hazardous materials but with no significant violations, known releases, or evidence of inadequate chemical handling practices. Example properties would be UST or dry cleaning facilities with no documented releases or where remediation or previous releases had been completed.

Of the parcels/properties that were evaluated, the following (5) properties of High or Moderate risk emerged, as presented in the following table.

**Table 31. Identified Properties of Concern**

Property Name/Address	Description of Site Operations/Primary Reasons for Risk Classification	Data Source	Risk Classification
<b>Segment A (US-101)</b>			
Fashion Square Car Wash/ 4625 Woodman Avenue (approximately 0.10 mile SE of the US-101 freeway)	Car Wash, with underground storage tanks - release to groundwater; status of "remedial action"	Reconnaissance, Database	Moderate
<b>Segment D (I-405)</b>			
Chevron-Texaco Van Nuys Terminal/15359 Oxnard Street/approximately 0.10 mile NE of the I-405 freeway	Petroleum bulk station, this facility was listed on the Leaking Underground Storage Tank (LUST), Resource Conservation Databases, as well as the Recovery Act Generator (RCRAGN) database maintained by the United State Environmental Protection Agency and the SPILLS database, maintained by the California Regional Water Quality Control Board	Reconnaissance, Database, and Historical Documentation	High
Chevron/5600 Sepulveda Boulevard/approximately 0.10 mile NE of I-405 freeway	Gasoline station that has experienced an unauthorized release of gasoline to the soil only, this facility is listed on the LUST database	Reconnaissance, Database	Moderate
Shell Service Station/5556 Sepulveda Boulevard/approximately 0.10 mile southeast from the I-405	Gasoline station that has experienced an unauthorized release of gasoline to the soil only, this facility is listed on the LUST database	Reconnaissance, Database	Moderate
<b>Segment E (I-405)</b>			
Unocal 76 Station/15410 Ventura Boulevard/approximately 0.10 mile NW from the I-405	Gasoline station that has experienced an unauthorized release of gasoline and is currently listed on the LUST database as undergoing "remedial action"	Reconnaissance, Database	Moderate

While the ISA indicated the aforementioned (5) properties as high and moderate risk properties, these properties are not within the footprint of the project, do not pose any potential for detrimental impacts during construction activities, and will not be acquired for Caltrans right-of-way.

**Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures**

Now that Alternative 1 has formally been selected as the Preferred Alternative, a more focused and in-depth approach to assessing the potential for detrimental impacts during construction activities will be performed upon project approval. Further evaluation of these types of risks will include subsurface exploration, sampling, and/or other forms of testing to avoid, minimize, or mitigate any potential hazardous waste impacts.

**Limitations.** The information presented in the ISA is based on the project scope of work, and relies on information provided by others in the description of historical conditions and a review of regulatory databases and files. Ninyo & Moore observed properties adjoining the I-405 and US-101 freeways from public rights-of-way only, and did not conduct interviews with individual/property representatives.

No ISA can completely eliminate uncertainty regarding the potential for hazardous materials conditions in connection with a property. Performance of this ISA is intended to reduce, but not eliminate, uncertainty regarding the presence of hazardous materials conditions. The available data do not provide definitive

information relative to past uses, operations, or incidents at the site or adjacent properties. The existence of site contamination that was not identified during this ISA is possible and cannot be adequately assessed without additional research beyond the stated scope of work. Now that Alternative 1 has been formally selected as the Preferred Alternative, the project will advance to the next phase where further evaluation of these types of risks will include subsurface exploration, sampling, and/or other forms of testing. The complete ISA is available for public review by request.

## 2.2.6 AIR QUALITY

**Regulatory Setting.** The Clean Air Act as amended in 1990 is the federal law that governs air quality. Its counterpart in California is the California Clean Air Act of 1988. These laws set standards for the quantity of pollutants that can be in the air. At the federal level, these standards are called National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS). Standards have been established for six criteria pollutants that have been linked to potential health concerns; the criteria pollutants are: carbon monoxide (CO), nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>), ozone (O<sub>3</sub>), particulate matter (PM), lead (Pb), and sulfur dioxide (SO<sub>2</sub>).

Under the 1990 Clean Air Act Amendments, the U.S. Department of Transportation cannot fund, authorize, or approve Federal actions to support programs or projects that are not first found to conform to State Implementation Plan for achieving the goals of the Clean Air Act requirements. Conformity with the Clean Air Act takes place on two levels—first, at the regional level and second, at the project level. The proposed project must conform at both levels to be approved. Regional level conformity in California is concerned with how well the region is meeting the standards set for carbon monoxide (CO), nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>), ozone (O<sub>3</sub>), and particulate matter (PM). California is in attainment for the other criteria pollutants. At the regional level, Regional Transportation Plans (RTP) are developed that include all of the transportation projects planned for a region over a period of years, usually at least 20. Based on the projects included in the RTP, an air quality model is run to determine whether or not the implementation of those projects would conform to emission budgets or other tests showing that attainment requirements of the Clean Air Act are met. If the conformity analysis is successful, the regional planning organization, such as the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG), and the appropriate federal agencies, such as the Federal Highway Administration, make the determination that the RTP is in conformity with the State Implementation Plan for achieving the goals of the Clean Air Act. Otherwise, the projects in the RTP must be modified until conformity is attained. If the design and scope of the proposed transportation project are the same as described in the RTP, then the proposed project is deemed to meet regional conformity requirements for purposes of project-level analysis.

Conformity at the project-level also requires “hot spot” analysis if an area is “non-attainment” or “maintenance” for carbon monoxide (CO) and/or particulate matter. A region is a “non-attainment” area if one or more monitoring stations in the region fail to attain the relevant standard. Areas that were previously designated as non-attainment areas but have recently met the standard are called “maintenance” areas. “Hot spot” analysis is essentially the same, for technical purposes, as CO or particulate matter analysis performed for NEPA and CEQA purposes. Conformity does include some specific standards for projects that require a hot spot analysis. In general, projects must not cause the CO standard to be violated, and in “non-attainment” areas the project must not cause any increase in the number and severity of violations. If a known CO or particulate matter violation is located in the project vicinity, the project must include measures to reduce or eliminate the existing violation(s) as well.

## Affected Environment

The ensuing discussion is from the project Air Quality Assessment dated January 15, 2008.

**Local Regulatory Setting.** The proposed project is located in the South Coast Air Basin (SCAB). The SCAB is comprised of parts of Los Angeles, Riverside and San Bernardino counties and all of Orange County. The basin is bounded on the west by the Pacific Ocean and surrounded on the other sides by mountains. To the north lie the San Gabriel Mountains, to the north and east the San Bernardino Mountains, to the southeast the San Jacinto Mountains and to the south the Santa Ana Mountains. The basin forms a low plain and the mountains channel and confine airflow which trap air pollutants.

The primary agencies responsible for regulations to improve air quality in the SCAB are the South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD) and the California Air Resources Board (CARB). The Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) is an important partner to the SCAQMD, as it is the designated metropolitan planning authority for the area and produces estimates of anticipated future growth and vehicular travel in the basin which are used for air quality planning. The SCAQMD sets and enforces regulations for non-vehicular sources of air pollution in the basin and works with SCAG to develop and implement Transportation Control Measures (TCM). TCM measures are intended to reduce and improve vehicular travel and associated pollutant emissions.

CARB was established in 1967 by the California Legislature to attain and maintain healthy air quality, conduct research into the causes and solutions to air pollution, and systematically attack the serious problem caused by motor vehicles, which are the major causes of air pollution in the State. CARB sets and enforces emission standards for motor vehicles, fuels, and consumer products. It sets the health based California Ambient Air Quality Standards (CAAQS) and monitors air quality levels throughout the state. The board identifies and sets control measures for toxic air contaminants. The board also performs air quality related research, provides compliance assistance for businesses, and produces education and outreach programs and materials. CARB provides assistance for local air quality districts, such as SCAQMD.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) is the primary federal agency for regulating air quality. The EPA implements the provisions of the Federal Clean Air Act (FCAA). This Act establishes national ambient air quality standards (NAAQS) that are applicable nationwide. The EPA designates areas with pollutant concentrations that do not meet the NAAQS as non-attainment areas for each criteria pollutant. States are required by the FCAA to prepare State Implementation Plans (SIP) for designated non-attainment areas. The SIP is required to demonstrate how the areas will attain the NAAQS by the prescribed deadlines and what measures will be required to attain the standards. The EPA also oversees implementation of the prescribed measures. Areas that achieve the NAAQS after a non-attainment designation are redesignated as maintenance areas and must have approved Maintenance Plans to ensure continued attainment of the NAAQS.

The CCAA required all air pollution control districts in the state to prepare a plan prior to December 31, 1994 to reduce pollutant concentrations exceeding the CAAQS and ultimately achieve the CAAQS. The districts are required to review and revise these plans every three years. The SCAQMD satisfies this requirement through the publication of an Air Quality Management Plan (AQMP). The AQMP is developed by SCAQMD and SCAG in coordination with local governments and the private sector. The AQMP is incorporated into the SIP by CARB to satisfy the FCAA requirements discussed above. The AQMP is discussed further in Section. Table 32 lists the current attainment designations for the SCAB. For the Federal standards, the required attainment date is also shown. The Unclassified designation indicates that the air quality data for the area does not support a designation of attainment or non-attainment.

**Table 32. Designations of Criteria Pollutants for the SCAB**

Pollutant	Federal	State
8- Hour Ozone (O <sub>3</sub> )	Severe-17 Non-attainment (2021)	Non-attainment
Respirable Particulate Matter (PM <sub>10</sub> )	Serious Non-attainment (2006)	Non-attainment
Fine Particulate Matter (PM <sub>2.5</sub> )	Non-attainment (2015)	Non-attainment
Carbon Monoxide (CO)	Attainment/Maintenance (2000)	Attainment
Nitrogen Dioxide (NO <sub>2</sub> )	Attainment/Maintenance (1995)	Attainment
Sulfur Dioxide (SO <sub>2</sub> )	Attainment	Attainment
Lead	Attainment	Attainment
Visibility Reducing Particles	n/a	Unclassified
Sulfates	n/a	Unclassified
Hydrogen Sulfide	n/a	Attainment
Vinyl Chloride	n/a	Attainment

## Notes:

1. The Federal 1-hour Ozone (O<sub>3</sub>) standard was rescinded effective June 15, 2005 with the implementation of the 8-hour standard. Prior to this the SCAB was designated Extreme Non-Attainment for the 1-hour O<sub>3</sub> standard with attainment date of 2010.
2. EPA changed the PM<sub>2.5</sub> 24-hour standard from 65 to 35 µg/m<sup>3</sup> with an effective date of December 2006. Until new area designations become effective in early 2010 based on the new standard, project-level conformity determinations must still consider the 1997 PM<sub>2.5</sub> standards because these are the standards upon which the current PM<sub>2.5</sub> non-attainment designations are based.

Table 32 shows that the U.S. EPA has designated SCAB as Severe-17 non-attainment for ozone, serious non-attainment for PM<sub>10</sub>, non-attainment for PM<sub>2.5</sub>, and attainment/maintenance for CO and NO<sub>2</sub>. The basin has been designated by the state as non-attainment for ozone, PM<sub>10</sub>, and PM<sub>2.5</sub>. The federal designations of Severe-17 and Serious affect the required attainment dates as the federal regulations have different requirements for areas that exceed the standards by greater amounts at the time of attainment/non-attainment designation.

The SCAB is designated as in attainment of the State and Federal SO<sub>2</sub> and lead as well as the state CO, NO<sub>2</sub>, SO<sub>2</sub>, lead, hydrogen sulfide, and vinyl chloride. In July 1997, U.S. EPA issued a new ozone NAAQS of 0.08 ppm using an 8-hour averaging time. Implementation of this standard was delayed by several lawsuits. Attainment/non-attainment designations for the new 8-hour ozone standard were issued on April 15, 2004 and became effective on June 15, 2005. The SCAB was designated severe-17 non-attainment, which requires attainment of the Federal Standard by June 15, 2021. As a part of the designation, the EPA announced that the 1-hour ozone standard would be revoked in June of 2005. Thus, the 8-hour ozone standard attainment deadline of 2021 supersedes and replaces the previous 1-hour ozone standard attainment deadline of 2010.

The SCAQMD is requesting that U.S. EPA change the non-attainment status of the 8 hour ozone standard to extreme. This will allow the use of undefined reductions (i.e. "black box") based on the anticipated development of new control technologies or improvement of existing technologies in the attainment plan. Further, the extreme classification could extend the attainment date by three years to 2024.

On April 28, 2005 CARB adopted an 8-hour ozone standard of 0.070 ppm. The California Office of Administrative Law approved the rulemaking and filed it with the Secretary of State on April 17, 2006. The standard became effective on May 17, 2006. California has retained the 1-hour concentration standard of 0.09 ppm. To be redesignated as attainment by the state the basin will need to achieve both the 1-hour and 8-hour ozone standards.

The SCAB was designated as moderate non-attainment of the PM<sub>10</sub> standards when the designations were initially made in 1990 with a required attainment date of 1994. In 1993, the basin was redesignated as serious non-attainment with a required attainment date of 2006 because it was apparent that the basin could not meet the PM<sub>10</sub> standard by the 1994 deadline. At this time Basin has met the PM<sub>10</sub> standards at all monitoring stations except the western Riverside where the annual PM<sub>10</sub> standard has not been met. However, on September 21, 2006, the U.S. EPA announced that it was revoking the annual PM<sub>10</sub> standard as research had indicated that there were no considerable health effects associated with long-term exposure to PM<sub>10</sub>. With this change the basin is technically in attainment of the federal PM<sub>10</sub> standards although the redesignation process has not yet begun.

In July 1997, U.S. EPA issued NAAQS for fine particulate matter (PM<sub>2.5</sub>). The PM<sub>2.5</sub> standards include an annual standard set at 15 micrograms per cubic meter ( $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ ), based on the three-year average of annual mean PM<sub>2.5</sub> concentrations and a 24-hour standard of 35  $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ , based on the three-year average of the 98th percentile of 24-hour concentrations. Implementation of these standards was delayed by several lawsuits. On January 5, 2005, EPA took final action to designate attainment and non-attainment areas under the NAAQS for PM<sub>2.5</sub> effective April 5, 2005. The SCAB was designated as non-attainment with an attainment required as soon as possible but no later than 2010. EPA may grant attainment date extensions of up to five years in areas with more severe PM<sub>2.5</sub> problems and where emissions control measures are not available or feasible. It is likely that the SCAB will need this additional time to attain the standard

Note that, although there is now a PM<sub>2.5</sub> standard, adequate tools are not currently available to perform a detailed assessment of PM<sub>2.5</sub> emissions and impacts at the project level. Analysis of PM<sub>2.5</sub> impacts is complex because it is both directly emitted from sources, like CO, and formed in the atmosphere from reactions of other pollutants, like ozone. Further, there are no good sources for the significance thresholds for PM<sub>2.5</sub> emissions at this time. Until tools and methodologies are developed to assess the impacts of projects on PM<sub>2.5</sub> concentrations, the analysis of PM<sub>10</sub> will need to be used as an indicator of potential PM<sub>2.5</sub> impacts.

On September 21, 2006, the U.S. EPA announced that the 24-hour PM<sub>2.5</sub> standard was lowered to 35  $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ . Attainment/non-attainment designations for the revised PM<sub>2.5</sub> standard will be made by December of 2009 with an attainment date of April 2015 although an extension of up to five years could be granted by the U.S. EPA.

The SCAB has not had any violations of the federal CO standards since 2003. Therefore, the SCAB has met the criteria for CO attainment. The SCAQMD formally requested the U.S. EPA to redesignate the Basin as attainment for CO. The U.S. EPA designated the basin as an attainment/maintenance area for CO on June 11, 2007.

The federal annual NO<sub>2</sub> standard was met for the first time in 1992 and has not been exceeded since. The SCAB was redesignated as attainment for NO<sub>2</sub> in 1998. The basin will remain a maintenance/attainment area until 2018, assuming the NO<sub>2</sub> standard is not exceeded.

0 shows that SCAB is designated as in attainment of the SO<sub>2</sub> and lead NAAQS as well as the state CO, NO<sub>2</sub>, SO<sub>2</sub>, lead, hydrogen sulfide, and vinyl chloride CAAQS. Generally, these pollutants are not considered a concern in the SCAB.

**Criteria Pollutants.** Since the passage of the Federal Clean Air Act of 1970 (FCAA) and subsequent amendments, the US EPA has established and revised the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS). The NAAQS was established for six major pollutants or criteria pollutants. The NAAQS are two tiered: primary, to protect public health, and secondary, to prevent degradation to the environment (i.e., impairment of visibility, damage to vegetation and property). The six criteria pollutants are ozone (O<sub>3</sub>), carbon monoxide (CO), particulate matter (PM<sub>10</sub> and PM<sub>2.5</sub>), nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>), sulfur dioxide (SO<sub>2</sub>), and lead (Pb). Table 33 presents the state and national ambient air quality standards.

**Ozone (O<sub>3</sub>).** Ozone is a toxic gas that irritates the lungs and damages materials and vegetation. Ozone is a secondary pollutant; it is not directly emitted. Ozone is the result of chemical reactions between other pollutants, most importantly hydrocarbons and NO<sub>2</sub>, which occur only in the presence of bright sunlight. Pollutants emitted from areas cities react during transport downwind to produce the oxidant concentrations experienced in the area.

**Particulate Matter (PM<sub>10</sub> & PM<sub>2.5</sub>).** Particulate matter includes both aerosols and solid particles of a wide range of size and composition. Of particular concern are those particles between 10 and 2.5 microns in size (PM<sub>10</sub>) and smaller than or equal to 2.5 microns (PM<sub>2.5</sub>). The size of the particulate matter is referenced to the aerodynamic diameter of the particulate. The PM<sub>10</sub> criteria is aimed primary at what the U.S. EPA refers to as “course particles.” Course particles are often found near roadways, dusty industries, construction sites, and fires. The PM<sub>2.5</sub> criteria, which are directed at particles less than 2.5 microns in size, are referred to as “fine particles.” These particles can also be directly emitted and they can also form when gases emitted from power plants, industries and automobiles react in the air. The principal health effect of airborne particulate matter is on the respiratory system. Studies have linked particulate pollution with irritation of the airways, coughing, aggravated asthma, irregular heartbeat, and premature death in people with heart or lung disease.

**Carbon Monoxide (CO).** Carbon monoxide is a colorless and odorless gas, which, in the urban environment, is associated primarily with the incomplete combustion of fossil fuels in motor vehicles. Carbon monoxide combines with hemoglobin in the bloodstream and reduces the amount of oxygen that can be circulated through the body. High carbon monoxide concentrations can lead to headaches, aggravation of cardiovascular disease, and impairment of central nervous system functions. Carbon monoxide concentrations can vary greatly over comparatively short distances. Relatively high concentrations are typically found near crowded intersections, along heavily used roadways carrying slow-moving traffic, and at or near ground level. Even under the most severe meteorological and traffic conditions, high concentrations of carbon monoxide are limited to locations within a relatively short distance (300 to 600 feet [90 to 185 meters]) of heavily traveled roadways. Overall carbon monoxide emissions are decreasing as a result of the Federal Motor Vehicle Control Program, which has mandated increasingly lower emission levels for vehicles manufactured since 1973.

**Nitrogen Oxides (NO<sub>x</sub>).** Nitrogen oxides from automotive sources are some of the precursors in the formation of ozone and secondary particulate matter. Ozone and particulate matter are formed through a series of photochemical reactions in the atmosphere. Because the reactions are slow and occur as the pollutants are diffusing downwind, elevated ozone levels are often found many miles from the source of precursor emission. The effects of nitrogen oxides emission are examined on a regional basis.

**Lead (Pb).** Lead is a stable compound, which persists and accumulates both in the environment and in animals. In humans, it affects the blood-forming or hematopoietic, the nervous, and the renal systems. In addition, lead has been shown to affect the normal functions of the reproductive, endocrine, hepatic, cardiovascular, immunological, and gastrointestinal systems, although there is significant individual variability in response to lead exposure. Since 1975, lead emissions have been in decline due in part to the introduction of catalyst-equipped vehicles, and decline in production of leaded gasoline. In general, an analysis of lead is limited to projects that emit significant quantities of the pollutant (i.e. lead smelters) and are not applied to transportation projects.

**Sulfur Oxides (SO<sub>x</sub>).** Sulfur oxides constitute a class of compounds of which sulfur dioxide (SO<sub>2</sub>) and sulfur trioxide (SO<sub>3</sub>) are of greatest importance. The oxides are formed during combustion of the sulfur components in motor fuels. Relatively few sulfur oxides are emitted from motor vehicles since motor fuels are now de-sulfured. The health effects of sulfur oxides include respiratory illness, damage to the respiratory tract, and bronchia-constriction.

**Table 33. Ambient Air Quality Standards**

Pollutant	Averaging Time	State Standards <sup>1,3</sup>	Federal Standards <sup>2</sup>	
			Primary <sup>3,5</sup>	Secondary <sup>3,6</sup>
Ozone (O <sub>3</sub> )	1 Hour	0.09 ppm (180 µg/m <sup>3</sup> )	--	--
	8 Hour	0.070 ppm (137 µg/m <sup>3</sup> )	0.08 ppm (157 µg/m <sup>3</sup> )	Same as Primary
Respirable Particulate Matter (PM <sub>10</sub> ) <sup>8</sup>	24 Hour	50 µg/m <sup>3</sup>	150 µg/m <sup>3</sup>	Same as Primary
	AAM <sup>6</sup>	20 µg/m <sup>3</sup>	--	Same as Primary
Fine Particulate Matter (PM <sub>2.5</sub> ) <sup>8</sup>	24 Hour	--	35 µg/m <sup>3</sup>	Same as Primary
	AAM <sup>6</sup>	12 µg/m <sup>3</sup>	15 µg/m <sup>3</sup>	Same as Primary
Carbon Monoxide (CO)	1 Hour	20 ppm (23 mg/m <sup>3</sup> )	35 ppm (40 mg/m <sup>3</sup> )	None
	8 Hour	9.0 ppm (10 mg/m <sup>3</sup> )	9 ppm (10 mg/m <sup>3</sup> )	None
	8 Hour (Lake Tahoe)	6 ppm (7 mg/m <sup>3</sup> )	--	--
Nitrogen Dioxide (NO <sub>2</sub> )	AAM <sup>6</sup>	0.030 ppm (56 µg/m <sup>3</sup> )	0.053 ppm (100 µg/m <sup>3</sup> )	Same as Primary
	1 Hour	0.18 ppm (338 µg/m <sup>3</sup> )	--	--
Sulfur Dioxide (SO <sub>2</sub> )	AAM <sup>6</sup>	--	0.030 ppm (80 µg/m <sup>3</sup> )	--
	24 Hour	0.04 ppm (105 µg/m <sup>3</sup> )	0.14 ppm (365 µg/m <sup>3</sup> )	--
	3 Hour	--	--	0.5 ppm (1,300 µg/m <sup>3</sup> )
	1 Hour	0.25 ppm (655 µg/m <sup>3</sup> )	--	--
Lead <sup>7</sup>	30 day Avg.	1.5 µg/m <sup>3</sup>	--	--
	Calendar Quarter	--	1.5 µg/m <sup>3</sup>	Same as Primary
Visibility Reducing Particles	8 hour	Extinction coefficient of 0.23 per km – visibility ≥ 10 miles ( 0.07 per km -- ≥30 miles for Lake Tahoe)	<b>No Federal Standards</b>	
Sulfates	24 Hour	25 µg/m <sup>3</sup>		
Hydrogen Sulfide	1 Hour	0.03 ppm (42 µg/m <sup>3</sup> )		
Vinyl Chloride <sup>7</sup>	24 Hour	0.01 ppm (26 µg/m <sup>3</sup> )		

1. California standards for ozone, carbon monoxide (except Lake Tahoe), sulfur dioxide (1 and 24 hour), nitrogen dioxide, PM<sub>10</sub>, PM<sub>2.5</sub>, and visibility reducing particles, are values that are not to be exceeded. All others are not to be equaled or exceeded.

2. National standards (other than ozone, PM<sub>10</sub>, PM<sub>2.5</sub>, and those based on annual averages or annual arithmetic mean) are not to be exceeded more than once a year. The ozone standard is attained when the fourth highest eight hour concentration in a year, averaged over three years, is equal to or less than the standard. For PM<sub>10</sub>, the 24 hour standard is attained when the expected number of days per calendar year with a 24-hour average concentration above 150 µg/m<sup>3</sup> is equal to or less than one. For PM<sub>2.5</sub>, the 24 hour standard is attained when 98 percent of the daily concentrations, averaged over three years, are equal to or less than the standard. Contact U.S. EPA for further clarification and current federal policies.

3. Concentration expressed first in units in which it was promulgated. Equivalent units given in parentheses are based upon a reference temperature of 25° C and a reference pressure of 760 torr. Most measurements of air quality are to be corrected to a reference temperature of 25° C and a reference pressure of 760 torr; ppm in this table refers to ppm by volume, or micromoles of pollutant per mole of gas.

4. National Primary Standards: The levels of air quality necessary, with an adequate margin of safety to protect the public health.

5. National Secondary Standards: The levels of air quality necessary to protect the public welfare from any known or anticipated adverse effects of a pollutant.

6. Annual Arithmetic Mean

7. The ARB has identified lead and vinyl chloride as 'toxic air contaminants' with no threshold level of exposure for adverse health effects determined. These actions allow for the implementation of control measures at levels below the ambient concentrations specified for these pollutants.

8. On September 21, 2006 EPA published a final rule revoking the annual 50 µg/m<sup>3</sup> PM<sub>10</sub> standard and lowering the 24-hour PM<sub>2.5</sub> standard from 65 µg/m<sup>3</sup>. Attainment designations are to be issued in December, 2009 with attainment plans due April, 2010.

-- No Standard

## Affected Environment/Environmental Conditions

**Climate.** The climate in and around the project area, as with all of Southern California, is controlled largely by the strength and position of the subtropical high pressure cell over the Pacific Ocean. It maintains moderate temperatures and comfortable humidity, and limits precipitation to a few storms during the winter "wet" season. Temperatures are normally mild, excepting the summer months, which commonly bring substantially higher temperatures. In all portions of the basin, temperatures well above 100 degrees F. have been recorded in recent years. The annual average temperature in the basin is approximately 62 degrees Fahrenheit.

Winds in the project area are usually driven by the dominant land/sea breeze circulation system. Regional wind patterns are dominated by daytime onshore sea breezes. At night the wind generally slows and reverses direction traveling towards the sea. Wind direction will be altered by local canyons, with wind tending to flow parallel to the canyons. During the transition period from one wind pattern to the other, the dominant wind direction rotates into the south and causes a minor wind direction maximum from the south. The frequency of calm winds (less than 2 miles per hour) is less than 10 percent. Therefore, there is little stagnation in the project vicinity, especially during busy daytime traffic hours.

Southern California frequently has temperature inversions which inhibit the dispersion of pollutants. Inversions may be either ground based or elevated. Ground based inversions, sometimes referred to as radiation inversions, are most severe during clear, cold, early winter mornings. Under conditions of a ground-based inversion, very little mixing or turbulence occurs, and high concentrations of primary pollutants may occur local to major roadways. Elevated inversions can be generated by a variety of meteorological phenomena. Elevated inversions act as a lid or upper boundary and restrict vertical mixing. Below the elevated inversion, dispersion is not restricted. Mixing heights for elevated inversions are lower in the summer and more persistent. This low summer inversion puts a lid over the South Coast Air Basin (SCAB) and is responsible for the high levels of ozone observed during summer months in the air basin.

**Monitored Air Quality.** Air quality at any site is dependent on the regional air quality and local pollutant sources. Regional air quality is determined by the release of pollutants throughout the air basin. Estimates for the SCAB have been made for existing emissions ("2003 Air Quality Management Plan", August 1, 2003). The data indicate that mobile sources are the major source of regional emissions. Motor vehicles (i.e., on-road mobile sources) account for approximately 45 percent of volatile organic compounds (VOC), 63 percent of nitrogen oxide (NO<sub>x</sub>) emissions, and approximately 76 percent of carbon monoxide (CO) emissions.

The SCAQMD has divided the SCAB into 38 air-monitoring areas with a designated ambient air monitoring station representative of each area. The project area is represented by measurements made at the Reseda monitoring station. The Reseda station is located approximately 5 miles northwest of the I-405 and I-101 interchange. The pollutants measured at the Reseda station include ozone, CO, PM<sub>2.5</sub> and nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>). The next nearest is the Burbank station located approximately 8.4 miles to the east. PM<sub>10</sub> and sulfur dioxide (SO<sub>2</sub>) monitoring data are measured at this station. The air quality data monitored from 2004 to 2006 is presented in Table 34.

The monitoring data presented in Table 34 were obtained from the CARB air quality data website ([www.arb.ca.gov/adam/](http://www.arb.ca.gov/adam/)). Federal and State air quality standards are also presented in the table.

**Table 34. Air Quality Levels Measured at the Reseda/Burbank Monitoring Stations**

Pollutant	California Standard	National Standard	Year	% Meas. <sup>1</sup>	Max. Level	Days State Standard Exceeded <sup>2</sup>	Days National Standard Exceeded <sup>2</sup>
Ozone	0.09 ppm for 1 hr.	None	2006	100	0.158	34	6
			2005	97	0.138	30	2
			2004	98	0.131	54	2
Ozone	0.070 ppm <sup>3</sup> for 8 hr.	0.08 ppm For 8 hr.	2005	100	0.109	--	17
			2005	97	0.113	--	12
			2004	98	0.115	--	30
CO	20 ppm For 1 hour	35 ppm For 1 hour	2006	98	4.8	0	0
			2005	98	5.1	0	0
			2004	97	5.0	0	0
CO	9 ppm For 8 hour	9 ppm For 8 hour	2006	98	3.5	0	0
			2005	98	3.5	0	0
			2004	97	3.5	0	0
NO <sub>2</sub> (1-Hour)	0.18 ppm For 1 hour	None	2006	99	0.073	0	n/a
			2005	96	0.086	0	n/a
			2004	99	0.083	0	n/a
NO <sub>2</sub> (Annual)	0.03 ppm AAM <sup>4</sup>	0.053 ppm AAM <sup>4</sup>	2006	99	0.018	n/a	No
			2005	96	0.020	n/a	No
			2004	99	0.021	n/a	No
Particulates PM2.5 (24 Hour)	None	35 µg/m <sup>3</sup> For 24 hr.	2006	--	44.0	n/a	0
			2005	--	39.5	n/a	0
			2004	--	56.2	n/a	0
Particulates PM2.5 (Annual)	12 µg/m <sup>3</sup> AAM <sup>4</sup>	15 µg/m <sup>3</sup> AAM <sup>4</sup>	2006	--	--	--	--
			2005	--	--	--	--
			2004	--	15.7	No	Yes
Particulates PM10 (24 Hour)	50 µg/m <sup>3</sup> For 24 hr.	150 µg/m <sup>3</sup> For 24 hr.	2006	88	71	10/--	0
			2005	100	92	5/30	0
			2004	97	74	6/38	0
Particulates PM10 (Annual)	20 µg/m <sup>3</sup> AAM <sup>4</sup>	None	2006	88	--	Yes	n/a
			2005	100	33	Yes	n/a
			2004	97	37	Yes	n/a
SO <sub>2</sub> (24 Hour)	0.04 ppm For 24 Hr.	0.14 ppm For 24 hr.	2006	96	0.004	0	0
			2005	97	0.006	0	0
			2004	89	0.009	0	0
SO <sub>2</sub> (Annual)	None	0.03 ppm AAM <sup>4</sup>	2006	96	0.001	n/a	No
			2005	97	0.002	n/a	No
			2004	89	0.003	n/a	No

1. Percent of year where high pollutant levels were expected that measurements were made  
 2. For annual averaging times a yes or no response is given if the annual average concentration exceeded the applicable standard. n/a indicates that there is no applicable standard. For the PM10 24 hour standard, daily monitoring is not performed. The first number shown in Days State Standard Exceeded column is the actual number of days measured that State standard was exceeded. The second number shows the number of days the standard would be expected to be exceeded if measurements were taken every day.  
 3. This concentration standard was approved by the ARB on April 28, 2005 and is expected to become effective in early 2006.  
 4. Annual Arithmetic Mean  
 -- Data Not Reported or insufficient data available to determine the value.

Source: CARB Air Quality Data Statistics web site [www.arb.ca.gov/adam/](http://www.arb.ca.gov/adam/) accessed 05/16/07

The monitoring data presented in Table 34 shows that ozone and particulate matter (PM<sub>10</sub> and PM<sub>2.5</sub>) are the air pollutants of primary concern in the project area.

The State 1-hour ozone standard was exceeded between 30 and 54 days each year between 2004 and 2006 at the Reseda station. The Federal 1-hour ozone standard was exceeded between 2 days in 2004 and 2005, and 6 days in 2006. The Federal 8-hour ozone standard was exceeded between 12 and 30 days each year. The recently adopted State 8-hour Ozone standard has also been exceeded but the CARB website is not currently reporting the total number of days. There does not appear to be a noticeable trend in either maximum ozone concentrations or days of exceedances in the area.

Ozone is a secondary pollutant; it is not directly emitted. Ozone is the result of chemical reactions between other pollutants, most importantly hydrocarbons and NO<sub>2</sub>, which occur only in the presence of bright sunlight. Pollutants emitted from upwind cities react during transport downwind to produce the oxidant concentrations experienced in the area. Many areas of the SCAQMD contribute to the ozone levels experienced at the monitoring station, with the more significant areas being those directly upwind.

The Federal 24 hour standard for PM<sub>2.5</sub> was not exceeded between 2004 and 2006 at the Reseda monitoring station. The annual average PM<sub>2.5</sub> concentration has exceeded the Federal standards in 2004, but not the State standards. (PM<sub>2.5</sub> data for 2005 and 2006 are not available).

The State 24-hour concentration standards for PM<sub>10</sub> have been exceeded between 30 and 38 days each year between 2003 and 2005 at the Burbank monitoring station. PM<sub>10</sub> has also exceeded the State standards in 2006, but the number of days of exceedance is not known. The Federal standards for PM<sub>10</sub> were not exceeded. The State annual average standard has been exceeded for the past three years. There does not appear to be a noticeable trend in either maximum particulate concentrations or days of exceedances in the area. Particulate levels in the area are due to natural sources, grading operations, and motor vehicles.

According to the EPA, some people are much more sensitive than others to breathing fine particles (PM<sub>10</sub> and PM<sub>2.5</sub>). People with influenza, chronic respiratory and cardiovascular diseases, and the elderly may suffer worsening illness and premature death due to breathing these fine particles. People with bronchitis can expect aggravated symptoms from breathing in fine particles. Children may experience decline in lung function due to breathing in PM<sub>10</sub> and PM<sub>2.5</sub>. Other groups considered sensitive are smokers and people who cannot breathe well through their noses. Exercising athletes are also considered sensitive, because many breathe through their mouths.

CO is another important pollutant that is due mainly to motor vehicles. Currently, CO levels in the project region are in compliance with the State and Federal 1-hour and 8-hour standards.

The monitored data shown in Table 34 show that other than ozone, PM<sub>10</sub> and PM<sub>2.5</sub> exceedances as mentioned above, no State or Federal standards were exceeded for the remaining criteria pollutants.

**Sensitive Receptors.** Generally, sensitive receptors are facilities or land uses that include members of the population sensitive to the effects of air pollutants, such as children, the elderly, and people with illnesses. Residential land uses in the vicinity of the project are located along both sides of I-101 and mostly on the west side of I-405 from I-101 extending south pass Ventura Boulevard. The Encino Hospital, other health care facilities, as well as a number of churches are located within a mile of the I-405/I-101 interchange. There are a number of schools located in the vicinity of Sepulveda Boulevard and Ventura Boulevard; some are located less than a quarter of the mile from the I-405/I-101 interchange.

## Environmental Consequences as a Result of Proposed Project Implementation

**Summary.** Compliance with the Transportation Conformity requirements of the Federal Clean Air Act (FCAA) is demonstrated. A regional air quality analysis is performed to demonstrate that the project will not adversely impact regional air quality. A local air quality analysis is performed to demonstrate that the

project will not adversely impact local air quality in the immediate vicinity of the project. The report also discusses potential impacts from Diesel Particulate Matter which has been listed by CARB as a toxic substance and presents measures to reduce PM<sub>10</sub> emissions during construction. The potential for release of Naturally Occurring Asbestos (NOA) during construction is also discussed.

The project is located in the South Coast Air Basin (SCAB). The South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD) and the California Air Resources Board (CARB) are responsible for regulating air pollutant sources in the Basin. The SCAQMD prepares the Air Quality Management Plan (AQMP) which specifies measures to meet the state and national ambient air quality standards (SAAQS and NAAQS). To show that the project will not adversely impact the region's air quality it must be shown that the project will not result in the transportation system exceeding the air pollutant budgets in the AQMP.

The 2004 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) and 2006 Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP) prepared by the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) are regional plans for future improvements in the areas transportation system. These plans must demonstrate that the air pollutant emissions associated with the transportation plan do not exceed the emissions budgets in the approved AQMP. The proposed project is a part of the 2004 RTP and 2006 RTIP. Therefore, the project will not result in an exceedance of the transportation air pollutant emissions budgets and will not adversely impact regional air quality.

Local impacts, also known as "hot spots" are assessed for CO, PM<sub>10</sub>, and PM<sub>2.5</sub>. The CO impacts are assessed using the "Transportation Project-Level Carbon Monoxide Protocol" (Protocol) developed by the Institute of Transportation Studies at the University of California Davis for Caltrans. The protocol contains a series of flow charts with criteria to determine that the project will result in local CO concentrations that exceed the state and national AAQS. The flow chart questions and responses are presented in Section 4.2. The analysis shows that CO concentrations in the area affected by the project would not worsen air quality, and would be expected to comply with the CO NAAQS. Therefore, the project will not result in an adverse local CO impact.

A PM<sub>2.5</sub> and PM<sub>10</sub> hot-spot analysis is not required for projects that are not a project of air quality concern (POAQC). In the South Coast Air Basin, it is the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) Transportation Conformity Working Group (TCWG) that makes the determination whether the project is or is not a POAQC. The required "PM Conformity Hot Spot Analysis – Project Summary for Interagency Consultation" was submitted to the TCWG for consideration at their May 22, 2007 meeting. The project was determined not to be a project of air quality concern because the facility is not projected to have a significant number of diesel vehicles (i.e. less than 10,000 per day), and because project would not result in any increase in the number of diesel trucks that would utilize the facility. The redistribution of traffic is minor and would occur primarily near residential areas that have very little truck traffic and little effect on truck movements. Therefore, the project will not result in an adverse local PM<sub>2.5</sub> or a PM<sub>10</sub> impact.

Impacts from Mobile Source Air Toxics MSAT are also examined. The analysis shows that the estimated VMT under each of the alternatives are nearly the same, varying by less than 2.2 percent, it is expected there would be no appreciable difference in overall MSAT emissions among the various alternatives. Also, regardless of the alternative chosen, emissions will be lower than present levels in the design year as a result of EPA's national control programs that are projected to reduce MSAT emissions by 57 to 87 percent between 2000 and 2020.

## Regional Air Quality Analysis

**Rules and Implementation.** The authority requiring projects to undergo a regional emissions analysis originates from section 176 (c) of the Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990. The law is codified as title 23 of the United States Code (23 U.S.C) and is known as the Federal Transit Act. The regulations cited to implement 23 U.S.C is contained in title 40 of the Code of Federal Regulation parts 51 and 93 (40 CFR 51 and 40 CFR 93). Parts 51 and 93 are commonly recognized as the Transportation Conformity Rule. On August 15, 1997 the Federal Register, published a public notice in which the US EPA requested to

streamline the 40 CFR 51 & 93. The final rule issued by the US EPA modified 40 CFR 51 and 93, and classified the Transportation Conformity Rule as 40 CFR 51.390 and 40 CFR 93.100 – 93.128.

The Transportation Conformity Rule requires a regional emissions analysis to be performed by the MPO for projects within its jurisdiction. For the Basin, the MPO is the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG). The regional emissions analysis includes all projects listed in the Regional Transportation Plan (Plan or RTP) and the Regional Transportation Improvement Program (TIP or RTIP). The RTP is a planning document spanning a 25-year period and the TIP implements the Plan on a 6-year increment. Both the Plan and TIP must support an affirmative conformity finding to obtain FHWA approval. Projects that are included in the regional analysis are listed in the TIP and referenced in the Plan. Projects in a Plan and TIP that have been approved by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) are considered to have met the conformity requirement for regional emissions analysis.

The currently approved RTP and TIP is the 2004 RTP and the 2006 RTIP. The 2004 RTP was adopted by SCAG on April 1, 2004 as Resolution #04-451-2. FHWA approved the 2004 Plan on June 7, 2004. The RTP was amended on July 27, 2004. A Draft 2006 RTIP was released in June 2006 and was formally approved by the SCAG on July 27, 2006. The 2006 RTIP was approved by the federal agencies on October 2, 2006.

In order to obtain FHWA approval of the Plan and TIP as conforming, the following tests, demonstrating affirmative findings with respect to the Transportation Conformity Rule, were applied to the 2004 RTP.

- Regional Emissions Analysis (Sections 93.109, 93.110, 93.118, and 93.119)
- Timely Implementation of TCMs Analysis (Section 93.113)
- Financial Constraint Analysis (Section 93.108)
- Interagency Consultation and Public Involvement Analysis (Sections 93.105 and 93.112)

Likewise, the approval of the 2006 RTIP is contingent upon satisfying all relevant CFR sections applicable:

- Consistency with SCAG's 2004 RTP (Section 450.324 of the US DOT-Metropolitan Planning Regulations)
- Regional Emissions Analysis (Sections 93.109, 93.118, and 93.119)
- Timely Implementation of TCMs Analysis (Section 93.113)
- Financial Constraint Analysis (Section 93.108)
- Interagency Consultation and Public Involvement Analysis (Sections 93.105 and 93.112)

**Project Inclusion in Approved RTP & RTIP.** The proposed project is included in the 2006 RTIP and referenced in the Plan. It is listed in Section II of Volume II of the 2006 RTIP, state highway section, Los Angeles County. The following project information is excerpted from the 2006 RTIP:

- Lead Agency – Caltrans
- Project ID # - LA0D77
- Air Basin - SCAB
- Model # - L393
- Program Code – CAN40
- Route – 405
- Begin Post Mile – 39.4
- End Post Mile – 40.5
- Description – City of L.A. – At Route 405 and US 101 interchange. Construct freeway connector from southbound Route 405 to northbound and southbound US-101 and add auxiliary lane from Burbank Boulevard to northbound US 101 connector (EA #199610, PPNO 2787)

As previously mentioned, the MPO performs the regional analysis as part of the submitted Plan and TIP. The regional analysis requirement is deemed satisfied and conforming to the Transportation Conformity

Rule upon FHWA approval of the Plan and TIP. Projects in the approved TIP and Plan meet the regional analysis criterion by reference to the two documents.

**Construction-Related Emissions.** Construction activities associated with the proposed project would be temporary and would last the duration of Project construction. The discussion below has concluded that Project construction would not create adverse pollutant emissions for any of the alternatives under consideration. Short-term impacts to air quality would occur during minor grading/trenching, new pavement construction and the re-stripping phase. Additional sources of construction related emissions include:

- Exhaust emissions and potential odors from construction equipment used on the construction site as well as the vehicles used to transport materials to and from the site; and
- Exhaust emissions from the motor vehicles of the construction crew.

Project construction would result in temporary emissions CO, NO<sub>x</sub>, ROG, and PM<sub>10</sub>. Stationary or mobile powered on-site construction equipment includes trucks, tractors, signal boards, excavators, backhoes, concrete saws, crushing and/or processing equipment, graders, trenchers, pavers and other paving equipment. The amount of worker trips to the site is unknown at this time. However, given the high volume of traffic in this area, the addition of worker trips will be inconsequential. Based on the insignificant relative amount of daily work trips required for Project construction, construction worker trips are not anticipated to significantly contribute to or affect traffic flow on local roadways and are therefore not considered significant. During the demolition phase some asphalt concrete (AC) pavement and curbs and gutters would have to be removed.

In order to further minimize construction-related emissions, all construction vehicles and construction equipment would be required to be equipped with the state-mandated emission control devices pursuant to state emission regulations and standard construction practices. After construction of the Project is complete, all construction-related impacts would cease, thus resulting in a less than significant impact. Short-term construction PM<sub>10</sub> emissions would be further reduced with the implementation of required dust suppression measures outlined within SCAQMD Rule 403. Note that Caltrans Standard Specifications for construction (Section 10 and 18 [Dust Control] and Section 39-3.06 [Asphalt Concrete Plants]) must also be adhered to. Therefore, Project construction is not anticipated to violate State or Federal air quality standards or contribute to the existing air quality violation in the air basin.

Section 93.122(d)(2) of the EPA Transportation Conformity Rule requires that in PM<sub>10</sub> non-attainment and maintenance areas (for which the SIPs identify construction-related fugitive dust as a contributor to the area problem), the RTIP should conduct the construction-related fugitive PM<sub>10</sub> emission analysis. The 2003 PM<sub>10</sub> SIP/AQMP emissions budgets for SCAB include the construction and unpaved-road emissions. The 2006 RTIP PM<sub>10</sub> regional emissions analysis includes the construction and unpaved road emissions for conformity finding.

### **Mitigation of PM<sub>10</sub> During Construction**

The approved 2003 Particulate Matter SIP contains provisions calling for mitigation of PM<sub>10</sub> emissions during construction. Pursuant § 93.117, the Department, the project sponsor, is required to stipulate to include, in its final plans, specification, and estimates, control measures that will limit the emission of PM<sub>10</sub> during construction.

The PM<sub>10</sub> emissions is a composite of geologic and aerosol variety. The prime concern during construction is to mitigate geologic PM<sub>10</sub> that occurs from earth movement such as grading. The agency who sponsored the PM<sub>10</sub> SIP is SCAQMD with concurrence from the California Air Resource Board. SCAQMD has established Rule 403 that addresses the mitigation PM<sub>10</sub> by reducing the ambient entrainment of fugitive dust and Rule 402 which requires that air pollutant emissions not be a nuisance off-site. Fugitive dust consists of solid particulate matters that becomes airborne due to human activity (i.e. construction) and is a subset of total suspended particulates. Likewise, PM<sub>10</sub> is a subset of total

suspended particulates. The Handbook states that 50% of total particulate matter suspended comprise of  $PM_{10}$ . Hence, in mitigating for fugitive dust, emissions of geologic  $PM_{10}$  are reduced.

During construction of the proposed project, the property owner/development and its contractors shall be required to comply with regional rules, which shall assist in reducing short-term air pollutant emissions. SCAQMD Rule 402 requires that air pollutant emissions not be a nuisance off-site. SCAQMD Rule 403 requires that fugitive dust be controlled with the best available control measures so that the presence of such dust does not remain visible in the atmosphere beyond the property line of the emission source. Two options are presented in Rule 403: monitoring of particulate concentrations or active control. Monitoring involves a sampling network around the project with no additional control measures unless specified concentrations are exceeded. The active control option does not require any monitoring, but requires that a list of measures be implemented starting with the first day of construction. This project will be in full compliance with both Rule 402 and Rule 403.

### Local Air Quality Analysis

**Overview of Local Analysis.** The local analysis is commonly referred to as project level air quality or “hot spot” analysis. The primary focus is the operational impact on air quality created by the proposed improvement. Unlike a regional analysis, a local analysis is constrained in scope and is limited to a particular project. The criteria pollutants analyzed do not consist of all pollutants in non-attainment. The analysis is restricted to carbon monoxide,  $PM_{10}$ , and  $PM_{2.5}$ . The analysis years consist of the year opening to traffic and the ultimate horizon year referenced in the approved Plan rather than a series of present and future years. The approach to the local analysis is tiered and is dependent on the status of the carbon monoxide SIP: the CO analysis can be qualitative, quantitative, or computational. The  $PM_{10}$  and  $PM_{2.5}$  analysis is qualitative in scope.

Similar to the regional analysis, the Transportation Conformity Rule also applies to the local analysis. Sections of pertinence are 40 CFR 93.115 to 93.117, 93.123, and 93.126 to 93.128. In California, the procedures of the local analysis for carbon monoxide are modified pursuant §93.123(a)(1). Sub-paragraph (a)(1) states the following:

### Local Analysis: Carbon Monoxide Operational Impact

**CO hot-spot analysis. (1)** The demonstrations required by §93.116 (“Localized CO and  $PM_{10}$  violations”) must be based on a quantitative analysis using the applicable air quality models, data bases, and other requirements specified in 40 CFR part 51, Appendix W (Guideline on Air Quality Models). These procedures shall be used in the following cases, unless different procedures developed through the interagency consultation process required in §93.105 and approved by the EPA Regional Administrator are used:

The sub-paragraph allows for an alternative. In California, the procedure for performing a CO analysis is detailed in the Transportation Project-Level Carbon Monoxide Protocol (Protocol) developed by the Institute of Transportation Studies at the University of California, Davis. David P. Howekamp, Director of Air Division of the US EPA Region IX, in October of 1997, approved the Protocol. The US EPA deemed the Protocol as an acceptable option to the mandated quantitative analysis. The Protocol incorporates §93.115 – 93.117, §93.126 – 93.128 into its rules and procedures.

§93.123(b)(1) requires that the  $PM_{10}$ , and  $PM_{2.5}$  analysis be quantitative. However, §93.123(b)(4) waives such analysis until the EPA releases modeling guidance and announces such guidance in the Federal Register. Since no modeling guidance has been released to date, §93.123(b)(4) offsets the implementation of §93.123(b)(1) and only a qualitative analysis is required.

In March 2006, the EPA released guidance on  $PM_{10}$ , and  $PM_{2.5}$  analyses, titled Transportation Conformity Guidance for Qualitative Hot-spot Analysis in  $PM_{2.5}$  and  $PM_{10}$  Nonattainment and Maintenance Areas.

This guidance supersedes previous FHWA and Caltrans PM<sub>10</sub> guidance. The analysis for PM<sub>10</sub> and PM<sub>2.5</sub> hotspots was performed under the March 2006 EPA Guidance.

The scope required for local analysis is summarized in Section 3, Determination of Project Requirements, and Section 4, Local Analysis, of the Protocol. Section 3 incorporates §93.115 and the procedure to determine project requirements begins with the Figure 1: Requirements for New Projects. The sections cited is followed by a response, which will determine the next applicable section of the flowchart for the proposed project.

The project is not in a CO non-attainment area and the South Coast Air Basin is currently classified as being in attainment/maintenance for CO. The project was redesigned as in "attainment: after the 1990 Clean Air Act, and the Sepulveda Basin has show continued attainment for CO. On June 11, 2007, the SCAB was redesigned as in attainment/maintenance for the CO NAAQS. The project has the potential to worsen air quality by way of; 1) an increase in cold starts, 2) increase in traffic volumes, and 3) worsening of traffic flows. The project will not significantly increase the percentage of operation in cold start, however, the project is projected to see an increase in peak AM/PM volumes. The project may also worsen flow on intersections and freeway ramps in the project study area by way of increased delays.

CO protocol modeling was performed using the CALINE4 computer model developed by Caltrans, and worst case meteorology was assessed. Worst-case projections of carbon monoxide concentrations (expressed in Parts Per Million, or ppm) indicate that the existing CO concentration levels are projected to comply with the 1-hour NAAQS of 35ppm, but exceed the 8-hour standard of 9ppm. The future CO concentration levels for 2015 and 2030 with and without the project will be in compliance with the 1-hour and 8-hour NAAQS. Because the future concentrations are projected to be below the air quality standards, the project will not result in a significant local air quality impact.

Projections show CO concentrations in 2015 and 2030 to be significantly lower than the existing CO levels, due to the anticipated decrease in the future vehicular emission rates and background concentration levels. In general, the background CO concentration and the vehicular air pollutant emission factors are projected to decrease steadily in the future years due to newer, cleaner, vehicles. While the local traffic volumes are projected to increase in the future, this is more than offset by the decrease of background levels and lower emission factors.

### **Local Analysis: PM<sub>2.5</sub> and PM<sub>10</sub> Operational Impacts**

Clean Air Act section 176(c)(1)(B) is the statutory criterion that must be met by all projects in nonattainment and maintenance areas that are subject to transportation conformity. Section 176(c)(1)(B) states that federally-supported transportation projects must not "cause or contribute to any new violation of any standard in any area; increase the frequency or severity of any existing violation of any standard in any area; or delay timely attainment of any standard or any required interim emission reductions or other milestones in any area." To meet statutory requirements, the March 10, 2006 final rule requires PM<sub>2.5</sub> and PM<sub>10</sub> hot-spot analyses to be performed for projects of air quality concern. Qualitative hot-spot analyses would be done for these projects before appropriate methods and modeling guidance are available and quantitative PM<sub>2.5</sub> and PM<sub>10</sub> hot-spot analyses are required under 40 CFR 93.123(b)(4). In addition, through the final rule, EPA determined that projects not identified in 40 CFR 93.123(b)(1) as projects of air quality concern (POAQC) have also met statutory requirements without any further hot-spot analyses (40 CFR 93.116(a)).

A PM<sub>2.5</sub> and PM<sub>10</sub> hot-spot analysis is not required for projects that are not a POAQC. In the South Coast Air Basin, it is the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) Transportation Conformity Working Group (TCWG) that makes the determination whether the project is or is not a POAQC. The TCWG is a forum to support interagency coordination to help improve air quality and maintain transportation conformity in Southern California. The group meets on a monthly basis to facilitate an inclusive air quality planning process and to fulfill the interagency consultation requirements of the Federal Transportation Conformity Rule. Membership of the Southern California TCWG includes federal

(US EPA, US EPA Region 9, FHWA, FTA), state (CA Air Resources Board, Caltrans), regional (Air Quality Management Districts, SCAG, etc.), and sub-regional (County Transportation Commissions) agencies and other stakeholders.

The required "PM Conformity Hot Spot Analysis – Project Summary for Interagency Consultation" was submitted to the TCWG for consideration at their May 22, 2007 meeting. The notice posted on the TCWG website that this project (#LA0D77) is not a POAQC. Both the Hot Spot Analysis form and the TCWG determination are included in the Appendix.

The project was determined not to be a project of air quality concern because the facility is not projected to have a significant number of diesel vehicles (i.e. less than 10,000 per day), and because project would not result in any increase in the number of diesel trucks that would utilize the facility. The redistribution of traffic is minor and would occur primarily near residential areas that have very little truck traffic and little effect on truck movements. The "Transportation Conformity Guidance for Qualitative Hot-Spot Analyses in PM<sub>2.5</sub> and PM<sub>10</sub> Nonattainment and Maintenance Areas," (U.S. EPA & FHWA, March 2006) provides examples of projects that are not an air quality concern. The first example is consistent with this proposed project, and the example is described as "Any new or expanded highway project that primarily services gasoline vehicle traffic (i.e., does not involve a significant number or increase in the number of diesel vehicles), including such projects involving congested intersections operating at Level-of-Service D, E, or F..." The project is not projected to increase the number of diesel vehicles on I-405, the connector ramps, or intersections within the project area, and accordingly, the TWCG determined that this project is not a project of air quality concern.

### **Additional Air Quality Topics**

**Mobile Source Air Toxics.** In addition to the criteria air pollutants for which there are National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS), EPA also regulates air toxics. Most air toxics originate from human-made sources, including on-road mobile sources, non-road mobile sources (e.g., airplanes), area sources (e.g., dry cleaners) and stationary sources (e.g., factories or refineries).

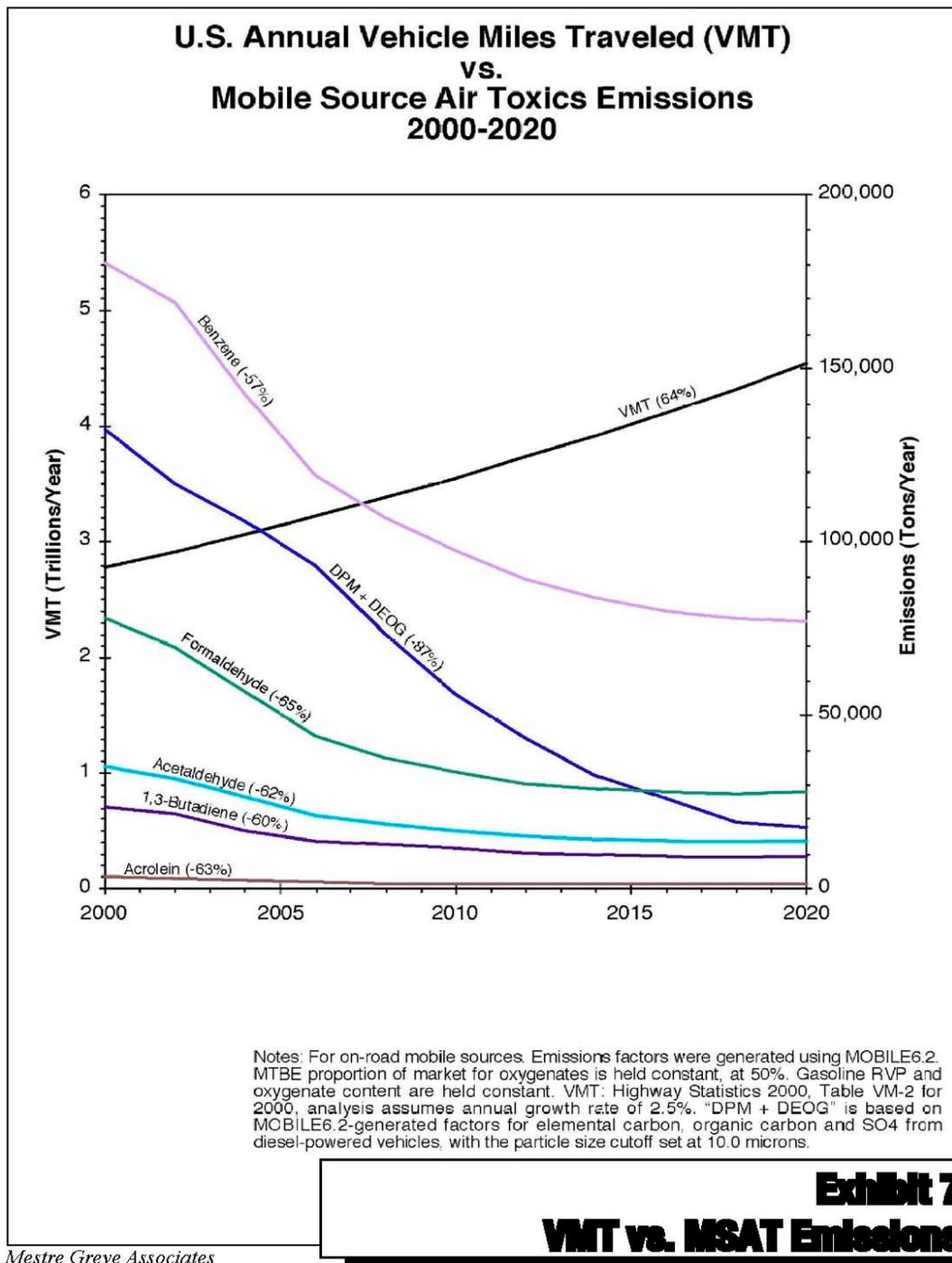
Mobile Source Air Toxics (MSATs) are a subset of the 188 air toxics defined by the Clean Air Act. The MSATs are compounds emitted from highway vehicles and non-road equipment. Some toxic compounds are present in fuel and are emitted to the air when the fuel evaporates or passes through the engine unburned. Other toxics are emitted from the incomplete combustion of fuels or as secondary combustion products. Metal air toxics also result from engine wear or from impurities in oil or gasoline.

The EPA is the lead Federal Agency for administering the Clean Air Act and has certain responsibilities regarding the health effects of MSATs. The EPA issued a Final Rule on Controlling Emissions of Hazardous Air Pollutants from Mobile Sources. 66 FR 17229 (March 29, 2001). This rule was issued under the authority in Section 202 of the Clean Air Act. In its rule, EPA examined the impacts of existing and newly promulgated mobile source control programs, including its reformulated gasoline (RFG) program, its national low emission vehicle (NLEV) standards, its Tier 2 motor vehicle emissions standards and gasoline sulfur control requirements, and its proposed heavy duty engine and vehicle standards and on-highway diesel fuel sulfur control requirements. Between 2000 and 2020, FHWA projects that even with a 64 percent increase in VMT, these programs will reduce on-highway emissions of benzene, formaldehyde, 1,3-butadiene, and acetaldehyde by 57 percent to 65 percent, and will reduce on-highway diesel PM emissions by 87 percent, as shown in Figure 30 (Federal Highway Administration, Memorandum: Interim Guidance on Air Toxics Analysis in NEPA Documents, February 3, 2006).

As a result, EPA concluded that no further motor vehicle emissions standards or fuel standards were necessary to further control MSATs. The agency is preparing another rule under authority of CAA Section 202(l) that will address these issues and could make adjustments to the full 21 and the primary six MSATs.

California's vehicle emission control and fuel standards are more stringent than Federal standards, and are effective sooner, so the effect on air toxics of combined State and Federal regulations is expected to result in greater emission reductions, more quickly, than the FHWA analysis shows. The FHWA analysis, with modifications related to use of the California-specific EMFAC model rather than the MOBILE model, would be conservative.

Figure 27. VMT vs. MSAT Emissions



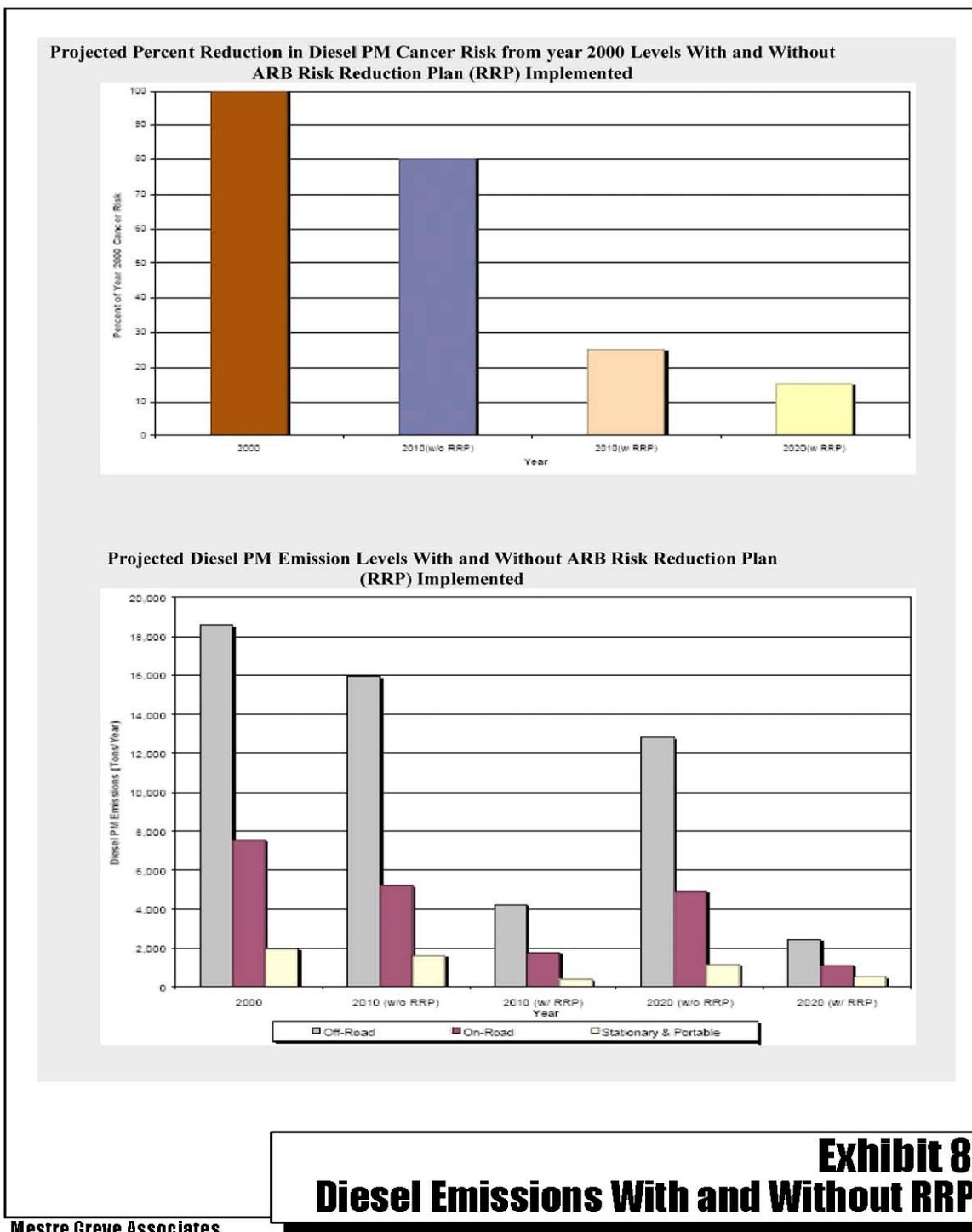
Source: Air Quality Assessment: SOUTHBOUND I-405 TO US-101 CONNECTOR IMPROVEMENT PROJECT, page 49, January 15, 2008.

Additional efforts are being undertaken by the CARB to control diesel particulate matter (PM). The CARB has found that diesel PM contributes over 70 percent of the known risk from air toxics and poses the greatest cancer risks among all identified air toxics. Diesel trucks contribute more than half of the total diesel combustion sources. However, the CARB has adopted a Diesel Risk Reduction Plan (DRRP) with control measures that would reduce the overall diesel PM emissions by about 85% from 2000 to 2020. In addition, total toxic risk from diesel exhaust may only be exposed for a much shorter duration. Further, diesel PM is only one of many environmental toxics and those of other toxics and other pollutants in various environmental media may over shadow its cancer risks. Thus, while diesel exhaust may pose potential cancer risks to receptors spending time on or near high risk diesel PM facilities, most receptors' short-term exposure would only cause minimal harm, and these risks would also greatly diminish in the future operating years of the project due to planned emission control regulations.

From 2000 to 2010, CARB staff predicts diesel PM emissions and risk would decrease by only about 20 percent if the recommended measures are not implemented. This reduction would result from the implementation of existing federal and state regulations and the attrition of older diesel-fueled passenger cars and light-duty trucks from the on-road fleet. The EPA has proposed new, lower emission standards for heavy-duty trucks for 2007 and lower sulfur limits for diesel fuel (on-road vehicles only) in 2006. The benefits of these proposed rules are not included as existing measures because they have not yet been adopted.

The recommended measures can be grouped as follows: measures addressing on-road vehicles, measures addressing off-road equipment and vehicles, and measures addressing stationary and portable engines. These measures include the EPA's 2007 new heavy-duty truck standards and the 2006 low-sulfur fuel limits. Figure 31 illustrates the impact of each of these groups of measures on projected diesel PM emission levels for 2010 and 2020. As shown, off-road recommended measures have the largest impact. Of the off-road recommended measures, the retrofit measures result in over 90 percent of the diesel PM reductions associated with all of the off-road measures.

**Figure 28. Projected Percent Reduction in Diesel PM Cancer Risk from Year 2000 Levels With and Without CARB Risk Reduction Plan (RRP) Implemented**



Source: Air Quality Assessment: SOUTHBOUND I-405 TO US-101 CONNECTOR IMPROVEMENT PROJECT, page 51, January 15, 2008.

## Unavailable Information for Project Specific MSAT Impact Analysis

This study includes a basic analysis of the likely MSAT emission impacts of this project per FHWA guidance (Federal Highway Administration, Memorandum: Interim Guidance on Air Toxics Analysis in NEPA Documents, February 3, 2006). However, available technical tools do not enable us to predict the project-specific health impacts of the emission changes associated with the project. Due to these limitations, the following discussion is included in accordance with CEQ regulations (40 CFR 1502.22(b)) regarding incomplete or unavailable information:

**Information that is Unavailable or Incomplete.** Evaluating the environmental and health impacts from MSATs on a proposed highway project would involve several key elements, including emissions modeling, dispersion modeling in order to estimate ambient concentrations resulting from the estimated emissions, exposure modeling in order to estimate human exposure to the estimated concentrations, and then final determination of health impacts based on the estimated exposure. Each of these steps is encumbered by technical shortcomings or uncertain science that prevents a more complete determination of the MSAT health impacts of this project.

**Emissions.** The EPA and California tools to estimate MSAT emissions from motor vehicles are not sensitive to key variables determining emissions of MSATs in the context of highway projects. MOBILE 6.2 has been developed by the EPA to predict on-road vehicular emissions. EMFAC (either EMFAC2002 or the recently released EMFAC2007 version) has been developed by the California Air Resources Board to predict vehicular emissions in California. While both MOBILE 6.2 and EMFAC are used to predict emissions at a regional level, they have limitations when applied at the project level. Both are trip-based models--emission factors are projected based on a typical trip length of around 7.5 miles, and on average speeds for this typical trip. This means that neither model has the ability to predict emission factors for a specific vehicle operating condition at a specific location at a specific time. Because of this limitation, both models can only approximate emissions from the operating speeds and levels of congestion likely to be present on the largest-scale projects, and cannot adequately capture emissions effects of smaller projects. For particulate matter (PM), the MOBILE6.2 model results are not sensitive to average trip speed; however, PM emissions from the EMFAC model are sensitive to trip speed, so for California conditions, diesel PM emissions are treated the same as other emissions. Unlike MOBILE 6.2, the EMFAC model does not provide MSAT emission factors; off-model speciation of EMFAC's Total Organic Compounds output must be used to generate MSAT emissions. The emission rates used on Both MOBILE 6.2 and EMFAC are based on a limited number of vehicle tests. These deficiencies compromise the capability of both MOBILE 6.2 and EMFAC2002/2007 to estimate MSAT emissions. Both are adequate tools for projecting emissions trends, and performing relative analyses between alternatives for very large projects, but neither is sensitive enough to capture the effects of travel changes caused by smaller projects or to predict emissions near specific roadside locations.

**Dispersion.** The tools to predict how MSATs disperse are also limited. The EPA's current regulatory models, CALINE3 and CAL3QHC, were developed and validated more than a decade ago for the purpose of predicting episodic concentrations of carbon monoxide (CO) to determine compliance with the NAAQS. The CALINE4 model used in California is an improvement on the CALINE3 based EPA models, but like them, it was built primarily for CO analysis. CALINE4 has not been specifically validated for use with other materials such as MSATs and is difficult to use for averaging periods of more than 8 hours or so (health risk data for MSATs are typically based on 24-hour, annual, and long term (30 to 70 years) exposure). Dispersion models are appropriate for predicting maximum concentrations that can occur at some time at some location within a geographic area but cannot accurately predict exposure patterns at specific times at specific locations across an urban area to assess potential health risk. The NCHRP is conducting research on best practices in applying models and other technical methods in the analysis of MSATs. This work also will focus on identifying appropriate methods of documenting and communicating MSAT impacts in the NEPA process and to the general public. Along with these general limitations of dispersion models, FHWA is also faced with a lack of adequate monitoring data in most areas for use in establishing project-specific MSAT background concentrations.

**Exposure Levels and Health Effects.** Finally, even if emission levels and concentrations of MSATs could be accurately predicted, shortcomings in current techniques for exposure assessment and risk analysis preclude us from reaching meaningful conclusions about project-specific health impacts. Exposure assessments are difficult because it is difficult to accurately calculate annual concentrations of MSATs near roadways, and to determine the portion of a year that people are actually exposed to those concentrations at a specific location. These difficulties are magnified for 70-year cancer assessments, particularly because unsupportable assumptions would have to be made regarding changes in travel patterns and vehicle technology (which affects emissions rates) over a 70-year period. There are also considerable uncertainties associated with the existing estimates of toxicity of the various MSATs, because of factors such as low-dose extrapolation and translation of occupational exposure data to the general population. Because of these shortcomings, any calculated difference in health impacts between alternatives is likely to be much smaller than the uncertainties associated with calculating the impacts. Consequently, the results of such assessments would not be useful to decision makers, who would need to weigh this information against other project impacts that are better suited for quantitative analysis.

**Summary of Existing Credible Scientific Evidence Relevant to Evaluating the Impacts of MSATs.** Research into the health impacts of MSATs is ongoing. For different emission types, there are a variety of studies that show that some either are statistically associated with adverse health outcomes through epidemiological studies (frequently based on emissions levels found in occupational settings) or that animals demonstrate adverse health outcomes when exposed to large doses.

Exposure to toxics has been a focus of a number of EPA efforts. Most notably, the agency conducted the National Air Toxics Assessment (NATA) in 1996 to evaluate modeled estimates of human exposure applicable to the county level. While not intended for use as a measure of or benchmark for local exposure, the modeled estimates in the NATA database best illustrate the levels of various toxics when aggregated to a national or State level.

The EPA is in the process of assessing the risks of various kinds of exposures to these pollutants. The EPA Integrated Risk Information System (IRIS) is a database of human health effects that may result from exposure to various substances found in the environment. The IRIS database is located at <http://www.epa.gov/iris>. The following toxicity information for the six prioritized MSATs was taken from the IRIS database *Weight of Evidence Characterization* summaries. This information is taken verbatim from EPA's IRIS database and represents the Agency's most current evaluations of the potential hazards and toxicology of these chemicals or mixtures. The five organic-based MSATs listed below are also listed as toxic air contaminants by the California Air Resources Board.

**Benzene** is characterized as a known human carcinogen.

The potential carcinogenicity of **acrolein** cannot be determined because the existing data are inadequate for an assessment of human carcinogenic potential for either the oral or inhalation route of exposure.

**Formaldehyde** is a probable human carcinogen, based on limited evidence in humans, and sufficient evidence in animals.

**1,3-butadiene** is characterized as carcinogenic to humans by inhalation.

**Acetaldehyde** is a probable human carcinogen based on increased incidence of nasal tumors in male and female rats and laryngeal tumors in male and female hamsters after inhalation exposure.

**Diesel exhaust** (DE) is likely to be carcinogenic to humans by inhalation from environmental exposures. Diesel exhaust as reviewed in this document is the combination of diesel particulate matter and diesel exhaust organic gases. The particulate matter fraction of diesel exhaust (Diesel PM) has been identified by the CARB as a toxic air contaminant due to long-term cancer risk.

**Diesel exhaust** is also connected with chronic respiratory effects, possibly the primary noncancer hazard from MSATs. Prolonged exposures may impair pulmonary function and could produce symptoms, such

as cough, phlegm, and chronic bronchitis. Exposure relationships have not been developed from these studies.

There have been other studies that address MSAT health impacts in proximity to roadways. The Health Effects Institute, a non-profit organization funded by EPA, FHWA, and industry, has undertaken a major series of studies to research near-roadway MSAT hot spots, the health implications of the entire mix of mobile source pollutants, and other topics. The final summary of the series is not expected for several years.

Some recent studies have reported that proximity to roadways is related to adverse health outcomes -- particularly respiratory problems. Much of this research is not specific to MSATs, instead surveying the full spectrum of both criteria and other pollutants. The FHWA cannot evaluate the validity of these studies, but more importantly, they do not provide information that would be useful to alleviate the uncertainties listed above and enable us to perform a more comprehensive evaluation of the health impacts specific to this project.

***Relevance of Unavailable or Incomplete Information to Evaluating Reasonably Foreseeable Significant Adverse Impacts on the Environment, and Evaluation of impacts based upon theoretical approaches or research methods generally accepted in the scientific community.***

Because of the uncertainties outlined above, a reliable quantitative assessment of the effects of air toxic emissions impacts on human health cannot be made at the project level. While available tools do allow us to reasonably predict relative emissions changes between alternatives for larger projects, the amount of MSAT emissions from each of the project alternatives and MSAT concentrations or exposures created by each of the project alternatives cannot be predicted with enough accuracy to be useful in estimating health impacts. (As noted above, the current emissions model is not capable of serving as a meaningful emissions analysis tool for smaller projects.) Therefore, the relevance of the unavailable or incomplete information is that it is not possible to make a determination of whether any of the alternatives would have "significant adverse impacts on the human environment."

Below, a quantitative analysis of MSAT emissions in the project area is provided. This analysis acknowledges that the project may result in slightly increased exposure to MSAT emissions in certain locations compared to no project conditions. However, the analysis shows that exposure to MSAT emissions in the future will be less than current conditions. The concentrations and duration of exposures are uncertain, and because of this uncertainty, the health effects from these emissions cannot be estimated.

**MSAT Emissions in the Project Area.** As discussed above, technical shortcomings of emissions and dispersion models and uncertain science with respect to health effects prevent meaningful or reliable estimates of MSAT emissions and effects of this project. However, even though reliable methods do not exist to accurately estimate the health impacts of MSATs at the project level, it is possible to qualitatively assess the levels of future MSAT emissions under the project. Although a qualitative analysis cannot identify and measure health impacts from MSATs, it can give a basis for identifying and comparing the potential differences among MSAT emissions-if any-from the various alternatives. Based on the FHWA MSAT analysis guidance (Federal Highway Administration, Memorandum: Interim Guidance on Air Toxics Analysis in NEPA Documents, February 3, 2006) the project would be considered as having a low potential for MSAT effects in that it is intended to improve operations of the I-405/SR-101 interchange without adding substantial new capacity or without creating a facility that is likely to meaningfully increase emissions. The analysis presented below shows that the project would not be expected to substantially change VMT over no build conditions and therefore, not substantially alter MSAT emissions in the project area.

For each alternative, the amount of MSATs emitted would be proportional to the vehicle miles traveled, or VMT, assuming that other variables such as fleet mix are the same for each alternative. VMT in the project area for traffic on the mainline I-405 and I-101 and the ramps for each project alternative were calculated using the annual average daily traffic volumes (AADT) from the traffic study prepared for the project and the length of each road segment. The specific traffic volumes and lengths used to calculate

the VMT's presented below are shown in the appendix. Table 35 presents the VMT for the No Build conditions and all 12 build alternatives for the year 2015. The absolute and percentage change in VMT over existing conditions and 2015 No Build conditions are presented in the table as well. The VMT for existing conditions was calculated to be 1,534,005 miles

**Table 35. Year 2015 Vehicle Miles Traveled**

Alternative	VMT	Change Over Existing		Change Over No Build	
		VMT	Percent	VMT	Percent
No Build	1,773,529	239,524	15.6%	--	--
1	1,774,437	240,432	15.7%	908	0.1%
1a	1,773,419	239,414	15.6%	-110	0.0%
1b	1,772,199	238,194	15.5%	-1,330	-0.1%
2	1,791,361	257,356	16.8%	17,832	1.0%
2a	1,790,343	256,338	16.7%	16,814	0.9%
2b	1,789,123	255,118	16.6%	15,594	0.9%
3	1,792,427	258,422	16.8%	18,898	1.1%
3a	1,791,409	257,404	16.8%	17,880	1.0%
3b	1,790,190	256,185	16.7%	16,660	0.9%
4	1,810,439	276,434	18.0%	36,909	2.1%
4a	1,809,420	275,415	18.0%	35,891	2.0%
4b	1,808,201	274,196	17.9%	34,672	2.0%

VMT for Existing Conditions is 1,534,005 shows the same data as 0 except for the year 2030.

**Table 36. Year 2030 Vehicle Miles Traveled**

Alternative	VMT	Change Over Existing		Change Over No Build	
		VMT	Percent	VMT	Percent
No Build	2,207,308	673,303	43.9%	--	--
1	2,214,759	680,754	44.4%	7,451	0.3%
1a	2,213,492	679,487	44.3%	6,184	0.3%
1b	2,211,974	677,969	44.2%	4,666	0.2%
2	2,227,518	693,513	45.2%	20,210	0.9%
2a	2,226,251	692,246	45.1%	18,942	0.9%
2b	2,224,733	690,728	45.0%	17,425	0.8%
3	2,241,809	707,804	46.1%	34,500	1.6%
3a	2,229,561	695,556	45.3%	22,253	1.0%
3b	2,228,044	694,039	45.2%	20,735	0.9%
4	2,253,246	719,241	46.9%	45,938	2.1%
4a	2,251,979	717,974	46.8%	44,671	2.0%
4b	2,250,461	716,456	46.7%	43,153	2.0%

VMT for Existing Conditions is 1,534,005

Table 35 and 36 show that, except for Rejected Alternatives 1a and 1b in 2015, the VMT estimated for each of the Build Alternatives is slightly higher than that for the No Build Alternative. This is primarily due to increased lengths of ramps with the project. This increase in VMT would lead to higher MSAT emissions for the action alternative along the highway corridor. The emissions increase is offset somewhat by lower MSAT emission rates due to increased speeds; according to CARB's EMFAC2007 emissions model, emissions of all of the priority MSATs except for diesel particulate matter decrease as speed increases. The extent to which these speed-related emissions decreases will offset VMT-related emissions increases cannot be reliably projected due to the inherent deficiencies of technical models.

Because the estimated VMT under each of the Alternatives are nearly the same, varying by less than 2.2 percent, it is expected there would be no appreciable difference in overall MSAT emissions among the various alternatives. Also, regardless of the alternative chosen, emissions will likely be lower than present levels in the design year as a result of EPA's national control programs that are projected to reduce MSAT emissions by 57 to 87 percent between 2000 and 2020. Local conditions may differ from these national projections in terms of fleet mix and turnover, VMT growth rates, and local control

measures. However, the magnitude of the EPA-projected reductions is so great (even after accounting for VMT growth) that MSAT emissions in the study area are likely to be lower in the future in nearly all cases.

**Naturally Occurring Asbestos (NOA).** Asbestos is a term used for several types of naturally occurring fibrous minerals that are a human health hazard when airborne. The most common type of asbestos is chrysotile, but other types such as tremolite and actinolite are also found in California. Asbestos is classified as a known human carcinogen by state, federal, and international agencies and was identified as a toxic air contaminant by the California Air Resources Board (CARB) in 1986. All types of asbestos are hazardous and may cause lung disease and cancer.

Asbestos can be released from serpentinite and ultramafic rocks when the rock is broken or crushed. At the point of release, the asbestos fibers may become airborne, causing air quality and human health hazards. These rocks have been commonly used for unpaved gravel roads, landscaping, fill projects and other improvement projects in some localities. Asbestos may be released to the atmosphere due to vehicular traffic on unpaved roads, during grading for development projects, and at quarry operations. All of these activities may have the effect of releasing potentially harmful asbestos into the air. Natural weathering and erosion processes can act on asbestos bearing rock and make it easier for asbestos fibers to become airborne if such rock is disturbed.

Serpentinite may contain chrysotile asbestos, especially near fault zones. Ultramafic rock, a rock closely related to serpentinite, may also contain asbestos minerals. Asbestos can also be associated with other rock types in California, though much less frequently than serpentinite and/or ultramafic rock. Serpentinite and/or ultramafic rock are known to be present in 44 of California's 58 counties. These rocks are particularly abundant in the counties of the Sierra Nevada foothills, the Klamath Mountains, and Coast Ranges. The California Department of Conservation, Division of Mines and Geology has developed a map of the state showing the general location of ultramafic rock in the state. This map indicates that over half of Los Angeles County has ultramafic rock occurrences. It is not clear from the map if there are occurrences of ultramafic rock in the vicinity of the project .

While unlikely, if naturally occurring asbestos, serpentine, or ultramafic rock is discovered during grading operations Section 93105, Title 17 of the California Code of Regulations requires notification of the AQMD by the next business day and implementation of the following measures within 24-hours:

- Unpaved areas subject to vehicle traffic must be stabilized by being kept adequately wetted, treated with a chemical dust suppressant, or covered with material that contains less than 0.25 percent asbestos
- The speed of any vehicles and equipment traveling across unpaved areas must be no more than fifteen (15) miles per hour unless the road surface and surrounding area is sufficiently stabilized to prevent vehicles and equipment traveling more than 15 miles per hour from emitting dust that is visible crossing the project boundaries
- Storage piles and disturbed areas not subject to vehicular traffic must be stabilized by being kept adequately wetted, treated with a chemical dust suppressant, or covered with material that contains less than 0.25 percent asbestos; and
- Activities must be conducted so that no track-out from any road construction project is visible on any paved roadway open to the public
- Equipment and operations must not cause the emission of any dust that is visible crossing the project boundaries

**Concluding Comments About Air Quality.** This project-level Air Quality report addresses all pertinent aspects of conformity and adheres to the Transportation Conformity Rule and currently the proposed project is listed in the FHWA approved 2004 RTP and 2006 RTIP. In any event, an in-depth discussion of project conformity to the FHWA approved 2004 RTP and 2006 RTIP is provided. The design, concept, and scope of the project have not changed significantly and the project will not interfere with the timely implementation of transportation control measures from the SIP. The essential role of SIP in regional analysis is documented in this report. A comprehensive analysis of potential air pollutants has concluded that the proposed project alternatives do not pose any significant operational impact on the ambient air quality in the project vicinity. The analysis shows that it is unlikely that the project will cause CO concentrations greater than those modeled in the SCAB CO Attainment Plan and therefore will not result in an exceedance of the CO NAAQS. Based on the most recent 3-years of PM<sub>10</sub> data at the Reseda air monitoring station, it is unlikely that the proposed project will cause the ambient PM<sub>10</sub> to exceed NAAQS. SCAG's Transportation Conformity Working Group determined that the proposed project alternatives are not a "project of air quality concern," and that PM<sub>2.5</sub> and PM<sub>10</sub> local impacts will not occur. A discussion of fugitive dust control measures is provided, and it is recommended that the measure be included as project commitments prior to construction. The analysis shows that the project would not be expected to cause any new violations, worsen existing violations, or delay timely attainment of the NAAQS. The analysis shows MSAT emissions in the project area will decrease in future years and that the project would not result in an increase in MSAT emissions compared to no project conditions. Control measures have been identified for naturally occurring asbestos should rock containing asbestos be uncovered.

The proposed project is fully funded and is in the Southern California Association of Governments 2004 Regional Transportation Plan, which was found to conform by the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) on April 1, 2004 and FHWA and FTA adopted the air quality conformity finding on June 7, 2004. The SCAG 2004 RTP was amended with Amendment 1 on July 27, 2004. The project is also included in the SCAG's financially constrained 2006 Regional Transportation Improvement Program, page 4. The Southern California Association of Governments 2006 Regional Transportation Improvement Program was found to conform by FHWA and FTA on October 2, 2006. The design concept and scope of the proposed project is consistent with the project description in the 2004 RTP, the 2006 RTIP and the assumptions in the SCAG'S regional emissions analysis.

## 2.2.7 NOISE

**Regulatory Setting .**The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969 and the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) provide the broad basis for analyzing and abating highway traffic noise effects. The intent of these laws is to promote the general welfare and to foster a healthy environment. The requirements for noise analysis and consideration of noise abatement and/or mitigation, however, differ between NEPA and CEQA.

### ***California Environmental Quality Act***

CEQA requires a strictly baseline versus build analysis to assess whether a proposed project will have a noise impact. If a proposed project is determined to have a significant noise impact under CEQA, then CEQA dictates that mitigation measures must be incorporated into the project unless such measures are not feasible. The rest of this section will focus on the NEPA-23 CFR 772 noise analysis.

### ***National Environmental Policy Act and 23 CFR 772***

For highway transportation projects with FHWA (and the Department, as assigned) involvement, the federal-Aid Highway Act of 1970 and the associated implementing regulations (23 CFR 772) govern the analysis and abatement of traffic noise impacts. The regulations require that potential noise impacts in

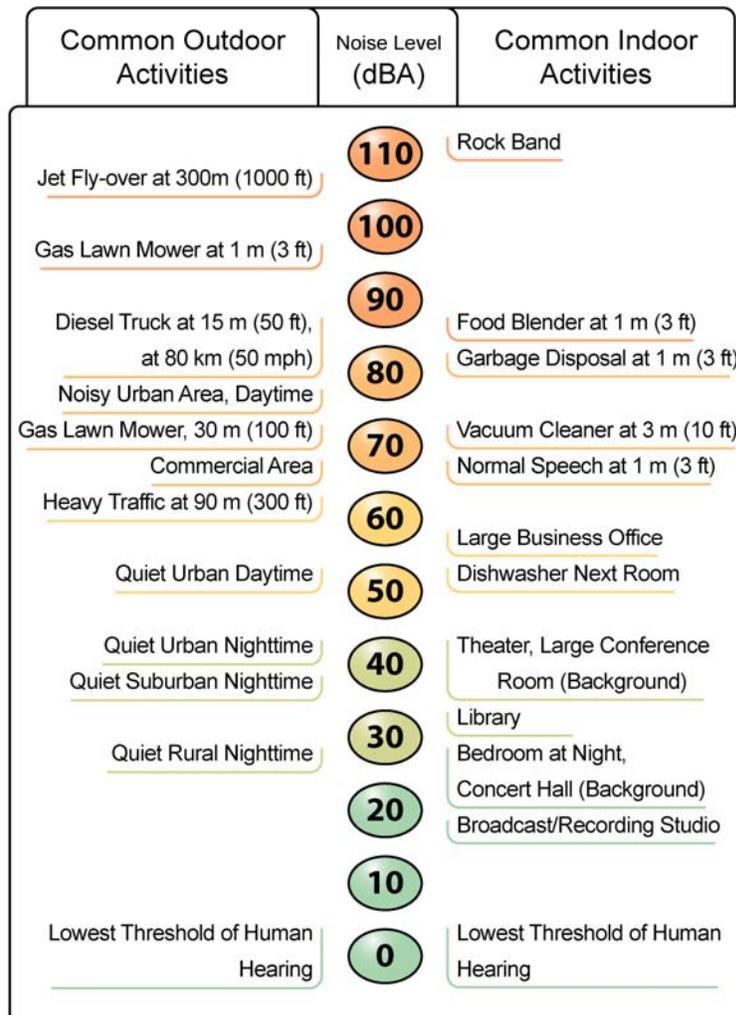
areas of frequent human use be identified during the planning and design of a highway project. The regulations contain noise abatement criteria (NAC) that are used to determine when a noise impact would occur. The NAC differ depending on the type of land use under analysis. For example, the NAC for residences (67 dBA) is lower than the NAC for commercial areas (72 dBA). The following table lists the noise abatement criteria for use in the NEPA-23 CFR 772 analysis.

**Table 37. Noise Abatement Criteria for Use in the NEPA-23 CFR 772 Analysis**

Activity Category	NAC, Hourly A-Weighted Noise Level, dBA $L_{eq}(h)$	Description of Activities
A	57 Exterior	Lands on which serenity and quiet are of extraordinary significance and serve an important public need and where the preservation of those qualities is essential if the area is to continue to serve its intended purpose
B	67 Exterior	Picnic areas, recreation areas, playgrounds, active sport areas, parks, residences, motels, hotels, schools, churches, libraries, and hospitals.
C	72 Exterior	Developed lands, properties, or activities not included in Categories A or B above
D	--	Undeveloped lands.
E	52 Interior	Residence, motels, hotels, public meeting rooms, schools, churches, libraries, hospitals, and auditoriums

The following figure lists the noise levels of common activities to enable readers to compare the actual and predicted highway noise-levels discussed in this section with common activities.

**Figure 29. Noise Levels of Common Activities**



In accordance with the Department's *Traffic Noise Analysis Protocol for New Highway Construction and Reconstruction Projects, August 2006*, a noise impact occurs when the future noise level with the project results in a substantial increase in noise level (defined as a 12 dBA or more increase) or when the future noise level with the project approaches or exceeds the NAC. Approaching the NAC is defined as coming within 1 dBA of the NAC.

If it is determined that the project will have noise impacts, then potential abatement measures must be considered. Noise abatement measures that are determined to be reasonable and feasible at the time of final design are incorporated into the project plans and specifications. This document discusses noise abatement measures that would likely be incorporated in the project.

The Department's *Traffic Noise Analysis Protocol* sets forth the criteria for determining when an abatement measure is reasonable and feasible. Feasibility of noise abatement is basically an engineering concern. A minimum 5 dBA reduction in the future noise level must be achieved for an abatement measure to be considered feasible. Other considerations include topography, access requirements, other noise sources and safety considerations. The reasonableness determination is

basically a cost-benefit analysis. Factors used in determining whether a proposed noise abatement measure is reasonable include: residents acceptance, the absolute noise level, build versus existing noise, environmental impacts of abatement, public and local agencies input, newly constructed development versus development pre-dating 1978 and the cost per benefited residence.

## Study Methods and Procedures

**Selection of Receivers and Measurement Sites.** Noise sensitive receivers in the project area that are subject to traffic noise impacts from freeway-generated noise were identified. Noise sensitive areas typically include residences, schools, libraries, churches and temples, hospitals, recreation and sport areas, playgrounds, hotels, motels and parks.

For this project, Caltrans Noise and Vibration Investigation Branch personnel performed a field survey of the entire area within the limits of the project. The survey included visiting the project sites in order to identify land uses within the project limits and to select the noise measurement sites. The entire area within the project limits was acoustically represented by 65 noise measurement site locations. The noise measurement sites were selected taking into consideration the following general site requirements:

- 1) Sites were acoustically representative of areas and conditions of interest. They were located at areas of human use.
- 2) Sites were clear of major obstructions between source and receiver. Microphone positions were more than 3 meters away from reflecting surfaces.
- 3) Sites were free of noise contamination by sources other than those of interest. Sites were not located near barking dogs, lawn mowers, pool pumps, air conditioners, etc.
- 4) Sites were not exposed to prevailing meteorological conditions that are beyond the constraints discussed in the Technical Noise Supplement.

**Measurement of Existing Noise Levels.** The existing noise environment in the project area was determined by performing short-term (10-minute) and long-term (24-hour) noise monitoring. 24-hour readings were taken at locations representative of residential area within an interchange in order to determine the noisiest hour. Sound level meters were placed at four representative sites (See Figures A through I) and were left to run continuously monitoring and recording noise levels for a 24-hour period. The short-term noise levels were recorded within each 24-hour noise monitoring for that particular area. The noise level data collected was then analyzed and adjusted using the 24-hour noise readings to determine the noisiest hour.

Additionally, three community background noise readings were taken within the project limits. Background noise is the total of all noise generated within the community and is measured away from the freeway where freeway traffic noise does not contribute to the total noise level. Background noise levels are typically measured to determine the feasibility (noise reducibility of 5 dBA) of noise abatement and to insure that noise reduction goals can be achieved. Noise abatement cannot reduce noise levels below background noise levels.

Short-term noise readings were taken from 12/15/04 to 01/20/05 between the hours of 9:50 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. using Metrosonics Model db-3080 sound level meters (serial numbers 3120, 3126, 3127, 3193 and 3194) placed 1.5 meters (5 feet) above the ground on a tripod. Measurements were typically taken for periods of 10 minutes at each location. The short-term monitoring locations are shown in Layouts L-1 through L-16 and Figures A through I for Alternative 1, Alternatives 1 with Mitigation 1 & 2, and Alternative 2/3. The same instrumentation was used for 24-hour noise readings.

During the short-term measurement, Caltrans staff attended the sound-level meter. All readings were recorded only if no sound level contamination from sources other than the freeway traffic were present. The noise levels measured during the measurement period were logged in the sound level meter's memory and later downloaded to a personal computer and printed.

The calibration of the meters was checked before and after the field measurements using the Metrosonics CL 304 calibrators (CL304-7456, CL304-7457, CL304-7458 and CL304-7459). It was determined that no adjustment in calibration was necessary. Wind speed was observed using a Kestrel 1000 anemometer during the short-term noise monitoring sessions. No noise readings were recorded when the wind speed exceeded a sustained 16 km/h (10 mph). The temperature varied from approximately 18° - 35° Celsius (65° - 95° Fahrenheit), and winds were light, having little effect on sound propagation over moderate distances. Traffic on Route 405 and Route 101 near the respective noise-monitoring site was counted simultaneously when short-term noise measurements were being recorded. Caltrans staff performed traffic counts and vehicle classifications manually. Vehicles were classified as automobiles, medium-duty trucks, and heavy-duty trucks. An automobile is defined as a vehicle with two axles and four tires and primarily designed to carry passengers. Small vans and light trucks are in this category as well. Medium trucks include all cargo vehicles with two axles and six tires. Heavy trucks include all vehicles with three or more axles.

Traffic speeds on I-405 and U.S.-101 were determined by traveling with the flow of traffic and observing the vehicle speed on the speedometer. The posted speed limit on the mainline I-405 and U.S.-101 in the project area is 105 km/h (65mph).

**FHWA Traffic Noise Model 2.5.** The Federal Highway Administration's Traffic Noise Model (FHWA TNM) Version 2.5 is FHWA's computer program for highway traffic noise prediction and analysis. For the traffic noise analysis presented in this report, FHWA TNM v. 2.5 computer program was used. In order to develop the analytical model, all relevant topographic features, including roadway lanes, receiver locations, existing sound barriers and existing terrain in the area of potential impact, were digitized into a three-dimensional, scaled reference coordinate system for both existing and future conditions.

**Calibration of Noise Model.** Using the measured existing noise level data and corresponding traffic counts, the FHWA TNM Version 2.5 was calibrated as necessary in order to correctly predict noise levels at analysis locations.

**Future Noise Level Prediction.** Analysis based on the traffic volumes and speeds, stated in the 1997 Highway Capacity Manual (6), indicates that maximum noise occurs at Level of Services (LOS) D-E at 85% of capacity and 100% of free flow speed. Using this information, it was determined that a traffic volume of 1950 vehicles/hour/lane would be the worst noise hour traffic volume under design-year (2034) conditions. The traffic noise model was analyzed for the above-mentioned traffic volume to predict worst hour noise levels for design-year conditions. The Traffic Noise Analysis Protocol requires that noise level be predicted using traffic characteristics that will yield the worst hourly traffic noise impact on a regular basis for future conditions.

**Identification of Traffic Noise Impacts and Noise Abatement Considerations.** Results from computer analysis for future-worst-hour noise levels were used to determine if traffic noise impacts would occur. Traffic noise impacts occur when it is determined that the proposed project causes a substantial noise increase or predicted traffic noise levels approach or exceed Noise Abatement Criteria. A noise increase is substantial when the predicted noise levels after project completion exceed existing noise levels by 12 dBA -  $L_{eq}(h)$ . A traffic noise impact also occurs when predicted noise levels after project completion approach within 1 dBA -  $L_{eq}(h)$ , or exceed Noise Abatement Criteria. Soundwall insertion losses were calculated using the calibrated traffic noise models developed for each analysis site. According to the protocol, a minimum of 5 dBA noise reduction (insertion loss) must be achievable at impacted receivers in order for the proposed abatement to be considered acoustically feasible. Based on the analysis results, preliminary noise abatement was recommended at locations where traffic noise impacts were identified and the abatement measure was found to be feasible. The reasonableness cost allowance for the acoustically feasible noise barriers was calculated following the procedure defined in TNAP. The reasonable cost allowance is based on a base allowance of \$26,000 per benefited residence (i.e. residences that receive at least 5 dBA noise reduction for the soundwall) and additional dollars for the following factors: absolute noise levels, change in noise levels, achievable noise reduction and the date the residences were constructed.

## Affected Environment

**Land Use and Sensitive Areas.** The existing land use within the project limits is comprised of residential, school, commercial, church, park, motel, golf course, baseball fields, hospital, and undeveloped land. There are two schools located within the project limits. The first school (Hesby Street School) is situated along U.S.-101 on Hesby Street, between Morrison Addison Streets. At the time of the original noise study (May 2005) the school was observed to be abandoned, but during additional noise studies conducted in May 2008, it was observed that the school was renovated and fully operational. The second school is the Emek Hebrew Academy (The Teichman Family Torah Center), located on Magnolia Boulevard along I-405 with grades ranging from pre-school to 8<sup>th</sup> grade. The school consists of a soccer playground and a playpen facing I-405. Adjacent to the school is a miniature golf course, the Sherman Oaks Castle Palace, located on the northeast quadrant of I-405 and U.S.-101 with frequent exterior human activity. In addition, there are three parks (The Encino Golf Course, three baseball fields, and a recreational park adjacent to the baseball fields) and a nursery located within the project limits: Encino Golf Course – located along northbound U.S.-101 between Balboa Ave and the Los Angeles River, the baseball fields adjacent to a recreational park – located along the southbound U.S.-101 between Hayvenhurst Ave and Libbet Ave, a nursery – the Sepulveda Garden Center is located along the southbound U.S.-101 between Forbes Ave and Hayvenhurst Ave.

There are several commercial developments within the project limits—the Western Motel and a Denny's Restaurant, both situated adjacent to each other at the northwest corner of Burbank Blvd and Sepulveda Blvd. The motel consists of a building structure, and an outdoor swimming pool that is shielded by 2-story motel building. Surveys indicate that Denny's Restaurant does not have an outside eating area. A hospital exists at the southeast corner of Balboa Ave and U.S.-101, and no frequent exterior human activity has been observed. In addition, there is an undeveloped piece of land belonging to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers that is classified as a "flood zone" along the southbound I-405 between U.S.-101 and Burbank Blvd, and immediately north of the Los Angeles River along the northbound I-405.

**Existing Traffic Noise.** The noise environment in the project area is dominated by traffic traveling the I-405 and U.S.-101. There are three existing soundwalls along the southbound U.S.-101: a 3.05m (10 feet) high soundwall from Balboa Ave to Hayvenhurst Ave., a 3.05m (10 feet) high soundwall from Hayvenhurst Ave to Haskell Ave, and a 4.27m (14 feet) high soundwall from Haskell Ave to Sepulveda Ave. In addition, there are four proposed soundwalls along the N/B I-405 from 0.75km south of Ventura Boulevard to 0.2km south of Burbank Boulevard as part of a separate project. For the purposes of this study, the said proposed soundwalls have been analyzed as existing soundwalls wherever applicable when modeling the traffic noise for this report.

The following Traffic Noise Measurements and Modeling Table summarizes short-term sound level measurements taken in the project area and the noise modeling results for existing conditions. The measurement and modeling results indicate that existing traffic noise levels for the residential area typically range between 52 and 71 dBA- $L_{eq}(h)$ . The 24-hour readings were taken at Sites #S-1<sup>^</sup>, #S-5<sup>^</sup>, #S-7<sup>^</sup>, and #N-1<sup>^</sup>. For Site #S-1<sup>^</sup>, which represents the area between Morrison St. and Haskell Ave along the southbound U.S.-101, the noisiest hour occurred between 5:18 a.m. and 6:18 a.m. For Site #S-5<sup>^</sup>, which represents the area between Haskell Ave and Libbit Ave along the southbound U.S.-101, the noisiest hour occurred between 11:37 a.m. and 12:37 p.m. For Site #S-7<sup>^</sup>, which represents the area between Libbit Ave and Balboa Blvd along the southbound Route 101, the noisiest hour occurred between 10:29 a.m. and 11:29 a.m. For Sites #N-1<sup>^</sup>, which represents the area between U.S.-101 and Burbank Blvd along the northbound I-405, the noisiest hour occurred between 6:52 a.m. and 7:52 a.m. Background noise levels were measured at two locations and ranged from 52dBA- $L_{eq}(h)$  to 57dBA- $L_{eq}(h)$ .

**Table 38. Traffic Noise Measurements and Modeling Results**

Table 3. Traffic Noise Measurements & Modeling Results																
Receiver	Location	Type of Development	Noise Abatement Category	Field-Measured Noise Level dBA - Leq[h]	Adjusted to Existing Worst Hour Noise Level dBA-Leq[h]	Modeled Noise Level dBA - Leq[h]	Traffic Noise Model Calibration Factor dBA - Leq[h]	Existing Wall or Earth Berm		Future Worst-Noise-Hour Noise Level	Noise Increase	Future Worst-Noise-Hour Noise Level	Noise Increase w/MTG 2 & 3	Future Worst-Noise-Hour Noise Level	Noise Increase	Impact Type
								Private Property (m)	State Property (m)							
Site #S-1^	15446 Morrison St.	residential	B (67 dBA)	62	62	67	-5	-	4.27	64.3	2.3	N/A	-	64.3	2.3	N
Site #S-2	Abandon School	school	B (67 dBA)	-	-	55	-6	-	4.27	58	0	N/A	-	58	0	N
Site #S-3	Caltrans Maintenance	commercial	C (72 dBA)	62	63	64	-2	-	-	65	2	N/A	-	65	2	N
Site #S-4	15710 Magnolia Blvd.	residential	B (67 dBA)	61	65	63	-2	-	3.05	65	0	N/A	-	65	0	A
Site #S-5	5188 Gaviota Ave	residential	B (67 dBA)	59	63	59	0	-	3.05	64	1	N/A	-	64	1	N
Site #S-5^	5188 Gaviota Ave	residential	B (67 dBA)	63	63	63	0	-	3.05	63	0	N/A	-	63	0	N
Site #S-6	5194 Brian Lane	residential	B (67 dBA)	65	67	64	1	-	3.05	67.5	0.5	N/A	-	67.5	0.5	E
Site #S-7	5340 Forbes Ave	residential	B (67 dBA)	60	60	63	-3	-	3.05	-	-	61.5	1.5	-	-	N
Site #S-7^	5340 Forbes Ave	residential	B (67 dBA)	60	63	63	-3	-	3.05	-	-	64.5	1.5	-	-	N
Site #S-7A	16810 Clark St.	residential	B (67 dBA)	-	-	60	-3	-	-	-	-	N/A	-	62	-	N
Site #S-7B	16810 Margate St.	residential	B (67 dBA)	-	-	58	-3	-	-	-	-	N/A	-	59.4	-	N
Site #S-7C	Vacant Land	commercial	C (72 dBA)	-	-	66	-3	-	-	-	-	67.1	-	-	-	N
Site #S-8	Baseball Fields	park	B (67 dBA)	59	60	62	-3	-	3.05	60.1	0.1	60.1	0.1	60.1	0.1	N
Site #S-9	5440 Forbes Ave	residential	B (67 dBA)	61	62	65	-4	-	-	62.7	0.7	62.7	0.7	62.7	0.7	N
Site #S-9A	16936 Burbank Blvd	residential	B (67 dBA)	-	-	62	-4	-	-	64.1	2.1	64.1	2.1	64.1	N	N
Site #S-9B	16946 Burbank Blvd	residential	B (67 dBA)	-	-	62	-4	-	-	63.9	-	63.9	-	63.9	-	N
Site #S-10	Medical Plaza 5400 Balboa Blvd	hospital	B (67 dBA)	63	63	65	-2	-	-	64.9	1.9	64.9	1.9	64.9	1.9	N
Site #S-11	Sepulveda Garden Center	commercial	C (72 dBA)	65	67	69	-4	-	-	67.9	0.9	67.9	0.9	67.9	0.9	N
Site #S-11A	16630 McCormick St.	residential	B (67 dBA)	-	-	62	-4	-	-	-	-	65	-	-	N	N
Site #N-1	Emek Hebrew Academy 15365 Magnolia Blvd	school	B (67 dBA)	70	72	71, 65.3**	-1	3.66*	-	67.2***	1.9	N/A	-	67.3***	2	E
Site #N-1^	Emek Hebrew Academy 15365 Magnolia Blvd	school	B (67 dBA)	72	73	73, 67.3**	-1	3.66*	-	69.2***	1.9	N/A	-	69.2	2	E
Site #N-1A	Emek Hebrew Academy 15365 Magnolia Blvd	school	B (67 dBA)	-	-	64, 60.9**	-1	-	3.66*	62.5***	1.6	N/A	-	62.7***	1.8	N
Site #N-2	Sherman Oaks Castle Palace 4989 Sepulveda Blvd	park	B (67 dBA)	69	70	68,****	1	-	-	69.8	0.2	N/A	-	69.8	0.2	E
Site #N-3	5345 Sepulveda Blvd	residential	B (67 dBA)	67	70	69, 63.6**	-2	-	3.66*	65.5***	1.9	N/A	-	65.4***	1.8	N
Site #N-3A	5425 Sepulveda Blvd	residential	B (67 dBA)	-	-	67, 61.3**	-2	-	3.66	63.2***	1.9	N/A	-	63.4***	2.1	N
Site #N-4	Channel	Contour Reading	-	68	70	71,****	-3	-	-	72.1	2.1	N/A	-	73.4	3.4	N
Site #N-5	15328 Albers St.	residential	B (67 dBA)	68	70	67, 66**	1	-	3.05*	67.6***	1.6	N/A	-	67.7***	1.7	E
Site #N-5A		motel	B (67 dBA)	-	-	65, 64.2**	1	-	-	65.2***	1	N/A	-	66****	1.8	A
Site #N-6	15352 Weddington St.	residential	B (67 dBA)	70	73	71, 62.7**	-1	-	3.66*	65.0***	2.3	N/A	-	65****	2.3	N
Site #N-6A	15353 Weddington St.	residential	B (67 dBA)	-	-	70, 64.7**	-2	-	3.66*	66.7***	2	N/A	-	66.6***	1.9	E
Site #N-6B	15353 Weddington St.	residential	B (67 dBA)	-	-	64, 60.9**	-1	-	3.66*	62.7***	1.8	N/A	-	62.6***	1.7	N

\* Proposed Soundwall under Project EA  
 \*\* Modeled Noise Level w/Proposed Soundwall under Project EA 199620  
 \*\*\* Future Worst Noise-Hour Level w/Proposed Soundwall under Project EA 199620  
 ^ 24 hour noise reading site

## Environmental Consequences

**Future Noise Environment.** Future noise levels were predicted using traffic characteristics that would yield the worst hourly traffic noise impact on a regular basis. As previously described, vehicles per hour per lane at 105 km/h (65 mph) were used as the future traffic. The percentages of cars, medium trucks, and heavy trucks use for modeling the present were assume the same for the future modeling. Predicted increases in traffic noise under design-year conditions relative to existing conditions typically are in the range of 1 - 2dBA. These increases are attributed to the reconstruction of a new alignment of the southbound I-405 to northbound US-101 Connector (Connector B), a partial realignment of the southbound I-405 to southbound U.S.-101 Connector (Connector A), realignment of the on-ramp from Burbank Boulevard to southbound I-405, a new on-ramp at Hayvenhurst Ave approaching northbound U.S.-101, and widening the Balboa on-ramp from one lane to two lane approaching the northbound U.S.-101.

**Traffic Noise Impacts.** The previous Traffic Noise Measurements and Modeling Table shows the locations where predicted traffic noise levels approach/exceed the Noise Abatement Criteria of 67 dBA- $L_{eq}(h)$  for Activity Category B. The Activity Category B land uses within the project limits under consideration include residential properties, a motel, a hotel, a school, a hospital, church, and three parks. The Activity Category C land uses within the project limits include a restaurant, and a nursery that have exterior frequent human use, and therefore, they were considered for potential freeway traffic noise impacts.

It was predicted that the future reconstruction on a new alignment of the southbound I-405 to the northbound U.S.-101 Connector (Connector B) and a partial realignment of the southbound I-405 to southbound US-101 Connector (Connector A) would impact all the residential areas, school, amusement park, and church adjacent to northbound I-405 within the project limits.

The Sherman Oaks Castle Park located on the northeastern quadrant of I-405 and U.S.-101 Interchange is an area with frequent exterior human use. The predicted worst-hour noise level at this location exceeds the NAC of 67 dBA- $L_{eq}(h)$  for Activity Category B, and therefore, it was determined to have traffic noise impact. The Emek Hebrew Academy is located adjacent to Sherman Oaks Castle Park on Magnolia Blvd, with a playground facing the freeway. In addition to the soundwall recommended for implementation under a separate Caltrans project, the school was evaluated and remained impacted by the traffic noise due to this proposed project (Preferred Alternative and Rejected Alternatives 2/3). All residential properties and churches along the northbound I-405 between Magnolia Blvd and Burbank Blvd have been evaluated and determined to have traffic noise impacts.

The Activity Category C land uses within the limits under consideration include commercial properties. There are several commercial developments within the project limits however, the Sepulveda Garden Center has outside areas with frequent human activity and therefore, it was analyzed for determining noise impacts. The predicted worst-hour traffic noise level at the nursery was 68 dBA- $L_{eq}(h)$ , which does not approach or exceed the NAC and therefore is not impacted. The Denny's Restaurant is another commercial development that was not analyzed for traffic noise impacts because it did not have any outside eating area.

## Abatement

**Preliminary Noise Abatement Analysis.** FHWA regulations (23CFR772) state that noise abatement will usually be necessary where noise impacts are predicted and only where frequent human use occurs, and where a lowered noise level would be of benefit. As a matter of practice, abatement is considered for places where people are exposed to highway noise for at least 1 hour on a regular basis. Potential noise abatement measures include:

- Avoiding the project impact by using design alternatives, such as altering the horizontal and vertical alignment of the project.
- Constructing noise barriers
- Acquiring property to serve as a buffer zone
- Using traffic management measures to regulate types of vehicles and speeds
- Acoustically insulating public use or nonprofit institutional structures

Caltrans is preparing a Noise Abatement Decision Report (NADR), in consideration of the topography, land use, right-of-way, and existing traffic. It is proposed that construction of soundwalls would be the appropriate form of noise abatement measure for this area. Soundwalls have been considered and /or recommended at the following locations for various activity categories within the project limits. The NADR is still in preparation and will be finalized as Caltrans moves toward final design of the project.

**Residential Areas.** The impacted residential areas have been considered for noise abatement. They are represented by Site #S4 and #S6 along the southbound U.S.-101, and Site #N5, along the northbound I-405. Site #S4 is considered impacted because the predicted traffic noise levels approach the NAC of 67 dBA- $L_{eq}(h)$ . Site #S6 and #N5 are also impacted because the predicted traffic noise levels exceed the NAC of 67 dBA- $L_{eq}(h)$ . However, it was determined that increasing the soundwall height to maximum of 4.9m would not provide additional 5 dBA noise reduction for each sites. All impacted residential areas considered for abatement are listed in the previous Traffic Noise Measurements and Modeling Table.

**Hotels/Motels.** The Western Motel is represented by Site #N5 within the project limits. Noise impacts were identified at this location. However, proposing a soundwall or increasing the height of the recommended soundwall under a separate Caltrans project (four proposed soundwalls along the N/B I-405 from 0.75km south of Ventura Boulevard to 0.2km south of Burbank Boulevard) did not provide additional 5 dBA noise reduction. In addition, a Modeled Noise Level Site #N-5A located at the pool (an area of frequent human use) in the motel's property did not indicate any noise impact from predicted noise levels.

**Schools.** There are two schools within the project limits. Site #S2 represents the Hesby Street School, located behind an existing 4.27m soundwall, along southbound U.S.-101 between Morrison Street and Allison Street. No traffic noise impact has been identified at this location. The Emek Hebrew Academy is a private school located on Magnolia Blvd along northbound I-405, and is represented by Site #N1. With the recommended soundwall under a separate Caltrans project (four proposed soundwalls along the N/B I-405 from 0.75km south of Ventura Boulevard to 0.2km south of Burbank Boulevard), this school has been evaluated and remains to have traffic noise impacts.

The predicted worst noise levels exceed NAC of 67 dBA- $L_{eq}(h)$  under this project. As it stands, the existing noise levels in this area exceed the aforementioned noise abatement criteria, but Caltrans has proposed an increase in the height of the existing soundwall to 16 feet in an effort to bring this site into compliance. But, studies deemed this solution as infeasible as the increase in height would not provide the additional 5dBA noise reduction needed to be in compliance with the NAC. Any further increases in wall height would require full replacement, which is neither feasible, nor prudent for the following reasons:

- A taller soundwall would require larger footings
- Larger footings would require additional acquisition of right-of-way
- A taller soundwall may not necessarily provide the needed attenuation to bring the site into compliance with the NAC

Further evaluation is needed to obtain a feasible and prudent solution to the noise impact issues to Emek Hebrew Academy. In the future, and as Caltrans moves toward final design of this project, these noise abatement feasibility issues will be revisited.

**Parks.** There are four parks located within the project limits: The Sherman Oaks Castle Palace, the Encino Golf Course, the three baseball fields, and the recreational park adjacent to the baseball fields. The only park determined to have freeway traffic noise impacts is the Sherman Oaks Castle Palace. Traffic noise impact [future predicted noise level of 70dBA] has been predicted at this location, as a result, a 4.27m (14ft.) high soundwall along the edge of pavement on the northbound I-405 has been considered and recommended.

**Commercial and Industrial Developments.** Within the project limits, there is a nursery located along southbound US-101 between Forbes and Hayvenhurst Avenues where frequent human use has been observed. No freeway traffic noise impacts have been predicted to occur at this commercial site.

**Noise Abatement Feasibility and Reasonable Cost Allowances.** The recommended soundwall considered for noise attenuation has been analyzed for feasibility based on the achievable noise reduction. The insertion loss for the considered soundwall is 6 decibels (dBA) and therefore acoustically feasible. The soundwall was further evaluated to estimate the reasonable cost-allowance required to determine the overall reasonableness.

For any soundwalls to be considered reasonable from a cost perspective, the total estimated cost of the soundwall must be equal to or below the total cost-allowance calculated for that wall. The cost calculations of the soundwall should include all items appropriate and necessary for the construction of the soundwall, such as traffic control, drainage modification, and retaining walls.

Preliminary information on the physical characteristics of potential abatement measures (e.g., physical location, length, and height of soundwalls) has been assessed. The final design must meet the requirements of Chapter 1100 of the Highway Design Manual (4). In particular, the minimum and maximum height requirements must be in accordance with Section 1102.3 of the manual.

Based on the studies performed so far, Caltrans intends to incorporate noise abatement measures in the form of soundwall with respective lengths and average heights of 4.27 m (14 ft). The following is a discussion on recommended noise abatement.

#### Northbound U.S.-101

Since no traffic noise impact has been identified, noise abatement has not been considered. Therefore, no soundwall has been recommended along the Northbound.

#### Southbound U.S.-101

The area represented by Site #S4 and #S6 were evaluated and determined to have traffic noise impact under Alternatives 1 & 2/3. However, increasing the existing soundwall height to maximum of 4.9 would not achieve a minimum noise reduction of 5 dBA in order for the proposed noise abatement measure to be considered feasible. Therefore, no soundwall was recommended.

#### Northbound I-405

Proposed soundwall SW1 (h=4.27m) was determined to provide 6 dBA noise attenuation for the areas represented by sites #N2 (Sherman Oaks Castle Palace – a miniature golf course). This proposed soundwall was previously recommended under a separate Caltrans project (four proposed soundwalls

along the N/B I-405 from 0.75km south of Ventura Boulevard to 0.2km south of Burbank Boulevard), however, due to a lack of funding the recommended soundwall was excluded from the project. The proposed soundwall SW1 would block the view from freeway of Sherman Oaks Castle Palace (Miniature golf course) located on the northeastern quadrant of I-405 and U.S.-101 Interchange. Therefore, the park owner's opinion and views (represented by Site #N2) must be considered before making a final noise abatement decision.

Southbound I-405

Since no traffic noise impact has been identified, noise abatement has not been considered. Therefore, no soundwall has been recommended.

However, calculations based on preliminary design data indicate that a noise barrier would reduce noise levels by 6 dBA for the Sherman Oaks Castle Palace at a total reasonable cost allowance of \$252,000. The final decision for construction of noise barriers will be made upon completion of the project design and the public involvement processes.

**Construction Noise.** During the construction phases of the project, noise from construction activities may intermittently dominate the noise environment in the immediate area of construction. Construction noise is regulated by Caltrans standard specifications, Section 7-1.011, Sound Control Requirements (7). These requirements state that noise levels generated during construction shall comply with applicable local, state, and federal regulations and that all equipment shall be fitted with adequate mufflers according to the manufacturers' specifications.

The table below summarizes typical noise levels produced by construction equipment commonly used on roadway construction projects. As indicated, equipment involved in construction is expected to generate noise levels ranging from 70 to 90 dBA at a distance of 15 meters (50 feet). Noise produced by construction equipment would be reduced over distance at a rate of about 6 dBA per doubling of distance. No adverse noise impacts from construction are anticipated because construction would be conducted in accordance with Caltrans standard specifications and would be short-term, intermittent, and dominated by local traffic noise. Implementing the following measures would minimize temporary construction noise impacts:

- All equipment shall have sound-control devices no less effective than those provided on the original equipment. No equipment shall have an unmuffled exhaust.
- As directed by the Engineer, the contractor shall implement appropriate additional noise mitigation measures including, but not limited to, changing the location of stationary construction equipment, turning off idling equipment, rescheduling construction activity, notifying adjacent residents in advance of construction work, or installing acoustic barriers around stationary construction noise sources.

**Table 39. Construction Equipment Noise**

Equipment	Maximum Noise Level, 15 m (50 ft) distance
Scrapers	89 dBA
Bulldozers	85 dBA
Heavy trucks	88 dBA
Backhoes	80 dBA
Pneumatic tools	85 dBA
Concrete pump	82 dBA

Source: Federal Transit Administration, 1995

**Concluding Comments about Noise.** Existing noise levels were recorded at 20 locations within the project limits. The existing ambient noise levels recorded were between 52 and 71 decibels (dBA). The future predicted worst hour noise levels for these locations were calculated using The Federal Highway Administration's Traffic Noise Model (FHWA TNM) Version 2.5.

The future noise levels after the completion of the project are expected to increase by 2 dBA. Several areas of land use categories B have been identified as being impacted by freeway noise. Noise attenuation measures in the form of soundwalls have been recommended for the impacted areas. A soundwall has been proposed with a height of 4.27m to provide noise reduction of 6 dBA to an amusement park (The Sherman Oak Castle Palace). The overall length of recommended soundwalls is approximately 185 m (606 ft). The Caltrans Noise Abatement Decision Report (NADR), completed May 16, 2008, is available for review upon request.

## 2.3 BIOLOGICAL ENVIRONMENT

The Biological Environment section of the IS/EA is broken into the following subsections:

- Natural Communities
- Wetlands and Other Waters
- Plant Species
- Animal Species
- Threatened and Endangered Species
- Invasive Species

### General Description of the Existing Biological and Physical Conditions

**Study Area.** The study area is surrounded by U.S.-101 on the south and west sides, I-405 on the east side, and the Sepulveda Dam on the north side. The Los Angeles River intersects the project area in the western portion and is completely concrete lined. North of the Sepulveda Dam is the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve, to the northwest is agricultural land, and heavy urbanization borders the east and south sides.

Current land use within the Sepulveda Basin include recreational activities, designation of wildlife habitat, agriculture as well as utility and military facilities. Recreational activities include golf courses, ball fields, tennis courts, model airplane fields, cricket fields and walking and bike paths. These activities are used by an estimated 365,000 people per year. Additionally, 225 acres have been set aside and dedicated for a wildlife area. This wildlife reserve provides wildlife habitat and recreational opportunities to residents along a network of paths within riparian, shrub, and herbaceous plant communities.

**Biological Conditions in the Biological Study Area (BSA).** The surveyed BSA for this project is made up of several natural community habitats as well as open space and disturbed areas. Habitats found directly within the project area include a riparian/wetland area that runs along the southeastern edge of the project, an oak woodland community located at the north side of Burbank Blvd., and an open, hilly area at the southern point of the project made up of primarily ruderal vegetation. At the northeastern portion of the project, the area is highly disturbed with non-native and ruderal vegetation being the primary vegetation type. The plant species that were identified in the project area are listed later in this chapter.

Due to this area being designated as a wildlife refuge, there is a high level of diversity of birds found within the project area as well as adjacent to it.

**Biological Study.** The basis for this biological discussion is the project Natural Environment Study Report (NESR), dated June 2007.

### 2.3.1 NATURAL COMMUNITIES

This section of the document discusses natural communities of concern. The focus of this section is on biological communities, not individual plant or animal species. This section also includes information on wildlife corridors and habitat fragmentation. Wildlife corridors are areas of habitat used by wildlife for seasonal or daily migration. Habitat fragmentation involves the potential for dividing sensitive habitat and thereby lessening its biological value.

A list of many of the birds occurring in the Sepulveda Basin Preserve was obtained from the San Fernando Valley Audubon Society and is listed later in this chapter. Many of these birds are found year round, while the remainder of the species use the Preserve as an important migratory corridor. Among the birds sighted is the state and federally listed least Bell's Vireo (*Vireo bellii pusillus*) and burrowing owl (*Athene cunicularia*), a state species of special concern. Species frequently seen in the project site are

the redtail hawk (*Buteo jamaicensis*), great egret (*Ardea alba*), Canada goose (*Branta canadensis*), and a variety of smaller finches, warblers and sparrows.

Critical Habitat, as defined under the Federal Endangered Species Act, is discussed in the Threatened and Endangered Species section 2.3.5. Wetlands and other waters are discussed in section 2.3.2.

## Affected Environment

**Natural Communities of Special Concern.** Components of a natural community of special concern listed in the California Natural Diversity Database, Coast Live Oak Riparian Forest, was observed within the project area.

Southern California Coast Live Oak Riparian Forest is a native plant community of concern that is listed in the Natural Diversity Database search for the project area. This plant community generally exists within the canyon bottoms in the area and throughout the Santa Monica Mountains. Loss of this habitat can be attributed to development pressures along this urban mountain range.

During several surveys of the area, (73) Coast live oak trees were found along the northern border of Burbank Blvd and within the project footprints of Rejected Alternatives 2 and 3, respectively. Larger communities of coastal live oaks were noted on the southern side of Burbank Blvd. between Burbank and the Sepulveda Dam.

## Environmental Consequences

**Project Impacts.** Impacts to coast live oak riparian forests, as a result of this project, would be limited to the area north of Burbank Blvd. Of the 73 trees located in that area, approximately 25 to 30 would have been directly impacted by Rejected Alternatives 2 and 3 and would have effectively caused the fragmentation of this small riparian forest. Impacts to coast live oaks from Preferred Alternative 1 will be limited to the area that runs along I-405 at the southeastern edge of the project area. The number of oaks affected is estimated to be less than 10 depending on the final design of this alternative.

**Cumulative Impacts.** Impacts from Rejected Alternatives 2 and 3 to the Coast Live Oak forest community would have been limited to the area north of Burbank Blvd. These impacts could have been fully mitigated as to not contribute to any cumulative impacts to the overall Coast Live Oak community.

## Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures

**Avoidance and Minimization Efforts.** The removal of coast live oak trees will be avoided to the greatest extent possible. However, should it be necessary to remove oak trees for the construction of the project, the number of trees removed will be minimized to the least amount necessary.

**Oak Woodland Replacement.** Oak woodlands are an important biological resource in California that provide habitat for numerous wildlife species. These trees provide shelter and nesting sites for birds and mammals, basking sites for lizards, food source for numerous species, as well as a shade source for creeks and streams which influences water temperatures and hydrology patterns. Oaks also filter pollution, decrease erosion and create oxygen and remove carbon dioxide from the atmosphere.

California is losing its oak woodlands at an alarming rate to land development and conversion to agriculture. Since 1945 over one million acres of oak woodland has been lost in California. A 2001 estimate shows the 30,000 acres of oaks per year are lost statewide, compared to only 60,000 acres for an entire decade in the mid 1980's to mid 1990's. Southern oak woodlands once covered much of the foothills and plains of the Southern California ecoregion and the Los Angeles Basin and San Fernando Valley were once noted for their vast savannas of coast live oak, and valley oak. Today, more than 85

percent of coastal sage scrub communities, which include oak woodlands, have been lost to urban and agricultural development. The vast majority of oak savannas in the Southern California region have been destroyed.

Should the removal of oak trees be necessary due to the 405/101 Interchange Project the loss will be mitigated offset through replacement planting. Based on the total amount of oak trees impacted and available on-site locations, favorable areas within the right of way will be selected by the District Biologist and Landscape Architect. Any required replacement beyond the space available in the right of way will be planted off-site, in coordination with an agency or organization that has yet to be determined.

Senate concurrent Resolution No. 17-Relative to Oaks, adopted by the California legislature, requests that state agencies assess their impacts to oak woodlands containing blue, Engleman, valley or coast live oak species and to preserve and protect to the maximum extent feasible or provide replacement plantings when these species are removed. By offsetting the impacts to oak woodlands as described above, Caltrans will also conform to the spirit of Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 17.

## 2.3.2 WETLANDS AND OTHER WATERS

**General Regulatory Setting.** Wetlands and other waters are protected under a number of laws and regulations. At the federal level, the Clean Water Act (33 U.S.C. 1344) is the primary law regulating wetlands and waters. The Clean Water Act regulates the discharge of dredged or fill material into waters of the United States, including wetlands. Waters of the United States include navigable waters, interstate waters, territorial seas and other waters that may be used in interstate or foreign commerce. To classify wetlands for the purposes of the Clean Water Act, a three-parameter approach is used that includes the presence of hydrophytic (water-loving) vegetation, wetland hydrology, and hydric soils (soils subject to saturation/inundation). All three parameters must be present, under normal circumstances, for an area to be designated as a jurisdictional wetland under the Clean Water Act.

Section 404 of the Clean Water Act establishes a regulatory program that provides that no discharge of dredged or fill material can be permitted if a practicable alternative exists that is less damaging to the aquatic environment or if the nation's waters would be significantly degraded. The Section 404 permit program is run by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) with oversight by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

The Executive Order for the Protection of Wetlands (E.O. 11990) also regulates the activities of federal agencies with regard to wetlands. Essentially, this executive order states that a federal agency, such as the Federal Highway Administration, cannot undertake or provide assistance for new construction located in wetlands unless the head of the agency finds: 1) that there is no practicable alternative to the construction and 2) the proposed project includes all practicable measures to minimize harm.

At the state level, wetlands and waters are regulated primarily by the Department of Fish and Game (CDFG) and the Regional Water Quality Control Boards (RWQCB). In certain circumstances, the Coastal Commission (or Bay Conservation and Development Commission) may also be involved. Sections 1600-1607 of the Fish and Game Code require any agency that proposes a project that will substantially divert or obstruct the natural flow of or substantially change the bed or bank of a river, stream, or lake to notify CDFG before beginning construction. If DFG determines that the project may substantially and adversely affect fish or wildlife resources, a Lake or Streambed Alteration Agreement will be required. CDFG jurisdictional limits are usually defined by the tops of the stream or lake banks, or the outer edge of riparian vegetation, whichever is wider. Wetlands under jurisdiction of the USACE may or may not be included in the area covered by a Streambed Alteration Agreement obtained from the CDFG.

The Regional Water Quality Control Boards were established under the Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act to oversee water quality. The RWQCB also issues water quality certifications in compliance with Section 401 of the Clean Water Act. Please see the Water Quality section for additional details.

### Project-Specific Regulatory Requirements

**The Federal Clean Water Act and California Fish and Game Code 1602.** A Section 401 of the Clean Water Act Water Quality Certification from the California Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) may be required since proposed construction activities include two new bridges over the Los Angeles River. A Section 404 of the Clean Water Act permit from the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) will likely be needed since proposed construction activities are anticipated to result in the discharge of dredged or fill material into waters of the United States. A 1602 Streambed Alteration Agreement from the CDFG may be necessary since proposed construction activities are anticipated to divert, obstruct, or change the natural flow, bed, channel, or bank of any river, stream, or lake.

The proposed project is not located within the coastal zone, therefore, coordination with the California Coastal Commission will not be required.

**Federal Endangered Species Act Consultation Summary.** Due to the presence of least Bell's vireo, a Federally endangered species, informal consultation with Fish and Wildlife Service will be required for this

project. A request for a species list was received from the Fish and Wildlife Service on May 11, 2006. This request effectively started the informal consultation process. In an effort to have the most updated species information for this area, a second request for a species list was sent January 2008. A current list is being prepared for Caltrans, however, according to Steve Kirkland of FWS, no additional species have been included for this area. Informal consultation was completed with FWS as of June 9<sup>th</sup>, 2008. During the consultation process, Caltrans District biologist Maureen Doyle spoke with Steve Kirkland of FWS on April 18, 2008, May 19<sup>th</sup>, 2008 and again in June 2008 regarding the level of impacts to the least Bell's vireo in this area. Based on information from Mr. Kirkland and through identification of avoidance and minimization measures that will be utilized during the construction of this project, a "no effect" determination was reached by Caltrans. A letter was sent to the Ventura Office of the Fish and Wildlife Service on June 9, 2008 detailing how this determination was reached.

**California Endangered Species Act Consultation Summary.** The California Department of Fish and Game received an invitation to participate during the initial scoping of the project from May 22, 2006 through June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2006. Initial comments were received from DFG identifying their concerns with the now Rejected Alternatives 2 and 3. They did not have any comments or concerns with the Preferred Alternative 1. Additionally, due to the presence of least Bell's vireo, a State and Federally listed endangered species; coordination with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is required under the Federal Endangered Species Act (FESA). Compliance with FESA will satisfy the California Endangered Species Act (CESA) under Fish & Game Code Section 2080.1. Ongoing coordination with the Department of Fish and Game will continue throughout the permitting phase of the project which occurs during Caltrans' PS&E phase.

**Wetlands and Other Waters Coordination Summary.** Because the potential impacts of the proposed Alternatives fall within an area designated as a retention basin, and because those impacts are estimated to be greater than 0.5 acres, the Department believes that this project will fall within the jurisdiction of the Army Corps of Engineers and would require a Section 404 Permit and a Section 401 Water Quality Certification. Also, Army Corp regulation 33 USC 408 states that there shall be no temporary or permanent alteration, occupation or use of any public works including but not limited to levees, sea walls, bulkheads, jetties and dikes for any purpose without the permission of the Secretary of the Army. Under the terms of 33 USC 408, and proposed modification requires a determination by the Secretary that such proposed alteration or permanent occupation or use of a Federal project is not injurious to the public interest and will not impair the usefulness of such work. The Corps decision on any permit request would occur after the Section 408 determination but prior to determining whether any easement may be approved. The evaluation of a Section 404 application can and should proceed concurrently with the evaluation of other factors relevant to the final decision of the Corps. Coordination with the Department of Fish and Game is also anticipated per Fish and Game Code 1600.

**Wetlands Delineation and Field Review.** Caltrans is required to delineate wetlands, identify impacts and evaluate avoidance alternatives in the environmental phase of project development, which is to be performed upon selection of a preferred alternative and by the time the final environmental document is circulated. Executive Order 11990, "Protection of Wetlands," May 24, 1977, requires federal agencies to make a wetlands finding which determines whether or not there is a practicable alternative to construction located in wetlands, whether all practicable measures to minimize harm to the wetlands have been included in the federal action, taking into account all economic, environmental, and other pertinent factors that have a bearing on practicability. Caltrans is required to obtain a 404 permit prior to advertisement for construction. This law and Section 404 permit program of the Clean Water Act of 1977 play an important part in the preliminary engineering phase. Timing of the field review should be arranged usually in late winter, spring, or early summer to identify wetlands plant species.

**Agency Coordination.** The Department met with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers on June 19, 2007 to provide a project status update and presentation. The discussion ranged from the various project alternatives to the project's various design and environmental constraints. The Department also provided the Corps with the following project technical studies for their review and comment:

- Floodplain Study and Mitigation Proposals
- Natural Environment Study Report
- Bioacoustics Study
- Historic Properties Study Report
- A few days later, Caltrans submitted to the Corps the project's Traffic Noise Investigation Study.
- The Department received a letter from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers dated October 9, 2007.
- The Department replied to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' October 9, 2007 letter with a letter dated December 27, 2007.
- The Department was contacted by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers on January 9, 2008. The Corps indicated that they had misplaced the Floodplain Study and Mitigation Proposals presented to them on June 19, 2007 and proceeded to request an electronic copy via email. The Department provided the Corps with the requested electronic copy via email, same day.

## Affected Environment

The Department conducted a Wetland Delineation on May 08, 2008. The Wetland Delineation Report is included in the Appendices section of this EA/IS. This delineation provides the necessary information to the resources agencies, so that the 'No Net Loss Policy' may be accurately implemented. The completed report and determination will be subject to concurrence by USACOE which will occur during the 404 permitting process at the next phase of the project (Caltrans' PS&E Phase).

The project area (selected Alternative 1) is located immediately southeast of the Sepulveda Dam structure, and south of Burbank Boulevard. The connectors, from the southbound I-405 to the US-101 will span over spillway of the dam and channelized portion of the Los Angeles River (Waters of the U.S.). The Wetland Delineation determined that within the northeast corner of the project area, there currently exists both a State and Federal Wetland.

The CALTRANS project biologist Ms. Maureen Doyle spoke with Mr. Mark Cohen of the USACE Regulatory Division on February 26, 2008 regarding the appropriate permit to pursue pursuant to Section 404. Mr. Cohen indicated that it was too early to make any definite determination as to which level of Section 404 permit would be required. He indicated that there were "several things that needed to happen" before CALTRANS and the USACE Regulatory Division could discuss the appropriate level of 404 permit that would be needed, as well as, any associated mitigation.

Input from the USACE was an important factor in identifying Alternative 1 as the LEDPA, and why CALTRANS selected Alternative 1 as the Preferred Alternative, and the build alternative that will be pursued for implementation. The USACE made its position and sentiment clear; Alternative 1 is more prudent and less environmentally damaging than Alternatives 2 and 3. All correspondence with the Department and the USACE can be found within the Appendices section of this document.

The three parameters necessary for an area to be considered a federal jurisdictional wetland are hydric soils, hydrophytic vegetation, and hydrology. All three parameters must be met according to the Army Corps of Engineers Wetland Delineation Manual for the area to be designated a Federal Wetland. The Wetland Delineation determined that the impact area surveyed is a Federal Wetland as it meets all three wetland parameters. The Wetland Delineation also determined that the impact area surveyed is a State wetland since the area meets the hydrophytic vegetation parameter. The dominant vegetation within that indicated delineation area is primarily mature mulefat shrubs and perennial ryegrass. Furthermore, the area does appear to function as a wetland, and supports a diversity of bird and mammal species.

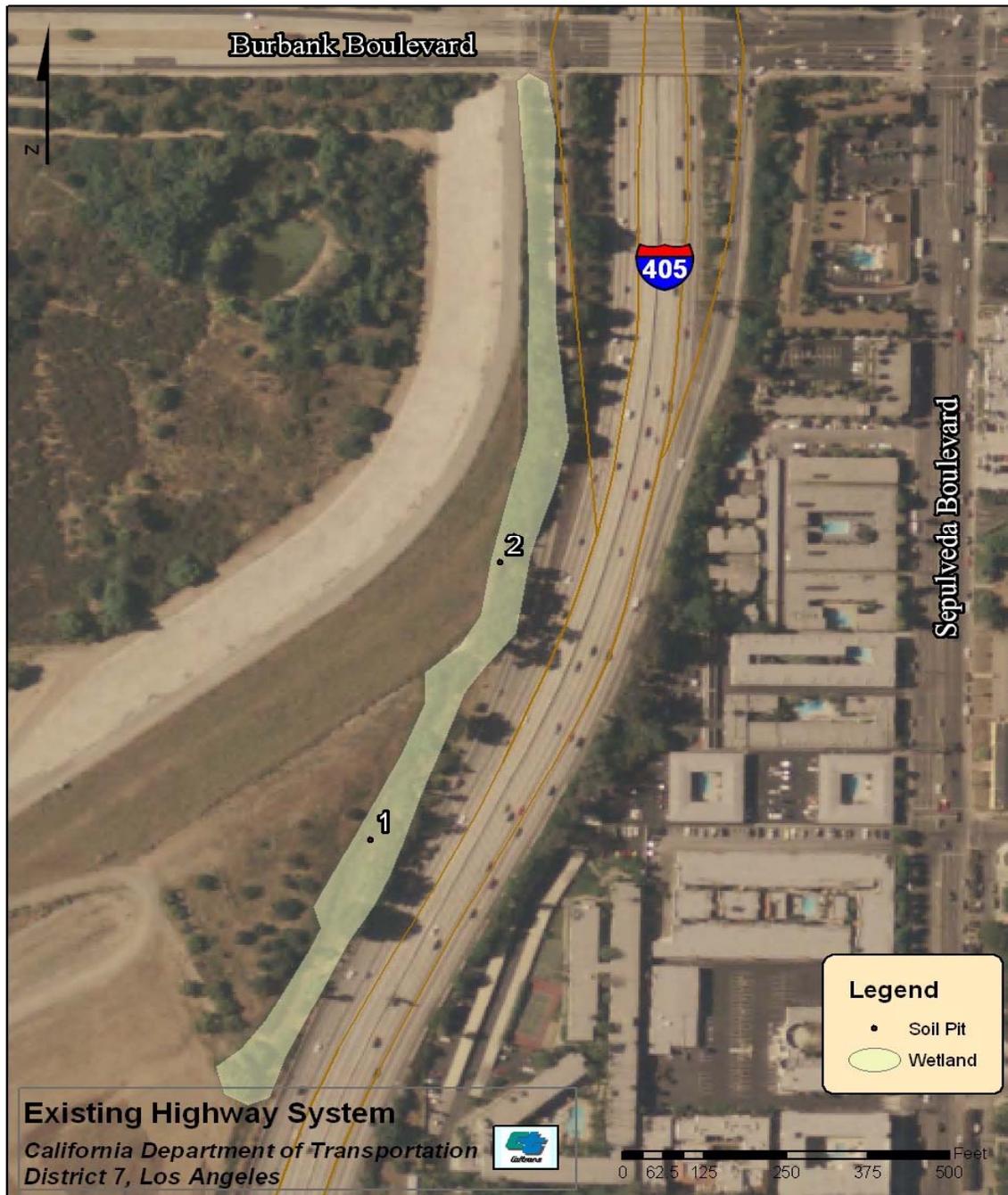
## Environmental Consequences

The Wetland Delineation determined that Preferred Alternative 1 (new connector from the southbound I-405 to the westbound US-101) would impact/destroy approximately 2.46 acres of State and 2.46 acres of Federal Wetlands, as denoted by Figure 30 ("polygon wetland area"). The dominant vegetation within that indicated delineation area is primarily mature mulefat shrubs and perennial ryegrass.

Army Corps of Engineer regulation 33 CFR 330 requires an Individual Permit for any affected acreage greater than .50 acres. Caltrans will therefore prepare the appropriate application and request an Individual Permit during the 404 permitting process at the next phase of this project.

A Wetland Delineation was not done for Alternatives 2 and 3 because the project footprint was located within the retention Basin itself. The retention area of the Basin is considered by the USACE to be waters of the US and therefore jurisdictional. Impacts to Waters of the US for Alternatives 2 and 3 were calculated based on the project footprint and encroachment into the basin. Impacts from Alternative 2 are estimated to be 39.25 acres. Impacts from Alternative 3 are estimated to be 38.56 acres.

Figure 30. Wetland Delineation – Soil Pit Locations in Project Study Area



Map created by Joel Bonilla/District 7 Division of Environmental Planning

**Determination of Least Environmentally Damaging Practicable Alternative (LEDPA).** In an analysis of key balancing factors, Caltrans has not only formally selected Alternative 1 as the “Preferred Alternative,” but also the Least Environmentally Damaging Practical Alternative, or LEDPA. The following table illustrates this analysis and provides a comparison to previously considered build alternatives.

**Table 40. Identification and Justification of the Least Environmentally Damaging Practicable Alternative (LEDPA)**

Balancing Factors	NO BUILD Alternative	Alternative 1	Alternative 2	Alternative 3	LEDPA: ALTERNATIVE 1
Impacts to Threatened and Endangered Species	No Effect	No Effect Determination (in coordination with Steve Kirkland of USFWS)	Likely to Adversely Effect	Likely to Adversely Effect	<b>Alternative 1 is the least biologically disruptive Build Alternative</b>
Acreage of State and Federal Wetland Destruction	0 acres	2.46 acres	2.46 acres	2.46 acres	<b>Alternative 1 poses no more impact to wetlands than the other Build Alternatives</b>
Encroachment Upon the Floodplain and Flood Control Basin	ZERO Encroachment	<b>Least</b> Encroachment of the Build Alternatives: L=1660ft W=42ft	Same as Alternative 1, plus an additional encroachment of L=2,850ft W=500ft	Same as Alternative 1, plus an additional encroachment of L=2,880ft W=560ft	<b>Alternative 1 is the least encroaching Build Alternative</b>
Project Purpose and Need	<b>FAILS</b> to meet the project Purpose and Need	<b>BEST</b> meets the project Purpose and Need	Meets the Purpose and Need, but fails to remove the weaving segment on the SB I-405	Meets the Purpose and Need, but fails to remove the weaving segment on the SB I-405	<b>Alternative 1 BEST meets the project Purpose and Need</b>
Biological Impacts	ZERO Biological Impacts	<b>Least</b> Biological Impacts of the Build Alternatives because it does not encroach upon the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve	Encroaches upon the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve: L=2,850ft W=500ft	Encroaches upon the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve: L=2,880ft W=560ft	<b>Alternative 1 is the least biologically disruptive Build Alternative</b>
Encroachment Upon the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve	ZERO Encroachment	<b>ZERO</b> Encroachment	An encroachment upon the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve of: L=2,850ft W=500ft	An encroachment upon the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve of L=2,880ft W=560ft	<b>Alternative 1 poses zero encroachment upon the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve</b>
Least Impact to Section 4(f) Resources	ZERO Impacts to Section 4(f) Resources	Impacts <b>ONE</b> Section 4(f) Resource: the Sepulveda Dam	Impacts TWO Section 4(f) Resources: the Sepulveda Dam and the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve	Impacts TWO Section 4(f) Resources: the Sepulveda Dam and the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve	<b>Alternative 1 poses the least impacts to Section 4(f) Resources, of the Build Alternatives</b>
Project Impact Footprint (right-of-way encroachment upon USACE land)	ZERO Impact Footprint	<b>Smallest</b> Impact Footprint of the Build Alternatives: L=1660ft W=42ft	Same as Alternative 1, plus an encroachment upon the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve of: L=2,850ft W=500ft	Same as Alternative 1, plus an encroachment upon the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve of: L=2,880ft W=560ft	<b>Alternative 1 has the smallest impact footprint, of the Build Alternatives</b>
Public Comment Record	Some support	<b>Received the most support</b>	By far the most opposition	By far the most opposition	<b>Alternative 1 received the most support</b>
Cost (Socioeconomic Considerations)	Not a factor: \$0	Not a factor: \$112,320,000	Not a factor: \$152,100,000	Not a factor: \$115,440,000	<b>Not a factor: Alternative 1 is the least expensive Build Alternative</b>

Concurrence with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, on this LEDPA decision, shall occur during the Section 404 permitting process, during the PS&E phase of this project.

### **Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures**

To mitigate for impacts to the small wetland area west, and adjacent to the shoulder of the I-405 freeway, Caltrans proposes to provide funding to the Bull Creek Restoration Project and Sepulveda Wetlands Park Project, with funding specified at roughly twenty percent of the total budget for each project. These proposals are, however, subject to change at any time, after further coordination of a final mitigation plan in cooperation with the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), the California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG), and the Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) during the permitting phase of the project.

Furthermore, the Department will continue the dialogue with Mr. Mark Cohen of the USACE Regulatory Division regarding the appropriate permit to pursue/apply for pursuant to Section 404 of the Clean Water Act. The Department will also apply for a Water Quality Certification with the Regional Water Quality Control Board pursuant to Section 401 of the Clean Water Act, as well as, a Streambed Alteration Agreement with the California Department of Fish and Game pursuant to Fish and Game Code 1602. These permits will be applied for after the completion of this NEPA/CEQA document, during the PS&E phase of the project. During this permitting process, the mitigation for the identified wetland impacts will be refined and likely increased as the Department coordinates/negotiates with the aforementioned agencies in order to obtain the aforementioned permits.

Previously rejected Alternatives C and D are avoidance alternatives that would have avoided the aforementioned wetland impacts. However, as previously discussed in this EA/IS, the Department rejected Alternatives C and D on the basis of not being reasonable, per the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), nor prudent per Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act. Alternative C would have required the full acquisition of 329 residential properties. Alternative D would have required the full acquisition of 2,422 residential properties. It can therefore be stated that the community disruption and environmental impacts posed by Alternatives C and D are of **extraordinary magnitude** when compared to **all** the previously-mentioned alternatives, and thus CALTRANS rejected Alternatives C and D on the basis of not being reasonable, nor prudent. Please refer to Chapter 1 of this EA/IS for the full project alternatives analysis.

### **Wetlands Only Practicable Finding**

E.O. 11990 mandates that an agency avoid, to the extent possible, the long and short term adverse impacts associated with the destruction or modification of wetlands, and to avoid direct or indirect support of new construction in wetlands wherever there is a practicable alternative. Table 41 shows why Preferred Alternative 1 is the Wetlands Only Practicable Alternative pursuant to E.O. 11990.

To mitigate wetland impacts:

Caltrans PROPOSES to provide funding to the Bull Creek Restoration Project at roughly twenty percent of the total budget. This proposal may be subject to change after coordination with USACE, CDFG, and RWQCB during permitting phase of the project.

Also, Caltrans PROPOSES to provide funding to the Sepulveda Wetlands Park Project at roughly twenty percent of the total budget. This proposal may also be subject to change after coordination with USACE, CDFG, and RWQCB during permitting phase of the project.

Based on the above considerations, it is determined that there is no practicable alternative to the proposed construction in wetlands and that the proposed action includes all practicable measures to minimize harm to wetlands that may result from such use. Furthermore, pursuant to E.O. 11990, Caltrans intends and commits to achieving a no net loss of wetlands.

**Table 41. Wetlands Only Practicable Finding Pursuant to E.O. 11990**

Balancing Factors	NO BUILD Alternative	Alternative 1	Alternative 2	Alternative 3	Only Practicable Alternative: ALTERNATIVE 1
Acreage of State and Federal Wetland Destruction	0 acres	2.46 acres	2.46 acres	2.46 acres	Alternative 1 poses no more impact to wetlands than the other Build Alternatives
Encroachment Upon the Floodplain and Flood Control Basin	ZERO Encroachment	<b>Least</b> Encroachment of the Build Alternatives: L=1660ft W=42ft	Same as Alternative 1, plus an additional encroachment of L=2,850ft W=500ft	Same as Alternative 1, plus an additional encroachment of L=2,880ft W=560ft	Alternative 1 is the least encroaching Build Alternative
Project Purpose and Need	<b>FAILS</b> to meet the project Purpose and Need	<b>BEST</b> meets the project Purpose and Need	Meets the Purpose and Need, but fails to remove the weaving segment on the SB I-405	Meets the Purpose and Need, but fails to remove the weaving segment on the SB I-405	Alternative 1 BEST meets the project Purpose and Need
Biological Impacts	ZERO Biological Impacts	<b>Least</b> Biological Impacts of the Build Alternatives because it does not encroach upon the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve	Encroaches upon the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve: L=2,850ft W=500ft	Encroaches upon the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve: L=2,880ft W=560ft	Alternative 1 is the least biologically disruptive Build Alternative
Encroachment Upon the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve	ZERO Encroachment	<b>ZERO</b> Encroachment	An encroachment upon the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve of: L=2,850ft W=500ft	An encroachment upon the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve of L=2,880ft W=560ft	Alternative 1 poses zero encroachment upon the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve
Least Impact to Section 4(f) Resources	ZERO Impacts to Section 4(f) Resources	Impacts <b>ONE</b> Section 4(f) Resource: the Sepulveda Dam	Impacts TWO Section 4(f) Resources: the Sepulveda Dam and the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve	Impacts TWO Section 4(f) Resources: the Sepulveda Dam and the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve	Alternative 1 poses the least impacts to Section 4(f) Resources, of the Build Alternatives
Project Impact Footprint (right-of-way encroachment upon USACE land)	ZERO Impact Footprint	<b>Smallest</b> Impact Footprint of the Build Alternatives: L=1660ft W=42ft	Same as Alternative 1, plus an encroachment upon the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve of: L=2,850ft W=500ft	Same as Alternative 1, plus an encroachment upon the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve of: L=2,880ft W=560ft	Alternative 1 has the smallest impact footprint, of the Build Alternatives
Public Comment Record	Some support	<b>Received the most support</b>	By far the most opposition	By far the most opposition	Alternative 1 received the most support
Cost (Socioeconomic Considerations)	Not a factor: \$0	Not a factor: \$112,320,000	Not a factor: \$152,100,000	Not a factor: \$115,440,000	Not a factor: Alternative 1 is the least expensive Build Alternative

### 2.3.3 PLANT SPECIES

**Regulatory Setting.** The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG) share regulatory responsibility for the protection of special-status plant species. “Special-status” species are selected for protection because they are rare and/or subject to population and habitat declines. Special status is a general term for species that are afforded varying levels of regulatory protection. The highest level of protection is given to threatened and endangered species; these are species that are formally listed or proposed for listing as endangered or threatened under the Federal Endangered Species Act (FESA) and/or the California Endangered Species Act (CESA). Also, please refer to the Threatened and Endangered Species section in this document for additional information regarding these species.

This section of the document discusses all the other special-status plant species, including CDFG fully protected species and species of special concern, USFWS candidate species, and non-listed California Native Plant Society (CNPS) rare and endangered plants.

The regulatory requirements for FESA can be found at United States Code 16 (USC), Section 1531, et. seq. See also 50 CFR Part 402. The regulatory requirements for CESA can be found at California Fish and Game Code, Section 2050, et. seq. Department projects are also subject to the Native Plant Protection Act, found at Fish and Game Code, Section 1900-1913, and the California Environmental Quality Act, Public Resources Code, Sections 2100-21177.

#### Affected Environment

**Special Status Plant Species.** Special status plant species that were listed in the CNDDDB, or in the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service species list, including Nevin’s barberry (*Berberis nevinii*) and the San Fernando Valley spine flower (*Chorizanthe parryi* var. *fernandina*), which are both associated with coastal scrub habitat, were studied and are discussed below. The proposed project is currently not expected to affect, or impact, these special status plant species.

**Discussion of Nevin’s Barberry.** Nevin’ barberry (*Berberis nevinii*) is a state and federally endangered herbaceous shrub of the Berberidaceae family. This species is historically found in chaparral, cismontane woodland, coastal scrub and riparian scrub habitats. As a result of the presence of coastal scrub habitat near the project location, one of the species habitat associations, Nevin’s barberry was studied in greater detail.

A record search of the CNDDDB did not list occurrences of this species in the project area and existing records were found to be located further north of the project. Additionally, general surveys of the area did not result in the observation of this species in the project footprint.

**Discussion of San Fernando Valley Spine Flower.** The San Fernando Valley spineflower (*Chorizanthe parryi* var. *fernandina*) is a state endangered and federal listing candidate species and is considered rare, threatened, or endangered in California and elsewhere by the California Native Plant Society (CNPS). This species is an annual herb from the buckwheat family associated with sandy or gravelly soils in coastal sage and alluvial fan sage scrub communities.

A record search of the CNDDDB did not list occurrences of this species in the project area and existing records were found to be located further north of the project. Additionally, general surveys of the area did not result in the observation of this species in the project footprint.

## Environmental Consequences

**Project Impacts (*Nevin's Barberry*).** Although coastal scrub habitat is present, the proposed project is not expected to affect this plant, due to its anticipated absence from the project area.

**Cumulative Effects (*Nevin's Barberry*).** Cumulative effects resulting from the proposed project area not anticipated for this species because the proposed project will not affect this species.

**Projects Impacts (*San Fernando Valley Spine Flower*).** Although coastal scrub habitat is present, the proposed project is not expected to affect this plant, due to its anticipated absence from the project area.

**Cumulative Effects (*San Fernando Valley Spine Flower*).** Cumulative effects resulting from the proposed project area not anticipated for this species because the proposed project will not affect this species.

## Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures

**Avoidance and Minimization Efforts (*Nevin's Barberry*).** Avoidance and minimization efforts are not proposed at this time due to the anticipated absence of this species from the project impact area. Future re-evaluation of the project should consider any new occurrence information that may be available for this species.

**Compensatory Mitigation (*Nevin's Barberry*).** Compensatory mitigation is not proposed for this species because the proposed project will not affect this species.

**Avoidance and Minimization Efforts (*San Fernando Valley Spine Flower*).** Avoidance and minimization efforts are not proposed at this time due to the anticipated absence of this species from the project impact area. Future re-evaluation of the project should consider any new occurrence information that may be available for this species.

**Compensatory Mitigation (*San Fernando Valley Spine Flower*).** Compensatory mitigation is not proposed for this species because the proposed project will not affect this species.

### 2.3.4 ANIMAL SPECIES

**Regulatory Setting.** Many state and federal laws regulate impacts to wildlife. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Fisheries and the California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG) are responsible for implementing these laws. This section discusses potential impacts and permit requirements associated with wildlife not listed or proposed for listing under the state or federal Endangered Species Act. Species listed or proposed for listing as threatened or endangered are discussed later in this chapter. All other special-status animal species are discussed here, including CDFG fully protected species and species of special concern, and USFWS or NOAA Fisheries candidate species.

Federal laws and regulations pertaining to wildlife include the following:

- National Environmental Policy Act
- Migratory Bird Treaty Act
- Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act

State laws and regulations pertaining to wildlife include the following:

- California Environmental Quality Act
- Sections 1600-1603 of the Fish and Game Code
- Section 4150 and 4152 of the Fish and Game Code

#### **Affected Environment**

During several surveys of the project area, signs of several species of mammals were found. These signs included scat, fur, tracks, remains and actual sightings. The following table identifies those species that were observed during these surveys. Also included in the table is a list of bird species obtained from the San Fernando Audubon Society. Many of these species are rarely in the area or are only present seasonally during migration and as such; this bird list is only intended to show the high diversity of species potentially found within the Preserve. Table 42 lists occurrences of wildlife species in the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve as obtained from the San Fernando Valley Audubon Society. Those species that are Federally and State Listed with a high probability of occurring within the project limits are discussed in the next section of this document.

#### **Environmental Consequences**

Although there may be temporary disruptions or impacts during the construction phase, there are not anticipated to be any permanent direct or indirect impacts to these species as a result of this project.

#### **Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures**

Standard avoidance and minimization practices will be followed as outlined in the Migratory Bird Treaty Act.

Table 42. Wildlife Species Identified in the Biological Study Area

Common Name	Scientific Name	Common Name	Scientific Name
<b>Mammal Species</b>	<b>Mammalia</b>	<b>Bird Species</b>	<b>Aves</b>
Virginia Opossum (remains)	<i>Didelphis virginiana</i>	Common Merganser	<i>Mergus merganser</i>
Coyote (scat)	<i>Canis latrans</i>	Red Breasted Merganser	<i>Mergus serrator</i>
Rabbit (remains)	<i>Silviagus sp</i>	Ruddy Duck	<i>Oxyura jamaicensis</i>
Ground Squirrel (observation)	<i>Spermophilus beecheyi</i>	Turkey Vulture	<i>Cathartes aura</i>
		Osprey	<i>Pandion haliaetus</i>
<b>Bird Species</b>	<b>Aves</b>	White Tailed Kite	<i>Elanus leucurus</i>
Red Throated Loon	<i>Gavia stellata</i>	Northern Harrier	<i>Circus cyaneus</i>
Common Loon	<i>Gavia immer</i>	Sharp Shinned Hawk	<i>Accipiter striatus</i>
Pied Billed Grebe	<i>Podilymbus podiceps</i>	Cooper's Hawk	<i>Accipiter cooperii</i>
Horned Grebe	<i>Podiceps auritus</i>	Red Shouldered Hawk	<i>Bueto lineatus</i>
Eared Grebe	<i>Podiceps nigricollis</i>	Swainsons Hawk	<i>Bueto swainsoni</i>
Western Grebe	<i>Aechmophorus occidentalis</i>	Red Tailed Hawk	<i>Bueto jamaicensis</i>
Clark's Grebe	<i>Aechmophorus clarkii</i>	Ferruginous Hawk	<i>Bueto regalis</i>
American White Pelican	<i>Pelecanus erythrorhynchos</i>	Golden Eagle	<i>Aquila chrysaetos</i>
Brown Pelican	<i>Pelecanus occidentalis</i>	Bald Eagle	<i>Haliaeetus leucocephalus</i>
Double Crested Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax auritus</i>	American Kestrel	<i>Falco sparverius</i>
American Bittern	<i>Botaurus lentiginosus</i>	Merlin	<i>Falco columbarius</i>
Least Bittern	<i>Ixobrychus exilis</i>	Peregrine Falcon	<i>Falco peregrinus</i>
Great Blue Heron	<i>Ardea herodias</i>	Prairie Falcon	<i>Falco mexicanus</i>
Great Egret	<i>Ardea alba</i>	California Quail	<i>Callipepla californica</i>
Snowy Egret	<i>Egretta thula</i>	Virginia Rail	<i>Rallus limicola</i>
Cattle Egret	<i>Bubulcus ibis</i>	Sora	<i>Porzana carolina</i>
Green Heron	<i>Butorides virescens</i>	Common Moorhen	<i>Gallinula chloropus</i>
Black Crowned Night Heron	<i>Nycticorax nycticorax</i>	American Coot	<i>Fulica americana</i>
White Faced Ibis	<i>Plegadis chihi</i>	Black Bellied Plover	<i>Pulvialis squatarola</i>
Swan	<i>Cygnus sp</i>	Semipalmated Plover	<i>Charadrius semipalmatus</i>
Gadwall	<i>Anas strepera</i>	Baird's Sandpiper	<i>Calidris bairdii</i>
Eurasian Wigeon	<i>Anas penelope</i>	Pectoral Sandpiper	<i>Calidris melanotos</i>
American Wigeon	<i>Anas americana</i>	Dunlin	<i>Calidris alpina</i>
Canvasback	<i>Aythya valisineria</i>	Long Billed Dowitcher	<i>Limnodromus scolopaceus</i>
Ring Necked Duck	<i>Aythya collaris</i>	Common Snipe	<i>Gallinago gallinago</i>
Greater Scaup	<i>Aythya marila</i>	Wilson's Phalarope	<i>Phalaropus tricolor</i>
Lesser Scaup	<i>Aythya affinis</i>	Bonapartes Gull	<i>Larus philadelphia</i>
Common Goldeneye	<i>Bucephala clangula</i>	Ring Billed Gull	<i>Larus delawarensis</i>
Buffelhead	<i>Bucephala albeola</i>	California Gull	<i>Larus californicus</i>
Hooded Merganser	<i>Lophodytes cucullatus</i>	Western Gull	<i>Larus occindentalis</i>
Greater White-fronted Goose	<i>Anser albifrons</i>	Killdeer	<i>Chandrius vociferus</i>
Snow Goose	<i>Chen caerulenscens</i>	Mountain Plover	<i>Chandrius montanus</i>
Ross' Goose	<i>Chen rossii</i>	Black Necked Stilt	<i>Himantopus mexicanus</i>
Canada Goose	<i>Branta canadensis</i>	American Avocet	<i>Recurvirostra americana</i>
Wood Duck	<i>Aix sponsa</i>	Greater Yellowlegs	<i>Tringa melanoluca</i>
Green Winged Teal	<i>Ansa crecca</i>	Lesser Yellowlegs	<i>Tringa flavipes</i>
Mallard	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>	Solitary Sandpiper	<i>Tringa solitaria</i>
Northern Pintail	<i>Anas acuta</i>	Spotted Sandpiper	<i>Actitius macularia</i>

Blue Winged Teal	<i>Anas discors</i>	Whimbrel	<i>Numenius phaeopus</i>
Cinnamon Teal	<i>Anas cyanoptera</i>	Western Sandpiper	<i>Calidris mauri</i>
Northern Shoveler	<i>Anas clypeata</i>	Least Sandpiper	<i>Calidris minutilla</i>
<b>Common Name</b>	<b>Scientific Name</b>	<b>Common Name</b>	<b>Scientific Name</b>
<b>Bird Species</b>	<b>Aves</b>	<b>Bird Species</b>	<b>Aves</b>
Caspian Tern	<i>Sterna caspia</i>	Bushtit	<i>Psaltriparus minimus</i>
Common Tern	<i>Sterna hirundo</i>	Red Breasted Nuthatch	<i>Sitta canadensis</i>
Forster's Tern	<i>Sterna forsteri</i>	Bewick's Wren	<i>Thyromanes bewickii</i>
Black Tern	<i>Chlidonias niger</i>	House Wren	<i>Troglodytes aedon</i>
Black Skimmer	<i>Rhynchops niger</i>	Marsh Wren	<i>Cistothorus palustris</i>
Rock Dove	<i>Columba livia</i>	Ruby Crowned Kinglet	<i>Regulus calendula</i>
Band Tailed Pigeon	<i>Columba fasciata</i>	Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	<i>Poliophtila caerulea</i>
Spotted Dove	<i>Streptopelia chinensis</i>	Western Bluebird	<i>Sialia mexicana</i>
Mourning Dove	<i>Zenaida macroura</i>	Mountain Bluebird	<i>Sialia currucoides</i>
Common Ground Dove	<i>Columbina passerina</i>	Hermit Thrush	<i>Catharus guttatus</i>
Barn Owl	<i>Tyto alba</i>	American Robin	<i>Turdus migratorius</i>
Great Horned Owl	<i>Bubo virginianus</i>	Varied Thrush	<i>Ixoreus naevius</i>
Burrowing Owl	<i>Athene cunicularia</i>	Wrentit	<i>Chamaea fasciata</i>
Short Eared Owl	<i>Asio flammeus</i>	Northern Mockingbird	<i>Mimus polyglottos</i>
Lesser Knighthawk	<i>Chordeiles acutipennis</i>	California Thrasher	<i>Toxostoma redivivum</i>
Vaux's Swift	<i>Chaetura vauxi</i>	American Pipit	<i>Anthus rubescens</i>
White Throated Swift	<i>Aeronautes saxatalis</i>	Cedar Waxwing	<i>Bombycilla cedrorum</i>
Black Chinned Hummingbird	<i>Archilocus alexandri</i>	Phainopepla	<i>Phainopepla nitens</i>
Costas Hummingbird	<i>Calypte costae</i>	Loggerhead Shrike	<i>Lanius ludovicianus</i>
Anna's Hummingbird	<i>Calypte anna</i>	European Starling	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>
Rufous Hummingbird	<i>Selasphorus rufus</i>	Least Bell's Vireo	<i>Vireo bellii</i>
Allen's Hummingbird	<i>Selasphorus sasin</i>	Cassin's Vireo	<i>Vireo cassinii</i>
Belted Kingfisher	<i>Ceryle alcyon</i>	Plumbeous Vireo	<i>Vireo plumbeus</i>
Acorn Woodpecker	<i>Melanerpes formicivorus</i>	Hutton's Vireo	<i>Vireo huttoni</i>
Nuttall's Woodpecker	<i>Picoides nuttallii</i>	Warbling Vireo	<i>Vireo gilvus</i>
Downy Woodpecker	<i>Picoides pubescens</i>	Tennessee Warbler	<i>Vermivora peregrina</i>
Northern Flicker	<i>Colaptes auratus</i>	Orange Crowned Warbler	<i>Vermivora celata</i>
Red Breasted Sapsucker	<i>Sphyrapicus ruber</i>	Lucy's Warbler	<i>Vermivora luciae</i>
Olive Sided Flycatcher	<i>Contopus cooperi</i>	Nashville Warbler	<i>Vermivora ruficapilla</i>
Western Wood Pewee	<i>Contopus sordidulus</i>	Yellow Warbler	<i>Dendrocia petechia</i>
Pacific Slope Flycatcher	<i>Empidonax difficilis</i>	Magnolia Warbler	<i>Dendrocia magnolia</i>
Black Phoebe	<i>Sayornis nigricans</i>	Yellow Rumped Warbler	<i>Dendrocia coronata</i>
Say's Phoebe	<i>Sayornis saya</i>	Black throated Gray	<i>Dendrocia nigrescens</i>
Ash Throated Flycatcher	<i>Myiarchus cinerascens</i>	Townsend's Warbler	<i>Dendrocia townsendi</i>
Tropical Kingbird	<i>Tyrannus melancholicus</i>	Hermit Warbler	<i>Dendrocia occidentalis</i>
Cassin's Kingbird	<i>Tyrannus vociferans</i>	Palm Warbler	<i>Dendrocia palorum</i>
Western Kingbird	<i>Tyrannus verticalis</i>	Black & White Warbler	<i>Mniotilta varia</i>
Eastern Kingbird	<i>Tyrannus tyrannus</i>	Common Yellowthroat	<i>Geothlypis trichas</i>
Horned Lark	<i>Eremophila alpestris</i>	Wilson's Warbler	<i>Wilsonia pusilla</i>
Tree Swallow	<i>Tachycineta bicolor</i>	Northern Waterthrush	<i>Seiurus noveboracensis</i>
Violet Green Swallow	<i>Tachycineta thalassina</i>	Yellow Breasted Chat	<i>Icteria virens</i>
N. Rough Winged Swallow	<i>Stelgidopteryx serripennis</i>	Summer Tanager	<i>Piranga rubra</i>
Cliff Swallow	<i>Hirundo pyrrhonota</i>	Western Tanager	<i>Pirange ludoviciana</i>

Barn Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>	Black Headed Grosbeak	<i>Pheucticus melanocephalus</i>
Western Scrub-jay	<i>Aphelocoma californica</i>	Blue Grosbeak	<i>Guiraca caerulea</i>
American Crow	<i>Corvus brachyrhynchos</i>	Lazuli Bunting	<i>Passerina amoena</i>
Common Raven	<i>Corvus corax</i>	Indigo Bunting	<i>Passerina cyanea</i>
Mountain Chickadee	<i>Parus gambeli</i>	Green Tailed Towhee	<i>Pipilo chlorurus</i>

### 2.3.5 THREATENED AND ENDANGERED SPECIES

**Regulatory Setting.** The primary federal law protecting threatened and endangered species is the Federal Endangered Species Act (FESA): 16 United States Code (USC), Section 1531, et seq. See also 50 CFR Part 402. This act and subsequent amendments provide for the conservation of endangered and threatened species and the ecosystems upon which they depend. Under Section 7 of this act, federal agencies, such as the Federal Highway Administration, are required to consult with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and the National Marine Fisheries Service (NOAA Fisheries) to ensure that they are not undertaking, funding, permitting or authorizing actions likely to jeopardize the continued existence of listed species or destroy or adversely modify designated critical habitat. Critical habitat is defined as geographic locations critical to the existence of a threatened or endangered species. The outcome of consultation under Section 7 is a Biological Opinion or an incidental take permit. Section 3 of FESA defines take as "harass, harm, pursue, hunt, shoot, wound, kill, trap, capture or collect or any attempt at such conduct."

California has enacted a similar law at the state level, the California Endangered Species Act (CESA), California Fish and Game Code, Section 2050, et seq. CESA emphasizes early consultation to avoid potential impacts to rare, endangered, and threatened species and to develop appropriate planning to offset project caused losses of listed species populations and their essential habitats. The California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG) is the agency responsible for implementing CESA. Section 2081 of the Fish and Game Code prohibits "take" of any species determined to be an endangered species or a threatened species. Take is defined in Section 86 of the Fish and Game Code as "hunt, pursue, catch, capture, or kill, or attempt to hunt, pursue, catch, capture, or kill." CESA allows for take incidental to otherwise lawful development projects; for these actions an incidental take permit is issued by CDFG. For projects requiring a Biological Opinion under Section 7 of the FESA, CDFG may also authorize impacts to CESA species by issuing a Consistency Determination under Section 2080.1 of the Fish and Game Code.

**Regional Federal and State Listed Species.** The following table lists the regional sensitive species that were identified using the California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDDB). Further evaluation of species that may have habitat present in the project area is discussed immediately below in the following section.

**Table 43. Sensitive Species - Regional Federal and State Listed**

Scientific Name	Common Name	Status	General Habitat Description	Habitat Present/Absent	Rationale
<i>Vireo bellii pusillus</i>	Least Bell's Vireo	FT, ST	(Nesting) Summer resident of Southern Ca. in low riparian in vicinity of water or in dry river beds below 2000 ft	P	Habitat associated with this species is not present within the project site. This species is known to be present adjacent to the impact area, but was not observed during general surveys.
<i>Athene cucularia</i>	Burrowing Owl	SSC	Subterranean nester, dependent upon burrowing mammals, most notably, the California ground squirrel	P	Habitat associated with this species may be present within the project limits. This species is historically known to be present in this area and during general surveys, signs of possible presence were found.
<i>Poliophtila californica</i>	Coastal California gnatcatcher	FT, SSC	Permanent resident of coastal sage scrub	A	The habitat within the project limits is not suitable for this species.
<i>Clemmys marmorata pallida</i>	Southwestern pond turtle	FSC, SSC	Permanent to nearly permanent water source, vegetation mats or mud banks	A	The habitat within the project limits is not suitable for this species.
<i>Phrynosoma coronatum blainvillei</i>	San Diego horned lizard	SSC	Coastal sage scrub, chaparral in arid areas; friable swallow sandy soils	A	The habitat within the project limits is not suitable for this species
<i>Berberis nevadensis</i>	Nevin's Barberry	FE, SE	Chaparral, cismontane woodlands, riparian and coastal scrub	A	The habitat within the project limits is not suitable for this species.
<i>Dudleya multicaulis</i>	Many-stemmed dudleya	CNPS 1B	Heavy often clayey soils or grassy slopes	A	The habitat within the project limits is not suitable for this species.
<i>Malacothamnus davidsonii</i>	Davidson's bush mallow	FSC, CNPS 1B	Coastal scrub, riparian woodland, chaparral; sandy washes	A	The habitat within the project limits is not suitable for this species.
<i>Chorizanthe parryi Fernandina</i>	San Fernando valley spineflower	FC, SE	Coastal scrub, sandy soils	A	The habitat within the project limits is not suitable for this species, possibly extirpated
<i>Calochortus plummerae</i>	Plummer's mariposa lily	CNPS 1B	Rocky sandy areas, usually granitic or alluvial material, many habitat types	A	The habitat within the project limits is not suitable for this species.

Absent [A] means no further work needed. Present [P] means general habitat is present and species may be present. Status: Federal Endangered (FE); Federal Threatened (FT); Federal Proposed (FP, FPE, FPT); Federal Candidate (FC), Federal Species of Concern (FSC); State Endangered (SE); State Threatened (ST); Fully Protected (FP); State Rare (SR); State Species of Special Concern (SSC); California Native Plant Society (CNPS)

## Regional Federal and State Listed Species with Highest Probability of Occurrence

Special status animal species that were listed in the CNDDDB or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service species list, including Least Bell's Vireo, were further studied to determine the potential impacts that the project may have and are discussed below. The proposed project is currently not expected to affect these special status animal species.

Prior Discussion of Bald eagle and Swainson's hawk have been deleted from this section. The Bald eagle, a State Endangered species, has been delisted from the Federally Threatened and Endangered Species List as of August 08, 2007 and is not part of the current CNDDDB list of species likely to occur in this area. Swainson's hawk, a State Threatened species, is also not included as part of the current CNDDDB list of species likely to occur in this area. No impacts to either of these species are anticipated due to this project.

**Discussion of Least Bell's Vireo.** Least Bell's Vireo (*Vireo bellii pusilla*) is a state and federally listed endangered species. These birds are small, measuring only 4.5 to 5.0 inches long (11.5-12.5 cm). They have short rounded wings, short straight bills and have a faint white eye ring. The feathers of this vireo are mostly gray above and pale below. Least Bell's Vireo's are typically found in the dense deciduous shrubs along riparian habitats as well as in ravines and along forest edges. The range of the least Bell's Vireo is along the southern coastal areas of California as well as parts of Colorado, Indiana and Mexico. This species is threatened by cowbird parasitism, habitat degradation and increases in agricultural land use.

A search of the CNDDDB revealed a 2004 occurrence of this species north of the project location in an area adjacent to Woodley Park. Also, a 2007 study done for the US Army Corps of Engineers identified 5 nesting pairs of LVB along the Los Angeles River and a single pair and two transient LBV within the Oak Woodland area located northwest of the dam structure. During several field surveys of the project area, however, this species was not observed. Additionally, the dense deciduous shrubs favored by this bird are not found within the project footprint for the Selected Alternative 1. No Federally identified Critical Habitat is present in or adjacent to the project location.

**Discussion of Burrowing Owl.** The burrowing owl (*Athene cunicularia*) is a California species of special concern. This owl is one of the smallest owls ranging in size from 7 – 10 in (19-25 cm) in height and is brown with spots on back and bars on the front. The burrowing owl is a ground nesting bird of prairie and grassland habitats, typically using the burrows of ground squirrels. Suitable habitat for this bird includes low ground cover and adequate roosting sites. Burrowing owls are found in most states, but over the last several decades has shown a rapid decline in numbers in California. This decline in numbers is due primarily to an increase in urbanization and development, resulting in a the loss of quality habitat.

A search of the CNDDDB did not reveal any historic occurrences of this species. However the San Fernando Audubon Society lists the burrowing owl as having a historic presence within the Sepulveda Basin Preserve. A preliminary, non-protocol, survey of the area did reveal suitable habitat at the very southern point of the project area, however the presence of owls could not be determined. Additional protocol surveys will need to be done to definitively determine the presence or absence of burrowing owls within the project site.

## Environmental Consequences

**Project Impacts (Least Bell's Vireo).** Due to the lack of suitable habitat found within the project site as well as directly adjacent to the project area, it is not likely that the proposed alternatives would have a direct impact on this species.

A study was recently done by Caltrans to analyze highway noise and anticipated impacts to the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife. This study showed that there would be a temporary, but substantial increase in

noise levels during the construction phase of this project associated with pile driving and other high noise signature equipment, but a small increase overall from an increase in traffic noise, post construction. Using information from this study and applying the interim guidelines developed in a recently published report on the effects of highway noise on birds, it is anticipated that there would be little to no effect, direct or indirect, on any least Bell's vireo associated with this project.

**Cumulative Effects (Least Bell's Vireo).** Because direct impacts to this species are anticipated to be very minimal or none at all, there will be no cumulative effects.

**Project Impacts (Burrowing Owl).** The potential burrowing owl habitat is located directly in the path of two of the proposed alternatives at the southern most corner of the project area. Either of these alternatives, if chosen, may impact this habitat.

**Cumulative Effects (Burrowing Owl).** Although there may be potential impacts to the habitat of this species, mitigation can be done to minimize any cumulative impacts.

### **Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures**

**Avoidance and Minimization Efforts (Least Bell's Vireo).** Standard avoidance and minimization practices will be followed as outlined in the Migratory Bird Treaty Act.

**Compensatory Mitigation (Least Bell's Vireo).** Presence of least Bell's vireo was not determined within the project site, and is not anticipated to occur within the project limits. Prior to any construction activities, a protocol level survey will be done to verify absence of this species. However, if pre-construction surveys reveal least Bell's vireos within the project limits, Caltrans will enter into Formal Section 7 Consultation with the Fish and Wildlife Service and obtain concurrence from the Department of Fish and Game in accordance with DFG Code 2080.1.

**Avoidance and Minimization Efforts (Burrowing Owl).** If burrowing owls are determined to be present within the project area, passive translocation will be employed during the non-breeding season to encourage nesting in an area away from the project location. This passive translocation technique will be used in accordance to the guidelines outlined by the Department of Fish and Game.

**Compensatory Mitigation (Burrowing Owl).** Presence of burrowing owl was not determined within the project site, therefore compensatory mitigation will not be required. However, if owls are found prior to construction, mitigation will be required according to Department of Fish and Game guidelines.

### **2.3.6 INVASIVE SPECIES**

**Regulatory Setting.** On February 3, 1999, President Clinton signed Executive Order 13112 requiring federal agencies to combat the introduction or spread of invasive species in the United States. The order defines invasive species as "any species, including its seeds, eggs, spores, or other biological material capable of propagating that species, that is not native to that ecosystem whose introduction does or is likely to cause economic or environmental harm or harm to human health." Federal Highway Administration guidance issued August 10, 1999 directs the use of the state's noxious weed list to define the invasive plants that must be considered as part of the NEPA analysis for a proposed project.

**Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures.** In compliance with the Executive Order on Invasive Species, E.O. 13112, and subsequent guidance from the Federal Highway Administration, the landscaping and erosion control included in the project will not use species listed as noxious weeds. In areas of particular sensitivity, extra precautions will be taken if invasive species are found in or adjacent to the construction areas. These include the inspection and cleaning of construction equipment and eradication strategies to be implemented should an invasion occur.

### **2.3.7 BIOACOUSTICS AND HIGHWAY NOISE IMPACTS TO THE BIOLOGICAL ENVIRONMENT**

**Noise Study.** In November 2006, a noise study was conducted to determine the effects that the Route 405 / 101 connector project may have upon the wildlife inhabitants in the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve Area. This report addresses increase in traffic noise resulting from the project as well as noise during construction that may cause an adverse impact on the wildlife in the area.

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and California Department of Transportation policies do not address noise impact on wildlife species. However, because the United States Endangered Species Act prohibits activities that would adversely affect habitats and the survival of endangered species, this study was done to specifically assess impacts to the Wildlife Reserve that may occur from this project.

All relevant studies were done to determine existing and future noise and sound levels before, during and after construction of the project alternatives. A field noise investigation was conducted to determine existing noise levels and gather information to develop and calibrate the noise model that was used for predicting future traffic and construction noise levels. Existing noise levels were recorded at several locations throughout the wildlife reserve. The analysis locations are acoustically representative of the area of concern. The existing ambient noise levels recorded ranged from 49 to 60 decibels (dBA). Additionally, sound level readings, pertinent field data, and construction equipment noise emission characteristics were used to develop the noise model for the area. The noise model was then used to predict expected traffic noise levels as well as equipment noise during construction activities.

The traffic and construction noise analysis indicated that construction activities, particularly the use of impact pile drivers, would substantially increase noise levels in the area. These increases, from 19 to 30 dBA, would be intermittent and temporary. Construction noise abatement measures can effectively reduce the noise impact during construction activities, and can consist of noise-suppressing sound blankets, use of alternative equipment, and ensuring that all the equipment is in good working order.

Based on the studies so far conducted, it has been determined that the ambient noise levels in the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve will increase 1 to 4 dBA due to traffic noise from the new freeway connector and on/off ramps and may experience temporary but substantial noise increase during the construction phase of the project. The levels of construction noise will depend on the type of equipment being used and can reach very high levels when equipment with high noise signatures are used. Construction noise abatement measures will be necessary if such equipment is used in order to reduce expected construction noise levels in the area. The final decision to implement construction noise abatement will be made upon completion of the project design and requirements based on the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) guidelines and the Endangered Species Act.

**Bioacoustics Report.** In September, 2007, a report was published which reviews literature and provides input on several important issues with regard to the effects of highway construction and traffic noise on birds. This report was prepared for the Department of Transportation by Robert J. Dooling and Arthur N. Popper of Environmental BioAcoustics LLC.

Three classes of potential effects on birds from highway noise were identified and include: (1) stress, resulting in physiological and behavioral effects; (2) damage to avian hearing from acoustic over-exposure; and (3) masking of important bioacoustic and communication signals.

Also identified within the report are suggested interim compliance guidelines and a science-based approach, using human and avian data from both the laboratory and the field, to address potential impacts of noise on bird species. The following is an excerpt summarizing the findings of this reports as well as a summary of the suggested interim guidance:

- Stress and physiological effects
- There are no studies definitively identifying traffic noise as the critical variable affect to bird behavior near roadways and highways.
- There are well documented adverse effects of sustained traffic noise on humans including stress, physiological and sleep disturbances, and changes in feelings of well being.
- Traffic/construction noise below the bird's masked threshold has no effect
- Acoustic over-exposure
  - Birds are more resistant to both temporary and permanent hearing loss or to hearing damage from acoustic overexposure than are humans and other animals that have been tested.
  - Birds can regenerate the sensory hair cells of the inner ear, thereby providing a mechanism for recovering from intense acoustic over-exposure, a capability not found in mammals.
  - The studies of acoustic over-exposure in birds have considerable relevance for estimating hearing damage effects of highway noise, non-continuous construction noise, and for impulsive construction noise such as pile drivers.
- Masking
  - Continuous noise of sufficient intensity in the frequency region of bird hearing can have a detrimental effect on the detection and discrimination of vocal signals by birds.
  - Noise in the spectral region of the vocalizations has a greater masking affect than noises outside this range. Thus, traffic noise will cause less masking than other environmental noises of equal overall level but that contain energy in a higher spectral region around 2-4 kHz (eg., insects, vocalizations of other birds).
  - Generally, human auditory thresholds in quiet and in noise are better than that of the typical bird which leads to the following:
    - The typical human will be able to hear single vehicle, traffic noise, and construction noise at a much greater distance from the roadway than will the typical bird, thereby providing a valuable, common sense, risk criterion.
    - The typical human will be able to hear a bird vocalizing in a noisy environment at twice the distance that a typical bird can.
  - From our knowledge of (i) bird hearing in quiet and noise, (ii) the Inverse Square Law, (iii) Excess Attenuation in a particular environment, and (iv) species-specific acoustic characteristics of vocalizations, reasonable predictions can be made about possible maximum communication distances between two birds in continuous noise.
  - The amount of masking of vocalizations can be predicted from the peak in the total power spectrum of the vocalization and the bird's critical ratio (i.e., signal-to-noise ratio) at that frequency of peak energy.
  - Birds, like humans and other animals, employ a range of short term behavioral strategies, or adaptations, for communicating in noise resulting in a doubling to quadrupling of the efficiency of hearing in noise. (Dooling and Popper, 2007)

**Interim Guidelines for Determining Effects.** Based on laboratory data, this report recommends several guidelines – two dealing with hearing damage and threshold shift, on dealing with masking, and a fourth dealing the stress and annoyance. These guidelines are: (1) Noise levels less than 110 dBA continuous

are extremely unlikely to cause hearing damage or permanent threshold shift in birds. (2) Continuous noise levels below 93 dBA are unlikely to cause even temporary threshold shifts in birds. This value, based solely on bird studies, is in harmony with much of the human literature. (3) At further distances from the highway, once the level of highway noise falls below the ambient noise level (particularly in the region of 2-4 kHz), there is little or no additional masking of communication signals beyond what already occurs from natural ambient noise. (4) In the absence of empirical data from birds, levels of highway noise known to annoy humans provide a useful interim guideline for the potential to cause physiological stress and behavioral disturbance in birds.

Two common sense guidelines also arise from review of the data on masking. First, the typical human listener can hear highway noise at distances 2-4 times greater than can the typical bird. It follows that highway noise from either traffic or construction activity that is just barely audible to humans at any given distance, almost certainly cannot be heard by birds at the same distance. Second, the converse is also true, if a human listener can barely hear a bird singing against a background of highway noise, masking data suggest that another bird would have to be half again as close to that singing bird in order to hear it (Dooling and Popper, 2007).

**Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures.** The traffic and construction noise analysis indicated that construction activities, particularly the use of impact pile drivers, may significantly increase noise levels in the area. Construction noise abatement measures can effectively reduce the noise impact during construction. The abatement measures will consist of noise-suppressing sound blankets, use of alternative equipment, and ensuring that all the equipment is in good working order.

## 2.4 CONSTRUCTION IMPACTS

**Traffic Impacts Related to Construction Activities.** It is expected that detailed construction staging plans will be completed for the project, and that a detailed analysis of how traffic will be impacted during the construction phase of the Preferred Alternative will be provided by Caltrans once these plans are available. The purpose of this section is to provide an overview or discussion of the expected traffic impacts related to construction activities. Similar projects have been constructed along Interstate 405 and other freeways within the Los Angeles metropolitan area in the recent past, and it is believed that this project will have similar impacts.

Construction of the planned improvements will probably require the narrowing of traffic lanes and a loss of shoulder areas for a prolonged period, thereby reducing the effective capacity of the freeway segments and/or ramps where construction is taking place. This can result in overall traffic delay increases by as much as 10 percent or more during peak traffic periods. The impact on traffic delays is particularly significant when construction starts, due to spectator slowing and the need for the average driver to adjust to changes in the roadway. However, within one-to-two weeks after construction starts, regular commuters usually become accustomed to driving through a construction zone and the amount of traffic delays caused by construction decreases accordingly. The following table details preliminary lane closure plans for the Preferred Alternative.

**Table 44. Preliminary Lane Closure Plans During Construction**

	Duration	Segment	Lane Number	Work Description
Alternative 1				
Stage 1	One weekend	Northbound US-101	6	Tie-in southbound I-405 connector to Northbound US-101.
Stage 2A	3-4 months	Southbound I-405	4	Tie-in southbound I-405 to US-101 northbound/southbound connectors.
Stage 2B	1-2 months	Southbound I-405 on-ramp at Burbank Boulevard	On-ramp	Full on-ramp closure to tie-in southbound I-405 to US-101 connector and tie-in with the re-aligned on-ramp.
Stage 2C	One Weekend	Southbound I-405 to US-101 Connector	Connector	Tie-in southbound I-405 connector to existing southbound US-101 connector.
Stage 3A	1-2 months	Southbound I-405 on-ramp at Burbank Boulevard	On-ramp	Full on-ramp closure - tie-in to southbound I-405.
Stage 3B	One weekend	Southbound I-405	3	Southbound I-405 onramp tie-in to southbound I-405.

**Water Quality Impacts Related to Construction Activities.** Pursuant to the Clean Water Act (Section 402), Caltrans has obtained from the SWRCB a NPDES permit that regulates storm water discharges from Caltrans facilities. The permit requires Caltrans to maintain and implement an effective Storm Water Management Plan (SWMP) that identifies and describes the BMPs used to reduce or eliminate the storm water runoff discharge of pollutants to waters of drainage conveyances and waterways. The SWMP is the framework for developing and implementing guidance to meet permit requirements for Caltrans' storm water discharges.

With respect to storm water quality, avoidance and minimization are accomplished by implementation of approved BMPs, which are generally broken down into four categories: Pollution Prevention, Treatment, Construction, and Maintenance BMPs. Certain projects may require installation and maintenance of permanent controls to treat storm water. Selection and design of permanent project BMPs is primarily refined in the next phase of the project: the Project Specifications and Estimates phase.

During construction activities, Caltrans has a comprehensive program for preventing water pollution via the preparation and implementation of the aforementioned SWPPP and WPCP. Caltrans has also developed and obtained the SWRCB approval of numerous BMPs for preventing water pollution during construction. Caltrans construction BMPs, SWPPP, and WPCP also incorporate the requirements of the SWRCB NPDES permit. This is all implemented jointly by both Caltrans, and the contractor hired to construct the project, prior to construction.

**Potential for Exposure of Workers to Geologic/Soils Hazards During Construction.** There are currently no special considerations of provisions recommended as a result of this project and the geologic conditions in the area, although, workers are subject to implementation and practice of general safety practices within construction zones.

**Potential for Detrimental Hazardous Waste Impacts During Construction Activities.** The purpose of the ISA is to identify, to the extent feasible, hazardous and potential hazardous waste problems within and next to the right-of-way, and proposed project area. Based on the results of historical research, review of environmental databases, regulatory agency inquiries, and site reconnaissance, properties were evaluated and classified as High, Moderate, or Low with regard to the potential for detrimental impacts during construction activities for this project. Of the (84) properties that were evaluated, the following (5) properties of High or Moderate risk emerged, as presented in the following table.

**Table 45. Identified Properties of Concern**

Property Name/Address	Description of Site Operations/Primary Reasons for Risk Classification	Data Source	Risk Classification
<b>Segment A (US-101)</b>			
Fashion Square Car Wash/ 4625 Woodman Avenue (approximately 0.10 mile SE of the US-101 freeway)	Car Wash, with underground storage tanks - release to groundwater; status of "remedial action"	Reconnaissance, Database	Moderate
<b>Segment D (I-405)</b>			
Chevron-Texaco Van Nuys Terminal/15359 Oxnard Street/approximately 0.10 mile NE of the I-405 freeway	Petroleum bulk station, this facility was listed on the Leaking Underground Storage Tank (LUST), Resource Conservation Databases, as well as the Recovery Act Generator (RCRAGN) database maintained by the United State Environmental Protection Agency and the SPILLS database, maintained by the California Regional Water Quality Control Board	Reconnaissance, Database, and Historical Documentation	High
Chevron/5600 Sepulveda Boulevard/approximately 0.10 mile NE of I-405 freeway	Gasoline station that has experienced an unauthorized release of gasoline to the soil only, this facility is listed on the LUST database	Reconnaissance, Database	Moderate
Shell Service Station/5556 Sepulveda Boulevard/approximately 0.10 mile southeast from the I-405	Gasoline station that has experienced an unauthorized release of gasoline to the soil only, this facility is listed on the LUST database	Reconnaissance, Database	Moderate
<b>Segment E (I-405)</b>			
Unocal 76 Station/15410 Ventura Boulevard/approximately 0.10 mile NW from the I-405	Gasoline station that has experienced an unauthorized release of gasoline and is currently listed on the LUST database as undergoing "remedial action"	Reconnaissance, Database	Moderate

**Air Quality and Construction-Related Emissions.** Construction activities associated with the proposed project would be temporary and would last the duration of Project construction. The discussion below has concluded that Project construction would not create adverse pollutant emissions for any of the alternatives under consideration. Short-term impacts to air quality would occur during minor grading/trenching, new pavement construction and the re-striping phase. Additional sources of construction related emissions include:

- Exhaust emissions and potential odors from construction equipment used on the construction site as well as the vehicles used to transport materials to and from the site; and
- Exhaust emissions from the motor vehicles of the construction crew.

Project construction would result in temporary emissions CO, NO<sub>x</sub>, ROG, and PM<sub>10</sub>. Stationary or mobile powered on-site construction equipment includes trucks, tractors, signal boards, excavators, backhoes, concrete saws, crushing and/or processing equipment, graders, trenchers, pavers and other paving equipment. The amount of worker trips to the site is unknown at this time. However, given the high volume of traffic in this area, the addition of worker trips will be inconsequential. Based on the insignificant relative amount of daily work trips required for Project construction, construction worker trips are not anticipated to significantly contribute to or affect traffic flow on local roadways and are therefore not considered significant. During the demolition phase some asphalt concrete (AC) pavement and curbs and gutters would have to be removed.

In order to further minimize construction-related emissions, all construction vehicles and construction equipment would be required to be equipped with the state-mandated emission control devices pursuant to state emission regulations and standard construction practices. After construction of the Project is complete, all construction-related impacts would cease, thus resulting in a less than significant impact. Short-term construction PM<sub>10</sub> emissions would be further reduced with the implementation of required dust suppression measures outlined within SCAQMD Rule 403 presented in Section 5.5. Note that Caltrans Standard Specifications for construction (Section 10 and 18 [Dust Control] and Section 39-3.06 [Asphalt Concrete Plants]) must also be adhered to. Therefore, Project construction is not anticipated to violate State or Federal air quality standards or contribute to the existing air quality violation in the air basin.

Section 93.122(d)(2) of the EPA Transportation Conformity Rule requires that in PM<sub>10</sub> non-attainment and maintenance areas (for which the SIPs identify construction-related fugitive dust as a contributor to the area problem), the RTIP should conduct the construction-related fugitive PM<sub>10</sub> emission analysis. The 2003 PM<sub>10</sub> SIP/AQMP emissions budgets for SCAB include the construction and unpaved-road emissions. The 2006 RTIP PM<sub>10</sub> regional emissions analysis includes the construction and unpaved road emissions for conformity finding.

**Mitigation of PM<sub>10</sub> During Construction.** The approved 2003 Particulate Matter SIP contains provisions calling for mitigation of PM<sub>10</sub> emissions during construction. Pursuant § 93.117, the Department, the project sponsor, is required to stipulate to include, in its final plans, specification, and estimates, control measures that will limit the emission of PM<sub>10</sub> during construction. Such control plans must be contained in an applicable SIP.

The PM<sub>10</sub> emissions is a composite of geologic and aerosol variety. The prime concern during construction is to mitigate geologic PM<sub>10</sub> that occurs from earth movement such as grading. The agency who sponsored the PM<sub>10</sub> SIP is SCAQMD with concurrence from the California Air Resource Board. SCAQMD has established Rule 403 that addresses the mitigation PM<sub>10</sub> by reducing the ambient entrainment of fugitive dust and Rule 402 which requires that air pollutant emissions not be a nuisance off-site. Fugitive dust consists of solid particulate matters that becomes airborne due to human activity (i.e. construction) and is a subset of total suspended particulates. Likewise, PM<sub>10</sub> is a subset of total suspended particulates. The Handbook states that 50% of total particulate matter suspended comprise of PM<sub>10</sub>. Hence, in mitigating for fugitive dust, emissions of geologic PM<sub>10</sub> are reduced.

During construction of the proposed project, the property owner/development and its contractors shall be required to comply with regional rules, which shall assist in reducing short-term air pollutant emissions. SCAQMD Rule 402 requires that air pollutant emissions not be a nuisance off-site. SCAQMD Rule 403 requires that fugitive dust be controlled with the best available control measures so that the presence of such dust does not remain visible in the atmosphere beyond the property line of the emission source. Two options are presented in Rule 403: monitoring of particulate concentrations or active control. Monitoring involves a sampling network around the project with no additional control measures unless specified concentrations are exceeded. The active control option does not require any monitoring, but requires that a list of measures be implemented starting with the first day of construction.

Rule 403 requires that "No person conducting active operations without utilizing the applicable best available control measures included in Table 1 of this Rule to minimize Fugitive dust emissions from each fugitive dust source type within the active operation."

Rule 403 requires that “Large Projects” implement additional measures. A Large Project is defined as “any active operations on property which contains 50 or more acres of disturbed surface area; or any earth-moving operation with a daily earth-moving or throughput volume of 3,850 cubic meters (5,000 cubic yards) or more three times during the most recent 365 day period. Depending on the scheduling of grading of the project may be considered a Large Project under Rule 403. Therefore, the project will be required to implement the applicable actions specified in Table 2 of the Rule. As a Large Operation, the project would also be required to:

- Submit a fully executed Large Operation Notification (SCAQMD Form 403N) to the SCAQMD Executive Officer within 7 days of qualifying as a large operation;
- Include, as part of the notification, the name(s), address(es), and phone number(s) of the person(s) responsible for the submittal, and a description of the operation(s), including a map depicting the location of the site;
- Maintain daily records to document the specific dust control actions taken, maintain such records for a period of not less than three years; and make such records available to the Executive Officer upon request.
- Install and maintain project signage with project contact signage that meets the minimum standards of the Rule 403 Implementation Handbook, prior to initiating any earthmoving activities.
- Identify a dust control supervisor that is employed by or contracted with the property owner/developer, is on the site or available on-site within 30 minutes during working hours, has the authority to expeditiously employ sufficient dust mitigation measures to ensure compliance with all Rule requirements, and has completed the AQMD Fugitive Dust Control Class and has been issued a valid Certificate of Completion for the class.
- Notify the SCAQMD Executive Officer in writing within 30 days after the site no longer qualifies as a large operation.

Rule 403 also requires that the construction activities “shall not cause or allow  $PM_{10}$  levels exceed 50 micrograms per cubic meter when determined by simultaneous sampling, as the difference between upwind and down wind sample.” Large Projects that cannot meet this performance standard are required to implement the applicable actions specified in Table 3 of Rule 403. Rather than perform monitoring to determine conformance with the performance standard, which will not reduce  $PM_{10}$  emissions, the project shall implement all applicable measures presented in Rule 403 Table 3 regardless of conformance with the Rule 403 performance standard. This potentially results in a higher reduction of particulate emissions than if these measures were implemented only after being determined to be required by monitoring.

Further, Rule 403 requires that that the project shall not “allow track-out to extend 25 feet or more in cumulative length from the point of origin from an active operation.” All track-out from an active operation is required to be removed at the conclusion of each workday or evening shift. Any active operation with a disturbed surface area of five or more acres or with a daily import or export of 100 cubic yards or more of bulk materials must utilize at least one of the measures listed at each vehicle egress from the site to a paved public road. All measures applicable to the construction activities associated with the project should be implemented to the greatest extent feasible.

**Noise Impacts Related to Construction.** During the construction phases of the project, noise from construction activities may intermittently dominate the noise environment in the immediate area of construction. Construction noise is regulated by Caltrans standard specifications, Section 7-1.011, Sound Control Requirements (7). These requirements state that noise levels generated during construction shall comply with applicable local, state, and federal regulations and that all equipment shall be fitted with adequate mufflers according to the manufacturers’ specifications.

The table below summarizes typical noise levels produced by construction equipment commonly used on roadway construction projects. As indicated, equipment involved in construction is expected to generate noise levels ranging from 70 to 90 dBA at a distance of 15 meters (50 feet). Noise produced by construction equipment would be reduced over distance at a rate of about 6 dBA per doubling of distance. No adverse noise impacts from construction are anticipated because construction would be conducted in

accordance with Caltrans standard specifications and would be short-term, intermittent, and dominated by local traffic noise. Implementing the following measures would minimize temporary construction noise impacts:

- All equipment shall have sound-control devices no less effective than those provided on the original equipment. No equipment shall have an unmuffled exhaust.
- As directed by the Engineer, the contractor shall implement appropriate additional noise mitigation measures including, but not limited to, changing the location of stationary construction equipment, turning off idling equipment, rescheduling construction activity, notifying adjacent residents in advance of construction work, or installing acoustic barriers around stationary construction noise sources.

**Table 46. Construction Equipment Noise**

Equipment	Maximum Noise Level, 15 m (50 ft) distance
Scrapers	89 dBA
Bulldozers	85 dBA
Heavy trucks	88 dBA
Backhoes	80 dBA
Pneumatic tools	85 dBA
Concrete pump	82 dBA

Source: Federal Transit Administration, 1995

**Maintenance of Access During Construction.** There will be short-term (temporary) access problems (pedestrian and vehicular) which will result from construction of the proposed project. Thus, these construction impacts are not considered permanent, and are therefore, below the level of significance as defined by CEQA. Funds have been allocated in order to provide a Traffic Management Plan (TMP), which will be developed and incorporated as part of the project design and prior to the onset of construction to minimize disruption to the existing traffic flow conditions.

A TMP typically serves to notify the motoring public and affected parties of construction dates, activities, and alternate routes (if proposed as part of a project), in an effort to reduce the volume of traffic through the area. The TMP may also provide motorists with alternate routes around any congestion-related delays. The TMP will consist of the following elements to minimize construction related traffic and access disruption:

- 1) Temporary traffic controls and signing shall be utilized
- 2) The implementation of traffic control procedures will be in conformance with the Caltrans Traffic Manual
- 3) A minimum of two through travel lanes in each direction will be provided
- 4) Public information center
- 5) Additional project signing
- 6) Advertising in local and regional newspapers
- 7) Staff attendance at local neighborhood and business association meetings to inform residents and merchants/landowners of project progress

Any bus stops located in the vicinity of the interchange will have to be relocated temporarily during construction since pedestrians will not be allowed in construction areas. The Department will order the resident construction engineer to post notifications prior to each bus stop relocation. The Department will coordinate its efforts with the Metropolitan Transit Authority (MTA), Los Angeles Department of

Transportation (LADOT), and all other appropriate transit agencies with operations in the area. A pedestrian traffic detouring plan shall be developed and implemented in order to ensure the safety of pedestrians, as well as to minimize pedestrian traffic disruption.

**Additional Public Safety Measures During Construction.** Whenever the Contractor's operations create a condition hazardous to traffic or to the public, the Contractor will furnish, erect, and maintain fences, temporary railing, barricades, lights, signs, and other devices, and take such other protective measures that are necessary to prevent accidents or damage or injury to the public.

- The contractor shall also furnish flaggers as are necessary to give adequate warning to traffic or to the public of any dangerous conditions to be encountered.
- Construction equipment shall enter and leave the highway via existing ramps and crossovers and shall move in the direction of public traffic. All movements of workmen and construction equipment on or across lanes open to public traffic shall be performed in a manner that will not endanger public traffic.
- Pedestrian openings through falsework shall be paved or provided with full width continuous wood walks and shall be kept clear. Pedestrians shall be protected from falling objects and curing water for concrete. All pedestrian openings through falsework shall be illuminated.
- No material or equipment shall be stored where it will interfere with the free and safe passage of public traffic, and at the end of each day's work and at other times when construction operations are suspended for any reason, the Contractor shall remove all equipment and other obstructions from that portion of the roadway open for use by public traffic.
- The Preferred Alternative would take approximately 3 years to construct. Caltrans would stage the work in order to minimize the impact to the traveling motorists as well as the non-motorists. Alternative 1 would not pose impacts to the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve or Woodley Park.
- Construction work on local streets would require taking (reducing) lanes during the day although access in each direction would still be maintained. At this time, it is not possible to gage how long this would remain. **Caltrans does not detour traffic into residential neighborhoods.**
- Construction often requires night work. CALTRANS would conform to all City of Los Angeles noise ordinances. At this time, it is not possible to gage how long night work would be required.
- Construction work would be done in stages (in pieces rather than all at once) to allow non-motorists access through the project site during construction. Pedestrian crossings would be maintained through the construction zone.

**Caltrans Public Awareness Campaign During Construction of the Preferred Alternative.** Prior to the start of construction, Caltrans and/or a Caltrans public relations consultant shall oversee and be responsible for implementation of the following elements of the project's Public Awareness Campaign:

- Coordinate and implement a pre-construction community meeting, as well as, other construction information meetings as necessary
- Create, operate, and maintain a 1-800 hotline that interested individuals can call to find out the latest construction information, as well as, to ask questions and file complaints
- Create and implement newspaper ads, radio ads, and press releases to announce new detours, road closures, work schedules, staging, and other pertinent construction information
- Mail construction notice flyers to all residences within a 1 to 2 mile radius of construction zones
- Caltrans will assign a resident engineer to oversee the construction of the project. The resident engineer will also handle any questions and complaints. Upon commencement of construction, the resident engineer's phone number will be made available.
- Work in a coordination and advisory role with the construction resident engineer and inspector to ensure that the contractor is implementing correct, accurate, clear, intuitive, and conscientious construction signage throughout the entire project area to ensure motorist and pedestrian safety and convenience

- Work in a coordination and advisory role with the construction resident engineer and inspector to ensure that the contractor immediately eradicates the following within the construction zones: i) homeless encampments ii) illegal dumping iii) graffiti iv) and other adverse quality of life issues that could negatively affect the community
- Work in a coordination and advisory role with the construction resident engineer and inspector to ensure that complaints are immediately addressed and the reported problems immediately eradicated.

## 2.5 CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

**Regulatory Setting.** Cumulative impacts are those that result from past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions, combined with the potential impacts of this project. A cumulative effect assessment looks at the collective impacts posed by individual land use plans and projects. Cumulative impacts can result from individually minor, but collectively substantial impacts taking place over a period of time.

Cumulative impacts to resources in the project area may result from residential, commercial, industrial, and highway development, as well as from agricultural development and the conversion to more intensive types of agricultural cultivation. These land use activities can degrade habitat and species diversity through consequences such as displacement and fragmentation of habitats and populations, alteration of hydrology, contamination, erosion, sedimentation, disruption of migration corridors, changes in water quality, and introduction or promotion of predators. They can also contribute to potential community impacts identified for the project, such as changes in community character, traffic patterns, housing availability, and employment.

CEQA Guidelines, Section 15130, describes when a cumulative impact analysis is warranted and what elements are necessary for an adequate discussion of cumulative impacts. The definition of cumulative impacts, under CEQA, can be found in Section 15355 of the CEQA Guidelines. A definition of cumulative impacts, under NEPA, can be found in 40 CFR, Section 1508.7 of the CEQ Regulations.

### Cumulative Impacts Related to Construction

Cumulative impacts have been identified that are related to TEMPORARY construction-related activities, and in regard to noise, dust, and access, amongst other activities. Caltrans has established minimization measures and Best Management Practices (BMPs) to ensure compliance with all established standards in the interests of maintaining a healthy environment in the surrounding project area. Caltrans also ensures that this project will not be constructed simultaneously with any other Caltrans project on the I-405 freeway, or simultaneously with any other City of Los Angeles or County of Los Angeles roadway improvement projects in the vicinity of the project area. Other Caltrans improvement projects on Interstate 405 are listed below, complete with construction dates, which may be preliminary, and subject to change at any time.

## **Other Caltrans Improvement Projects on Interstate-405**

### **EA 19590 | Southbound Interstate 405 Carpool Lane**

Mile Marker: 29.2/32.1

From I-10/I-405 Interchange to Waterford Street

Add auxiliary lane, add carpool lane

Construction: 4/2005-9/2008

### **EA 1667U | Southbound Interstate 405 Carpool Lane**

Mile Marker: 31.9/39.7

From Waterford Street to I-405/US-101 Interchange

Construct southbound carpool lane

Construction completed

### **EA 19100 | Northbound Interstate 405 Auxiliary Lane**

Mile Marker 37.0/39.0

Add auxiliary lane from Mulholland Drive

Construction completed

### **EA 20120 | Northbound Interstate 405 Gap Closure**

Mile Marker : 38.7/39.4

Carpool gap closure with structure

Construction: 3/2005-8/2008

### **EA 19130 | Northbound Interstate 405 to Southbound US Route 101 Widening**

Mile Marker: 39.0/39.4

Widen northbound I-405 to southbound US-101 connector

Construction completed

### **EA 19962 | Northbound Interstate 405 Carpool Lane**

Mile Marker: 38.8/40.1

Construct carpool lane from Greenleaf to Burbank Boulevard

Construction completed

### **EA 12030 | Northbound Interstate 405 Carpool Lane**

Mile Marker: 17.14

Construct carpool lane from National Boulevard to Greenleaf Street

Construction: 12/2008-4/2013

### **EA 1178U | Southbound & Northbound Interstate 405 Carpool Lane**

Mile Marker: 25.9/29.5

Construct carpool lane from Route 90 to Interstate 10

Construction: 10/2004-3/2010

To further avoid significant and cumulative construction-related impacts, Caltrans shall:

- Implement a Public Awareness Campaign for the I-405/US-101 Connector Improvement Project as previously mentioned in the construction impacts section. Caltrans and/or a Caltrans public relations consultant shall actively oversee and be responsible for implementation of this campaign.
- All city street improvements/mitigation as discussed in Section 2.1.5 (Traffic and Transportation/Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities) is expected to be completely within Caltrans and City of Los Angeles right-of-way, and therefore, right-of-way impacts to adjacent residential and business properties is not required, nor expected.
- All city street improvements/mitigation as discussed in Section 2.1.5 (Traffic and Transportation/Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities) would be properly phased and staged during implementation to ensure that the area does not experience significant, simultaneous, or cumulative construction-related impacts.
- Caltrans and the Los Angeles Department of Transportation (LADOT) shall continue to refine the city street improvements/mitigation as discussed in Section 2.1.5 (Traffic and Transportation/Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities), and shall jointly ensure that all associated impacts are avoided, minimized, and mitigated to the maximum practicable extent in any necessary environmental reevaluation/addendum, to avoid any significant cumulative and construction-related impacts.

## **Cumulative Impacts in Relation to Climate Change**

**Regulatory Setting.** While climate change has been a concern since at least 1988, as evidenced by the establishment of the United Nations and World Meteorological Organization's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), the efforts devoted to greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions reduction and climate change research and policy have increased dramatically in recent years. In 2002, with the passage of Assembly Bill 1493 (AB 1493), California launched an innovative and pro-active approach to dealing with GHG emissions and climate change at the state level. AB 1493 requires the Air Resources Board (ARB) to develop and implement regulations to reduce automobile and light truck GHG emissions; these regulations will apply to automobiles and light trucks beginning with the 2009 model year.

On June 1, 2005, Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger signed Executive Order S-3-05. The goal of this Executive Order is to reduce California's GHG emissions to: 1) 2000 levels by 2010, 2) 1990 levels by the 2020 and 3) 80% below the 1990 levels by the year 2050. In 2006, this goal was further reinforced with the passage of Assembly Bill 32 (AB 32), the Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006. AB 32 sets the same overall GHG emissions reduction goals while further mandating that ARB create a plan, which includes market mechanisms, and implement rules to achieve "real, quantifiable, cost-effective reductions of greenhouse gases." Executive Order S-20-06 further directs state agencies to begin implementing AB 32, including the recommendations made by the state's Climate Action Team.

Climate change and GHG reduction is also a concern at the federal level; however, at this time, no legislation or regulations have been enacted specifically addressing GHG emissions reductions and climate change.

**The Project Within the Context of Climate Change.** According to a recent white paper by the Association of Environmental Professionals, "an individual project does not generate enough greenhouse gas emissions to significantly influence global climate change. Global climate change is a cumulative impact; a project participates in this potential impact through its incremental contribution combined with the cumulative increase of all other sources of greenhouse gases.

The Department and its parent agency, the Business, Transportation, and Housing Agency, have taken an active role in addressing GHG emission reduction and climate change. Recognizing that 98 percent of California's GHG emissions are from the burning of fossil fuels and 40 percent of all human made GHG

emissions are from transportation, the Department has created and is implementing the Climate Action Program at Caltrans (December 2006).

One of the main strategies in the Department's Climate Action Program to reduce GHG emissions is to make California's transportation system more efficient. The highest levels of carbon dioxide from mobile sources, such as automobiles, occur at stop-and-go speeds (0-25 miles per hour) and speeds over 55 mph. Relieving congestion by enhancing operations and improving travel times in high congestion travel corridors will lead to an overall reduction in GHG emissions.

The Department recognizes the concern that carbon dioxide emissions raise for climate change. However, modeling and gauging the impacts associated with an increase in GHG emissions levels, including carbon dioxide, at the project level is not currently possible. No federal, state or regional regulatory agency has provided methodology or criteria for GHG emission and climate change impact analysis. Therefore, the Department is unable to provide a scientific or regulatory based conclusion regarding whether the project's contribution to climate change is cumulatively considerable.

The Department continues to be actively involved on the Governor's Climate Action Team as ARB works to implement AB 1493 and AB 32. As part of the Climate Action Program at Caltrans (December 2006), the Department is supporting efforts to reduce vehicle miles traveled by planning and implementing smart land use strategies: job/housing proximity, developing transit-oriented communities, and high density housing along transit corridors. The Department is working closely with local jurisdictions on planning activities; however, the Department does not have local land use planning authority. The Department is also supporting efforts to improve the energy efficiency of the transportation sector by increasing vehicle fuel economy in new cars, light and heavy-duty trucks. However it is important to note that the control of the fuel economy standards is held by the United States Environmental Protection Agency and ARB. Lastly, the use of alternative fuels is also being considered; the Department is participating in funding for alternative fuel research at the University of California Davis.

## CHAPTER 3 | COMMENTS AND COORDINATION

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Early and continuing coordination with the general public and appropriate public agencies is an essential part of the environmental process to determine the scope of environmental documentation, the level of analysis, potential impacts and mitigation measures and related environmental requirements. Agency consultation and public participation for this project have been accomplished through a variety of formal and informal methods, including: project development team meetings, interagency coordination meetings, Scoping meetings, etc. This chapter summarizes the results of the Department's efforts to fully identify, address and resolve project-related issues through early and continuing coordination.

### Scoping

**What is Scoping?** Scoping is a process designed to examine a proposed project early in the Environmental Impact Statement / Environmental Impact Report (EIS/EIR) analysis and review process. Scoping is intended to identify the range of issues raised by the proposed project and to outline feasible alternatives or mitigation measures to avoid potentially significant environmental effects. The Scoping process inherently stresses EARLY consultation with local agencies, responsible agencies, review agencies, trustee agencies, cooperating agencies, tribal governments, elected officials, interested/affected individuals, any other stakeholders, and any federal agency whose approval or funding of the proposed project will be required for completion of the project.

Scoping is considered an effective way to bring together and resolve the concerns of other agencies and individuals who may potentially be affected by the proposed project, as well as other interested persons, such as the general public, who might not be in accord with the action on environmental grounds.

Scoping Procedures for the Proposed Project. At this time, the environmental document for this project is an EA/IS, not an EIS/EIR. The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) regulations do not require an EA/IS to undergo formal Scoping procedures. However, consistent with Caltrans' early involvement philosophy, and in light of the project's vital importance, scoping procedures were undertaken.

The hope was to ensure that the concerns of ALL stakeholders were known early in the process and incorporated into the environmental analyses and CEQA/NEPA/Section 4(f) document. During the Scoping period, the Department solicited comments and input from all stakeholders and attempted to ensure their early involvement in the project development and environmental process.

Scoping was conducted from May 22, 2006 to June 30, 2006. Public Scoping Notification ads were placed in the following newspapers on the following dates:

Los Angeles Times: June 1, 2006

Daily News: June 1, 2006

La Opinion: June 1, 2006

Studio City Sun: June 8, 2006

Sherman Oaks Sun: June 8, 2006

Note: Publication dates varied because the Studio City Sun and the Sherman Oaks Sun do not publish daily.

Public Scoping Notification letters were mailed (postmarked May 30, 2006) to every individual, official, business, and agency listed in the project mailing list. To view the project mailing list, please refer to the Appendices section of this document. In addition to the Public Scoping Notification Letters, residents in a half-mile radius of the proposed project area were also mailed a Scoping Notification newsletter (postmarked May 30, 2006). All told, Public Scoping Notification letters and newsletters were sent to

approximately 1,126 property owners, residents, local businesses, pertinent public agencies and federal, state, and local elected officials.

Consistent with the aforementioned goals of Scoping, the aforementioned Scoping notification newspaper ad, letter, and newsletter solicited project participation from all stakeholders and encouraged the interested public to submit written comments, questions, and concerns to:

Mr. Ronald Kosinski  
Deputy District Director  
Division of Environmental Planning  
California Department of Transportation  
100 South Main Street, MS-16A  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

The Scoping Notification newspaper ad, letter, and newsletter also invited the public to the Public Scoping Meeting held on Wednesday, June 14, 2006, from 6:00 to 8:00 PM, at Valley Beth Shalom located at 15739 Ventura Boulevard, in the community of Encino, in the City of Los Angeles.

Please refer to the Appendices section of this document to view the said Scoping Notification newspaper ads, letters, and flyers, as well as, for copies of the formal written comments received from the public during the Scoping period. The Department's responses to those comments will be provided in the Appendices section of the final draft of this environmental document (after the public comment period and public hearing).

The following table provides a brief summary of Scoping Comments:

**Table 47. Summary of Scoping Comments**

SOUTHBOUND I-405 TO US-101 CONNECTORS IMPROVEMENT PROJECT (EA 199610)						
ENVIRONMENTAL SCOPING: JUNE 1 - JUNE 30, 2006						
NAME	NO-BUILD ALTERNATIVE	ALTERNATIVE 1	ALTERNATIVE 2	ALTERNATIVE 3	ALTERNATIVE 4	SUMMARY OF WRITTEN COMMENTS
<b>ELECTED OFFICIALS</b>						
Hon. Dennis P. Zine, LA City Council - Third District	No Specific Comment	No Specific Comment	No Specific Comment	No Specific Comment	Concerned	Supports right-of-way acquisition when absolutely necessary. Requests that any residential right-of-way acquisition is done in a very narrowly confined setting such that only those properties which are ABSOLUTELY
Hon. Sheila James Kuehl, State Senator - 23rd District	Opposed	Supports Conditionally	Opposed	Opposed	Opposed	Strongly supports the proposal to upgrade the connector. Wants Caltrans to further develop Alternative 1 and to find a way for Alternative 1 NOT lose access to the US-101 from Burbank Blvd. Opposed to any encroachment upon the wildlife refuge or the loss of homes (i.e. Alternatives 2, 3, 4).
Hon. Paul Koretz, State Assembly - 42nd District	Opposed	Supports Conditionally	Opposed	Opposed	Opposed	Wants Caltrans to further develop Alternative 1 and to find a way for Alternative 1 NOT lose access to the US-101 from Burbank Blvd.
Hon. Lloyd E. Levine, State Assembly - 40th District	Opposed	Supports Conditionally	Opposed	Opposed	Opposed	Wants Caltrans to further develop Alternative 1 and to find a way for Alternative 1 NOT lose access to the US-101 from Burbank Blvd. Wants to schedule a meeting with Caltrans in order to be fully briefed on the project. Once Alternative 1 is fully developed (i.e. no loss of access to US-101 from Burbank Blvd., he would ask his district to support it).
Hon. Howard L. Berman, US Member of Congress - 28th District	Opposed	No Specific Comment	Opposed	Opposed	Opposed	Supports "taking steps to alleviate traffic in the Valley", but not "at the expense of our environment nor our homeowners." Requests that Caltrans listen carefully to the community input, and not take actions that would destroy the "critically important" Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Refuge.
<b>ENVIRONMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS</b>						
Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Areas Steering Committee	No Specific Comment	No Specific Comment	Opposed	Opposed	No Specific Comment	Opposed to any encroachment upon the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve.
Los Angeles Audubon Society	Supports	Supports	Opposed	Opposed	No Specific Comment	Opposed to any encroachment upon the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve.
San Fernando Valley Audubon Society	Supports	Supports	Opposed	Opposed	Opposed	Opposed to any encroachment upon the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve.
Resource Conservation District of the Santa Monica Mountains	Supports	Supports	Opposed	Opposed	No Specific Comment	Opposed to any encroachment upon the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve.
California Native Plant Society	No Specific Comment	No Specific Comment	Opposed	Opposed	No Specific Comment	Opposed to any encroachment upon the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve.
<b>COMMUNITY BASED ORGANIZATIONS</b>						
Homeowners of Encino	Opposes	Supports	Supports	Supports	Opposed	Supports "limited system fixes" with "minimal negative impacts on residents."
Sherman Oaks Homeowners Association	Opposes	No Specific Comment	No Specific Comment	No Specific Comment	Opposed	Strongly opposes Alternative 4, encourages further study of the other four options.
Sherman Oaks Neighborhood Council - Parking, Traffic and Transportation Committee	No Specific Comment	No Specific Comment	No Specific Comment	No Specific Comment	No Specific Comment	Add to the e-mail list.
<b>RESOURCE AGENCIES</b>						
US Army Corps of Engineers	No Specific Comment	Concerned	Concerned	Concerned	Concerned	Indicated concerns regarding "problems associated with freeway construction and their use in sensitive areas," and potential adverse impacts to flood control, public recreation, and natural resources conservation.
State of California, Department of Fish and Game	No Specific Comment	No Specific Comment	Concerned	Concerned	No Specific Comment	Inform that funds from the Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) were used for improvements to the Wildlife Refuge. Concerned about impacts to the refuge.
<b>STATE/COUNTY/CITY GOVERNMENTS</b>						
City of Los Angeles, Department of Transportation	Opposes	Supports Conditionally	Supports Conditionally	Supports Conditionally	Supports Conditionally	Fully supports the project. Describes suggested improvements to the proposed alternatives.
County of Los Angeles, Department of Parks and Recreation						
County of Los Angeles, Department of Public Works						
Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG)						
<b>INTERESTED INDIVIDUALS</b>						
Written Comments Submitted at the Meeting	Supports=5 Opposes=0	Supports=4 Opposes=0	Supports=1 Opposes=3	Supports=3 Opposes=3	Supports=0 Opposes=10	
Verbal Comments Submitted to the Court Reporter at the Meeting	Supports=2 Opposes=4	Supports=1 Opposes=1	Supports=2 Opposes=4	Supports=3 Opposes=4	Supports=2 Opposes=5	
Written Comments Submitted by Mail or Email	Supports=56 Opposes=0	Supports=55 Opposes=0	Supports=1 Opposes=101	Supports=2 Opposes=101	Supports=1 Opposes=25	
Interested Individuals Totals	Supports=63 Opposes=4	Supports=60 Opposes=1	Supports=4 Opposes=108	Supports=8 Opposes=108	Supports=3 Opposes=40	

## Consultation and Coordination

**PID Phase of the Project.** The Project Initiation Document (PID) phase of the project is the time during which the project’s feasibility, schedule, cost, impacts, and design alternatives are studied at a preliminary and a conceptual level. Coordination with the project’s primary stakeholders begins during this phase. In this case, it was at this time that Caltrans engineers first began coordination with the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE). In a letter dated December 15, 2000, the USACE conceptually approved this project. Please refer to the Appendices Section of this document to view the letter.

**Value Analysis Phase of the Project.** Value Analysis (VA) or Value Engineering (VE) is a function-oriented, structured, multi-disciplinary team approach to solving problems or identifying improvements. The goal of any VA Study is to: Improve value by sustaining or improving performance attributes (of the project, product, and/or service being studied) while at the same time reducing overall cost (including lifecycle operations and maintenance expenses).

During this phase of the project, a multi-agency, multi-disciplinary team was assembled to study the existing alternatives alongside the Department, as well as to propose new design alternatives, and if necessary, drop existing design alternatives. This phase was conducted during: August 5, 6, 7 of 2003 and August 19, 20, 21 of 2003.

The stakeholders whom were invited and attended were representatives of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the City of Los Angeles. Below is the Value Analysis attendance grid.

**Table 48. Value Analysis Attendance Grid**

MEETING ATTENDEES							Caltrans				
Southbound I-405 Connectors to Northbound US 101							TELEPHONE	FAX			
2003							E-MAIL				
August											
5	6	7	19	20	21						
X				X	X	Edward Andraos	Caltrans	Senior Transportation Engineer/Project Manager	213 897-7722		
									Edward_andraos@dot.ca.gov		
X	X	X	X	X	X	Ed Aguilar	Caltrans Environmental Planning	Assistant Environmental Planner	213 897-8492		
									Eduardo_aguilar@dot.ca.gov		
X	X	X	X	X	X	Debbie Wong	Caltrans Maintenance Support	Transportation Engineer D	213 897-7305		
									Debbie_wong@dot.ca.gov		
X	X	X	X	X	X	Rene Yin	Caltrans Design	Transportation Engineer D	213 897-0389		
									Rene_yin@dot.ca.gov		
X		X			X	Bill Zeigler	Corps of Engineers	Civil Engineer Engineering Permits Value Engineer	213 452-3747	452-4248	
									William.j.zeigler@usace.army.mil		
X	X	X	X	X	X	Mynh Tran	Caltrans	Transportation Engineer	213 897-9526		
									Mynh_s_tran@dot.ca.gov		
X	X	X	X	X	X	Loi Lam	Caltrans	Transportation Engineer D	213 897-0448		
									Loi_lam@dot.ca.gov		
X	X	X	X	X	X	Shafiq Islam	Caltrans	Project Engineer	213 897-0969		
									Shafiq_islam@dot.ca.gov		

MEETING ATTENDEES							Caltrans		
Southbound I-405 Connectors to Northbound US 101							TELEPHONE	FAX	
2003							E-MAIL		
August									
5	6	7	19	20	21	NAME	ORGANIZATION	POSITION	
X	X		X	X		Majid Madani	Caltrans	Structures Design Senior Bridge Engineer	213 897-7722 Majid_Madani@dot.ca.gov
X	X	X	X	X	X	Vladimir Y. Gurfinkel	Caltrans Encino Construction Office	Assistant Resident Engineer	818 788-3303 x204 Vladimir_gurfinkel@dot.ca.gov
X	X	X			X	Talal Balaa	Caltrans	VA Unit	213 897-4195
X						Duke Huynh	Caltrans DTM-TMP	Transportation Engineer	213 897-7775
X						Florizel Bautista	Caltrans Design B	Design Manager	213 897-1609 897-7023 Florizel_bautista@dot.ca.gov
X	X	X	X	X	X	Elsie Robinson	Caltrans Design B	Transportation Engineer	213 897-0128
X						Robert A. Ringler	Police Advisory Board Traffic Committee	Chair	310 475-5978 475-0281 wlatraffic@adelphia.net
X						Dan Murdoch	Caltrans Right-of-Way		213 879-1816

MEETING ATTENDEES							Caltrans		
Southbound I-405 Connectors to Northbound US 101							TELEPHONE	FAX	
2003							E-MAIL		
August									
5	6	7	19	20	21	NAME	ORGANIZATION	POSITION	
X						Carvel Bass	Corps of Engineers Operations	Ecologist/NEPA	213 452-3392 cbass@spl.usace.army.mil
X	X	X	X	X	X	Larisa Bolotsky	Los Angeles Department of Transportation	Transportation Engineer Associate III	213 977-7847 lbolotsky@dot.lacity.org
X				X	X	Haripal Vir	Los Angeles Department of Transportation	Principal Transportation Engineer	213 580-1190 hvir@dot.lacity.org
		X				Cheryl Powell	Caltrans Planning	Senior Transportation Planner	213 897-3747 Cheryl_j_powell@dot.ca.gov
X	X	X	X	X	X	Rob Stewart	VMS, Inc.	VA Facilitator	503 531-8864 531-9784 rob@vms-inc.com
					X	David Joseph	California Highway Patrol		818 888-0980
					X	Adriai Torres	California Highway Patrol		818 888-0980
					X	Steve Sethi	Caltrans	Highway Operations	213 897-2077

MEETING ATTENDEES										Caltrans		
Southbound I-405 Connectors to Northbound US 101										TELEPHONE	FAX	E-MAIL
2003												
August												
5	6	7	19	20	21	NAME	ORGANIZATION	POSITION				
				X	X	Jim DeLuca	Caltrans	HQ Design Reviewer	213	897-0384		
					X	Greg Farr	Caltrans	Design B - Senior Transportation Engineer	213	899-0108		
					X	Greg Damico	Caltrans	Design D - Senior Transportation Engineer	213	897-9046		
					X	Aziz Elattar	Caltrans	Senior Environmental Planner	213	897-0686		
					X	Bill Regan	Caltrans	Design – Deputy District Director	213	897-0362		
					X	Raja Mitwasi	Caltrans	Chief Deputy – Deputy District Director	213	897-0362		
					X	Frank Quan	Caltrans	Operations – Deputy District Director	213	897-0362		
					X	Massoud Nabifar	Caltrans	PSR	213	897-0994		

**Pre-Scoping Phase of the Project.** Prior to the Scoping phase of the project, the Department met with various stakeholders to discuss the proposed project, the upcoming Scoping period for the project and its public participation invitation to all stakeholders and interested individuals. The emphasis of the dialogue was to begin gathering comments on the project’s potential impacts to the Sepulveda Dam, the Sepulveda Basin, the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Refuge, Woodley Park, and the neighboring communities.

- The Department met with U.S. Army Corps of Engineers on October 26, 2005.
- The Department met with the City of Los Angeles Department of Recreation and Parks on March 23, 2006.
- The Department met with the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Refuge Steering Committee Members, first onsite at the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Refuge, then at City of Los Angeles Department of Recreation and Parks offices.
- The Department provided a project briefing to the field deputies and the representatives from the offices of pertinent elected officials on June 12, 2006.

**Scoping Phase of the Project.** During the Scoping phase of the project, the Department conducted the outreach efforts discussed previously in the Scoping Procedures Section of this document. The following outreach efforts were also performed:

- On June 5, 2006, the previously discussed Scoping Notification letter and newsletter were hand-delivered to approximately 30 residences on and around La Maida Street, which is located immediately southeast of the I-405/U.S.-101 interchange. These residences were also personally invited to the June 14, 2006 Public Scoping Meeting. These residents would have been the most likely to be directly and indirectly impacted by rejected Alternative 4 of the proposed project.
- The previously discussed Scoping Notification letter and newsletter were also placed at a number of repository locations in the area along with a repository drop letter. These repository locations primarily included all local public libraries.
- The Department provided a project briefing to the field deputies and the representatives from the offices of pertinent elected officials prior to the June 14, 2006 Public Scoping Meeting.

**Post-Scoping Phase of the Project.** After conclusion of the Scoping phase of the project, the Department performed the additional outreach efforts:

- The Department provided a project briefing to City of Los Angeles Council member Tony Cardenas on June 27, 2006. The emphasis of the dialogue was on the project's potential impacts to the Sepulveda Dam, the Sepulveda Basin, the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Refuge, Woodley Park, and the neighboring communities.
- The Department provided a project briefing to the United Chambers of Commerce on August 21, 2006.
- The Department provided a project briefing to the field deputies and the representatives from the offices of pertinent elected officials on January 17, 2007.
- The Department met with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers on June 19, 2007 to provide a project status update and presentation. The discussion ranged from the various project alternatives to the project's various design and environmental constraints. The Department also provide the Corps with the following project technical studies for their review and comment:
  - a) Floodplain Impact Report and Mitigation Proposals
  - b) Natural Environment Study Report (biological impact report)
  - c) Bioacoustics Study (noise impact report to Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve)
  - d) Historic Property Survey Report
  - e) Engineering Design Drawings for Alternatives 1, 2, 3, and 4Traffic Noise Investigation Report was also submitted in June 2007
- The Department received a letter from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers dated October 9, 2007.
- The Department replied to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' October 9, 2007 letter with a letter dated December 27, 2007.
- The Department was contacted by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers on January 9, 2008. The Corps indicated that they had misplaced the Floodplain Study and Mitigation Proposals presented to them on June 19, 2007 and proceeded to request an electronic copy via email. The Department provided the Corps with the requested electronic copy via email, same day.
- On February 26, 2008, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers inquired via email about the status of the draft EA/IS. Caltrans provided the status update, same day.
- The Department received a letter from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers dated February 25, 2008 regarding its status as a cooperating agency.
- The Department replied to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' February 25, 2008 letter with a letter dated March 17, 2008.
- The Department received a letter from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers dated March 28, 2008 regarding its status as a cooperating agency.
- The Department replied to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' March 28, 2008 letter with a letter dated April 21, 2008.
- The Department received a letter from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers dated April 23, 2008 regarding the project's Section 4(f) Evaluation.

The aforementioned correspondence can be viewed in the appendices section of this document.

**Pre-Public Comment Period Meeting with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.**

The Department provided a project briefing to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers on April 3, 2008. At that time, the Department provided to the Corps the following pre-draft items:

- The Section 4(f) Evaluation
- The biological impact portion of the draft EA/IS
- The floodplain/hydraulic impact portion of the draft EA/IS

**Draft EA/IS Public Comment Period and Public Hearing.**

The public comment period and public hearing timeline was as follows:

Start of 45 day public comment period: April 14, 2008

Elected Official/Field Deputy Briefing: May 7, 2008

Public Hearing: May 14, 2008

End of public comment period: May 28, 2008

Preferred Alternative selected: June 2008

The Caltrans Division of Public Affairs issued a press release for this project on May 14, 2008.

The following Public Notice newspaper ad appeared in the following newspapers, on the specified dates:

Daily News: April 14, 2008

Jewish Journal: April 18, 2008

Telemundo: April 17, 2008

LA Watts Times: April 17, 2008

The following Announcement of Public Hearing newspaper ad appeared in the following newspapers, on the specified dates:

Daily News: May 7, 2008

Jewish Journal: May 9, 2008

Telemundo: May 8, 2008

LA Watts Times: May 8, 2008

At the start of the 45 day public comment period, the Department sent the draft version of this EA/IS to all of the project stakeholders discussed in the aforementioned Scoping section, as well as the numerous new individuals that were added to the project mailing list database during and after the Scoping period. To view the project mailing list, please refer to the appendices section of this document.

The Department solicited questions, comments, and concerns from all stakeholders regarding the proposed project and its potential environmental and community impacts, as discussed in the draft EA/IS. The Department held a public hearing so that all stakeholders could voice their questions, comments, and concerns in person. All written comments received during this Public Comment Period, as well as verbal comments made at the public hearing, were considered formal comments and become part of the public record. The Department responded/addressed all formal comments in this final draft EA/IS.

## CHAPTER 4 | LIST OF PREPARERS

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Loi Lam, Transportation Engineer (Location Hydraulics Study)

**Caltrans District 7, Storm Water Unit**

Shirley Pak, Senior Transportation Engineer  
Maria Agustin, Transportation Engineer

## **CHAPTER 5 | DISTRIBUTION LIST**

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## I-405 Master Database - EA 199610

### CATEGORY

<i>Organization</i>	<i>Last Name First Name</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Address City</i>	<i>State</i>	<i>Zip</i>	<i>Phone Fax</i>
<b>Agencies</b>						
California Highway Patrol	Badilla Steve		5825 De Soto Ave Woodlands Hills	CA	91367	818-888-0980
Caltrans	Dunlap Kelly	Acting Office Chief	1120 "N" Street Sacramento	CA	95814	916-651-8164
Caltrans	Frederick Mary	Acting Aeronautics Program Manager	1120 "N" Street Sacramento	CA	95814	
Caltrans	Higa Derek		100 S. Main Street Los Angeles	CA	90012	213-897-0394 213-897-0394
Caltrans, District 7	Brazile Joe	External Affairs	100 S. Main Street, MS 13-063 Los Angeles	CA	90012	213-897-0849 213-897-8603
Caltrans, Public Affairs	Gish Judy	Pubic Affairs Officer		CA		
City of Los Angeles	Fujioka William T.	Administrative Officer	200 N. Main St. Los Angeles	CA	90012-419	
City of Los Angeles	Grant Tom		200 N. Main St., Room 1500 Los Angeles	CA	90012	
City of Los Angeles	King Marianne		6262 Van Nuys Blvd., Suite 351 Van Nuys	CA	91401	
City of Los Angeles	Shull Mike	Superintendent of Planning and Construction	1200 W. 7th Street, #700 Los Angeles	CA	90017	213-928-9191 213-928-9180
City of Los Angeles	Singh Michelle		6262 Van Nuys Blvd., Suite 351 Van Nuys	CA	91401	
City of Los Angeles	Whettam Kimberlina	Field Deputy, CD5	200 N. Spring Street, Rm. 440 Los Angeles	CA	90012	818-756-8083 818-788-9210
City of Los Angeles, Board of Public Works	Gibson James	Executive Officer	200 N. Spring Street, #361 Los Angeles	CA	90012	213-978-0250 213-978-0278
City of Los Angeles, Bureau of Engineering	Armstrong Carol S.	Environmental Specialists	1149 S. Broadway, Suite 600 Los Angeles	CA	90015-220	213-485-5762 213-847-0656
City of Los Angeles, Bureau of Engineering	Kasparian Ara	Environmental Affairs Officer	1149 S. Broadway, Suite 700 Los Angeles	CA	90015	213-485-5729
City of Los Angeles, Bureau of Engineering	Richardson Phil	Principal Civil Engineer	1149 S. Broadway, Suite 700 Los Angeles	CA	90015	213-485-4523 213-485-4838
City of Los Angeles, Bureau of Street Lighting	Ebrahimian Ed	Director	600 South Spring Street, Suite 140 Los Angeles	CA	90014	212-847-6401 213-847-5405
City of Los Angeles, Bureau of Street Services	Robertson William A.	Director	600 South Spring Street, Suite 210 Los Angeles	CA	90014	213-485-5681 213-622-2375

Wednesday, January 30, 2008

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<b>CATEGORY</b>						
<b>Organization</b>	<b>Last Name First Name</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Address City</b>	<b>State</b>	<b>Zip</b>	<b>Phone Fax</b>
<b>City of Los Angeles, City Planning Department</b>						
	Blumenfeld Jane	Division Manager	200 N. Spring Street, 7th Floor Los Angeles	CA	90012-260	213-978-1372
<b>City of Los Angeles, Community Planning Bureau</b>						
	Rausch Charlie	Section Supervisor	200 N. Spring Street, 6th Floor Los Angeles	CA	90012	213-978-1167
<b>City of Los Angeles, Department of City Planning</b>						
			San Fernando Valley, Constituent Van Nuys	CA	91401	
<b>City of Los Angeles, Department of Public Works</b>						
		Planning Division	650 S. Spring St. Suite 200 Los Angeles	CA	90014-191	
<b>City of Los Angeles, Department of Public Works</b>						
		Planning Division	650 S. Spring St. Suite 200 Los Angeles	CA	90014-191	
<b>City of Los Angeles, Department of Public Works</b>						
	Ruiz Cynthia M.	President	200 N. Spring Street, M-464, Rm 36 Los Angeles	CA	90012	
<b>City of Los Angeles, Department of Public Works</b>						
	Troyan Vitaly		1149 S. Broadway St., #700 Los Angeles	CA	90015	
<b>City of Los Angeles, Department of Transportation</b>						
	Banerjee Frances	Acting General Manager	100 S. Main Street Los Angeles	CA	90012	213-972-8480 213-972-8410
<b>City of Los Angeles, Department of Transportation</b>						
	Kim Jay	Senior Transportation Engineer	100 S. Main Street, 94 Los Angeles	CA	90012	213-972-8476
<b>City of Los Angeles, Department of Transportation</b>						
	Shao Bill	Transportation Engineer	6262 Van Nuys Blvd., Suite 320 Van Nuys	CA	91401	818-374-4688 818-374-4676
<b>City of Los Angeles, Department of Water and Power</b>						
			P.O. Box 51111 Los Angeles	CA	90051-010	
<b>City of Los Angeles, Department of Water and Power</b>						
	Giese Jodean M.		111 N. Hope St., Rm. 1121 Los Angeles	CA	90012	
<b>City of Los Angeles, Dept of Power &amp; Water</b>						
	Moore Linda		1149 S. Broadway Los Angeles	CA	90015	213-485-5751
<b>City of Los Angeles, Dept. of Recreation &amp; Parks</b>						
	Attaway David	Environmental Supervisor	1200 W. 7th Street, Suite 700 Los Angeles	CA	90017	213-928-9130 213-928-9180
<b>City of Los Angeles, Dept. of Recreation and Parks</b>						
	Huntley Susan	Management Analyst, Grants Administration	1200 W. 7th Street, #700 Los Angeles	CA	90017	213-928-9153 213-928-9122
<b>City of Los Angeles, Environmental Affairs Department</b>						
	Hunter Wayde		200 N. Spring St., Suite 2005, MS Los Angeles	CA	90012	213-978-2366
<b>City of Los Angeles, Housing Authority</b>						
	Agbor Agbor		8121 Van Nuys Blvd., #600 Van Nuys	CA	91402	818-756-1194
<b>City of Los Angeles, Housing Authority</b>						
	Montiel Rudolf	Executive Director	2600 Wilshire Blvd. Los Angeles	CA	90057	
<b>City of Los Angeles, Office of Transportation</b>						
	Vir Haripal	Principal Transportation Engineer	100 S. Main Street, 10th Floor Los Angeles	CA	90012	213-972-8404

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<b>CATEGORY</b>						
<b>Organization</b>	<b>Last Name First Name</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Address City</b>	<b>State</b>	<b>Zip</b>	<b>Phone Fax</b>
<b>City of Los Angeles, Plan Approval/Site Plan Review</b>						
			200 N. Spring Street, 6th Flr Los Angeles	CA	90012	
<b>City of Los Angeles, Plan Approval/Site Plan Review</b>						
	Duenas Bob	South Valley	6262 Van Nuys Blvd. Van Nuys	CA	91401	818-374-5072
<b>City of Los Angeles, Plan Approval/Site Plan Review</b>						
	Platkin Dick	North Valley	6262 Van Nuys Blvd., 6th Floor Van Nuys	CA	91401	818-374-5074
<b>City of Los Angeles, Planning Dept.</b>						
	Vidal Anna	City Planner	6262 Van Nuys Blvd., Suite 351 Van Nuys	CA	91401	818-374-5043
<b>City of Los Angeles, Recreation and Parks Department</b>						
			200. N. Main Street, Room 1330 Los Angeles	CA	90012	
<b>City of Los Angeles, West Valley Region</b>						
	Novak Ken	Senior Park Maintenance Supervisor	6335 Woodley Ave. Van Nuys	CA	91406	818-756-8189 818-908-9786
<b>County of Los Angeles</b>						
	McCormack Conny		P.O. Box 1024 Norwalk	CA	90651-102	562-462-2716
<b>County of Los Angeles</b>						
	Stone H.W.	Director, Public Works	P.O. Box 1460 Alhambra	CA	91802	
<b>County of Los Angeles Dept. of Regional Planning</b>						
	Hartl James	Director	320 West Temple Street Los Angeles	CA	90012	213-974-6401
<b>County of Los Angeles Fire Department</b>						
	Freeman P. Micheal	Chief	1320 N. Eastern Ave. Los Angeles	CA	90063	323-881-2401
<b>County of Los Angeles Sanitation District</b>						
	Horvath Robert	Technical Services	1955 Workman Mill Road Whittier	CA	90601	
<b>County of Los Angeles Sanitation District</b>						
	Stahl Jim	Chief Engineer and General Manager	1955 Workman Mill Road Whittier	CA	90601	562-699-7411
<b>County of Los Angeles Sheriff's Department</b>						
	Baca Lee	Sheriff	4700 Romona Boulevard Monterey Park	CA	91754-216	
<b>County of Los Angeles, Department of Parks and Recreation</b>						
	Guiney Russ	Director	433 South Vermont Ave. Los Angeles	CA	90020	213-738-2961
<b>County of Los Angeles, Department of Public Works</b>						
	Dechellis Brad		900 S. Fremont Avenue Alhambra	CA	91803	
<b>County of Los Angeles, Department of Public Works</b>						
	Lopez Maria	LA River Master Plan	900 S. Fremont Ave. Alhambra	CA	91803-133	
<b>County of Los Angeles, Department of Public Works</b>						
	Sharp Dan	Senior Civil Engineer	900 S. Fremont Ave. Alhambra	CA	91803-133	
<b>County of Los Angeles, Department of Public Works</b>						
	Wolfe Donald L.	Director	P.O. Box 1460 Alhambra	CA	91802-146	
<b>County of Los Angeles, Department of Regional Planning</b>						
	Meneses Frank	Administrator	320 West Temple Street, Rm. 1351 Los Angeles	CA	90012	213-974-6441 213-626-0434

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<b>Organization</b>	<b>Last Name First Name</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Address City</b>	<b>State</b>	<b>Zip</b>	<b>Phone Fax</b>
<b>Metropolitan Transportation Authority</b>						
	Inge Carol	Interim Chief Planning Officer	1 Gateway Plaza Mail Stop:	99-22-		213-922-3056
			Los Angeles	CA	90012-293	
<b>Municipal Area Express (MAX)</b>						
		Director	20500 Madrona Avenue			310-618-6266
			Torrance	CA	90503-369	
<b>Museum of Vertebrate Zoology</b>						
	Moritz Craig M.	Director	3101 Valley Life Sciences Bldg.			510-642-3567
			Berkeley	CA	94720	
<b>National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration</b>						
		Director, Office of Ecology and Conservation	14th Street & Constitution NW, R			202-482-6090
			Washington	DC	20230	
<b>Office of the Attorney General</b>						
	Jordan Patterson Jamee		P.O. Box 944255			916-322-3360
			Sacramento	CA	94244	
<b>Project Development and Management</b>						
		Chief, Environmental Planning	400 P Street, Suite 3460			
			Sacramento	CA	95814	
<b>State of California, Governor's Office of Planning and Research</b>						
	Walsh Sean	Director	P.O. Box 3044			916-322-2318
			Sacramento	CA	95812-304	
<b>Van Nuys Community Police Station</b>						
	Miller James A.	Area Commanding Officer	6240 Sylmar Avenue			818-756-8343
			Van Nuys	CA	91401	
<b>Association</b>						
<b>Building Industry Association</b>						
	Ayala Natalie		28460 Ave. Stanford, #110			661-257-5046 ext. 2
			Santa Clarita	CA	91355	661-257-5045
<b>Building Industry Association</b>						
	Schroeder Holly		28460 Ave. Stanford, #110			661-257-5046
			Santa Clarita	CA	91355	661-257-5045
<b>CBOs</b>						
<b>American Legion, Sun Valley, Post 520</b>						
			9026 Sunland Blvd.			818-767-9461
			Sun Valley	CA	91352	
<b>American Legion, Sunland-Tujunga Post 377</b>						
			10039 Pinewood Avenue			818-353-9856
			Tujunga	CA	91042	
<b>Armenian National Committee</b>						
			4500 Stansbury Avenue			818-207-8416
			Van Nuys	CA	91423	
<b>Armenian Relief Society</b>						
			11719 Moorpark Street			818-753-8227
			Studio City	CA	91604	
<b>Art Association of Sunland-Tujunga</b>						
	Saurer Pat					818-352-2484
<b>Bel-Air Association</b>						
	Aylesworth Barbara	Executive Director	100 Bel Air Road			310-474-3527
			Los Angeles	CA	90077	310-475-6994
<b>Bel-Air Camera</b>						
	Ponder Frank	President	10925 Kinross Ave.			310-208-5150
			Los Angeles	CA	90024	
<b>Cabrini Villas Homeowners Association</b>						
			9600 Cabrini Drive			818-504-9600
			Burbank	CA	91504	

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<b>Organization</b>	<b>Last Name First Name</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Address City</b>	<b>State</b>	<b>Zip</b>	<b>Phone Fax</b>
<b>CPAB Traffic Committee/Residents of Beverly Glen</b>	Ringler	Chair/President	1604 Crater Lane			310-475-5978
	Robert A.		Los Angeles	CA	90077-313	310-475-0281
<b>Creator of the FITCALM Proposal</b>	Roth		23916 Avenida Entrana			
	Paul		Valencia	CA	91355	
<b>Economic Alliance of the San Fernando Valley</b>			5121 Van Nuys Blvd., #200			818-379-7000
			Sherman Oaks	CA	91403	
<b>Economic Alliance of the San Fernando Valley</b>	Ackerman	President & Chief	5121 Van Nuys Blvd., Suite 200			818-379-7000
	Bruce	Executive Officer	Sherman Oaks	CA	91403	
<b>Encino Business Improvement District</b>	Levi	Executive Director	17547 Ventura Blvd. #106			323-525-0406
	Susan		Encino	CA	91316	323-525-0407
<b>Equestrian Trails Inc., Corral 20 Shadow Hills Rogh Riders</b>						
<b>Foothill Funsters Senior Club</b>			8640 Fenwick Street			818-353-9571
			Sunland	CA	91040	
<b>Foothill Optimist Club</b>	Chagolla					818-760-4770
	Minu					
<b>Four Oaks Townhomes Estate</b>			5200 White Oak Ave.			
			Encino	CA	91316	
<b>Friends of McGroarty Arts Center</b>			7570 McGroarty Terrace			818-352-5285
			Tujunga	CA	91042	
<b>Friends of the Los Angeles River</b>	MacAdams		570 W. Ave. 26, Suite 100			
	Lewis		Los Angeles	CA	90065	
<b>Friends of the Studio City Library</b>			12511 Moorpark Street			818-755-7873
			Studio City	CA	91604	
<b>Friends of Westwood</b>	Faxon	Vice President	10737 Le Conte Ave.			310-474-1072
	Prudence		Los Angeles	CA	90024	
<b>Friends of Westwood/Save Westwood Village</b>	Lake	President	10558 Kinnard Ave.			310-470-4522
	Laura		Los Angeles	CA	90024	
<b>Lake View Terrace Homeowner's Association</b>			P.O. Box 453			818-503-2333
			Sunland	CA	91040	
<b>Lake View Terrace Improvements Association</b>			P.O. Box 224			818-897-7644
			Sunland	CA	91341	
<b>Laurel Plaza Neighborhood Association</b>			6013 Carpenter Avenue			818-754-1220
			North Hollywood	CA	91606	
<b>Little Landers Historical Society</b>			10110 Commerce Avenue			818-352-3420
			Tujunga	CA	91042	
<b>Los Angeles and San Gabriel Rivers Watershed Council</b>	Golding	President	700 N. Alameda Street			213-229-9945
	Arthur		Los Angeles	CA	90012	

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<b>Organization</b>	<b>Last Name First Name</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Address City</b>	<b>State</b>	<b>Zip</b>	<b>Phone Fax</b>
<b>Los Angeles and San Gabriel Rivers Watershed Council</b>						
	Harter	Executive Director	700 N. Alameda Street			213-229-9952
	Rick		Los Angeles	CA	90012	
<b>Mid-Valley Chamber of Commerce</b>						
			7120 Hayvenhurst Avenue			818-989-0300
			Van Nuys	CA	91406	818-989-3836
<b>North Village Neighborhood Association</b>						
			11471 Delano Street			818-487-5850
			North Hollywood	CA	91606	
<b>North Westwood Village Association</b>						
	Taylor		444 Kelton			310-208-8007
	Shelley		Los Angeles	CA	90024	
<b>Pacific Palisades Council</b>						
	Wolfberg	President	P.O. Box 1131			
	George		Pacific Palisades	CA	90272	310.454.9959
<b>Residents of Beverly Glen</b>						
	Buben	Vice President	2042 N. Beverly Glen Blvd.			310-288-0105 x15
	Dan		Los Angeles	CA	90077	
<b>Roscomare Valley Association</b>						
	Harper	President	2337 Roscomare Road #2-228			310-471-1523
	Scott		Los Angeles	CA	90077	
<b>Roscomare Valley Association</b>						
	Twining	Director	2337 Roscomare Road #2-228			
	Stephen		Los Angeles	CA	90077	
<b>Rotary Club of Studio City-Sherman Oaks</b>						
			P.O. Box 1234			818-906-1951
			Studio City	CA	91614	
<b>Rotary Club of Sun Valley</b>						
<b>Rotary Club of Sunland-Tujunga</b>						
						818-352-0534
<b>Rotary Club of Van Nuys</b>						
			11733 Victory Blvd.			818-760-4700
			North Hollywood	CA	91606	
<b>Save Westwood Village</b>						
			1093 Broxton Ave. PMB 620			
			Los Angeles	CA	90024	
<b>Save Westwood Village</b>						
	Metcalfe	Co-President	1421 Pandora Ave.			
	Mike		Los Angeles	CA	90024	
<b>Shadow Hills Property Owner's Association</b>						
			P.O. Box 345			818-352-3693
			Sunland	CA	91041	
<b>Sherman Oaks Chamber of Commerce</b>						
			14827 Ventura Blvd., #207			818-906-1951
			Sherman Oaks	CA	91403	818-783-3100
<b>Sherman Oaks Homeowner's Association</b>						
			P.O. Box 5223			818-377-4590
			Sherman Oaks	CA	91413	
<b>SMC Civic Association</b>						
	Wolfberg	President	P.O. Box 1131			
	George		Pacific Palisades	CA	90272	310.454.9959
<b>Studio City Beautification Association</b>						
			P.O. Box 1374			
			Studio City	CA	91614	

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	<i>First Name</i>		<i>City</i>				<i>Fax</i>
Studio City Chamber of Commerce			4024 Radford Avenue				818-655-5916
			Studio City	CA		91604	
Studio City Improvements Association			4024 Radford Avenue				818-655-5377
			Studio City	CA		91604	
Studio City Resident's Association			P.O. Box 1374				818-509-1230
			Studio City	CA		91614	818-509-1060
Sun Valley Chamber of Commerce			8133-A Sunland Blvd.				818-768-2014
			Sun Valley	CA		91352	
Sun Valley Watershed Stakeholders Group							
Sunland-Tujunga Business Business and Professional Women							818-782-4236
Sunland-Tujunga Chamber of Commerce			8250 A Foothill Blvd.				818-352-4433
			Sunland	CA		91042	
Sunland-Tujunga Coordinating Council							818-353-7056
Sunland-Tujunga Elks Lodge			10137 Commerce Ave.				818-352-2098
			Tujunga	CA		91042	
Sunland-Tujunga Kiwanis Club							818-541-9068
	McDougall						
	Bonnie						
Sunland-Tujunga Lion's Club							818-353-4554
	Schellenbach						
	Marynance & Peter						
Sunland-Tujunga Merchant's Association			9929 Commerce Avenue				818-353-6186
			Tujunga	CA		91042	
Tujunga Watershed Council and Stakeholders			P.O. Box 176				
			Sunland	CA		91041	
Valley Glen Neighborhood Association			13659 Victory Blvd., PMB 283				818-780-4189
			Valley Glen	CA		91401	
Valley Horse Owners Association							818-771-0156
Valley Industry and Commerce Association			5121 Van Nuys Blvd., #203				818-817-0545
			Sherman Oaks	CA		91403	
Valley Village Homeowners Association			P.O. Box 4916				818-506-5158
			Valley Village	CA		91617	
<i>Chamber of Commerce</i>							
Canoga Park/West Hills Chamber			7248 Owensmouth Ave.				818-884-4222
	Heigh		Canoga Park	CA		91303	818-884-4604
	Mouivia						

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<i>Organization</i>	<i>Last Name First Name</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Address City</i>	<i>State</i>	<i>Zip</i>	<i>Phone Fax</i>
<b>Canoga Park/West Hills Chamber of Commerce</b>						
	Leyner	Administrative Director	7248 Owensmouth Ave.			818-884-4222
	Barbara		Canoga Park	CA	91303	818-884-4604
<b>Canoga Park/West Hills Chamber of Commerce</b>						
	Young		7248 Owensmouth Ave.			818-704-1505
	Ed		Canoga Park	CA	91303	818-884-4604
<b>Chatsworth/Porter Ranch Chamber of Commerce</b>						
	Himes		10038 Old Depot Plaza Road			818-625-1983
	Les		Chatsworth	CA	91311	
<b>Encino Chamber of Commerce</b>						
	Davis	President	4933 Balboa Blvd.			818-789-4711
	Seth		Encino	CA	91316	818-789-2485
<b>Encino Chamber of Commerce</b>						
	Simon		15760 Ventura Blvd., #1520			818-501-3100
	Joel M.		Encino	CA	91436	818-461-0559
<b>Granada Hills Chamber of Commerce</b>						
			17723 Chatsworth Street			818-368-3235
			Granada Hills	CA	91344	
<b>Granada Hills Chamber of Commerce</b>						
	Bursk		17723 Chatsworth Street			818-368-8646
	Bonnie		Granada Hills	CA	91344	818-368-9547
<b>Granada Hills Chamber of Commerce</b>						
	Knepper		17723 Chatsworth Street			818-366-5005
	Dorena		Granada Hills	CA	91344	
<b>Granada Hills Chamber of Commerce</b>						
	Vitti		17723 Chatsworth Street			818-366-1668
	Joe		Granada Hills	CA	91344	
<b>Sherman Oaks Chamber of Commerce</b>						
	Cohen		14827 Ventura Blvd., #207			818-990-7260
	Bob		Sherman Oaks	CA	91403	818-990-1643
<b>Sherman Oaks Chamber of Commerce</b>						
	Frohlich	Executive Director	14827 Ventura Blvd., #207			818-360-5986
	Sondra		Sherman Oaks	CA	91403	818-360-5986
<b>Sherman Oaks Chamber of Commerce</b>						
	Myers		14827 Ventura Blvd., #207			818-654-2491
	Roger		Sherman Oaks	CA	91403	818-654-2491
<b>Studio City Chamber of Commerce</b>						
	Reed-Funnel	Executive Director	4024 Radford Ave., Editorial Bldg 2			818-655-5916
	Sandra		Studio City	CA	91604	818-655-8392
<b>Tarzana Chamber of Commerce</b>						
	Hornstein	President	P.O. Box 570414			818-343-3687
	Steve		Tarzana	CA	91356	818-705-0127
<b>Toluca Lake Chamber of Commerce</b>						
	Budzichowski		2003 Toluca Lake Chamber of Co			818-761-6594
	Allen		Toluca Lake	CA	91610	818-980-0052
<b>United Chamber of Commerce</b>						
	Haendle		5121 Van Nuys Blvd., #208			818-981-4491
	Amy		Sherman Oaks	CA	91403	818-981-4256
<b>Universal City North Hollywood Chamber of Commerce</b>						
	Kent	Administrative Director	6369 Bellingham Ave.			818-508-5155
	Linda		North Hollywood	CA	91606-320	818-508-5156
<b>Westchester/Marina Del Rey Chamber of Commerce</b>						
	Ciancimino	Executive Director	6151 W. Century Blvd., #514			310-645-5151
	Tony		Westchester	CA	90045	
<b>Winnetka Chamber of Commerce</b>						
	Tallent					818-998-3833
	Pauline					818-998-4056

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<i>Organization</i>	<i>Last Name First Name</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Address City</i>	<i>State</i>	<i>Zip</i>	<i>Phone Fax</i>
Woodland Hills Chamber of Commerce	Goldwater		20121 Ventura Blvd., #309			818-347-4737
	Rose		Woodland Hills	CA	91364	818-347-3321
Woodland Hills Chamber of Commerce	Holzer		20121 Ventura Blvd.			818-347-4737
	Stephen		Woodland Hills	CA	91364	818-347-3321
Woodland Hills Chamber of Commerce	Keowen	Chairman of the Board	20121 Ventura Blvd., #309			818-347-4737
	Sherry		Woodland Hills	CA	91364	818-347-3321
Woodland Hills Chamber of Commerce	Kunz		20121 Ventura Blvd., #309			818-620-8434
	Robert		Woodland Hills	CA	91364	
Woodland Hills Chamber of Commerce	McCarthy		20121 Ventura Blvd., #309			818-389-1876
	Sean		Woodland Hills	CA	91364	

*Education*

Bellagio Road Newcomer		Principal	11301 Bellagio Road			310-476-2281
			Los Angeles	CA	90049	
Burbank Boulevard Elementary School		Principal	12215 Albers Street			818-763-6497
			North Hollywood	CA	91607	
Canfield Elementary School		Principal	9233 Airdrome Street			310-552-2525
			Los Angeles	CA	90035	
Carthay Center Elementary School		Principal	6351 W. Olympic Blvd.			323-935-8173
			Los Angeles	CA	90048	
Castle Heights Elementary School		Principal	9755 Cattaraugus Avenue			310-839-4528
			Los Angeles	CA	90034	
Cheviot Hills High School		Principal	9200 Cattaraugus Avenue			310-839-4051
			Los Angeles	CA	90034	
Clover Elementary School		Principal	11020 Clover Avenue			310-479-7739
			Los Angeles	CA	90034	
Emerson Middle School		Principal	1650 Selby Avenue			323-654-8417
			Los Angeles	CA	90024	
Encino Elementary School		Principal	16941 Addison Street			818-784-1762
			Encino	CA	91316	
Fairburn Elementary School		Principal	1403 Fairburn Avenue			310-470-1344
			Los Angeles	CA	90024	
Fairfax High School		Principal	7850 Melrose Avenue			323-651-5200
			Los Angeles	CA	90046	
Hamilton High School		Principal	2955 S. Robertson Blvd.			310-836-1602
			Los Angeles	CA	90034	
Lanai Elementary School		Principal	424 Lanai Road			818-788-1590
			Encino	CA	91436	

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<b>Organization</b>	<b>Last Name First Name</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Address City</b>		<b>State Zip</b>	<b>Phone Fax</b>
Laurel Elementary School		Principal	925 N. Hayworth Avenue Los Angeles		CA 90046	323-654-1930
Los Angeles Unified School District	Romer Roy	Office of the Superintendent	333 S. Beaudry Ave., 24th Floor Los Angeles		CA 90017	213-241-7000
Marymount High School	Gozdecki Mary Ellen	Principal	10643 Sunset Blvd. Los Angeles		CA 90077	310-472-1205
Melrose Elementary School		Principal	731 N. Detroit Street Los Angeles		CA 90046	323-938-6275
Overland Elementary School		Principal	10650 Ashby Avenue Los Angeles		CA 90064	310-838-7308
Palms Middle School		Principal	10860 Woodbine Street Los Angeles		CA 90034	310-837-5236
Riverside Elementary School		Principal	13061 Riverside Drive Sherman Oaks		CA 91423	818-990-4525
Roscomare Elementary School		Principal	2425 Roscomare Road Los Angeles		CA 90077	310-472-9829
Rosewood Elementary School		Principal	503 N. Croft Avenue Los Angeles		CA 90048	323-651-0166
Sherman Oaks Elementary School		Principal	14755 Greenleaf Street Sherman Oaks		CA 91403	818-784-8283
UCLA Watch	Midler Alvin		134 Greenfield Ave. Los Angeles		CA 90049	310-472-6799 310-472-5652
UCLA, Local Government and Community Relations	Brueggemann Diana	Executive Director	10920 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 1500 Los Angeles		CA 90024-398	310-794-6824
UCLA, Local Government and Community Relations	Chamorro Carmen		10920 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 1500 Los Angeles		CA 90024-398	310-794-6837 310-794-6827
University of California, Los Angeles	Harris Adrian	Vice Chancellor, Planning, Emeritus	15744 Greenleaf Street Encino		CA 91436	818-990-1950
Van Nuys High School	Clay Herm	Principal	6235 Cedros Avenue Van Nuys		CA 91411-159	818-781-2371 818-781-5181
Walt Whitman High School		Principal	7795 Rosewood Avenue Los Angeles		CA 90036	323-651-0645
Warner Elementary School		Principal	615 Holmby Avenue Los Angeles		CA 90024	310-475-5893
Westwood Elementary School		Principal	2050 Shelby Avenue Los Angeles		CA 90025	310-474-7788
Wonderland Elementary School		Principal	8510 Wonderland Avenue Los Angeles		CA 90046	323-654-4401

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<i>Elected Offices - City</i>						
<b>City of Los Angeles, Council District 12</b>						
	Burarie		200 N. Spring Street, Room 405			818-756-8501
	John		Los Angeles	CA	90012	
<b>City of Los Angeles, Council District 4 - Valley Field Office</b>						
	Roth	Field Deputy	10116 Riverside Dr., Room 200			818-755-7630
	Alice		Los Angeles	CA	91602	818-755-7631
<b>City of Los Angeles, Council District 6</b>						
	Flores	Legislative Deputy	200 N. Spring Street, Rm. 455			213-473-7006
	Macaria		Los Angeles	CA	90012	213-847-0549
<b>City of Los Angeles, Council District 9</b>						
	Perry	Council Member	200 N. Spring Street, Rm. 420			213-473-7009
	Jan		Los Angeles	CA	90012	213-473-5946
<b>City of Los Angeles, District 2</b>						
	Bartels	Chief of Staff	200 N. Spring Street, Rm. 475			213-473-7002
	Claire		Los Angeles	CA	90012	
<b>City of Los Angeles, District 2</b>						
	Hernandez	District Director	6350 Laurel Canyon Blvd., Suite 20			818-755-7676
	Nancy		North Hollywood	CA	91606	
<b>City of Los Angeles, District 2</b>						
	Keene	Field Deputy	7747 Foothill Blvd.			818-352-3287
	Jackie		Tujunga	CA	91042	
<b>City of Los Angeles, District 2</b>						
	Tarica	Legislative Deputy	200 N. Spring Street, Rm. 475			213-473-7002
	Daniel		Los Angeles	CA	90012	
<b>City of Los Angeles, District 5</b>						
	Ippoliti	District Director	15760 Ventura Blvd., Suite 1020Ve			818-971-3088
	Fortuna		Encino	CA	91436	818-788-9210
<b>City of Los Angeles, District 5</b>						
	Sample	Chief of Staff, Policy & Communications	200 N. Spring Street, Rm. 440			213-473-7005
	Denise		Los Angeles	CA	90012	
<b>City of Los Angeles, District 5</b>						
	Trifiletti	District Counsel & Senior Planning	822 S. Robertson Blvd., #102			310-289-0353
	Lisa		Los Angeles	CA	90035	
<b>City of Los Angeles, District 6</b>						
	Cornejo	Council Aide	200 N. Spring Street, Rm. 455			213-473-7006
	Jose		Los Angeles	CA	90012	
<b>City of Los Angeles, District 6</b>						
	Gonzalez	District Director	8135 San Fernando Road			818-756-7558
	Arturo		Sun Valley	CA	91352	
<b>City of Los Angeles, District 6</b>						
	Gonzalez	District Director	14410 Sylvan Street, #215			818-778-4999
	Arturo		Van Nuys	CA	91401	
<i>Elected Offices - County</i>						
<b>Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors, District 3</b>						
	Gil Krisiloff	Senior Field Deputy	500 W. Temple Street, Room 821			213-974-3333
	Flora		Los Angeles	CA	90012	213-625-7360
<b>Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors, District 3</b>						
	Nissman	Policy Deputy	26600 Agoura Road, # 100			818-880-9416
	Susan		Calabasas	CA	91302	818-880-9346
<b>Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors, District 3</b>						
	Rescalvo	Deputy	500 W. Temple Street, Rm 821			213-974-3333
	Vivian		Los Angeles	CA	90012	213-625-7360

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**CATEGORY**

<i>Organization</i>	<i>Last Name First Name</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Address City</i>	<i>State Zip</i>	<i>Phone Fax</i>
<i>Elected Offices - Federal</i>					
<b>Office of Senator Dianne Feinstein</b>					
	Daley	Senior Field Representative	11111 Santa Monica Blvd., #915		310-914-7300
	Trevor		Los Angeles CA 90025		
<b>U.S. House of Representatives, District 27</b>					
	Tou	Policy Deputy	5000 Van Nuys Blvd., Suite 420		818-501-9200
	Michael		Sherman Oaks CA 91403-179		818-501-1554
<b>U.S. House of Representatives, District 28</b>					
	Blumenfield		14546 Hamlin Street, Suite 202		818-994-7200
	Bob		Van Nuys CA 91411		
<i>Elected Offices - State</i>					
<b>California State Assembly, District 40</b>					
	Kaufman		6150 Van Nuys Blvd., #300		818-904-3840
	Talia		Van Nuys CA 91401		
<b>California State Assembly, District 41</b>					
	Lippman		6355 Topanga Canyon, #205		818-596-4141
	Timothy		Woodland Hills CA 91367		
<b>California State Assembly, District 42</b>					
	Isaacs	Field Representative	9200 W. Sunset Blvd., PH 15		310-285-5490
	Ellen		West Hollywood CA 90069		310-285-5499
<b>California State Senate, District 21</b>					
	Carroll		215 N. Marengo, #185		626-683-0282
	Damian		Pasadena CA 91101		
<b>California State Senate, District 28</b>					
	Pinzler	District Director	2512 Artesia Blvd., Suite 200		310-318-6994
	Arlene		Redondo Beach CA 90278		310-318-6733
<b>Office of Assembly Member Paul Koretz, District 42</b>					
	Greenstein	Policy Deputy	9200 Sunset Blvd., PH 15		310-285-5490
	Jay		West Hollywood CA 90069		310-285-5499
<b>Office of Senator Sheila Kuehl, District 23</b>					
	Newman	Policy Deputy	10951 W. Pico Blvd., #202		310-441-9084
	Lori		Los Angeles CA 90064		310-441-0724
<i>Electeds - City</i>					
<b>City of Los Angeles, Council District 1</b>					
	Reyes	Council Member	200 N. Spring Street, Rm. 410		213-473-701
	Ed P.		Los Angeles CA 90012		213-485-8907
<b>City of Los Angeles, Council District 11</b>					
	Rosendahl	Council Member	200 N. Spring Street, Rm. 415		213-485-3811
	Bill		Los Angeles CA 90012		213-473-6926
<b>City of Los Angeles, Council District 12</b>					
	Smith	Council Member	200 N. Spring Street, Rm. 405		213-473-7012
	Greig		Los Angeles CA 90012		213-473-6925
<b>City of Los Angeles, Council District 13</b>					
	Garcetti	Council Member	200 N. Spring Street, Rm. 470		213-473-7013
	Eric		Los Angeles CA 90012		213-613-0819
<b>City of Los Angeles, Council District 2</b>					
	Greuel	Council Member	200 N. Spring Street, Rm. 475		213-473-7002
	Wendy		Los Angeles CA 90012		213-680-7895
<b>City of Los Angeles, Council District 3</b>					
	Zine	Council Member	200 N. Spring Street, Rm. 450		213-473-7003
	Dennis P.		Los Angeles CA 90012		213-485-8988
<b>City of Los Angeles, Council District 4</b>					
	LaBonge	Council Member	200 N. Spring Street, Rm. 480		213-485-3337
	Tom		Los Angeles CA 90012		213-624-7810

<b>CATEGORY</b>						
<b>Organization</b>	<b>Last Name First Name</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Address</b>		<b>State Zip</b>	<b>Phone Fax</b>
			<b>City</b>			
<b>City of Los Angeles, Council District 4</b>						
	Weitzer	Chief of Staff	200 N. Spring Street, Rm. 480			213-485-3337
	Renee		Los Angeles	CA	90012	213-624-7810
<b>City of Los Angeles, Council District 6</b>						
	Cardenas	Council Member	200 N. Spring Street, Rm. 455			213-473-7006
	Tony		Los Angeles	CA	90012	213-847-0549
<b>City of Los Angeles, District 5</b>						
	Weiss	Council Member	200 N. Spring Street, Rm. 440			213-473-7005
	Jack		Los Angeles	CA	90012	213-978-2250
<b>City of Los Angeles, Office of the Mayor</b>						
	Villaraigosa	Mayor	200 N. Spring Street, Rm. 303			213-978-0600
	Antonio		Los Angeles	CA	90012	213-978-0750
<b>Electeds - County</b>						
<b>Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors, District 3</b>						
	Yaroslavsky	Supervisor	500 W. Temple Street			213-974-3333
	Zev		Los Angeles	CA	90012	213-625-7360
<b>Electeds - Federal</b>						
<b>United States House of Representatives, District 27</b>						
	Sherman	Congress Member	5000 Van Nuys Blvd., Suite 420			818-501-9200
	Brad		Sherman Oaks	CA	91403	818-501-1541
<b>United States House of Representatives, District 28</b>						
	Berman	Congress Member	14546 Hamlin Street, Suite 202			818-994-7200
	Howard L.		Van Nuys	CA	91411	818-994-1050
<b>United States House of Representatives, District 30</b>						
	Waxman	Congress Member	8436 West Thirds Street, Suite 600			(323) 651-1040
	Henry		Los Angeles	CA	90048	
<b>United States Senate</b>						
	Bailon	Senior Field Representative	312 N. Spring Street, Suite 1748			213-894-5000
	Adolfo		Los Angeles	CA	90012	213-894-5012
<b>United States Senate</b>						
	Boxer	Senator	112 Hart Senate Office Building			202-224-3553
	Barbara		Washington	DC	20510	213-894-5042
<b>United States Senate</b>						
	Feinstein	Senator	331 Hart Senate Office Building			202-224-3841
	Dianne		Washington	DC	20510	202-228-3954
<b>Electeds - State</b>						
<b>California State Assembly, District 40</b>						
	Levine	Assembly Member	6150 Van Nuys Blvd., #300			818-904-3840
	Lloyd E.		Van Nuys	CA	91401	818-902-0764
<b>California State Assembly, District 41</b>						
	Brownley	Assembly Member	6355 Topanga Canyon Blvd., #205			818-596-4141
	Julia		Woodland Hills	CA	91367	818-596-4150
<b>California State Assembly, District 42</b>						
	Feuer	Assembly Member	9200 Sunset Blvd., PH 15			310-285-5490
	Mike		West Hollywood	CA	90069	310-285-5499
<b>California State Senate, District 21</b>						
	Scott	Senator	215 N. Marango Ave., #185			626-683-0282
	Jack		Pasadena	CA	91101	626-793-5803
<b>California State Senate, District 23</b>						
	Kuehl	Senator	10951 W. Pico Blvd., #202			310-441-9084
	Sheila James		Los Angeles	CA	90064	310-441-0724
<b>Emergency Responder</b>						
<b>California Highway Patrol, West Valley</b>						
	Tang	Public Affairs Officer	5825 De Soto Ave.			818-888-0980
	Leland		Woodland Hills	CA	91367-529	

<b><i>CATEGORY</i></b>						
<b><i>Organization</i></b>	<b><i>Last Name First Name</i></b>	<b><i>Title</i></b>	<b><i>Address City</i></b>		<b><i>State Zip</i></b>	<b><i>Phone Fax</i></b>
City of Los Angeles, Fire Department						
			200 N. Main Street			
			Los Angeles	CA	90012	
State of California - Department of California Highway Patrol						
	Tang		6300 Bristol Parkway			310-642-3939
	Leland		Culver City	CA	90230	
State of California - Department of California Highway Patrol - West Valley						
	Greenfield		5825 DeSoto Avenue			818-888-0980
	Gary		Woodland Hills	CA	91367	
<b><i>Environmental Groups</i></b>						
California Native American Heritage Commission						
		Executive Secretary	915 Capitol Mall, Rm 364			
			Sacramento	CA	95814	
California Native Plant Society						
			2707 K Street, Suite 1			916-447-2677
			Sacramento	CA	95816	916-447-2727
Friends of the Los Angeles River						
	Stoever	Development Director	570 W. Ave. 26, Suite 100			
	Mary-Kate		Los Angeles	CA	90065	
Los Angeles Audubon Society						
			7377 Santa Monica Blvd.			323-876-0202
			West Hollywood	CA	90046	323-876-7609
Los Angeles River Connection						
		Director	315 W 9th St., Suite 1110			213-622-5237
			Los Angeles	CA	90015	213-629-5288
Native American Tribal Councils						
	Alcala		P.O. Box 9090			
	Martin		Marina Del Rey	CA	90292	
Resource Conservation District of the Santa Monica Mountains						
	Preece	District Manager	122 N. Topanga Canyon Blvd.			310-455-1030
	Dave		Topanga	CA	90290	310-455-1172
San Fernando Valley Audubon Society						
	Ohlenkamp	President	20082 Stites Drive			310-455-1827
	Kris		Topanga	CA	90290	
San Fernando Valley Audubon Society						
	Oppenheimer		8933 Darbey Avenue			818-885-7493
	Carolyn		Northridge	CA	91325	
San Fernando Valley Audubon Society						
	Polak-Rechet		11002 Garden Grove			818-360-1438
	Jeanne		Northridge	CA	91326	
San Fernando Valley Audubon Society						
	Shteir		14355 Huston Street, #225			818-995-6429
	Seth		Sherman Oaks	CA	91423	
San Fernando Valley Audubon Society						
	Timlin		10539 Hillview Avenue			818-341-9354
	Donna		Chatsworth	CA	91311	
Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy, River Projects						
	Arnold		570 W. Ave. 26, Suite 100			310-589-3200
	Chuck		Los Angeles	CA	90065	310-221-8900
Sierra Club						
	Robinson	Conservation Coordinator	3435 Wilshire Boulevard, Suite 320			213-387-4287 Ext. 2
	Jennifer		Los Angeles	CA	90010-190	213-387-5383
Sierra Club						
	Silverman	Director	3435 Wilshire Boulevard, Suite 320			213-387-4287 Ext. 2
	Ron		Los Angeles	CA	90010-190	213-387-5383

<b><i>CATEGORY</i></b>						
<b><i>Organization</i></b>	<b><i>Last Name First Name</i></b>	<b><i>Title</i></b>	<b><i>Address City</i></b>	<b><i>State</i></b>	<b><i>Zip</i></b>	<b><i>Phone Fax</i></b>
<b>Southwestern Herpetologists Society</b>						
	Marrtin	President	P.O. Box 7469			818-992-8959
	Elisa		Van Nuys	CA	91409	
<b>The River Project</b>						
	Winters		11950 Ventura Blvd.			818-980-9660
	Melanie		Studio City	CA	91604	
<b>The Tree People</b>						
			12601 Mullholland Drive			818-753-4600
			Beverly Hills	CA	90210	818-753-4635
<b><i>Homeowners Associations</i></b>						
<b>Brentwood Glen Homeowners Association</b>						
	Elizabeth		11420 Bolas St.			310-472-2808
			Los Angeles	CA	90049	310-476-5698
<b>Brentwood Homeowners Association</b>						
	Renee	President	P.O. Box 49427			310-471-8350
	Robert		Los Angeles	CA	90049	
<b>Crestwood Hills Homeowners Association</b>						
	Regberg	President	1036 Tigertail Road			310-475-5735
	Scott		Los Angeles	CA	90049	
<b>Homeowners of Encino</b>						
	Silver	President	P.O. Box 260205			818-990-2757
	Gerry		Encino	CA	91426	818-990-7273
<b>Sherman Oaks Homeowners Association</b>						
	Close	President	P.O. Box 5223			818-377-4590
	Richard		Sherman Oaks	CA	91413	
<b>West of Westwood Homeowners Association</b>						
	Tippit	President	P.O. Box 64496			310-474-2326
	Terri		West Los Angeles	CA	90064	310-475-2126
<b>Westdale Homeowners Association</b>						
	Smith		3308 Butler Ave.			310-567-5704
	Rem		Los Angeles	CA	90066	
<b>Westwood Homeowners Association</b>						
	Agay	President	1363 Woodruff Ave.			818-986-2569
	Richard		Los Angeles	CA	90024-512	310-234-0301
<b>Woodland Hills Homeowners Organization</b>						
	Ward	President				818-761-4065
	Polly			CA		
<b><i>Interested Parties</i></b>						
	Ahlin & Al D'Andrea		1240 Marion Drive			
	Margit		Glendale	CA	91205	
	Almdale		1433 11th Street, #5			
	Chuck		Santa Monica	CA	90401	
	Alvarez		15131 La Maida Street			818-784-7405
	Deseire		Sherman Oaks	CA	91403	
	Arthur		109 Roanoke Street			
	Stephanie		San Francisco	CA	94131	
	Assor		15159 La Maida Street			818-995-6713
	Jeacques		Sherman Oaks	CA	91403	
	Bailey		5926 Hesperia Avenue			
	Glenn		Encino	CA	91316	

<i>CATEGORY</i>							
<i>Organization</i>	<i>Last Name</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Address</i>		<i>State</i>	<i>Zip</i>	<i>Phone</i>
	<i>First Name</i>		<i>City</i>				<i>Fax</i>
	Baker		15136 La Maida Street				
	Martin		Sherman Oaks	CA		91403	
	Barbar Ahmed		3029 E. Cardinal Street				714-588-8368 or 56
	Robert		Anaheim	CA		92806	
	Bass		2303 Glen Canyon Road				
	Judy		Altadena	CA		91001	
	Batten		22678 Cass Avenue				
	Edmund Stanley & Jo		Woodland Hills	CA		91264	
	Benneti		P.O. Box 370236				818-343-4076
	Wilma		Reseda	CA		91337	
	Berman			CA			
	Joshua						
	Bermini		15206 La Maida Street				818-986-7764
	Jeff & Laric		Sherman Oaks	CA		91403	
	Blorfroshan			CA			
	Mo						
	Bolotsky		100 S. Main Street, 9th Floor				213-972-5024
	Larisa		Los Angeles	CA		90012	
	Bolten		11620 Mayfield Avenue				
	Joseph		Los Angeles	CA		90049	
	Borman		11453 Albern Avenue				818-896-6058
	Cile		Lake View Terrace	CA		91342	
	Brown		1741 Colby Avenue, #301				310-592-9267
	Mark		Los Angeles	CA		90025	
	Butler		575 S. Barrington Avenue., #206				
	Paul		Los Angeles	CA		90049	
	Cantor		4423 Noble Ave.				
	Sue		Sherman Oaks	CA		91403	
	Collins		5748 Costello				
	Paul		Valley Glen	CA		91401	
	Collins		2655 Creston Drive				
	Paul & Ellen		Los Angeles	CA		90068	
	Conner		17819 Rinaldi Street				
	Fox		Granada Hills	CA		91344	
	Cutuli		1840 Preuss Road				
	Sandra		Los Angeles	CA		90035	
	Cyger		209 S. Oakland Avenue, #F				
	Ron		Pasadena	CA		91101	

<i>CATEGORY</i>						
<i>Organization</i>	<i>Last Name First Name</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Address</i>		<i>State Zip</i>	<i>Phone Fax</i>
			<i>City</i>			
	De Vita Linda		28130 Bobwhite Circle, #48 Saugus		CA 91350	
	Ecker Dorothy M.		3944 Windsor Place La Canada Flintridge		CA 91011	
	Elinoff Katie		4836 Norwich Avenue Sherman Oaks		CA 91403	
	Esterve Jim		4530 Densmore Encino		CA 91436	310-864-3224
	Eytan Avisar		4155 Dixie Canyon Avenue Sherman Oaks		CA 91403	818-981-1707
	Faber Joyce and Garold		10053 Halifax Street Ventura		CA 93004	
	Fag Deborah & Frank		15140 La Maida Street Sherman Oaks		CA 91403	818-501-0634
	Feagans Nancy J.		2010 1/2 Pullman Lane Redondo Beach		CA 90278	
	Fenning Rebecca		4434 Densmore Avenue Encino		CA 91436	
	Fomm E. & I.		3201 Plaza del Amo Torrance		CA 90503	
	Ford Sharon		13028 Aetna Street Valley Glen		CA 91401	818-780-5816
	Galaviz Jesse		18110-11 Killion Street Tarzana		CA 91356	818-345-6918
	Garrett Laura		711 S. Mentor Avenue Pasadena		CA 91106	
	Gassert Leland C.		22122 Itasca Street Chatsworth		CA 91311	
	Gilliland Susan		525 Avon Avenue Pasadena		CA 91105	
	Gispan Nathalie & Eran		15118 La Maida Street Sherman Oaks		CA 91403	818-915-4118
	Goldstein Michael		4938 Densmore Encino		CA 91436	818-783-1684
	Green Zan		18333 Hatteras Street, #122 Tarzana		CA 91356	818-344-2144
	Green Lesa		15234 La Maida Street Sherman Oaks		CA 91403	818-981-3929

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	<i>First Name</i>		<i>City</i>	<i>State</i>	<i>Zip</i>	<i>Fax</i>
	Greuel		5931 Reseda Blvd., #123			
	Bridget		Tarzana	CA	91356	
	Griffin		4801 Columbus Avenue			
	Don		Sherman Oaks	CA	91403	
	Hearn		4844 Noble Aveue			
	Connie		Sherman Oaks	CA	91403	
	Henry		15245 La Maida Street, #101			818-539-2051
	Dorothy		Sherman Oaks	CA	91403	
	Hope			CA		
	Leslie					
	Hopkins		13053 Rose Avenue			
	Lynne		Los Angeles	CA	90066	
	Houghton		8544 Walnut Drive			
	Mona		Los Angeles	CA	90046	
	Howell		6633 Burnet Avenueu			
	Judy		Van Nuys	CA	91405	
	Johnston		3434 Troy Drive			
	Rory		Los Angeles	CA	90068	
	Jones		11116 Van Alden Avenue			
	Linda		Northridge	CA	91326	
	Kaczmarek		4907 Radford Avenue			818-906-6942
	Ana		Studio City	CA	91604	
	Kanno		P.O. Box 280067			
	Brenda		Northridge	CA	91328	
	Kassel		12049 Dunblane Avenue			
	Deborah		Northridge	CA	91326	
	Kater		16149 Otego Street			818-788-1682
	Natalie		Encino	CA	91436	
	Katz		6610 Whitman Avenue			818-997-7377
	Ronna		Van Nuys	CA	91406	
	Khan		12717 Tiara Street			818-985-9447
	Rarn		Valley Village	CA	91607	
	Klamnman		5005 Gloria Avenue			818-906-0110
	Ken		Encino	CA	91436	
	Klemic		5420 Buffalo Avenue			
	Priscilla		Sherman Oaks	CA	91423	
	Kobler		1503 S. Crescent Heights Blvd.			
	Marie Danielle		Los Angeles	CA	90035	

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		Lamb Walter		4201 Duquesne Avenue, #4 Culver City	CA	90232	
		Landau Norma & John		4959 Densmore Encino	CA	91436	
		Langford Carol		1703 Avendia Del Manzano Camarillo	CA	93010	
		Langton Arthur		7435 Lena Avenue West Hills	CA	91307	818-887-0973
		Leisten Laurence M.			CA		
		Leppler Bill		4928 Morse Avenue Sherman Oaks	CA	91423	
		MacInnis Alex		1475 Silver Lake Blvd. Los Angeles	CA	90026	
		Malone George		15440 Milbank Street Encino	CA	91436	818-798-8304
		Marenius Margie		15105 La Maida Street Sherman Oaks	CA	91403	818-981-1607
		Marqhart Elizabeth		15132 La Maida Street Sherman Oaks	CA	91403	
		Martin Tudor		11538 San Vicente Blvd. Los Angeles	CA	90049	310-571-1326
		Maseda Margie		4201-102 Las Virgenes Road Calabasas	CA	91302	
		Mebasser Samuel		2525 Pearl Street Santa Monica	CA	90405	
		Meksin Isa-Kae		1028 1/2 Laguna Avenue Los Angeles	CA	90026	213-250-4350
		Messick Tim		15245 La Maida Street, #102 Sherman Oaks	CA	91403	415-215-3180
		Molinari Marilyn		7309 Asman Avenue West Hills	CA	91307	
		Moore James E.		31830 Firecrest Road Agua Dulce	CA	91390	
		Ogata Peggy		2002 Mentone Avenue Pasadena	CA	91103	
		Onderwyzer Sonya		323 Allen Avenue Glendale	CA	91201-250	

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<i>Organization</i>	<i>Last Name First Name</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Address City</i>		<i>State Zip</i>	<i>Phone Fax</i>
	Osokow Mark		22035 Burbank Blvd., #310 Woodland Hills		CA 91367	
	Ota Teiko		15217 La Maida Street Sherman Oaks		CA 91403	310-435-6972
	Paulson Cathy		10518 Andasol Avenue Granada Hills		CA 91344	
	Prince Karl		15245 La Maida Street Sherman Oaks		CA 91403	818-783-7893
	Raskin Judith		1833 Lemoyne Street Los Angeles		CA 90026	
	Rena Ravive		14936 Camarillo Street Sherman Oaks		CA 91403	818-784-9221
	Renaker Mary M.		4414 Finley Ave. Los Angeles		CA 90027	
	Roosevelt Evan		6350 Laurel Canyon Blvd., #210 North Hollywood		CA 91606	818-755-7676 818-755-7862
	Rosen Diane		17437 Rancho Street Encino		CA 91316	818-788-1223
	Ross Janice		5355 Quakertroun Avenue Woodland Hills		CA 91364	
	Ross Alan C.		1925 Bayview Drive Hermosa Beach		CA 90254	
	Schatz, EDD, RD Pauline E.		22315 Miranda Street Woodland Hills		CA 91367-452	
	Scheel Janet		12023 Eddleston Drive Northridge		CA 91326	
	Scheel Mark		12023 Eddleston Drive Northridge		CA 91326	
	Schermerhorn Robert		15242 La Maida Street Sherman Oaks		CA 91403	818-784-4873
	Scott Earl		15153 La Maida Street Sherman Oaks		CA 91403	
	Seeley Karen		9333 Sierra Hwy. Agua Dulce		CA 91390	
	Shanman Roberta		712 36th Street Manhattan Beach		CA 90266	
	Shentov Shalom		15126 La Maida Street Sherman Oaks		CA 91403	818-906-0665

<i>CATEGORY</i>						
<i>Organization</i>	<i>Last Name First Name</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Address City</i>	<i>State</i>	<i>Zip</i>	<i>Phone Fax</i>
	Shlom Lea	Shermtou	15126 La Maida Street Sherman Oaks	CA	91403	818-906-0665
	Silver Gerand		P.O. Box 260205 Encino	CA	91426	
	Smith Jeanne		15102 La Maida Street Sherman Oaks	CA	91403	818-784-2669
	Smith Arlene		15224 Morrison Street Sherman Oaks	CA	91403	818-788-2436
	Smith Christine C.		9227 Balcom Avenue Northridge	CA	91325	
	Solek Christopher		3828 Latrobe Street Los Angeles	CA	90031	
	Spilkoman Andy		15131 La Maida Street Sherman Oaks	CA	91403	
	Stauss Jane		24125 Albers Street Woodland Hills	CA	91367	
	Stevens Theresa A.		1506 1/2 Maple Street Santa Monica	CA	90409	
	Stoddard Glenn		20417 Hamlin Street Winnetka	CA	91306	818-346-8585
	Sugden Tanis		2947 S. Beverly Drive Los Angeles	CA	90034	
	Tapia Hilda		4867 Noble Sherman Oaks	CA	91403	
	Taylor Coral		25052 Walnut Stret, #116 Santa Clarita	CA	91321	
	Timpers Erik		15202 La Maida Street Sherman Oaks	CA	91403	818-728-4562
	Timpers-Bonord Sophie		15202 La Maida Street Sherman Oaks	CA	91403	818-728-4562
	Tobias Michele		6147 Paseo Encantada Camarillo	CA	93012	
	Travel Beck		10921 Oso Avenue Chatsworth	CA	91311	818-998-3122 818-998-3588
	Trogman Elaine		6709 Calhoun Avenue Van Nuys	CA	91405	818-780-8345
	Tsai Chihfang		15217 La Maida Street Sherman Oaks	CA	91403	

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	van Hartesveldt Patricia		7719 Nestle Avenue Reseda	CA	91335	
	Venable James		15137 La Maida Street Sherman Oaks	CA	91403	818-523-2359
	Walter Shelton		6755 Rhodes Avenue, #131 North Hollywood	CA	91606	818-982-1617
	Wang Robert		12249 Collins Street North Hollywood	CA	91607	818-763-2214
	Wang Ann		2560 Centinela Avenue Los Angeles	CA	90064	
	Watkins Ron & Audrey		1780 O'Leary Court Newbury Park	CA	91320	
	Weinberg Charlotte		15123 La Maida Street Sherman Oaks	CA	91403	818-981-4120
	Wells Marcella		15154 La Maida Street Sherman Oaks	CA	91403	
	White Rosemarie		11576 Marrison Street Valley Village	CA	91601	
	Willahan Barbara		20082 Stites Drive Topanga	CA	90290	
	Zarky Michael		10963 Citrus Drive Moorpark	CA	93021	
<b>Balboa Park</b>			17015 Burbank Blvd. Encino	CA	91316	
<b>Brentwood Glen</b>	Smith Hal					
<b>California Native Plant Society - LA-Santa Monica Mountains Chapter</b>						
	Hartman Steve		6117 Reseda Blvd., Suite H Reseda	CA	91335	818-881-3706 818-881-3206
<b>California State University, Northridge</b>	Maxwell Joyce B.	Professor Emerita	18111 Nordhoff Street Northridge	CA	91330-830	
<b>Canada Goose Project</b>			11576 Morrison Street Valley Village	CA	91601	
<b>City of Los Angeles</b>	Husting Ken		100 S. Main Street, 9th Floor Los Angeles	CA	90012	213-972-5008
<b>City of Los Angeles, District 1</b>	Campbell Helen		200 N. Spring Street, Room 410 Los Angeles	CA	90012	213-473-5890 213-485-8907
<b>Delano Park</b>			15100 Erwin St. Van Nuys	CA	91411	818-756-8529 818-756-7757

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<b>CATEGORY</b>						
<b>Organization</b>	<b>Last Name First Name</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Address City</b>	<b>State</b>	<b>Zip</b>	<b>Phone Fax</b>
<b>Encino/Tarzana Regional Medical Center Encino Hospital</b>			16237 Ventura Blvd. Encino	CA	91436	818-995-5000
<b>Hillside Federation</b>			P.O. Box 1041 Studio City	CA	91614	310-472-6091
	Twining Stephen C.	Chairman				
<b>HMB Enterprises</b>			15103 La Maida Street Sherman Oaks	CA	91403	818-986-8577
	Sobol Ronald	President				
<b>Julien Communications Public Relations</b>			4325 Park Fortuna Calabasas	CA	91302	818-222-6790 818-225-0560
	Julien Lois					
<b>Los Angeles Audubon Society</b>			7377 Santa Monica Balvd. West Hollywood	CA	90046	
	George Garry					
<b>Los Angeles Valley College, Dept of Biology</b>			5800 Fulton Avenue Valley Glen	CA	91401	
	Huang Sara	Associate Professor				
<b>Moorpark College</b>			810 Ol Topanga Rd. Topanga	CA	90290	310-455-8609
	Ehrgott Andrea	Geography/GIS Instructor				
<b>Planning and Zoning</b>			10256 Chrysanthemum Lane Los Angeles	CA	90077	310-441-5415
	Cooke Pam					
<b>Post-Production Services</b>						818-687-3696
	Hearn Constance					
<b>Santa Monica Bay Audubon Society</b>			533 Fourth Street Santa Monica	CA	90402	
	Plauzoles Lucien (Lu)	President				
<b>Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Areas Steering Committee</b>			15938 Haynes Van Nuys	CA	91406	818-901-9234
	MacKinnon Joyce					
<b>Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Committee</b>			11950 Ventura Blvd., #9 Studio City	CA	91604	
	Winters Melanie	Chaiperson				
<b>Sherman Oaks Fashion Square</b>			14006 Riverside Dr. Sherman Oaks	CA	91423	
<b>Sherman Oaks Homeowners Association</b>			14214 Hortense Street Sherman Oaks	CA	91423	
	Maloney Mike					
<b>Sherman Oaks Homeowners Association</b>			15030 Ventura Blvd., #707 Sherman Oaks	CA	91403	818-469-3367
	Rankell David					
<b>Southland Regional Association of Realtors</b>			17048 Chatsworth Street Granada Hills	CA	91344	818-993-9470
	Ezell Jim					
<b>Tetra Tech, Inc.</b>			17770 Cartwright, Suite 500 Irvine	CA	92614	949-250-6788 949-608-5870
	Artz, PE Ira Mark	Divisional Vice President				
<b>UCLA, Dept. of Psychology</b>			A Franz Hall Los Angeles	CA	90095	
	Finley Jason					
<b>United States Army Reserve Center</b>			5161 Sepulveda Blvd. Sherman Oaks	CA	91403	

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<b>Organization</b>	<b>Last Name First Name</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Address City</b>	<b>State</b>	<b>Zip</b>	<b>Phone Fax</b>
Valley Presbyterian Hospital		President	15107 Vanowen Street Van Nuys	CA	91405	818-782-6600
Van Nuys Airport			16461 Sherman Way, #200 Van Nuys	CA	91406	818-785-8838
Van Nuys/Sherman Oaks Park			14201 Huston St. Van Nuys	CA	91423	818-783-5121
West L.A. Veloway	Snyder Ryan		431 South Burnside Ave. #10-C Los Angeles	CA	90036	323-571-2910
West Van Nuys/Lake Balboa Neighborhood Council	Haller William	President	8121 Van Nuys Blvd., #401 Panorama City	CA	91402	818-780-8240
Westwood Hills Property Owners Association	Fontanes Lori		370 Dalkeith Avenue Los Angeles	CA	90049	310-288-1667
Woodley Ave. Park			Woodley Ave. and Victory Blvd. Van Nuys	CA	91411	
Your North Village	Taylor Shelley	President	P.O. Box 49700 Los Angeles	CA	90049	310-208-8007
<b>Interested Parties</b>						
The Federation of Hillside & Canyon Association	Luchs Joan	President	3309 Carse Drive Hollywood Hills	CA	90068	323-851-1597
<b>Libraries</b>						
Encino Tarzana Library			18231 Ventura Blvd. Tarzana	CA	913560	818-343-1983
Palms-Rancho Park Library			2920 Overland Ave. Los Angeles	CA	90064	310-840-2142
Robertson Library			1719 S. Robertson Los Angeles	CA	90035	310-840-2147
Sherman Oaks Branch Library			14245 Moorpark St. Sherman Oaks	CA	91423	818-205-9716
Sherman Oaks Library			14245 Moorpark Street Sherman Oaks	CA	91423	818-755-7878
Studio City Branch Library			12511 Moorpark Street Studio City	CA	91604	818-755-7873
Studio City Library			12511 Moorpark Street Studio City	CA	91604	818-755-7878
Sunland-Tujunga Branch Library			7771 Foothill Blvd. Tujunga	CA	91042	818-352-4481
Valley Plaza Branch Library			Closed for construction			

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<b>Organization</b>	<b>Last Name</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Address</b>		<b>Phone</b>	<b>Fax</b>
	<b>First Name</b>		<b>City</b>	<b>State Zip</b>		
<b>West Los Angeles Regional Library</b>						
			11360 Santa Monica Blvd.		310-575-8323	
			Los Angeles	CA 90025		
<b>Westwood Library</b>						
			1246 Glendon Avenue		310-474-1739	
			Los Angeles	CA 90024		
<b>Media</b>						
<b>Daily News</b>						
	Kaye	Editor	P.O. Box 4200		818-713-3000	
	Ron		Woodland Hills	CA 91367		
<b>Daily News</b>						
	Nelson		P.O. Box 4200			
	Eric		Woodland Hills	CA 91367		
<b>Daily News</b>						
	Parker		P.O. Box 4200			
	Chris		Woodland Hills	CA 91367		
<b>Neighborhood Councils</b>						
<b>Bel-Air Beverly Crest Neighborhood Council</b>						
	Lukasiks	President	1714 Stone Canyon Road		310-472-9872	
	Steve		Los Angeles	CA 90077		
<b>Bel-Air Beverly Crest Neighborhood Council</b>						
	Twining	Vice President	1525 Sepulveda Blvd., #5		310-479-6247	
	Stephen C.		Los Angeles	CA 90025		
<b>Encino Neighborhood Council</b>						
	Goldstein	President	4933 Balboa Blvd.		818-817-6998	
	Linda		Encino	CA 91316		
<b>Encino Neighborhood Council</b>						
	Kater		16149 Otsego Street		818-788-1682	
	Pat		Encino	CA 91436		
<b>Foothill Trails District Area Neighborhood Council</b>						
					818-896-6058	
<b>Mid-Town North Hollywood Neighborhood Council</b>						
					818-762-9267	
<b>Neighborhood Council Valley Village</b>						
			P.O. Box 4703		818-759-8204	
			Valley Village	CA 91617	818-760-1243	
<b>North Hollywood North East Neighborhood Council</b>						
	Garcia				818-761-7482	
	Jose Roy					
<b>Sherman Oaks Neighborhood Council</b>						
	Barad		P.O. Box 5721		818-503-2399	
	Jill		Sherman Oaks	CA 91413		
<b>Studio City Neighborhood Council</b>						
			4024 Radford Ave., Editorial Bldg.,		818-762-2865	
			Studio City	CA 91604	818-655-8240	
<b>Sun Valley Area Neighborhood Council</b>						
	O'Sullivan				818-768-7494	
	Dennis					
<b>Sunland-Tujunga Neighborhood Council</b>						
			7747 Foothill Blvd., Room 101		818-951-7411	
			Tujunga	CA 91042		
<b>Valley Alliance of Neighborhood Councils</b>						
	Banks Barad				818-990-4002	
	Jill				818-990-4002	

<b>CATEGORY</b>						
<b>Organization</b>	<b>Last Name</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Address</b>			<b>Phone</b>
	<b>First Name</b>		<b>City</b>	<b>State</b>	<b>Zip</b>	<b>Fax</b>
Valley Glen Community Council			PMB 331, 13659 Victory Blvd.			818-994-4741
			Valley Glen	CA	91401	
Van Nuys Neighborhood Council			6331 Columbus Avenue			818-416-0223
			Van Nuys	CA	91411	
Westside Neighborhood Council	Spector		P.O. Box 64370			310-474-2326
	Steve		Los Angeles	CA	90064	
Westwood Community Neighborhood Council Organizing Committee	White		908 Malcolm Ave.			310-441-4461
	Liza		Los Angeles	CA	90024	
<b>Parks</b>						
Beeman Park			12621 Rye Street			818-769-4415
			Studio City	CA	91604	
Beverly Glen Park			Angelo Dr. and Baywood Ct.			
			Los Angeles	CA	90077	
Briarwood Park			461 Almaden Ct.			
			Los Angeles	CA		
Carthay Circle Park			McCarthy Vista & Wilshire			
			CA			
Cheviot Hills Recreation Center			2551 Motor			
			Los Angeles	CA	90064	
Coldwater Canyon Park			12601 Mulholland Drive			
			Los Angeles	CA	90210	
De Neve Square Park			314 Beverly Glen			
			CA			
Encino Park			16953 Ventura			
			Encino	CA	91316	
Erwin Park			6150 Atoll Avenue			
			Van Nuys	CA	91401	
Fairfax Senior Citizen Center			7929 Melrose			
			Los Angeles	CA	90046	
Fehlhaber-Houk Park			Elmhurst at Tujunga Canyon Blvd.			
			Tujunga	CA		
Finn Park			7747 Foothill Blvd.			
			Tujunga	CA	91042	
Fryman Park			Laurel Canyon and Fryman			
			Studio City	CA	91604	
Haines Canyon Park			Haines Canyon Avenue			
			CA			

<b>CATEGORY</b>						
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	<b>First Name</b>		<b>City</b>	<b>State</b>	<b>Zip</b>	
Hansen Dam Park and Recreation Center			11770 Foothill Blvd.			818-896-6215
			Lake View Terrace	CA	91040	
Holmby Park			601 Clubview Dr.			
			Los Angeles	CA	90024	
Kittridge Mini-Park			Kitteridge Street and Greenbush			
			Valley Glen	CA		
Lake View Terrace Park and Recreation Center			11075 Foothill Blvd.			818-899-8087
			Lake View Terrace	CA	91342	
Libbit Park			5101 Libbit			
			Encino	CA	91436	
Little Landers Park			10116 Commerce Avenue			
			Tujunga	CA	91042	
Los Angeles River Greenway			Los Angeles River			
McGroarty Park			McGroarty Street & McGroarty Ter			
			Tujunga	CA	91042	
Moorpark Park			12061 Moorpark Street			
			Studio City	CA	91604	
Oro Vista Park			Oro Vista Avenue at Grove Stret			
			Sunland	CA	91040	
Palms Recreation Center			2950 Overland			
			Los Angeles	CA	90064	
Park			Club Dr. and McDonnel			
				CA		
Pasko Park			7579 McGroarty Terrace			
			Tujunga	CA	91042	
Poinsettia Recreation Center			7431 Willoughby Avenue			
			Los Angeles	CA	90046	
Robertson Recreation Center			1641 Preuss Road			
			Los Angeles	CA	90035	
Schachter Park (Irving Park)			2599 Beverwil Drive			
			Los Angeles	CA	90034	
Sepulveda Garden Center			16633 Magnolia			
			Encino	CA	91436	
Sherman Oaks Castle Park			4989 Sepulveda Blvd.			
			Sherman Oaks	CA	91403	
Stonehurst Park and Recreation Center			9901 Dronfield Avenue			
			Sun Valley	CA	91352	

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<i>Organization</i>	<i>Last Name</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Address</i>	<i>State</i>	<i>Zip</i>	<i>Phone</i>
	<i>First Name</i>		<i>City</i>			<i>Fax</i>
Strathern Park, West			12541 Saticoy Street North Hollywood	CA	91605	
Studio City Park and Recreation Center			12621 Rye Street Studio City	CA	91604	
Sunland Park and Recreation Center			8651 Foothill Blvd. Sunland	CA	91040	
Sunland Senior Citizen Center			8640 Fenwick Street Sunland	CA	91040	818-353-9571
Tujunga Greenbelt & Pedestrian Bridge			Coldwater Canyon Van Nuys	CA	91401	
Valley Glen Community Park			6150 Atoll Avenue Van Nuys	CA	91401	
Valley Plaza Park and Recreation Center			12240 Archwood Street North Hollywood	CA	91606	818-765-5885
Valley Village Park			500 Westpark Drive Valley Village	CA		
Van Nuys-Sherman Oaks Park and Recreation Center			14201 Huston Street Sherman Oaks	CA	91423	818-783-5121
Van Nuys-Sherman Oaks Senior Citizen Center			5040 Van Nuys Blvd. Sherman Oaks	CA	91423	818-905-8985
Verdugo Mountain Park						
Victory-Vineland Park and Recreation Center			11117 Victory Blvd. North Hollywood	CA	91606	
Villa Cabrini Park			9401 Villa Cabrini Drive, West Burbank	CA	91504	
Wilacre Park			12601 Mulholland Drive Los Angeles	CA	90210	
Woodbine Park			3409 Vinton Los Angeles	CA	90034	
Woodbridge Park			11240 Moorpark Street Studio City	CA	91604	
<i>Project Team</i>						
IBI Group	La Point		18401 Von Karman Ave., #110			949-833-5588
	Lydia		Irvine	CA	92612	
<i>Property Owners Associations</i>						
Encino Property Owners Association	Jasper	President	15601 Meadowgate Road			818-981-0474
	Bill		Encino	CA	91436	818-788-2473

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	<i><b>First Name</b></i>		<i><b>City</b></i>	<i><b>State</b></i>	<i><b>Zip</b></i>	
<b>Holmby-Westwood Property Owners Association</b>						
	Brown	Co-President	10778 Weyburn Ave.			310-475-5931
	Sandy		Los Angeles	CA	90024	
<b>Holmby-Westwood Property Owners Association</b>						
	Freedman	Co-President	10782 Weyburn Ave.			310-474-2946
	Jackie		Los Angeles	CA	90024	
<b>Holmby-Westwood Property Owners Association</b>						
	Paterson		914 Westwood Blvd. #573			310-470-1785
	Tom		Los Angeles	CA	90024	
<b>Westwood Hills Property Owners Association</b>						
	Magnuson	President	11147 Ophir Ave.			310-472-9352
	Carole		Los Angeles	CA	90024-743	
<b>Westwood Hills Property Owners Association</b>						
	Miller		11011 Cashmere Street			310-472-7437
	Harriet		Los Angeles	CA	90049	
 <i><b>Resource Agencies</b></i>						
<b>Army Corp of Engineers, L.A. District</b>						
			P.O. Box 532711			213-452-3349
			Los Angeles	CA	90053	
<b>California Department of Education</b>						
		Chief, Bureau of School Planning	1430 N Street, #5111			
			Sacramento	CA	95814	

Resource Agencies continued on next page

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<b>Organization</b>	<b>Last Name</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Address</b>		<b>Phone</b>	
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<b>California Department of Fish and Game</b>						
	Ingram		402 E. Ojai Ave., Suite 101, Box 52			
	Trudy		Ojai	CA	93023	
<b>California Wildlife Federation</b>						
			P.O. Box 1527			
			Sacramento	CA	95812-152	
<b>DC Tillman Water Reclamation Plant</b>						
	Netto		6100 Woodley Ave.			818-778-4138
	Hiddo		Van Nuys	CA	91406	
<b>Department of Fish and Game</b>						
	Eng		4949 Viewridge Ave.			858-467-4210
	Larry		San Diego	CA	92123	
<b>Department of Housing and Urban Development</b>						
		Environmental Clearance Officer	600 Harrison Street, 3rd Floor			415-489-6400
			San Francisco	CA	94107	415-489-6419
<b>Federal Aviation Administration</b>						
			15000 Aviation Blvd.			
			Hawthorne	CA	90250	
<b>Federal Aviation Administration</b>						
	Rustad, AWP474		P.O. Box 92007			
	Clifford		Los Angeles	CA	90009	
<b>Federal Aviation Administration</b>						
	Roberts	Chief, Airports Division	P.O. Box 92007			310-725-3608
	Dennis E.		Los Angeles	CA	90009	
<b>Federal Emergency Management Agency</b>						
	Armes	Regional Director, District 9	1111 Broadway, Suite 1200			510-627-7100
	Karen E.		Oakland	CA	94607	
<b>Federal Highway Administration</b>						
	Perez	Senior Transportation Engineer	650 Capitol Mall, Suite 4-100			916-498-5065
	Cesar		Sacramento	CA	95814	
<b>Federal Transit Administration, Region 9</b>						
			201 Mission Street, Suite 2210			
			San Francisco	CA	94105	
<b>Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB)</b>						
	Carrillo		320 W. 4th St., Suite 200			213-576-5759
	Valerie		Los Angeles	CA	90013	213-576-6640
<b>Naval and Marine Corps Reserve Center</b>						
			6337 Balboa Blvd.			
			Encino	CA	91316	
<b>South Coast Air Quality Management District</b>						
	Smith	Program Supervisor	21865 E. Copley Dr.			909-396-2000
	Steve		Diamond Bar	CA	91765	
<b>U.S. Army Corps of Engineers</b>						
	Castanon	Chief Regulatory Branch	P.O. Box 532711			213-452-3967
	David		Los Angeles	CA	90053	213-452-4214
<b>U.S. Army Corps of Engineers</b>						
	DeSaddi	Project Manager	P.O. Box 532711			213-452-3967
	Susan A.		Los Angeles	CA	90053-232	213-452-4214
<b>U.S. Department of Agriculture</b>						
		Office of the Secretary	1400 Independence Ave., SW			
			Washington	DC	20250	
<b>U.S. Department of Commerce, Room 6800</b>						
		Director, Office of Ecology and Conservation	14th & Constitution NW			202-482-2000
			Washington	DC	20230	
<b>U.S. Department of Energy</b>						
		Director, Office of Environmental Compliance	1000 Independence Ave., SW Rm.			800-342-5363
			Washington	DC	20585	202-586-4403

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	<i>First Name</i>		<i>City</i>	<i>State</i>	<i>Zip</i>	<i>Fax</i>
U.S. Department of Homeland Security						
			Washington	DC	20528	202-282-8000
U.S. Department of Interior						
		Director, Office of Environmental Policy and	1849 C Street, NW			202-208-3100
			Washington	DC	20240	
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency						
			1000 Pennsylvania Ave. NW			
			Washington	DC	20460	
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency						
		EIS Coordinator, Region 9	75 Hawthorne Street 14th Floor M			415-947-8000
			San Francisco	CA	94105-394	
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 9						
	Hashimoto		75 Hawthorne Street			415-947-4406
	Janet		San Francisco	CA	94105	
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service						
	Zoutendyk	North San Diego Division	6010 Hidden Valley Road			760-431-9440
	David	Chief	Carlsbad	CA	92011	
USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service						
			44811 N. Date Avenue, Suite G			661-945-2604
			Lancaster	CA	93534	
USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service						
			4500 Glenwood Dr., Building B			951-684-1552
			Riverside	CA	92501	951-683-3814
<i>Sensitive Receptor</i>						
Sherman Oaks Galleria						
	Emmet	Galleria Managaement	15301 Ventura Blvd., Bldg. B, Suite			818-382-4100
	Douglas		Sherman Oaks	CA	91403	
Sherman Oaks Galleria						
	Rediger	Office Leasing	15301 Ventura Blvd., Bldg. B, Suite			818-382-4100
	Lis		Sherman Oaks	CA	91403	
<i>Sensitive Receptors</i>						
Radisson Valley Center						
			15433 Ventura Blvd			
			Sherman Oaks	CA	91403	
Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Areas Steering Committee						
	Kotin	Youth Activities Chair &	6801 Las Olas Way			310-457-5796
	Muriel S.	Representative	Malibu	CA	90265	
Sepulveda Dam Recreation Area						
			17017 Burbank Blvd.			
			Encino	CA	91316	
Sherman Oaks Galleria						
			15301 Ventura Blvd.			818-382-4100
			Sherman Oaks	CA	91403	
<i>Transportation Agencies</i>						
Caltrans, District 7						
	Aguilar		100 S. Main Street			213-897-8492
	Eduardo		Los Angeles	CA	90012	
Caltrans, District 7						
	Struhl	Associate Environmental	100 S. Main Street, MS 16A			213-897-5446
	Mine	Planner	Los Angeles	CA	90012	
Caltrans, Freeway Operations						
	Hanna		100 S. Main Street			213-897-7916
	Ashraf W.		Los Angeles	CA	90012	

<i><b>CATEGORY</b></i>							
<i><b>Organization</b></i>	<i><b>Last Name</b></i>	<i><b>Title</b></i>	<i><b>Address</b></i>		<i><b>State</b></i>	<i><b>Zip</b></i>	<i><b>Phone</b></i>
	<i><b>First Name</b></i>		<i><b>City</b></i>				<i><b>Fax</b></i>
<b>City of Torrance Transit System</b>							
	Turner		20500 Madrona Avenue				310-618-6266
	Kim		Torrance,	CA		90503-369	
<b>Metro</b>							
	Mack		One Gateway Plaza				213-922-2844
	Marta		Los Angeles	CA		90012	
<b>Santa Monica Municipal Bus Lines</b>							
	Megriff		1660 7th. Street				
	Stephanie		Santa Monica	CA		90401	
<b>Southern California Association of Governments</b>							
	Jones		818 W. 7th. Street 12th Floor				213-236-1800 Ext. 8
	Laverne		Los Angeles	CA		90017	213-236-1963
<b>Westside Cities Council of Governments</b>							
	Bar-El		1685 Main Street				310-458-8341
	Elizabeth		Santa Monica	CA		90401	
<i><b>Utilities</b></i>							
<b>Southern California Gas Company</b>							
			8141 Gulana Avenue				
			Playa Del Rey	CA		90293	





## APPENDICES



**Interstate-405 to the U.S. Highway-101 Connector Improvement Project  
Environmental Assessment / Initial Study [EA/IS]**  
Finding of No Significant Impact / Mitigated Negative Declaration and Final Section 4(f) Evaluation  
Los Angeles County, California | 07-LA-405 [PM 39.4/40.5] / 07-LA-101 [PM 17.0/19.4]



## APPENDIX A | CEQA CHECKLIST

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**ENVIRONMENTAL SIGNIFICANCE CHECKLIST**

This checklist identifies physical, biological, social and economic factors that might be affected by the proposed project. In many cases, background studies performed in connection with the projects indicate no impacts. A NO IMPACT answer in the last column reflects this determination. Where there is a need for clarifying discussion, the discussion is included in Section VI following the checklist. The words "significant" and "significance" used throughout the following checklist are related to CEQA, not NEPA, impacts.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
I. AESTHETICS -- Would the project:				
a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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Selected Alternative 1 requires the construction of new connector/bridge structures that will infringe upon the Sepulveda Dam spillway. The new structures would create some visual distraction, especially to motorists using the southbound I-405 and northbound US-101 freeways. Mountain views in the distance would remain intact, but the new, man-made structures would obstruct some views of existing, mature vegetation. Caltrans and the FHWA mandate that a qualitative/aesthetic approach will be taken to mitigate for visual quality loss in the project area.

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II. AGRICULTURE RESOURCES: In determining whether impacts to agricultural resources are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to the California Agricultural Land Evaluation and Site Assessment Model (1997) prepared by the California Dept. of Conservation as an optional model to use in assessing impacts on agriculture and farmland. Would the project:

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland, to non-agricultural use?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

III. AIR QUALITY -- Where available, the significance criteria established by the applicable air quality management or air pollution control district may be relied upon to make the following determinations. Would the project:

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Violate any air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard (including releasing emissions which exceed quantitative thresholds for ozone precursors)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
e) Create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

IV. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES -- Would the project:

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Game or US Fish and Wildlife Service?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f) Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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Selected Alternative 1 will have impacts to the small wetland area west, and adjacent to the shoulder of the I-405 freeway. Caltrans proposes to mitigate for these impacts by providing additional funding to the Bull Creek Restoration Project and Sepulveda Wetlands Park Project. Funding is specified at roughly twenty percent of the total budget for each project. These proposals are, however, subject to change at any time, after further coordination of a final mitigation plan in cooperation with the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), the California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG), and the Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) during the permitting phase of the project.

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	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
V. CULTURAL RESOURCES -- Would the project:				
a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in §15064.5?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to §15064.5?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

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Selected Alternative 1 will result in an adverse effect to the National Register eligible Sepulveda Dam under Adverse Effect Criterion 2(i), 2(ii), 2(iv) and 2(v). Specific design measures will be implemented during the design phase of the project to mitigate adverse effects to the National Register eligible Sepulveda Dam.

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VI. GEOLOGY AND SOILS -- Would the project:

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:				
i) Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
ii) Strong seismic ground shaking?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
iv) Landslides?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d) Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial risks to life or property?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
e) Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative waste water disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of waste waer?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

VII. HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS –would the project:

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d) Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
f) For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
g) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
h) Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires, including where wildlands are adjacent to urbanized areas or where residences are intermixed with wildlands?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

VIII. HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY -- Would the project:

	Less Than Potentially Significant Impact	Significant With Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Substantially deplete groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that there would be a net deficit in aquifer volume or a lowering of the local groundwater table level (e.g., the production rate of pre-existing nearby wells would drop to a level which would not support existing land uses or planned uses for which permits have been granted)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, in a manner which would result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, or substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or off-site?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) Create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f) Otherwise substantially degrade water quality?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g) Place housing within a 100-year flood hazard area as mapped on a federal Flood Hazard Boundary or Flood Insurance Rate Map or other flood hazard delineation map?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
h) Place within a 100-year flood hazard area structures which would impede or redirect flood flows?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
i) Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving flooding, including flooding as a result of the failure of a levee or dam?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
j) Inundation by seiche, tsunami, or mudflow?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Selected Alternative 1 calls for the construction of connector bridges to cross the spillway outlet area of the Sepulveda Dam in order to connect to the US-101. A portion of the earthfill embankment of the dam adjacent to northbound US-101 will be modified to accommodate the change. These encroachments would not substantially affect the dam's operations, but will require mitigation measures to replace the dam's storage volume. Mitigation measures for the selected alternatives are strictly based upon reservoir water surface elevation criteria, irrespective of downstream channel conditions. The project has been conceptually approved by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Los Angeles District) which has regulatory responsibility for the Dam, and the reservoir lands. It is possible that other solutions could be provided by the USACE in the forthcoming phases of this project. For specific information, please refer to section 2.2.1 titled Hydrology and Floodplain within the Physical Environment section of the environmental document.

IX. LAND USE AND PLANNING - Would the project:

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Physically divide an established community?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project (including, but not limited to the general plan, specific plan, local coastal program, or zoning ordinance) adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Conflict with any applicable habitat conservation plan or natural community conservation plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
X. MINERAL RESOURCES -- Would the project:				
a) Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Result in the loss of availability of a locally-important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan or other land use plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

XI. NOISE – Would the project result in:

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Exposure of persons to or generation of noise levels in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Exposure of persons to or generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) A substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) A substantial temporary or periodic increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
f) For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

The noise study for Selected Alternative 1 determined that the following locations were identified as being impacted by freeway noise. A soundwall has been recommended along the portion of freeway, adjacent to locations impacted by freeway noise. The recommended soundwall considered for noise attenuation has been analyzed for feasibility based on the achievable noise reduction.

Northbound U.S.-101

Since no traffic noise impact has been identified, noise abatement has not been considered. Therefore, no soundwall has been recommended along the Northbound.

Southbound U.S.-101

The area represented by Site #S4 and #S6 were evaluated and determined to have traffic noise impact under selected alternatives 1.

Northbound I-405

Proposed soundwall SW1 (h=4.27m) was determined to provide 6 dBA noise attenuation for the areas represented by sites #N2 (Sherman Oaks Castle Palace – a miniature golf course). The proposed soundwall SW1 would block the view from freeway of Sherman Oaks Castle Palace (Miniature golf course) located on the northeastern quadrant of I-405 and U.S.-101 Interchange. Therefore, the park owner's opinion and views (represented by Site #N2) must be considered before making a final noise abatement decision.

Southbound I-405

Since no traffic noise impact has been identified, noise abatement has not been considered. Therefore, no soundwall has been recommended.

For site specific information please refer to section 2.2.7 titled Noise, within the environmental document.

XII. POPULATION AND HOUSING -- Would the project:

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Induce substantial population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Displace substantial numbers of existing housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Displace substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

XIII. PUBLIC SERVICES

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for any of the public services:				
Fire protection?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Police protection?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Schools?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Parks?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Other public facilities?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

XIV. RECREATION –

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Would the project increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Does the project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

XV. TRANSPORTATION/TRAFFIC – Would the project:

a) Cause an increase in traffic which is substantial in relation to the existing traffic load and capacity of the street system (i.e., result in a substantial increase in either the number of vehicle trips, the volume to capacity ratio on roads, or congestion at intersections)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Exceed, either individually or cumulatively, a level of service standard established by the county congestion management agency for designated roads or highways?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) Result in a change in air traffic patterns, including either an increase in traffic levels or a change in location that results in substantial safety risks?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d) Substantially increase hazards due to a design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
e) Result in inadequate emergency access?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
f) Result in inadequate parking capacity?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
g) Conflict with adopted policies, plans, or programs supporting alternative transportation (e.g., bus turnouts, bicycle racks)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Please refer to section 2.1.5 titled Traffic and Transportation/Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities of the

XVI. UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS –

Would the project:

- |   |                          |                          |                                     |                                     |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| a) Exceed wastewater treatment requirements of the applicable Regional Water Quality Control Board?   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| b) Require or result in the construction of new water or wastewater treatment facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?                            | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| c) Require or result in the construction of new storm water drainage facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?                                     | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            |
| d) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project from existing entitlements and resources, or are new or expanded entitlements needed?  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| e) Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider which serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| f) Be served by a landfill with sufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the project's solid waste disposal needs?  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| g) Comply with federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste?   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

XVII. MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE –

- |  |                          |                          |                                     |                          |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| a) Does the project have the potential to degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b) Does the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? ("Cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects)?   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c) Does the project have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings,   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

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With the rejection and elimination of Alternatives 2 and 3, and the selection of Alternative 1, the project does not pose significant biological impacts. Furthermore, Alternative 1 would not eliminate any examples of major periods of California history or pre-history. With the implementation of the proposed traffic and construction-related impact minimization and mitigation measures, as well as the proposed construction scheduling and phasing, the proposed

project would not pose significant cumulative impacts. The proposed project does not pose substantial adverse effects on human beings.



**APPENDIX B | SECTION 4(F) EVALUATION**

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## **Section 4(f)/Section 6(f) Evaluation**

I-405/US-101 Connector  
07-LA-405 PM 39.4/40.5  
07-LA-101 PM 17.0/19.4

Prepared by the  
State of California Department of Transportation

Submitted Pursuant to  
42 U.S.C. 42(2)(c) and 49 U.S.C. 303

The environmental review, consultation, and any other action required in accordance with applicable Federal laws for this project is being, or has been, carried-out by the Department under its assumption of responsibility pursuant to 23 U.S.C. 327.



June 2008

## 1 | APPLICATION OF SECTION 4(f)

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### 1-1 Introduction

The environmental review, consultation, and any other action required in accordance with applicable Federal laws for this project is being, or has been, carried-out by the Department under its assumption of responsibility pursuant to 23 U.S.C. 327.

Section 4(f) was created with the establishment of the United States Department of Transportation (USDOT) in 1966. Codified in federal law at 49 U.S.C. §303, Section 4(f) of the United States Department of Transportation Act of 1966 declares that "it is the policy of the United States government that special effort should be made to preserve the natural beauty of the countryside and public park and recreation lands, wildlife and waterfowl refuges, and historic sites."

Section 4(f) specifies that the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and other DOT agencies cannot approve the use of land from a significant publicly owned public park, recreation area, wildlife or waterfowl refuge, or any significant historic site unless the following conditions apply:

- There is no feasible and prudent alternative to the use of land; and
- The action includes all possible planning to minimize harm to the property resulting from use.

Each project proposal must include a 4(f) avoidance alternative.

Section 4(f) further requires consultation with the Department of the Interior and, as appropriate, the involved offices of the Department of Agriculture and Housing and Urban and Development in developing transportation projects and programs that use lands protected by Section 4(f). If historic sites are involved, then coordination with the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) is also needed.

On March 12, 2008, FHWA/Federal Transit Administration (FTA) published their final rule on Section 4(f). It became effective on April 11, 2008. This final rule modifies the procedures for granting Section 4(f) approvals as follows:

1. Clarifies the factors to be considered and the standards to be applied when determining if an alternative for avoiding the use of Section 4(f) property is feasible and prudent.
2. Clarifies the factors to be considered when selecting a project alternative in situations where all alternatives would use some Section 4(f) property.
3. Establishes procedures for determining that the use of a Section 4(f) property has a *de minimis* impact on the property.
4. Updates the regulation to recognize statutory and common sense exceptions for uses that advance Section 4(f)'s preservation purpose, as well as the option of applying a programmatic Section 4(f) evaluation.
5. Moves the Section 4(f) regulation out of the agencies' National Environmental Policy Act regulation, "Environmental Impact and Related Procedures," into its own part with a reorganized structure that is easier to use.

This Section 4(f) evaluation has been prepared pursuant to the FHWA regulations for Section 4(f) compliance codified at 23 CFR Section 774. Additional guidance has been obtained from the FHWA Technical Advisory T 6640.8A (1987), the FHWA Section 4(f) Policy Paper (2005), and the FHWA Western Resource Center Section 4(f) Checklist (1997).

### 1-2 Section 4(f) "Use"

A Section 4(f) use occurs when one or more of the following conditions are met:

Land is permanently acquired for a transportation project by partial or full acquisition (i.e., “direct use”).

Temporary occupancy of the protected resource is considered adverse in terms of the preservationist purposes of Section 4(f) (i.e., “temporary occupancy”).

Even though there's no permanent incorporation of land, the project's proximity impacts are so severe that the protected activities, features or attributes that qualify the resource for protection under Section 4(f) are substantially impaired (i.e., “constructive use”).

### 1-2.1 Direct Use

As the term implies, the action involves the direct use of Section 4(f) lands by permanent incorporation of such lands into a transportation facility. This may occur as a result of a partial or full acquisition of a fee simple interest (right-of-way acquisition), or permanent easements. Permanent easement use differs from fee simple use in that the easement may not necessarily change the landscape permanently.

### 1-2.2 Temporary Occupancy

During the construction phase of the highway project, a temporary easement such as a staging or access area may be needed. Once the easement is no longer needed, the Section 4(f) resource must be restored to the condition in which it was originally found. Temporary easements, right-of-entry, or short-term arrangements may be considered Section 4(f) use if the land is subject to temporary or permanent adverse changes, such as contour alterations or removal of mature trees and other vegetation. A temporary occupancy may not be considered a Section 4(f) use if all of the following conditions exist:

- Duration of occupancy must be temporary, i.e., less than the time needed for construction of the project, and there should be no change in ownership of the land.
- Scope of the work must be minor, i.e., both the nature and magnitude of the changes to the 4(f) resource must be minimal.
- There are no anticipated permanent adverse physical impacts, nor will there be interference with the activities or purposes of the resource, on either a temporary or permanent basis.
- The land being used must be fully restored, i.e., the resource must be returned to a condition which is at least as good as that which existed prior to the project.
- There must be documented agreement of the appropriate Federal, State, or local officials having jurisdiction over the resource regarding the above conditions.

### 1-2.3 Constructive Use

Constructive use [23 CFR 774.15] involves the evaluation of indirect or “proximity impacts” to a 4(f) resource. No actual use or “take” is involved. A constructive use occurs when the project's proximity impacts (i.e., noise, vibration, visual, access, and/or ecological impacts) are so severe that those protected activities, features or attributes that qualify the resource for protection under Section 4(f) are “substantially impaired.” Substantial impairment occurs only when the protected activities, features or attributes are substantially diminished by the proposed project.

FHWA policy has determined that constructive use may occur when:

- The projected noise level increase attributable to the project substantially interferes with the use and enjoyment of a noise-sensitive facility of a resource protected by Section 4(f), such as hearing the performances at an outdoor amphitheater, sleeping in the sleeping area of a campground, enjoyment of a historic site where a quiet setting is a generally recognized feature

or attribute of the site's significance, enjoyment of an urban park where serenity and quiet are significant attributes, or viewing wildlife in an area of a wildlife and waterfowl refuge intended for such viewing. [23CFR 774.15(e)(1)]

- The proximity of the proposed project substantially impairs esthetic features or attributes of a resource protected by Section 4(f), where such features or attributes are considered important contributing elements to the value of the resource. Examples of substantial impairment to visual or esthetic qualities would be the location of a proposed transportation facility in such proximity that it obstructs or eliminates the primary view of an architecturally significant historical building, or substantially detracts from the setting of a park or historic site which derives its value in substantial part due to its setting. [23CFR 774.15(e)(2)]
- The project results in a restriction on access, which substantially diminishes the utility of a significant publicly, owned park, recreation area, or historic site. [23 CFR 774.15(e)(3)]
- The vibration impact from operation of the project substantially impairs the use of a Section 4(f) resource, such as projected vibration levels that are great enough to physically damage a historic building or substantially diminish the utility of the building, unless the damage is repaired and fully restored consistent with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties, in other words, the integrity of the contributing features must be returned to a condition that is substantially similar to that prior to the project. [23 CFR 774.15(e)(4)]
- The ecological intrusion of the project substantially diminishes the value of wildlife habitat in a wildlife or waterfowl refuge adjacent to the project substantially interferes with the access to a wildlife or waterfowl refuge, when such access is necessary for established wildlife migration or critical life cycle processes, or substantially reduces the wildlife use of a wildlife and waterfowl refuge. [23 CFR 774.15(e)(5)].

## **2 | PROPOSED ACTION–PROJECT NEED AND DESCRIPTION**

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### **2-1 Purpose and Need of the Proposed Project**

The existing non-standard connector experiences extensive congestion, delays, and queue lengths throughout the day. The purpose of the project is to improve safety, operation, capacity, and traffic flow through the interchange by replacing the existing 20 mph single-lane connector, with a new 50 mph two-lane connector.

#### **Discussion of Purpose**

The Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG), along with the Offices of Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa and U.S. Congressman Brad Sherman have identified this interchange as in need of improvement to relieve congestion and improve safety, operation, capacity, and traffic flow.

The I-405/US-101 interchange is critical to the effective operation of the entire freeway system in the San Fernando Valley and the Los Angeles region as a whole. The SB I-405 to the NB US-101 connector is considered one of the busiest in the nation. The purpose of this project is to:

- To transfer through-vehicle trips to the regional highway system.
- To provide congestion relief in order to improve traffic flow.
- To provide a balanced circulation system and reduce out of direction travel.
- To improve the operational and safety design to meet current standards to the greatest extent possible.
- To enhance the safety throughout the project area while minimizing environmental and socio-economic impacts.

The following discussion summarizes the present and future conditions of the existing I-405/US-101 project area that constitutes the need for action. Several project alternatives have been developed to meet the purpose and need. If no improvements are made, the I-405/US-101 project area will continue as a "bottleneck" condition during peak hour traffic.

**Improvements to Safety, Operation, Capacity, and Traffic Flow.** In the existing condition, the SB I-405 to NB US-101 connector is considered to be one of the busiest in the world, and experiences heavy congestion, long delays, and high accident rates. Undesirable conditions on the SB I-405 freeway in the vicinity of the US-101 connector are attributable to a number of factors, including high volumes, low ramp design speed, and limited ramp capacity. All of the proposed build alternatives result in improved conditions on the freeway mainline, and produce similar operational improvements. The existing single-lane connector from SB I-405 to NB US-101 has a sharp, non-conventional curve with a design speed of 20 miles-per-hour. Replacing the existing connector with a two-lane, 50 mile-per-hour ramp is expected to improve flow through the area and reduce the spillback from the ramp queue on to the I-405 freeway mainline. This connector improvement is included in all of the proposed alternatives.

A weaving segment is a length of highway over which traffic streams cross paths through lane-changing maneuvers, formed between merge and diverge points. In all build alternatives, the new configuration would eradicate the weaving segment between the existing Burbank Boulevard on-ramp and the US-101 connector diverge. Weaving areas are attributable to significant disruption in traffic flow, particularly with high metering volumes, as opposing movements compete for merge space. Elimination of the weaving segment will provide improved average speed and level of service, as well as enhance safety, operation, capacity, and flow along the SB I-405 freeway in this area.

## Discussion of Need

The I-405 freeway carries an average of 115,000 to 160,000 vehicles per day in the vicinity of the Sepulveda Basin, and the US-101 carries an average of 160,000 to 165,000 vehicles per day in this area. The connector between the SB I-405 freeway and the US-101 carries over 50,000 vehicles per day, with just over half of those vehicles heading to the NB US-101 freeway and the remaining heading to SB US-101. The existing connector is a non-standard, single-lane structure with an operational speed of 20 miles-per-hour, and the facility is not sufficient to handle the traffic demand. As previously mentioned, vehicles form a queue at this location that frequently backs up onto the I-405 mainline, with a weaving segment between the existing Burbank Boulevard on-ramp and the US-101 connector diverge that contributes to high accident rates.

**Accident Rates.** Accident data and three-year average accident rates for segments of I-405 and US-101 within the project study area are discussed in Section 1.2.2 of the environmental document. The total accident rate record for the time reveals actual accident rates higher than the state average for similar facilities [1.45 accidents per million vehicle miles (MVM) compared to state averages of 1.09 accidents per MVM respectively].

**Capacity and Transportation Demand.** A Traffic Analysis Report (IBI Group, 2007) was prepared that analyzed (19) access and freeway connector ramps in the project area. The SB I-405 connector ramp to the NB US-101 was flagged as it currently operates at capacity, and will likely require improvements as travel demand and congestion is only expected to increase in the coming years. The existing connector is designed to carry a capacity of 1,500 vehicles per hour (veh/hr), but AM peak period volume through the connector exceeds that number at 1,792 veh/hr, and PM peak is approaching capacity at 1,374 veh/hr. If no improvements are made to this interchange, volume is projected to approach 2,073 veh/hr during the AM peak, and 1,590 veh/hr during the PM peak in the year 2015. Year 2030 projections show AM peak volumes approaching 2,580 veh/hr and PM peak volumes approaching 1,979 veh/hr.

In addition, basic freeway segments within the study area have been analyzed using capacity and Level of Service (LOS) concepts from the Highway Capacity Manual (HCM) 2000, Chapter 23 – Basic Freeway Segments. The measure used to provide an estimate of level of service is density, where density is calculated from the average vehicle flow rate per lane and the average speed. Failure, breakdown, congestion, and LOS F occur when queues begin to form on the freeway. Density—expressed as pc/mi/ln, or passenger cars per mile, per lane—tends to increase sharply within the queue and may be considerably higher than the maximum density value listed above. Please refer to Section 1.2.2 of the environmental document for a summary of LOS levels on the study area freeway mainline facilities.

## 2-2 Proposed Project Description

The Department has considered nine (9) alternatives. At the time of circulation of the draft environmental document, Alternative 4, and Alternatives A-D had already been rejected, and four (4) alternatives remained under consideration; the No-Build Alternative, and Alternatives 1-3. Of the four alternatives carried forward, Alternative 1 has been identified as the Preferred Alternative that Caltrans intends to implement, and the No-Build and Alternatives 2 and 3 have since been rejected and eliminated from further consideration.

This section will elaborate on the four alternatives that were considered. Also, listed in this section are the five alternatives that were analyzed and previously rejected, Alternative 4 and Alternatives A through D.

The three “Build” Alternatives (1, 2 & 3) that were under consideration at the time of circulation of the draft environmental document each shared the following common features:

- Replacing the existing 20 mph single-lane connector from the SB I-405 to the NB U.S.-101 with a new 50 mph two-lane connector bridge that encroaches upon and spans over the spillway of the Sepulveda Dam
- Eliminating the existing erratic and conflicting traffic weaving patterns between the Burbank Blvd on-ramp and the SB I-405 mainline as well as the traffic weaving patterns with SB I-405 mainline traffic attempting to access the US-101 connectors
- Realignment and reconstruction of the Burbank Boulevard on-ramp to the SB I-405 and/or the US-101
- Realignment and reconstruction of the current U.S. Army Corps of Engineers service road (northwest side of the interchange) for the operation and maintenance of the Sepulveda Dam
- Each poses an adverse impact to the historic Sepulveda Dam, which is a Section 4(f) resource.

### THE “NO-BUILD” ALTERNATIVE

The “No Build” or “Do Nothing” alternative calls for the existing connector, from the SB I-405 to the NB U.S.-101, to remain as is. The No-Build alternative would do nothing to improve the present day, or projected congestion and congestion related problems, thereby leading to a progressive deterioration of the issues identified in the Need and Purpose of this project. Therefore, the Need and Purpose of this project would remain unaddressed and its objectives unrealized.

### ALTERNATIVE 1 (THE PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE)

This alternative calls for a new, elevated, connector bridge structure that spans over the spillway of the Sepulveda Dam, from the SB I-405 to the NB U.S.-101. It will eliminate the sharp turn radius curve of the existing connector, thereby accomplishing the project's Need and Purpose.

The Burbank Boulevard on-ramp to the SB I-405 would need to be reconstructed to pass beneath the new connector structure. Furthermore, to implement this new Burbank Boulevard on-ramp structure, both of the existing connectors from the SB I-405 to the U.S.-101 would need to be removed, and traffic from Burbank Boulevard would lose access to both directions of the U.S.-101.

Additionally, with both of the existing connectors from the SB I-405 to the U.S.-101 requiring removal, this alternative will also require the construction of a new connector from the SB I-405 to the SB U.S.-101, in order to maintain that particular access.

#### **Project Alternative Cost Estimates:**

These are the estimates for costs associated with this alternative only, which are subject to change and revision:

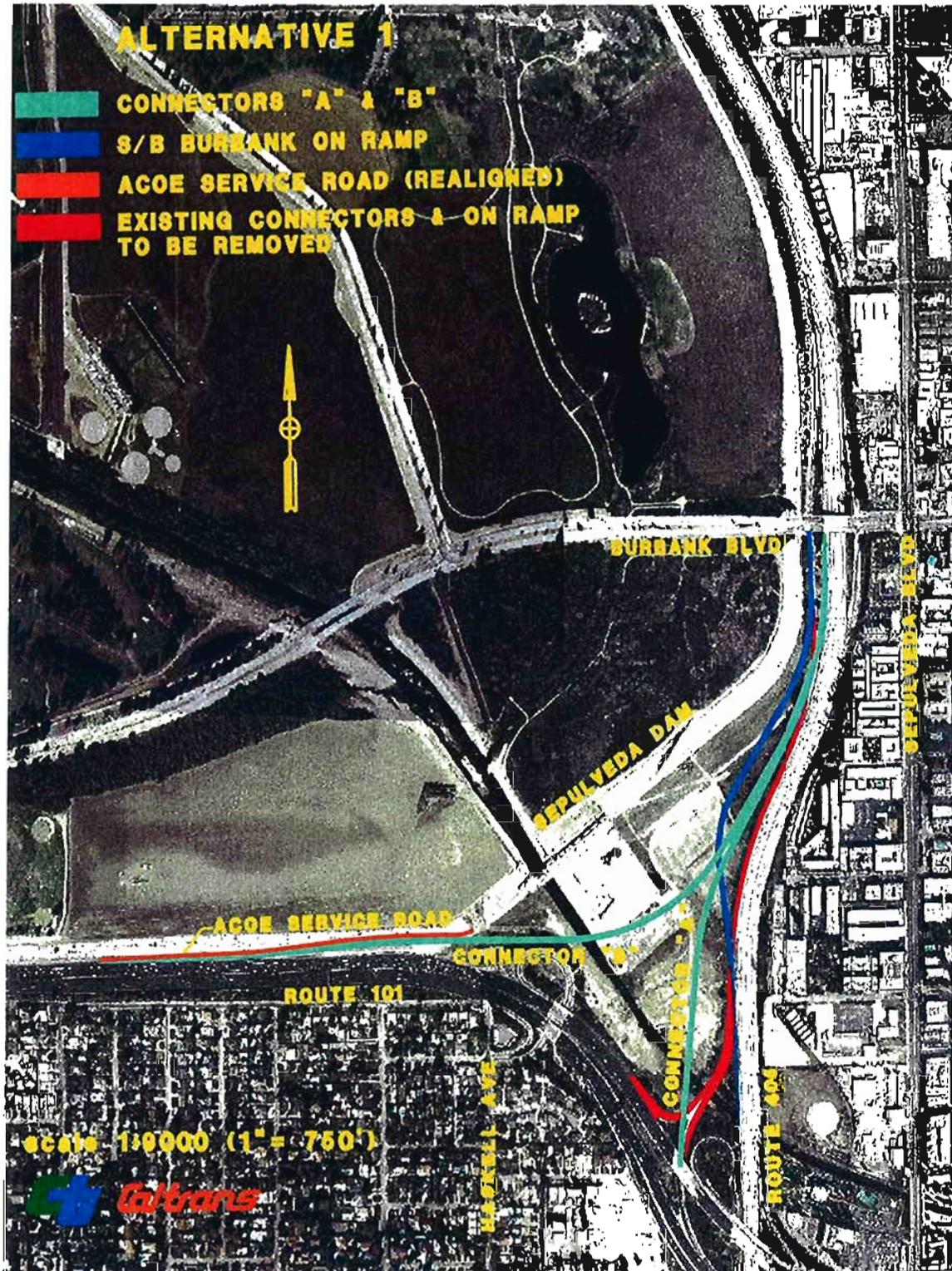
- Roadway Items: \$34,900,000.
- Structure Items: \$46,300,000.
- Right-of-Way Cost: \$200,000.
- Mitigation Cost: \$5,000,000.

#### **Size and Location of Impact Area/Volume:**

The Preferred Alternative will require an additional 5.12 acres of highway easement adjacent to existing facilities. 10.20 acres of temporary construction easement will be required for construction staging, storage of equipment, and other related activities. The new elevated structure in the design of this alternative will occupy approximately 3.08 acres on existing

USACE-managed land. The footings that support the new elevated structure will occupy approximately 0.45 acres of a permanent easement.

Encroachment on the reservoir will only occur on the south end of the Sepulveda Dam, and occupy approximately 49,014 ft<sup>3</sup>. Additionally, the new structure will occupy 1.07 acres of the upstream dam embankment and 0.59 acres of fill. The length and width of the structure that spans over the dam will be 550 and 42 feet, respectively. Dimensions of the structure that encroach into the spillway will be 1660 feet in length, with varying widths from 42 to 14 feet. 1670 feet of USACE service road will be realigned due to the connector encroachment, with all 1670 feet of the realigned road on structure.



## ALTERNATIVE 2

Like Alternative 1, this alternative would have called for a new, elevated, connector bridge structure spanning over the spillway of the Sepulveda Dam, from the SB I-405 to the NB U.S.-101. However, unlike Alternative 1, this alternative would have maintained access from Burbank Boulevard to the U.S.-101 via the construction of a constricted loop on-ramp, but at the cost of encroaching onto the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Refuge (within the flood control basin). The structure would have been located immediately north of Burbank Boulevard, and west of the I-405.

The constricted on-ramp loop design would have also required the reconstruction of the Burbank Boulevard/I-405 over-crossing bridge would have been required in order to meet vertical clearance requirements. This would have resulted in an additional increase in temporary construction-related traffic congestion. At the same time, this alternative would not have required the removal of the existing connector from the SB I-405 to the SB U.S.-101 and would not have carried the added burden of constructing a new connector structure.

### **Project Alternative Cost Estimates:**

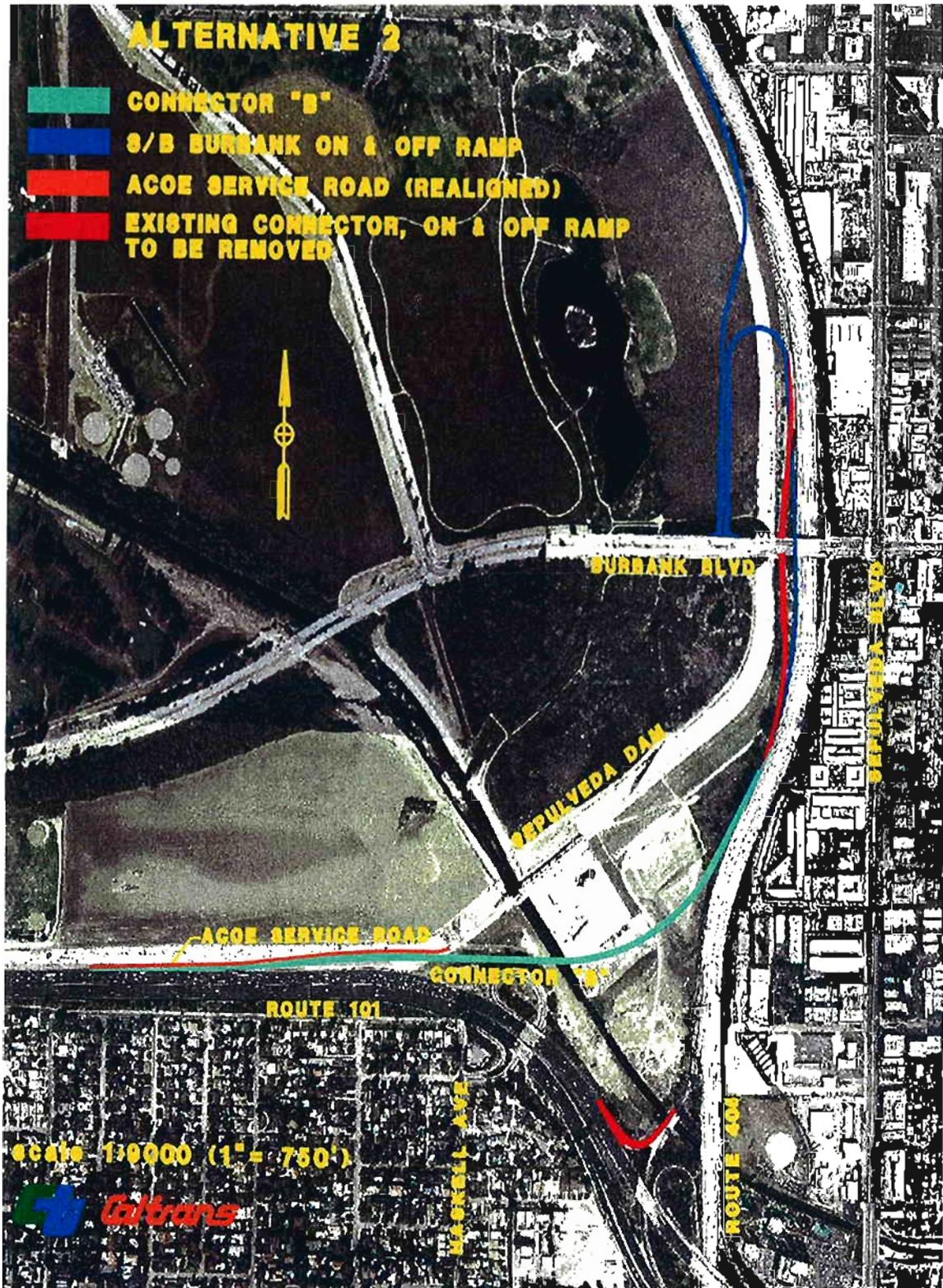
There are the estimates for costs associated with this alternative only, which are subject to change and revision:

- Roadway Items: \$42,700,000.
- Structure Items: \$69,100,000.
- Right-of-Way Cost: \$200,000.
- Mitigation Cost: \$5,000,000.

### **Size and Location of Impact Area/Volume:**

This alternative would have occupied approximately 0.28 Acres of the spillway outlet area, 1.07 acres of the upstream dam embankment, 0.79 acres of footing easement, 0.59 acres of fill, 0.16 acres of the downstream embankment into the basin north of Burbank Boulevard, and 76,950 ft<sup>3</sup> of the dam reservoir. The south end (49,014 ft<sup>3</sup>) and northeast section (27,936 ft<sup>3</sup>) of the Sepulveda Dam would have been affected. Length and width of the structure on the dam would have totaled 550 and 41 feet, respectively. The encroachment of the new connector structures onto the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Refuge would have been 2,850 feet long by 500 feet wide, which is approximately 7% of the 225-acre Wildlife Reserve.

**Basis for Rejection:** Like Alternative 1, Alternative 2 would have posed an adverse impact to the historic Sepulveda Dam, which is a protected resource pursuant to Section 4(f) of the U.S. Department of Transportation Act. However, unlike Alternative 1, Alternative 2 would have also impacted the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve, which is also a Section 4(f) protected resource. Since Alternative 1 was deemed by CALTRANS to be feasible, prudent, and least harmful in light of the preservation purpose of Section 4(f), Alternative 2 was rejected.



### ALTERNATIVE 3

Alternative 3 is identical to Alternative 2, except that this alternative sought to eliminate the need for the reconstruction of the existing Burbank Boulevard/I-405 over-crossing. To accomplish this, the design of the on-ramp loop specified a larger radius, thereby increasing the encroachment onto the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Refuge to 2,880 feet long by 560 feet wide, which is approximately 8% of the 225-acre Wildlife Reserve.

#### **Project Alternative Cost Estimates:**

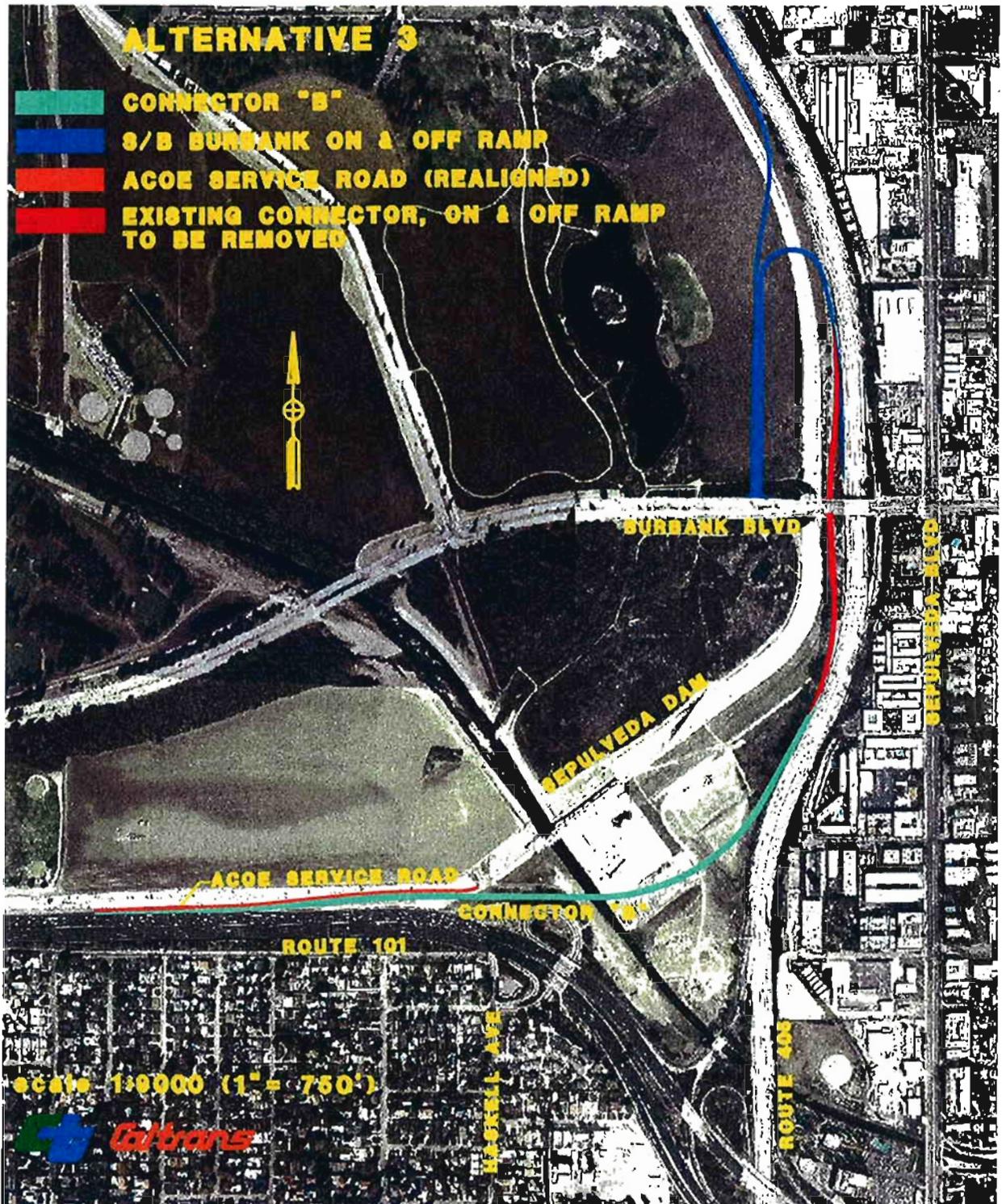
These are the estimates for Right-of-Way costs associated with this alternative only, which are subject to change and revision:

- Roadway Items: \$26,400,000.
- Structure Items: \$57,300,000.
- Right-of-Way Cost: \$100,000.
- Mitigation Cost: \$5,000,000.

#### **Size and Location of Impact Area/Volume:**

This alternative would have occupied approximately 0.25 acres of the spillway outlet area, 1.07 acres of the upstream dam embankment, 76,950 ft<sup>3</sup> of the dam reservoir, 0.80 acres of footing easement, 0.59 acres of fill, and 1.90 acres of the downstream embankment into the basin north of Burbank Boulevard. The south end (49,014 ft<sup>3</sup>) and northeast section (27,936 ft<sup>3</sup>) of the Sepulveda Dam would have been affected. The length and width of the structure on the dam would have totaled 550 and 41 feet, respectively. The encroachment of the new connector structures onto the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Refuge would have equaled 2.92 acres of the 225 total acreage (1.30%).

**Basis for Rejection:** Like Alternative 1, Alternative 3 would have posed an adverse impact to the historic Sepulveda Dam, which is a protected resource pursuant to Section 4(f) of the U.S. Department of Transportation Act. However, unlike Alternative 1, Alternative 3 would have also impacted the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve, which is also a Section 4(f) protected resource. Since Alternative 1 was deemed by CALTRANS to be feasible, prudent, and the least harmful alternative in light of the preservation purpose of Section 4(f), Alternative 3 was also rejected.



## The Five (5) Previously Rejected Alternatives

### ALTERNATIVE 4:

This alternative is similar to Alternative 1, except it sought to completely avoid the impacts posed by Alternative 1, as well as, the impacts posed by Alternatives 2 and 3. Unlike Alternative 1, this alternative would have retained access from Burbank Boulevard to the U.S.-101 by allowing traffic to use a new on-ramp to the SB I-405 (as required by Alternative 1) to access the U.S.-101 via the existing connectors from the SB I-405 to the U.S.-101 (rather than removing these connectors as is required by Alternative 1). This would have been accomplished by constructing the new Burbank Boulevard on-ramp to the SB I-405 so that it would also connect with the existing connectors at its terminus (unlike Alternative 1).

Since this alternative would have retained access to the U.S.-101 from Burbank Boulevard, it would not require an encroachment upon the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Refuge (as is required by Alternatives 2 and 3). However, the consequence of not closing and removing the existing connectors (as required by Alternative 1) is that this alternative would not only require the construction of a new connector from the SB I-405 to the SB U.S.-101, but also face the added challenge/burden of having to “go around” the existing connectors, and therefore, would have to be more than five times as long as the same connector required per Alternative 1. Consequently, this would have required (3) full and (10) partial right-of-way acquisitions of residential property on the southeast side of the interchange.

#### **Project Alternative Cost Estimates:**

These are the estimates for Right-of-Way costs associated with this alternative only, which are subject to change and revision:

- Roadway Items: \$56,235,672.
- Structure Items: \$83,834,200.
- Right-of-Way Cost: \$5,747,200.
- Mitigation Cost: \$5,000,000.

#### **Size and Location of Impact Area/Volume:**

This alternative would have occupied approximately 5.04 acres of the spillway outlet area, 0.45 acres of permanent footing easement and 0.59 acres of fill, in addition to 0.98 acres of the upstream dam embankment, and 49,014 ft<sup>3</sup> of the dam reservoir. The dam reservoir would have been affected only on the south end of the Sepulveda Dam. Length and width of the structure on the dam would have measured 550 and 41 feet, respectively.

#### **Basis for Rejection:**

Alternative 4 would have made the eastbound U.S.-101 less safe by creating a new weave segment on the eastbound U.S.-101 between the interchange, and the Van Nuys Boulevard off-ramps. In other words, traffic from the output of the new connector from the southbound I-405 to the eastbound U.S.-101 would have needed to criss-cross past eastbound U.S.-101 mainline traffic seeking to exit at the Haskell Boulevard off-ramps. This defeats the safety component of the project's Purpose and Need. Therefore, Alternative 4 was rejected for its incompatibility with the project's Purpose and Need.



## **ALTERNATIVE A**

Alternative A involving slip-ramps was considered during the Project Initiation Phase (Project Study Report process). This alternative was withdrawn from further study because the use of slip-ramps does not conform to FHWA policy. This alternative would connect the new Burbank Boulevard on-ramp to the U.S.-101 via slip ramp connections to the new connectors, thereby retaining Burbank access to the US-101.

Slip ramps are not in conformity with Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) design standards. FHWA states that: 1) Local connections within interchanges – especially on freeway-to-freeway ramps – violate driver expectancy and introduce additional decision points in an area where the information processing task is already complex. They also create a high potential for traffic queuing back onto the through freeway lanes (which defeats the Need and Purpose of this project). In addition, such ramps seldom provide for full directional services, thus creating the possibility of wrong-way movements by drivers who wish to return or continue in the same direction. 2) It is poor public policy as well as poor engineering practice to allow additional access to existing freeway ramps. 3) FHWA does not support any type of slip ramp.

Additionally, Section 502.3 of the Highway Design Manual (HDM) states that “local traffic service interchanges should not be located within freeway-to-freeway interchanges unless geometric standards and level of service will be substantially maintained.”

### **Project Alternative Cost Estimates:**

These are the estimates for Right-of-Way costs associated with this alternative only, which are subject to change and revision:

- Roadway Items: \$44,169,213
- Structure Items: \$48,279,800.
- Right-of-Way Cost: \$68,008,337.
- Mitigation Cost: \$5,000,000.

### **Basis for Rejection:**

Since Alternative A would have called for slip ramps to connect to the NEW connectors, per FHWA, this would have created a high potential for traffic queuing back onto the through freeway lanes. For this reason, Alternative A defeats the purpose of the project’s “Need and Purpose.” Hence, Alternative A was rejected on the basis of its incompatibility with the project’s Need and Purpose.



## **ALTERNATIVE B**

Alternative B is a hybrid between Alternative 1 and Alternative 4. This alternative would maintain the connector ramps from Burbank Boulevard onto Highway 101 in the northbound and southbound directions. The flyover ramp from the southbound 405 to the southbound 101 is eliminated and the need to acquire up to 30 homes on the southeast side of the interchange would not be necessary. A new, elevated structure will be built over the Sepulveda Dam Spillway from the southbound 405 to the northbound 101 to eliminate the sharp radius curve on the existing connector. As with Alternatives 1 and 4, no impacts to the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Refuge would occur.

Like Alternative 4, Alternative B calls for the existing connectors to remain as is. The consequence of not closing and removing the existing connectors (as required by Alternative 1) is that this alternative (like Alternative 4) would have also required the construction of a new connector from the SB I-405 to the SB U.S.-101.

The new connector, however, would not have met grade and vertical clearance standards. It would not have been feasible to design connector "A" to pass over the new Burbank Boulevard on-ramp, and subsequently under the NB US-101 mainline, in order to tie into the SB US-101 mainline.

### **Project Alternative Cost Estimates:**

These are the estimates for Right-of-Way costs associated with this alternative only, which are subject to change and revision:

- Roadway Items: \$41,960,752.
- Structure Items: \$45,865,810.
- Right-of-Way Cost: \$791,829,108.
- Mitigation Cost: \$5,000,000.

### **Basis for rejection:**

Alternative A is not feasible.



## ALTERNATIVE C

This alternative would have avoided all encroachment upon land managed and operated by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (i.e. Sepulveda Dam), as well as the floodplain and Section 4(f) resources on that land. Unlike Alternatives 1, 2, 3, 4, A, and B, this Alternative would not have called for a new connector bridge from the SB I-405 to the NB U.S.-101 that would encroach upon and span over the spillway of the Sepulveda Dam.

Instead, Alternative C would have called for the complete relocation of the improved SB I-405/U.S.-101 connectors to the northeast, southeast, and southwest of the existing connectors, thereby completely avoiding any encroachment upon the northwest side of the interchange, where the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers land is located.

This non-conventional configuration would have required that both new connectors "connect" to the U.S.-101 freeway from the south side, and would have consequently posed right-of-way acquisition impacts to the northeast, southeast, and southwest corners of the interchange. Right-of-way acquisitions for this alternative would have involved (329) total properties.

### **Project Alternative Cost Estimates:**

These are the estimates for Right-of-Way costs associated with this alternative only, which are subject to change and revision:

- Roadway Items: \$128,881,234
- Structure Items: \$214,895,731.
- Right-of-Way Cost: \$791,829,108.
- Mitigation Cost: \$5,000,000.

### **Basis for rejection:**

Compared to Alternatives 1, 2, 3, 4, A and B, Alternative C would have posed:

- The largest project impact footprint
- The largest and most disproportionate right-of-way acquisition impact requirements
- The most adverse temporary and permanent community disruption impacts

When compared to Alternatives 1, 2, 3, 4, A and B, the community impacts posed by Alternative C would have been of extraordinary magnitude. Therefore, the Department has concluded that continuing to pursue Alternative C as a viable option is not reasonable, nor prudent.

Per the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ), as part of its oversight of implementation of NEPA, CEQ Regulations 40 CFR Sec. 1502.14 requires that all reasonable alternatives be examined. In **determining the scope of alternatives to be considered**, the emphasis is on what is "reasonable". The Department has concluded that Alternative C is not a reasonable alternative, and therefore, not fit for further consideration.



## ALTERNATIVE D

This alternative would have also avoided all encroachment upon land managed and operated by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (i.e. Sepulveda Dam), as well as the floodplain and Section 4(f) resources on that land. Unlike Alternatives 1, 2, 3, 4, A, and B, this Alternative did not call for a new connector bridge from the SB I-405 to the NB U.S.-101 that would have encroached upon and spanned over the spillway of the Sepulveda Dam.

Instead, Alternative D called for a complete relocation of the new SB I-405/NB U.S.-101 connector toward the far northwest, completely "going around and behind" U.S. Army Corps of Engineers land. This configuration would not have required alteration of the existing SB I-405/NB U.S.-101 connector, and therefore, it would have remained as is.

The new SB I-405/NB U.S.-101 connector would have originated from the SB I-405, just south of Salicoy Street, and connected to the NB U.S.-101 just east of Tampa Avenue via a 5.2-mile long fly-over connector bridge structure. Consequently, this alternative would have required (2422) full right-of-way property acquisitions. The Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Refuge would not have been impacted, nor any other part of the Sepulveda Flood Control Basin.

### Right-of-Way Cost Estimates:

These are the estimates for Right-of-Way costs associated with this alternative only, which are subject to change and revision:

- Roadway Items: \$67,314,401.
- Structure Items: \$329,982,051.
- Right-of-Way Cost: \$3,360,600,304.
- Mitigation Cost: \$5,000,000.

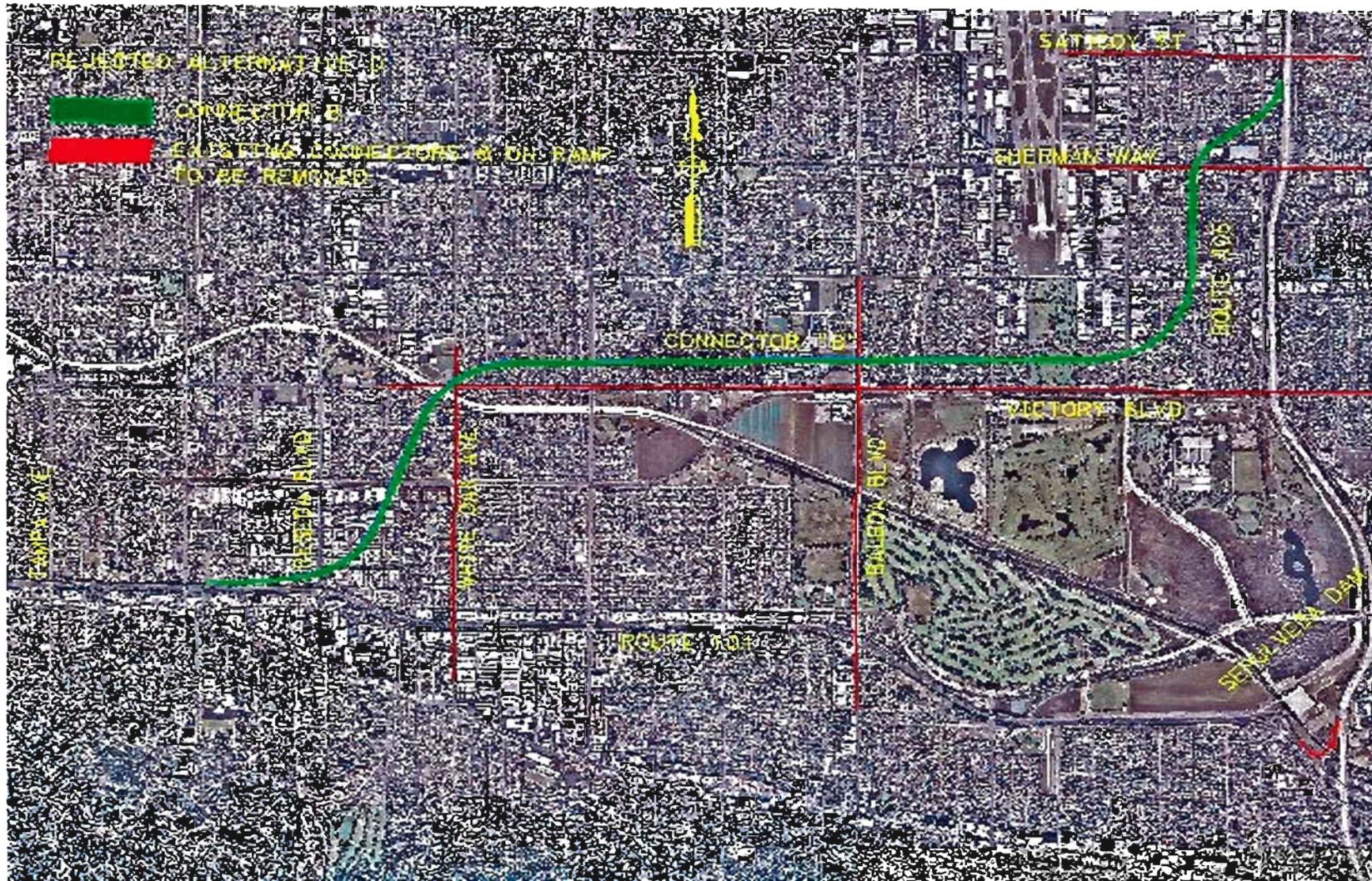
### Basis for rejection:

Compared to Alternatives 1, 2, 3, 4, A, B and C, Alternative D would have posed:

- By far, the largest project impact footprint of ALL alternatives.
- The largest and most disproportionate right-of-way acquisition impact requirements.
- The most adverse temporary and permanent community disruption impacts.

When compared to Alternatives 1, 2, 3, 4, A, B and C, Alternative D would have also posed community impacts of extraordinary magnitude, which are avoidable by simply eliminating Alternative D from further consideration. Therefore, the Department has concluded that continuing to pursue Alternative D as a viable option is neither reasonable, nor prudent.

Per the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ), as part of its oversight of implementation of NEPA, CEQ Regulations 40 CFR Sec. 1502.14 requires that all reasonable alternatives be examined. In determining the scope of alternatives to be considered, the emphasis is on what is "reasonable". The Department has concluded that Alternative D is not a reasonable alternative, and therefore, not fit for further consideration.



### 3 | DESCRIPTION OF SECTION 4(f) RESOURCES

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As noted above, resources subject to Section 4(f) consideration include publicly owned lands consisting of a public park/recreation area; public wildlife and waterfowl refuges of national, state, or local significance; or historic sites of national, state, or local significance, whether publicly or privately owned. As recommended in the FHWA Section 4(f) Checklist, all NRHP-eligible historic sites within the Area of Potential Effects (APE) and all public parks, recreational facilities, and wildlife refuges within approximately 0.5-mi (0.8-km) of any of the project alternatives were included in this evaluation.

All the Section 4(f) resources that are evaluated in this section are located within the Sepulveda Basin.

#### **The Sepulveda Basin:**

The 405/101 Connector project encroaches upon the Sepulveda Dam Flood Control Basin and Recreation Area (Basin). The Basin is located at the junction of the I-405 and US-101 Freeways in the San Fernando Valley (Valley), City of Los Angeles (City), and is managed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE). The Basin encompasses 2,097 acres, and provides flood protection to properties within the Los Angeles River drainage area.

The primary purpose of the dam and its associated Basin is to provide flood protection. The Basin is also designated as a regional park in the Los Angeles City General Plan, and is zoned as open space. The area's land use is governed by its 1981 Master Plan, which specifies the recreational uses of the proposed project site and its alternatives. Portions of the Basin are currently used for recreational activities, wildlife habitat, agriculture, as well as utility and military facilities.

The Corps leases 1,527 acres to the city of Los Angeles Department of Recreation and Parks for recreational purposes. Recreational facilities include a wildlife area, Woodley Park, Beilenson Park, three golf courses, Hjelte Sports Field, tennis courts, Balboa Recreation Center, a dog park, cricket fields, the Japanese Garden Center and numerous playing fields, picnic areas and other amenities. The Sepulveda Basin includes the largest recreation area in the Valley.

Table 3-1 lists major land uses in the Basin. Figure 3-1 illustrates the land uses in the Basin. Two parcels in the eastern portion of the Basin have been dedicated for a wildlife area. Several small farms are present within the Basin. Public utilities including the Donald C. Tillman Water Reclamation Plant (Tillman) are also located within the Basin.

<b>Table 3-1: Sepulveda Basin Land Use</b>		
<b>Sepulveda Basin Land Users</b>	<b>Type of Use</b>	<b>Acres Used</b>
National Guard Navy Air National Guard	Armory Reserve Training	60 Acres
City of Los Angeles, Dept. of Public Works	Tillman	80 Acres
City of Los Angeles, Fire Department	Fire Station	9 Acres
Agricultural Lessees	Agriculture	390 Acres
City of Los Angeles, Department of Recreation and Parks	Recreation and Parks	
	Sepulveda Golf Course	300 Acres
	Woodley Golf Course	200 Acres
	Balboa Sports Center	80 Acres
	Baseball Fields	
	Franklin Field	33 Acres
	Victory Blvd. Field	9 Acres
	White Oak Ave. Field	23 Acres
	Hayvenhurst Ave. Field	13 Acres
	Woodley Ave. Park	80 Acres
	Model Airplane Center	31 Acres
	Garden Center	16 Acres
	Bicycle Trail	11 Acres
	Valley Youth Center	15 Acres
	Woodley Golf Course & Bike Trail	7 Acres
	Parking Lot	
	Miniature Golf Course	6 Acres
	Wildlife Refuge Park & Management Center	48 Acres (currently 225 Acres)

*Source: Sepulveda Basin Master Plan, 1981.*

Figure 3-2 illustrates the Section 4(f) resources within 0.5-mile of the project alternatives.

### Public Parks and Recreation Areas

In order to qualify as a Section 4(f) resource, a park or recreation area must meet the following criteria:

- It must be publicly owned
- It must be open to the public
- Its major purpose must be recreation
- It must be significant as a park or recreation area

One public park has been identified in the proposed project area. Detailed description of this resource is provided below.

### **3-1.1 Woodley Park – Description and Significance of Property**

#### **A. Type/Location/Size**

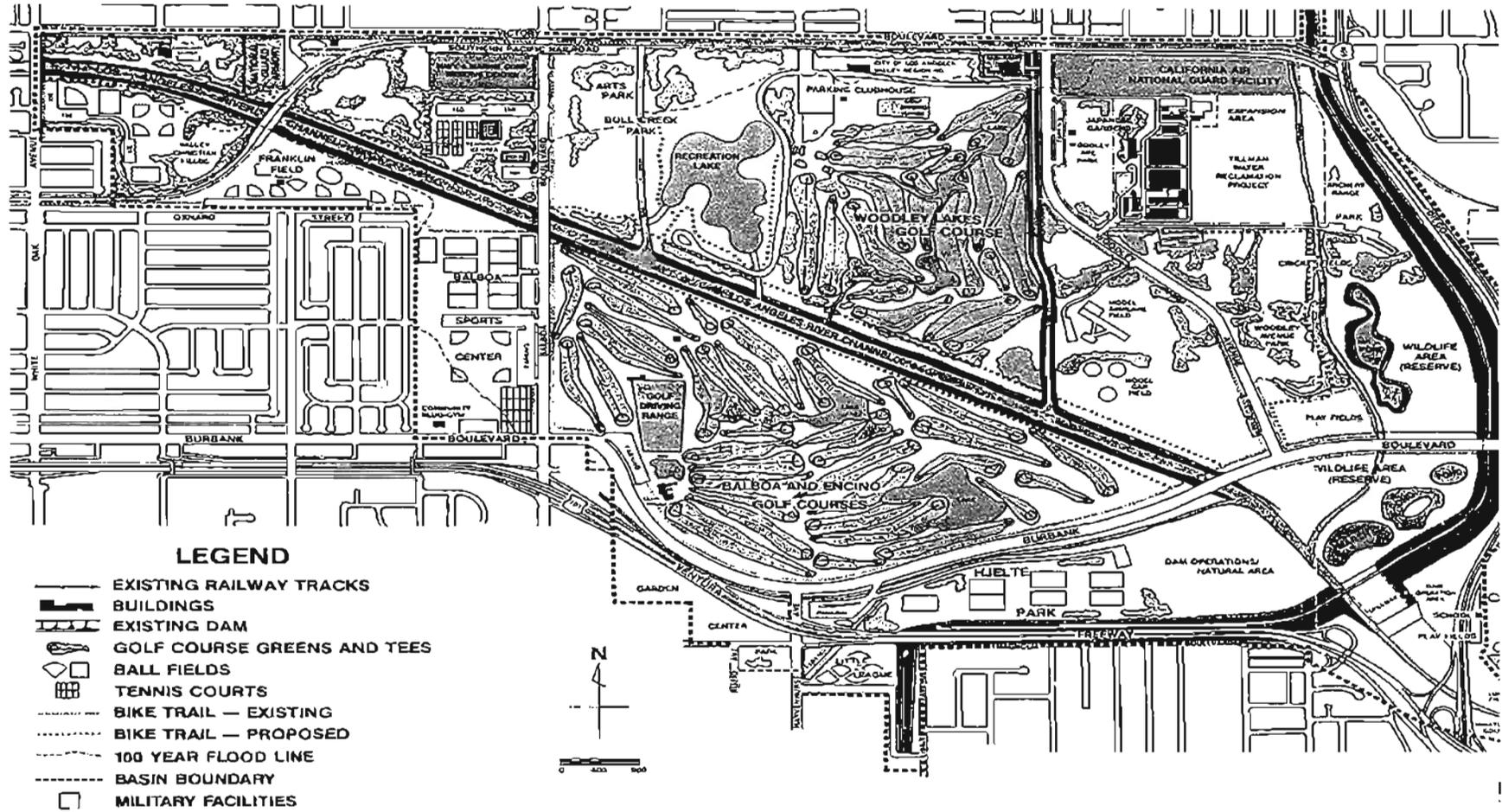
Woodley Park is a public park located east of Woodley Avenue, and south of Victory Boulevard, in the northeast corner of the Basin immediately adjacent to Tillman. The size of the park is approximately 80 acres.

#### **B. Access/Facilities/Usage**

Vehicular and pedestrian access to the park is from Woodley Avenue. The park includes the following existing facilities:

- Turfed park area
- Picnic sites
- Barbecue pits
- Cricket fields
- Children's play area
- Baseball diamond (unlighted)
- Apollo 3 flight field
- Archery Range
- Restrooms.
- Woodley Park is open from dawn to dusk.

Figure 3-1. Generalized Land Use – Sepulveda Basin Recreation Area



Source: City of Los Angeles, Department of Public Works, Sepulveda Wetlands Park – Draft Concept Design Report

Figure 3-2. Section 4(f) Resources



Map created by Joel Bonilla/Environmental Planner - Caltrans District 7, Division of Environmental Planning

### **C. Relationship to Similar Facilities in the Area**

Woodley Park is part of the Sepulveda Basin Recreation Area.

### **D. Ownership/Jurisdiction**

Woodley Park is developed jointly by City of Los Angeles R & P Department and USACE under Code 710 cost-sharing program.

### **E. Significance**

The availability and function of this park plays an important role in meeting the recreational objectives of the community.

### **Why a 4(f) Resource:**

Woodley Park is managed by the USACE and operated by the City of Los Angeles, and is open to the public. It serves as a significant recreation area for the surrounding community because of its picnic and play areas, cricket fields, baseball diamond and archery range. Thus, it meets all four criteria for the protection of Section 4(f) parks and recreation areas, and is considered a Section 4(f) resource.

## **3-2 Wildlife Refuges**

In order to qualify as a Section 4(f) resource, a wildlife or waterfowl refuge must meet the following criteria:

- It must be publicly owned
- Its major purpose must be that of a refuge
- It must be significant as a refuge

One wildlife refuge has been identified in the proposed project area. Detailed description of this resource is provided below.

### **3-2.1 Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve – Description and Significance of Property**

#### **A. Type/Location/Size**

The Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve (Reserve) is located east of Woodley Avenue, and south of Victory Boulevard, stretching from south of Woodley Park to south of Burbank Boulevard.

The Reserve is currently 225 acres, the result of several phases of development. It was initially established as a 48-acre riparian area in 1979, and went through several expansions over the years. The latest addition was in 1998 funded by the USACE.

#### **B. Access/Facilities/Usage**

Vehicular and pedestrian access is from Woodley Avenue. The following are included in the reserve:

- Restrooms
- Amphitheatre
- Haskell Creek and Riparian Woodland Habitat
- Wildlife Lake and Island with Shoreline Habitat
- Canada Geese/Migratory Waterfowl Forage Area (no entry)
- Hummingbird Hill (Native Plant Garden)
- Expansion Area (undergoing natural plant succession)
- South Area with Coastal Sage Scrub and Riparian & Mulefat Scrub

The Reserve is open to the public, with the exception of the designated foraging areas. Various activities take place during various times of the year such as walks, group hikes and educational field trips for local schools. Figure 3-3 illustrates the various functions of the Reserve.

**C. Relationship to Similar Facilities in the Area**

The Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve is part of the Sepulveda Basin Recreation Area.

**D. Ownership/Jurisdiction**

The land is managed by the USACE, who currently leases it to the City. The area is rehabilitated by local interests. Serving as an advisory to the City is the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Areas Steering Committee, whose members include the Audubon Society, Canada Goose Project, California Native Plant Society, Friends of the LA River, Resource Conservation District of the Santa Monica Mountains, and the Sierra Club.

**E. Significance**

The area was developed as a restored natural habitat for birds and small animals with native vegetation. Its major purpose is as a refuge. However, public is allowed as visitors.

**Why a 4(f) Resource:**

The Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve is managed by the USACE and operated by the City of Los Angeles. Its major purpose is as a refuge, and it is significant, as it is the only wildlife refuge in the surrounding community. Thus, it meets all three criteria for the protection of Section 4(f) wildlife refuges, and is considered a Section 4(f) resource.

Figure 3-3. Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve



### 3-3 Historic Sites

In order to qualify for protection under Section 4(f), a cultural resource must meet the following criteria: It must be of national, state or local significance.

If it is not on or eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), its protection must be considered appropriate by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA).

**Archaeological Resources.** According to the Archaeological Survey Report (Caltrans, December 2006), the results of the records search and field investigation has revealed that there are no recorded archaeological resources within the Area of Potential Effect (APE). Therefore, this Section 4(f) Evaluation does not include any archaeological resources. However, the following provisions would be included that address unanticipated discovery of archaeological resources:

- If cultural materials are discovered during construction, all earth-moving activity within and around the immediate discovery area will be diverted until a qualified archaeologist can assess the nature and significance of the find.
- If human remains are discovered, State Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5 states that further disturbances and activities shall cease in any area or nearby area suspected to overlie remains, and the County Coroner contacted. Pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 5097.98, if the remains are thought to be Native American, the coroner will notify the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC).

One significant architectural resource has been identified in the proposed project area. Detailed description of this resource is provided below.

#### 3-3.1 Sepulveda Dam

##### Description and Significance of Property

Sepulveda Dam is a single purpose flood control project constructed and operated by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Los Angeles District. Construction of the project was completed on December 30, 1941. Sepulveda Dam is the western-most of the Corps of Engineers projects in the Los Angeles County Drainage Area (LACDA) flood control system. The flood control elements include the dam and a dry-land reservoir. The dam is a "compacted earthfill structure with a concrete spillway and outlet structure near the center" and the reservoir has a storage capacity of 17,300 acre-feet at "crest of spillway gates raised." (Sepulveda Basin Master Plan EIS/EIR 1981).

The purpose of the project is to collect flood runoff from the uncontrolled drainage areas upstream, store it temporarily, and release it to the Los Angeles River at a rate that does not exceed the downstream channel capacity. The project has eight outlet passages, of which, only four have gates. Because the other four passages have no gates, Sepulveda Dam cannot "shut off" flow to the Los Angeles River.

The Sepulveda Flood Control Dam was found **eligible for listing in the NRHP**. In a letter dated March 14, 2007, the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) concurred that the Sepulveda Dam is eligible for the NRHP under criteria A and C, at the local level, with 1941-1949 as the period of significance. Under criterion A, the dam's construction coincides with a major shift in the operation of flood relief in the Los Angeles Basin from a local venture to its being federally funded and managed. Under criterion C, the Sepulveda Dam was designed in a straightforward engineering approach prevalent in Southern California. It is a compacted earth fill dam constructed during a time when accelerated changes in construction equipment allowed for larger and faster excavations. The work also involved a massive pile driving operation, reportedly one of the largest such jobs undertaken in the region at the time. The dam is also notable for the PWA Moderne design of the outlet works and spillway.

**Why a 4(f) Resource:**

Coordination with the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) confirmed the historic significance of Sepulveda Dam, which is eligible for listing on the NRHP. Because of its significance and eligibility, it is considered a Section 4(f) resource.

## 4 | IMPACTS TO SECTION 4(f) RESOURCES

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As discussed in Section 1, the use of Section 4(f) properties typically occurs when: 1) land is permanently acquired for a transportation project by partial or full acquisition (i.e., “direct use”), 2) temporary occupancy of the protected resource is considered adverse in terms of the preservationist purposes of Section 4(f) (i.e., “temporary occupancy”), or 3) the project’s proximity impacts are so severe that the protected activities, features or attributes that qualify the resource for protection under Section 4(f) are substantially impaired (i.e., “constructive use”).

The following sections describe how the proposed alternatives would affect Section 4(f) resources. A summary of potential effects is provided in Table 4-1.

The analysis of potential impacts on Section 4(f) resources below includes:

- A discussion of how the proposed project alternatives would affect each Section 4(f) resource, and whether the effects would result in a “use” of the resource.
- An evaluation of any feasible and prudent alternatives to avoid use of the Section 4(f) resource. An avoidance alternative is prudent and feasible if it avoids using the Section 4(f) property and does not cause other severe problems of a magnitude that substantially outweighs the importance of protecting the Section 4(f) property. In assessing the importance of protecting the Section 4(f) property, it is appropriate to consider the relative value of the Section 4(f) property to the preservation purpose of the Section 4(f) statute.
  1. An avoidance alternative is not feasible if it cannot be built as a matter of sound engineering judgment.
  2. An avoidance alternative is not prudent if (23 CFR 774.117):
    - Compromises the project so that it is unreasonable given the purpose and need;
    - Results in unacceptable safety or operational problems;
    - After reasonable mitigation, still causes:
      - Severe social, economic, or environmental impacts;
      - Severe disruption to established communities;
      - Severe environmental justice impacts; or
      - Severe impacts to other federally protected resources;
    - Results in additional construction, maintenance, or operational costs of an extraordinary magnitude;
    - Causes other unique problems or unusual factors; or
    - Involves multiple factors listed above that while individually minor, cumulatively cause unique problems or impacts of extraordinary magnitude.
- A discussion of measures to minimize harm to Section 4(f) resources where a potential “use” has been identified. When a Section 4(f) resource must be used, all planning to minimize harm, including development of mitigation measures, must be undertaken in coordination with the agency owning and/or administering the resource.

### 4-1.1 Woodley Park – Application of Section 4(f) Criteria for Use

#### Direct Use

The proposed project alternatives would not require any permanent use (permanent acquisition/easement) of Woodley Park.

#### Temporary occupancy

The proposed project alternatives would not require any temporary occupancy of Woodley Park. There will be no temporary construction easements, access areas and detours on Woodley Park.

**Constructive Use**

For the reasons described below, no constructive use would occur:

*Access* – The proposed project alternatives would not affect vehicular or pedestrian access to the park. There would be no construction related impacts to accessibility of the park.

*Noise/Vibration* – Alternative 2 and 3 includes construction of a new loop on-ramp that connects to Burbank Boulevard to the west of the current ramp intersection. Under Alternative 2 and 3, the new structure will be approximately 650-feet and 665-feet away from the park, respectively. Woodley Park is used for activities that do not require quiet surroundings. Also, the existing park is located in a busy urban area, surrounded by a busy traffic corridor.

According to the supplemental noise study conducted by Caltrans to analyze and highway noise impacts to the biological environment (please see Chapter 2 of the IS/EA), the existing traffic noise level in the northernmost section of the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Refuge/southernmost section of

**Table 4-1: Potential Effects on Section 4(f) Resources**

Resource	Alternative 1			Alternative 2			Alternative 3			Remarks
	Use			Use			Use			
	D*	T*	C*	D	T	C	D	T	C	
Woodley Park										No use.
Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve				X			X			<p><i>Direct Use –</i></p> <p>Alternative 2: 2.64 acres (1.17% of the 225 total acreage)</p> <p>Alternative 3: 2.92 acres (1.30% of the 225 total acreage)</p>
Sepulveda Dam	X			X			X			<p><i>Direct Use –</i></p> <p>Alternative 1: 4.93 acres of the spillway outlet area, 0.45 acres of permanent footing easement, 1.07 acres of upstream dam embankment.</p> <p>Alternative 2: 0.28 acres of the spillway outlet area, 0.79 acres of permanent footing easement, 1.07 acres of upstream dam embankment, 0.16 acres of downstream dam embankment.</p> <p>Alternative 3: 0.25 acres of the spillway outlet area, 0.80 acres of permanent footing easement, 1.07 acres of upstream dam embankment, 1.90 acres of downstream dam embankment.</p>
* D=Direct, T=Temporary, C=Constructive										

Woodley Park currently is 56 decibels. After project implementation, if Alternatives 2 or 3 were to be selected and therefore generate additional traffic noise from the south due to the new on-ramp, the noise levels would rise 1 decibel, to 57 decibels. That noise impact is well below the Noise Abatement Criteria (NAC) threshold for parks: 67 decibels.

Short-term noise and/or vibration impacts associated with construction activities would be temporary and intermittent. Because these impacts would be limited in duration, they could not reasonably be considered so substantial as to impair the activities, features, or attributes that qualify the park under Section 4(f).

*Aesthetics* – There would be no effects to the aesthetic quality of the park. Views to or from the park are not a feature or characteristic of the property.

*Biological Resources (Vegetation and Wildlife)* – The proposed project alternatives would not impact any biological resources within the park.

*Air Quality* – A comprehensive analysis of potential air pollutants has concluded that the proposed project alternatives do not pose any significant operational impact on the ambient air quality in the project vicinity. The Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG)'s Transportation Conformity Working Group determined that the proposed project alternatives are not a "project of air quality concern," and that PM<sub>2.5</sub> and PM<sub>10</sub> local impacts will not occur. A discussion of fugitive dust control measures is provided as part of this project and the measure is included as project commitments prior to construction of this project. The analysis shows that the project would not be expected to cause any new violations, worsen existing violations, or delay timely attainment of the NAAQS. The analysis shows Mobile Source Air Toxic (MSAT) emissions in the project area will decrease in future years and that the project would not result in an increase in MSAT emissions compared to no project conditions. Control measures have been identified for naturally occurring asbestos should rock containing asbestos be uncovered.

*Water Quality* – The proposed project will not have any specific impacts to water quality in park. In general, the proposed project calls for an encroachment into the Sepulveda Flood Control Basin. Therefore, the receiving water is the Sepulveda Basin Reservoir, a component of the Los Angeles River Watershed. The proposed project is larger than 1 acre, and therefore, will require implementation of Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) pursuant to the Clean Water Act (Section 402). Please refer to Chapter 2 of the IS/EA for a more detailed discussion of Water Quality and Storm Water Runoff.

#### **4-1.2 Woodley Park – Avoidance Alternatives**

Because none of the proposed alternatives would result in a use of Woodley Park, no analysis of avoidance alternatives is required.

#### **4-1.3 Woodley Park – Measures to Minimize Harm**

Since no Section 4(f) use would result from the proposed alternatives, no measures to minimize harm would be needed.

### **4-2 Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve**

#### **4-2.1 Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve – Application of Section 4(f) Criteria for Use**

Alternatives 2 and 3 propose to acquire land by permanent easement in Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve (Reserve) to be incorporated into the proposed transportation facility. As such, this action would result in **direct use of the Section 4(f) resource**.

Under Alternative 2, the proposed alignment over the Reserve would cover approximately 2.64 acres of the 225 total acreage (1.17%). The area covered under Alternative 3 is 2.92 acres (1.30%). These easements will not alter the land use of the location; the primary uses of open space and recreation would be maintained.

The access roads will most likely be located at the two loops at Haskell on/off ramps, and adjacent to the I-405, completely within the Caltrans right-of-way. The contractor will determine the location of equipment storage.

Within the Reserve, a number of coastal live oak trees and walnut trees located north of Burbank Blvd, and approximately 18 acres of an area that has been designated as a migratory forage corridor directly adjacent to the I-405 will be permanently impacted by Alternatives 2 and 3. The proposed alternatives may have both permanent and temporary impacts to sensitive species such as burrowing owl (*Athene cunicularia*) and least Bell's Vireo (*Vireo bellii*), as well as to other bird species that utilize this area as an important stopping point along their migratory routes. The proposed project may result in permanent habitat loss, which would be subject to minimization measures and compensatory mitigation. Although the project is anticipated to be completed in one season, some impacts primarily those due to an increase in noise to nesting birds and the local avian populations, are anticipated to be temporal prolonged impacts.

#### **4-2.2 Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve – Avoidance Alternatives**

The following avoidance alternatives were evaluated as defined in 23 CFR 774.17 (effective as of April 11, 2008), and consideration for the six factors as identified on page 34 to determine whether an alternative is prudent were documented.

##### **No-Build Alternative**

The No Build alternative would result in the connectors between the freeways remaining as they are. The Sepulveda Dam would remain as is without further encroachments on the spillway, earthen embankment and reservoir. No direct use would occur.

##### **1. Is the avoidance alternative feasible?**

Not applicable since there will be no modifications to the current connector.

##### **2. Is the avoidance alternative prudent?**

- *Purpose and Need:* No-Build Avoidance Alternative fails to meet the needs that the proposed project intends to address. The project's purpose and need would remain unfulfilled, and the project's objectives unrealized. This avoidance alternative compromises the project to a degree that it is unreasonable to proceed with the project in light of its purpose and need;
- *Unacceptable safety or operational problems:* The existing connector is a non-standard, single-lane structure with an operational speed of 20 miles-per-hour, and the facility is not sufficient to handle the traffic demand. The accident rate on the existing connector from the southbound I-405 to the westbound U.S.-101 is nearly four times higher than the State average for similar facilities. It would not be acceptable or prudent for the California Department of Transportation and the Federal Highway Administration to ignore this operational problem and instead choose to do nothing (i.e. the No-Build Alternative). Under this avoidance alternative, the current unacceptable safety and operational problems would continue, and possibly worsen;
- *Problems after reasonable mitigation:* The No-Build Alternative doesn't require any mitigation, therefore this factor is not applicable;
- *Additional construction, maintenance, or operational costs:* This factor was considered, but was found to be not applicable to the No-Build Alternative;
- *Other unique problems:* This factor was considered, but was found to be not applicable to the No-Build Alternative;

- *Cumulative impacts of multiple factors:* This factor was considered, but was found to be not applicable to the No-Build Alternative.

Based on the analysis above, the No-Build alternative is **not prudent** because it doesn't meet the project's stated purpose and need, and results in unacceptable safety and operational problems.

#### **Alternative 1**

This alternative would avoid the Reserve, however would still result in use of a Section 4(f) resource, the Sepulveda Dam.

##### **1. Is the avoidance alternative feasible?**

Alternative 1 can be built as a matter of sound engineering judgment; therefore is considered feasible.

##### **2. Is the avoidance alternative prudent?**

- *Purpose and Need:* Alternative 1 does meet the project's purpose and need and does not compromise the project;
- *Unacceptable safety or operational problems:* Under Alternative 1, traffic from Burbank Boulevard would lose access to the US-101. However, this loss of access does not result in any unacceptable safety or operational problems;
- *Problems after reasonable mitigation:* After reasonable mitigation, Alternative 1 would not still cause severe social, economic, or environmental impacts; severe disruption to established communities; severe environmental justice impacts; or severe impacts to other federally protected resources;
- *Additional construction, maintenance, or operational costs:* Alternative 1 has the smallest impact footprint, and would not result in additional construction, maintenance, or operational costs of an extraordinary magnitude;
- *Other unique problems:* Alternative 1 does not cause any other unique problems or unusual factors;
- *Cumulative impacts of multiple factors:* The factors listed above does not cumulatively cause unique problems or impacts of extraordinary magnitude.

Based on the analysis above, Alternative 1 is **feasible and prudent**.

#### **Alternative 4**

Like Alternative 1, this alternative would also avoid the Reserve, but result in use of the Sepulveda Dam, another Section 4(f) resource. In addition, this alternative proposes the largest footprint, and would require acquisition of up to 30 homes. This alternative was withdrawn from further study because it would compromise safety due to the addition of a new weave segment on the eastbound US-101 between the connector and Van Nuys Boulevard. Therefore, it would not be compatible with the project's purpose and need.

##### **1. Is the avoidance alternative feasible?**

Alternative 4 can be built as a matter of sound engineering judgment; therefore is considered feasible.

##### **2. Is the avoidance alternative prudent?**

- *Purpose and Need:* Alternative 4 would compromise safety due to the addition of a new weave segment on the eastbound US-101 between the connector and Van Nuys Boulevard. As such, Alternative 4 does not meet the project's purpose and need;
- *Unacceptable safety or operational problems:* As discussed above, Alternative 4 would result in an unacceptable safety problem;
- *Problems after reasonable mitigation:* Alternative 4 would require a substantial acquisition of residential property. After reasonable mitigation, Alternative 4 would still cause severe social, economic impacts and severe disruption to established communities;
- *Additional construction, maintenance, or operational costs:* This factor was considered, but was found to be not applicable to Alternative 4;

- *Other unique problems:* This factor was considered, but was found to be not applicable to Alternative 4;
- *Cumulative impacts of multiple factors:* This factor is not applicable to Alternative 4 as the factors discussed above are not individually minor.

Based on the analysis above, Alternative 4 is **feasible**, but **not prudent**.

#### **Alternative A**

This alternative was withdrawn from further study because the use of slip-ramps does not conform to FHWA policy.

##### **1. Is the avoidance alternative feasible?**

While Alternative A can be built, it is not supported by FHWA because it would require the implementation of a slip ramp.

##### **2. Is the avoidance alternative prudent?**

- *Purpose and Need:* Alternative A would compromise the project because the slip ramp would create a high potential for traffic to back up onto the freeway lanes. As such, Alternative A compromises the project and does not meet the project's purpose and need;
- *Unacceptable safety or operational problems:* As discussed above, Alternative A would result in an unacceptable safety and operational problem;
- *Problems after reasonable mitigation* This factor was considered, but was found to be not applicable to Alternative A;
- *Additional construction, maintenance, or operational costs:* This factor was considered, but was found to be not applicable to Alternative A;
- *Other unique problems:* Alternative A would require a slip ramp that is not supported by FHWA; therefore would cause a unique problem or unusual factor;
- *Cumulative impacts of multiple factors:* This factor is not applicable to Alternative A as the factors discussed above are not individually minor.

Based on the analysis above, Alternative A is **feasible**, but **not prudent**.

#### **Alternative B**

Even though this alternative would avoid the Reserve, it was determined to be was flawed and physically impossible to implement.

##### **1. Is the avoidance alternative feasible?**

Alternative B cannot be built as a matter of sound engineering. The new connector proposed by Alternative B would not be able to meet grade and vertical clearance standards. It is not feasible for the new connector "A" to pass over the Burbank Boulevard on-ramp to the NB US-101, and then under the NB US-101 mainline to tie in to the SB US-101 mainline. Alternative B is **not feasible**.

##### **2. Is the avoidance alternative prudent?**

The six factors are not discussed since Alternative B is not feasible.

#### **Alternative C**

As discussed in Section 2-3, this alternative would completely avoid the Sepulveda Dam Basin by moving the 405/101 Interchange Connector to southeast and then southwest from the existing location. It would not result in a use of the Section 4(f) resource. However, it would require full and partial acquisition of approximately 50 privately owned properties, and displace a substantial number of families or businesses. In addition, it would result in a serious disruption of established travel patterns on local streets in the area. The cost of this avoidance alternative has been estimated at seven hundred million dollars. Given the very high costs for acquisition of right-of-way, relocation costs, lost tax base for the City, disruption of local traffic and the substantial adverse community impacts to an entire community, Alternative C is not a prudent alternative.

**1. Is the avoidance alternative feasible?**

Alternative C is feasible.

**2. Is the avoidance alternative prudent?**

- *Purpose and Need:* Alternative C would compromise the project so that it would be unreasonable to proceed given the project's purpose and need. It would not provide a balanced circulation system, improve the operational design, or enhance safety while minimizing environmental and socio-economic impacts.
- *Unacceptable safety or operational problems:* Alternative C would result in a serious disruption of established travel patterns on local streets in the area. As such, it would result in unacceptable operational problems;
- *Problems after reasonable mitigation:* After reasonable mitigation, Alternative C would still cause severe social, economic and environmental impacts and severe disruption to established communities;
- *Additional construction, maintenance, or operational costs:* Considering the very large footprint, construction of Alternative C would cost significantly more than the rest of the alternatives; approximately 423 percent more than Alternative 1, 307 percent than Alternative 2, and 411 percent more than Alternative 3. Even though not a factor in elimination of this alternative, Alternative C would result in additional construction costs of an extraordinary magnitude;
- *Other unique problems:* Alternative C has an unconventional and undesirable geometric, and implementing it would cause additional unique problems;
- *Cumulative impacts of multiple factors:* This factor is not applicable to Alternative C as the factors discussed above are not individually minor.

Based on the analysis above, Alternative C is feasible, but not prudent.

**Alternative D**

As discussed in Section 2-3, this alternative also would completely avoid the Sepulveda Dam Basin by moving the 405/101 Interchange Connector northwest from the existing location. It would not result in a use of the Section 4(f) resource. This connector would be approximately 5.2 mile long. It would require full and partial acquisition of approximately 100 privately owned properties, and displace a substantial number of families or businesses. In addition, it would result in a serious disruption of established travel patterns on local streets in the area. The estimated cost of this avoidance alternative would be one billion dollars. Given the very high costs for acquisition of right-of-way, disruption of local traffic and the substantial adverse community impacts to an entire community, Alternative D is not a prudent alternative.

**1. Is the avoidance alternative feasible?**

Alternative D is feasible.

**2. Is the avoidance alternative prudent?**

- *Purpose and Need:* Alternative D would compromise the project so that it would be unreasonable to proceed given the project's purpose and need. It would not provide a balanced circulation system, improve the operational design, or enhance safety while minimizing environmental and socio-economic impacts.
- *Unacceptable safety or operational problems:* Alternative D would result in a serious disruption of established travel patterns on local streets in the area. As such, it would result in unacceptable operational problems;
- *Problems after reasonable mitigation:* After reasonable mitigation, Alternative D would still cause severe social, economic and environmental impacts and severe disruption to established communities;
- *Additional construction, maintenance, or operational costs:* Considering the very large footprint, constructing Alternative D would cost significantly more than the rest of the alternatives; approximately 489 percent more than Alternative 1, 355 percent more than Alternative 2, and 475

- percent more than Alternative 3. Even though not a factor in elimination of this alternative, Alternative D would result in additional construction costs of an extraordinary magnitude;
- *Other unique problems:* Alternative D has the most unconventional and undesirable geometrics, and implementing it would cause additional unique problems;
  - *Cumulative impacts of multiple factors:* This factor is not applicable to Alternative D as the factors discussed above are not individually minor.

Based on the analysis above, Alternative D is feasible, but not prudent.

#### **4-2.3 Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve – Measures to Minimize Harm**

All possible planning to minimize harm include the following (please refer to Chapter 2 of the IS/EA for a more detailed discussion):

- Provide funding to other proposed projects that are identified in the Reserve (Bull Creek Restoration Project and Sepulveda Wetlands Park Project).
- Develop and implement a restoration plan for the Sepulveda Basin forage area.
- Planting of native trees along the length of the new 405 connector.
- Plant at a minimum ratio of 5:1
- Primary species would be coast live oak and California walnut.
- Off-site: In-lieu fee transfer to the SMMC to be applied to restoration efforts within the San Fernando Valley watershed but outside the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve.

#### **4-2.4 Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve – Concluding Statement**

Based on the above considerations, Alternative 1 is a feasible and prudent alternative to the use of land from Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve.

### **4-3 Sepulveda Dam**

#### **4-3.1 Sepulveda Dam – Application of Section 4(f) Criteria for Use**

All three Build Alternatives propose to acquire land by permanent easement on the Sepulveda Dam to be incorporated into the proposed transportation facility. The three proposed alternatives will encroach into the Sepulveda Dam by constructing elevated structures that cross the dam spillway outlet area to connect to northbound and southbound US-101. A portion of the earthen embankment of the dam adjacent to northbound US-101 will be modified to accommodate the change. A retaining wall would be erected to minimize the volume loss of the reservoir as a result of realigning the Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) service road. Additionally, alternatives two and three propose a new structural on-ramp and off-ramp north of Burbank Boulevard that will cross the dam maintenance access road at grade on the earthen embankment. As such, this action would result in **direct use of the Section 4(f) resource**.

##### **Alternative 1**

This alternative would remove the existing connector ramps from the southbound I-405 to northbound and southbound US-101, along with the existing southbound I-405/US-101 on-ramp from Burbank Boulevard. New two-lane US-101 connector ramps (structures) would be constructed over the Sepulveda Dam spillway connecting southbound I-405 with northbound (connector B) and southbound (connector A) US-101, and Burbank Boulevard with southbound I-405. The elevated connectors that pass through the dam spillway will be approximately fifty (50) feet high, the same approximate height as the Sepulveda Dam gates. The USACE service road adjacent to northbound 101 will be realigned to accommodate the new connector which would drop down on top of the earthen embankment as it merges with northbound 101.

The proposed encroachment on the embankment is approximately 550 feet long and 39 feet wide. A retaining wall will be built along the earthen embankment (northbound US-101) to mitigate for a loss of volume in the reservoir due to the realigned service road.

This alternative would constitute an Adverse Effect on the Sepulveda Dam under Adverse Effect Criterion 2(i) as the dam embankment along northbound US-101 will be excavated for footings for the descending ramp structure, the retaining wall and the realigned USACE access road (1.07 acres). This alternative would constitute an Adverse Effect on the Sepulveda Dam under Adverse Effect Criterion 2(i) because it would entail the physical destruction of or damage to all or part of the property. This alternative would constitute an Adverse Effect on the Sepulveda Dam under Adverse Effect Criterion 2(ii) as the elevated structures to be built through the dam spillway (4.93 acres) and upon the earthen embankment, as well as the proposed retaining wall, are alterations of the property that is not consistent with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties (36 CFR part 68) and applicable guidelines. This alternative would constitute an Adverse Effect on the Sepulveda Dam under Adverse Effect Criterion 2(iv) as the addition of elevated freeway connector ramps through the dam spillway, and the utilization of the earthen embankment for the descending freeway connector ramp, change the character of the Sepulveda Dam's use (flood control) and physical features within the dam setting that contribute to its historic significance. The earthen embankment, spillway and reservoir are character defining features of the Sepulveda Dam. This alternative would constitute an Adverse Effect on the Sepulveda Dam under Adverse Effect Criterion 2(v) by introducing a visual element (elevated connector ramps) into the spillway area and on top of the embankment that diminishes the integrity of the property's significant historic features. The Dam is eligible because it was designed in a straightforward engineering approach prevalent in Southern California at the time. The earth fill dam was constructed during a time when accelerated changes in construction equipment allowed for larger and faster excavations. The work also involved a massive pile driving operation, reportedly one of the largest undertaken in the region at the time. The dam is also notable for the PWA Moderne design of the outlet works and spillway.

#### **Alternative 2**

This alternative would constitute an Adverse Effect on the Sepulveda Dam under the same Adverse Effect Criteria as were listed for Alternative 1. Under this alternative only Connector B (S/B I-405 to N/B US-101) would be constructed through the dam spillway. Under Alternative 2 there would be additional adverse effects as a result of the construction of new structures that connect to Burbank Boulevard approximately 120 yards west of the current ramp intersection. The new on ramp would extend north from Burbank Boulevard, and loop around to join the I-405 southbound just after the Burbank Boulevard Overcrossing. This alternative will require 22,000 cubic feet of the dam reservoir and 0.79 acres of footing easement in the Wildlife Refuge for the ramp structure. Both the on and off ramps would cross over and sit on top of the earthen embankment of the dam north of Burbank Boulevard requiring 0.15 acres of embankment. The earthen embankment, spillway and the reservoir are character defining features of the Sepulveda Dam.

#### **Alternative 3**

This alternative would constitute an Adverse Effect on the Sepulveda Dam under the same Adverse Effect Criteria as were listed for Alternatives 1 and 2. This alternative has the same general alignment as Alternative 2, except that the Burbank Boulevard loop on ramp would be of a standard design requiring an additional 50 feet of encroachment onto the reservoir Wildlife Refuge. The earthen embankment and the reservoir are character defining features of the Sepulveda Dam.

### **4-3.2 Sepulveda Dam – Avoidance Alternatives**

The following avoidance alternatives were evaluated as defined in 23 CFR 774.17 (effective as of April 11, 2008), and consideration for the six factors as identified on page 34 to determine whether an alternative is prudent were documented.

The project area is a built environment, with little room for geometrical improvements. As clearly demonstrated below, each of the following alternatives has been fully evaluated and determined not to be prudent.

#### **No-Build Alternative**

The No Build alternative would result in the connectors between the freeways remaining as they are. The Sepulveda Dam would remain intact without further encroachments on the spillway, earthen embankment and reservoir. No direct use would occur, however the project's purpose and need would remain unfulfilled and the project's objectives unrealized. The No-Build Alternative is considered not prudent because it fails to meet the needs which the project was designed to address.

**1. Is the avoidance alternative feasible?**

Not applicable since there will be no modifications to the current connector.

**2. Is the avoidance alternative prudent?**

- *Purpose and Need:* No-Build Avoidance Alternative fails to meet the needs that the proposed project intends to address. The project's purpose and need would remain unfulfilled, and the project's objectives unrealized. This avoidance alternative compromises the project to a degree that it is unreasonable to proceed with the project in light of its purpose and need;
- *Unacceptable safety or operational problems:* The existing connector is a non-standard, single-lane structure with an operational speed of 20 miles-per-hour, and the facility is not sufficient to handle the traffic demand. The accident rate on the existing connector from the southbound I-405 to the westbound U.S.-101 is nearly four times higher than the State average for similar facilities. It would not be acceptable or prudent for the California Department of Transportation and the Federal Highway Administration to ignore this operational problem and instead choose to do nothing (i.e. the No-Build Alternative). Under this avoidance alternative, the current unacceptable safety and operational problems would continue, and possibly worsen;
- *Problems after reasonable mitigation:* The No-Build Alternative doesn't require any mitigation, therefore this factor is not applicable;
- *Additional construction, maintenance, or operational costs:* This factor was considered, but was found to be not applicable to the No-Build Alternative;
- *Other unique problems:* This factor was considered, but was found to be not applicable to the No-Build Alternative;
- *Cumulative impacts of multiple factors:* This factor was considered, but was found to be not applicable to the No-Build Alternative.

Based on the analysis above, the No-Build alternative is **not prudent** because it doesn't meet the project's stated purpose and need, and results in unacceptable safety and operational problems.

#### **Alternative C**

As discussed in Section 2-3, this alternative would completely avoid the Sepulveda Dam Basin by moving the 405/101 Interchange Connector to southeast and then southwest from the existing location. It would not result in a use of the Section 4(f) resource. However, it would require full and partial acquisition of approximately 50 privately owned properties, and displace a substantial number of families or businesses. In addition, it would result in a serious disruption of established travel patterns on local streets in the area. The cost of this avoidance alternative has been estimated at seven hundred million dollars. Given the very high costs for acquisition of right-of-way, relocation costs, lost tax base for the City, disruption of local traffic and the substantial adverse community impacts to an entire community, Alternative C is not a prudent alternative.

**1) Is the avoidance alternative feasible?**

Alternative C is feasible.

**2) Is the avoidance alternative prudent?**

- *Purpose and Need:* Alternative C would compromise the project so that it would be unreasonable to proceed given the project's purpose and need. It would not provide a balanced circulation system, improve the operational design, or enhance safety while minimizing environmental and socio-economic impacts.
- *Unacceptable safety or operational problems:* Alternative C would result in a serious disruption of established travel patterns on local streets in the area. As such, it would result in unacceptable operational problems;
- *Problems after reasonable mitigation:* After reasonable mitigation, Alternative C would still cause severe social, economic and environmental impacts and severe disruption to established communities;
- *Additional construction, maintenance, or operational costs:* Considering the very large footprint, construction of Alternative C would cost significantly more than the rest of the alternatives; approximately 423 percent more than Alternative 1, 307 percent than Alternative 2, and 411 percent more than Alternative 3. Even though not a factor in elimination of this alternative, Alternative C would result in additional construction costs of an extraordinary magnitude;
- *Other unique problems:* Alternative C has an unconventional and undesirable geometric, and implementing it would cause additional unique problems;
- *Cumulative impacts of multiple factors:* This factor is not applicable to Alternative C as the factors discussed above are not individually minor.

Based on the analysis above, Alternative C is **feasible**, but **not prudent**.

#### **Alternative D**

As discussed in Section 2-3, this alternative also would completely avoid the Sepulveda Dam Basin by moving the 405/101 Interchange Connector northwest from the existing location. It would not result in a use of the Section 4(f) resource. This connector would be approximately 5.2 mile long. It would require full and partial acquisition of approximately 100 privately owned properties, and displace a substantial number of families or businesses. In addition, it would result in a serious disruption of established travel patterns on local streets in the area. The estimated cost of this avoidance alternative would be one billion dollars. Given the very high costs for acquisition of right-of-way, disruption of local traffic and the substantial adverse community impacts to an entire community, Alternative D is not a prudent alternative.

#### **1. Is the avoidance alternative feasible?**

Alternative D is feasible.

#### **2. Is the avoidance alternative prudent?**

- *Purpose and Need:* Alternative D would compromise the project so that it would be unreasonable to proceed given the project's purpose and need. It would not provide a balanced circulation system, improve the operational design, or enhance safety while minimizing environmental and socio-economic impacts.
- *Unacceptable safety or operational problems:* Alternative D would result in a serious disruption of established travel patterns on local streets in the area. As such, it would result in unacceptable operational problems;
- *Problems after reasonable mitigation:* After reasonable mitigation, Alternative D would still cause severe social, economic and environmental impacts and severe disruption to established communities;
- *Additional construction, maintenance, or operational costs:* Considering the very large footprint, constructing Alternative D would cost significantly more than the rest of the alternatives; approximately 489 percent more than Alternative 1, 355 percent more than Alternative 2, and 475 percent more than Alternative 3. Even though not a factor in elimination of this alternative, Alternative D would result in additional construction costs of an extraordinary magnitude;
- *Other unique problems:* Alternative D has the most unconventional and undesirable geometrics, and implementing it would cause additional unique problems;

- *Cumulative impacts of multiple factors:* This factor is not applicable to Alternative D as the factors discussed above are not individually minor.

Based on the analysis above, Alternative D is feasible, but not prudent.

#### 4-3.3 Sepulveda Dam – Measures to Minimize Harm

The following mitigation measures was presented in the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) that was submitted to SHPO under separate cover, pursuant to Section 106 PA Stipulation XI, 36 CFR 800.6(a), and 800.6(b)(1):

- A. Prior to the start of any work that could adversely affect any characteristics that qualify the Sepulveda Flood Control Dam as an historic property, Caltrans shall ensure that the recordation measures specified in section A of this stipulation are completed.
  1. Caltrans shall take large-format (4" by 5" or larger negative size) photographs showing the Sepulveda Dam in context as well as details of its historic engineering features. Photographs shall be processed for archival permanence in accordance with the Historic American Engineering Record (HAER) photographic specifications. Caltrans shall ensure that all documentation is completed before construction commences on the Sepulveda Dam. Views of the Sepulveda Dam shall include:
    - (a) Contextual views showing the Sepulveda Dam in its setting;
    - (b) Elevation views;
    - (c) Detail of views of significant engineering and design elements.
  2. Caltrans shall make a reasonable and good faith effort to locate historic construction drawings for the Sepulveda Dam. If these drawings are located, Caltrans shall photographically reproduce plans, elevations and selected details from these drawings in accordance with HAER photographic specifications. If they are legible in this format, reduced size (8 1/2" by 11") copies of construction drawings may be included as pages of the report cited in subsection A.3 of this stipulation rather than photographed and included as photographic documentation. If historic construction drawings for the Sepulveda Dam cannot be located, the requirements of this paragraph shall not apply.
  3. A written historical and descriptive report for the Sepulveda Dam will be completed. This report will provide a physical description of the Sepulveda Dam, discuss its construction and its significance under applicable NRHP criteria, and address the historical context for its construction following the format and instructions in the September 1993 National Park Service (NPS) *HAER Guidelines for Preparing Written Historical and Descriptive Data* guidelines for written documentation.
  4. Upon completion, copies of the documentation prescribed in subsection A.3 of this stipulation shall be retained by Caltrans District 7, deposited in the Caltrans Transportation History Library in Sacramento, the City of Los Angeles Public Library, and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Library.
- B. Caltrans shall prepare a website, or adapt its current website, to make the information from the HABS/HAER report available to the public for at least five (5) years. The information will also be made available to the Caltrans Transportation Library in Sacramento, and the USACE Library in Washington D.C. for inclusion on their website.

- C. Caltrans shall produce a documentary (motion picture or video) that addresses the history of the Sepulveda Flood Control Dam, and its place in the history of flood control in the Los Angeles basin. The motion picture or video shall be of broadcast quality, of sufficient length for a standard 30-minute broadcast program, and shall be made available to local broadcast stations, public access channels in the local cable systems, and requesting schools/libraries; and one copy shall be submitted to the Caltrans Transportation Library in Sacramento.
- D. Caltrans will make every effort to incorporate the following measures in the design phase of the project:
  - 1. The bents or piers of the elevated connector structures that cross through the dam spillway should be similar in shape to the Streamline Moderne gates (outlet structure) of the dam.
  - 2. The elevated connector structures should have as low a profile as current safety/design guidelines will allow in order to reduce the visual impacts and views of the dam.
  - 3. All new concrete material should match in color and texture that of the dam outlet structure.

#### **4-3.4 Sepulveda Dam – Section 106 Consultation**

In the case of historic properties, *the official with jurisdiction* is the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) as defined in 23 CFR 774.17.

Consultation with the SHPO and other cultural resources stakeholders is described in Section 2.1.8, *Cultural Resources* and in the Section 106 documentation (Historic Property Survey Report [HPSR] and Finding of Effect [FOE]). The following is a summary:

January 2001 – The HPSR for this project was completed by Caltrans and sent to SHPO for concurrence on the Determination of Eligibility for the Dam.

March 14, 2007 – The SHPO concurred with the results of the HPSR, and agreed with Caltrans' determination that the Sepulveda Dam is eligible for the NRHP.

February 2008 – The Finding of Effect (FOE) was completed by Caltrans and sent to SHPO for concurrence on the Adverse Effects.

March 31, 2008 – SHPO concurred on the FOE.

May 19, 2008 – The Draft Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) was transmitted to the SHPO.

June 26, 2008 – The SHPO signs the MOA.

Copies of the concurrence letters from the SHPO are included in Section 4(f) Appendix A.

#### **4-3.5 Sepulveda Dam – Least Harm Analysis and Concluding Statement**

23 CFR 774.3 states that if there is no feasible and prudent avoidance alternative, then the Administration may approve only the alternative that:

- 1. Causes the least overall harm in light of the statute's preservation purpose. The least overall harm is determined by balancing the following factors:
  - (i) The ability to mitigate adverse impacts to each Section 4(f) property (including any measures that result in benefits to the property);
  - (ii) The relative severity of the remaining harm, after mitigation, to the protected activities, attributes, or features that qualify each Section 4(f) property for protection;

- (iii) The relative significance of each Section 4(f) property;
  - (iv) The views of the official(s) with jurisdiction over each Section 4(f) property;
  - (v) The degree to which each alternative meets the purpose and need for the project;
  - (vi) After reasonable mitigation, the magnitude of any adverse impacts to resources not protected by Section 4(f); and
  - (vii) Substantial differences in costs among the alternatives.
2. The alternative selected must include all possible planning, as defined in 23 CFR 774.17, to minimize harm to Section 4(f) property.

Based on the above considerations, there is no feasible and prudent alternative to the use of land from the Sepulveda Dam. As required by 23 CFR 774.3, all proposed build alternatives were analyzed to determine the alternative that causes the least overall harm. The results are shown in Table 4-2.

**It was determined that Alternative 1 includes all possible planning to minimize harm to the Sepulveda Dam resulting from such use and causes the least overall harm in light of the statute's preservation purpose.**

<b>Table 4-2: Least Harm Analysis for Sepulveda Dam - Pursuant to Section 4(f)</b>					
<b>Balancing Factors Pursuant to Section 774.3(c)(1)</b>	<b>NO BUILD Alternative</b>	<b>Alternative 1</b>	<b>Alternative 2</b>	<b>Alternative 3</b>	<b>Least Damaging Alternative to Section 4(f) Resources</b>
<b>Project Purpose and Need</b>	FAILS to meet the project Purpose and Need	BEST meets the project Purpose and Need	Meets the Purpose and Need, but fails to remove the weaving segment on the SB I-405	Meets the Purpose and Need, but fails to remove the weaving segment on the SB I-405	<b>Alternative 1 BEST meets the project Purpose and Need</b>
1. The ability to mitigate adverse impacts to the Section 4(f) property	Not Applicable	Good. Impacts to the Sepulveda Dam would be less difficult to mitigate than impacts to the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve (Reference Section 106 Memorandum of Agreement in Appendix S of the Environmental Document)	Difficult. Impacts to the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve have been deemed "unmitigatable" by some. Additionally, this alternative would carry the same impacts to the Sepulveda Dam as Alternative 1.	Difficult. Impacts to the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve have been deemed "unmitigatable" by some. Additionally, this alternative would carry the same impacts to the Sepulveda Dam as Alternative 1.	<b>Alternative 1</b>
2. The relative severity of the remaining harm after mitigation, to the protected activities, attributes, or features that qualify the Section 4(f) property for protection.	Not Applicable	The impacts to the Sepulveda Dam, after mitigation, have been deemed less than significant by CALTRANS	It appears that even with mitigation, the impacts to the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve would not be mitigatable to a level below significance	It appears that even with mitigation, the impacts to the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve would not be mitigatable to a level below significance	<b>Alternative 1</b>
3. The relative significance of the Section 4(f) property.	Not Applicable	The Sepulveda Dam is locally and regionally significant.	The Sepulveda Dam is locally and regionally significant. The Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve is locally and regionally significant.	The Sepulveda Dam is locally and regionally significant. The Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve is locally and regionally significant.	<b>Alternative 1</b>
4. The views of the official(s) with jurisdiction over the Section 4(f) property.	Not Applicable	USACE concerned about impacts to the Sepulveda Dam.	USACE strongly opposed to the impacts that Alternative 2 would pose to the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve.	USACE strongly opposed to the impacts that Alternative 3 would pose to the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve.	<b>Alternative 1</b>
5. The degree to which each alternative meets the purpose and need for the project.	Not Applicable	Alternative 1 is the best alternative from a freeway operations standpoint. Alternative 1 best meets the purpose and need.	Alternative 2 does not meet the purpose and need as well as Alternative 1	Alternative 3 does not meet the purpose and need as well as Alternative 1	<b>Alternative 1</b>
6. After reasonable mitigation, the magnitude of any adverse impacts to resources not protected by Section 4(f)	Not Applicable	No significant impacts to flood volume capacity of the reservoir (reference Hydrology/Floodplain Section 2.2.1 of the environmental document)	Significant flood volume capacity of the reservoir (reference Hydrology/Floodplain Section 2.2.1 of the environmental document).	Significant flood volume capacity of the reservoir (reference Hydrology/Floodplain Section 2.2.1 of the environmental document).	<b>Alternative 1</b>
7. Substantial differences in costs among the alternatives.	Not Applicable	Not a factor: \$112,320,000	Not a factor: \$152,100,000	Not a factor: \$115,440,000	<b>Not a factor: Alternative 1 is the least expensive Build Alternative</b>

## 5 | SECTION 4(f) CONSULTATION AND COORDINATION

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Chapter 3 of the IS/EA discusses consultation and coordination with the Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) and the City of Los Angeles Department of Recreation and Parks (City), who are the officials with jurisdiction for Woodley Park and Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Refuge, in detail. The following discussion includes a summary.

Consultation and coordination with the USACE and the City began during the project initiation phase and has been ongoing. Representatives from the USACE and the City were invited and participated in Value Analysis of the project in August 2003. Prior to scoping, Caltrans held three meetings with the USACE, the City and the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Area Steering Committee (Committee) in 2005 and 2006. The goal of these meetings was to discuss the proposed project and solicit comments on potential impacts to the Basin. Public Scoping Meeting was held on June 14, 2006. Two additional meetings were held with the USACE to further address their concerns about the project. In addition to the meetings, there has been continuous correspondence between parties about various aspects of the project.

Section 4-3.5 of this Section 4(f) Evaluation includes correspondence and concurrence with SHPO, the official with jurisdiction for Sepulveda Dam. No USACE concurrence will be sought for Sepulveda Dam.

## 6 | SECTION 6(F)(3) CONSIDERATIONS

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Section 6(f)(3) of the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act (LWCF Act) (16 USC Section 460I-4) contains provisions to protect federal investments in park and recreation resources and the quality of those assisted resources. The law recognizes the likelihood that changes in land use or development may make park use of some areas purchased with LWCF funds obsolete over time, particularly in rapidly changing urban areas, and provides for conversion to other use pursuant to certain specific conditions:

*Section 6(f)(3) – No property acquired or developed with assistance under this section shall, without the approval of the Secretary, be converted to other than public outdoor recreation uses. The Secretary shall approve such conversion only if he finds it to be in accord with the then existing comprehensive statewide outdoor recreation plan and only upon such conditions as he deems necessary to assure the substitution of other recreation properties of at least equal fair market value and of reasonably equivalent usefulness and location.*

This requirement applies to all parks and other sites that have been the subject of LWCF grants of any type, and includes acquisition of parkland and development or rehabilitation of park facilities.

A search of the California Department of Parks and Recreation (CDPR) LWCF grants database found that Sepulveda Dam Recreation Area Development received a grant from LWCF in the amount of \$244,983.00 during the 1968/1969 fiscal year (Project Number 06-00061). CDPR was contacted on February 15, 2008. Richard Rendon, LWCF Project Officer, indicated that the grant was used for 160 picnic units, sanitation facilities, parking, roads, walks, lighting and playfields in **Woodley Park**. The portion of the LWCF grants list that includes the Sepulveda Dam and correspondence with CDPR is included in Appendix B.

### **Findings**

Woodley Park is a Section 4(f) resource included in this evaluation. It has been determined that the proposed project alternatives do not result in a use of the Woodley Park. As no conversion of LWCF properties would occur under any of the Build alternatives, the requirements of Section 6(f) of the LWCF Act would not apply.

## 7 | SECTION 4(f)/6(f) EVALUATION REFERENCES

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California Department of Transportation, *Standard Environmental Reference: Chapter 20 – Section 4(f) and Related Requirements*, Volume 1, August 2007.

City of Los Angeles, Department of Parks and Recreation,  
<<http://www.laparks.org/dos/horticulture/sepulvedabasin.htm>>, Accessed on January 2008.

Federal Highway Administration, *Section 4(f) Checklist*, May 1997.

\_\_\_\_\_, *Section 4(f) Policy Paper*, March 1, 2005.

\_\_\_\_\_, *Technical Advisory T6640.8A, Guidance for Preparing and Processing Environmental and Section 4(f) Documents*, October 1987.

I-405/US-101 Connector Project Archaeological Survey Report, December 2006.

I-405/US-101 Connector Project Finding of Effect, February 2008.

I-405/US-101 Connector Project Historic Property Survey Report, January 2007.

I-405/US-101 Connector Project Natural Environmental Study Report, January 2008.

I-405/US-101 Connector Project Supplemental Traffic and Construction Noise Study Report: Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve, November 2006.

U. S. Army Corps of Engineers. *Sepulveda Basin Master Plan and Environmental Impact Report/Statement*. Los Angeles: 1981.

\_\_\_\_\_, *Supplement 1 to the 1981 Sepulveda Basin Master Plan Including Environmental Assessment*. Los Angeles: 1995.

\_\_\_\_\_, *Water Control Manual, Sepulveda Dam & Reservoir Los Angeles River*. Los Angeles: May 1989.

U.S. Department of the Interior, *Handbook on Departmental Review of Section 4(f) Evaluations*, February 2002.

National Park Service, Land and Water Conservation Fund,

<[http://www.parks.ca.gov/pages/1008/files/lw\\_all\\_funded\\_projects\\_2007.pdf](http://www.parks.ca.gov/pages/1008/files/lw_all_funded_projects_2007.pdf)>, Accessed on January 2008

**SECTION 4(F) APPENDIX A**

**CONCURRENCE LETTERS FROM THE OFFICE OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION ON  
SEPULVEDA DAM**

**SECTION 4(F) APPENDIX B**

**LWCF GRANTS LIST & CORRESPONDENCE WITH CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT  
OF PARKS AND RECREATION**

**California Department of Parks and Recreation** 8/29/2006  
**Office of Grants and Local Services**

Project Number	Project Name	Agency	Grant Amount
	Land & Water Conservation Fund		
06-00060	MOJAVE RIVER WDLF AREA ACQ	Wildlife Conservation Board	\$389,130
06-00061	SEPULVEDA DAM REC AREA DEV	City of Los Angeles, Recreation & Parks	\$244,983
06-00062	POCKET AREA/GARCIA BEND PARK	City of Sacramento	\$88,183
06-00063	AMERICAN RIVER PARKWAY ACQ	County of Sacramento	\$160,222
06-00064	EL DORADO PARK DEV	City of Long Beach, Parks, Rec &	\$405,450
06-00085	SYCAMORE FLAT DEV (FEATHERLY)	County of Orange	\$178,534
06-00066	PETIT PARK ACQ	City of Oxnard	\$256,000
06-00067	TOLAND PARK DEV	County of Ventura	\$35,190
06-00068	VALENCIA PARK(MARTIN LUTH.KING	City of San Diego, Parks	\$201,548
06-00089	DOS PICOS PARK DEV	County of San Diego, Parks &	\$180,400
06-00070	KERN RIVER STATE PARK DEV	County of Kern	\$172,380
06-00071	TRUCKEE RIVER REG PK	Truckee-Donner R.P.D.	\$57,500
06-00073	METRO MINI-PARKS ACQ & DEV	City & County of San Francisco RPD	\$151,408
06-00075	DOG ISLAND FISHING ACCESS DEV	Wildlife Conservation Board	\$24,327
06-00077	CORRP	Department of Parks and Recreation	\$248,641
		Sub Total: 1968/69	\$4,636,752
<b>1967/68</b>			
06-00025	SYCAMORE FLAT DEV (FEATHERLY)	County of Orange	\$204,104
06-00027	OCEAN BEACH DEV	City of San Diego, Parks	\$74,191
06-00028	SANTA ROSA PARK ACQ	County of Ventura	\$132,973
06-00029	HANSEN DAM DEV	City of Los Angeles, Recreation & Parks	\$166,667
06-00030	ROYAL OAKS PARK ACQUISITION	County of Monterey	\$62,256
06-00031	BARTLETT PARK DEV	County of Tulare	\$35,775
06-00034	SAN PEDRO PIER DEV	Wildlife Conservation Board	\$372,233
06-00035	LOPEZ RESERVOIR DEV	County of San Luis Obispo	\$399,342
06-00037	MODESTO RESERVOIR ACQ	County of Stanislaus	\$91,261
06-00041	SAILOR BAR PARK	County of Sacramento	\$60,000
06-00042	KESWICK LAKE ANGLING DEV	Wildlife Conservation Board	\$38,345
06-00045	JOHN MCLAREN PARK DEV	City & County of San Francisco RPD	\$300,000
06-00046	SUGAR PINE POINT SP	Department of Parks and Recreation	\$300,000
06-00047	GLEN HELEN REGIONAL PARK DEV	County of San Bernardino	\$180,000
06-00048	PASO NOGAL PARK ACQ	Pleasant Hill R.P.D	\$51,000
06-00049	MILL CREEK DEV	County of Tehama	\$18,360
06-00050	CARPINTERIA VALLEY PARK DEV	County of Santa Barbara, Parks	\$24,744
06-00051	WEST VALLEY RESERVOIR ACCESS	Wildlife Conservation Board	\$17,576
06-00052	FOX GROVE ANGLING ACCESS DEV	Wildlife Conservation Board	\$30,600
		Sub Total: 1967/68	\$2,559,427

"Rendon, Richard" <RREND@parks.ca.gov>

02/15/2008 10:08 AM

Good morning Eddie,

Attached is one .pdf copy(not very good) of the original 6(f)(3) Boundary Map and one .pdf copy of the same area, which should help you out for your analysis. Also, here is the written project scope for the original project: **Development of 160 picnic units, sanitary facilities, parking, roads, walks, lighting and playfields.**

If you need anything else, please let me know. I will be leaving at 12:15 today and will be back in the office on Tuesday, February 19<sup>th</sup>.

Thanks,

Richard

Richard Rendon, LWCF Project Officer  
California State Parks  
Office of Grants and Local Services  
1416 9th Street, Room 918  
Sacramento, CA 95814  
Phone: (916) 651-7600  
Fax: (916) 653-6511

**From:** Eddie Isaacs [mailto:eddie\_isaacs@dot.ca.gov]  
**Sent:** Friday, February 08, 2008 3:13 PM  
**To:** jecks@parks.ca.gov; Rendon, Richard  
**Subject:** 1968 Sepulveda Dam 06-00061 Land and Water Conservation Fund

Hello Richard,

My name is Eddie Isaacs and I am an Environmental Planner from Caltrans District 7 in Los Angeles.

I am working on the Section 4(f) document for the I-405/US-101 Connector Project. Jeanne Eckstrom referred me to you for this grant information request.

This competitive Land and Water Conservation Fund grant was allocated to the City of Los Angeles' Recreation and Parks Department in 1968 for \$244,983 to improve the Sepulveda Dam Recreation Area as part of project 06-00061. Its status is complete and was for development. According to computer records Jeanne had as part of the project, it paid for 160 picnic units, sanitation facilities, sewers, playfields, lighting, parking, roads and walkways. I would appreciate it if you could please send a written project scope, a Section 6(f) boundary map via email or to my mailing address or fax number below:

Eddie Isaacs  
Caltrans District 7  
Division of Environmental Planning  
100 South Main Street MS16A  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Fax (213) 897-0685

I will call you in a moment to discuss this project with you.

Thank you for your help,  
Eddie

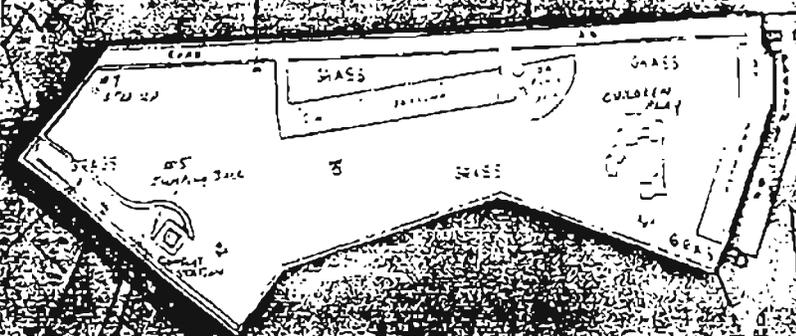
Eddie Isaacs  
Environmental Planner-Maintenance Biological Services  
California Coastal Commission Liaison  
Caltrans District 7 Environmental Planning



(213) 897-2829 [Eddie\\_Isaacs@dot.ca.gov](mailto:Eddie_Isaacs@dot.ca.gov) 06-00061-1.pdf 06-00061-2.pdf

WOODLEY AVE. PARK SECTION II  
8100 WOODLEY AVE.  
HOUSTON, TEXAS 77063

6(f)(3) Boundary Map  
Sepulveda Dam - Woodley Park  
# 06 - 00061



*[Handwritten signature]*

## **APPENDIX C | TITLE VI POLICY STATEMENT**

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**DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**  
OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR  
1120 N STREET  
P. O. BOX 942873  
SACRAMENTO, CA 94273-0001  
PHONE (916) 654-5266  
FAX (916) 654-6608  
TTY (916) 653-4086



*Flex your power!  
Be energy efficient!*

January 14, 2005

## TITLE VI POLICY STATEMENT

The California Department of Transportation under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and related statutes, ensures that no person in the State of California shall, on the grounds of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, and age, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination under any program or activity it administers.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Will Kempton".

WILL KEMPTON  
Director

*"Caltrans improves mobility across California"*



## **APPENDIX D | SUMMARY OF RELOCATION BENEFITS**

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## **RELOCATION ASSISTANCE ADVISORY SERVICES**

The California Department of Transportation (the Department) will provide relocation advisory assistance to any person, business, farm or non-profit organization displaced as a result of the Department's acquisition of real property for public use. The Department will assist residential displacees in obtaining comparable decent, safe and sanitary replacement housing by providing current and continuing information on sales price and rental rates of available housing. Non-residential displacees will receive information on comparable properties for lease or purchase.

Residential replacement dwellings will be in equal or better neighborhoods, at prices within the financial means of the individuals and families displaced, and reasonably accessible to their places of employment. Before any displacement occurs, displacees will be offered comparable replacement dwellings that are open to all persons regardless of race, color, religion, sex or national origin, and are consistent with the requirements of Title VIII of the Civil Rights Act of 1968. This assistance will also include supplying information concerning federal and state assisted housing programs, and any other known services being offered by public and private agencies in the area.

## **RESIDENTIAL RELOCATION PAYMENTS PROGRAM**

The links below are to the Relocation Assistance for Residential Relocation Brochure:

[http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/row/pubs/residential\\_english.pdf](http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/row/pubs/residential_english.pdf)  
[http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/row/pubs/residential\\_spanish.pdf](http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/row/pubs/residential_spanish.pdf)

## **THE BUSINESS AND FARM RELOCATION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM**

The links below are to the Relocation Assistance Program for businesses and/or farms:

[http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/row/pubs/business\\_farm.pdf](http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/row/pubs/business_farm.pdf)  
[http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/row/pubs/business\\_sp.pdf](http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/row/pubs/business_sp.pdf)

## **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

49 CFR Part 24.209—No relocation payment received by a displaced person under this part shall be considered as income for the purpose of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954, which has been redesignated as the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (Title 26, U.S.Code), or for the purpose of determining eligibility or the extent of eligibility of any person for assistance under the Social Security Act (42 U.S. Code 301 *et seq.*) or any other federal law (except for any other Federal law providing low-income housing assistance).

Persons who are eligible for relocation payments and who are legally occupying the property required for the project will not be asked to move without being given at least 90 days advance notice, in writing. Occupants of any type of dwelling eligible for relocation payments will not be required to move unless at least one comparable "decent, safe and sanitary" replacement residence, open to all persons regardless of race, color, religion, sex or national origin, is available or has been made available to them by the state.

Any person, business, farm or non-profit organization, which has been refused a relocation payment by the Department, or believes that the payments are inadequate, may appeal for a hearing before a hearing officer or the Department's Relocation Assistance Appeals Board. No legal assistance is required; however, the displacee may choose to obtain legal counsel at his/her expense. Information about the appeal procedure is available from the Department's Relocation Advisors.

The information above is not intended to be a complete statement of all of the Department's laws and regulations. At the time of the first written offer to purchase, owner-occupants are given a more detailed explanation of the state's relocation services. Tenant occupants of properties to be acquired are contacted immediately after the first written offer to purchase, and also given a more detailed explanation of the Department's relocation programs.

#### **IMPORTANT NOTICE**

To avoid loss of possible benefits, no individual, family, business, farm or non-profit organization should commit to purchase or rent a replacement property without first contacting a Department of Transportation relocation advisor at:

State of California  
Department of Transportation, District # 7  
100 South Main Street  
Los Angeles, California 90012-7028  
213-897-4811

## **APPENDIX E | ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITMENTS RECORD**

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## DISTRICT 7 DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITMENTS RECORD

Interstate-405 (San Diego Freeway) to the Southbound Interstate-101 (Ventura Freeway) Connector Improvement Project  
EA 07-199610 | 07-LA-405 [PM 39.4/40.5] / 07-LA-101 [PM 17.0/19.4]

Log No.	Mitigation Type	Responsible Party	Implementation / Monitoring Phase	Mitigation Measure
	<b>BIOLOGY</b>			
1-Jan	Wetland/Riparian/Uplands Mitigation	Biology/ Generalist/PM/ Resident Engineer	PS&E	To mitigate for impacts to the small wetland area west, and adjacent to the shoulder of the I-405 freeway, Caltrans PROPOSES to provide funding to the Bull Creek Restoration Project at roughly twenty percent of the total budget. Subject to change after coordination with USACE, CDFG, and RWQCB during permitting phase.
1-2	Endangered Species	Biology/ Resident Engineer	Construction	If Burrowing Owls are determined to be present within the project area, passive translocation will be employed during the non-breeding season to encourage nesting in an area away from the project location. This passive technique will be used in accordance to the guidelines outlined by the Department of Fish and Game.
1-3	Wetland/Riparian/Uplands Mitigation	Biology/ Generalist/PM/ Resident Engineer	PS&E	To mitigate for impacts to the small wetland area west, and adjacent to the shoulder of the I-405 freeway, Caltrans PROPOSES to provide funding to the Sepulveda Wetlands Park Project at roughly twenty percent of the total budget. Subject to change after coordination with USACE, CDFG, and RWQCB during permitting phase.
1-4	Invasive Species Considerations (coordination w/Landscape Architecture)	Landscape Architecture/ Biology/ Resident Engineer	PS&E	In compliance with the Executive Order on Invasive Species, E.O. 13112, and subsequent guidance from the FHWA, the landscaping and erosion control included in the project will not use species listed as noxious weeds. In areas of particular sensitivity, extra precautions will be taken if invasive species are found in or adjacent to the construction areas.
1-5	Bioacoustic Minimization Measures	Design/ Resident Engineer	Construction	Construction activities, particularly the use of impact pile drivers, may significantly increase noise levels in the area. Construction noise abatement measures will consist of noise-suppressing sound blankets, use of alternative equipment, and ensuring that all equipment is in good working order.
1-6	Clearing and grubbing	Resident Engineer/ Biology	Construction	In order to avoid/minimize impacts to nesting birds or tree roosting bats, CALTRANS will require that all vegetation/tree clearing and grubbing be performed outside the time period of February 15 through September 15.

1-7	Biological contamination	Resident Engineer	Construction	Maintenance and Construction equipment shall be checked and maintained daily by contractor so as to prevent leaks or other potential contamination problems. Contractor maintenance equipment and repair items are to be stored in an area that is currently paved, and that will not impair the road in any way or impact the biological diversity of the area.
1-8	Vehicle operational checks	Resident Engineer	Construction	At the start of each workday before moving mechanical equipment, contractor and maintenance personnel shall look under it for animals (reptiles, amphibians, and mammals) that may use the equipment for cover.
	Burrowing owl surveys	Biology/ Resident Engineer	Pre-construction	CALTRANS will conduct burrowing owl focused surveys prior to construction, and in coordination with the California Department of Fish and Game, will devise avoidance, minimization, and mitigation measures, if needed.
<b>VISUAL/LANDSCAPE</b>				
2-1	Invasive species considerations (coordination w/Biology)	Landscape Architecture/ Design/ Resident Engineer	PS&E	In compliance with the Executive Order on Invasive Species, E.O. 13112, and subsequent guidance from the FHWA, the landscaping and erosion control included in the project will not use species listed as noxious weeds. In areas of particular sensitivity, extra precautions will be taken if invasive species are found in or adjacent to the construction areas.
2-2	Erosion Control			
2-3	Special Architectural Treatments	Landscape Architecture/ Design/ Resident Engineer	PS&E	Retaining walls will be visually compatible with the surrounding community. Native vegetation will be planted in disturbed areas and wildlife areas where space allows.
2-4	Special Architectural Treatments	Landscape Architecture/ Design/ Resident Engineer	PS&E	Architectural detailing will be specified; pilasters, wall caps, interesting block patterns, color, and materials to match existing color palette of surrounding area.
2-5	Special Architectural Treatments	Landscape Architecture/ Design/ Resident Engineer	PS&E	Visual interest will be created to reduce the apparent height of walls.
2-6	Special Architectural Treatments	Landscape Architecture/ Design/ Resident Engineer	PS&E	Slope pavement at undercrossings will be enhanced with texture to deter graffiti.
2-7	Special Architectural Treatments	Landscape Architecture/ Design/ Resident Engineer	PS&E	Where needed, vine plantings will be used on walls to deter graffiti to enhance visual quality.

2-8	Special Architectural Treatments	Landscape Architecture/ Design/ Resident Engineer	PS&E	Where slope pavement is not possible, vegetation will be planted at undercrossings as appropriate.
2-9	Special Architectural Treatments	Landscape Architecture/ Design/ Resident Engineer	PS&E	Native vegetation will be planted in disturbed areas and wildlife areas where space allows.
2-10	Special Architectural Treatments	Landscape Architecture/ Design/ Resident Engineer	PS&E	Ornamental vegetation will be utilized as necessary.
<b>CULTURAL RESOURCES</b>				
3-1	Unearth Human Remains/Cultural Materials Provisions	Generalist/ Cultural/ Resident Engineer	Construction	If human remains/cultural materials are discovered during construction, all earth moving activity within and around the immediate discovery area and contact shall be made with the Caltrans Division of Environmental Planning. Construction shall be diverted until a qualified archaeologist can assess the nature and significance of the find.
3-2	Unearth Human Remains Provisions	Generalist/ Cultural/ Resident Engineer	Construction	If human remains are discovered, State Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5 states that further disturbances and activities shall cease in any area or nearby area suspected to overlie remains, and the County Coroner contacted. Pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 5097.98, if the remains are thought to be Native American, the coroner will notify the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) who will then notify the Most Likely Descendent (MLD). At this time, the person who discovered the remains will contact Gary Iverson, Caltrans District 7, Heritage Resource Coordination at (213)880-2010.
3-3	Other Requirements set forth in the MOA and or SHPO consultation	Cultural/Design /Resident Engineer	PS&E	The bents or piers of the elevated structures that cross through the spillway should be similar in shape to the Streamline Modern gates of the Sepulveda Dam.
3-4	Other Requirements set forth in the MOA and or SHPO consultation	Cultural/Design /Resident Engineer	PS&E	The elevated structures/connectors should have as low a profile as current safety/design guidelines will allow in order to reduce the visual impacts and views of the dam.
3-5	Other Requirements set forth in the MOA and or SHPO consultation	Cultural/Design /Resident Engineer	PS&E	All new concrete should match in color and texture to that of the dam outlet structure.

<b>PALEONTOLOGY</b>				
4-1	Unexpected Discovery Provisions	Paleontology/ Resident Engineer	Construction	If paleontological resources are discovered during construction, the paleontologist (or paleontological monitor) will recover them. Construction work in these areas will be halted or diverted to allow recovery of fossil remains in a timely manner. Fossil remains collected during the monitoring and salvage portion of the mitigation program will be cleaned, repaired, sorted, and cataloged. Prepared fossils, along with copies of all pertinent field notes, photos, and maps, will then be deposited in a scientific institution with paleontological collections.
<b>COMMUNITY/SOCIAL IMPACTS</b>				
5-1	Maintenance of pedestrian/bicycle access and ADA Compliance	Design/ Resident Engineer	PS&E/ Construction	The accommodation of pedestrians and bicyclists shall be taken into consideration and maintained during both the design and construction phases of the project. Special attention must be paid to maintaining EQUAL access for all persons, particularly, the disabled, the elderly, and minority and low-income populations. Full compliance with ADA standards must be maintained and implemented via the Transportation Management Plan (TMP) for all temporary AND permanent design modifications.
5-2	Temporary Detours/Traffic Controls	Resident Engineer	Construction	Temporary traffic controls, signing, barriers, and flagmen should be employed as necessary and appropriately for the efficient movement of traffic (in accordance with standard traffic engineering practices) to facilitate construction of the project improvements while maintaining traffic flows and minimizing disruption to traffic.
5-3	Street and Ramp Closures	Design/ Resident Engineer	Construction	Construction activities shall be staged in such a manner to minimize the need for street and/or ramp closures. To the greatest extent possible, such closures (when required) should be made during off-peak and/or overnight periods. In advance of, and during closure periods, appropriate public communication and temporary signage shall be used to warn motorists of the closure. Alternative routes shall be clearly marked, and associated signage maintained at all times.
5-4	Equipment, contractor yard, and restrictions on construction activities	Design/ Resident Engineer	PS&E/ Construction	Ensure continuous refinement, implementation, and consistency of Construction Staging/Lane Closure Plan to ensure optimum traffic flow through project area.
5-5	Utilities, Emergency, and Community Services	Design/ Resident Engineer	PS&E/ Construction	In accordance with Caltrans design guidelines, utility infrastructures that are impacted by project construction would be relocated before construction, during construction, protected in place, or abandoned. The utilities that must be relocated as part of project construction would be relocated in such a manner as to minimize any disruption of service those utilities provide, pursuant to Section 8.1-10, Utility and Non-Highway Facilities of the Standard Specifications issued by Caltrans. Project impacts to utility service systems during construction and operation would thus be reduced to a less than significant level.

5-6	Utilities, Emergency, and Community Services	Design/ Resident Engineer	PS&E/ Construction	Impacts to fire, police, and emergency service response times would be minimized by implementation of a Traffic Management Plan (TMP) that would contain detailed plans of access routes and detours during construction. The TMP should be reviewed and approved by the Los Angeles County Fire Department and any potentially affected fire or law enforcement agency. Caltrans would maintain contacts with the community, police, and fire protection services through public outreach during the construction phase.
5-7	Measures to Mitigate Traffic Impacts on Surrounding Local Intersections	Design/ Resident Engineer	PS&E	Add an additional left turn lane from westbound Burbank Boulevard to southbound Hayvenhurst Avenue.
5-8	Measures to Mitigate Traffic Impacts on Surrounding Local Intersections	Design/ Resident Engineer	PS&E	Add a right turn lane from eastbound Burbank Boulevard to southbound Hayvenhurst Avenue.
5-9	Measures to Mitigate Traffic Impacts on Surrounding Local Intersections	Design/ Resident Engineer	PS&E	Northbound US-101 off-ramp at Hayvenhurst Avenue – add left turn lane to southbound Hayvenhurst Avenue.
5-10	Measures to Mitigate Traffic Impacts on Surrounding Local Intersections	Design/ Resident Engineer	PS&E	Construct new northbound US-101 on-ramp from Hayvenhurst Avenue.
5-11	Measures to Mitigate Traffic Impacts on Surrounding Local Intersections	Design/ Resident Engineer	PS&E	Add an additional left turn lane from southbound Hayvenhurst Avenue to southbound US-101 on-ramp.
5-12	Measures to Mitigate Traffic Impacts on Surrounding Local Intersections	Design/ Resident Engineer	PS&E	Add additional lane on southbound US-101 on-ramp at Hayvenhurst Avenue
5-13	Measures to Mitigate Traffic Impacts on Surrounding Local Intersections	Design/ Resident Engineer	PS&E	Add additional lane to eastbound Magnolia Boulevard at Hayvenhurst Avenue
5-14	Measures to Mitigate Traffic Impacts on Surrounding Local Intersections	Design/ Resident Engineer	PS&E	Provide a traffic signal at the new intersection of the new connector, the southbound I-405 off-ramp, and Burbank Boulevard.
5-15	Measures to Mitigate Traffic Impacts on Surrounding Local Intersections	Design/ Resident Engineer	PS&E	Modify the Burbank Boulevard roadway at the above location to provide adequate right-turn and left turn storage to the new connector.
5-16	Measures to Mitigate Traffic Impacts on Surrounding Local Intersections	Design/ Resident Engineer	PS&E	Provide a traffic signal at the new intersection of the new connector/southbound I-405 off-ramp at Burbank Boulevard.
5-17	Measures to Mitigate Traffic Impacts on Surrounding Local Intersections	Design/ Resident Engineer	PS&E	Modify the Burbank Boulevard roadway at the above location to provide adequate right-turn and left-turn storage to the new connector.
5-18	Measures to Mitigate Traffic Impacts on Surrounding Local Intersections	Design/ Resident Engineer	PS&E	Provide three lanes on the reconfigured southbound I-405 off-ramp at Burbank Boulevard.
5-19	Measures to Mitigate Traffic Impacts on Surrounding Local Intersections	Design/ Resident Engineer	PS&E	Provide adequate improvements along Burbank Boulevard to accommodate increased traffic. This includes Burbank Boulevard/Woodley Avenue, and Burbank Boulevard/Hayvenhurst Boulevard intersections.

5-20	Maintenance of access to public transportation	Design/Resident Engineer	PS&E/ Construction	Coordination with local transportation authorities and access to public transportation shall be maintained throughout PS&E and construction of the project. Any relocation of transit stops shall be within reasonable distance of original point of access, and signage for any temporary changes to services shall be maintained throughout the life of the project for proper comprehension and legibility at all times.
5-21	Measures to minimize debris, litter, and pollution	Resident Engineer	Construction	At the end of the day when operations are complete debris or trash shall be removed from the work area and properly disposed of by contractor. All personnel working within the project area will follow all litter and pollution laws.
<b>FLOODPLAIN</b>				
6-1	General	Hydraulics/Design/ Resident Engineer	PS&E	The project proposes realignment of the USACE service road by constructing a retaining wall that will allow excavating the upstream embankment to restore storage volume removed by realignment USACE service road.
6-2	General	Hydraulics/Design/ Resident Engineer	PS&E	Extension of existing Burbank Boulevard Bridge: Burbank Boulevard is closed during major storm events due to raising water in the basin (the lowest elevation is at Los Angeles River). The space under the bridge will compensate for the volume loss of the basin due to the project. This proposal will avoid closure of Burbank Boulevard during major storm events, however, it is not cost effective, and also requires study and cooperation with the City of Los Angeles.
6-3	General	Hydraulics/Design/ Right-of-way/ Resident Engineer	PS&E	Acquire residential private properties; acquiring some properties at risk, at the southeast corner of the basin. McLellan Avenue and Burbank Boulevard, where the front yards are still lower than the Probable Maximum Flood water surface elevation (7.12 feet).
6-4	General	Hydraulics/Design/ Resident Engineer	PS&E	Dredging of silt from basin to restore the volume of storage removed by additional roadway embankment.
6-5	Flooding during construction	Resident Engineer	Construction	If flooding occurs during construction of the project the contractor shall be responsible to protect the workplace from adverse effects of flooding by means such as plastic sheeting, fiber rolls, berms, minimizing earthwork during the rainy season and slope stabilization to minimize sediment from clogging the protected drainage inlet BMPs, gravel bags, berms with greater porosity and structural integrity to allow runoff into drainage inlets while retaining sediment, and pumping of flooded temporary low spots created by construction activities.
6-6	Equipment storage location	Resident Engineer	Construction	Construction equipment shall be stored outside and away from the Los Angeles River and its tributaries.

NOISE ATTENUATION				
7-1	Construction equipment noise control	Resident Engineer	Construction	All equipment shall have sound-control devices no less effective than those provided on the original equipment. No equipment shall have an unmuffled exhaust. All equipment shall be properly maintained to assure that no additional noise, due to worn or improperly maintained parts, would be generated.
7-2	Additional noise control measures	Resident Engineer	Construction	As directed by the Resident Engineer, the contractor shall implement appropriate additional noise minimization measures including, but not limited to, changing the location of station construction equipment, turning-off idling equipment, rescheduling construction activity, notifying adjacent residents in advance of construction work, and/or installing acoustic barriers around stationary construction noise sources.
7-3	Noise Abatement	Design/Noise/Project Management	PS&E	A soundwall has been PROPOSED to mitigate for the increase in noise levels at the Sherman Oaks Castle Palace (a miniature golf course). An offer has been extended to management of the facility, but the decision and implementation of the measure are still pending and in coordination at this time.
AIR QUALITY				
8-1	Dust Control and other Best Management Practices	Resident Engineer	Construction	To reduce project air quality impacts to the greatest extent feasible, the contractor shall implement a fugitive dust control program pursuant to the provisions of SCAQMD Rule 403.
8-2	Dust Control and other Best Management Practices	Resident Engineer	Construction	All construction vehicle tires shall be washed at the time these vehicles exit the project site.
8-3	Dust Control and other Best Management Practices	Resident Engineer	Construction	All import/export soil carried by haul trucks shall be covered by a tarp or other means.
8-4	Dust Control and other Best Management Practices	Resident Engineer	Construction	Any intensive dust generating activity such as grinding concrete for existing roads must be controlled to the greatest extent feasible.
8-5	Equipment specifications	Resident Engineer	Construction	To minimize construction-related emissions, all construction vehicles and construction equipment shall be equipped with the state-mandated emission control devices pursuant to state emission regulations and standard construction practices, and be properly tuned and maintained in accordance with manufacturer's specifications.
8-6	Equipment specifications	Resident Engineer	Construction	All contractors shall maintain and operate construction equipment so as to minimize exhaust emissions. During construction, trucks and vehicles in loading and unloading queues shall turn their engines off, when not in use, to reduce vehicle emissions. Construction emissions shall be phased and scheduled to avoid emissions peaks and discontinued during second-stage smog alerts.
8-7	Equipment specifications	Resident Engineer	Construction	Electricity from power poles, rather than temporary diesel or gasoline powered generators shall be used to the greatest extent feasible.
8-8	Equipment specifications	Resident Engineer	Construction	All construction vehicles shall be prohibited from idling in excess of ten minutes, both on-and-off-site.

8-9	Equipment specifications	Resident Engineer	Construction	Heavy-duty construction equipment shall use alternative clean fuels, such as low sulfur diesel or compressed natural gas with oxidation catalysts or particulate traps, to the greatest extent feasible.
8-10	Specifications for solvents and coatings	Resident Engineer	Construction	All utilized solvents and coatings shall be consistent with SCAQMD rules and regulations.
<b>HAZARDOUS MATERIALS INVESTIGATION/TREATMENT</b>				
9-1	Phase II Site Investigation and Workplan	Hazardous Waste	PS&E	Now that Alternative 1 has formally been selected, further analyses should be performed under the protocols of a Phase II site investigation to address the potential impacts of contaminated soils or ground water. Prior to implementation of the Phase II program, and Phase II Workplan shall be prepared prior to commencement of field activities to identify the locations of each boring, sampling intervals, sample analysis, and methods to be utilized.
9-2	Unexpected discovery of contaminants	Hazardous Waste/Resident Engineer	Construction	Should any contaminants be discovered during testing, standard protocols for the protection of construction workers, and neighboring properties shall be implemented pursuant to state regulatory measure include but not limited to Cal OSHA standards. Project construction would be conducted with a contingency plan in place in the event that unknown hazardous materials are unexpectedly encountered during construction.
<b>WATER QUALITY REQUIREMENTS</b>				
10-1	Stormwater Management Plan (SWMP)/Water Pollution Control Program (WPCP)	Design/ Water Quality/ Stormwater/ Resident Engineer	PS&E/ Construction	NPDES Construction General Permit No. CAS000003 requires Caltrans to maintain and implement an effective Storm Water Management Plan (SWMP) that identifies and describes the Best Management Practices (BMPs) used to reduce or eliminate the stormwater runoff discharge of pollutants to waters of drainage conveyances and waterways. The SWMP shall be used as the framework for developing and implementing guidance to meet permit requirements for Caltrans' storm water discharges.
10-2	Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) Requirements	Design/Water Quality/ Stormwater/ Resident Engineer	PS&E/ Construction	Project engineers shall consider and implement treatment controls for the project and consult with the District NPDES Storm Water Coordinator to minimize nitrogen loadings associated with runoff from storm drain systems to the greatest extent possible.
10-3	Permanent Storm Water Control Measures including Operations and Maintenance Information	Design/Water Quality/ Stormwater	PS&E	Caltrans shall design permanent project BMPs during the PS&E phase of the project to prevent water pollution. Consideration and implementation of pollution prevention, treatment, construction, and maintenance BMPs is required to the greatest extent possible.

## **APPENDIX F | FHWA POLICY ON SLIP RAMPS**

---



# FHWA POLICY REGARDING SLIP RAMPS



"Holm, Jeff <FHWA>" <Jeff.Holm@fhwa.dot.gov> on 11/16/2000  
04:31:00 PM

To: Elaheh\_Yadegar@dot.ca.gov (IPM Return requested) (Receipt notification requested),  
JD\_Bamfield@dot.ca.gov (IPM Return requested) (Receipt notification requested), "Cady, Robert  
<FHWA>" <Robert.Cady@fhwa.dot.gov> (IPM Return requested) (Receipt notification requested)  
cc: Yogini\_Patel@dot.ca.gov (IPM Return requested) (Receipt notification requested), "Schlicht, Robert  
<FHWA>" <Robert.Schlicht@fhwa.dot.gov> (IPM Return requested) (Receipt notification requested)  
Subject: Re: FHWA Policy for the Slip Ramps EA 19961K, 405/101 connectors

Bob Cady asked that I respond to your question concerning slip ramps.

Our Federal-Aid Policy Guide states the following:

From FAPG  
June 17, 1998, Transmittal 23

"ADDITIONAL ACCESS POINTS TO EXISTING FULL ACCESS-CONTROLLED INTERCHANGE RAMPS  
(23 CFR 630)

a. Local connections within interchanges -- especially on freeway-to-freeway ramps -- violate driver expectancy and introduce additional decision points in an area where the information processing task is already complex. They also create a high potential for traffic queuing back onto the through freeway lanes. In addition, such ramps seldom provide for full directional service, thus creating the possibility of wrong-way movements by drivers who wish to return or continue in the same direction.

b. It is poor public policy as well as poor engineering practice to allow additional access to existing freeway ramps. In many cases, the additional access ramps would provide traffic service to individual developments. Interchanges on the Interstate System and normally on other freeways are designed to provide access to local areas -- not to individual developments or parcels. Ramps to and from freeways should connect to local area road networks which in turn perform the function of land service to individual generators."

Basically, the our guidance frowns on any type of slip ramp.

Don't forget CT Design Manual Section 502.3, 2 d also frowns upon using them.

Jeff Holm, P.E.  
Design/Traffic Operations Engineer  
FHWA California Divison  
Phone: 916-498-5021  
FAX: 916-498-5008  
E-mail: Jeff.Holm@fhwa.dot.gov

>>> Elaheh\_Yadegar@dot.ca.gov 11/16/00 08:37AM >>>  
JD/Bob

One of the comments from Caltrans Environmental Branch is to add a reference to the FHWA policy for the slip-ramps as part of the PSR-PDS.

Is there any written policy stating that slip-ramp connecting a ramp to a connector is against FHWA policy?

Thanks,  
Elaheh



## **APPENDIX G | SCOPING NEWSPAPER ADVERTISEMENT AND LETTER**



## **APPENDIX H | STATE CLEARINGHOUSE ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF REVIEW COMPLIANCE**

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AJUNOLD SCHWARZENEGGER  
GOVERNOR

STATE OF CALIFORNIA  
GOVERNOR'S OFFICE of PLANNING AND RESEARCH  
STATE CLEARINGHOUSE AND PLANNING UNIT



CYNTHIA BRYANT  
DIRECTOR

May 29, 2008

Eduardo Aguilar  
California Department of Transportation, District 7  
100 South Main Street, MS-16A  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Subject: Southbound Interstate 405 to the Westbound U.S. Highway-101 Connector Improvement Project  
SCH#: 2008041100

Dear Eduardo Aguilar:

The State Clearinghouse submitted the above named Joint Document to selected state agencies for review. On the enclosed Document Details Report please note that the Clearinghouse has listed the state agencies that reviewed your document. The review period closed on May 28, 2008, and the comments from the responding agency (ies) is (are) enclosed. If this comment package is not in order, please notify the State Clearinghouse immediately. Please refer to the project's ten-digit State Clearinghouse number in future correspondence so that we may respond promptly.

Please note that Section 21104(c) of the California Public Resources Code states that:

"A responsible or other public agency shall only make substantive comments regarding those activities involved in a project which are within an area of expertise of the agency or which are required to be carried out or approved by the agency. These comments shall be supported by specific documentation."

These comments are forwarded for use in preparing your final environmental document. Should you need more information or clarification of the enclosed comments, we recommend that you contact the commenting agency directly.

This letter acknowledges that you have complied with the State Clearinghouse review requirements for draft environmental documents, pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act. Please contact the State Clearinghouse at (916) 445-0613 if you have any questions regarding the environmental review process.

Sincerely,

Terry Roberts  
Director, State Clearinghouse

Enclosures  
cc: Resources Agency

1400 10th Street P.O. Box 3044 Sacramento, California 95812-3044  
(916) 445-0613 FAX (916) 323-3018 www.opr.ca.gov

**Document Details Report  
State Clearinghouse Data Base**

**SCH#** 2008041100  
**Project Title** Southbound Interstate 405 to the Westbound U.S. Highway-101 Connector Improvement Project  
**Lead Agency** Caltrans #7

**Type** JD Joint Document  
**Description** NOTE: Joint Document comprised of Negative Declaration and Environmental Assessment.

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) proposes various alternatives to improve the connector from the southbound San Diego Freeway (I-405) to the westbound Ventura Freeway (U.S. Highway-101). A new, upgraded 50 mph two-lane connector would replace the existing 20 mph single-lane connector. The proposed project would require right-of-way from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers related to the operation of the Sepulveda Dam.

**Lead Agency Contact**

**Name** Eduardo Aguilar  
**Agency** California Department of Transportation, District 7  
**Phone** (213) 897-8492 **Fax**  
**email**  
**Address** 100 South Main Street, MS-16A  
**City** Los Angeles **State** CA **Zip** 90012

**Project Location**

**County** Los Angeles  
**City** Los Angeles, City of  
**Region**  
**Cross Streets** Sepulveda Boulevard, Burbank Boulevard (I-405/US-101)  
**Parcel No.**  
**Township** 1N **Range** 15W **Section** **Base** 83

**Proximity to:**

**Highways** US 101  
**Airports** Van Nuys Airport  
**Railways**  
**Waterways** LA River, Sepulveda Dam, Haskell Creek  
**Schools** Many  
**Land Use**

**Project Issues** Aesthetic/Visual; Air Quality; Archaeologic-Historic; Biological Resources; Cumulative Effects; Drainage/Absorption; Economics/Jobs; Flood Plain/Flooding; Geologic/Seismic; Growth Inducing; Landuse, Noise; Population/Housing Balance; Public Services; Recreation/Parks; Schools/Universities; Solid Waste; Toxic/Hazardous; Traffic/Circulation; Vegetation; Water Quality; Wetland/Riparian; Wildlife

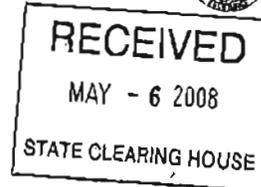
**Reviewing Agencies** Resources Agency; Regional Water Quality Control Board, Region 4; Department of Parks and Recreation; Native American Heritage Commission; Central Valley Flood Protection Board; Department of Fish and Game, Region 5; Department of Water Resources; California Highway Patrol; Caltrans, Division of Aeronautics; Air Resources Board, Transportation Projects; State Water Resources Control Board, Clean Water Program; State Lands Commission

**Date Received** 04/17/2008 **Start of Review** 04/17/2008 **End of Review** 05/28/2008

Note: Blanks in data fields result from insufficient information provided by lead agency

## NATIVE AMERICAN HERITAGE COMMISSION

516 CAPITOL MALL, ROOM 364  
SACRAMENTO, CA 95814  
(916) 659-8261  
Fax (916) 857-5360  
Web Site [www.nahc.ca.gov](http://www.nahc.ca.gov)  
e-mail: [ds\\_nahc@pacbell.net](mailto:ds_nahc@pacbell.net)



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April 30, 2008

Mr. Eduardo Aguilar  
CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
100 S. Main Street, MS 16A  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Re: SCH#2008041100: CEQA Notice of Completion; proposed Negative Declaration for Southbound Interstate 405 to U.S. Highway 101 Connector Improvement Project, Sherman Oaks Area; Caltrans Project; Los Angeles County, California

Dear Mr. Aguilar:

The Native American Heritage Commission is the state agency designated to protect California's Native American Cultural Resources. The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requires that any project that causes a substantial adverse change in the significance of an historical resource, that includes archaeological resources, is a 'significant effect' requiring the preparation of an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) per the California Code of Regulations §15064.5(b)(c) (CEQA guidelines). Section 15382 of the 2007 CEQA Guidelines defines a significant impact on the environment as "a substantial, or potentially substantial, adverse change in any of physical conditions within an area affected by the proposed project, including ... objects of historic or aesthetic significance." In order to comply with this provision, the lead agency is required to assess whether the project will have an adverse impact on these resources within the 'area of potential effect (APE)', and if so, to mitigate that effect. To adequately assess the project-related impacts on historical resources, the Commission recommends the following action:

- √ Contact the appropriate California Historic Resources Information Center (CHRIS) for possible 'recorded sites' in locations where the development will or might occur. Contact information for the Information Center nearest you is available from the State Office of Historic Preservation (916/853-7278)/ <http://www.ohp.parks.ca.gov>. The record search will determine:
  - If a part or the entire APE has been previously surveyed for cultural resources.
  - If any known cultural resources have already been recorded in or adjacent to the APE.
  - If the probability is low, moderate, or high that cultural resources are located in the APE.
  - If a survey is required to determine whether previously unrecorded cultural resources are present.
- √ If an archaeological inventory survey is required, the final stage is the preparation of a professional report detailing the findings and recommendations of the records search and field survey.
  - The final report containing site forms, site significance, and mitigation measures should be submitted immediately to the planning department. All information regarding site locations, Native American human remains, and associated funerary objects should be in a separate confidential addendum, and not be made available for public disclosure.
  - The final written report should be submitted within 3 months after work has been completed to the appropriate regional archaeological information center.
- √ Contact the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) for:
  - A Sacred Lands File (SLF) search of the project area and information on tribal contacts in the project vicinity that may have additional cultural resource information. Please provide this office with the following citation format to assist with the Sacred Lands File search request: USGS 7.5-minute quadrangle citation with name, township, range and section.
  - The NAHC advises the use of Native American Monitors to ensure proper identification and care given cultural resources that may be discovered. The NAHC recommends that contact be made with Native American Contacts on the attached list to get their input on potential project impact (APE). In some cases, the existence of a Native American cultural resources may be known only to a local tribe(s).
- √ Lack of surface evidence of archeological resources does not preclude their subsurface existence.
  - Lead agencies should include in their mitigation plan provisions for the identification and evaluation of accidentally discovered archeological resources, per California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) §15064.5 (f). In areas of identified archaeological sensitivity, a certified archaeologist and a culturally affiliated Native American, with knowledge in cultural resources, should monitor all ground-disturbing activities.
  - A culturally-affiliated Native American tribe may be the only source of information about a Sacred Site/Native American cultural resource.
  - Lead agencies should include in their mitigation plan provisions for the disposition of recovered artifacts, in consultation with culturally affiliated Native Americans.

√ Lead agencies should include provisions for discovery of Native American human remains or unmarked cemeteries in their mitigation plans.

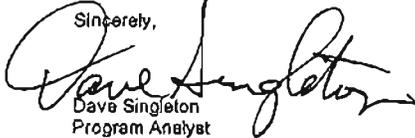
• CEQA Guidelines, Section 15084.5(d) requires the lead agency to work with the Native Americans identified by this Commission if the initial Study identifies the presence or likely presence of Native American human remains within the APE. CEQA Guidelines provide for agreements with Native American, identified by the NAHC, to assure the appropriate and dignified treatment of Native American human remains and any associated grave liens.

√ Health and Safety Code §7050.5, Public Resources Code §5097.98 and Sec. §15084.5 (d) of the California Code of Regulations (CEQA Guidelines) mandate procedures to be followed, including that construction or excavation be stopped in the event of an accidental discovery of any human remains in a location other than a dedicated cemetery until the county coroner or medical examiner can determine whether the remains are those of a Native American. Note that §7052 of the Health & Safety Code states that disturbance of Native American cemeteries is a felony.

√ Lead agencies should consider avoidance, as defined in §15370 of the California Code of Regulations (CEQA Guidelines), when significant cultural resources are discovered during the course of project planning and implementation

Please feel free to contact me at (916) 653-6251 if you have any questions.

Sincerely,



Dave Singleton  
Program Analyst

Attachment: List of Native American Contacts

Cc: State Clearinghouse

## **APPENDIX I | ANNOUNCEMENT OF PUBLIC HEARING**

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**ANNOUNCEMENT OF PUBLIC HEARING**

for the southbound San Diego Freeway  
(Interstate-405) to the northbound Ventura  
Freeway (US Highway-101) Connector  
Improvement Project



<p><b>What's Being Planned?</b></p>	<p>The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) proposes various alternatives to improve the connector from the southbound San Diego Freeway (Interstate-405) to the northbound Ventura Freeway (U.S. Highway-101). A new, upgraded 50 mph two-lane connector would replace the existing 20 mph single-lane connector. The proposed project would require right-of-way from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers related to the operation of the Sepulveda Dam.</p>
<p><b>Why This Ad?</b></p>	<p>A public hearing will be held to allow any interested individuals an opportunity to discuss certain design features of the project with Caltrans staff before the final design and alternative is selected.</p>
<p><b>What's Available?</b></p>	<p>The Environmental Assessment/Initial Study (EA/IS) is available for viewing and download at <a href="http://www.dot.ca.gov/d1s107/resources/evrdocs/">http://www.dot.ca.gov/d1s107/resources/evrdocs/</a>. The EA/IS is also available for review and copying at the Caltrans District 7 Division of Environmental Planning (100 S. Main Street, Los Angeles) on weekdays from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. The EA/IS is also available at the Los Angeles Public Library – Van Nuys Branch located on 6250 Sylmar Avenue Van Nuys, CA 91401 and at the Sherman Oaks Branch Library located at 14245 Moorpark Street, Sherman Oaks, 91423.</p>
<p><b>Where Do You Come In?</b></p>	<p>The public hearing will be held:   <b>Wednesday May 14, 2008 from 5:30pm-8:30pm</b> at Valley Beth Shalom located at 15739 Ventura Blvd., Encino, CA 91436.</p> <p>If you cannot attend, please submit your written comments no later than May 28, 2008 to:          Mr. Ronald Kosinski          Deputy District Director          California Department of Transportation          Division of Environmental Planning (405/101)          100 South Main Street MS 15A          Los Angeles, CA 90012</p> <p>Individuals who require special accommodation (American Sign Language interpreter, accessible seating, documentation in alternative formats, etc.) are requested to contact the Department's Public Affairs Office at 213-897-3656 at least 21 days prior to the scheduled hearing date. TDD users may contact the California Relay Service TDD line at 1-800-735-2929 or Voice Line at 1-800-735-2922.</p>
<p><b>Contact</b></p>	<p>For additional information, please contact Mr. Eduardo Aguilar at (213) 897-8492. Thank you for your interest in this transportation project.</p>

*Thank you for your interest!*  
 Caltrans improves mobility across California!



**APPENDIX J | PUBLIC NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY OF DRAFT EA/IS  
AND PUBLIC HEARING**

---



**DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**

DISTRICT 7

100 MAIN STREET, MS16A

LOS ANGELES, CA 90012

PHONE (213) 897-0703

FAX (213) 897-0685

TTY (213) 897-4937



*Flex your power!  
Be energy efficient!*

April 14, 2008

Responsible Agencies, Review Agencies, Trustee  
Agencies, Cooperating Agencies and Individuals  
Interested in the improvement of the connector  
from the southbound San Diego Freeway  
(Interstate-405) to the westbound Ventura  
Freeway (U.S. Highway-101)

07-LA-405 PM 39.4/40.5  
07-LA-101 PM 17.0/19.4  
Southbound I-405 to the  
Westbound U.S.-101 Connector  
Improvement Project  
EA 199610

**Draft Environmental Assessment/Initial Study Now Available**

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) proposes various alternatives to improve the connector from the southbound San Diego Freeway (Interstate-405) to the westbound Ventura Freeway (U.S. Highway-101). A new, upgraded 50 mph two-lane connector would replace the existing 20 mph single-lane connector. The proposed project would require right-of-way from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers related to the operation of the Sepulveda Dam.

In conformity with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), and Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act, Caltrans has studied the effects that the proposed project may have on the environment and community. The results of these studies are contained in an environmental document known as a draft Environmental Assessment/Initial Study (EA/IS). The purpose of this notice is to inform the public of its completion and availability to any interested individuals.

Furthermore, a hearing will be held to allow any interested individuals an opportunity to discuss certain design features of the project with Caltrans staff before the final design and alternative is selected. **The public hearing will be held on Wednesday May 14, 2008 from 5:30pm-8:30pm at Valley Beth Shalom located at 15739 Ventura Blvd., Encino, CA 91436.** Individuals who require special accommodation (American Sign Language interpreter, accessible seating, documentation in alternative formats, etc.) are requested to contact the Caltrans Public Affairs Office at 213-897-3656 at least 21 days prior to the scheduled hearing date. TDD users may contact the California Relay Service TDD line at 1-800-735-2929 or Voice Line at 1-800-735-2922.

Enclosed is a copy of the draft EA/IS for your review. Please submit any written comments no later than May 28, 2008 to:

Mr. Ronald Kosinski, Deputy District Director  
California Department of Transportation  
Division of Environmental Planning (405/101 Connector)  
100 South Main Street MS 16A  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

For additional information, or for an additional copy of the draft EA/IS (hard copy and/or CD), please contact Mr. Eduardo Aguilar at (213) 897-8492. Thank you for your interest in this transportation improvement project.

Sincerely,

  
RONALD KOSINSKI  
Deputy District Director



**APPENDIX K | PUBLIC HEARING NEWSPAPER AD (DAY 7/DAY 30)**

---



**PUBLIC NOTICE**

Notice of Availability of Draft Environmental Document and Announcement of Public Hearing for the southbound San Diego Freeway (Interstate-405) to the westbound Ventura Freeway (US Highway-101) Connector Improvement Project



<p><b>What's Being Planned?</b></p>	<p>The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) proposes various alternatives to improve the connector from the southbound San Diego Freeway (Interstate-405) to the westbound Ventura Freeway (U.S. Highway-101). A new, upgraded 50 mph two-lane connector would replace the existing 20 mph single-lane connector. The proposed project would require right-of-way from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers related to the operation of the Sepulveda Dam.</p>
<p><b>Why This Ad?</b></p>	<p>Caltrans has studied the effects that the proposed project may have on the environment and community. The results of these studies are contained in an environmental document known as a draft Environmental Assessment/Initial Study (EA/IS). The purpose of this notice is to inform the public of its completion and availability to any interested individuals.</p>
<p><b>What's Available?</b></p>	<p>The EA/IS is available for review and copying at the Caltrans District 7 Division of Environmental Planning (100 S. Main Street, Los Angeles) on weekdays from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. The environmental document is also available at the Los Angeles Public Library - Van Nuys Branch located on 6250 Sylmar Avenue Van Nuys, CA 91401 and at the Sherman Oaks Branch Library located at 14245 Moorpark Street, Sherman Oaks, 91423.</p>
<p><b>Where Do You Come In?</b></p>	<p>Do you have any comments regarding the EA/IS? Do you disagree with the findings of the studies? Would you care to make any other comments about the project? Please submit any written comments no later than May 28, 2008 to:</p> <p>Mr. Ronald Kosinski Deputy District Director California Department of Transportation Division of Environmental Planning (405/101) 100 South Main Street MS 16A Los Angeles, CA 90012</p> <p>Caltrans will begin accepting comments on April 14, 2008</p>
<p><b>When and Where?</b></p>	<p>A hearing will be held to allow any interested individuals an opportunity to discuss certain design features of the project with Caltrans staff before the final design and alternative is selected. The public hearing will be held on Wednesday May 14, 2008 from 5:30pm-8:30pm at Valley Beth Shalom located at 15739 Ventura Blvd., Encino, CA 91436. Individuals who require special accommodation (American Sign Language interpreter, accessible seating, documentation in alternative formats, etc.) are requested to contact the Department's Public Affairs Office at 213-897-3656 at least 21 days prior to the scheduled hearing date. TDD users may contact the California Relay Service TDD line at 1-800-735-2929 or Voice Line at 1-800-735-2922.</p>
<p><b>Contact</b></p>	<p>For additional information, please contact Mr. Eduardo Aguilar at (213) 897-8492. Thank you for your interest in this transportation project.</p> <p><i>Thank you for your interest!</i> Caltrans improves mobility across California!</p>



**ANNOUNCEMENT OF PUBLIC HEARING**

for the southbound San Diego Freeway  
(Interstate-405) to the northbound Ventura  
Freeway (US Highway-101) Connector  
Improvement Project



<p><b>What's Being Planned?</b></p>	<p>The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) proposes various alternatives to improve the connector from the southbound San Diego Freeway (Interstate-405) to the northbound Ventura Freeway (U.S. Highway-101). A new, upgraded 50 mph two-lane connector would replace the existing 20 mph single-lane connector. The proposed project would require right-of-way from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers related to the operation of the Sepulveda Dam.</p>
<p><b>Why This Ad?</b></p>	<p>A public hearing will be held to allow any interested individuals an opportunity to discuss certain design features of the project with Caltrans staff before the final design and alternative is selected.</p>
<p><b>What's Available?</b></p>	<p>The Environmental Assessment/Initial Study (EA/IS) is available for viewing and download at <a href="http://www.dot.ca.gov/dist07/resources/envdocs/">http://www.dot.ca.gov/dist07/resources/envdocs/</a>. The EA/IS is also available for review and copying at the Caltrans District 7 Division of Environmental Planning (100 S. Main Street, Los Angeles) on weekdays from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. The EA/IS is also available at the Los Angeles Public Library - Van Nuys Branch located on 6250 Sylmar Avenue Van Nuys, CA 91401 and at the Sherman Oaks Branch Library located at 14245 Moorpark Street, Sherman Oaks, 91423.</p>
<p><b>Where Do You Come In?</b></p>	<p>The public hearing will be held:</p> <p>Wednesday May 14, 2008 from 5:30pm-8:30pm at Valley Beth Shalom located at 15739 Ventura Blvd., Encino, CA 91436.</p> <p>If you cannot attend, please submit your written comments no later than May 28, 2008 to:</p> <p>Mr. Ronald Kosinski Deputy District Director California Department of Transportation Division of Environmental Planning (405/101) 100 South Main Street MS 16A Los Angeles, CA 90012</p> <p>Individuals who require special accommodation (American Sign Language Interpreter, accessible seating, documentation in alternative formats, etc.) are requested to contact the Department's Public Affairs Office at 213-897-3656 at least 21 days prior to the scheduled hearing date. TDD users may contact the California Relay Service TDD line at 1-800-735-2920 or Voice Line at 1-800-735-2822.</p>
<p><b>Contact</b></p>	<p>For additional information, please contact Mr. Eduardo Aguilar at (213) 897-8492. Thank you for your interest in this transportation project.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Thank you for your interest!</i> Caltrans improves mobility across California!</p>	









## Southbound I-405 to Northbound US-101 Connector Improvement Project

### Public Hearing

#### AGENDA

**DATE/TIME:** Wednesday May 14, 2008 @ 5:30 PM to 8:30 PM

**LOCATION:** Valley Beth Shalom  
15739 Ventura Blvd., Encino, CA

- 
- 6:00 PM Laura Muna-Landa, Arellano Associates, Presiding Officer
- Welcome/Opening Comments
  - Purpose of the Public Hearing
  - Public Hearing Procedure
- 6:15 PM Eduardo Aguilar, Division of Environmental Planning
- Purpose and Need of the Project
  - Project Alternatives
  - Environmental Process
- 6:45 PM Ashraf Habbak, Division of Project Management
- Project Funding Status
  - Project Funding Sources
  - Project Schedule
- 6:50 PM Laura Muna-Landa, Arellano Associates, Presiding Officer
- Public Comments/Testimony
  - Question and Answer Session
- 8:15 PM Laura Muna-Landa, Arellano Associates, Presiding Officer
- Closing Comments







### PROJECT PURPOSE

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) proposes to improve the interchange of the San Diego Freeway (I-405) and the Ventura Freeway (U.S. 101). The purpose of the project is to improve safety, operation, capacity, and traffic flow through the interchange by improving the connector. Caltrans proposes to replace the existing connector, from the southbound (SB) I-405 to the westbound (WB) U.S. 101 with an upgraded connector consisting of a new two-lane, 50 mph bridge spanning over the spillway of the Sepulveda Dam.

### PROJECT ALTERNATIVES

**No Build Alternative** - The "No Build" or "Do Nothing" alternative calls for the existing connector, from SB I-405 to NB U.S.-101, to remain as is.

**Alternative 1** - This alternative calls for a new, elevated, connector bridge structure that spans the spillway of the Sepulveda Dam, from SB I-405 to NB U.S.-101. It will eliminate the sharp turn radius curve of the existing connector. The Burbank Boulevard on-ramp to SB I-405 would need to be reconstructed to pass beneath the new connector structure. To implement this new Burbank Boulevard on-ramp structure, both of the existing connectors from SB I-405 to the U.S.-101 would be removed, therefore, traffic from Burbank Boulevard would lose access to both directions of U.S.-101. Additionally, with both of the existing connectors from SB I-405 to U.S.-101 requiring removal, this alternative will also require the construction of a new connector from SB I-405 to SB U.S.-101, in order to maintain that particular access.

**Alternative 2** - This alternative calls for a new, elevated, connector bridge structure that spans the spillway of the Sepulveda Dam, from SB I-405 to NB U.S.-101. However unlike Alternative 1, this alternative maintains access from Burbank Boulevard to U.S.-101 via the construction of a constricted loop on-ramp, which encroaches onto the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Refuge (within the flood control basin) located immediately north of Burbank Boulevard, immediately west of I-405. Since the loop design is constricted to minimize the encroachment onto the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Refuge, in order to properly implement the on-ramp loop, a reconstruction of the Burbank Boulevard/I-405 over-crossing bridge would be required. This would result in an additional increase in temporary construction related traffic congestion. Also unlike Alternative 1, since the new Burbank Boulevard loop onramp (which also provides access to SB I-405) encroaches upon the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Refuge rather than on the existing connectors, this alternative does not require the removal of the existing connector from SB I-405 to SB U.S.-101. In other words, unlike Alternative 1, this alternative does not carry the added burden of having to construct a new connector from SB I-405 to SB U.S.-101.

**Alternative 3** - This Alternative is identical to Alternative 2, except that this alternative seeks to eliminate the need for a reconstruction of the existing Burbank Boulevard/I-405 over-crossing. To accomplish this, a non-constricted on-ramp loop would need to be implemented, thereby encroaching an additional 60 feet onto the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Refuge (within the flood control basin).

### RIGHT OF WAY IMPACTS

The proposed project will not impact residential homes since a recently rejected Alternative 4 is no longer being considered.

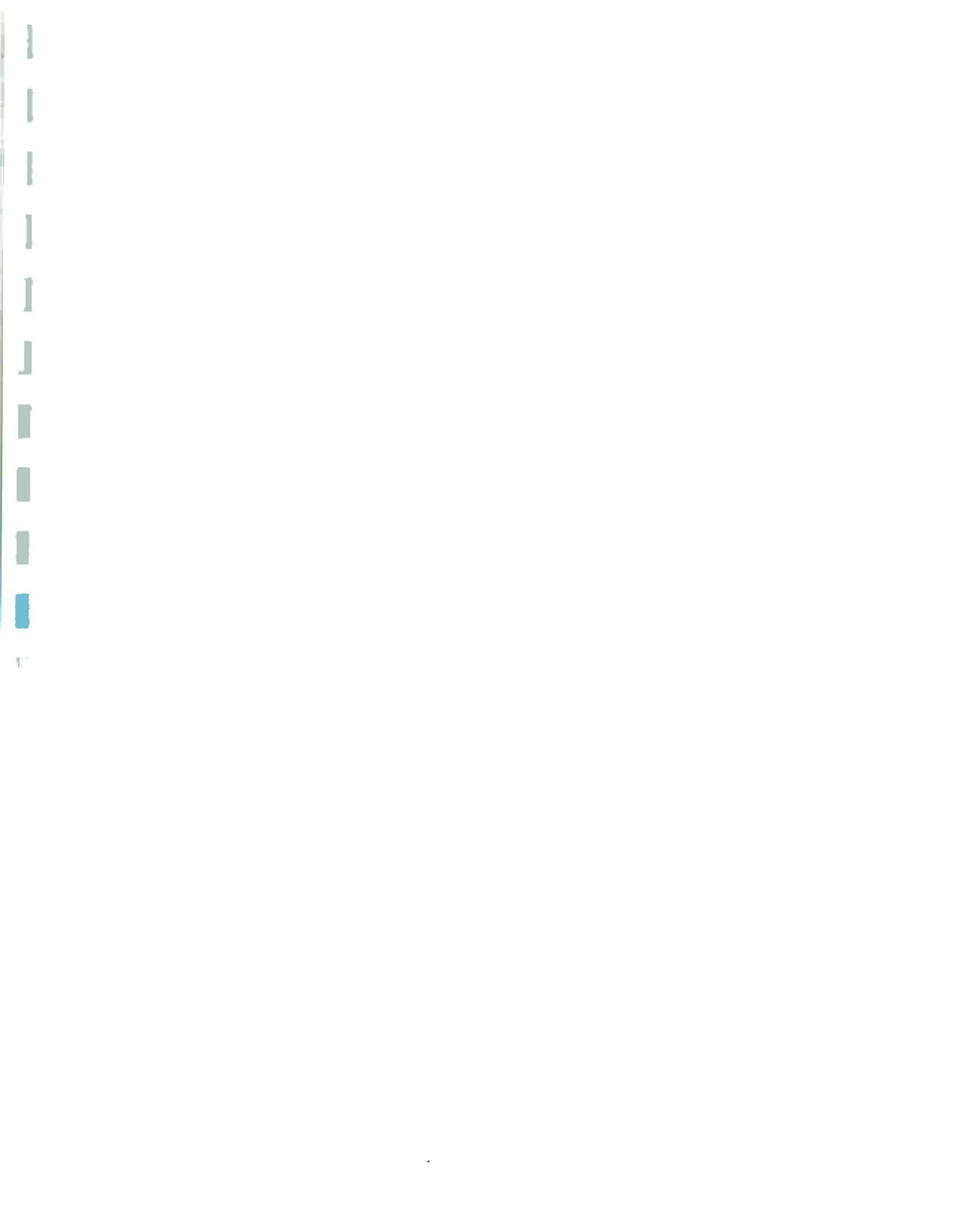
### CURRENT SCHEDULE

It is anticipated that Caltrans will choose an alternative by June 2008. Funding for this project has not yet been authorized.

### WHERE DO I SEND MY WRITTEN COMMENTS?

You can send your written comments until **May 28, 2008** to:

Ronald J. Kosinski, Deputy District Director, Division of Environmental Planning, California Department of Transportation, District 7, 100 S. Main Street, MS 16A, Los Angeles, CA 90012



### **WHAT IS THE I-405/U.S. 101 PROJECT?**

The California Department of Transportation (the Department, or "Caltrans") proposes to replace the existing connector, from the southbound San Diego Freeway (Interstate-405) to the westbound Ventura Freeway (U.S. Highway-101), with an upgraded connector. The new 50-mph two-lane connector would replace the current 20-mph single-lane connector. This would be accomplished by constructing a new bridge structure crossing over the spillway of the Sepulveda Dam. The Department has considered nine (9) alternatives, eight (8) of which are variations on this connector improvement proposal. Currently, four (4) alternatives remain under consideration, including the No-Build Alternative. The proposed project location is within the San Fernando Valley community of Sherman Oaks, in the City of Los Angeles, in the County of Los Angeles.

### **WHY IS THE PROPOSED PROJECT NEEDED?**

The I-405 freeway carries an average of 115,000 to 160,000 vehicles per day in the vicinity of the Sepulveda Basin, and the U.S.-101 carries an average of 160,000 to 165,000 vehicles per day in this area. The connector between the southbound I-405 freeway and the U.S.-101 carries over 50,000 vehicles per day, with just over half of those vehicles heading to the northbound U.S.-101 freeway and the remaining heading to southbound U.S.-101. The existing connector is single-lane structure with an operational speed of 20 miles-per-hour, and the facility is not sufficient to handle the traffic demand. Vehicles form a queue at this location that frequently backs up onto the I-405 mainline, with many weaving areas along the connector route, which contribute to high accident rates.

### **WHY IS CALTRANS INVOLVED?**

As the steward of the State's highway transportation system, of which Interstate 405 and U.S. Highway 101 are a part, Caltrans identifies and recommends all traffic operational improvements necessary to relieve traffic congestion, improve safety, and ensure that the said facilities are operating at an acceptable "Level of Service."

### **WHY DOES CALTRANS PERFORM ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES?**

Caltrans project development and maintenance activities must comply with a multitude of state, federal and local laws and regulations. Since the passage of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) in 1969 and the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) in 1970, Caltrans has maintained staff to ensure compliance with these rules. Other environmental regulations require that specific activities be performed and detailed procedures be followed. This places a tremendous responsibility on Caltrans environmental staff to ensure that all laws and regulations are followed during the course of project development and system maintenance.

### **ARE ANY PROPERTIES PROPOSED FOR ACQUISITION?**

**No!** This project will not require the acquisition of any private property.

### **WILL ANY OF THE BUILT ALTERNATIVES RESULT IN THE CLOSURE OF FREEWAY ON- OR OFFRAMPS?**

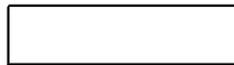
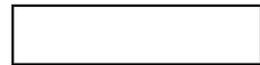
Alternative 1 would result in the loss of access from Burbank Boulevard to the U.S. Highway 101. Mitigation on the local city streets would be included.

### **WHEN WILL THE PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE BE SELECTED?**

The preferred alternative will be selected by June 2008.



Glazier Hall  
Entrance



Public Affairs &  
Arrellano Associates



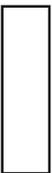
Env  
Engineering  
(Haz Waste)



Env  
Engineering  
(Noise, AQ)

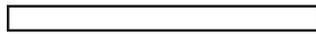


Design  
& PM

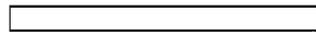
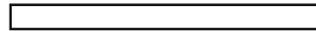


Env  
Planning

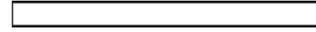
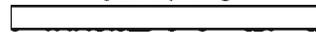
Kosher  
Refreshments



SEATING



SEATING



Audience Mic



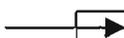
Court Reporter



Laptop



Stage



Panel Table



PowerPoint Screen



Podium



LADOT



Traffic



ROW



Landscape  
Arch



Hydraulics  
& SW





**APPENDIX M | PUBLIC HEARING COURT REPORTER TRANSCRIPT**



SOUTHBOND I-405  
PUBLIC HEARING

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1

2

CALTRANS

3

SOUTHBOND I-405 TO NORTHBOUND US-1-1 CONNECTOR

4

IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

5

6

7

PUBLIC HEARING

8

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WEDNESDAY, MAY 14, 2008

13

6:02 P.M.

14

TAKEN AT

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VALLEY BETH SHALOM

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15739 VENTURA BOULEVARD

17

ENCINO, CALIFORNIA

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FILE NO. 080514CJ

25

REPORTED BY: CAROLINE JETTER, CSR NO. 11568

SOUTHBOND I-405  
PUBLIC HEARING

MAY 14, 2008

PAGE 132  
1 PANEL MEMBERS:  
2 LAURA J. MUNA-LANDA, ARELLANO ASSOCIATES,  
3 PRESIDING OFFICER  
4  
5 EDUARDO AGUILAR, DIVISION OF  
6 ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING  
7  
8 ASHRAF MANNA, TRAFFIC ENGINEER  
9  
10 ASHRAF HABEAK, P.E., PMP, SENIOR  
11 TRANSPORTATION ENGINEER, PROJECT MANAGER  
12  
13 PAUL D. CARON, BRANCH CHIEF, MOUNTAIN  
14 AREA PROJECTS, BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES  
15  
16  
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PAGE 133  
1 A-G-E-N-D-A  
2  
3  
4 BY MS. MUNA-LANDA:  
5 WELCOME/OPENING COMMENTS  
6 PURPOSE OF THE PUBLIC HEARING  
7 PUBLIC HEARING PROCEDURE  
8  
9 BY: MR. AGUILAR  
10 PURPOSE AND NEED OF THE PROJECT  
11 PROJECT ALTERNATIVES  
12 ENVIRONMENTAL PROCESS  
13  
14 BY: MR. ARIE ELATTAR  
15 PROJECT FUNDING STATUS  
16 PROJECT FUNDING SOURCES  
17 PROJECT SCHEDULE  
18  
19 BY: MS. MUNA-LANDA  
20 PUBLIC COMMENTS/TESTIMONY  
21 QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION  
22 CLOSING COMMENTS  
23  
24  
25

3

PAGE 134  
1 5:58 P.M.  
2 WEDNESDAY, MAY 14, 2008  
3 ENCINO, CALIFORNIA  
4  
5  
6 MS. MUNA-LANDA: Good evening. We're going to  
7 go ahead and get started here. If you could take a  
8 seat, please.  
9 I would like to call this meeting to order at  
10 6:02 P.M. I would like to welcome you to the Caltrans  
11 public hearing for the Southbound Interstate 405 to the  
12 Northbound U.S. 101 connector improvement project.  
13 My name is Laura Muna-Landa, and I will be the  
14 presiding officer for the public hearing this evening.  
15 Basically my role this evening is to keep this public  
16 hearing moving in an orderly and fair fashion and try to  
17 keep it as informal as possible.  
18 I would like to thank several representatives  
19 that are here this evening from some elected offices:  
20 Timothy Lippman from assembly person Julia Brownley's  
21 office; Michael Tu (phonetic), with councilman Brad  
22 Sherman's office; and Matthew Schupbach with councilman  
23 Jack Weiss's office from the fifth district.  
24 I would like to kind of give you a little  
25 background of what we've been doing in this process.

4

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1 We're in the midst of a 45-day public comment period for  
2 this project, which began on April 14, 2008, and it will  
3 end on May 28, 2008. It's anticipated that the  
4 preferred alternative for this project will be selected  
5 in June of this year.  
6 I would like to share with you a little bit  
7 about how we advertised for this project. We ran a  
8 public notice newspaper ad, which advertised the public  
9 hearing and the public comment period.  
10 It appeared in the following newspapers: "The  
11 Daily News" on April 14, "The Jewish Journal" on  
12 April 18; "Telemundo" on April 17; and the "L.A. Watts  
13 Times" on April 17.  
14 Additionally, Caltrans Division of Public  
15 Affairs issued a press release on April 14. We also had  
16 a second public notice that appeared at several  
17 newspapers advertising this evening's public hearing,  
18 and it appeared in "The Daily News" on May 7, "The  
19 Jewish Journal" on May 9, "Telemundo" on May 8, and the  
20 "L.A. Watts Times" on May 8.  
21 We have environmental document availability  
22 letters that were sent to federal, state, county and  
23 local elected officials as well as other public and  
24 private organizations and individuals. These notices  
25 were sent directly via U.S. mail.

5

SOUTHBOND I-405  
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1 We also had a project newsletter that many of  
2 you may have received announcing the public hearing.  
3 And that was sent to over 2,000 individuals on a  
4 database that we comprised throughout the course of the  
5 project.

6 The draft environmental document is also  
7 available for viewing, and it is downloadable in the  
8 Caltrans website. I also believe we have limited copies  
9 over here available for your use. And I believe that  
10 we're willing to give those out as long as we have them  
11 available.

12 I would like to also let you know that  
13 tonight's proceedings are being recorded by a shorthand  
14 court reporter that's down here.

15 So when you come in to speak, if you could,  
16 please, definitely use the microphone even if your voice  
17 is the kind of voice that carries. It aids her in  
18 trying to get all of your comments noted. And also if  
19 you could speak slowly so that she can record your  
20 comments accordingly.

21 The purpose of the public hearing tonight is to  
22 receive public testimony and to answer questions  
23 regarding the project alternatives, the draft  
24 environmental document and to give hearing attendees the  
25 opportunity to present their comments concerning the

6

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1 please turn these back in to the front desk so we can  
2 try to organize those and get them ready for this  
3 evening to respond.

4 After completing the comment card and you turn  
5 those in, we'll organize those. We will only be calling  
6 people to speak if you've turned in a comment card. So  
7 please make sure, if you have a desire to speak, you  
8 complete that comment card.

9 After -- the comment period will begin after a  
10 brief presentation by the Caltrans staff.

11 In our public comment period, we're limiting  
12 your comments to two minutes, please. And we will have  
13 to enforce this time constraint so that we have enough  
14 time for everyone to share their comments.

15 If anyone has a very detailed question and --  
16 it may be in your best interest if you direct the  
17 question to any of the appropriate Caltrans staff  
18 members. Of course, that in no means limits you to  
19 asking the question up front in the comment card.

20 Please also keep in mind that we may not be  
21 able to get to answer all comments -- excuse me. All  
22 questions this evening. But please be assured that they  
23 will be answered in the environmental document.

24 All the comment cards, any statements for the  
25 record and questions will become part of the official

8

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1 proposed project.

2 Caltrans is holding this public hearing prior  
3 to selecting the preferred alternative or making any  
4 commitment on the project. No decision will be made  
5 until the complete public record has been reviewed.

6 The public record consists of all the formal  
7 comments submitted here this evening at the hearing as  
8 well as any comments submitted in writing to Caltrans by  
9 May 28 in response to the draft environmental document.

10 When you came in this evening, you should have  
11 received several documents -- a public agenda -- meeting  
12 agenda, a project fact sheet and an additional document,  
13 it's called "Frequently Asked Questions," a comment and  
14 question card, and then also we have the alternatives  
15 depicted on maps here. And those are off to the side as  
16 well.

17 If you haven't received any of those documents,  
18 they're available right outside the room here.

19 The comment card is what we're going to use  
20 tonight to keep things moving in an orderly fashion.  
21 There's basically three things you can do this evening.  
22 You can check the box indicating you wish to speak, or  
23 you can have a question answered, or you can have a  
24 statement filed for the record.

25 We ask that, after you complete these, you

7

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1 record for this project. If you have any follow-up  
2 questions, you can also submit comment cards later this  
3 evening or submit the questions to Caltrans directly.

4 We will not, again, be taking any comments from  
5 the floor without a comment card. If we run out of  
6 time, please keep in mind that 8:30 is our closing time  
7 that we've committed to with the Temple Valley Beth  
8 Shalom. And we will try to answer as many questions as  
9 possible.

10 If you have any statements that you would like  
11 to submit to us, you can also turn those in at the front  
12 registration table, and we'll give those equal weight as  
13 much as we do oral testimony.

14 Once again, the comment period will remain open  
15 until May 28. And any written comments -- this is  
16 included on the information received tonight -- can be  
17 sent directly to Mr. Ron Kosinski, the Caltrans Division  
18 of Environmental Planning. The mailing address is 100  
19 South Main Street, Los Angeles, California, 90012. His  
20 address, as I mentioned, is also directly on the  
21 documents we handed out as well as the comment card.

22 All the information on this project is  
23 available for inspection at the Caltrans district  
24 office, which is that same address I gave you. And you  
25 can also inspect and see documents at libraries in the

9

SOUTHBOND I-405  
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1 study area as well as the Caltrans website, which is  
2 printed on the bottom of the agenda and other handout  
3 materials.

4 With that, I would like to turn it over to Ed  
5 Aguilar, who is with the Division of Environmental  
6 Planning. He will be providing a brief presentation.

7 MR. AGUILAR: Good evening. My name is Ed  
8 Aguilar. I'm with the Caltrans Division of  
9 Environmental Planning. At Caltrans it is our  
10 responsibility to ensure that the project's  
11 environmental and community impacts are identified and  
12 assessed --

13 UNIDENTIFIED: Could you please speak louder,  
14 please.

15 MR. AGUILAR: Absolutely. All right. I'll  
16 start over. My name is Ed Aguilar. I'm with the  
17 Caltrans Division of Environmental Planning. At  
18 Caltrans, it is our responsibility to ensure that the  
19 project impacts are identified and assessed during the  
20 project's process.

21 Pursuant to the National Environmental Policy  
22 Act, the California Environmental Policy Act, and  
23 Section 4F of the Department of Transportation, Caltrans  
24 has prepared a draft environmental assessment-initial  
25 study-Section 4F evaluation. This is what is

10

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1 involving injuries is nearly four times higher than the  
2 state average.

3 Therefore, the purpose of the project is to  
4 improve the safety, operation, capacity and traffic flow  
5 through the interchange by replacing the existing 20  
6 mile per hour single lane connector with a new 50 mile  
7 per hour, two-lane connector. This will be accomplished  
8 by constructing a new bridge structure spanning over the  
9 spillway of the Sepulveda dam.

10 Caltrans has considered nine alternatives.  
11 Currently four alternatives remain under consideration,  
12 including the no-build alternative.

13 Let's take a closer look at each of the  
14 proposed alternatives. We'll start off with the four  
15 alternatives that are still on the table and under  
16 consideration.

17 First, we have the no-build alternative. Do  
18 nothing. The connector will remain as is. It would  
19 remain unaltered. The traffic conditions would remain  
20 as they are now and continue to deteriorate over time.

21 Next we have alternative one. Alternative one  
22 calls for a new 500 -- 550-foot long, 41-foot wide, two  
23 lane, 50 mile per hour connector bridge that will span  
24 above and over the spillway of the Sepulveda dam.

25 Let's take a look at the pros and cons of

12

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1 collectively called the environmental document.

2 Over the years, Caltrans considered nine  
3 alternatives, each of which carried adverse impacts and,  
4 therefore, invoked strong opinions from various  
5 stakeholders.

6 Caltrans will have a tough task of having to  
7 weigh the traffic data, the engineering data, the  
8 environmental impact data and the entire public comment  
9 record in order to formally pick the preferred  
10 alternative. That will be done next month.

11 So now let's take a closer look at the proposed  
12 project. We'll start by discussing the project's  
13 purpose and need. In other words, why do this.

14 Well, the connector from the southbound 405 to  
15 the westbound 101 is one of the busiest in the nation  
16 and is not sufficient to handle the current demand. It  
17 experiences heavy congestion, long delays and queue ins  
18 and high accident rates.

19 This is due to several factors -- very high  
20 traffic volumes, low connector design speed, limited  
21 connector capacity and traffic constructions known as  
22 weaving.

23 Collectively, this is all resultant in high  
24 accident rates that exceed the state average. On the  
25 connector itself, for example, the rate of accidents

11

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1 alternative one. We'll begin with the upside.

2 Alternative one is the best alternative from a freeway  
3 operation standpoint. It is the only one of four  
4 alternatives still under consideration that eliminates  
5 the existing weaving conflict experienced at Burbank  
6 on-ramp traffic attempting to criss-cross past 405  
7 mainline traffic seeking to access the 101 connectors.

8 Since this weave conflict contributes to high  
9 accident rates in this area, the elimination of it is a  
10 big plus for alternative one.

11 Another upside for alternative one is that it  
12 has the smallest project footprint and would therefore  
13 require no residential right-of-way acquisition and  
14 would not require any encroachment upon the Sepulveda  
15 basement wildlife preserve.

16 (Applause.)

17 MR. AGUILAR: So now let's take a look at the  
18 downside of alternative one. Because alternative one  
19 has the smallest project footprint, it carries the  
20 various engineering constraints and limitations, the  
21 most profound being the loss of access to the 101 in  
22 both directions to Burbank Boulevard.

23 Therefore, that makes it the worst alternative  
24 from a local city streets standpoint. That is why the  
25 City of Los Angeles Department of Transportation is

13

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1 opposed to alternative one. The cost of alternative one  
2 is estimated to be \$121 million.

3 Let's talk about alternative two now. Like  
4 alternative one, alternative two also calls for an new  
5 connector bridge that will span over this spillway of  
6 the Sepulveda dam.

7 Unlike alternative one, however, alternative  
8 two routine access from Burbank Boulevard to the 101,  
9 this will be accomplished by building a constricted new  
10 on-ramp which would encroach upon the Sepulveda basin  
11 wildlife preserve.

12 The size of this encroachment would be  
13 2,850 feet long -- which is approximately 7 percent of  
14 the 225-acre wildlife reserve.

15 Let's discuss the downside of alternative two.  
16 Obviously the big drawback here is that alternative two  
17 requires an encroachment upon land which is set aside  
18 for the U.S. Army of Corps of Engineers and is an oasis  
19 for wildlife as well in Los Angeles.

20 For this reason, many environmental groups and  
21 the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers are opposed to  
22 alternative two.

23 The other downside of alternative two is that  
24 from a freeway operation standpoint, it is not as good  
25 as alternative one because, unlike alternative one,

14

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1 The downside, however, is that, unlike  
2 alternative two, alternative three requires an  
3 additional 60-foot encroachment onto the Sepulveda  
4 basement wildlife preserve, which on a percentage basis  
5 bumps up the encroachment 15 percent of the 225-acre  
6 wildlife reserve.

7 Like alternative two, alternative three is  
8 opposed by many environmental groups and the U.S. Army  
9 Corps of Engineers. And like alternative two,  
10 alternative three retains access for Burbank Boulevard  
11 to both directions of the 101. The cost of alternative  
12 three is estimated to be \$124 million.

13 Before I move on to discuss the five rejected  
14 alternatives, I would like to briefly discuss the street  
15 improvements that would at the very least be included as  
16 part of this connector project, regardless of which  
17 alternative is selected.

18 Number one, Caltrans would construct a new  
19 northbound on-ramp to the 101 at Hayvenhurst. Number  
20 two, Caltrans will provide adequate street improvements  
21 along Hayvenhurst to accommodate the additional traffic.

22 Number three, Caltrans would modify Burbank  
23 Boulevard to provide adequate right turn and left turn  
24 bridge space onto the southbound 405 on-ramp. And  
25 included at this location, Caltrans would also provide a

16

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1 alternative two does not eliminate the aforementioned  
2 weaving conflict experienced at Burbank on-ramp traffic  
3 attempting to criss-cross past 405 traffic seeking an  
4 access to 101 connectors.

5 Another downside of alternative two is that it  
6 requires the reconstruction of the distinct Burbank  
7 Boulevard bridge overcrossing that spans over the 405  
8 resulting in an additional \$30 million in construction  
9 expenses.

10 Now, let's look at the upside of alternative  
11 two. Alternative two, routine access from Burbank  
12 Boulevard to the 101, alternative two would not require  
13 any residential right-of-way acquisition. And because  
14 of the constricted loop on-ramp at Burbank Boulevard,  
15 alternative two would reduce the width of the  
16 interchange into the wildlife reserve by 60 feet.

17 The cost of alternative two is estimated at  
18 \$160 million.

19 Let's talk about alternative three now.  
20 Alternative three is identical to alternative two except  
21 that alternative three would not require the  
22 construction of the existing Burbank Boulevard  
23 overcrossing that spans over the boulevard. That brings  
24 alternative three to cost an estimated 30\$ million less  
25 than alternative two.

15

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1 new traffic signal.

2 So now, as I mentioned earlier, Caltrans has  
3 considered nine alternatives. We have just looked at  
4 the four alternatives that are still on the table and  
5 under consideration.

6 At this time, we'll now briefly look at the  
7 five alternatives that have already been considered but  
8 rejected.

9 We'll start off with rejected alternative four.  
10 Caltrans created alternative four to avoid all of the  
11 aforementioned impacts. This alternative would have  
12 retained access from Burbank Boulevard to the 101 while  
13 at the same time would have fully avoided any  
14 encroachment approach upon the Sepulveda basin wildlife  
15 preserve.

16 Alternative four would have accomplished this  
17 by simply not removing either of the existing connectors  
18 on the southbound 405 to the 101 and instead would have  
19 simply created a connection between those existing  
20 connectors and a new Burbank Boulevard on-ramp thereby  
21 retaining access from Burbank Boulevard to the 101.

22 But doing this, this project impact improvement  
23 would have been shifted to the southeast side of the  
24 interchange where it would have required three full  
25 acquisitions and ten partial acquisitions of residential

17

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1 property.

2 This, however, is an unreasonable alternative.

3 Four was rejected. Alternative four was rejected

4 because it violates the project's purpose and need,

5 which is to improve safety, operation, capacity and

6 traffic flow through the interchange.

7 Next slide.

8 We're still looking at alternative four here.

9 As you notice by the slide, alternative four is not

10 compatible with the purpose of the project because it

11 would create a new weaving disruption, which currently

12 does not exist on the eastbound 101 between the output

13 of the new connector and the Van Nuys Boulevard

14 off-ramp.

15 In other words, alternative four will make the

16 eastbound 101 less safe and increase its level of

17 operation. In fact, alternative four was the worst

18 alternative from the improvement operation standpoint

19 before it was eliminated.

20 Next let's look at rejected alternative A.

21 This alternative was a creative effort on the part of

22 Caltrans to avoid all the aforementioned impacts.

23 The downside of this alternative, however, and

24 its fatal flaw, is that it utilizes what are called slip

25 ramps. A slip ramp is an on-ramp, such as the on-ramp

18

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1 of Burbank Boulevard, that connects directly to a

2 connector as shown on the slide in order to retain

3 access to the 101.

4 The problem is that our partners at the Federal

5 Highway of Administrations statements to the (inaudible)

6 violate driver expectancy and introduce additional

7 decision points in an area where the information

8 processing task is already complex.

9 The feds also state that slip ramps create a

10 high potential for traffic queuing back onto the freeway

11 banks, which in this case is the southbound 405

12 mainland. This defeats the purpose of the project which

13 is to reduce traffic from backing up and queuing on the

14 405 mainland. For this reason, alternative A was

15 rejected.

16 Next we have rejected alternative B. This

17 alternative was a creative effort on the part of the

18 City of Los Angeles Department of Transportation. Their

19 goal in creating this alternative was to avoid all the

20 aforementioned impacts.

21 Unfortunately, alternative B is flawed from an

22 engineering standpoint. It is not possible to build

23 alternative B due to the grading differences that would

24 exist between the proposed and existing structures.

25 Therefore, like alternative A, alternative B was also

19

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1 eliminated for further consideration.

2 Next we have rejected alternative C. This

3 alternative was a necessary avoidance alternative. It

4 would avoid any impact to any Section 4F protected

5 resources on U.S. Army Corps of Engineers land. And

6 unlike any of the previously mentioned alternatives,

7 this alternative would have zero impacts to the

8 Sepulveda dam.

9 However, alternative C was eliminated on the

10 basis that it is not reasonable. It would require the

11 full acquisition of 329 residential properties.

12 Therefore, it can be stated that the impacts

13 posed on alternative C are an extraordinary magnitude

14 compared to the previously mentioned alternatives. Thus

15 Caltrans rejected alternative C on the basis that it is

16 not reasonable nor prudent.

17 And lastly, we have rejected alternative D.

18 Like alternative C, alternative D was a necessary

19 avoidance alternative. It would avoid any impact to

20 Section 4F protected resources on U.S. Army Corps of

21 Engineers land. And like alternative C, this

22 alternative would have zero impacts to the Sepulveda

23 dam.

24 However, it was eliminated on the basis that it

25 is not reasonable because it would require the full

20

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1 acquisition of 2,422 residential properties. Therefore,

2 it would be stated that the impacts posed in alternative

3 D are of extraordinary magnitude when compared to the

4 other alternatives. And thus, Caltrans rejected

5 alternative D on the basis that it is not reasonable nor

6 prudent.

7 We have now discussed all nine alternatives

8 that Caltrans considers as part of its project. As

9 mentioned, next month Caltrans will have the tough task

10 of choosing one alternative from the list of four

11 alternatives that are still on the table for

12 consideration.

13 Caltrans will either pick the no-build

14 alternative, alternative one, alternative two or

15 alternative three.

16 Caltrans will then very carefully weigh the

17 entire public comment record -- all of the traffic data,

18 all of the engineering data, and of course all of the

19 environmental impact data.

20 Caltrans will then decide whether the impacts

21 posed as a selected alternative will have a significant

22 adverse affect on the environment.

23 If Caltrans determines that the selected

24 alternative would pose a significant adverse effect on

25 the environment, Caltrans would then move to prepare an

21

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1 environmental impact report pursuant to the California  
2 Environmental Quality Act and an environmental impact  
3 statement pursuant to the National Environmental Policy  
4 Act.

5 If, however, Caltrans determines that the  
6 implementation of the selected alternative would not  
7 pose a significant adverse affect to the environment,  
8 Caltrans would move toward the preparation and  
9 implementation of a negative declaration pursuant to the  
10 California Environmental Quality Act and a finding of no  
11 significant impact pursuant to the Natural Environmental  
12 Policy Act.

13 At this time, I need to state that, whichever  
14 path Caltrans takes, everyone that submits a formal  
15 comment to Caltrans regarding this project will receive  
16 a written notice from Caltrans announcing this decision.

17 At this time, we'll now have Project Manager  
18 Ashraf Habbak say a few words about the funding status  
19 of this project and its schedule. Thank you.

20 MR. HABBAK: Thank you, Ed, very much for your  
21 presentation. Good evening.

22 Again, my name is Ashraf Habbak. I'm the  
23 project manager. I just wanted to basically mention  
24 that this project has been funded for the project report  
25 environmental document phase, using regional

22

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1 We're calling you in the order we received.  
2 There's a microphone right here at the front. If you  
3 would please come up. And I'll call your name. But  
4 also, before you start speaking, if you would please  
5 state the name clearly for the benefit of our reporter  
6 here.

7 So with that, I'd like to start first with  
8 Muriel Kotin, followed by Manuel Carrera and Teri  
9 Redman.

10 MS. KOTIN: Good evening. My name is Muriel  
11 Kotin. I am president of San Fernando Valley Autobahn.

12 The Sepulveda basin wildlife reserve is an  
13 absolute refuge for people. It's very important to  
14 wildlife. But this is an incredibly important place for  
15 the citizens of, not only the San Fernando Valley, but  
16 the region. I think you'll be hearing from more people  
17 about that today.

18 Annually, we bring about 3,000 schoolchildren  
19 on field trips to the Sepulveda basin. And other  
20 organizations and some schools independently bring their  
21 children there. Colleges as well do field studies  
22 there.

23 It's an amazing place. Perhaps even more  
24 meaningful, if there could be even more meaningful than  
25 that, is the fact that this is a place where people come

24

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1 transportation improvement program funds from our  
2 regional transportation planning agency, the M.T.A.

3 And at this time no funding has been identified  
4 for the next phases, which is design and construction.

5 Basically, like Ed mentioned, we anticipate by  
6 next month that we would be selecting the preferred  
7 alternative. And by doing that, that will conclude the  
8 phase of this project, the project approval,  
9 environmental document, and basically until funding is  
10 identified.

11 Then, once funding has been identified, will  
12 provide with the next phase of design and construction,  
13 if one of the building alternatives have been selected.

14 Thank you very much.  
15 (Applause.)

16 MS. MUNA-LANDA: I would like to also announce  
17 that, since we began, we had two additional elected  
18 representatives arrive. Lexi Richards, who is with  
19 counsel member Wendy Greuel's office and Ellen Isaacs,  
20 who is with assembly member Mike Feuer's office. Thank  
21 you for joining us.

22 At this point I would like to start our public  
23 comment period. What I'm going to do is basically  
24 announce the first three speakers. And I'll cue you up  
25 so you know where you're in the order process.

23

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1 for a short vacation -- maybe an hour, maybe two hours,  
2 from the city, from the hub-bub and madness of the city.

3 There are photographers there, artists, people  
4 jogging, people just enjoying nature. They aren't  
5 necessarily bird watchers like me.

6 I urge Caltrans to not adopt alternative two or  
7 three. It would not only take away part of the -- part  
8 of the wildlife reserve, but it would spoil the  
9 tranquility and peacefulness.

10 It would be much harder to be able to have a  
11 group of 15 kids that are viewing the birds or the fish  
12 or the turtles or whatever with the distractions of cars  
13 screeching around on-ramps and coming off an on-ramp.

14 So please, I urge you to either adopt  
15 alternative one or the no-build. Thank you.

16 (Applause.)

17 MS. MUNA-LANDA: Manuel Carrera followed by  
18 Teri Redman.

19 MR. CARRERA: Good evening. My name is Manuel  
20 Carrera, and I'm a resident of Van Nuys.

21 It is inconceivable that the unique and  
22 irreplaceable wildlife reserve be partially paved over  
23 for more freeway on and off-ramps. There is nothing  
24 else like a reserve in the valley certainly and probably  
25 not in the city.

25

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1 It is too special and precious to lose to more  
2 concrete for cars, regardless of the traffic problem  
3 situation.

4 I go there several times a week for exercise  
5 and relaxation. It is free and close to my home in Van  
6 Nuys. In a city with so little open space and parks, it  
7 is simply unconscionable that it is under threat.

8 It is a place of beauty and tranquility in a  
9 frenzied city that desperately needs spiritual healing  
10 and solace. There must be a better way.

11 We owe it to our children and their children to  
12 use our creativity and intelligence to leave them a  
13 legacy we can be proud of. The only acceptable  
14 alternative is alternative number one. But a no-build  
15 alternative would be even better.

16 Please, Caltrans, think progressively and  
17 imaginatively before rendering a decision. Thank you.  
18 (Applause.)

19 MS. MUNA-LANDA: Following Teri Redman will be  
20 Aaron Green, Snowdy Dodson and Kris Ohlencamp.

21 MS. REDMAN: I speak today as an educator. I  
22 teach environmental science at Brentwood school. And  
23 we've come all the way over the hill, as we say, to the  
24 wildlife basin in Sepulveda because of the beauty. It's  
25 a magnificent place.

26

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1 dollars and give us some alternative means of  
2 transportation. Save your hundreds of millions of  
3 dollars and fix the potholes so we can get better  
4 mileage. There's just so many better ways to do this.

5 I feel a little bit like "The Lorax" -- okay?  
6 And I'm sure that everybody knows story of "The Lorax."  
7 And it's a movie that I show every year in my  
8 environmental science class.

9 And I got to tell you the truth. At the end of  
10 the movie, I cry every year. Because where do we have  
11 the right as humans to take over all the protoplasm of  
12 the world?

13 Remember the little story of the fishies that  
14 had to leave the pond because of the fluff, fluff, plop,  
15 flop, and you know, they had nowhere to go? I mean, you  
16 cut the wildlife preserve smaller and smaller and  
17 smaller, and these birds will have no place to go.

18 These are birds, many of whom migrate from  
19 South America all the way up to Alaska. Think about  
20 what a miracle that is, a 3,000-mile journey. If they  
21 don't have places like Sepulveda basin to stop over and  
22 recharge and rest -- and some of them actually roost  
23 there -- they will cease to exist.

24 They will be like the little fishies in "The  
25 Lorax" with their suitcases in their hands with no place

28

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1 And I speak because I wonder what kind of  
2 legacy we're leaving for our kids. You know, I'm  
3 sitting here listening to these different alternatives  
4 and saying, my God, what year is this? Is this 1955?

5 Is this the only way that we can approach the  
6 problem of traffic and congestion in Los Angeles? Build  
7 more freeways, and they shall come. Build more  
8 freeways, you're going get more cars.

9 It's inevitable. More freeways will attract  
10 more cars, will attract more people, will put more  
11 people in cars which will lead to the same damn problem  
12 in ten years from now. Okay? I mean what's the point?

13 You know, I teach environmental science. It's  
14 a tough thing to teach today because, as the ice caps  
15 melt and there's -- the price of oil is -- what? 120  
16 bucks a barrel or something like that -- I mean these  
17 kids are used to having -- look what kind of legacy  
18 we're leaving.

19 We talk about resource shortage. We talk about  
20 shortage as something as basic as water. We're talking  
21 about over population. These kids know that they're  
22 going to be lucky to have the kind of lifestyle that  
23 we've enjoyed, that my generation has really exploited.

24 And so the last speaker said there's got to be  
25 a better way. Look, save your hundreds of millions of

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1 left to go.

2 Please, Caltrans, we're in 2008. You can do  
3 better. Take the hundreds of millions of dollars and  
4 give us something better, more progressive. Don't do it  
5 for me. Do it for these guys. Thanks.

6 (Applause.)

7 MS. MUNA-LANDA: Aaron Green.

8 MR. GREEN: Good evening. My name is Aaron  
9 Green. I am with VICA, the Valley Industry and Commerce  
10 Association.

11 And I just want to start out by saying that  
12 VICA has supported and continues to support the  
13 increased construction of -- finally needed  
14 transportation construction here in the San Fernando  
15 Valley.

16 I was at another hearing similar to this one  
17 about a month ago on the Metro long range transportation  
18 project. And we spoke about -- I spoke about the need  
19 to address the 101 and the 134 freeways, a vital  
20 corridor that we have here in the San Fernando Valley.

21 We think that this vital artery needs to be  
22 addressed as soon as possible. And VICA and our staff  
23 and our members have looked at these three options. And  
24 with these three options on the table, we think that  
25 alternative one is going to be the best option.

29

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1 You know, the no-build option is not an option.  
2 To do nothing about the fact that we've got a 20-year  
3 old piece of infrastructure here -- it's a 20-year-old  
4 ramp. It's just not going to work.

5 There are congestion issues. There are safety  
6 issues. And the amount of pollution and hours of work  
7 lost every day are in the thousands as a result of this  
8 old grant. And we think it can be improved upon.

9 So with that said, we think that option one is  
10 the best one. It's the most feasible for local  
11 residents, for Caltrans, for the Army Corps of  
12 Engineers, and ultimately for Sacramento, the law makers  
13 in Sacramento and in Washington who are going to end up  
14 funding this project.

15 Options two and three, as we heard already, are  
16 more expensive. And you know, as anybody who might have  
17 been reading the papers recently, California is not  
18 flush this year with extra cash. So getting a thrifty  
19 project might be advantageous.

20 Getting cooperation from the Army Corps of  
21 Engineers is going to be essential. And options two and  
22 three are probably not going to encourage that. So with  
23 the acknowledgement that something needs to be done, we  
24 would really like to support -- again, of the three on  
25 the table, option number one.

30

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1 increased traffic glut and air pollution.

2 The wildlife reserve is one of the few  
3 remaining wild wetlands in the San Fernando Valley,  
4 which was historically covered with ecologically rich  
5 marshes, ponds, streams and rivers.

6 The eastern portion of the wildlife preserve is  
7 open habitat with scattered plant species, especially  
8 conducive for birds of prey, and is a nesting area for a  
9 vast variety of bird species.

10 This is also the main Canada goose foraging  
11 area in the wildlife reserve. The same area is  
12 currently one of the least disturbed by humans in the  
13 wildlife preserve.

14 The portion along Burbank Boulevard has many  
15 mature oak and walnut trees, many of which were planted  
16 using funds given as mitigation for chemical spills in  
17 the basin.

18 The addition of freeway on and off-ramps in the  
19 eastern portion of the wildlife reserve would fragment  
20 the habitat, most likely ruining it for rafter or Canada  
21 goose foraging, create dead zones under the overpasses  
22 and probably lead to a huge increase of homeless people  
23 due to the overpasses.

24 The sense of wild nature that is available  
25 would be seriously reduced, and that sense of getting

32

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1 You know, from a planning, financial and  
2 logistical perspective, something has to be done about  
3 this project. And you know, we would really like to  
4 reinforce, as was discussed, that an on-ramp westbound  
5 to the 101 at Mayvenhurst needs to be part of this and  
6 that additional street improvements need to be part of  
7 this.

8 Again, to do nothing is not a solution. Thank  
9 you very much.

10 (Applause.)

11 MS. DODSON: Hello, I'm Snowy Dodson. I'm the  
12 president of the Local Chapter of the California Native  
13 Plant Society. And we're against disturbing the  
14 wildlife area, in that we are in favor of either the  
15 no-build alternative or alternative one.

16 And we are against alternatives two and three.  
17 If we have to start diminishing the pathetically few  
18 wildlife areas that we have in order to accommodate more  
19 growth, then we're going in the wrong direction.

20 Instead of accommodating the concept of  
21 unlimited traffic growth, Caltrans and the L.A.  
22 Department of Transportation should be planning for a  
23 future that is geared to mass transit.

24 We should look to planning that lessens our  
25 freeway carbon footprint, not one that accommodates an

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1 out in nature, that is such a key component for the  
2 children and our education program, would be impacted.

3 Disturbance of the soil due to the actual  
4 construction rights of way and buffer zones and access  
5 to the construction zone would likely set back our weed  
6 control efforts to square one, obliterating nearly 20  
7 years of effort and significant investments by the  
8 California Native Plant Society, the Wildlife Reserve  
9 Consortium, the City of Los Angeles, and the Army Corps  
10 of Engineers. Thank you so much.

11 (Applause.)

12 MS. MUNA-LANDA: Following Snowy Dodson will  
13 be Mark Osokow, Rosemarie White and Seth Shtair.

14 MR. OHLENKAMP: My name is Kris Ohlenkamp. And  
15 I find that alternatives two and three are neither  
16 reasonable nor prudent because they will cause the  
17 destruction of the homes of more than 240 species of  
18 birds who have called this area home for centuries and  
19 several generations.

20 I have led nature walks through the Sepulveda  
21 basin area every month for the last 30 years.

22 During that time I have seen this area evolve  
23 from growing corn and other farm crops to afal fields,  
24 to a natural marsh land, to a lake and then we all as  
25 environmentalists in the community got together and we

33

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1 developed this wildlife area. We established this  
2 wildlife area. We put our own sweat into this wildlife  
3 area.

4 Every plant in this core 60 acres that they're  
5 talking about -- not the 225 acres -- but the core  
6 60 acres that would be the original wildlife area, that  
7 alternatives two and three will cut out 25 percent of,  
8 was planted -- every plant in there was planted by the  
9 Native Plant Society and the Audubon Society and other  
10 environmental groups, where they'd come up from seeds  
11 from plants that were planted.

12 The Corps of Engineers tried to plant it  
13 originally with a 5 percent success rate. So they gave  
14 up and volunteers took over.

15 This is a unique habitat, and it is still  
16 changing. It's changing every year. We're adding new  
17 species every year -- the (inaudible), an endangered  
18 species, is now found in this area. And in the last two  
19 years, it has been breeding there.

20 There are more changes coming every year.  
21 Acorn woodpeckers are coming in. Phainoplas are coming  
22 in. There are birds that are threatened, sensitive  
23 species that are just now starting to show up because  
24 the oaks are just getting mature enough to provide  
25 habitat and food for them. Don't stop this now. We

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1 need this. Thank you.

2 (Applause.)

3 MR. OSOKOW: Good evening, everybody. My name  
4 is Mark Osokow. I'm one of the board of directors of  
5 the San Fernando Valley Audubon Society, and I'm also a  
6 retired biologist. I'm a master bird bander with the  
7 U.S. Geological Survey Bird Banding Laboratory. And  
8 I've come here to oppose alternatives two and three of  
9 this project proposal.

10 Those two proposals in particular would  
11 absolutely destroy Sepulveda basin wildlife refuge. It  
12 would fragment it in a way that, as others have  
13 indicated already, destroying areas of hawk forage and  
14 goose forage, nesting bird areas, et cetera.

15 I would also like to focus on some other  
16 things, other than the actual damage to the wildlife.  
17 And that has to do with the costs and the way this  
18 project is being presented.

19 The C.D. that was sent to me by Caltrans  
20 contains a 385-page document. I read a lot of it,  
21 couldn't get through the entire document. But I did  
22 read a big portion of it.

23 It contains substantial errors. And I would  
24 like to point out to everybody here that many of the  
25 alternatives that are possible to conceive that would be

35

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1 much less costly and probably more effective were not  
2 considered by Caltrans in this proposal.

3 Simple things like putting speed bumps in the  
4 travel lane on the south 405, putting signage,  
5 controlling the speeding through better law enforcement.

6 One of the things that the environmental  
7 assessment initial study points out is that over  
8 40 percent of the accidents in that area are caused by  
9 speeding -- something that should be able to be brought  
10 under control by proper law enforcement -- speed bumps  
11 and other much less costly measures, than spending a  
12 hundred million dollars plus to build these expensive  
13 ramp designs.

14 So those are things that I want to bring to  
15 your attention. I'm hoping that you all get a copy of  
16 the environmental assessment initial study and pore over  
17 it and look for errors such as that, things that have  
18 been left out, totally ignored by Caltrans that seem to  
19 have a pension for wanting to build something that's a  
20 big project, rather than taking a more reasoned and  
21 controlled approach to this.

22 That's all I have to say. Thank you very much.  
23 (Applause.)

24 MR. SHTEIR: Hello. Good Evening. My name is  
25 Seth Shteir. I'm a vice president of the San Fernando

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1 Valley Audubon. And my day job is an elementary school  
2 teacher.

3 And I'm here tonight to adamantly oppose  
4 alternatives two and three. As a teacher over the past  
5 11 years, I've introduced hundreds of children to  
6 wildlife and wildlife viewing through trips through the  
7 Sepulveda basin.

8 And I think it's important to note that, when  
9 you talk about the San Fernando Valley, there are over a  
10 million people living in a ten-mile radius of the  
11 Sepulveda basin wildlife refuge.

12 That's really significant because, without the  
13 refuge, a lot of kids won't be getting the experiences  
14 of outdoors and nature that they really need to grow and  
15 become advocates.

16 As vice president of the San Fernando Valley  
17 Audubon, I'm equally opposed to this. And I'm equally  
18 opposed because I know the biodiversity of the basin. I  
19 know that there is 240 nesting species of birds there,  
20 and we also lead environmental education programs and  
21 walks.

22 So in conclusion, I would like to urge Caltrans  
23 to eliminate alternatives two and three because widening  
24 the interchange under these two alternatives is a  
25 short-sighted approach that will have grave

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1 environmental costs. Thank you.  
2 (Applause.)  
3 MS. MUNA-LANDA: Rosemarie White. Following  
4 Rosemarie White would be Joyce Batten, Gerald Silva and  
5 Chuck Ahudale.  
6 MS. WHITE: I'm going to try not to yell into  
7 this thing, even though I have an urge to do that.  
8 I'm Dr. Rosemarie White. I actually am the  
9 head of the Canada goose project. The Canada goose  
10 project started in 1992. And I have data on all of the  
11 migratory Canada geese that are coming into the  
12 Sepulveda basin from Alaska, Canada and all the way down  
13 to the Pacific Flyway and can use that data to prove  
14 that we really do need this habitat.  
15 And now I'm going to interject something else  
16 that I really want you to hear. I'm a clinical  
17 psychologist. I'm a suicidologist. I'm a trauma expert.  
18 I'm an expert on depression. I'm part of the disaster  
19 response team of the Red Cross, and I've seen it all --  
20 Katrina and all of the earthquakes and the fires.  
21 And I want to tell you something. In my  
22 studies which have been published about suicide and  
23 depression, the one factor -- the one factor that is  
24 uniform is the absence of hope.  
25 And hope is embodied in nature. And when a

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1 Valley Audubon Society.  
2 And like everyone else tonight, I'm opposed to  
3 options two and three. But I have a question about  
4 option one, which seems to be the most reasonable of the  
5 alternatives. And that is, how is it going to be  
6 funded? Is state money going to be involved? How much  
7 federal money will be forthcoming?  
8 Today I heard that the gap in the California  
9 budget is about \$50 billion. And nobody seems to know  
10 how to rectify the situation.  
11 And my wonder is is this really the best use of  
12 our scarce funds when teachers are getting pink slips,  
13 mental health services are being curbed and other  
14 significant programs are on the chopping block?  
15 I would like to know exactly how the funds are  
16 going to be forthcoming. And until I hear that, I think  
17 I'm for the no-build option. Thank you.  
18 (Applause.)  
19 MS. MUNA-LANDA: Gerald Silva. Following Mr.  
20 Silva, we have Chuck Ahudale and Lisa Reveen.  
21 MR. SILVA: Good evening, Ladies and Gentlemen.  
22 I'm president of the Homeowners of Encino. I want to  
23 say that we have a huge respect for the Sepulveda basin.  
24 We would have defended the Sepulveda basin.  
25 And I have to ask a question for some of the

40

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1 child can go out and plant a seed and watch that seed  
2 come up through the ground, what a miracle. And grow  
3 and become a plant and a flower and a tree.  
4 And that is the beauty, and that is the  
5 importance of this wildlife area because we don't have  
6 the open space and we're going to have less of the open  
7 space.  
8 So I'm addressing Caltrans now. I can show  
9 you, again, 20 years of data on Canada geese coming down  
10 into that area and on that lake. And I will use that  
11 data because Canada geese are protected under the  
12 Migratory Bird Treaty between Canada, the United States  
13 and Mexico.  
14 But over and above that, I'm speaking to you  
15 from my heart. And I want you to know that everybody in  
16 this room and this valley and this city knows about that  
17 place and uses it and values it.  
18 And we cannot -- we cannot destroy it -- any  
19 part of the 200 acres that we have. So please, I am for  
20 alternative one. And I am against alternative two and  
21 three. Thank you.  
22 (Applause.)  
23 MS. BATTEN: Good evening, everyone. My name  
24 is Joyce Batten. I'm a 45-year resident of the San  
25 Fernando Valley and also a member of the San Fernando

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1 youngsters here. Where were you when we fought the  
2 racetrack? To keep that out of the basin? And where  
3 were you when killeman one (phonetic) went in and took a  
4 huge chunk of the basin and it was basically Glenn  
5 Bailey and Homeowners of Encino that fought them?  
6 And where when you when killeman two (phonetic)  
7 went in and took a huge amount of the basin? And where  
8 were you when we fought to keep the portion of the basin  
9 that they wanted to put the wetlands in? You know,  
10 that's prime target.  
11 So I'm just telling you. You're not going to  
12 want to hear it. But environmentalists are going to  
13 have to listen carefully to what I have to say -- and  
14 I'm sure Caltrans will as well.  
15 Currently there are four alternatives under  
16 construction -- consideration, not construction.  
17 Including the no-build -- the existing non-standard  
18 connector experiences extensive congestion and delays  
19 and killing waits throughout the day.  
20 The purpose of this project is to improve  
21 safety, operation, capacity and traffic flow through  
22 that interchange. And it replaces the 20 mile an hour  
23 ramp with a 50 mile an hour ramp.  
24 Homeowners of Encino has consistently worked  
25 against development and against expansion. And I can

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1 assure you that the reason for supporting alternative  
2 three -- and I'll get to that in just a moment -- is for  
3 safety. Human life.

4 There are -- they have a 34 percent increase in  
5 fatalities and injuries in that little section. That's  
6 important. And I want you to think about that before --  
7 before you set your priorities up.

8 The E.I.R., that is Caltrans, shows this grade  
9 increase at the interchange. Now, we also understand --  
10 and this is not explicit in the report -- that Maskell  
11 on and off-ramps would not be modified. So that's one  
12 of the prerequisites for our concern.

13 Let me address each of these briefly. First,  
14 no-build. The no-build alternative would provide no  
15 additional improvements to the freeway. It's not going  
16 to have any capacity, but it would not eliminate the  
17 dangers that are present.

18 Of the remaining three options, each calls for  
19 the replacement of the 20 mile an hour section by the  
20 50 mile an hour section.

21 Now, there are significant differences between  
22 two, three, and four. That is, alternatively to the A,  
23 B and C, if you want.

24 First, with respect to alternative A, we oppose  
25 alternative A because it would eliminate the access to

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1 to the traffic, while they take that Burbank bridge,  
2 destroy it and rebuild it? You're talking about  
3 protecting the environment. That would be a disaster.

4 And that leads me to the conclusion which is  
5 alternative C. We support alternative C for several  
6 reasons. It's cheaper, it takes no -- it takes not a  
7 huge amount of space from the basin, but increases the  
8 safety and we think, without having to rebuild the  
9 bridge.

10 And finally, it does not have the problem of  
11 the additional traffic shown on Sepulveda.

12 Thank you for your time and attention.  
13 (Applause.)

14 MS. MUNA-LANDA: I would like to also announce  
15 that Kan Mattoo of the assembly member Lloyd Levine's  
16 office has joined us. Thank you for coming.

17 Following Chuck Almdale will be Lisa Reveen and  
18 Walter Lamb. Thank you.

19 MR. ALMDALE: I'm Chuck Almdale. I am a former  
20 resident of Santa Monica, and I now live out here in  
21 North Hills. I've driven through that intersection  
22 probably a couple of thousand times over the last 30  
23 years. I'm pretty familiar with it.

24 And I've also been converting into the  
25 Sepulveda basin for about that long. It's an excellent,

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1 the 101 freeway from Burbank. And there are thousands  
2 of Encino residents that daily have to access. They  
3 come from Costco. They come from the eastern portion of  
4 Van Nuys and so on.

5 So this quick support for alternative A would  
6 be a disaster because a huge amount of traffic would  
7 have to burgeon onto Sepulveda and would come onto  
8 Ventura Boulevard, an already grid-locked area.

9 So your alternative A would not be acceptable,  
10 nor would the alternative -- no projects alternative --

11 MS. MUNA-LANDA: If you could work to conclude  
12 your comments, please.

13 MR. SILVA: Say again.

14 MS. MUNA-LANDA: I'm sorry. If you could work  
15 to conclude your comments.

16 MR. SILVA: Okay. I will.

17 Now, let me comment -- two short paragraphs.

18 It's important, please. Now, with respect to the  
19 alternative -- the next two alternatives. You'll want  
20 to hear those. They're brief paragraphs. But please.

21 With respect to alternative B, we oppose  
22 alternative B because its substantial increase in costs  
23 and most importantly would require the reconstruction of  
24 the Burbank bridge.

25 Do you have any idea what that's going to mean

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1 excellent site. And we had our meeting at the Santa  
2 Monica Audubon Society last night, took an informal  
3 poll. We were against options two and three, and one  
4 and two we were okay with.

5 However, I would like to make the comment, I  
6 live now on Devonshire, which is just a little bit south  
7 of the 118 freeway.

8 Now, from Devonshire, we which has an entrance  
9 onto north and south 405 freeway, but we cannot take the  
10 405 and get onto the 118. Also on the 118 we cannot get  
11 off onto the 405 and get off at Devonshire.

12 So we have to take alternative routes, which  
13 for us is primarily either Woodley or Sepulveda  
14 Boulevard, if we want to get onto the 118 or come use  
15 that place to get to our house.

16 And it's a slight nuisance. It's no big deal.  
17 An extra two minutes maybe, maybe not even that much.  
18 But it's really not a big deal.

19 So in that sense, I would say options two and  
20 three, in order to take a big bite out of the Sepulveda  
21 basin in order to make it a little bit easier maybe for  
22 the people using Burbank wanting to get on the 101, I  
23 would say live with it. It's not that big a deal. I  
24 think that's all I have to say.

25 (Applause.)

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1 MS. REVEEN: Hi, I'm Lisa Reveen. I serve on  
2 the Lake Balboa Neighborhood Council, but I'm here as a  
3 resident of Lake Balboa. I live just across the street  
4 from the wildlife area. And I know everyone's opinion  
5 tonight.

6 As far as the gentleman said about closing the  
7 Burbank on-ramp, I think that's why we have the weaving  
8 problem and the accidents because of the people entering  
9 the freeway from Burbank. So closing that is actually a  
10 good thing in my opinion.

11 There are two entrances just north of Burbank  
12 on Victory Boulevard and also on Sepulveda Boulevard as  
13 well as going south on Sepulveda. So that's all I have  
14 to say. I'm against two and three. Thank you.

15 (Applause.)

16 MS. MUNA-LANDA: Following Walter Lamb will be  
17 Miriam Fogur and Sharon Ford.

18 MR. LAMB: Thank you. I'm Walter Lamb. I'm  
19 not a biologist or a teacher or a professional  
20 environmentalist. And I could tell you I would much  
21 rather be at home right now watching the NHL playoff  
22 game.

23 But when I heard about this, something just  
24 snapped because it seemed so absurd to me that we would  
25 be looking at options that were encroaching on areas

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1 bulldozers and flattened the Santa Monica mountains and  
2 put in a ten-lane freeway in each direction, we could  
3 probably get up there in a lot less time.

4 But I don't think any of us wants to do that or  
5 live in a world where we're making those kinds of  
6 decisions. So as far as I can tell, I'm still not sold  
7 that we need to do anything.

8 Obviously, the safety issue to me trumps the  
9 convenience. I would like to continue to investigate  
10 some of the other issues that have been brought that  
11 could mitigate the no-build.

12 But obviously, of the three other solutions,  
13 we've got one that's cheaper, safer and honors a  
14 commitment that we made to ourselves to preserve this  
15 precious and ever boiling, open space wildlife habitat.

16 And to me, it seems like a no-brainer decision.  
17 Thank you.

18 (Applause.)

19 MS. FOGUR: Okay. What I was about to say is  
20 that I think there's a way to cure the problem by  
21 finding out from the engineers themselves if maybe the  
22 ramp doesn't have to be going around but just straight  
23 making it where it goes up on a incline going up and  
24 over there -- nothing going too -- infringing into the  
25 wildlife area. There's got to be a way to this

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1 that had been set aside very specifically as a wildlife  
2 preserve.

3 And I just couldn't sit by and reading the  
4 papers -- as we've all done probably many times -- you  
5 know, two months from now, that the decision had already  
6 been made and that the powers that be had taken yet  
7 another chunk of consistently doing away with open space  
8 in the name of convenience.

9 And with all respect to the gentleman from  
10 Encino, as I was listening to these options, I, in my  
11 notes, seem to think that option one -- alternative one  
12 was cheaper than the other two and also didn't have the  
13 safety issue because of the lack of weaving. So I just  
14 wanted to clarify that.

15 The decision made on this project tonight  
16 clearly transcends local politics and traffic issues.  
17 This decision to me signals whether we as a society are  
18 capable of addressing the kinds of challenges that we  
19 are clearly now basing on a global scale.

20 And we just can't keep giving in to whim after  
21 whim after whim of added convenience. When my wife and  
22 I drove up here today, we got stuck in traffic, a lot of  
23 traffic because we had come up from Culver City when we  
24 came up the 405.

25 And it occurred to me that, if we just took

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1 solution. And I think that people can find some answers  
2 here.

3 The thing is I drove through there today, and  
4 it is -- it is really bad, that one ramp. And there's a  
5 way to do it without taking any land away. If we got  
6 good engineers, we can do it. And I know that we can do  
7 it. We have the minds to do it.

8 So anyway, I just want say that, you know,  
9 there's a lot of birds that are dying and ducks dying  
10 over at Lake Balboa. So if you people care about the  
11 wildlife, you would be caring about Lake Balboa itself.

12 And I can tell you that right now, that's a  
13 large area in the basin. And we need to clean the whole  
14 place up. I don't know why there's nobody here doing  
15 anything about it. You're complaining about having  
16 this, finding an alternative to getting around.

17 So folks, please step up to the plate and give  
18 them alternatives. I think the best way is straight up  
19 on the freeway from Burbank making it straight across  
20 over.

21 And I would like to have a way going east as  
22 well because the tunnel going under to -- going to the  
23 east 134 is not easy as well. There has got to be  
24 something we can do here. Thank you.

25 (Applause.)

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1 MS. MUNA-LANDA: Sharon Ford next followed by  
2 Ronald Kulberg. And our last speaker is Don Neumark.  
3 UNIDENTIFIED: I have a card too.  
4 MS. MUNA-LANDA: That's okay. We'll get you  
5 in. Sorry about that.  
6 MS. FORD: We've all talked tonight about what  
7 would happen to the Sepulveda wildlife refuge.  
8 You haven't been able to see what we have been  
9 trying to tell you. These pictures, if you have a  
10 chance, please come and look at them because they were  
11 taken over a period of at least 12 years, because one of  
12 the little girls in this picture was barely two years  
13 old. And she just turned 14.  
14 She is my granddaughter. And this was the  
15 first place that I ever took her to teach her about  
16 wildlife. And she has grown up there.  
17 This -- the building of these two multi lane  
18 ramps -- first of all, I can't even fathom doing  
19 50 miles an hour on a transition ramp. And the noise  
20 would completely destroy the tranquility of that area.  
21 But more than anything, we all know how many  
22 years it will take to build such ramps. While that  
23 building is being done, the dirt will choke the lake.  
24 It will kill the fish. It will kill the crawfish. It  
25 will kill the toads, the very food that the heron,

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1 And it's going to go farther than Haskell. It has to  
2 get to Ventura. So this plan -- any plan, nobody spoke  
3 up that in -- you know, Ventura and Hayvenhurst, that's  
4 already, you know, a traffic problem.  
5 And all that extra Ventura traffic that they  
6 have to drive around, this plan doesn't address. So I  
7 thought it was supposed alleviate traffic, not push it  
8 somewhere else.  
9 Next is, you know, you got a 50 mile an hour  
10 ramp. Well, it can only go 50 miles an hour if the 101  
11 is not congested. So why don't they tell us, you know,  
12 what percentage of the day is the traffic going to go up  
13 50 percent.  
14 Because you automatically think at, you know,  
15 24 hours a day, it's going to go 50 miles an hour, which  
16 is not right. So they're missing that information.  
17 It's not going to go 50 miles an hour 24/7.  
18 The other thing is, once you push traffic onto  
19 the street because of closed Haskell or you're closing  
20 the 101 access and stuff, now the traffic has to deal  
21 with pedestrians, bicyclists, local school buses,  
22 emergency vehicles -- all that now you have to deal  
23 with.  
24 So you know, one gentleman says no big problem  
25 two minutes to go out of your way. But what about all

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1 egrets and other birds eat.  
2 It will be no place for nesting birds. It  
3 certainly won't be anyplace for somebody who wants to go  
4 and recreate or teach their children about the wildlife  
5 because you would have to wear a dust mask.  
6 By the time that construction is completed, the  
7 entire area will be dead. It will kill the vegetation.  
8 It will kill it. It will be a place where non native  
9 and invasive plants will go in. And I'm totally against  
10 any building in two -- on proposition -- whatever you  
11 want to call it. Numbers two and three.  
12 And I'm either for a no-build or number one.  
13 Thank you.  
14 (Applause.)  
15 MR. KULBERG: I'm Ronald Kulberg, a fellow  
16 resident. And I'm kind of neutral, if we're going to  
17 build, because there's some unanswered questions that I  
18 have.  
19 Basically, you know, the thing is supposed to  
20 alleviate traffic. Well, they said there's some  
21 mitigation to what they're going to do to Hayvenhurst  
22 and whatnot. But they didn't mention that there's also  
23 going to be no access to Haskell anymore.  
24 So all that traffic that used to use Haskell,  
25 whether you like it or not, has to go somewhere else.

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1 these things now you have to not run into and kill or,  
2 you know, slow down the other things?  
3 So basically my concern is I need more  
4 information because it really doesn't cover everything.  
5 You know, they're just talking about what they want to  
6 talk about and mitigate what they want to mitigate. And  
7 that's not fair.  
8 And I know, you know, we're not taking any  
9 houses away now. So it's all us against wildlife, which  
10 I thought we were supposed to protect wildlife because,  
11 if we don't protect this, then let's go build some more  
12 roads and passes through Santa Monica Mountains to  
13 alleviate the traffic. Where does it stop? Thank you.  
14 (Applause.)  
15 MS. MUNA-LANDA: Following Don Neumark we have  
16 Todd Royal and Donna Pearman.  
17 If anyone else would like to speak and you  
18 haven't submitted a card, please do so at this time.  
19 Thank you.  
20 MR. NEUMARK: Can I move this mike?  
21 MS. MUNA-LANDA: Yes.  
22 MR. NEUMARK: Okay. I'm here not to be for and  
23 against any of these suggestions. I'm here to bring up  
24 a fourth alternative because I think that's what we're  
25 really headed for here.

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1 There needs to be some sort of a compromise. I  
2 understand that there's an environmental issue here.  
3 And I fully support that. By the same token, I see the  
4 need for something to be done in this area. So I've  
5 already suggested to this the engineers over there.

6 And they're going to look into it, they promise  
7 me. In the meantime, I want to sort of present it to  
8 all of you so you can see what you want to think about  
9 this. I'm going to bring this mike over so you can get  
10 some general idea of what I'm talking about.

11 Good. Okay. I'll just use this for right now.  
12 Well, this one probably would get me -- this one over  
13 here. Okay. I don't know if you can all see this, if  
14 you looked at the alternatives. Maybe you have a sheet  
15 like this that they gave you.

16 But if you look at the space between the  
17 service road, which belongs to the Army Corps of  
18 Engineers -- and they're not willing to relinquish  
19 that -- there's this actual downslope that goes from  
20 that service road down to the freeway below.

21 And that space is actually the exit ramp for  
22 the -- to get onto Burbank Boulevard right now from  
23 the -- heading southbound, I believe.

24 That same exit could now be turned around and  
25 used as the on-ramp. And thereby, it would save a lot

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1 wildlife and less of a dependent -- not taking away any  
2 land that you see here now that they're showing.

3 This represents 300 feet, by the way. There's  
4 300 feet. And it's approximately 1,200 feet in the  
5 shorter one. I don't know what the longer one is. So  
6 that gets reduced to around 500 feet.

7 So it's a compromise. It's not perfect. It's  
8 not exactly zero. But it's a lot less of an impact than  
9 what's there now. And I really hope that Caltrans takes  
10 a look at that as a fourth alternative because that may  
11 solve a lot of the problems. Thank you.

12 (Applause.)

13 MS. MUNA-LANDA: Todd Royal followed by Donna  
14 Pearman -- and I'm going to mess this name up because I  
15 can't read it -- Stephen Vodantis. Vodantis. Sorry.  
16 And then our last speaker is Mathew Tehulsky. Thank  
17 you.

18 MR. ROYAL: Thank you very much. Hi. My name  
19 is Todd Royal. I'm actually a resident of Studio City.  
20 And I came out because also I served on the Board of the  
21 Studio Neighborhood Council.

22 I guess my biggest concern has been in Studio  
23 City we're working with -- right now the whole thing  
24 with the university M.T.A. project. And I'm sure, as we  
25 all remember, when the M.T.A. was originally conceived,

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1 of money because that's already there, including the  
2 retaining walls and everything else that's there. And  
3 they would be able to follow this right up to a certain  
4 point where they have to meet this radius.

5 Now, this radius is very important because it's  
6 the minimum size radius that's needed in order to be  
7 able to get onto the freeway. And it's actually  
8 engineered. And it's a state -- Caltrans ordinance.

9 So if you took this area and moved it into this  
10 upper area or someplace far away and just had a very  
11 gradual -- using this existing exit for an entrance and  
12 bring it up here and grab -- go over most of the service  
13 road, you would have about a 600-foot area by about a  
14 hundred foot wide at the upper end to turn around and be  
15 able to get onto this southbound traffic, which would  
16 give people merging in more time to merge in without  
17 disrupting the traffic flow. And most of this is  
18 already there. All you have to do is reverse it.

19 So you're basically building a few pylons,  
20 which that will be a problem for the birds. But if they  
21 do it on the off-season, you might say, then those  
22 pylons would be making noise and a little bit of dust.

23 Most of that would go over the service road and  
24 then the rest is a grading issue over on the other side  
25 of the service road, which would be less of an impact to

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1 it was supposed to be -- help transportation and  
2 supposed to help us -- fuel efficiency. You name it.

3 Now we in Studio City have seen that the M.T.A.  
4 has become a development organization. So my big  
5 question to you guys at Caltrans is, if you're going to  
6 grab this land now, are you going to turn it into a  
7 development organization also?

8 Are you going to build condominiums? Are you  
9 going to build office towers? Because that is what  
10 we're seeing right now in Studio City. And  
11 respectfully, it is being shoved down our throats.

12 I don't want to see a land graph. I have to  
13 agree with the folks who say you don't want to see the  
14 different things from environmental impacts, I don't  
15 want to see it from a development standpoint.

16 I don't want to see the land that is going to  
17 be taken away from us -- our precious land. Because it  
18 seems to me that, once we say one thing, with -- we're  
19 going to have a subsequent system, that what we're not  
20 seeing is that all of a sudden we're now being told that  
21 the M.T.A., again, is a development organization.

22 Can you, Caltrans -- can you -- the different  
23 officials around there, can you say to us that you're  
24 only going to be building freeways and you're not going  
25 to be encroaching on our own spaces to begin selling

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1 these things off. This is a great certain.  
2 Again, we are seeing this in Studio City right  
3 now. I would really respectfully request of each of you  
4 tonight to -- when the whole thing with the M.T.A., the  
5 universal project, they're talking about taking away and  
6 building over four million square feet of office space,  
7 and the M.T.A. was never, ever, ever conceived to be a  
8 development organization -- so you as Caltrans -- again,  
9 I respectfully request of you and ask to answer that  
10 question.

11 Are you only going to be in the freeway  
12 building business and not any luxury condo, townhouse  
13 and apartment building business? Thank you.

14 (Applause.)

15 MS. PEARMAN: I'm Donna Pearman. I used to  
16 live near there in Lake Balboa for most of my life.

17 My boyfriend told me about the time the  
18 Sepulveda basin was a lot larger than it is now before  
19 Burbank Boulevard went through. It completely changed  
20 the Sepulveda basin. Free flight airplanes used to roam  
21 way up in the sky along with the birds.

22 Of course, as a complete wildlife area then  
23 also, the changes -- it really hurt the wildlife and  
24 really hurt the basin. I'm worried that anything other  
25 than alternative one might hurt the Sepulveda basin.

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1 One of our programs is to bring literally  
2 thousands of schoolchildren into this reserve every  
3 year. We're just one organization. I know there are  
4 other organizations that bring many other students into  
5 the reserve.

6 Alternatives two and three would seriously scar  
7 the wilderness either -- the wildlife reserve. So I  
8 would strongly urge Caltrans not to entertain options  
9 two and three.

10 In fact, wherever we have wilderness and  
11 wildlife reserves, we should -- that should be a hard  
12 line. And we should never cross that line because, as  
13 everyone knows, wilderness space and open space is  
14 dwindling, not just in this country but all over the  
15 world.

16 Of all the alternatives, only one is to my mind  
17 even to be considered. If Caltrans thinks that they  
18 must build, then only alternative one would be  
19 acceptable.

20 I think, even better than alternative one, is a  
21 no-build option and to put the money in more creative  
22 solutions, like mass transit or other things that would  
23 mitigate the traffic problem. Thank you.

24 (Applause.)

25 MS. MJNA-LANDA: Following Mathew Tehulsky -- I

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1 I am especially concerned about the frog  
2 population. The frogs are declining in the world. And  
3 there's frogs in the wildlife. I hear them. I'm a  
4 champion for the frogs and toads.

5 I'm thinking maybe another alternative. I'm  
6 not sure. I really don't want to hurt the basin. It's  
7 the only large wildlife area in Van Nuys.

8 Maybe another alternative may be good because  
9 we don't have the money. And as I said, that one guy,  
10 he's talking about maybe -- maybe it's a project for the  
11 C.R.A. So I don't want to have anything where the  
12 C.R.A. is going to come on in and be along with  
13 Caltrans.

14 I realize it's difficult to go from the 405 and  
15 101. My commuter express flight 73 does have a hard  
16 time going from one to the other. So I think there's  
17 got to be another alternative.

18 I'm not sure about one. I think that needs to  
19 be studied more. Send it to the committee. Thank you.

20 (Applause.)

21 MS. MJNA-LANDA: Stephen -- with a name that I  
22 can't pronounce.

23 MR. VODANTIS: My name is Stephen Vodantis.  
24 I'm the education coordinator for the resource  
25 conservation district with the Santa Monica mountains.

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1 have a card here from Irene Sandler.

2 Did you also want to speak in addition to a  
3 question?

4 MR. TEHULSKY: Oh, yeah. Mine will be very  
5 short. Okay. I'm Mathew Tehulsky. I'm with the  
6 Audubon Society. As a member, I've been elected as a  
7 photographer for about 30 years.

8 And I wrote an article for their newsletter  
9 which came out. And I want to read the three  
10 paragraphs. And that will be my testimony. No further  
11 comments.

12 "On March 7, 2004, I went on  
13 a 'first Sunday of the month' bird  
14 walk with the San Fernando Valley  
15 Audubon Society at the Sepulveda  
16 Basin Wildlife Reserve -- a 225-acre  
17 wetland habitat in Van Nuys,  
18 California. That is a haven for  
19 about 240 species of birds throughout  
20 the year.

21 "Along the trail to the lake,  
22 we saw the Great-tailed Grackle, Lark  
23 Sparrow, Red-winged Blackbird, Anna's  
24 Hummingbird, Ruby-crowned Kinglet,  
25 Song Sparrow, Red-shafted Flicker,

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1 Brown-headed Cowbird, Cassin's  
2 Kingbird, Belted Kingfisher, and  
3 Mourning Dove -- all within ten  
4 minutes."  
5 Then I talk about other stuff. And I close by  
6 saying:  
7 "So there you have it -- one walk  
8 on one Sunday at one park in America.  
9 And within a ten-mile radius of the  
10 Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve  
11 1.5 million people reside.  
12 "Who says people in wildlife  
13 cannot live side by side?"  
14 So that's our pride and joy of what we have in  
15 the rest of the country is our ability out here to keep  
16 wide open spaces. And that's the great west that we  
17 have. And we want to preserve it. So like everybody  
18 else, we don't want to have a freeway running through  
19 Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve. Thank you.  
20 (Applause.)  
21 MS. MUNA-LANDA: Following Ms. Sandler, we'll  
22 go into the question portion, unless anyone else would  
23 like to submit a speaker card.  
24 MS. SANDLER: My name is Irene Sandler. I have  
25 for the past four or five years worked toward a safer

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1 Sepulveda and a safer 405.  
2 I notice that only Caltrans is sitting on the  
3 dais. You're missing the Los Angeles Department of  
4 Education -- of Transportation. And your education  
5 would come through having both groups there. I would  
6 suggest you have another meeting and you invite both  
7 groups.  
8 You're not up here answering questions. And  
9 you're not making a presentation. But I'm sure that  
10 people would love to hear from you.  
11 You have to some good ideas. You know what  
12 some of the impacts will be of these projects. Maybe  
13 you should come up and discuss them and how -- if this  
14 will affect Ventura Boulevard, et cetera.  
15 It's up to you people to organize yourselves,  
16 not to just come to one meeting and say goodbye. Go to  
17 meetings, organize meetings, talk to Gerry Silver about  
18 meetings. Take a look at this draft E.I.R., and notice  
19 that when it talks about alternative one, two, and  
20 three, everything is mitigatable or no adverse impacts.  
21 These are the findings. You can talk until  
22 you're blue in the face. These are the findings. How  
23 can you disprove the findings?  
24 Your goose is cooked before you've begun. I  
25 suggest that you really, really take the time, get the

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1 hard copy or get the disk. Don't give up.  
2 Follow the money. Where does the money come  
3 from? Does it come from M.T.A., or did Caltrans get the  
4 money? Who watches that money? Who watches the  
5 finances?  
6 Once they get permission to build, who  
7 contracts that building out? What kind of leverage have  
8 you to make sure how long this project will take?  
9 They're going to take down the Skirball bridge.  
10 They're going to take down the Mulholland bridge when  
11 they do the I-405 project. What do you think is going  
12 to happen in this other area?  
13 (Applause.)  
14 MS. MUNA-LANDA: With no other speaker cards,  
15 we'll go ahead and begin the question-and-answer portion  
16 of our meeting.  
17 MR. AGUILAR: Okay. First, I'll address the  
18 last speaker. She mentioned the Environmental  
19 Assessment Initial study. At this time it has not been  
20 E.I.R. E.I.S.  
21 For those of you who are not familiar with the  
22 level of environmental documents, there are three  
23 levels. The lowest level is the categorical exemption,  
24 categorical exclusion. The middle level, which is what  
25 we wrote for this project, is initial

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1 study-environmental assessment. The highest level  
2 is the environmental impact report --  
3 UNIDENTIFIED: Can you please use that  
4 microphone? I'm hard of hearing. And it's really bad.  
5 MR. AGUILAR: Okay. I apologize.  
6 UNIDENTIFIED: You can correct it. But then  
7 you just slide back.  
8 MR. AGUILAR: Okay. All right. So let me  
9 start over.  
10 For those of you who are not familiar with the  
11 three levels of environmental document, you have the  
12 lowest level, which is the categorical  
13 exclusion-categorical exemption.  
14 You have the middle level, which is what we  
15 wrote for this project. That is the initial  
16 study-environmental assessment. And you have the  
17 highest level, which is an environmental impact  
18 report-environmental impact statement.  
19 So we wrote the middle of them. And at this  
20 time it is not making conclusions. It is a draft  
21 document that is circulated to the public. It's been  
22 circulated to every government official at every level,  
23 every government agency at every level.  
24 All of the stakeholders, homeowners  
25 association, Chambers of Commerce, et cetera, so that

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1 you can read it and write to us and disagree or agree,  
2 make your comments so that we will either fix the  
3 document or address your comments and answer your  
4 questions before the document is finalized.

5 So that's the purpose of this process. We have  
6 by no means made any determination at this point. We're  
7 going to do it in conjunction with you guys.

8 Earlier a speaker mentioned Haskell. This  
9 project does not propose any changes to Haskell. It  
10 will close it in either direction. So Haskell will  
11 remain as is if this project were to be implemented.

12 And there was a comment regarding the new  
13 connector. The new connector -- Eddie, can you put  
14 alternative one up, please?

15 There was a comment about the connector being  
16 two lanes and operating at 50 miles per hour. And if  
17 the 101 were to be grid-locked, cars would not be moving  
18 at 50 miles an hour. That's correct. But you also got  
19 to consider that the purpose of the connector is  
20 storage.

21 So let's say the connector does become a  
22 parking lot during rush hour. The parking lot will be  
23 on the connector, which is 560-feet long, two lanes.

24 So the cars will be parked on the connector and  
25 not on the southbound 405 main line causing the back up

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1 address that in writing in the final documents as we go  
2 back within our traffic data, within our projects and  
3 provide a very detailed response.

4 The purpose of this project is very precise.  
5 It's to improve the safety and operation through the  
6 interchange going on southbound 405 and going to the  
7 westbound 101.

8 So we described that, and the effort of time  
9 and effort to provide a good solemn response, we'll have  
10 to defer and answer that question in the final document.

11 And with that, I'll have Ashraf Hanna, our  
12 traffic engineer at Caltrans, address two traffic  
13 related questions.

14 MR. HANNA: Thanks, Ed.

15 Good evening, everyone. My name is Ashraf  
16 Hanna. I'm the traffic engineer for this project and  
17 also for routes 101 and the 405.

18 My team and I were responsible for studying all  
19 aspects of the traffic part of this project, the  
20 alternatives and which ones would actually make us  
21 experience -- all of us who use that interchange --  
22 experience an improvement every day.

23 UNIDENTIFIED: Sorry. Who are you?

24 MR. HANNA: My name is spelled A-s-h-r-a-f.  
25 Last name is Hanna, H-a-n-n-a.

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1 and rear-end collisions, et cetera, et cetera, and the  
2 weaving.

3 So even if it's not operating at 50 miles per  
4 hour during rush hour, it will still serve a purpose to  
5 improve safety and decrease congestion.

6 Let's see. We had a comment from Kathy  
7 Lewiski. She writes, "A very concerned homeowner,  
8 having lived at this address since 1973. We finally --  
9 we will finally be getting our sound wall at the 405 and  
10 the Royal Oak Avenue", I believe it says.

11 "We have been promised a sound wall. Will it  
12 be 18 feet in height as promised?"

13 The dimensions of sound walls are typically  
14 18 feet when they're outside Caltrans standards. When  
15 they're within Caltrans right-of-way, they're typically  
16 16 feet.

17 And the area that Kathy Lewiski is describing  
18 would get a sound wall. But it would be part of the  
19 other project. It would be part of the 405 carpool  
20 project for the 101. So she will be getting a sound  
21 wall that is part of a different project.

22 Teri or Tori Redman writes: "If you build more  
23 freeways, you will attract more cars. What is being  
24 done to abate traffic on our streets and freeways?"

25 That is a tough question. We would most likely

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1 Before I answer the questions that I have here,  
2 I would like to just take a minute of your time. I need  
3 to remind you that traffic is going to keep coming to  
4 this interchange whether we do something or not.

5 Traffic, as it is right now and probably  
6 because you're all residents in the area, you know how  
7 much delay that you have to go through, trying to cross  
8 this busy interchange.

9 We did a very comprehensive study.  
10 Alternatives one, two and three are expected to save you  
11 and all the others who use this interchange every year  
12 between \$29 and \$38 million every single year, savings  
13 in travel delay, improving the environment, less  
14 pollution, less cost of fuel a user experiences because  
15 of longer transportation. And better response to  
16 emergencies, when somebody needs to get to the hospital  
17 in a timely manner, even a fraction of a minute can mean  
18 the person's life.

19 Caltrans has the responsibility to do whatever  
20 is possible to improve bad situations like the one we  
21 have right now.

22 With that being said, I'm going to read the  
23 first question. And please excuse me if I'm going to  
24 read slowly, because I'm just trying to figure out  
25 what's written here.

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1 The question is from Chris Van Beveren or  
2 Beveran -- I'm sorry if I read the name wrong.

3 The question is, "In my experience, the traffic  
4 on 101 northbound, it's stop-and-go during peak travel  
5 times. If the connector is built, cars from 405 south  
6 will just be going faster when they try to merge. To  
7 me, this seems more likely to cause accidents than as  
8 now exists. Could you comment."

9 The only comment that I can give you is let's  
10 examine how the westbound 101 on-ramp to southbound 405  
11 operates right now and if it is a safe connector or not.

12 It's crawling at a very, very low speed most of  
13 the day. And would this render this on-ramp, a safe  
14 on-ramp? It does not.

15 People going at low speeds, when they see a  
16 back-up connector or when they hit a traffic jam,  
17 drivers tend to do all kinds of things -- maneuvering,  
18 cutting off, getting out of the line, driving on the  
19 shoulder. And I deal with problems like this every  
20 single day of the week.

21 So if this new connector would provide a design  
22 speed limit of 50 miles, it's going to improve -- as Ed  
23 was just mentioning, it's going to improve storage.  
24 It's going to eliminate one of the basic factors that  
25 cause accidents, which is the weaving issue on the

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1 westbound confusion and congestion. The disappearing  
2 lane on the westbound 101 approaching the Hayvenhurst is  
3 deadly."

4 I think that's the question.

5 In conjunction with this question, there was a  
6 comment from one of you folks before about the  
7 improvements that we are planning to achieve with this  
8 project.

9 We spoke about adding a new westbound on-ramp  
10 from Hayvenhurst. Caltrans is planning on widening the  
11 westbound off-ramp to Hayvenhurst by adding one more  
12 lane.

13 And also we are planning on widening the  
14 eastbound on-ramp from Hayvenhurst by also adding one  
15 lane and most importantly -- which is going to answer  
16 this question -- there is going to be an auxiliary lane  
17 between Hayvenhurst and Balboa that's going to be  
18 constructed on the westbound 101 that's going to address  
19 any weaving issues that going to compromise safety, is  
20 going to be addressed by installing, by constructing  
21 this new auxiliary lane.

22 As you all know, the auxiliary lanes are a very  
23 low cost and high efficient mean of mitigating weaving,  
24 storage on off-ramps that sometimes back up onto the  
25 main line and you start blocking lane number five, lane

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1 freeway -- side swiping, rear ending, it's going to  
2 provide a better movement for the people going from the  
3 southbound 405 going to westbound 101.

4 As you all might know, a few years ago we  
5 installed reflectors to prohibit northbound 405 traffic  
6 from exiting at Maskell and that also did a huge  
7 improvement to the situation at the interchange.

8 Once we cleared that interchange in a more  
9 timely manner, we are definitely going to experience a  
10 better level of service and a better operational and  
11 safety environment for everyone that uses that  
12 connector.

13 And let me remind you again. All the people  
14 using that connector, with the implementation of  
15 alternatives one through three, will be saving each  
16 single year from \$29 to \$38 million to the benefit of  
17 all the people that live in the area or the people who  
18 use that interchange.

19 Second question is from Wayne White. The  
20 question is "After all of this, there is no effort  
21 indicated that would be a solution to the congestion on  
22 the 101 east or west. This insane on-ramp" -- I'm  
23 guessing he's referring to the new connector -- "that  
24 puts the northbound interchange, the number one lane of  
25 that 101 westbound is still a contributor to 101

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1 number four, and suddenly lane number -- the one  
2 adjacent to it on the inside is being blocked because  
3 people don't want to wait in line and suddenly the  
4 following lane is being blocked, and then you end up  
5 with a bottleneck that backs up the main line for miles  
6 and miles backwards.

7 So that's the mitigation that we are proposing  
8 and that we intend to do.

9 The last question is from Irene Sandler asking  
10 about the capacity of -- I'm not going to answer the  
11 funding. The project manager is here. And he's the  
12 most capable person to answer this question.

13 As far as capacity, I'm not really sure what  
14 kind of capacity is she referring to. But if she can  
15 redirect her question and send it to Caltrans' attention  
16 freeway operations. She can put my name on it.  
17 Attention my name or anybody else.

18 We'll gladly answer her to her satisfaction.  
19 And maybe if she can explain better what was the  
20 capacity that she was referring to, maybe I can answer  
21 her right now.

22 If you are -- pardon me?

23 UNIDENTIFIED: The 500 car storage.

24 MR. HANNA: The 500 car storage on the  
25 connector?

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1 UNIDENTIFIED: That's the capacity I was  
2 referring to.

3 MR. HANNA: The storage issue is a by-product  
4 of a new on-ramp, new off-ramp or a new connector,  
5 meaning sometimes or many times you experience a backup  
6 on the main line just because one of the off-ramps has  
7 low storage.

8 If you are -- let's get an example. The Sunset  
9 off-ramp from northbound 405, that some of you folks  
10 were mentioning that new project that we're doing right  
11 now for the H.O.V. lane, that Sunset off-ramp has a very  
12 high demand. It serves U.C.L.A. It serves so many  
13 residential -- everything.

14 That Sunset off-ramp has a very low storage  
15 capacity. And we end up, due to this storage problem,  
16 having a very low level of service on the main line,  
17 just because the people trying to get off at Sunset  
18 block two lanes or more.

19 And this scenario happens all over, not only  
20 just -- I just cited Sunset as an example. So as far as  
21 the storage, the storage is going to serve the main line  
22 southbound 405 in case there is a block downstream that  
23 connector on the westbound 101.

24 This way we do not have to block the main line  
25 405, and people going through on southbound 405 can move

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1 people from the connector trying to merge to the main  
2 line.

3 This is one of the major causes of accidents in  
4 that area. So that new connector is going to address  
5 this issue and is going to eliminate that weaving point.

6 So coming back to your question, when people  
7 come down from the new connector to the westbound,  
8 they're not going to experience that same issue anymore  
9 because that issue is being gone.

10 So now they can merge right onto lane number  
11 five or lane number six of main line westbound 101 and  
12 then they have ample space and ample distance to start  
13 merging to the inside of the freeway lanes number four,  
14 three, two and one.

15 So did I answer your question, or I didn't get  
16 it right?

17 UNIDENTIFIED: (Nods.)

18 MR. HANNA: No? Okay. Hold on a second,  
19 please. One second. She's not done yet.

20 Go ahead. Are you talking about --

21 UNIDENTIFIED: The westbound 101.

22 MR. HANNA: Are you talking about existing or  
23 with the project?

24 UNIDENTIFIED: With the project.

25 MR. HANNA: Okay.

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1 easier.

2 So in every project that we study in our  
3 office, we insist on having the maximum storage that we  
4 can get that is possibly being offered, whether we have  
5 right-of-way, whether we can purchase city right-of-way,  
6 whether we can do anything possible to increase storage.

7 Why? Because this -- solving the storage  
8 problem is going to solve an issue on the main line  
9 freeway in the vicinity of that ramp or connector.

10 Was that your question?

11 UNIDENTIFIED: Yes. What happens when they  
12 actually come to the freeway off the storage 50 miles an  
13 hour?

14 MR. HANNA: Coming down to westbound 101?

15 UNIDENTIFIED: Yes. Is there a special lane,  
16 or are they immediately merging?

17 MR. HANNA: Now, that is a very good question.  
18 And I was hoping somebody would ask it because one of  
19 the main features, that maybe many of you overlooked of  
20 this project, it's going to eliminate the weaving that  
21 we are currently having between southbound 405 and the  
22 Haskell off-ramp.

23 We have about 633 feet between the point of the  
24 existing connector and the off-ramp. We have a serious  
25 issue with people trying to get off to Haskell and

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1 UNIDENTIFIED: Do the cars come right onto a  
2 freeway lane immediately that other cars could be in  
3 because they're going west on the 101?

4 MR. HANNA: If you are asking about if we're  
5 adding a lane --

6 UNIDENTIFIED: On-ramp lane --

7 MR. HANNA: We're not widening the 101. So the  
8 answer, we are coming to lane number six or lane number  
9 seven on westbound 101.

10 UNIDENTIFIED: So cars will be coming at speed.  
11 In that area people are coming from a stop or possibly a  
12 line-up of 500 cars. And they're merging onto --

13 MR. HANNA: In that particular area, the  
14 westbound 101 is too wide. Westbound 101 in that area  
15 by the Sepulveda dam and by Haskell, the 101 is seven  
16 lanes. The westbound.

17 It's a very wide area. So we're not  
18 anticipating -- by any means of design or operational  
19 standards, we're not anticipating that within that  
20 segment up to Hayvenhurst we're going to have any  
21 problems for the merging of cars from the new connector  
22 to the main line due to the fact that the main line  
23 in that particular area is wide enough and also because  
24 we have already prohibited northbound 405 traffic from  
25 merging right.

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1 So we dedicated that area for 101 traffic and  
2 for the southbound 405 traffic.  
3 Yes, sir. Please.  
4 UNIDENTIFIED: We heard earlier that options  
5 two and three -- (inaudible) --  
6 COURT REPORTER: Wait a second.  
7 UNIDENTIFIED: Much louder. I thought we heard  
8 earlier that options two and three did not solve the  
9 weaving. And you seem to be saying that they will with  
10 these new auxiliary lanes? Is that what you're telling  
11 us?  
12 MR. HANNA: No. I'm talking about the weaving  
13 between the connector and Haskell. Right now the  
14 existing connector from southbound 405 to Haskell has  
15 about 633 feet, little under 700 feet. That's going to  
16 go. We're going to have that issue gone.  
17 UNIDENTIFIED: Okay. So the weaving that we  
18 heard about earlier would not be mitigated by options  
19 two or three? That --  
20 MR. HANNA: The weaving that we were speaking  
21 about was the weaving from Burbank traffic onto  
22 southbound 405 trying to weave in with the other traffic  
23 getting on the connector. That's a different area.  
24 We're addressing the 101 now; right? Go ahead.  
25 UNIDENTIFIED: To your point about the

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1 they have their own model. They have their own  
2 forecast. They have their own mathematical equations.  
3 And that's the figure that they give Caltrans,  
4 M.T.A., everybody else, that every hour of delay in  
5 travel time will cost 11 and, as I said, is going to go  
6 up to 19.  
7 Go ahead.  
8 UNIDENTIFIED: Question over here. I have a  
9 question.  
10 MR. HANNA: Yes.  
11 MR. SILVER: Yeah. I'm Gerry Silver,  
12 homeowners --  
13 MR. HANNA: Sorry. They're not letting me have  
14 any more time. If you have more questions, feel free to  
15 send them to me, and I'll answer them to your  
16 satisfaction.  
17 UNIDENTIFIED: Could we get one quick question  
18 in, please?  
19 Could you make any projection as to how many  
20 human lives or serious injuries would be saved by that  
21 new ramp over a five or ten-year period?  
22 The money we can work more out with. I want to  
23 know how many people's lives will be saved or how many  
24 serious injuries that you might expect over a five-year  
25 period and weigh that against the environmental issues.

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1 \$28 million or whatever you said in terms of savings,  
2 how many people do we divide that by to understand what  
3 the per capita impact would be? It seems to be --  
4 MR. HANNA: Okay. I don't know how many people  
5 reside in this area. So I cannot do the math. But I  
6 can tell you that much.  
7 Every single hour that any one of us sits on  
8 the freeway or being delayed on the freeway costs \$11.00  
9 out of your own pocket. And that's not my figure.  
10 That's the Association of Governments in Southern  
11 California. That's the number they predicted.  
12 And this number is going to go up from 11 to 19  
13 very soon. So imagine you are driving let's say a  
14 ten-mile distance, and you're supposed to be driving  
15 that ten-mile distance at 60 miles per hour; right? So  
16 you should cross it in ten minutes driving a mile per  
17 minute; right? At 60 miles.  
18 Instead of spending ten minutes to go to  
19 wherever you want to go, you're spending an hour and a  
20 half. So you are being delayed an hour and 20 minutes  
21 going there and possibly another hour and 20 minutes  
22 coming back.  
23 So that's about \$30.00 out of your own pocket  
24 everyday just sitting in traffic. That's how the  
25 Association of Governments of Southern California --

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1 MR. HANNA: I cannot do that prediction. But  
2 what I can tell you is the accident rate that we have in  
3 this area is four times as much as the state average.  
4 Would that answer the question?  
5 UNIDENTIFIED: So you're talking about many  
6 lives? Many serious injuries?  
7 MR. HANNA: That's injuries, bodily, fatal,  
8 monetary injuries to your car, to your property. This  
9 intersection -- this interchange, the accident rate is  
10 four times as much as the state average.  
11 UNIDENTIFIED: What will it be when you're  
12 finished? Reduced significantly?  
13 UNIDENTIFIED: What's it going to change to?  
14 What's it going to change to? What's the answer? From  
15 four, how much?  
16 UNIDENTIFIED: How much better will it be?  
17 COURT REPORTER: Hey, hey, hey --  
18 MR. HABBAK: Wait. If you don't mind, I just  
19 want to answer quickly.  
20 UNIDENTIFIED: Four to what?  
21 MR. HANNA: There's a display on the table that  
22 says traffic, where it says accidents. And for each  
23 alternative, you're going to see how it's going to be  
24 improved by.  
25 And this table is on-line. So you can make a

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1 printout and you can look at it whenever you want.  
2 MR. HABBAK: Okay. Very quickly, I want to  
3 answer Irene's question of the funding.  
4 You were asking about -- you said -- you  
5 mentioned here explain funding for design build, et  
6 cetera.  
7 Now, as I mentioned before, basically we are in  
8 the project program for the environmental document  
9 phase. Once that is done, we're supposed to move to the  
10 design and then after design to construction.  
11 We have funding only for this phase. We do not  
12 have funding for design or construction. So basically,  
13 I mean the simple answer is there's no funding at this  
14 point.  
15 Once funding is identified, then we can move on  
16 to design and then to construction if the -- one of the  
17 build alternatives were selected. If not, then nothing  
18 would happen then.  
19 I hope that answers your question then.  
20 MS. MUNA-LANDA: I realize many of you have  
21 questions. And at this point we have no other question  
22 cards.  
23 But what we are committed to doing is the  
24 specialists with Caltrans will continue to stay here  
25 until 8:30 -- okay. I'm told here, the biologist wants

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1 Your comments will be responded to, and they  
2 will be responded to with all due sincerity.  
3 So please, believe me and believe my  
4 environmental planning staff, that they -- Eduardo and  
5 all the other folks at the Division of Environmental  
6 Planning -- are going to be working hard to make sure  
7 that your comments are listened to and taken very  
8 seriously.  
9 That's all I want to say.  
10 MS. MUNA-LANDA: So with that, we're going to  
11 conclude this portion of our public hearing. It is  
12 7:58.  
13 As I mentioned earlier, all the specialists at  
14 this table as well as around the room will be here  
15 through 8:30.  
16 If you would like to ask specialized questions,  
17 they'll be happy to answer those.  
18 Additionally, we would like to remind you that  
19 the public comment period closes on May 28.  
20 We ask that you please submit all comments  
21 beyond tonight in writing to the address listed on both  
22 the fact sheet and the comment card.  
23 And we thank you for your participation.  
24 Thank you.  
25 (Applause.)

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1 to respond to some questions that were raised during  
2 this speaking portion.  
3 MR. CARON: My name is Paul Caron. I'm the  
4 Chief District Biologist for Caltrans. And biology  
5 seems to have taken a prominent place in the debate  
6 tonight. So I decided to come wander on up here.  
7 One of the biggest issues obviously is impacts  
8 to the refuge. We are taking that very seriously. That  
9 is not something that we are discounting just because we  
10 are a transportation organization.  
11 We're also an environmental stewardship  
12 organization. Some may be cynical about that. But it  
13 is true. There's a biologist at Caltrans.  
14 We have a group of biologists at Caltrans. And  
15 we are out there studying the impacts of this job on a  
16 fairly regular basis.  
17 One of the things that we're studying is what's  
18 going to be the impact to the foraging habitat of the  
19 various bird species out there. We do know about the  
20 water fowl area that is pretty close to one of the  
21 proposed connectors for alternatives two and three.  
22 We are aware of the Riparian Coast Live Oak  
23 Woodland habitat that may or may not be impacted. All  
24 of that is going to be taken into account during this  
25 process, and all of your voices are going to be heard.

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1 (Whereupon the proceedings adjourned at 7:56  
2 P.M.)  
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STATE OF CALIFORNIA

I, CAROLINE JETTER, CSR. NO. 11568, a  
Certified Storthand Reporter in and for the State of  
California, do hereby certify:

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SYLVIA BECKER & ASSOCIATES (323) 857-1010

SOUTHBOND I-405  
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**APPENDIX N | DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENT COVER LETTER**



**DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**

DISTRICT 7

100 MAIN STREET, MS16A

LOS ANGELES, CA 90012

PHONE (213) 897-0703

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April 14, 2008

Responsible Agencies, Review Agencies, Trustee  
Agencies, Cooperating Agencies and Individuals  
Interested in the improvement of the connector  
from the southbound San Diego Freeway  
(Interstate-405) to the westbound Ventura  
Freeway (U.S. Highway-101)

07-LA-405 PM 39.4/40.5  
07-LA-101 PM 17.0/19.4  
Southbound I-405 to the  
Westbound U.S.-101 Connector  
Improvement Project  
EA 199610

**Draft Environmental Assessment/Initial Study Now Available**

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) proposes various alternatives to improve the connector from the southbound San Diego Freeway (Interstate-405) to the westbound Ventura Freeway (U.S. Highway-101). A new, upgraded 50 mph two-lane connector would replace the existing 20 mph single-lane connector. The proposed project would require right-of-way from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers related to the operation of the Sepulveda Dam.

In conformity with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), and Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act, Caltrans has studied the effects that the proposed project may have on the environment and community. The results of these studies are contained in an environmental document known as a draft Environmental Assessment/Initial Study (EA/IS). The purpose of this notice is to inform the public of its completion and availability to any interested individuals.

Furthermore, a hearing will be held to allow any interested individuals an opportunity to discuss certain design features of the project with Caltrans staff before the final design and alternative is selected. **The public hearing will be held on Wednesday May 14, 2008 from 5:30pm-8:30pm at Valley Beth Shalom located at 15739 Ventura Blvd., Encino, CA 91436.** Individuals who require special accommodation (American Sign Language interpreter, accessible seating, documentation in alternative formats, etc.) are requested to contact the Caltrans Public Affairs Office at 213-897-3656 at least 21 days prior to the scheduled hearing date. TDD users may contact the California Relay Service TDD line at 1-800-735-2929 or Voice Line at 1-800-735-2922.

Enclosed is a copy of the draft EA/IS for your review. Please submit any written comments no later than May 28, 2008 to:

Mr. Ronald Kosinski, Deputy District Director  
California Department of Transportation  
Division of Environmental Planning (405/101 Connector)  
100 South Main Street MS 16A  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

For additional information, or for an additional copy of the draft EA/IS (hard copy and/or CD), please contact Mr. Eduardo Aguilar at (213) 897-8492. Thank you for your interest in this transportation improvement project.

Sincerely,

  
RONALD KOSINSKI  
Deputy District Director



## **APPENDIX O | PROJECT NEWSLETTER**

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## I-405/U.S. 101 Connector Project Public Hearing

DETAILS  
INSIDE

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) is continuing to work with the community to determine the most efficient ways to improve traffic flow on the connector from the San Diego Freeway (I-405) at the Burbank Boulevard overcrossing to the northbound Ventura Freeway (U.S. 101). Caltrans is in the Environmental Phase of this project to improve the connector. Please see inside this newsletter to find out more about a public hearing on the draft environmental document and proposed design alternatives to be held May 14th at Temple Valley Beth Shalom in Encino. Your participation and comments in this process are important and encouraged. Read on to see how you can share your comments on this project.



The map above shows the area of the I-405/U.S. 101 Connector Project. Caltrans has been working on the environmental document, trying to minimize impacts while developing the best alternatives to improve traffic flow on this extremely busy freeway connector.

## I-405/U.S. 101 Connector Project - The Facts

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) is studying options for a new two-lane connector from the southbound San Diego Freeway (I-405) at the Burbank Boulevard overcrossing to the northbound Ventura Freeway (U.S. 101). The proposed project location is in the San Fernando Valley community of Sherman Oaks, in the City of Los Angeles.

The existing connector is subject to extensive congestion, delays, and queue

lengths throughout the day.

The purpose of the project is to improve safety, operation, capacity, and traffic flow through the interchange by improving the connector.

Caltrans proposes to replace the existing connector, from the southbound I-405 to the westbound U.S. 101 with an upgraded connector. The current single-lane connector was built in the 1960's to accommodate speeds of 20-mph. A new 50-mph, two-lane connector is needed to accommodate increased

traffic and congestion. This would be accomplished by constructing a new bridge structure crossing over the spillway of the Sepulveda Dam. The Department has considered nine alternatives, eight of which are variations on this connector improvement proposal. Currently, four alternatives remain under consideration, including the No-Build Alternative.

## I-405/U.S. 101 Connector Project - The Public Hearing

Caltrans has prepared a Draft Environmental Assessment/Initial Study (EA/IS) for this project and will host a public hearing on

**Wednesday, May 14th**

**5:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.**

**Valley Beth Shalom - 15739 Ventura Boulevard, Encino**

At the public hearing, you will have the opportunity to view proposed plans and make comments. Qualified personnel will be available to answer questions and discuss details surrounding ongoing efforts to promote congestion relief along the I-405/U.S. 101 Connector.

A formal presentation will be made with the opportunity for the public to express views in writing or through verbal comments.

## I-405/U.S. 101 Connector Project - The Alternatives

At the start of the analysis, Caltrans considered nine alternatives. Four alternatives remain under consideration, including the No-Build Alternative. The following is a summary of the alternatives under consideration.

### **"NO-BUILD" ALTERNATIVE**

The "No Build" or "Do Nothing" alternative calls for the existing connector, from SB I-405 to NB U.S.-101, to remain as is.

### **ALTERNATIVE 1**

This alternative calls for a new, elevated, connector bridge structure that spans the spillway of the Sepulveda Dam, from SB I-405 to NB U.S.-101. It will eliminate the sharp turn radius curve of the existing connector. The Burbank Boulevard on-ramp to SB I-405 would need to be reconstructed to pass beneath the new connector structure. To implement this new Burbank Boulevard on-ramp structure, both of the existing connectors from SB I-405 to the U.S.-101 would be removed, therefore, traffic from Burbank Boulevard would lose access to both directions of U.S.-101. Additionally, with both of the

existing connectors from SB I-405 to U.S.-101 requiring removal, this alternative will also require the construction of a new connector from SB I-405 to SB U.S.-101, in order to maintain that particular access.

### **ALTERNATIVE 2**

This alternative calls for a new, elevated, connector bridge structure that spans the spillway of the Sepulveda Dam, from SB I-405 to NB U.S.-101. However unlike Alternative 1, this alternative maintains access from Burbank Boulevard to U.S.-101 via the construction of a constricted loop on-ramp, which encroaches onto the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Refuge (within the flood control basin) located immediately north of Burbank Boulevard, immediately west of I-405. Since the loop design is constricted to minimize the encroachment onto the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Refuge, in order to properly implement the on-ramp loop, a reconstruction of the Burbank Boulevard/I-405 over-crossing bridge would be required. This would result in an additional increase in temporary construction related traffic congestion. Also unlike

Alternative 1, since the new Burbank Boulevard loop onramp (which also provides access to SB I-405) encroaches upon the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Refuge rather than on the existing connectors, this alternative does not require the removal of the existing connector from SB I-405 to SB U.S.-101. In other words, unlike Alternative 1, this alternative does not carry the added burden of having to construct a new connector from SB I-405 to SB U.S.-101.

### **ALTERNATIVE 3**

Alternative 3 is identical to Alternative 2, except that this alternative seeks to eliminate the need for a reconstruction of the existing Burbank Boulevard/I-405 over-crossing. To accomplish this, a non-constricted on-ramp loop would need to be implemented, thereby encroaching an additional 50 feet onto the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Refuge (within the flood control basin).

### **What Do You Think?**

Caltrans welcomes public opinion and comment on this project.

You may send comments or questions via e-mail to:

**Eduardo\_Aguilar@dot.ca.gov**

A copy of the Draft EA/IS may be obtained at:

<http://www.dot.ca.gov/dist07/resources/envdocs/>

(2008-04-11 - SOUTHBOUND INTERSTATE 405 TO US 101 CONNECTOR IMPROVEMENT PROJECT)



California Department of Transportation  
District 7

c/o Arellano Associates  
Public Outreach Consultants  
13791 Roswell Avenue, Suite A  
Chino, CA 91710

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## I-405/U.S. 101 Connector Project - What's Next?

The draft environmental document is completed and is being circulated to the public for review and comment. A formal public hearing will be held on Wednesday, May 14 at the Valley Beth Shalom in Encino. Funding for the project has not yet been authorized.

The status of this project and other I-405 projects may be obtained by visiting the website at [www.dot.ca.gov/dist07/move405/](http://www.dot.ca.gov/dist07/move405/) The project's environmental document may be viewed at <http://www.dot.ca.gov/dist07/resources/envdocs/>



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**APPENDIX P | LETTER OF NO EFFECT TO U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE  
SERVICE**

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## DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

DISTRICT 7, Division of Environmental Planning  
100 SO. Main ST.  
LOS ANGELES, CA 90012  
PHONE (213) 897-0703  
FAX (213) 897-0685



*Fit your power!  
Be Energy efficient!*

June 9, 2008

US Fish and Wildlife Service  
2493 Portola Road, Suite B  
Ventura, CA 93003

Attn: Steve Kirkland

This letter is being sent to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for the purpose of declaring a "No Effect" determination with regards to the Least Bell's vireo (LBV) as it pertains to the I-405 / US-101 Interchange project proposed by the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans). This letter describes the proposed project, the potential impacts, the proposed mitigation measures and the supporting documentation used in Caltrans' determination.

The selected alternative for this project (Alternative 1 in the Draft IS/EIS) calls for a new, elevated, connector bridge structure that spans over the spillway of the Sepulveda Dam, from the SB I-405 to the NB US-101. This project will be built using heavy equipment and will involve the use of pile driving for construction of the pillars needed for the elevation of the structure over the dam and spillway.

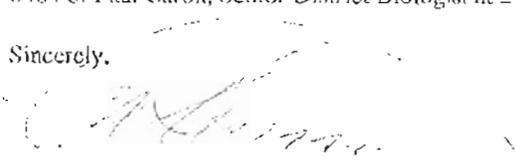
Potential impacts to the LBV analyzed for this project are limited to the possible noise impacts during construction, as no LBV habitat will be removed as a result of this project. The LBV habitat with the potential to be affected by noise is the oak woodland scrub area located north of Burbank Blvd., west of the dam and bordered on the east by the Los Angeles River.

In 2007, Caltrans conducted a noise study for this area and determined that the potential decibel level due to pile driving was estimated at between 72 and 75 dBA. This level was estimated without consideration to any noise reduction measures that would be put in place at the time of construction. With the use of noise attenuating devices, such as sound blankets, this dBA level can be reduced by 20 decibels. That reduction would bring the decibel level down to within the current ambient noise level of that area which was determined to be between 55 to 58 dBA.

A "no effect" determination can be assumed only when impacts are mitigated to below significance such that there will be no impacts to listed species. Caltrans has demonstrated that the potential impacts from this project can and will be mitigated so that there will be no impacts, direct, indirect or cumulative, to the LBV in this area.

If you should have any questions regarding this determination, please Maureen Doyle, District Biologist, at 213-897-0404 or Paul Caron, Senior District Biologist at 213-897-0610

Sincerely,

  
Maureen Doyle, District Biologist  
CA Dept. of Transportation, District 7  
Division of Environmental Planning  
100 S. Main Street, MS 16A  
Los Angeles, CA 90012  
maureen\_doyle@dot.ca.gov



**APPENDIX Q | CALTRANS/USACE PROJECT CORRESPONDENCE**



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
LOS ANGELES DISTRICT, CORPS OF ENGINEERS  
P.O. Box 53711  
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90053-2325

December 15, 2000

REFLECT TO  
ATTENTION OF:

Office of the Chief  
Operations Branch

Ms. Elaheh Yadegar  
Department of Transportation  
District 7  
120 South Spring Street  
Los Angeles, California 90012

Dear Ms. Yadegar:

This is in response to your letter of November 28, 2000 concerning the Project Study Report for the South Bound 405 Connector to the North Bound US 101 Improvements at the Sepulveda Dam (Corps File No. EE1-30).

Operations Branch has reviewed the report and has conceptual approved of the report and project.

Do not start work within Corps right-of-way until plans and calculations have reviewed and approved by the Corps of Engineers.

If you have any questions, please call Mr. Ted Masigat, Operations Branch, at (213) 452-3393.

Sincerely,

*Charles L. Beams*  
George L. Beams, P.E.  
Chief, Construction-  
Operations Division



"Bass, Carvel H SPL"  
<Carvel.H.Bass@spl01.usac  
e.army.mil>  
03/22/2007 03:22 PM

To "Eduardo Aguilar" <eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov>  
cc  
bcc  
Subject RE: Sepulveda Dam Master Plan (UNCLASSIFIED)

Classification: UNCLASSIFIED  
Caveats: NONE

Thanks, Ed, for your thoughtful response, very professional response to my short comments. Let us say that I don't fully appreciate or perhaps trust the overall process - yet. I can't see how it would be an appropriate use of Corps land to turn the Wildlife Lake area into part of the freeway although I also appreciate the societal issues and pressures. So, I'm just popping off while the whole thing stews in the black box of the environmental scoping/preview process. In other words, although someone can draw it on a map, I don't like the 'alternatives' that would do that to that wildlife lake. It is a desperate alternative which would use someone else's land in a 180-degree different way than the way the local stakeholders at Federal, City, and local levels have shaped the present site. There is a disconnect between agencies on those alternatives. But, I understand that the process is bigger than we are, and you've been doing a good job of carrying the project - I can't complain about you, just the process and its uncertainties for the future. Again, thanks, and we'll have a chance to 'plan' more in the future.

Carvel

-----Original Message-----

From: Eduardo Aguilar [mailto:eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov]  
Sent: Thursday, March 22, 2007 1:20 PM  
To: Bass, Carvel H SPL  
Subject: Sepulveda Dam Master Plan

Dear Carvel,  
I appreciate your response to our inquiry regarding the Sepulveda Dam Master Plan Update.

We'd like to re-emphasize that the Corps' input is critically important to us, that is why we are seeking a more current version of the Sepulveda Basin Master Plan. We did so during Scoping almost a year ago, and we are doing so again. Since progress has not been made, we'll put it in a memo to file and move on.

The Scoping phase of a project is an important process designed to examine a proposed project very early (i.e. before the environmental document is even started). It is an invitation to all stakeholders to help bring to Caltrans's attention the very thing you wrote in your email: "I do not think that CALTRANS is aware of the issues at that location". Well, that was the very purpose of Scoping and the numerous meetings Caltrans had with all the stakeholders during the Scoping period almost 1 year ago!

Fortunately however, Caltrans is in receipt of the letter from the Corps submitted during the scoping period last year. If all this critical information that you are referring to is in that letter, like it very well should be, then we have nothing to worry about because Caltrans is therefore "aware of the issues at that location".

Secondly, officially choosing or eliminating alternatives prior to the completion and circulation of the draft environmental document defeats the purpose of CEQA and NEPA, which require that projects undergo a REAL and objective Alternatives Analysis. Caltrans will follow the CEQA/NEPA/Section 4f/Section 106 process thoroughly.

Lastly, your final comment indicating that "it will be interesting to see if an intelligent proposal can be made".

Again, this was the very purpose of Scoping. It was an invitation for elected officials and government agencies at EVERY level, as well to ALL other stakeholders, to assist Caltrans in identifying other feasible alternatives. Only the City of LA made that attempt, and it failed because of a fatal flaw in their proposed geometrics. Therefore as it stands, Caltrans + over 2000 stakeholders have failed to come up with an "intelligent proposal".

Regardless, Caltrans will follow the CEQA/NEPA/Section 4f/Section 106 process thoroughly, and is committed to overcoming the various engineering and environmental constraints in order to deliver to the stakeholders a mutually acceptable project.

Eddie  
Isaacs/D01/Caltrans/CAGov

03/20/2007 09:17  
AM

Eduardo  
Aguilar/D07/Caltrans/CAGov@DOT

To

cc

Subject

Fw: Response regarding Sepulveda  
Dam Master Plan (UNCLASSIFIED)

Eddie Isaacs  
Environmental Planner-Maintenance Biological Services Caltrans District 7  
Environmental Planning  
(213) 897-2829 Calnet 8-467-2829  
Eddie\_Isaacs@dot.ca.gov

"Bass, Carvel H  
SPL"  
<Carvel.H.Bass@sp  
101.usace.army.mil>

03/16/2007 09:36  
AM

"Eddie Isaacs"  
<eddie\_isaacs@dot.ca.gov>

To

cc

Subject

RE: Update regarding Sepulveda Dam  
Master Plan (UNCLASSIFIED)

Classification: UNCLASSIFIED

Caveats: NONE

There is no updated version yet. It's being discussed, is all.

Thank you for the notice on the environmental documentation. We actually have some big problems with the alternatives that would affect the Wildlife Lake area and I do not think that CALTRANS is aware of the issues at that location; otherwise the alternative(s) would be dropped now. Although we have indicated that those alternatives would result in impacts extremely difficult for Caltrans to mitigate, we have not had much effect on your scoping process with that situation. The Corps does not think - and has said so - that the alternatives involving Wildlife Lake area are good ones and it is Corps land, so it will be interesting to see if an intelligent proposal can be made.

From: Eddie Isaacs [mailto:eddie\_isaacs@dot.ca.gov]  
Sent: Friday, March 16, 2007 7:43 AM  
To: Bass, Carvel H SPL  
Subject: Update regarding Sepulveda Dam Master Plan

Hello Carvel,

My name is Eddie Isaacs and I am an Environmental Planner/Biologist with Caltrans District 7. I work with Ed Aguilar and Mine Struhl. I wanted to provide you a quick update on the 405/101 Connector Project, as well as, to make a request.

The draft Environmental Document for the Connector project is still a work in progress. It will be done a few months and we'll circulate it to all the stakeholders (including you), and then we'll be holding a public hearing.

I understand that the original version of the Sepulveda Basin Master Plan was published in 1981, and that the updated version is currently in progress. To ensure that the proposed project does not conflict with the new Master Plan (an analysis is currently in progress within the Environmental Document), we hope, that it is not too much to ask, if we could obtain a draft version of the updated Master Plan.

Thank you for your assistance,  
Eddie

Eddie Isaacs  
Environmental Planner-Maintenance Biological Services Caltrans District 7  
Environmental Planning  
(213) 897-2829 Calnet 8-467-2829  
Eddie\_Isaacs@dot.ca.gov

Classification: UNCLASSIFIED

Caveats: NONE

Classification: UNCLASSIFIED

Caveats: NONE



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
LOS ANGELES DISTRICT, CORPS OF ENGINEERS  
P.O. Box 532711  
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90053-2325

June 30, 2006

REPLY TO  
ATTENTION OF.

Operations Branch

Mr. Ronald Kosinski, Deputy District Director *WK*  
CALTRANS, District 7  
Division of Environmental Planning  
100 South Main Street, MS 16A  
Los Angeles, California 90017

Dear Mr. Kosinski:

This letter concerns the CALTRANS proposal to build a new, two-lane connector, in the vicinity of Sepulveda Dam Flood Control Project, from southbound Interstate 405 to the northbound U.S. Highway 101. For this proposal, CALTRANS is conducting a 30-day comment period which ends June 30, 2006, as described in public meetings, in the CALTRANS newsletter "On the Move" and in Mr. Eduardo Aguilar's e-mail description of "The Alternatives", both attached.

This letter provides comments from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Los Angeles District.

**Introduction:**

A proposal at Sepulveda Basin would allow the physical juxtaposition, or overlay in real space, of two entirely separate public missions: flood control (including recreation) with freeway routing. General comments can be made to the proposed plan/alternatives concerning current land use, natural resource conservation, and likely effects from constructing a freeway overpass or connection on or above Corps land at eastern Sepulveda Basin.

Presently, the 405/101 freeways *border* Sepulveda Basin's levee at the same or at lower elevations. The project as proposed would add a new, vertical over-layering to the Basin: a new freeway/connector section would now be over, and supported from within, the Basin. Short-term construction and future freeway activity in perpetuity would affect the Basin in many ways, not all of which are predictable at this time. CALTRANS has provided a range of alternative scenarios, to solve the stated problem of freeway congestion at the 405/101 interchange. The general proposal would have one or more new freeway connector segment(s), passing over a Corps levee(s) and/or other Corps

property, and require placement of piers and other construction activities. This would radically change the landscape, with both construction and perpetual project footprints left over a relatively large area.

Four (4) "Build" Alternatives have been suggested. CALTRANS has shown these alternatives in public or agency scoping presentations during recent years and the Corps has attended several briefings, from 17 July, 2003 through April 25, 2006. However, since 2003, CALTRANS has used 2-dimensional line drawings to show the project alternatives and the Corps has informed CALTRANS that more specific information is needed for project review. Nothing has yet been provided. Since no such information has been provided, then Corps comments must be general; so little information does not allow review of the 4 alternatives or ranking them. No estimates have been provided showing acreage which would be directly or indirectly affected either inside or outside Sepulveda Basin. No 2-dimensional "footprint" is provided to show pier placement or the possible dimensions, or the 3-D shape, of any structural alternatives. Because dimensions, masses, and volumes are not provided, it is impossible to visualize the alternatives and hence to make specific comments.

#### **General Considerations:**

The proposal would affect many acres of City-leased recreation lands, already spoken for. The proposal should be reviewed among Corps Real Estate specialists as to its conforming to Corps Real Estate regulations and requirements. The proposal's Real Estate issues and mechanics have not been discussed among the relevant agencies.

Major problems associated with freeway construction and their use in sensitive areas include: trash; homeless encampments; graffiti; noise; environmental degradation; loss of aesthetics; and possibly future damage to Corps structures; etc. Given the assigned purposes for operating Sepulveda Dam (flood control, recreation, and resource conservation), this proposal would add hardship to the Corps' accomplishing its Congressionally-charged mission for future generations. Oil or other contaminant spills and auto accidents could end up in the Basin where there is now no such problem.

Environmental coordination for this project, and the costs to compensate for *any* loss of quality recreation experience and natural resources conservation, would be complex and quite expensive. The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) document, to be prepared by CALTRANS, must convincingly show either "... no significant adverse effects to the human environment ..." or that the eventually chosen Alternative is the "... least environmentally damaging practicable alternative" to meet the project purpose. Each alternative must also be reasonable to the extent that that each alternative meets the project's purpose and need. The review for several other environmental laws, including Endangered Species and Migratory Waterfowl Acts, will also be coordinated among the Army Corps, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Ventura

office), and CALTRANS. At this time it is not known as to whether the project can meet any such requirements.

#### **Response to Available Scoping Information:**

Each of the four "Build" alternatives is described in terms of "impacts to the Sepulveda Dam" with Alternative #'s 1-3 posing "right of way impacts ... [either] south of [or] both north and south of Burbank Blvd," and Alternative #4 with "eliminate[d] .. impacts to the Sepulveda Dam north of Burbank Blvd." *Based on available information*, it appears that most project alternatives could severely, adversely impact some of the existing, approved land use in the eastern Sepulveda Basin. Besides flood control, such Congressionally-approved land uses include public recreation and natural resources conservation.

#### **Engineering Division:**

Regarding any Corps-owned land use or operations areas, several disciplines in Engineering Division provided preliminary comments to a CALTRANS technical team when they made a presentation of the design options on 17 July, 2003. At that meeting's conclusion, Corps Engineering Division agreed to coordinate further *when* CALTRANS had developed sufficient advanced technical design information that would offset/mitigate identified impacts, specifically with respect to the bridge pier(s) that they had planned to place in the Sepulveda Spillway and Outlet Channel. To date, no technical information has been made available for Corps engineers to reassess that would alter the initial negative first reaction to the design options.

#### **Construction-Operations Division:**

In addition to Engineering Division's comments, the Construction-Operations Division (Operations Branch) operates the Basin for flood control, recreation and other approved land uses, and provides comments, below.

#### **North of Burbank Blvd.**

Any overlay to occur *north of Burbank Blvd.* would affect many acres of sensitive natural area, both by construction (temporary and permanent impacts) and in the future through perpetuity (permanent impacts). The subject land north of Burbank Blvd. is a ***park***, owned by the Corps and leased to City of Los Angeles for low-impact recreation and including natural resources conservation. The Sepulveda Wildlife Lake and Wildlife Area results from past ***mitigation*** requirements related to Tillman Water Treatment Plant's construction. It is ***sensitive and rare habitat***, adjacent to a wetland/lake which is used by ***migratory waterfowl***. The designations "mitigation," "park," "migratory waterfowl," and "sensitive and rare habitat" are jurisdictional issues at both the State and

Federal levels. The subject Corps-owned land north of Burbank Blvd. is regarded as extremely ecologically "sensitive". During intense winter storms, the subject land north of Burbank becomes a shallow lake, under water, and accessible only by boat or helicopter. An major scenic overlook at Burbank Blvd./405 Fwy. would be obscured, which now allows a view northward across the Wildlife Lake/Reserve (please see Figure on the attached brochure, "*The Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve*").

South of Burbank Blvd.

South of Burbank Blvd., the proposed subject area is close to the Dam's spillway area which is designed to allow for high-water release when storm conditions warrant. On the upstream side of the spillway is a Corps maintenance area which is adjacent to high quality native habitat and the Los Angeles River. On the downstream side of the spillway is an area used for Corps maintenance operations, for commercial film and photo shoots, and for other miscellaneous activities. The downstream spillway area also contains oak and other native trees, in an upland/ruderal habitat area.

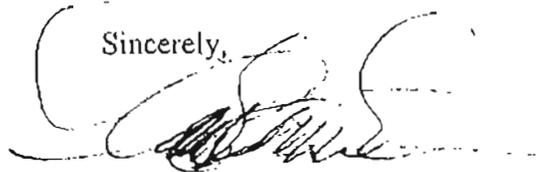
If the overlay were to occur *south of Burbank Blvd.* then the similar concerns as above apply as regards direct and indirect adverse effects to habitat. Also, the landscape ("viewscape") would be altered and could adversely affect the Corps' commercial filming program at Sepulveda Basin.

Summary:

To summarize, the proposal would dramatically affect Corps-owned and/or City-leased lands and, without considerable compensatory mitigation and/or re-design, may not be acceptable. The Corps has neither been approached with a request for project *concept approval* nor received additional needed technical information. As this CALTRANS Scoping Period ends, the public, including the Corps, has simply been provided with insufficient information and analysis to date, to adequately respond.

We conclude with a renewed request for CALTRANS to provide the Corps with the requested additional information. The information will be distributed to the respective Corps specialists to review and, later, provide you with a comprehensive response of our analysis. Please feel free to contact me at (213) 452-3961 or have your staff call Ms. Katie Parks, Operations Manager, at (213) 452-3399.

Sincerely,



Alex C. Dornstauder  
Colonel, US Army  
District Engineer

Enclosures



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
LOS ANGELES DISTRICT, CORPS OF ENGINEERS  
P.O. Box 532711  
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90053-2325

June 1, 2007

REPLY TO  
ATTENTION OF:

Construction-Operations Division

Mr. Eddie Isaacs  
CALTRANS District 7  
Environmental Planning  
100 S. Main Street, MS16-A  
Los Angeles, California 90012

Dear Mr. Isaacs:

This is in regard to the CALTRANS Interstate 405/US Highway 101 Connector Project proposed for development within the Sepulveda Dam Flood Control Basin.

We have conducted a preliminary review of the information provided in your email dated April 24, 2007 and in previous meetings over approximately six years, and have the following comments:

a. Preliminary indications are that several of the proposed freeway "connectors" will cross over the Los Angeles River Channel immediately downstream of Sepulveda Dam FCB and possibly impact the spillway apron and spillway channel as well. Specifically, all of the alternatives cross over the Los Angeles River Channel once and Alternatives 1 and 4 appear to span the channel twice. Further, all of the alternatives indicate that Connector "B" (defined as *SB 405 / NB 101 Connector*) might also affect the hydraulic and structural integrity of the dam's spillway between stationing 30+00 and 40+00. This concern is especially significant when Caltrans speaks to the requirement of various amounts of acreages in terms of "permanent footing easement". We request that Caltrans provide more detailed (plan, profile, typical cross sections, etc.) information of the actual footprint of their proposed structures relative to both the spillway and various LA River channel crossing sites.

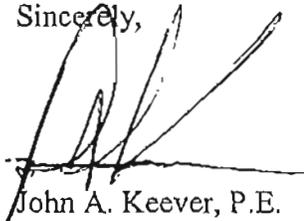
b. Alternatives 2 and 3 encroach into the reservoir area and the proposed structures would cause unspecified loss of reservoir storage space. Therefore, in addition to Los Angeles District review of all alternatives, alternatives 2 and 3 are subject to South Pacific Division (SPD) requirements for development proposals within Corps reservoirs (SPD Regulation 1110-2-1). The loss of storage space due to alternatives 2 and 3 is only one of several adverse impacts from the proposal.

c. Each of the four alternatives proposed would affect Corps property to an undetermined extent. Alternative 1 and 4 will affect the Corps Operations area, alternatives 2 and 3 would additionally affect the Wildlife Lake area which the City and Corps cost-shared to develop. A "reasonable range of alternatives" is mandated under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) which would include alternative methods to reduce traffic congestion which would not directly affect Federal property.

d. The information provided for each alternative's proposed easement/construction acreage seems to include both Federal and other (including private) properties, which renders the comparisons unclear regarding Federal land. Also, the areas of project impact (APE) for each alternative is not provided. Please note the attached matrix which shows areas needing further analysis and information provided. The Corps has serious concerns about this project's impacts and its appropriateness at Sepulveda Flood Control Basin.

The Corps would like to arrange a meeting with you to discuss the comments listed above. The meeting will give each agency an opportunity to address the issues. In this way we will all develop a better understanding of the alternatives under consideration. This should also help in your resubmittal to address each comment. Ms. Katie Parks, Operations Branch, is available to coordinate a meeting. If you have any questions, please call her at (213) 452-3399.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John A. Keever', written over a horizontal line.

John A. Keever, P.E.  
Chief, Construction-Operations  
Division

Enclosure



Colonel Thomas H. Magness

August 8, 2007

Page 2

- d. The property information we provided in the attached April 24, 2007 Response to Mr. Carvell Bass' Concerns does not distinguish between Federal and other types of properties since only Federal property is discussed in the document. Total square footage and construction footprint of the Alternatives 1 through 4 was provided in that document. We will include the Area of Project Impact (APE) in maps as part of the upcoming Draft Environmental Document.

Attached for your review are 8 aerial maps depicting Alternatives 1, 2, 3, 4, A, B, C, D as well as two separate ArcGIS layouts depicting each of the alternatives. Also included is a copy of the June 1, 2007 letter from Mr. John A. Keever, a written description of the eight build alternatives and the no-build alternative, the Hydrology Report, the Army Corps' Checklist regarding Land Use and the Project Conceptual Proposal, and the April 24, 2007 Caltrans Response to the Checklist. In addition we have enclosed the email sent to Army Corps staff, document with questions regarding landuse in the Sepulveda Basin Recreation Area, and the property information spreadsheet submitted by Environmental Planning Staff on June 8, 2007 and resent on June 20 and July 3, 2007. To clarify, Alternatives 1, 2, 3, 4 are currently the proposed build alternatives, whereas alternatives A, B, C, and D are alternatives that were considered but deemed infeasible. The no build alternative is also an option that is being studied. If your staff has any comments or questions regarding the files Caltrans submitted prior to the June 19, 2007 meeting with the Army Corps, which include the I405/US101 Hydraulic Study and the Particulate Matter Conformity Hot Spot Analysis, we would appreciate the opportunity to address them.

Lastly, please at your earliest convenience, provide the Department with a response to our inquiry regarding current and future land use in the Sepulveda Basin Recreation Area. If you would like further information, please do not hesitate to contact me at 213-897-0703.

Sincerely,



Ron Kosinski

Deputy District Director, Division of Environmental Planning  
Caltrans District 7

CC: Mr. John A. Keever, Chief, Construction-Operations  
Mr. Carvel H. Bass, Ecologist/NEPA Reviewer, Operations



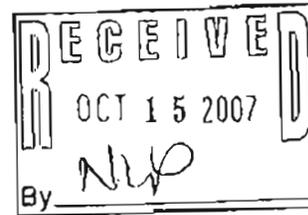
**DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY**

LOS ANGELES DISTRICT, CORPS OF ENGINEERS  
P.O. BOX 532711  
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90063-2326

October 9, 2007

REPLY TO  
ATTENTION OF

Office of the  
District Commander



Mr. Douglas R. Failing  
Director, Caltrans District 7  
California Department of Transportation  
100 South Main Street  
Los Angeles, California 90012

Dear Mr. Failing:

I understand that the California Department of Transportation ("Caltrans") has been developing alternatives for a project to relieve congestion and delay problems on Southbound I-405 and US-101 in the vicinity of Sepulveda Dam and has sought the views of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers ("USACE") on its preliminary proposals. Caltrans has identified to us several possible design alternatives that it is considering in preparing to move forward with this project. All four of the design alternatives currently being considered by Caltrans would require Caltrans to acquire a property interest in portions of USACE managed land. As you know, Caltrans cannot obtain federal land through condemnation, and USACE has not to date agreed to permit Caltrans to make use of USACE managed land for its project. Further information is needed before such decisions can be made.

On June 19, 2007, representatives of Caltrans met with USACE to discuss those proposals. In a letter dated August 8, 2007, Caltrans also provided additional information about its proposal. Since the June meeting, this office has been meeting internally for the purpose of developing a team response to your proposal. We apologize for the delay this has caused in responding to your proposal. I recognize that the work of Caltrans is important to the citizens of Southern California, and it is our desire to provide you with the information you require.

In anticipation of future meetings with Caltrans, I am writing this letter to summarize concerns that need to be addressed before USACE can make decisions concerning proposed alternatives for this project and request information that should facilitate future meetings. These concerns are spelled out more fully in the enclosed memorandum. I request that you provide a detailed written response to this letter and memorandum that I can share with various experts within the District upon whose guidance I will be relying in evaluating Caltrans' proposals.

As the District Commander, I am responsible for assuring that USACE assets are properly utilized. First and foremost, it is my responsibility to make sure that USACE assets at Sepulveda Dam are used in support of the project purpose as set forth by Congress. Secondly, I am responsible for assuring that actions taken at the project are in accordance with our overall

master plan for the project area. Thirdly, I am responsible for ensuring proper environmental stewardship of Sepulveda Dam resources. My staff has reviewed your proposal in light of these responsibilities.

In considering the alternatives that you have proposed, our foremost concern is the proper functioning of the existing flood control project and dam safety. We cannot permit any project on USACE managed land that would impair the ability of Sepulveda Dam to provide flood protection to communities downstream. As explained in the enclosed memorandum, there are specific engineering concerns that we request Caltrans address concerning the impact of its proposals on the dam and other features of the flood control project.

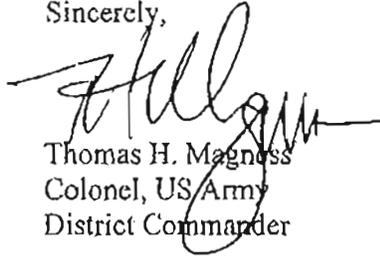
Two of your proposed alternatives encroach on the Wildlife Reserve at Sepulveda Dam and conflict with the master plan and existing use of the basin. My preliminary view is that permitting such an encroachment would be contrary to the public interest. I strongly encourage you to focus your efforts on other alternatives. As you know, the Wildlife Reserve at Sepulveda Basin was created jointly by USACE and the City of Los Angeles. The Wildlife Reserve, one of the few open-space areas in the San Fernando Valley, is important to the community and provides needed habitat for migratory birds and other animals.

According to the Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1968, the Secretary of the Department of Transportation may not approve any program or project which requires the use of any publicly owned land from a wildlife refuge of significance as determined by the federal officials having jurisdiction thereof unless 1) there is no feasible and prudent alternative to the use of such land, and 2) such program includes all possible planning to minimize harm to such wildlife refuge. In the presentations that Caltrans has made to my staff to date, Caltrans has not indicated how it would address these requirements. To the contrary, Caltrans' proposals suggest that there are feasible and prudent alternatives to the use of the Wildlife Reserve for its project.

I request that you evaluate the information provided in this letter and the enclosure. Please provide us any additional information that will help us address the issues identified by the USACE team members. We look forward to working with you as we move toward finding a solution to issues affecting Sepulveda Dam.

Please feel free to send your response to this letter directly to me at District Commander, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, P.O. Box 532711, Los Angeles, California 90053-2325, with a courtesy copy to Ms. Katie Parks, Operations Branch. Your staff should continue to coordinate routine issues on this matter with Ms. Katie Parks, Operations Branch. Her telephone number is (213) 452-3399.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'H. Magnuss', written over the typed name and title.

Thomas H. Magnuss  
Colonel, US Army  
District Commander

Enclosure

## MEMORANDUM FOR District Commander

SUBJECT: Team Concerns Related to Caltrans Proposal to Expand I-405/US-101 Connector at Sepulveda Dam

## 1. Dam Safety and Other Engineering Concerns.

Sepulveda Dam was designed to collect and store flood runoff from the upstream drainage areas and release the water at a non-damaging flow rate. We cannot permit any project on USACE managed land that would impair the ability of Sepulveda Dam to provide flood protection to communities downstream. Our specific engineering concerns are listed by sub-discipline in the subparagraphs below.

a. Reservoir Regulation. Our specific concerns related to reservoir regulation are discussed in depth in the South Pacific Division Regulation (SPD R) 1110-2-1, "Land Development Proposals at Corps Reservoir Projects," dated 18 December 2001. This regulation has been previously furnished to Caltrans staff, and additional copies are available if needed. Any proposal should address the requirements of the regulation, including the following specific items:

- (1) compliance with the terms of existing real estate interests;
- (2) the requirement to preserve effective reservoir storage capacity;
- (3) ability of the proposed development to withstand periodic flooding;
- (4) prohibition on uses that could damage the reservoir due to floatable articles, pollutants and debris;
- (5) the requirement to maintain consistency with the reservoir master plan;
- (6) the requirement to preserve the current operational flexibility of the project;
- (7) the requirement to preserve future operational flexibility of the project;
- (8) prohibition on uses that would create a public safety hazard by inducing people to enter the basin without having a sufficient means of evacuation; and,
- (9) consideration of environmental impacts of development proposals.

b. Hydraulics and Hydrology. Our specific hydraulics and hydrology concerns include the effect that any proposal would have on flows as they enter the reservoir, drain through it, and as they approach and exit the outlet works and spillway. Any proposal should address these

concerns and quantify any anticipated impacts. Proposals also need to address impacts to sediment transport and deposition, and impacts that local scour around proposed structures would have upon reservoir project features.

c. Geotechnical. Geotechnical concerns include showing analysis and designs that demonstrate that any loads placed on the embankment do not impair its ability to retain water.

d. Structural and Civil Design. Structural and civil design concerns include assurances that any features proposed will not reduce the structural stability of any project feature under any design loading condition, including seismic. Also, access must be maintained to all project features for personnel and equipment for operation, maintenance, repair, rehabilitation and flood fighting.

## 2. NEPA Concerns.

In deciding whether to permit the use of federal lands for Caltrans' proposed project and, if so, to what extent, USACE is required to comply with the National Environmental Policy Act ("NEPA"). It is our understanding that Caltrans intends that the CEQA document that it prepares will also fulfill the requirements of NEPA for the federal agencies involved. However, NEPA requires USACE to consider a "reasonable range of alternatives" before deciding to take any federal action. See 42 U.S.C. §4321-4347; 40 C.F.R. §1505.1. From the USACE perspective, the alternatives deemed feasible by Caltrans and currently under consideration for the CEQA document do not include a "reasonable range of alternatives" for NEPA purposes.

It was the understanding of USACE that Caltrans has decided to assess approximately nine alternatives in the California Environmental Quality Act ("CEQA") document it is currently preparing. The nine alternatives include the four design proposals that are currently being considered, a "no build" alternative, and four alternatives that have been disregarded because Caltrans considers them to be infeasible. Each of the proposed feasible alternatives would have an effect on USACE managed property.

All of the alternatives deemed feasible by Caltrans, with the exception of the "no build" alternative, require the use of USACE managed land. Any NEPA document prepared in anticipation of USACE action on this matter must address alternative methods to reduce traffic congestion that do not involve, and alternatives that minimize, the use of Federal land. At the meeting on June 19, 2007, it appeared that Caltrans took the position that no other alternatives need to be considered despite the requirements of NEPA. Despite this, in the letter dated August 8, 2007, Caltrans added two additional alternatives that did not utilize land managed by USACE. Unfortunately, Caltrans deemed these additional alternatives infeasible due to the cost of each alternative and the potential effects to private property.

In order to satisfy the NEPA requirements for this project, Caltrans must carry out a complete NEPA analysis of each of the alternatives. This includes both those alternatives deemed feasible and those deemed infeasible by Caltrans. In completing this analysis, Caltrans should provide a complete cost analysis for those alternatives deemed feasible as well as those deemed infeasible

by Caltrans. The cost analysis should include not only a calculation of the fair market value of any private land that Caltrans would need to obtain in order to complete its proposal, but also the fair market value of the land of the United States.

Caltrans has deemed two alternatives to be infeasible due to Federal Highway Administration policy. Caltrans should provide us with a written explanation of the policy at issue and the specific reasons that the alternatives do not meet the requirements of that policy.

In addition, the evaluation of alternatives which involve USACE managed property must fully assess our concerns described in this letter and in our letter dated June 1, 2007. We are very concerned about potential impacts to USACE-managed land, including dam integrity, reservoir capacity, wildlife reserve impacts, and historic properties and cultural resources. In order to assure that the most complete NEPA document is prepared, we suggest that USACE be included as a cooperating agency in the preparation of its NEPA document.

### 3. Wildlife Reserve Concerns.

The wildlife reserve at Sepulveda Basin was created jointly by USACE and the City of Los Angeles and is included in the Master Plan for Sepulveda Basin. The reserve, one of the few open-space areas in the San Fernando Valley, is important to migratory birds and other animals. During the meeting that took place on June 19, 2007, Caltrans representatives mentioned that it was completing its "Section 4(f)" analysis and that it was likely that the Department of Transportation would determine that there was "no prudently feasible alternative" to utilizing the wildlife reserve for the Caltrans proposal.

Various Federal Highway Administration laws and regulations state that it is a national policy that special effort be made to preserve the natural beauty of the wildlife refuges. According to the Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1968, the Secretary of the Department of Transportation shall not approve any program or project which requires the use of any publicly owned land from a wildlife refuge as determined by the federal officials having jurisdiction thereof unless 1) there is no feasible and prudent alternative to the use of such land, and 2) such program includes all possible planning to minimize harm to such wildlife refuge. We doubt that Caltrans can make such a showing since even its present range of alternatives contains two which would not encroach upon the wildlife reserve.

It does not appear that anyone from either Caltrans or the Department of Transportation has requested a letter from this office regarding our position as to the significance of the publicly owned wildlife reserve at issue. A search of our records has shown that we have provided no written opinion on this issue.

We would like to review a copy of the "Section 4(f)" analysis that contains the basis for the determination that there is "no prudently feasible alternative" to utilizing the wildlife reserve for this proposal.

#### 4. Mitigation Concerns.

As the manager of certain parcels of land owned by the United States, USACE is responsible for maintaining that land in accordance with applicable statutes, Executive Orders and internal operating regulations. Pursuant to Executive Order 11988, it is the policy of USACE to avoid or minimize adverse impacts associated with the use of a flood plain unless there is no practicable alternative. Most of the alternatives proposed by Caltrans would have an adverse impact on the flood plain. If one of those alternatives is determined to be the only practicable alternative in this matter, then, USACE has a responsibility to make sure that steps are taken to design or modify the proposed action so as to minimize the potential harm to the flood plain. In other words, USACE must take steps to assure that any negative effects of that action are mitigated and involve the public in that process.

Caltrans has proposed meetings with USACE to discuss options for mitigating the negative environmental effects of each of the proposals. We are of course willing to meet with Caltrans to consider mitigation proposals. We are concerned, however, that Caltrans is looking to USACE employees to design its mitigation plan. During the June 19, 2007, meeting, USACE representatives asked the Caltrans representatives to describe their ideas for mitigating the environmental impacts of the project. Caltrans responded that it had no plans or ideas for mitigating the environmental impacts. Rather, the Caltrans representatives responded that they were looking to develop those plans with USACE representatives. In the letter from Caltrans dated August 8, 2007, Caltrans included an attachment with a section entitled "Mitigation Proposals." Although Caltrans included proposals to mitigate for the loss of flood storage capacity that would result from its designs, Caltrans did not address any mitigation for the negative environmental effects of the designs.

USACE employs only a limited number of environmental scientists to support such undertakings. These environmental scientists are trained to review plans and projects submitted to USACE. USACE then approves or disapproves those plans or projects depending on the needs of the agency and our agency regulations. The work of developing a mitigation plan proposal generally lies with the project proponent. It is not the responsibility of USACE environmental scientists to design mitigation proposals for project proponents.

Given the importance of this project and its potential impact upon our existing projects, USACE may be able to provide Caltrans informal advice and assistance in developing its mitigation plan. However, any informal advice cannot constitute an endorsement of any particular alternative or prejudgment of the outcome of the decision making process. In order to assure that the best use is made of USACE staff time before any advice is given, it is requested that Caltrans submit a written proposal to USACE that defines Caltrans' initial thoughts on how to mitigate the potential negative environmental impacts of the various alternatives. The Caltrans mitigation proposal can then act as a starting point for discussion on this matter. This systematic approach to the proposed meetings will reduce the amount of time diverted from the regular duties of USACE environmental scientists.

## 5. Regulatory Concerns.

Caltrans' proposed construction activities will require a Clean Water Act Section 404 permit if those activities involve dredging or filling in a water of the United States. This is not unlikely when a proposed project is located in close proximity to a dam. No permit application or request for a jurisdictional determination has yet been received by our Regulatory Division. If a regulatory permit is needed, an application should be filed with our Regulatory Division. To avoid delay and/or duplication of work necessary to comply with NEPA and CEQA, we suggest that Caltrans give consideration to whether its proposed project will need a Section 404 permit as soon as reasonably possible. In formulating alternatives, Caltrans should bear in mind that in order to obtain a permit, the applicant must demonstrate that it has selected the least environmentally damaging practicable alternative.

Coordination with Regulatory Division point of contact Mark D. Cohen prior to submittal of a permit application is highly suggested. In addition, Caltrans, the Corps, and other agencies have developed a Section 404/NEPA Integration Process which has been used to guide many high profile projects across Southern California. Use of this Memorandum of Understanding or the development of a similar agreement could help to coordinate the process.

The USACE evaluation of any permit request must take place prior to determining whether any real estate interest will be granted, although the evaluation of a section 404 application can and should proceed concurrently with the evaluation of other factors relevant to the final decision of USACE. Caltrans should be aware that a real estate approval is not implied by the issuance of a permit, nor is permit issuance guaranteed by any real estate approval.

## 6. Real Estate Concerns.

The Real Estate Division is currently conducting a review of the Los Angeles District's real estate files to determine whether there are additional property issues that could effect our ability to provide an easement for right-of-way or any other real estate interest necessary for the project. At a minimum, prior to granting an easement for right-of-way to build on USACE managed land, the District Engineer is required to make an administrative finding that the easement for right-of-way will not be contrary to the public interest.

## 7. Authority.

Only the District Commander has the authority to bind the District in this matter. According to Engineering Regulation 405-1-12, 8-181c., a finding by the District Engineer that the grant "will not be against the public interest" must precede the grant. Comments or suggestions offered by representatives of the Agency should not be regarded as a final decision of the District Engineer on whether to grant an easement for right-of-way.

Very respectfully submitted,

Proposal Review Team

**DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**

DISTRICT 7

100 MAIN STREET, MS16A  
LOS ANGELES, CA 90012  
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*Flex your power!  
Be energy efficient!*

December 27, 2007

Thomas H. Magness, Colonel, United States Army  
Chief, Construction-Operations Divisions  
Department of the Army  
Los Angeles District, Corps of Engineers  
PO Box 532711  
Los Angeles, CA 90053-2325

File: EA 19961  
I-405/101 Connector  
PM 39.5/40.3

Dear Mr. Magness:

I have been asked to respond to your letter dated October 9, 2007 addressed to our District Director, Doug Failing. The issues you raised were extensive, however we appreciate your patience in awaiting this response. This project is in the environmental study phase and not in the final design phase. The project has been in this phase for the last four years, which is more than normal. The cooperation of the U.S. Army corps of Engineers to complete this phase is vital and we truly appreciate your personal involvement.

We believe that many of the current questions and concerns raised in your October 9<sup>th</sup> letter should have been brought up and addressed during the Value Analysis Study that was conducted in consultation with USACE in August 2003. However, I asked my staff to take this opportunity to address some of your concerns mentioned in your letter while your remaining concerns will be addressed in the draft joint-NEPA/CEQA/Section 4(f) document, which will be sent to all stakeholders in early 2008.

Please refer to the attachment for a detailed response to your concerns. I am also forwarding this letter, as well as your October 9<sup>th</sup> letter, to the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). As our federal partners on this Interstate improvement project, they will be working directly with the USACE on any transfers of federal property determined necessary upon completion of the environmental document.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ronald Kosinski".  
RONALD KOSINSKI  
Deputy District Director

CC: Ms. Katie Parks, Operations Branch  
Gene Fong, Regional Administrator, FHWA

**USACE Comment:** Caltrans cannot obtain federal land through condemnation.

**CALTRANS Response:** The California Department of Transportation (CALTRANS) agrees. The proposed, federally funded project is a joint endeavor with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), which was initiated by U.S. Congressman Brad Sherman, and has the support of other elected officials. Any final right-of-way transfers will have the direct involvement of the USACE and FHWA.

**USACE Comment:** The USACE has not to date agreed to permit Caltrans to make use of the USACE managed land for its project. Further information is needed before such decisions can be made.

**CALTRANS Response:** CALTRANS has provided the USACE with all requested information available, and will continue to do so.

Furthermore, CALTRANS has been proactive in involving the USACE very early in the project development process. The purpose of early coordination with agencies like the USACE is to ensure that CALTRANS develops a context-sensitive design and a mutually acceptable project.

In August 2003, CALTRANS requested the USACE's participation in the project's multi-agency, multi-disciplinary Alternatives Value Analysis Study. At that study, project alternatives were dropped (i.e. Alternative A) and others created (i.e. Alternatives 2 and 3 which encroach upon the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Refuge). Understanding the importance of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) alternatives analysis process, CALTRANS was seeking the USACE's input during that critically important project alternatives analysis and new alternatives creation phase of the project. Mr. Carvel Bass and Mr. Bill Zeigler represented the USACE at the August 2003 Value Analysis Study, but did not raise many of the concerns from the October 9, 2007 letter, despite CALTRANS being clear that each of the proposed project alternatives called for a new, improved connector from the southbound I-405 to the westbound US-101, which required the use of USACE land.

The detailed concerns contained in the USACE's October 9, 2007 letter were exactly the type of input that Caltrans was seeking from the USACE during the August 2003 Value Analysis Study, as well as during the month-long continued early coordination process of May/June 2006 (Scoping). During Scoping, the City of Los Angeles and other agencies were involved in the process and actually proposed a new project alternative (Alternative B), which attempted to minimize impacts that the current Alternative 4 poses to the City's residents on the southeast side of the interchange.

**USACE Comment:** Two of your proposed alternatives encroach on the Wildlife Reserve at Sepulveda Dam and conflict with the master plan and existing use of the basin. My preliminary view is that permitting such an encroachment would be contrary to the public interest. I strongly encourage you to focus your efforts on other alternatives.

**CALTRANS Response:** CALTRANS takes the importance of the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Refuge very seriously. Three of the five proposed project alternatives do not encroach upon

the wildlife refuge (i.e. Alternative 1, Alternative 4, and the No Build Alternative). CALTRANS believes that the current Alternatives Analysis should be completed so that all stakeholders can have a say in the decision-making process, such as:

- All pertinent elected officials
- All pertinent agencies
- All affected and interested individuals

Removing project alternatives during the environmental, Section 4(f), engineering, and alternatives analysis process, and denying other stakeholders an opportunity to view and comment on the results of those analyses, is not appropriate because it denies the public the opportunity to decide what is in its own best interest.

**USACE Comment:** The USACE requests that Caltrans address the impacts of its proposals to the dam and other features of the flood control basin.

**CALTRANS Response:** The primary purpose of the Sepulveda Dam is flood control. The runoff from 152 square miles of watershed flows into the basin and is funneled into a flood control channel to regulate the flow of the Los Angeles River, thereby preventing flooding along the river downstream of the dam. The dam's operating criteria were based strictly upon reservoir water surface elevation, irrespective of the downstream channel conditions. However, to address the project's volume-loss impacts to the basin's flood control operations, five (5) mitigation proposals were presented in the project's Floodplain Study Report, which was submitted to the USACE on June 19, 2007. The USACE has yet to comment on those mitigation proposals.

Furthermore, the spillway at Sepulveda dam was designed to pass, without danger to the dam or threat of overtopping the dam. As stated in the above-mentioned Floodplain Study Report, since the Dam has been in operation, the reservoir water surface elevation reached its all-time historical maximum of 705.10 feet (1927 NGVD) during floods of 16 February 1980, and it reached 702.53 feet on March 1, 1983. Please recall that at designed elevation 712 feet, the spill gates begin to lower to discharge water onto the spillway apron. Otherwise, the existing I-405 and US-101 connectors would likely be inundated as a result of water discharge from the spillway with the designed discharge rate. The CALTRANS project alternatives propose to construct a connector bridge over the spillway apron, from the southbound I-405 to the US-101. This proposal would have minimal impact to the dam operations. USACE has also indicated concern regarding structural issues and scouring potential. CALTRANS Headquarters Structural and Hydraulic Structure teams will become more involved with the project as it approaches the Project Specifications and Estimates phase.

**USACE Comment:** The Sepulveda Basin Master Plan and the proposed project alternatives.

**CALTRANS Response:** According to the Sepulveda Basin Master Plan and Final Environmental Impact Report / Statement: "It is possible that changes in reservoir project operation will have to take place in the future. The Sepulveda Basin is one element of a comprehensive flood control system for the metropolitan Los Angeles area, and recent review has indicated that the overall system may not provide the high degree of flood protection set forth in Federal guidelines for urban areas. Consequently, the operating plan for Sepulveda Dam could be modified at a future time to afford higher protection to down stream areas. This could result in more frequent inundation of land in the reservoir area." If this

happens, the chance for the spill gates lower to discharge water onto the spillway would be very low. Also, please refer to the following bulleted items:

- For each of the proposed alternatives, the new southbound I-405 to westbound US-101 connector bridge will not affect the Dam's structural integrity.
- For each of the proposed alternatives, the 15-foot wide service road located along the north side of the US-101 freeway, between the Haskell Ave. and Hayvenhurst Ave, would be re-aligned to accommodate the proposed new southbound I-405 to westbound US-101 connector. The access would be maintained throughout the project, and the new re-aligned service road would be constructed before removal of the existing service road.
- The rejected alternatives A and B include a "slip ramp" to maintain traffic access from the Burbank Blvd. on-ramp to the eastbound and westbound US-101. As discussed in correspondence from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) to CALTRANS, "slip-ramps" that connect to "freeway-to-freeway-connectors" cannot be used. Despite this fact, Alternatives A and B were considered and evaluated due to the potential impacts that the current Alternative 1 poses to the local roadway system (i.e. loss of access to the US-101 from Burbank Blvd.), as well as, the City of Los Angeles's desire to maintain that access. This situation, as well as, the referenced FHWA design policy will be discussed further in the draft joint-NEPA/CEQA/Section (4f) document.

**USACE Comment:** It is our understanding that Caltrans intends that the CEQA document that it prepares will also fulfill the requirements of NEPA for the federal agencies involved.

**CALTRANS Response:** CALTRANS has always prepared joint NEPA/CEQA documents on projects that involve a federal action, and has never attempted to write a CEQA document in lieu of a NEPA document. This project proposal is no exception. CALTRANS has never said, nor implied otherwise.

**USACE Comment:** From the USACE perspective, the alternatives deemed feasible by Caltrans and currently under consideration for the CEQA document do not include a "reasonable range of alternatives" for NEPA purposes.

**CALTRANS Response:** Per the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ), as part of its oversight of implementation of NEPA, CEQ Regulations 40 CFR Sec. 1502.14 requires that all reasonable alternatives be examined. In determining the scope of alternatives to be considered, the emphasis is on what is "reasonable". Reasonable alternatives include those that are practical or feasible from the technical or economic standpoint.

CALTRANS continues to pursue reasonable and prudent alternatives that are feasible. Rigorously exploring and expending resources on alternatives that are not technically or economically sound from an engineering standpoint, or which potentially create environmental and community impacts greater than the current 5 alternatives, and/or that do not conform to the Federal Highway Administration's design standards, is not "reasonable".

The rationale on why some alternatives were considered, rejected, deemed not reasonable, and therefore, not pursued for implementation will be substantiated in the draft NEPA/CEQA/Section 4(f) document.

**USACE Comment:** We are very concerned about potential impacts to USACE-managed land, including dam integrity, reservoir capacity, wildlife reserve impacts, and historic impacts and cultural resources. In order to assure that the most complete NEPA document is prepared, we suggest that the USACE be included as a cooperating agency in the preparation of its NEPA document.

**CALTRANS Response:** CALTRANS in consultation with FHWA has always included, and regarded the USACE, as a cooperating agency. Per the NEPA CEQ Regulations Sec. 1501.6, the lead agency shall:

- a) Request the participation of each cooperating agency in the NEPA process at the earliest possible time.  
**Note:** CALTRANS requested the USACE's participation as early as the August 2003 Value Analysis Study, a phase of the project during which alternatives were dropped, and new alternatives created.
- b) Use the environmental analysis and proposals of cooperating agencies to the maximum extent possible.  
**Note:** CALTRANS has sought the input of the USACE to the maximum extent, as early in the process as possible, several times (i.e. the Value Analysis, Scoping, meetings, phone calls, emails, etc.).
- c) Meet with a cooperating agency at the latter's request.  
**Note:** CALTRANS has initiated contact with and met with the USACE every time that the USACE has requested a meeting.

CALTRANS agrees that the USACE, as a Cooperating Agency, should increase its involvement in the project and improve its participation in the process.

**USACE Comment:** During the meeting that took place on June 19, 2007, Caltrans representatives mentioned that it was completing its Section 4(f) analysis and that it was likely that Department of Transportation would determine that there was "no prudent or feasible alternative" to utilizing the wildlife reserve for the Caltrans proposal.

**CALTRANS Response:** That is inaccurate. CALTRANS made no such statement. The project alternatives analysis and NEPA/CEQA/Section 4(f)/formal public comment process is not yet complete. Therefore, CALTRANS does not know whether "there is no prudent or feasible alternative" to encroaching upon the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Refuge. CALTRANS will ensure that meeting minutes are prepared and circulated after future meetings in order to prevent further misunderstandings from occurring.

**USACE Comment:** According to the Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1968, the Secretary of CALTRANS of Transportation shall not approve any program or project which requires the use of any publicly owned land from a wildlife refuge as determined by the federal officials having jurisdiction thereof unless 1) there is not feasible and prudent alternative to the sue of such land, and 2) such program includes all possible planning to minimize harm to such

wildlife refuge. We doubt that Caltrans can make such a showing since even its present range of alternatives contains two, which would not encroach upon the wildlife reserve.

**CALTRANS Response:** Section 4(f) of the U.S. Department of Transportation Act of 1966 is the law that is the basis for this discussion. Since CALTRANS's Section 4(f) Evaluation is not yet complete, it is premature to make any assumptions as it implies a lack of objectivity in the analysis and application of the law.

Above all, CALTRANS has attempted to remain objective despite strong opinions, objections, and/or support for **each** of the five (5) proposed alternatives. CALTRANS has not committed, nor made a final decision as to which of the five (5) proposed alternatives will ultimately be selected. Such a decision will not be made until after the NEPA/CEQA/Section 4(f)/formal public comment process is completed.

Section 4(f) requires the application of the **Feasible and Prudent Standard**. Therefore, the first test under Section 4(f) is to determine which alternatives are feasible and prudent. An alternative is feasible if it is technically possible to design and build that alternative. The second part of the standard involves determining whether an alternative is prudent or not. An alternative may be rejected as not prudent for any of the following reasons:

- It does not meet the project purpose and need,
- It involves extraordinary operational or safety problems,
- There are unique problems or truly unusual factors present with it
- It results in unacceptable and severe adverse social, economic or other environmental impacts,
- It would cause extraordinary community disruption,
- It has additional construction costs of an extraordinary magnitude, or
- There is an accumulation of factors that collectively, rather than individually, have adverse impacts that present unique problems or reach extraordinary magnitudes.

CALTRANS's Section 4(f) Evaluation will be objectively prepared, and the Feasible and Prudent Standard will be objectively applied.

**USACE Comment:** It does not appear that anyone from either Caltrans or FHWA has requested a letter from this office regarding our position as to the significance of the publicly owned wildlife reserve at issue. A search of our records has shown that we have provided no written opinion on this issue.

**CALTRANS Response:** CALTRANS is, and has been, seeking the USACE's opinions/input (written or otherwise) on all aspects of the project since August 2003, then again during the May/June 2006 Scoping phase of the project.

Furthermore, CALTRANS has had meetings with the USACE and the City of Los Angeles Department of Recreation and Parks in which the importance of the Wildlife Refuge was discussed. CALTRANS also attended a site visit, and a subsequent meeting, with the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Refuge Steering Committee. The USACE's NEPA reviewer, Mr. Carvel Bass, was present at all those meetings. CALTRANS has also thoroughly reviewed the 1981 Sepulveda Basin Master Plan, and is referencing that document in the

NEPA/CEQA/Section 4(f) documents. The research and analysis of this sensitive area continues and will be provided when the draft CEQA/NEPA/Section 4(f) document is circulated for Agency/Public comment.

**USACE Comment:** We would like to review a copy of the 'Section 4(f)' analysis that contains the basis for the determination that there is "no prudently feasible alternative" to utilizing the wildlife reserve for this proposal.

**CALTRANS Response:** The Section 4(f) Evaluation is not complete, nor has the determination section of that document been prepared. The said "no prudently feasible alternative" to utilizing the wildlife reserve determination does NOT exist.

**USACE Comment:** The USACE must take steps to assure that any negative effects are mitigated and involve the public in that process. Caltrans proposed meetings with the USACE to discuss options for mitigating the negative environmental effects of each the proposals. We are concerned, however, that Caltrans is looking to USACE employees to design its mitigation plan. It is not the responsibility of the USACE environmental scientists to design mitigation proposals for project proponents.

**CALTRANS Response:** CALTRANS never asked USACE employees to design its mitigation plan. CALTRANS simply desires to work closely with the USACE to ensure that the USACE's interests are protected. We would assume that if there are potential impacts on USACE resources, USACE staff would be interested in working collaboratively with CALTRANS specialists on possible mitigation measures.

NEPA CEQ Regulation Sec. 1501.6 states that:

- A cooperating agency shall assume on request of the lead agency responsibility for developing information and preparing environmental analyses including portions of the environmental impact statement concerning which the cooperating agency has special expertise.
- Make available staff support at the lead agency's request to enhance the latter's interdisciplinary capability.

Given the importance of the Wildlife Refuge and the Sepulveda Dam, CALTRANS highly recommends that the USACE work closely with CALTRANS specialists to ensure that the final mitigation measures are designed to USACE standards, and that the USACE's interests, including the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Refuge, are protected.

**USACE Comment:** Given the importance of this project and its potential impact upon our existing projects, the USACE may be able to provide Caltrans informal advice and assistance in developing its mitigation plan. In order to assure that the best use is made of USACE staff time before any advice is given, it is requested that Caltrans submit a written proposal to the USACE that defines Caltrans' initial thoughts on how to mitigate the potential negative environmental impacts of the various alternatives. The Caltrans mitigation proposal can then act as a starting point for discussion on this matter.

Colonel Thomas H. Magness  
December 27, 2007  
Attachment  
Page 7 of 7

**CALTRANS Response:** On October 30, 2007, the CALTRANS project biologist contacted the USACE NEPA reviewer to again attempt mitigation discussions in order to jointly ensure that the USACE's interests are protected. The NEPA reviewer declined on the basis that "we don't have a basis of information yet, or agreement, to discuss mitigation." We will follow your suggestion and provide a written proposal with our initial thoughts and request informal advice and assistance in developing a mitigation plan.

Prepared by the CALTRANS I-405/US-101 Project Development Team.

Eddie  
Isaacs/D07/Caltrans/CAGov  
10/31/2007 04:48 PM

To Eduardo Aguilar/D07/Caltrans/CAGov@DOT  
cc  
bcc  
Subject Mitigation for the 405/101 Interchange project

Correspondence yesterday (Tuesday, October 30, 2007) between Carvel Bass, NEPA Review for US Army Corps, and Maureen, Biologist for 405/101 Connector Project.

Eddie Isaacs  
Environmental Planner-Maintenance Biological Services  
California Coastal Commission Liaison  
Caltrans District 7 Environmental Planning  
(213) 897-2829 Eddie\_Isaacs@dot.ca.gov

----- Forwarded by Eddie Isaacs/D07/Caltrans/CAGov on 10/31/2007 04:47 PM -----



Maureen  
Doyle/D07/Caltrans/CAGov  
10/30/2007 07:55 AM

To "Bass, Carvel H SPL" <Carvel.H.Bass@usace.army.mil>  
cc  
Subject RE: Mitigation for the 405/101 Interchange project

Carvel,

Thank you for your response. I look forward to meeting with you to talk about more specific mitigation plans. Until then, and until there is a consensus or agreement with regards to the project alternatives, I will work on pulling together some general ideas so that we have a good jumping off point.

Have a good day and I look forward to our next meeting.

Maureen Doyle  
Environmental Planner NS  
D7 Environmental Planning  
Office: 213-897-0404  
Fax: 213-897-0685

"Bass, Carvel H SPL" <Carvel.H.Bass@usace.army.mil>



"Bass, Carvel H SPL"  
<Carvel.H.Bass@usace.army.mil>  
10/30/2007 07:42 AM

To "Maureen Doyle" <maureen\_doyle@dot.ca.gov>  
cc  
Subject RE: Mitigation for the 405/101 Interchange project

Thank you for the input, Maureen. While we can and should talk about this, we can't yet do much besides

talk about general things. However, the master plan revision is not related to our task because there are already known ways and areas where improvements could, theoretically, occur. At some time we can talk about how and why this is so, but the main thing is that there are certain areas which would be appropriate for any planning for mitigation. At this time, we should hold off on meeting about mitigation, however, because the Corps hasn't yet accepted the proposal(s), and the Corps and Caltrans managers - I mean the corporate managers - are still approaching the project. The Corps Colonel recently sent a letter to CT Regional Director Mr. Falling, which lists Corps thoughts on the proposal and that is setting the tone at this time for our (Corps) efforts regarding the proposal. One thing we don't yet visualize, based on Caltrans documentation, is the actual 3-D footprint of each option, so we don't know the impacts, so we do not yet theorize about the mitigation. We don't have a basis of information yet, or agreement, to discuss mitigation. I will say that, obviously, the Wildlife Lake area (east of Woodley) is critical and sensitive; the LA River corridor is critical and sensitive; the Operations Area south of Burbank is critical and sensitive, so those would be geographical areas to think about until we talk. We would in general not want to invent additional areas than those, for ecological enhancement - that is just a rule of thumb based on present and likely future land uses at SPVDA.

Carvel Bass, Ecologist  
Operations Branch  
213 452 3392

**From:** Maureen Doyle [mailto:maureen\_doyle@dot.ca.gov]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, October 30, 2007 7:26 AM  
**To:** Bass, Carvel H SPL  
**Subject:** Mitigation for the 405/101 Interchange project

Carvel,

As the Caltrans biologist for this project, I am currently working on developing mitigation options for impacts that may result from the proposed 405/101 Interchange project. I am looking at several mitigation options such as on-site replanting of native species that may be directly impacted, removal of invasive species and restoration of native habitat, as well as the transfer of funding to be put towards planned habitat restoration in the area. In order to develop mitigation options consistent with the vision Corps has for Sepulveda Basin, it would be useful to have some specific information on any future land use plans.

I understand that the Corps is currently updating their Master Plan for the Sepulveda Basin and all the information is still in a draft form. However, any information about what the agency has planned for this area would be very helpful, and allow me to develop a detailed, comprehensive mitigation plan.

Thank you for your time.

Maureen Doyle  
Environmental Planner NS  
D7 Environmental Planning  
Office: 213-897-0404  
Fax: 213-897-0685

**DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY**LOS ANGELES DISTRICT, CORPS OF ENGINEERS  
P.O. BOX 532711  
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90063-3225

February 25, 2008

REPLY TO  
ATTENTION OFOffice of the Chief of  
Asset Management DivisionMr. Ronald Kosinski  
Deputy District Director  
Caltrans, District 7  
100 Main Street, MS16A  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Dear Mr. Kosinski:

I am writing on behalf of the District Commander in response to your letter dated December 27, 2007. Thank you for taking the time to respond to our letter regarding the proposal to modify Southbound I-405 and US-101 in the vicinity of Sepulveda Dam. We hope the District Commander's letter has provided you with the information you need regarding the perspective of the United States Army Corps of Engineers ("USACE") on your preliminary proposals and that his letter will serve as a basis for future discussion. We are writing this letter to supplement the information contained in the District Commander's letter.

In the attachment to your letter dated December 27, 2007, you stated that USACE was provided with a copy of the Floodplain Study Report at a meeting on June 19, 2007. We do not have a copy of the Floodplain Study Report and can find no record of receiving it. Please provide us with another copy of the Floodplain Study Report at your earliest convenience. Also, please provide us with a list of the other documents you believe have been provided to USACE, so that we can review our files and verify that we have them.

The attachment to your letter draws some conclusions about the impacts your proposals will have on the dam. For example, on page two of the attachment, you state, "This proposal would have minimal impact to the dam operations." Please note that USACE has not made any determination about the impact of your proposals. Our engineers have not to date been provided with sufficient information to reach any conclusion about the impact of the proposals on dam operations or the dam itself. For that reason, the engineering concerns were expressed in the enclosure to the District Commander's letter. If additional information is available at this time to assist our engineers with making these determinations, please provide it. We recognize your project is still in the early stages, and engineering analyses may not yet be fully developed. However, you should realize that any action that has the potential to impact on the dam must be reviewed and approved by USACE engineers before USACE could grant use of the land at Sepulveda Dam.

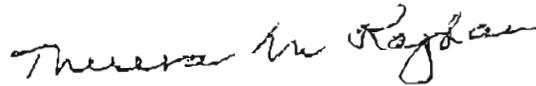
We interpret your letter as inviting us to participate as a cooperating agency in the preparation of your CEQA/NEPA/Section 4(f) document. We accept your invitation to become a

- 2 -

cooperating agency. We look forward to reviewing the draft document to ensure that it will provide an adequate environmental analysis to support a decision whether to grant the use of USACE managed land for your project. In addition, with respect to the Section 4(f) analysis of the EIS/EIR, USACE is preparing a written opinion regarding the significance of the wildlife refuge at Sepulveda Dam. We would also like the opportunity to respond to the Section 4(f) document before it is finalized. Please provide us with your proposed timeline for preparation of the draft Section 4(f) document so that we may ensure that we send you our comments prior to completion of the draft report.

We look forward to reviewing your written proposal with your initial thoughts regarding the mitigation plans. Please forward any response to this letter to Ms. Katie Parks, Operations Branch, P.O. Box 532711, Los Angeles, California 90053-2325. Ms. Parks' telephone number is (213) 452-3399.

Sincerely,



Theresa M. Kaplan  
Chief, Asset Management Division

Eduardo  
Agullar/D07/Caltrans/CAGov  
02/26/2008 05:46 PM

To "Parks, Katie B SPL" <Katie.B.Parks@usace.army.mil>  
cc "Eddie Isaacs" <eddie\_isaacs@dot.ca.gov>, Aziz  
Elattar/D07/Caltrans/CAGov@DOT,  
Mark.D.Cohen@usace.army.mil, Maureen  
bcc  
Subject southbound 405 to the US-101 Connector Project 

Hello Katie,

At this time, the environmental document for this job is an EA/IS, not an EIS/EIR.  
NEPA/CEQA does not require an NOI/NOP at the start of the draft EA/IS preparation.  
We did conduct Scoping nonetheless (back in 2006), even though that is not required for an EA/IS.  
We intend to conduct a public circulation (45 days) and a public hearing for the draft EA/IS.

EA/IS's typically require a minimum public circulation of 30 days (IS component per CEQA). We, however, do 45 days.

We are in receipt of the letter from Ms. Theresa M. Kaplan dated 2/25/08.  
We were surprised and disappointed that it claimed that the USACE had no record of receiving the following project specialist studies:

- Natural Environment Study Report (biological impact report)
- Bioacoustics Study
- Historic Preservation Study Report
- The Floodplain/Hydraulics Report
- Traffic Noise Investigation

Those items were hand-delivered by me to Carvel Bass and you on June 19, 2007, with the exception of the Traffic Noise Investigation, which was hand delivered by Eddie Isaacs a few days later. We were hoping to receive the USACE's critical input, particularly in regards to the Dam and the Wildlife Refuge.

I'm going to attempt to set up a new meeting for the very near future. The draft EA/IS/Section 4(f) is approximately 99% complete.

Regards,  
Ed

"Parks, Katie B SPL" <Katie.B.Parks@usace.army.mil>



"Parks, Katie B SPL"  
<Katie.B.Parks@usace.army.mil>  
02/26/2008 03:31 PM

To "Eddie Isaacs" <eddie\_isaacs@dot.ca.gov>  
cc "Eduardo Aguilar" <eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov>  
Subject RE: Additional Hydraulics Info

Hello,

Can you tell me when the notice of intent was issued?

Katie Parks  
(213) 452-3399

## DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

DISTRICT 7

100 MAIN STREET, MS16A

LOS ANGELES, CA 90012

PHONE (213) 897-0703

FAX (213) 897-0685

TTY (213) 897-4937

*Flex your power!  
Be energy efficient!*

March 17, 2008

Office of the Chief of  
Asset Management Division  
Attn: Ms. Theresa M. Kaplan, Chief  
cc: Ms. Katie Parks

File: LA-405/101  
EA 199610  
s/b I-405 to US-101  
Connector Project

Department of the Army  
Los Angeles District, Corps of Engineers (USACE)  
PO Box 532711  
Los Angeles, CA 90053-2325

**Response to the USACE letter Dated February 25, 2008**

Dear Ms. Kaplan:

The California Department of Transportation (Department) is in receipt of your letter dated February 25, 2008 regarding the southbound Interstate-405/US Highway-101 Connector Improvement Project. Per your request, attached to this letter is the Floodplain Impact Report. Also per your request, below is the list of items provided to the USACE on June 19, 2007, when the Department provided the USACE a presentation regarding the proposed project:

- 1) Floodplain Impact Report
- 2) Natural Environment Study Report (biological impact report)
- 3) Bioacoustics Report (noise impact report to the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve)
- 4) Historic Preservation Study Report
- 5) Engineering Design Drawings for Alternatives 1, 2, 3, 4
- 6) Note: the Traffic Noise Investigation was hand-delivered days later.

The Department is very pleased to continue working with the USACE, in its capacity as a Cooperating Agency, and welcomes the opportunity to work even closer with the USACE on this endeavor, as well as to continue soliciting input from the USACE on all aspects of the project. The Department accepts the USACE's invitation to present this project, and answer questions about it, on March 25, 2008.

Sincerely,

RONALD KOSINSKI

Deputy District Director

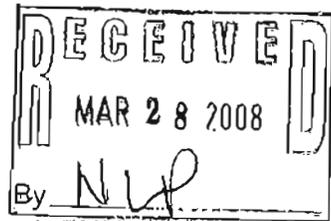
California Department of Transportation

*Handwritten notes:*  
2/28/08 11:12 AM  
3/1/08 11:12 AM  
3/1/08 11:12 AM  
3/1/08 11:12 AM

**U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS  
LOS ANGELES DISTRICT**

**OFFICE OF COUNSEL**

**P.O. Box 532711  
Los Angeles, CA 90053-2325**



Our street address for visitors and couriers is:  
915 Wilshire Boulevard, Suite 1535, Los Angeles, California 90017  
Fax (213) 452-4217  
Website: [www.spl.usace.army.mil](http://www.spl.usace.army.mil)  
**FAX COVER SHEET**

**DATE: 28 March 2008**

**PLEASE DELIVER THE FOLLOWING PAGES TO:**

**Name: Douglas R. Felling**

**Firm/Organization: California Department of Transportation**

**Direct Contact Number: ( ) \_\_\_\_\_**

**Fax Number: (213) 897-3836**

**From: \_\_\_\_\_ Lawrence N. Minch (213) 452-3946**

**Paula S. Klotzbach (213) 452-3953**

**\_\_\_\_\_ Mark M. Weltraub (213) 452-3930**

**\_\_\_\_\_ Elizabeth A. Moriarty (213) 452-3955**

**\_\_\_\_\_ Gilbert H. Chong (213) 452-3957**

**\_\_\_\_\_ Carole A. Riley (213) 452-3959**

**\_\_\_\_\_ Burke S. Largo (213) 452-3954**

**\_\_\_\_\_ Sharon A. Williams (213) 452-3947**

**\_\_\_\_\_ Janita L. Relford (213) 452-3152**

**\_\_\_\_\_ Maria D. Romero (213) 452-3950**

**Total number of pages to follow: 3**

**Comments: \_\_\_\_\_**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

This facsimile is intended only for the use of the individual or entity to which it is addressed. It may contain information that is privileged, confidential, or otherwise protected from disclosure under applicable law. If the reader of this transmission is not the intended recipient or agent responsible for delivering the transmission to the intended recipient, you are hereby notified that any dissemination, distribution, copy or use of this transmission or its contents is strictly prohibited. If you have received this transmission in error, please notify us by telephone and return the original transmission by U.S. Mail to us at the address given above.



REPLY TO  
ATTENTION OF

**DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY**  
LOS ANGELES DISTRICT CORPS OF ENGINEERS  
P. O. BOX 632711  
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90063-2525

March 28, 2008

Office of the  
District Engineer

Mr. Douglas R. Failing  
Director, Caltrans District 7  
California Department of Transportation  
100 South Main Street  
Los Angeles, California 90012

Dear Mr. Failing:

I am writing to follow up on a recent conversation between Caltrans Senior Environmental Planner Ed Aguilar and US Army Corps of Engineers ("USACE") Operations Manager Katie Parks regarding Caltrans' proposed road construction project to expand Southbound I-405 and US-101 in the vicinity of Sepulveda Dam. As you know, the proposed project currently being considered by Caltrans will require an easement across land managed by USACE on behalf of the federal government. As I explained in my letter dated October 9, 2007, USACE cannot grant such an easement unless and until my concerns described in that letter are resolved. In my letter and its attached memorandum, I detailed a number of areas of concern that have not been resolved between our agencies. Those areas of concern include Dam Safety and Other Engineering Concerns, NEPA Concerns, Wildlife Reserve Concerns, Mitigation Concerns, Regulatory Concerns, and Real Estate Concerns.

Despite the many specific USACE concerns identified in my letter, Mr. Aguilar informed Ms. Parks that Caltrans does not intend to provide USACE an opportunity to review and comment in its NEPA document before its public release. As you know, Caltrans' proposed project requires extensive environmental documentation before it can be undertaken and before USACE can exercise any authority to grant an easement for this purpose. It was the understanding of USACE that Caltrans was in the process of preparing an Environmental Impact Report/Statement ("EIR/EIS") to meet the environmental documentation requirements of the project. Only recently did USACE learn that Caltrans chose to prepare an Environmental Assessment ("EA") instead of the more detailed EIR/EIS.

It was my hope that the environmental document prepared by Caltrans would satisfy not only the environmental requirements of Caltrans but also the environmental requirements of USACE. In an effort to avoid delays that could result from the sequential preparation of multiple environmental documents and/or multiple revisions to the Caltrans EA, USACE requested an opportunity to review and provide comment on the draft EA prepared by Caltrans prior to its release for public comment. During Mr. Aguilar's conversation with Katie Parks on the morning of March 24, 2008, Mr. Aguilar stated that Caltrans has decided that it will not provide USACE

- 2 -

with the opportunity to review and provide input on the draft environmental document prior to the document's release to the public.

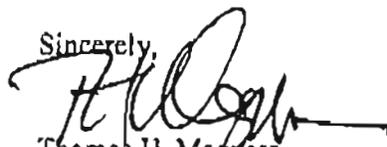
I am disappointed with this decision and it runs contrary to recent legislative and interagency cooperative efforts that strive to increase coordination among federal agencies. In February 2008, USACE formally requested the opportunity to be included as a cooperating agency in the preparation of the environmental documentation for this project. It was our understanding that as a cooperating agency, USACE would work with Caltrans to publish a draft environmental document that meets the needs of both agencies. Such a process cannot be unilaterally accelerated without adversely impacting the quality of the NEPA documentation. In light of the relatively limited and recent communications between our agencies, USACE input to date has not been commensurate with the federal action we have been asked to undertake as a result of this project. With Caltrans' decision to withhold the draft EA from USACE prior to its public release, it is reasonable to assume that Caltrans and USACE do not have the same understanding and expectations of the roles and responsibilities of cooperating agencies. Because of this lack of mutual understanding, USACE withdraws its request to be included as a cooperating agency in the Caltrans EA. When required for reporting purposes, Caltrans should indicate that USACE was not included as a cooperating agency because Caltrans did not obtain an agreement from USACE on the roles and responsibilities of each agency prior to releasing the EA.

Furthermore, in our letters of October 2007 and February 2008, we expressed our desire to provide input for the draft Section 4(f) document prior to the release of your NEPA document and requested your proposed timeline for completion of that document so that we could submit our Section 4(f) letter in a timely manner. Your decision to release the NEPA document without coordinating with us for the timely preparation and receipt of our Section 4(f) input increases our concern about the completeness of your environmental documentation.

As soon as possible, please provide me with the release date and location of the draft EA. This office will review the draft EA and provide comments in the same manner as the general public. Following that review, we will determine if the EA meets our environmental documentation needs, or if we must prepare our own environmental document. At this time, given the lack of coordination between our two agencies, I am very concerned that the EA will be insufficient for USACE purposes.

If you have any questions about this letter or need any additional information, please contact me at (213) 452-3961, or your staff can contact Ms. Katie Parks, Operations Branch at P.O. Box 53271.1, Los Angeles, California 90053-2325. Ms. Parks' telephone number is (213) 452-3399.

Sincerely,



Thomas H. Magness  
Colonel, US Army  
District Commander

cc: Ronald Kosinski, Deputy District Director Via Facsimile and First Class Mail  
Council on Environmental Quality Via First Class Mail  
Federal Highway Administration Via First Class Mail

**DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**

DISTRICT 7

100 MAIN STREET, MS16A

LOS ANGELES, CA 90012

PHONE (213) 897-0703

FAX (213) 897-0685

TTY (213) 897-4937

*Flex your power!  
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April 21, 2008

Thomas H. Magness, Colonel, United States Army  
Chief, Construction-Operations Divisions  
Department of the Army  
Los Angeles District, Corps of Engineers  
PO Box 532711  
Los Angeles, CA 90053-2325

File: LA-405/101  
EA 199610  
s/b I-405 to US-101  
Connector Project

Dear Mr. Magness:

The California Department of Transportation (CALTRANS) is in receipt of your letter dated March 28, 2008. CALTRANS understands the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) position and concern regarding the proposed project. CALTRANS has always regarded the USACE as a Cooperating Agency, and has valued and pursued the USACE's involvement in this project. That is why in June 2007, CALTRANS provided exclusively to the USACE, and requested the USACE's review and input, on the following project information:

- 1) Floodplain Impact Report
- 2) Natural Environment Study Report (biological impact report)
- 3) Bioacoustics Report (noise impact report to the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve)
- 4) Historic Preservation Study Report
- 5) Engineering Design Drawings for Alternatives 1, 2, 3, 4
- 6) Traffic Noise Investigation

Also in June 2007, CALTRANS accepted the USACE's request to consider alternatives that would seek to avoid any impacts to USACE land. Thus, CALTRANS created and evaluated Alternatives C and D.

In August 2003, CALTRANS requested and obtained the involvement of the USACE in the project's Value Analysis. This was a phase of the project in which alternatives were evaluated, created, and eliminated. CALTRANS then continued the coordination and dialogue with the USACE during the Scoping phase of the project in May/June 2006.

Furthermore, CALTRANS has fully accepted and participated in every USACE request for a meeting, and has provided the USACE with all available information, at the earliest possible time. This includes the April 3, 2008 meeting in which CALTRANS provided to the USACE the biological and hydraulic sections of the NEPA/CEQA document, as well as, the Section 4(f) Evaluation. Please be advised that this information was based on all the aforementioned information provided to the USACE in June 2007. The Corps did not provide review comments.

Colonel Thomas H. Magness

April 21, 2008

Page 2 of 2

By early 2008, the environmental document deadline was approaching, and thus CALTRANS District 7 was required to submit to CALTRANS headquarters and CALTRANS legal the NEPA/CEQA/Section 4(f) Evaluations, which included the project history. The CALTRANS Headquarters position was that CALTRANS had fulfilled its obligations as a lead agency, and recommended that the NEPA/CEQA/Section 4(f) Evaluation proceed with public circulation.

CALTRANS regrets the USACE's decision to withdraw as a Cooperating Agency and requests that the USACE reconsider that position. If you have any questions or comments, please feel free to contact me at (213) 897-0686.

Sincerely,



AZIZ ELATTAR

Office Chief

cc: Ronald Kosinski, Deputy District Director  
Council on Environmental Quality  
Federal Highway Administration



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
LOS ANGELES DISTRICT, CORPS OF ENGINEERS  
P.O BOX 532711  
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90053-2325

April 23, 2008

REPLY TO  
ATTENTION OF:

Office of the  
District Counsel

Mr. Ronald J. Kosinski *RL*  
Deputy District Director  
Division of Environmental Planning  
California Department of Transportation, District 7  
100 South Main Street, MS-16A  
Los Angeles, California 90012

Dear Mr. Kosinski:

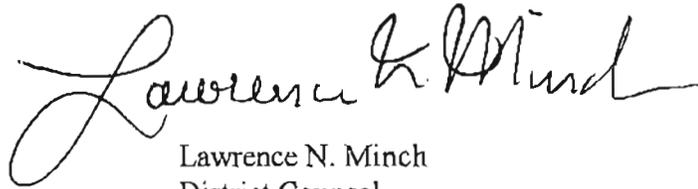
In follow-up to our April 3, 2008 meeting, I am writing to clarify the Corps' position on the application of Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act of 1966, as amended, to areas within the Sepulveda Basin located at the junction of the I-405 and US-101 freeways in the San Fernando Valley, City of Los Angeles, California. According to your Draft Section 4(f)/Section 6(f) Evaluation of March 2008, your agency concluded Woodley Park, the wildlife refuge, and Sepulveda Dam are Section 4(f) resources.

As you are aware, Section 4(f) only applies if the transportation project at issue will use land from a significant publicly owned public park, recreation area, or wildlife or waterfowl refuge, and any land from a historic site of national, State, or local significance. 49 U.S.C. § 303(c). A publicly owned park, recreation area or wildlife and waterfowl refuge are presumed to be significant unless the official having jurisdiction over the site concludes that the entire site is not significant. 23 C.F.R. § 774.11 (c). An historic site is significant only if it is on or eligible for the National Register of Historic Places, unless the Federal Highway Administration determines that the application of Section 4(f) is otherwise appropriate. 23 C.F.R. § 774.11(e).

Upon review of Corps policy and coordination of this issue with our Headquarters Office in Washington, D.C., we agree Woodley Park, the wildlife refuge and Sepulveda Dam are Section 4(f) resources. Pursuant to 23 C.F.R. § 774.3(c) and Federal Highway Administration's Section

4(f) Policy Paper dated March 1, 2005, in the event all alternatives use land from 4(f) resources, the alternative that results in the least overall harm in light of the statute's preservation purpose must be selected. Should you have any questions concerning the information presented in this letter, please contact me at (213) 452-3946.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lawrence N. Minch". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping initial "L".

Lawrence N. Minch  
District Counsel



## DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY

LOS ANGELES DISTRICT, CORPS OF ENGINEERS  
P.O. BOX 532711  
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90053-2326

May 28, 2008

REPLY TO  
ATTENTION OF

Office of the  
District Commander

Mr. Ronald S. Kosinski *RK*  
Deputy District Director  
Division of Environmental Planning  
California Department of Transportation  
100 South Main Street, Suite MS 16A  
Los Angeles, California 90012

Dear Mr. Kosinski:

Enclosed are the comments of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers ("Corps") on the Draft Environmental Assessment/Initial Study ("EA") for your proposed construction of a new Southbound Interstate-405 to the U.S. Highway-101 Connector Improvement Project ("Project"), dated April 2008.

Based on our review of the EA, it is the Corps' understanding that each of the "build" alternatives would require three separate approvals from the Corps. Corps approval would be required for (1) proposed alterations to the Dam, (2) the use of Federal land managed by the Corps, and (3) impacts to waters of the United States. These approvals would be major Federal actions for which we, as a Federal agency, would have independent legal responsibility to comply with the National Environmental Policy Act ("NEPA"). It is unlikely that the Corps could approve any of the currently proposed alternatives without the completion of an Environmental Impact Statement ("EIS").

The impacts of the proposed "build" alternatives appear to be significant in terms of both context and intensity. The proposed alternatives all appear to require excavation and/or modification of the Dam, with potential impacts to structural and hydraulic integrity. In addition, all of the proposed "build" alternatives would require substantial adverse impacts to the historic property of the Sepulveda Dam, and two of the alternatives would require substantial impacts to the locally and regionally significant resource of the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve. Although each of the "build" alternatives described in the EA would substantially impact Federal property, the EA does not address critical elements of the Corps' flood control, land management, and regulatory responsibilities.

The Corps' responsibilities to maintain the safety of its flood control features, including the Sepulveda Dam, are of paramount importance. To that end, the Corps is required to comply with the terms of 33 USC 408, a Federal law which requires that before allowing any alteration, occupation or use of a flood control work, the Corps must determine that such use will not be injurious to the public interest and will not impair the usefulness of such work. The "public

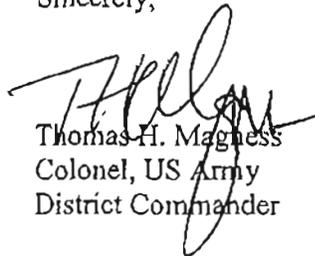
interest" is a broad standard, which encompasses the full range of requirements set forth in Federal environmental laws, as well as other Federal statutes and regulations. This determination may only be made by the Chief of Engineers.

To date, no permit application has been submitted to the Corps for a Clean Water Act Section 404 permit. As we stated in our previous letters, the Corps decision on any permit request must take place prior to our determination of whether any easement will be granted, although the evaluation of a section 404 application can and should proceed concurrently with the evaluation of other factors relevant to the final decision of the Corps. The final decision on a Section 408 request, however, must precede the final decision on a Section 404 permit.

Because this proposed Project would have impacts upon as many as three areas – the Dam, the Wildlife Reserve, and waters of the United States – that are specifically protected by several Federal laws, including Section 408, Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act of 1966, as amended and codified at 49 USC 303, the National Historic Preservation Act, and the Clean Water Act, the Corps believes that it is necessary to explore additional prudent alternatives and further measures to minimize harm to the Federal project and the environment.

The Corps commends Caltrans for its efforts thus far in designing alternatives to meet the transportation needs of the public. Thank you for providing the Corps an opportunity to review and comment on the EA. Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at (213) 452-3961, or your staff may contact Ms. Katie Parks, Operations Branch, at (213) 452-3399 or by mail at U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, P.O. Box 532711, Los Angeles, California 90053-2325.

Sincerely,



Thomas H. Magness  
Colonel, US Army  
District Commander



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS  
441 G STREET NW  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20314-1000

CECW-PB

OCT 23 2006

## MEMORANDUM FOR MAJOR SUBORDINATE COMMANDS

SUBJECT: Policy and Procedural Guidance for the Approval of Modification and Alteration of Corps of Engineer Projects

### 1. REFERENCES:

- a. ER 1165-2-119, dated 20 September 1982, Modifications to Completed Projects
- b. 33 CFR 208.10, Local flood protection works; maintenance and operation of structures and facilities
- c. 33 USC 408, Taking possession of, use of, or injury to harbor and river improvements
- d. 33 CFR 320.4, General policies for evaluating permit applications
- e. Section 404 of the Clean Water Act
- f. Section 10 of the River and Harbors Act of 1899

2. PURPOSE. Recent events have demonstrated the need to provide clarification and additional guidance on the policy and procedures for dealing with proposals to modify or alter completed Corps of Engineers projects that are either locally or federally maintained. Often requests for modifications to Corps projects come up in the context of Section 404 permitting actions or for modifications to existing Corps projects for the purposes of O&M. This memorandum addresses the use of the appropriate authority and the proper level of approval for such proposals.

### 3. BACKGROUND.

a. ER 1165-2-119 provides policy and guidance on the modification of completed Corps of Engineers projects, and describes the specific circumstances under which modifications can be approved and accomplished. In general, proposed significant modification of a completed project, involving new Federal construction or real estate acquisition, and any proposed modification that would make the project serve new purposes, or increase the scope of services to authorized purposes beyond that intended at the time of construction, or to extend services to new beneficiaries (areas), requires authorization by Congress. There may be instances where reporting officers find that proposed significant changes to a completed project may be desirable, in which case investigations may be undertaken to document the need for and the feasibility of such project modifications. To the extent practicable, such changes should be accomplished under existing authorities. However, the circumstances under which such modifications can be approved and made are limited, as discussed in the ER, and are briefly summarized below.

b. For projects constructed, operated and maintained by the Corps, the Corps may, as part of its operations and maintenance efforts, make reasonable changes and additions needed to

CECW-PB

SUBJECT: Policy and Procedural Guidance for the Approval of Modification and Alteration of Corps of Engineer Projects

properly operate the project or minimize maintenance. In addition, multiple purpose projects operated and maintained by the Corps may be modified within existing authorities for dam safety assurance, changes in water control plans, addition of water supply, changes to meet water quality needs, and recreation and fish and wildlife enhancement, as discussed in the ER. The Chief of Engineers also has limited discretion to modify navigation projects. For Corps-constructed projects operated and maintained by local interests, any proposed Federal work at these projects usually requires congressional authorization, with the exception of work required to correct a design deficiency.

c. Guidance on the responsibilities for the operation and maintenance of local protection projects is found in 33 CFR 208.10. This regulation describes local sponsors' responsibilities for operating and maintaining the structural soundness and functionality of the project in order to assure that the project meets its authorized purposes. Specifically, 33 CFR 208.10 a (5) requires that "no improvement shall be passed over, under, or through the walls, levees, improved channels or floodways, nor shall any excavation or construction be permitted within the limits of the project right-of-way, nor shall any change be made in any feature of the works without prior determination by the District Engineer" that such changes will not adversely affect the functioning of the protective facilities. The types of changes that can be considered and approved by a District Engineer under 33 CFR 208.10 are relatively minor, low impact modifications, such as pipes or pipelines proposed to pass over or through a Federal work, or a road or similar type of infrastructure improvement proposed to pass over a Federal levee. Such minor proposed modifications are considered part of a District Engineer's responsibilities related to normal O&M of such facilities. Any proposed modification of a Federal work, such as a levee or channel, which would involve significant changes to the authorized project's scope, project purpose, or functioning, cannot be approved by the District Engineer, but instead must be forwarded through the Division Commander for the approval of the Chief of Engineers, as explained hereinafter. That is, any proposed change to a Federal work exceeding the level of ordinary District O&M responsibilities for a project must be sent through the Division Commander to the Chief of Engineers for approval, as discussed in the following paragraphs.

d. Any proposed modification to an existing Corps projects (either federally or locally maintained) that go beyond those modifications required for normal O&M require approval under 33 USC 408. 33 USC 408 states that there shall be no temporary or permanent alteration, occupation or use of any public works including but not limited to levees, sea walls, bulkheads, jetties and dikes for any purpose without the permission of the Secretary of the Army. Under the terms of 33 USC 408, any proposed modification requires a determination by the Secretary that such proposed alteration or permanent occupation or use of a Federal project is not injurious to the public interest and will not impair the usefulness of such work. The authority to make this determination and to approve modifications to Federal works under 33 USC 408 has been delegated to the Chief of Engineers.

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#### 4. POLICY.

Any significant alteration or modification to either a locally or federally maintained Corps of Engineers project must be approved by the Chief of Engineers under 33 USC 408 unless covered by ER 1165-2-119. Modifications to a Corps projects beyond those necessary to properly operate the project or to minimize maintenance costs as well as any significant alteration or modification requested by any non-Federal interest for their own benefit also requires the Chief's approval under 33 USC 408.

#### 5. PROCEDURES.

a. The following information will be provided with any request for the approval of significant modifications or alterations to a locally or federally maintained Corps project requiring the Chief of Engineers approval under 33 USC 408.

1. A written request by the non-Federal interests for approval of the project modification/alteration.
2. A physical and functional description of the existing project
3. A detailed description of the proposed modification
4. The purpose/need for the modification
5. A description of any related, ongoing Corps studies/efforts in the watershed
6. A Public Interest Determination
7. Appropriate NEPA documentation
8. Any Administrative Record
9. A discussion of indirect effects
10. A discussion of E.O. 11988 Considerations
11. Technical Analysis
  - Technical adequacy of the design
  - Changes in water surface profiles and flow distribution
  - Assessment of anticipated local and system-wide resultant impacts, i.e., impacts on system integrity
  - Upstream and downstream impacts of the proposed alterations, including potential impacts to existing floodplain management and water control management plans of Federal projects within the basin
  - A discussion of residual risk

b. If there is an associated Section 404/10 permit action, the required public interest and technical evaluations under 33 USC 408 can be done concurrently with that action. Upon completion of the public interest determination and of the technical analyses regarding the impact of the proposed modification on the usefulness of the project, the District Engineer will make a recommendation (with supporting documentation) through the Division Commander to

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the Chief of Engineers (Attn: Appropriate RIT) for his consideration and approval under 33 USC 408. The District Engineer will make the final Section 404/10 permit decisions following the Chief of Engineers decision under 33 USC 408. A minimum of 30 days must be allowed for HQUSACE review.

c. For locally operated and maintained Corps projects, the operations and maintenance for any approved project modifications or alterations will be the responsibility of the non-Federal sponsor and the Project Cooperation Agreement or other appropriate document must be updated to address non-Federal sponsor responsibilities for the approved modifications.

6. If the desired modifications cannot be suitably pursued or approved under any of the preceding approaches, additional congressional authorization may be required. Section 216 of the Flood Control Act of 1970 is the appropriate authority to use to consider such modifications.

7. Consideration will be given to further delegation of the approval authority to a lower level as we gain more experience with the types of changes that are proposed for approval under 33 USC 408.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

  
for DON T. RILEY  
Major General, USA  
Director of Civil Works

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COMMENTS OF THE U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS, LOS ANGELES DISTRICT, ON THE DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT/INITIAL STUDY AND SECTION 4(f) EVALUATION FOR THE SOUTHBOUND INTERSTATE-405 (SAN DIEGO FREEWAY) TO THE U.S. HIGHWAY-101 (VENTURA FREEWAY) CONNECTOR IMPROVEMENT PROJECT, DATED APRIL 2008

The United States Army Corps of Engineers ("Corps") submits the following comments on the draft environmental assessment/initial study and section 4(f) evaluation for the Interstate-405 to Highway-101 Connector Improvement Project ("Project"), dated April 2008 ("EA").

Although all of the proposed "build" alternatives described in the EA would substantially impact Federal property, the EA does not address critical elements of the Corps' flood control, land management, and regulatory responsibilities. The draft EA appears to assume that the Corps' only criterion for evaluating whether to grant relevant agency approvals is the extent of the Project's effects on the operation of Sepulveda Dam and the Flood Control Basin. While the Corps does manage the Sepulveda Dam property for flood control purposes, the Corps has additional responsibilities as the manager and steward of Federal lands.

The Project would require three separate approvals from the Corps: (1) approval of proposed alterations to the Dam, (2) a grant of an easement to use Federal land managed by the Corps, and (3) a permit for the Project's impacts upon waters of the United States. Each of these approvals would require the Corps to evaluate the proposed Project under one or more Federal statutes and regulations, and each approval would be a major Federal action for which we, as a Federal agency, would have independent legal responsibility to comply with the National Environmental Policy Act ("NEPA"). These comments focus primarily upon the areas of the EA most relevant to whether these approvals could be granted.

The Corps' responsibilities to maintain the safety of its flood control features are of paramount importance. Corps review of your proposals is governed by 33 USC 408, a Federal law which requires that, before allowing any alteration, occupation, or use of a flood control work, the Corps must determine that such use will not be injurious to the public interest and will not impair the usefulness of such work. The "public interest" is a broad standard, which encompasses the full range of requirements set forth in Federal environmental laws, as well as other Federal statutes and regulations. This determination, which may only be made by the Chief of Engineers, requires a searching evaluation.

Property acquired by the Corps for the safe and effective operation of a flood control project must be managed in accordance with Federal regulation and policy. While prohibiting any use of alteration of a structure that would compromise its integrity or effectiveness for flood control is an absolute requirement, the Corps must also consider numerous other factors in determining whether to grant an easement for use of Federal land managed by the Corps, including environmental considerations.

As we have noted in our previous correspondence, it had been the hope of the Corps that the environmental document prepared by your agency would support our environmental requirements as well as those of Caltrans. We think it likely, however, that the Corps could not approve any of the currently proposed alternatives without the completion of an Environmental Impact Statement ("EIS").

The impacts of the proposed "build" alternatives described in the EA appear to be significant in terms of both context and intensity. The proposed alternatives all appear to require excavation and/or modification of the Dam, with potential impacts to structural and hydraulic integrity. In addition, all of the proposed "build" alternatives would require substantial adverse impacts to the historic property of the Sepulveda Dam, and two of the alternatives would require substantial impacts to the locally and regionally significant resource of the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve. More information should be provided in the EA to identify alternatives not discussed in the EA and explain why they were discarded.

The following comments first raise general concerns of the Corps applicable to any project that proposes to make use of Sepulveda Dam or Sepulveda Basin. Then they address: (1) the Project's potential impacts upon the dam's operation and the dam as an historic property; (2) its potential impacts upon the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve; and (3) the formulation and consideration of alternatives. We conclude with comments pointing out miscellaneous errors or omissions that do not fit within the categories above.

## I. General Comments

1) Section 1.5 of the EA states that the Corps is required to give "permission" in order for any portion of the Project to take place on land managed by the Corps. More accurately, the Corps must grant an easement to Caltrans and/or the Federal Highway Administration before construction could take place on Corps-managed lands. Before the Corps may grant such an easement, the Corps is required to comply with the Federal statutes and regulations governing its Civil Works projects and real estate activities.

2) The Corps is a project-funded organization and does not receive funds from Congress that would enable us to perform the extensive reviews required to approve a project of this nature. Pursuant to 10 USC 2695, the Corps is authorized to charge administrative fees to fund the review of a request for an easement or other interest in land that is owned by the United States and managed by the Corps. Such administrative fees would include the costs of conducting environmental reviews of the proposed project. If Caltrans intends to request an easement from the Corps for its proposed project, as the draft EA indicates, it should enter into negotiations with the Corps to develop a Memorandum of Agreement ("MOA") to cover these costs. To avoid delays, this should occur as soon as possible. Neither execution of an MOA, nor the receipt of funds pursuant to it, obligates the Corps in any way to grant an easement or any other interest in land sought by a project proponent.

3) Section 1.3.1 of the EA reads, in part, "After the public circulation period, all comments will be considered, and the Department will select a preferred alternative and make the final determination of the project's effect on the environment. In accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act, if no unmitigable significant adverse impacts are identified, the Department will prepare a Negative Declaration (ND) or Mitigated ND. Similarly, if the Department determines the action does not significantly impact the environment, the Department, as assigned by the Federal Highway Administration, will issue a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)." The EA does not describe the process you intend to undertake should unmitigable significant adverse impacts be found during this process. The EA should describe the process that will be undertaken should unmitigable significant impacts be identified.

4) The EA does not include adequate information for the Corps to determine the size of the easement Caltrans would request under each alternative. The areas of impact are not consistent throughout the document, and it is unclear whether Caltrans would seek to incorporate all impacted areas into its transportation facility. The EA should make clear the total size of easement that Caltrans would request for each alternative.

5) The EA should include a description of the authorizations governing the operation of the Sepulveda Basin. The Sepulveda Dam flood control project was authorized as part of the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1936. The Corps of Engineers maintains Sepulveda Dam and appurtenant flood control facilities. Under the authority of the Flood Control

Act of 1941, the Secretary of the Army granted the City of Los Angeles a license to develop part of the Sepulveda Basin for recreational purposes. That Act was subsequently supplemented by the more encompassing Flood Control Acts of 1944 and 1946, which provided nationwide guidelines for recreational developments at Corps projects. Under the authority of the Flood Control Act of 1944, as amended by the Flood Control Act of 1946, two leases for recreational development were granted – one to the City and one to a non-profit corporation. The Flood Control Act of 1944, as amended by the Flood Control Acts of 1946, 1954, 1960, and 1962, authorizes the Corps of Engineers to construct, maintain, and operate public park and recreational facilities at water resources development projects and to permit local interests to construct, maintain, and operate such facilities.

6) Executive Order 11988 requires that we avoid, to the extent possible, the long- and short-term adverse impacts associated with the occupancy and modification of floodplains and avoid direct or indirect support of floodplain development wherever there is a practicable alternative. E.O. 11988 is mentioned only in passing in the EA. The EA should explain how the project would comply with E.O. 11988.

7) The Corps must ensure compliance with the requirements of 33 USC 408. Under 33 USC 408, it is

*“unlawful for any person to take possession of or make use of for any purpose, or build upon, alter, ...or in any manner whatever impair the usefulness of any...work built by the United States....in whole or in part,...to prevent floods...: Provided, That the Secretary of the Army may, on the recommendation of the Chief of Engineers, grant permission for the temporary occupation or use of any of the aforementioned public works when in his judgment such occupation or use will not be injurious to the public interest: Provided further, that the Secretary may, on the recommendation of the Chief of Engineers, grant permission for the alteration or permanent occupation or use of any of the aforementioned public works when in the judgment of the Secretary such occupation or use will not be injurious to the public interest and will not impair the usefulness of such work.”* (Emphasis added.)

Assuming that Caltrans provides us with specific engineering data and information that it regards as sufficient to address fully our concerns regarding potential damage to structural and hydraulic integrity, any alternative that involves building on or altering the Dam itself would require review and approval by our Headquarters. The evaluation by the Chief of Engineers of any proposed modification to the Dam would require a detailed description of the proposed modification, a public interest determination, a discussion of indirect effects, and a detailed technical analysis of design adequacy, including a discussion of residual risk. We are attaching to these comments Corps policy guidance addressing the implementation of Section 408.

8) The EA acknowledges that the Project would require a Clean Water Act Section 404 Permit. It states, “Because the potential impacts of the proposed Alternatives fall within an area designated as a retention basin, and because those impacts are estimated to

be greater than 0.5 acres, the Department believes that this project will fall within the jurisdiction of the Army Corps of Engineers and would require a Section 404 Permit and Section 401 Water Quality Certification." (EA 2.3.2). It also states, "Caltrans is required to delineate wetlands, identify impacts and evaluate avoidance alternatives in the environmental phase of project development, which is to be performed upon selection of a preferred alternative and by the time the final environmental document is circulated." (Id.) The EA's identification and characterization of Corps Regulatory jurisdiction, and impacts to our jurisdiction, should be expanded to satisfy Corps Regulatory purposes. This basic information is required for further analysis of the Project for Section 404 issues.

9) As we noted in our previous letters, no Section 404 permit application or request for a jurisdictional determination for this Project has been received by our Regulatory Division. In addition, no pre-application meetings have occurred. Section 2.2.2 of the EA indicates that Caltrans does not intend to seek an Individual or Nationwide Permit until the Project Specifications and Estimates phase of the project. Regulatory involvement is encouraged early on in the project development process, especially for those projects involving larger impacts, or projects that are complex or controversial in nature. When the CEQA and NEPA processes are undertaken concurrently, the selection of a preferred alternative is premature without advance coordination with the Corps' Regulatory Division. A permit may be issued under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act only for the least environmentally damaging practicable alternative that meets the project purpose (LEDPA). Absent early involvement, viable alternatives, including a potential LEDPA, may be prematurely dismissed.

Procedures for such coordination have been memorialized in a Memorandum of Understanding for the NEPA and Clean Water Act Section 404 Integration Process for Federal Aid Surface Transportation Projects in California (April 2006), to which Caltrans is a signatory. More generally, such advance coordination is also required by the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU), Section 6002.

10) The Corps decision on any permit request would occur after the Section 408 determination but prior to determining whether any easement request may be approved. The evaluation of a Section 404 application can and should proceed concurrently with the evaluation of other factors relevant to the final decision of the Corps.

## **II. Potential Impacts Upon Sepulveda Dam**

1) Our letters to Caltrans of June and October 2007 stated that we needed assurances and detailed information demonstrating that any features proposed will not reduce the structural stability of any dam feature under any design loading condition. We also expressed concern regarding effects on the hydraulic integrity of the spillway. In addition, access must be maintained to all dam features for personnel and equipment for operation, maintenance, repair, rehabilitation, and flood fighting. The EA does not provide detailed information on the structural, hydraulic, and access issues.

2) From the limited information that is provided in the Environmental Assessment regarding the specific impacts to the dam embankment and spillway, the Corps is concerned that the proposal appears to include cutting into and/or excavating the embankment. The EA states,

“The elevated connectors that pass through the dam spillway will be approximately fifty (50) feet high, the same approximate height as the Sepulveda Dam gates. The USACE service road adjacent to northbound 101 will be realigned to accommodate the new connector, which would drop down on top of the earthen embankment as it merges with northbound 101. The proposed encroachment on the embankment is approximately 550 feet long and 39 feet wide. A retaining wall will be built along the earthen embankment (northbound US-101) to mitigate for a loss of volume in the reservoir due to the realigned service road.... [T]he dam embankment along northbound US-101 will be excavated for footings for the descending ramp structure, the retaining wall and the realigned USACE access road (1.07 acres). This alternative would... entail the physical destruction of or damage to all or part of the property. Additionally, this alternative would constitute an Adverse Effect on the Sepulveda Dam ... as the elevated structures to be built through the dam spillway (4.93 acres) and upon the earthen embankment, as well as the proposed retaining wall, are alterations of the property that are not consistent with the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties (36 CFR part 68) and applicable guidelines. Moreover, this alternative would constitute an Adverse Effect on the Sepulveda Dam under Adverse Effect Criterion 2(iv) as the addition of elevated freeway connector ramps through the dam spillway, and the utilization of the earthen embankment for the descending freeway connector ramp, change the character of the Sepulveda Dam’s use (flood control) and physical features within the dam setting that contribute to its historic significance.” (EA 2.1.7, p. 85).

It also includes the following statement: “...[A]ll four (4) of the proposed project design alternatives call for a direct encroachment on portions of the dam structure itself, and therefore, may potentially/theoretically pose an adverse impact to its structural integrity and a reduction to its flood volume storage capacity.” (EA 2.2.1, p. 88)

The Corps cannot consent to any action which could impair the structural integrity of Sepulveda Dam or interfere with its operation. Also, any structure that spans over the dam without affecting the embankment must maintain space for access by personnel and equipment. The specific dimensions of such space requirements should be coordinated with Corps staff. The potential impacts to the spillway are not clear from the information provided, but these impacts would also require close evaluation by Corps personnel. Please provide additional detailed information on the impacts to the dam and the spillway.

3) The Corps must ensure compliance with the requirements of 33 USC 408. Assuming that Caltrans is able to demonstrate that its specific proposals would not impair the structural integrity of Sepulveda Dam or interfere with its operation, they appear to trigger the need for a Section 408 review, as described in our general comments above.

4) The EA reveals that each of the alternatives has the potential to impact the Corps' Service Road. The Service Road is a critical operational feature of the dam and is heavily used by personnel for the day-to-day operation and maintenance activities as well as for the dam's periodic inspections. It is essential that any modifications to the Service Road ensure that the Corps does not lose any existing use of the road. The EA should explain in detail the manner in which Caltrans proposes to modify the Service Road, including how it would provide access to the dam during construction of any modification to the Service Road

5) Caltrans has previously been provided with a copy of SPD Regulation I110-2-1 related to land development proposals at Corps reservoir projects. The EA should discuss the plan for adhering to that regulation.

6) It is the Corps' understanding that the presence of freeway structures on Corps-managed property may result in an increased homeless population because the homeless often shelter underneath freeway structures. The Corps is concerned that the possibility of human habitation under freeway structures on Corps-managed property may result in potential safety risks during flood season as well as damage to adjacent natural resources. The presence of freeway structures may attract increased vandalism and defacement of Corps land and structures. Freeways often result in increased trash from a variety of sources, particularly from litter from passing traffic. It is the experience of the Corps that an increase in the homeless population and the presence of vandals can also lead to an increase in trash and debris. The EA does not discuss the increase in these elements or how the increase will impact the Wildlife Reserve or dam operations area. The EA should be amended to describe these elements and how they will affect the Wildlife Reserve, dam operations area, and the other recreational elements of the basin. The EA should also describe what, if any, mitigation measures are planned to alleviate these impacts, and which agency or agencies would be responsible for the costs associated with these issues.

7) The EA states that Alternatives 1, 2, and 3 would impact the dam's spillway, embankment, and reduce the reservoir's project storage space by 49,014 cubic feet. The EA should explain the methodology used to compute the loss of 49,014 cubic feet of storage for each alternative.

8) Section 2.1.7 of the EA, entitled "Cultural Resources," states that a Historic Property Survey Report, completed by Caltrans in January 2007, concludes that Sepulveda Dam, including the outlet works, structures, spillway, earthen embankment, and reservoir, is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places, a conclusion with which the State Historic Preservation Officer concurs. The EA does not contain a full

explanation of how Caltrans reached that conclusion. The Corps suggests that the EA expand the explanation and incorporate the following description of Sepulveda Dam's historic status.

Sepulveda Dam (the Dam) is a structure that is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). A property is considered eligible for listing on the NRHP if it meets one or more of the following criteria:

The quality of significance in American history, architecture, archaeology, engineering, and culture is present in districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects that possess integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association and

- a) that are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history; or
- b) that are associated with the lives of persons significant in our past; or
- c) that embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or
- d) that have yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history. (36 CFR § 60.4)

In addition to significance, a property must also have physical integrity to be listed on or eligible for listing on the NRHP. Integrity does not demand absolute purity, but the historic property must be a "preservable entity" that still communicates what makes it significant.

The Dam has protected lives and property, as well as permitted the development of the very densely populated area around the Dam (i.e., the San Fernando Valley, America's first suburb), which is a very important region in the development of the State of California and the United States as a whole. Without Sepulveda Dam, and the Los Angeles County Drainage Area (LACDA) of which it is an element, the development of Los Angeles as we know it could not have occurred. This makes the Dam an integral part of Los Angeles history and therefore American history as well. It satisfies criterion a.

The Dam's designers and builders (i.e., the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Los Angeles District) could be considered persons significant in our past, satisfying criterion b.

Under criterion c, Sepulveda Dam evokes the distinctive characteristics of the important Works Progress Administration ("WPA") period of

American History (1935-1943). The particular architectural style is known as PWA Moderne, which is closely associated with federal architecture (Ewing-Toledo 2007:23). One unique feature of the spillway is the moveable panels to raise or lower its elevation (Wormer 1985:117).

Being an excellent example of WPA period structures, it conveys a sense of the importance of the period and the immensity of its impact for American society. Unlike many WPA structures which were small bridges not significant on their own, it is a very large and visually impressive structure. Therefore, it serves a valuable role for researchers of American history. For this reason, among others, the Dam satisfies criterion d.

Finally, the Dam is definitely a "preservable entity" that still conveys what makes it significant. Its appearance remains distinctive, and it maintains its physical integrity and functionality.

9) In the Corps' opinion, the Project would result in significant impacts to the historic qualities of Sepulveda Dam that could not be easily mitigated. Thus, it appears that the Corps could not grant an easement for the Project unless an EIS is prepared. In support of this conclusion, the Corps considered the fact that blocking the views of the dam with the proposed connector would result in substantial impairment to the viewshed and the historic character of the Dam, along with other impacts. The dam is iconic, having appeared in many films and television advertisements. The dam is an important example of PWA Moderne architecture and of federal engineering. In addition, the Dam and its setting comprise a visual document of Los Angeles' past.

10) Furthermore, the connector structure itself would be anticipated to interfere with aesthetic features of the Dam that provide important contributing elements. According to the EA, it appears that the dam itself would be physically altered by the proposal. (EA 2.1.7). As noted above, the Corps could not permit excavation of the embankment or other modifications that would interfere with the dam's structural integrity; assuming they would not, these changes would likely affect the historical values of the Dam. Although Caltrans proposes to coordinate the design of the connector with that of the dam, the inclusion of the connector would still detract from the appearance of the dam. While some mitigation through Historic American Buildings Survey / Historic American Engineering Record ("HABS/HAER") would be possible, data recovery cannot fully mitigate the impacts to the historic structure. For these reasons, it appears an EIS would be required to fully assess the impacts proposed to the Dam. The EA should address this.

11) The Corps notes that the preliminary proposals to mitigate for loss of volume in Section 2.2.1 would require additional review. For example, one mitigation proposal includes "Widening the existing dirt canal inside the basin between Route 405 and Woodley Avenue (Haskell Channel). This proposal will fulfill requirements to increase storage volume inside the basin and no water impounded." Haskell Channel operates as a riparian corridor which has been the subject of planting by local groups. Excavating

Haskell Channel would require additional permitting and environmental compliance from various agencies as well as additional mitigation.

### III. Potential Impacts Upon the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve

1) Please add the phrase "locally and regionally significant wildlife reserve" to the first paragraph of Section 2.2.1 of the EA on page 85. The paragraph would then read:

"The Los Angeles River drains the vast watershed of the San Fernando Valley and surrounding mountains--finally emptying into the Pacific Ocean at Long Beach. In years of heavy rainfall, this normally tame watercourse becomes a mighty force, as was the case in 1938 when torrential rains caused the river to flood adjacent farms and homes. Consequently, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers channelized the river and built the Sepulveda Dam to capture and hold floodwaters for later gradual release down the river. Except for infrequent but dramatic flood episodes, this otherwise dry-land flood control basin, most of which is leased from the Corps by the City of Los Angeles Department of Recreation & Parks, plays host to diverse uses today including athletic fields, agriculture, golf courses, a fishing lake, parklands, a sewage treatment facility, and a *locally and regionally significant wildlife reserve.*" (Added language italicized.)

2) The EA should discuss more fully the ecological significance of the Wildlife Reserve. The Corps considers the Wildlife Reserve to be locally and regionally significant; in reaching this conclusion, the Corps looked at the purpose and use of the wildlife area as well as the land surrounding the Wildlife Reserve. The Corps provides the following information regarding the significance of the wildlife refuge and requests that it be incorporated into the EA.

The Wildlife Reserve plays an important role regionally and locally in providing wildlife habitat and opportunities for exploration of that habitat in an extremely urbanized and built-out part of the Los Angeles basin. Any loss of wildlife habitat from this area would be extremely difficult to replace. The wildlife area was developed with the following objectives: develop a wetlands system; enhance habitat for wildlife; increase wildlife interpretive opportunities within the eastern portion of the Flood Control Basin.

Improvements to the area have been made through several initiatives. Both the Corps and the City of Los Angeles have spent substantial funds on the area through cost-shared improvements such as creation of the wildlife lake, plantings, and restoration measures. Local conservation and community groups have also made substantial investments of time and resources. As a result of these improvements, the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve is a unique area of open space and

biodiversity located in the middle of an urban area. It is a riparian, grassland, woodland, and aquatic habitat for numerous species of plants and animals, including numerous species of resident and migratory birds.

This wildlife area is unique in the San Fernando Valley and was specifically set aside as an area for both ecological development and for viewing of wildlife by locals in an otherwise developed portion of southern California. In addition to its functions in providing wildlife habitat in the middle of an urban area, the Wildlife Reserve is also a place for humans to recreate and commune with nature. The San Fernando Valley Audubon chapter conducts numerous programs in the north reserve area, leading activities for nearly five thousand children and adults annually. In addition to these organized educational programs are thousands of additional visits by individual bird watchers, photographers, families with small children, and other nature lovers. The monthly Sunday walks for San Fernando Valley Audubon Society bring about five hundred visitors annually.

3) Some of the improvements to the Wildlife Reserve were undertaken as mitigation for impacts of increased recreation plans within the Basin. In addition, a court order required the formation of the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Areas Consortium, consisting of local environmental groups, to oversee the spending of fines levied on two local companies that spilled hazardous materials into Haskell Creek. The EA should include a discussion of the impact of the proposal on these mitigation requirements.

4) The Size and Location of Impact Area/Volume section of the EA states on pages 11 and 14 that Alternative 2 will encroach on 2.64 acres of the wildlife refuge whereas Alternative 3 will encroach on 2.92 acres of the wildlife refuge. It appears that the 2.64-acre value and the 2.92-acre value account for the footprint of the proposed structure only. The diagrams that accompany the description of Alternatives 2 and 3 show that a large portion of the wildlife refuge will be surrounded by roadways on all sides creating a de facto highway median out of a portion of the wildlife refuge. The EA should describe the full acreage of the de facto highway median in the Size and Location of Impact Area/Volume section and should evaluate its reasonably foreseeable impacts upon the use of the area by wildlife.

5) The Corps has performed a preliminary analysis of the impacted acreage of Alternatives 2 and 3 which includes the de facto median area. Our calculations suggest that the total area impacted, including the de facto median area, will be no less than 14 acres. Both the area taken for the connector structures themselves and the area segmented from the remainder of the refuge as a median should be considered directly impacted areas for the purpose of the EA, and the EA should be amended to reflect the full area of direct impact. Including the de facto median in the area of direct impact will require additional analysis under Section 4(f) (49 USC 303, 23 USC 138). It is not clear from the EA whether an easement would be requested over the entire segmented area, but the de facto median or segmented area should be considered as proposed for use. Under

Section 4(f), a site is considered used when land is taken by a project or the project has significant adverse air, water, noise, land accessibility, aesthetic, or other environmental impacts on or around the site. (See 23 CFR 774.17). Because the segmented area would face proximity impacts and be isolated in a way that would substantially impair the protected features and activities, the EA should address these impacts.

6) The Corps believes that the construction of multi-lane ramps on the east side of the Wildlife Reserve, close to the wildlife lake, would cause irreparable damage to the reserve by fragmentation of the landscape and by pollution. The damage caused by air, light, noise, and ground pollution, due to construction and to indefinite vehicle use, would be likely to pollute the lake, damage and/or remove surrounding vegetation and trees, fragment the habitat, eliminate a foraging area, and increase the invasion of non-native or exotic plant species. The EA should include additional discussion of these impacts and include a plan to mitigate for this damage.

7) The EA asserts that "although there may be temporary disruptions or impacts during the construction phase, there are not anticipated to be any permanent direct or indirect impacts to [wildlife species identified in the biological study area] resulting from the project." (EA, 2.3.4). The EA should explain the basis for its conclusion that the project will not have any permanent impacts upon the wildlife that make use of the refuge. The explanation should address with scientific evidence the Corps' concern that the addition of freeway overpass on- and/or off-ramps in the eastern portion of the Wildlife Reserve would seriously fragment the current habitat, which, among other impacts, would likely damage it for raptor or goose foraging. Currently, the eastern portion of the Wildlife Reserve is open habitat with scattered *Baccharis sp.* especially conducive for birds of prey and serves as a nesting area for a variety of bird species. This is also the main Canada goose foraging area in the Wildlife Reserve. The Corps is concerned that the functions provided by the existing area would be damaged, and the use of the area cut off from the rest of the reserve would result in less overall area for use by the animal species that are currently within the area.

8) On page 38 of the EA, under the section entitled "Sepulveda Basin Recreation Area," the last two sentences of the first paragraph read, "It features a lake with a bird-refuge island, extensive native plant revegetation, and some of the best bird-watching opportunities in the Los Angeles Basin. Migratory birds gather here in the fall and winter, and are strongly attracted to water within the basin." This statement is not completely accurate. Please replace the last sentence with the following: "Migratory birds gather here in the *spring*, fall and winter, and are strongly attracted to water within the basin. *Included in the spring migratory birds is the least Bell's vireo, a federally endangered species, which, according to surveys in 2005, 2007, and 2008, breeds and nests within one thousand feet of the proposed project.*" (Added language italicized.)

9) The EA contains limited information on impacts to vegetation, though it notes that twenty-five to thirty of the coast live oaks bordering Burbank Boulevard would likely have to be removed. Some of these trees were planted using mitigation funds as described in our comments above. In recognition of their value to the area, coast live oaks

are protected under a City of Los Angeles ordinance. The EA should explain the impacts to the functions provided by vegetation in the area, including but not limited to the impacts upon coast live oaks.

10) The EA does not discuss the noise impacts to the wildlife refuge in Section 2.2.7, mentioning the area only as "undeveloped land," and the 4(f) discussion mentions noise impacts only briefly. The serenity and quiet provided for wildlife and for human visitors are important attributes of the area. In the Corps' opinion, the wildlife refuge should be evaluated as an area in which serenity and quiet are important characteristics, with a Noise Abatement Criteria of 57 dBA. The Supplemental Traffic and Construction Noise Study Report (November 2006) provided to the Corps suggests that substantial temporary noise impacts from construction will occur. The study further suggests that overall noise levels will rise in certain areas of the wildlife refuge. The EA should provide a detailed discussion of noise impacts to the wildlife refuge and include information on how Caltrans proposes to mitigate these impacts.

11) The ability to view wildlife in the San Fernando Valley is an important value of the Wildlife Reserve that should be discussed in the EA. Los Angeles is considered "park poor," as open space in the region is extremely limited in comparison to other major urban areas. The Sepulveda and Hansen Basins are the only accessible, designated, protected wildlife viewing areas within the San Fernando Valley. If Alternative 2 or 3 were constructed, the viewing opportunities provided, along with the sense of "wild nature" that is available, would be seriously reduced. As noted above, the Wildlife Reserve is used by school groups and environmental organizations for educational purposes. A discussion in the EA of the effects of habitat fragmentation on wildlife should also incorporate an examination of the potential impacts on the ability of human users to view wildlife in the area.

12) The Sepulveda Dam Master Plan dated 1981 reflects on the Sepulveda Basin as a regional park oriented to a population (i.e., noted as of 1981 as 335,000) and area of the four districts surrounding the basin: Encino-Tarzana, Reseda-West Van Nuys, Van Nuys-North Sherman Oaks, and Sherman Oaks- Studio City. According to the Master Plan, "The area of the Sepulveda Basin correlates generally with criteria set by the City of Los Angeles Department of Recreation and Parks, calling for six acres of regional park land for each 1,000 people. On the basis of the present regional population, 2,190 acres should be provided." The EA should assess how the various alternatives will affect the Sepulveda Basin's ability to continue to function as a Regional Park and how Caltrans plans to mitigate for its project's impact upon parks and wildlife viewing in the region.

13) To a substantial extent, the impacts to the Wildlife Reserve noted in our comments could be difficult to mitigate because there is no large parcel of land available in the immediate area to add to the wildlife area as compensatory mitigation. The mitigation proposals included in the EA are vague and do not appear to address the Corps' specific concerns. The EA should elaborate on the mitigation proposals and how they would compensate for the values and functions of the Wildlife Reserve.

14) Given that Alternative 1 does not directly impact the Wildlife Reserve while Alternatives 2 and 3 substantially impact the Reserve, it is not clear how the EA reached the conclusion that the estimated mitigation costs for Alternatives 2 and 3 would be identical to the mitigation costs for Alternative 1. The EA should explain the basis for the cost estimates provided.

15) All of the proposed build alternatives have an adverse impact on the historic property located in the Sepulveda Flood Control Basin; however, only two of the alternatives have an impact on the Wildlife Reserve. Based on this, it appears that there is a feasible and prudent alternative to impacting the Wildlife Reserve and that the alternatives that impact on the Reserve may not be constructed in light of the provisions of Section 4(f). The EA should either so state or explain how Caltrans has reached a different conclusion.

16) The description of "pros" for Alternative 2 contains the statement, "Due to the constricted loop on-ramp, the encroachment onto the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife refuge is minimized to the maximum extent." While the proposed impact to the Wildlife Reserve is less than that of Alternative 3, the EA presents an alternative that avoids all impacts to the Wildlife Reserve. The EA should correct the statement to reflect the relative impacts of the alternatives with respect to the Wildlife Reserve.

17) Section 2.2.1 of the EA reads in part, "Environmental Coordination with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has been ongoing since 2003, and the Department submitted to the Corps the project Natural Environment Study Report (biological study) and the Floodplain Evaluation Report (including the 5 mitigation proposals) on June 19, 2007 for their input, review, and comment. As of the date of this Draft EA/IS, the Corps is still reviewing those materials." This statement and a similar statement in Section 2.3.2 are not completely accurate. The Corps did not receive the Floodplain Evaluation Report until March 2008. Further, Caltrans declined to share with the Corps the analysis contained in the draft EA and 4(f) statement until March 2008.

Page 139 of the EA states incorrectly that the Floodplain Evaluation Report and the Historic Preservation Study were provided to the Corps in June 2007. The Corps received a number of documents from Caltrans in June 2007, including an agenda; colored depictions of the proposed alternatives; a written description of the proposed alternatives; a Natural Environmental Study Report; a Supplemental Traffic and Construction Noise Study Report; and a "Summary of VA Alternatives." The Floodplain Evaluation Report was not among those reports. When, in a letter dated December 27, 2007, Caltrans stated that the Floodplain Evaluation Report had been provided to the Corps at the June 2007 meeting, the Corps contacted Caltrans to obtain a copy of the report and was told that it was not provided to the Corps in June 2007. The Corps' point of contact at Caltrans attempted to send an electronic version to the Corps at that time, but the electronic document sent to the Corps was not properly named; Caltrans instead provided a mislabeled second copy of the Location Hydraulic Study at that time. The Floodplain Evaluation Report was not provided to the Corps until March 17, 2008.

The Historic Preservation Study was not provided to the Corps at the June 2007 meeting. At the meeting, a representative of Caltrans advised the Corps that they were almost finished preparing that portion of the report. The Corps requested a copy of the report at that time, but the request was denied because the document was not ready for distribution.

The Corps has been objecting to the proposed encroachment into the Wildlife Reserve since 2003. At the meeting that took place in June 2007, the Corps requested that Caltrans consider some alternatives that did not require encroaching on the Wildlife Reserve. Caltrans has added no feasible alternatives that avoid the Wildlife Reserve. Additional rejected alternatives C and D were added to the list of infeasible options following the June 2007 meeting. The goal of those proposals when formulated by Caltrans was to avoid not only the Wildlife Reserve, but all lands managed by the Corps. While the Corps would like to avoid impacts on both the Wildlife Reserve and the dam, the Corps renews its request for the EA to recommend an alternative that avoids the Wildlife Reserve.

#### IV. The Formulation and Consideration of Alternatives

- 1) The EA does not adequately describe the genesis of its purpose and need statement. For example, the Corps is concerned that the selection of alternatives may have been artificially constrained by the inclusion of a specific connector solution (i.e., replacement of the single, 20-mph connector with a two-lane, 50-mph connector) or by economic considerations that improperly regard the Federal lands as free. The EA should include more information on the level of service and volume flow the project seeks to achieve and any cost analysis that was employed in formulating or screening out alternatives.
- 2) Very little information is provided about the alternatives' performance in satisfying the purpose and need. While some information is provided on reduction of weaving segments and traffic delay cost savings, more information on the results that each alternative is projected to achieve in meeting the purpose and need should be included in the EA.
- 3) In June 2007, Caltrans met with the Corps to discuss the Project. At that time, Caltrans explained that Alternative A was rejected because it included slip ramps, which are generally not recommended by the Federal Highway Administration ("FHWA"). At that time, Alternative 4, now described as "recently rejected," was still being promoted as a feasible alternative. Caltrans did not disclose to the Corps that Alternative 4 included slip ramps and was not recommended by the FHWA. The EA should explain why this information was not provided to the Corps in June 2007. The EA should also address what changes might be made to the design of Alternative 4 or its alignment that would allow its construction without slip ramps.
- 4) In the EA, Caltrans has provided some information on the alternatives dismissed based on FHWA policy, as we requested in our October 2007 letter. The EA cites the

FHWA policy and explains that slip ramps are discouraged. The EA also states that "FHWA has already once denied Caltrans' request for a slip ramp design exemption." The EA should include information concerning any discussions that Caltrans has had with FHWA of using slip ramps on this project or suggestions from FHWA concerning potential alternatives to slip ramps.

5) The Corps is concerned that alternatives that would be prudent under the Section 4(f) analysis may have been overlooked in scoping. Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act of 1966 predates NEPA and contains a prescriptive element. When public land qualifies for protection under Section 4(f), it permits the land's use for a highway project only if there is no prudent and feasible alternative. In addition, the concept of prudence is broader than that of reasonableness under NEPA. In order to rule out an avoidance alternative under Section 4(f), the alternative must be infeasible or imprudent rather than unreasonable. As stated in FHWA guidance, "...[S]imply because under NEPA an alternative (that meets the purpose and need) is determined to be unreasonable, does not by definition mean it is imprudent under the higher substantive test of Section 4(f). Therefore, it is possible for an alternative that was examined but dismissed during the preliminary NEPA alternative screening process to still be a feasible and prudent avoidance alternative under Section 4(f). In other words, there is more room to reject alternatives as unreasonable under NEPA than there is to find those same alternatives are imprudent under Section 4(f)." (FHWA Policy Paper, 5). The EA should clarify where alternatives were dismissed due to imprudence rather than unreasonableness. To properly evaluate the prudence of alternatives, the costs and impacts of avoidance alternatives should be compared to the impacts and costs of a typical project of the kind in a comparable setting.

6) Section 4(f) requires that no use of a 4(f) resource be made unless there is no feasible and prudent avoidance alternative and that all possible planning has been undertaken to minimize impacts to the 4(f) resource. The EA should include additional information on whether certain alternatives could be modified or refined further to reduce impacts to the 4(f) resources at issue.

7) The set of alternatives considered before the public scoping process occurred appear to include a wider range of possibilities than those included in the EA. The Corps would like more information on the viability of the discarded alternatives considered but not discussed in the EA.

8) The Corps would like additional information concerning whether the impacts of the build alternatives on the dam could be reduced by moving the alignment of the NB 101 connector to the south and/or east, potentially affecting the Haskell Avenue interchange but avoiding the dam. In examining the alternatives considered in materials developed before the EA or the public scoping, it appears that Caltrans considered modifications or elimination of part or all of the Haskell Avenue Interchange to eliminate weaving issues. The EA should address why this alternative was dropped from consideration, and whether it could be used in combination with and/or to modify Alternative 1 to reduce impacts to the dam.

9) The EA should provide more information on whether alternative ramp designs could be used for the Burbank Boulevard ramp. In particular, the EA should address whether there are other ramp designs, such as a roundabout or a single point urban interchange, that would occupy space comparable to the existing right of way.

10) In our letter of October 2007, we noted that a calculation of the costs of each alternative should include a calculation of the fair market value of Federal land. The cost analysis provided does not include a calculation of the fair market value of the land of the United States. Without this information, alternatives cannot be compared fairly.

#### V. Miscellaneous Comments

1) The phrase "five (4) alternatives" appears on page 7, Section 1.3 of the EA and again on page 4 of the Section 4(f) portion of the document. This typographical error should be corrected.

2) The Corps manages land owned by the United States in the Sepulveda Dam Flood Control Basin. The United States, not the Corps, owns the land and facilities. Throughout the EA, there are references to land or facilities owned by the Corps. These references are not accurate. Please correct this language within the document.

3) On page 38, under the section entitled "Sepulveda Basin Recreation Area," the EA reads in part, "The Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve is the only unpaved stretch of the Los Angeles River, which is also a source of reclaimed water for the area and the Donald C. Tillman Water Reclamation Plant." This statement should be corrected. The Tillman Water Reclamation Plant, and not the Los Angeles River, is a source of reclaimed water for the area. The reclaimed water flows into the Los Angeles River. In addition, the Sepulveda Basin does not contain the only unpaved stretch of the Los Angeles River, though the stretch of the river does play an important role in the area.

4) The "Impact" column for Alternative 2 and Alternative 3 on Table 9, located on page 46 of the EA, should be amended by adding a sentence that reads, "Unlike Alternative 1, this Alternative also poses right-of-way impacts to the Wildlife Refuge, a Section 4(f) protected property."



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
LOS ANGELES DISTRICT, CORPS OF ENGINEERS  
P.O. BOX 532711  
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90083-2328

June 4, 2008

REPLY TO  
ATTENTION OF  
Asset Management Division

Mr. Ronald J. Kosinski  
Deputy District Director  
Division of Environmental Planning  
California Department of Transportation, District 7  
100 South Main Street, MS-16A  
Los Angeles, California 90012

Dear Mr. Kosinski:

This is in response to your letter dated May 1, 2008, which we received May 20, 2008, requesting the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' ("Corps") comments on the draft Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) between the California Department of Transportation and the State Historic Preservation Office pursuant to § 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA). The draft MOA includes measures to mitigate adverse impacts to the Sepulveda Dam, a property eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places, as a result of Caltrans' proposed construction of a new Southbound Interstate-405 to the U.S. Highway-101 connector (the "Project"). The Corps has reviewed the draft MOA and offers the following comments.

1. The current MOA invites the Corps to participate in the MOA as a consulting party. Because the Corps manages the land owned by the United States in the Sepulveda Basin in which part of the proposed Project would occur and, as stated in our letter dated May 28, 2008, commenting on Caltrans' draft Environmental Assessment (EA) for the Project, the Project appears to require three separate approvals from the Corps. Such approvals constitute an "undertaking" as defined in 36 C.F.R. § 800.16(y) for which the Corps must individually comply with the requirements of § 106 of the NHPA. In lieu of separate MOAs evidencing each agency's compliance with § 106 of the NHPA, we request that Caltrans revise the MOA to include both agency's undertakings, the potential to cause effects on historic properties, the measures to avoid, minimize or mitigate such adverse effects related to each undertaking, and the roles and responsibilities of each agency under the MOA; our agency should be included as a signatory to the MOA, as revised, pursuant to 36 C.F.R. § 800.6(c)(1).

2. While the draft MOA states that Caltrans has decided there are no alternatives to adversely affecting the dam, we have not yet independently reached such decision. As our comments on Caltrans' draft EA state, an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is likely to be necessary for any grant of approval for impacts to the dam, an easement for the right of way, and Clean Water Act § 404 permit. Therefore, at this time, we cannot determine mitigation for as-yet-unknown impacts of our potential approvals.

3. Pursuant to 36 C.F.R. § 800.6(a)(1)(i)(A), we desire to have the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation actively participate in the consultation and be included as a signatory to the MOA.

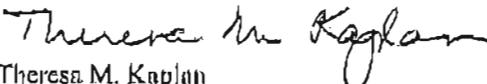
4. Recital four of the draft MOA states that the Corps agrees to Caltrans as the "Lead Federal Agency" for the undertaking. The Corps has not provided Caltrans with an agreement designating Caltrans as the "Lead Federal Agency," pursuant to 36 C.F.R. § 800.2(a)(2), to serve as the agency official to act on our behalf for the purpose of fulfilling the collective responsibilities under § 106. We are not prepared to do so at this time.

We believe that it would be premature at this time to further negotiate or execute an MOA addressing mitigation measures for impacts to the dam, when we have not yet been able to analyze fully the impacts of any specific proposal for accomplishing Caltrans' purpose, or to examine independently whether there are alternatives that would accomplish the same purpose while avoiding or reducing the impacts. While we wish to continue to coordinate with you in the spirit of cooperation, we cannot consult on a MOA for historic preservation until we have assessed impacts in an EIS supporting the required Federal actions.

I am forwarding a copy of this letter to Mr. Gary Iverson, Division of Environmental Planning, California Department of Transportation, District 7, 100 South Main Street, MS-16A, Los Angeles, California 90012; Mr. Milford Wayne Donaldson, FAIA, State Historic Preservation Officer, Office of Historic Preservation, P.O. Box 942896, Sacramento, California 94296-0001; and Mr. Don Klima, Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, Director, Office of Federal Agency Programs, Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, 1100 Pennsylvania Avenue NW, Suite 809, Old Post Office Building, Washington, DC 20004.

Should you have any questions concerning the information presented in this letter, please contact Katie B. Purks, Asset Management Division, at the address above or by telephone at (213) 452-3399.

Sincerely,

  
Theresa M. Kaplan  
Chief, Asset Management Division  
Los Angeles District  
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

FAX TRANSMISSION COVER SHEET



6-5-08

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
LOS ANGELES DISTRICT, CORPS OF ENGINEERS  
RECREATION RESOURCE MANAGEMENT  
CESPL-CO-O-R  
P.O. BOX 532711  
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90053

From: Katie Parks  
Asset Management Division  
Phone: 213/452-3399  
Fax: 213-452-4195

To: Eddie Isaacs  
CALTRANS (213) 897-0685

Subject: Comments on the draft Memorandum of Agreement

See attached letter

**DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**

DISTRICT 7

DIVISION OF ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING

100 MAIN STREET, SUITE 100

LOS ANGELES, CA 90012-3606

PHONE (213) 897-0703

FAX (213) 897-2593

TTY (213) 897-4937

*Flex your power!  
Be energy efficient!*

June 20, 2008

Ms. Theresa M. Kaplan  
Chief, Asset Management Division  
Los Angeles District  
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Dear Ms. Kaplan:

Thank you for your response regarding the Draft Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) between the California Department of Transportation and the State Historic Preservation Office pursuant to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) with regards to the Southbound I-405 to the US Highway 101 Connector Project.

Regarding comment:

1. We received an email from John Killeen on May 27, 2008 requesting that USACE be added as signatory on the DMOA. We consulted with SHPO and agreed to add USACE as a signatory. I sent John Killeen a revised copy of the DMOA on May 29, 2008. Subsequent to this transmittal Caltrans consulted with our Headquarters' Section 106 Liaison and the ACHP. The result of this consultation found that it is not required that USACE be a signatory on the MOA. We agreed with this determination and revised the MOA to include USACE as a consulting party.

While Caltrans recognizes USACE's request to be a signatory, at this point USACE has not proposed any additional mitigation, nor do we foresee any additional mitigation required for compliance with Section 106 at this time. After final design is complete Caltrans is willing to meet with USACE cultural staff to discuss any further Section 106 issues.

2. Caltrans, as the Lead Federal Agency has made a formal determination and finding related to Section 106 compliance and the SHPO has concurred in our Finding of Adverse Effect. The environmental documentation (IS/EA) includes avoidance alternatives to affecting federal land under management by the USACE.
3. The ACHP was notified of our Finding of Adverse Effect in a letter and document dated March 5, 2008. In a letter dated April 9, 2008 they declined involvement based on the information they were

provided (letter attached). They do however express that if we determine that their participation is necessary to conclude the consultation process that they be notified. We have been in contact with ACHP regarding the need for their continued participation in this project.

4. Caltrans is the "Lead Federal Agency" for the proposed Undertaking, a freeway connector project. Caltrans is the lead agency for implementation of this federal transportation project.

We regret that the USACE refuses to participate in this MOA consultation. We sincerely believe that there is adequate information contained in the Section 106 documentation for USACE to make an informed decision related to cultural resources impacts.

Sincerely,



Gary Iverson  
Historic Resources Coordinator  
Division of Environmental Planning  
Caltrans District 7, Los Angeles

cc: Ronald Kosinski, Deputy District Director  
Division of Environmental Planning



Preserving America's Heritage

April 9, 2008

Mr. Gregory P. King, Chief  
Cultural and Community Studies Office  
Department of Transportation  
Division of Environmental Analysis  
1120 N Street  
P.O. Box 942874  
Sacramento, CA 94274-0001

Ref: *Proposed Southbound Interstate 405 to US 101 Improvement Project  
City and County of Los Angeles, California*

Dear Mr. King:

On March 5, 2008 the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP) received your notification regarding the adverse effects of the referenced undertaking. Based upon the information you provided, we have concluded that Appendix A, *Criteria for Council Involvement in Reviewing Individual Section 106 Cases*, of our regulations, "Protection of Historic Properties" (36 CFR Part 800), does not apply to this undertaking. Accordingly, we do not believe that our participation in the consultation to resolve adverse effects is needed. However, if we receive a request for participation from the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO), Tribal Historic Preservation Officer, affected Indian tribe, a consulting party, or other party, we may reconsider this decision. Additionally, should circumstances change, and you determine that our participation is needed to conclude the consultation process, please notify us.

Pursuant to 36 CFR §800.6(b)(1)(iv), you will need to file the final Memorandum of Agreement (MOA), developed in consultation with the California SHPO, Indian tribes, and other consulting parties, and related documentation at the conclusion of the consultation process. The filing of the MOA with the ACHP and fulfillment of its stipulations are required to complete your compliance responsibilities under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act.

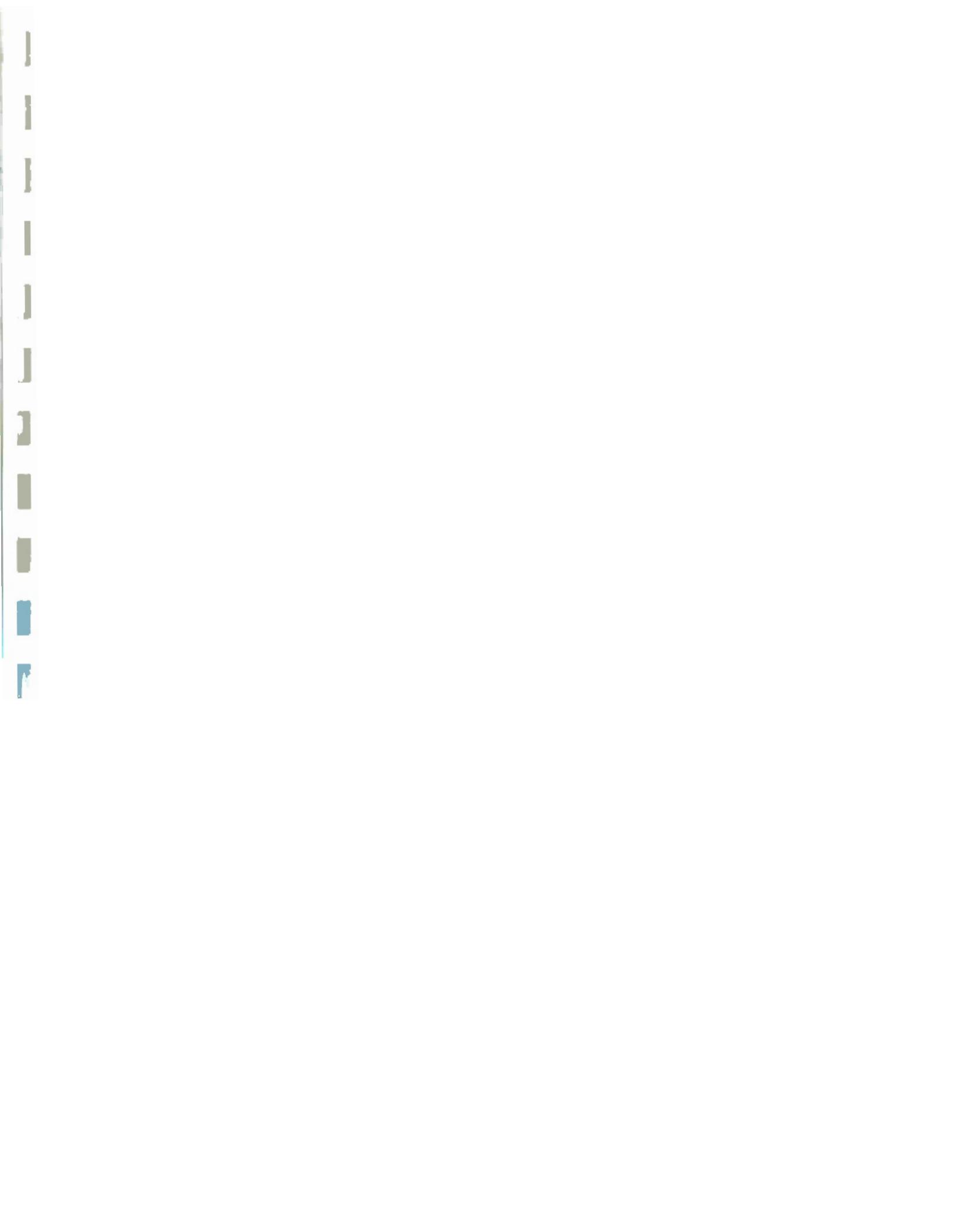
Thank you for providing us with your notification of adverse effect. If you have any questions or require further assistance, please contact me at 202-606-8522 or via e-mail at [clegard@achp.gov](mailto:clegard@achp.gov).

Sincerely,

Carol Legard  
FHWA Liaison  
Office of Federal Agency Programs

ADVISORY COUNCIL ON HISTORIC PRESERVATION

1100 Pennsylvania Avenue NW, Suite 803 • Washington, DC 20004  
Phone: 202 606 8502 • Fax: 202 606 8447 • [achp@achp.gov](mailto:achp@achp.gov) • [www.achp.gov](http://www.achp.gov)



## **APPENDIX R | LOCATION HYDRAULIC STUDY**

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**LOCATION HYDRAULIC STUDY FORM**

Dist. 07 Co. LA Rte. 405 K.P. 64.5/PM 39.4/40.5  
EA 199610 Bridge No. N/A

Floodplain Description:

Flood Control Basin / Sepulveda Dam to control and regulate flow of the Los Angeles River downstream.

1. Description of Proposal (include any physical barriers i.e. concrete barriers, soundwalls, etc. and design elements to minimize floodplain impacts)

The project proposed to improve traffic flow and safety at SB I-405 and US-101. There are 3 alternatives and no-built alternative are being considered. The 3 alternatives will encroach into Sepulveda Flood Control Basin by constructing the new connector from SB I-405 to US-101 and the new Burbank Blvd. Ramps. The proposed connector is an elevated structure, and to make room for the new connector along NB US-101, the basin service road is realigned to the north. A portion of earthfill embankment of the dam is modified and a retaining wall is constructed to compensate for the volume loss of the reservoir.

2. ADT: Current 113,000 (2004) Projected 162,000 (2030)

3. Hydraulic Data: Base Flood  $Q_{100} =$  481  $m^3 / s$   
 $WSE_{100} =$  712'\* The flood of record, if greater than  $Q_{100}$ : (\*) : 1927 NGVD

$Q =$  N/A  $m^3 / s$   $WSE =$  N/A  
Overtopping flood  $Q =$  2846  $m^3 / s$   $WSE =$  712'\*  
Are NFIP maps and studies available? YES X NO \_\_\_\_\_

4. Is the highway location alternative within a regulatory floodway?  
YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO X

5. Attach map with flood limits outlined showing all buildings or other improvements within the base floodplain.

Potential  $Q_{100}$  backwater damages:

- A. Residences? NO X YES \_\_\_\_\_
- B. Other Bldgs? NO X YES \_\_\_\_\_
- C. Crops? NO X YES \_\_\_\_\_
- D. Natural and beneficial \_\_\_\_\_

FLOODPLAIN VALUES? NO X YES \_\_\_\_\_

6. Type of Traffic:

- A. Emergency supply or evacuation route? NO \_\_\_\_\_ YES X
- B. Emergency vehicle access? NO \_\_\_\_\_ YES X
- C. Practicable detour available? NO \_\_\_\_\_ YES X
- D. School bus or mail route? NO \_\_\_\_\_ YES X

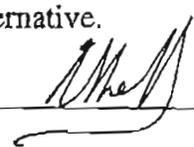
7. Estimated duration of traffic interruption for 100-year event hours: 0 Hr.

8. Estimated value of Q100 flood damages (if any) – moderate risk level.

A.	Roadway	\$	<u>0</u>
B	Property	\$	<u>0</u>
	Total	\$	<u>0</u>

9. Assessment of Level of Risk Low X  
Moderate         
High       

For High Risk projects, during design phase, additional Design Study Risk Analysis May be necessary to determine design alternative.

Signature – Dist. Hydraulic Engineer  Date 5/12/08  
(Item numbers 3,4,5,7,9)

Is there any longitudinal encroachment, significant encroachment, or any support of incompatible Floodplain development? NO X YES       

If yes, provide evaluation and discussion of practicability of alternatives in accordance with 23 CFR 650.113

Information developed to comply with the Federal requirement for the Location Hydraulic Study shall be retained in the project files.

Signature – Dist. Project Engineer  Date 5/13/08  
(Item numbers 1,2,6,8)

## **APPENDIX S | FLOODPLAIN STUDY – MITIGATION PROPOSALS**

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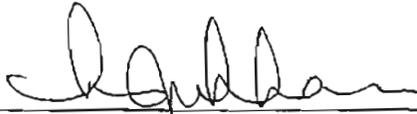
07-LA-405 KP 64.5 (PM 40.3)  
07-LA-101 KP 27.2/29.6 (PM 17.0/18.5)  
Realignment of S/B LA-405 Connector  
To N/B and S/B LA-101

EA 199610

## Floodplain Study

## Mitigation Proposals

Prepared By:



Loi Lam P.E

Reviewed By:



Dave Bhalla P.E., STE

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The approved Project Study Report - Project Development Support (PSR-PDS) for S/B I-405 Connector to N/B US-101 with 3 alternatives, proposed displacement approximately 108,000 cubic meters of storage from Sepulveda Dam. However, during Project Report (PR) phase and subsequent meetings with the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACOE), they expressed concern that any displacements of basin storage will impact the Dam operations. Therefore, 4 revised alternatives with minimum basin storage displacement have been proposed. Division of Environmental Planning has requested Office of Engineering Services, Hydraulics Section to perform a Floodplain Study for the revised proposals.

## 2. SEPULVEDA DAM AND RESERVOIR

Sepulveda Dam is located across the Los Angeles River, 43 miles above the mouth of the river, and 6 miles above the confluence of Tujunga Wash and the Los Angeles River. The dam is in the south-central portion of the San Fernando Valley, just northwest of the junction of the Ventura Freeway (US-101) and the San Diego Freeway (I-405).

Sepulveda Dam consists of an earthfilled embankment with a reinforced concrete spillway and outlet works. The components of Sepulveda Dam and Reservoir include: dam, outlet works, control house, and spillway. Reservoir lands are used as flood control behind Sepulveda Dam. It consists of 2,097 acres and extends from the San Diego Freeway on the east and the Ventura Freeway on the south to Victory Boulevard on the north and to about 0.2 miles beyond Balboa Boulevard on the west, with a strip of flood control land about 0.4 mile wide extending westward on either side of the Los Angeles River to White Oak Avenue.

The primary purpose for which Sepulveda Dam was constructed is flood control. Other uses and benefits of the dam and reservoir such as recreation, agriculture and wildlife mitigation are secondary. Sepulveda Dam regulates flow on the Los Angeles River, and is designed to prevent flooding along the river below the dam.

The Los Angeles River is regulated by the outlet works, which consist of 4 gated outlets and 4 ungated outlets to maximum discharge of 16,500 cfs at a reservoir water surface elevation of 710 feet, 1927 NGVD, the height of the spillway crest with spillway gates raised.

The spillway is a reinforced concrete ogce section of the overflow gravity type, which has seven submersible drum gates operating as function of water surface elevation. For

reservoir surface elevations between 710 and 712, the discharge over the top of the crest gates increases very slowly. At elevations between 712 and 715 feet, however, the rate of discharge increases very rapidly with elevation, as the crest gates lower from 710 to 700 feet. Water spilling over the raised crest gates would cascade down across the ogee onto the spillway apron. This apron is a large concrete slab with a gentle downward slope, extending 694 feet downstream of the ogee.

### 3. PROPOSED ALTERNATIVES

To improve traffic movements from Southbound I-405 to US-101 freeway, the project proposed 4 alternatives: The 4 proposed alternatives will encroach into the Sepulveda Dam by constructing bridges to cross the spillway outlet area to connect to N/B and S/B US-101. A portion of the earthfill embankment of the dam adjacent to N/B US-101 will be modified to accommodate the change. A retaining wall would be erected to minimize the volume loss of the reservoir.

- 103,300,000  
49,014 ft<sup>3</sup>  
0.93
- a. **Alternative 1:** proposes new Burbank Boulevard on-ramp and 2 new connectors from S/B I-405 to N/B and S/B US-101.

This alternative will occupy approximately 4.93 acres of the spillway outlet area, and 0.45 acres of permanent footing easement, in addition to approximately 1.07 acres of the upstream dam embankment, 0.59 acres of fill, and 49,014 ft<sup>3</sup> of the dam reservoir. The dam reservoir will be affected only on the south end of the Sepulveda Dam. Length and width of the structure on the dam will be 550 and 41 feet, respectively.

- b. **Alternative 2:** proposes new Burbank Boulevard on-ramp and off ramp, new connector from S/B I-405 to N/B US-101, and widening existing S/B I-405 to S/B US-101 connector. This alternative will occupy approximately 0.28 Acres of the spillway outlet area, 1.07 acres of the upstream dam embankment, in addition, 0.79 acres of footing easement, 0.59 acres of fill, 0.16 acres of the downstream embankment into the basin north of Burbank Boulevard, and 76,950 ft<sup>3</sup> of the dam reservoir. The south end (49,014 ft<sup>3</sup>) and northeast section (27,936 ft<sup>3</sup>) of the Sepulveda Dam would be affected. Length and width of the structure on the dam will be 550 and 41 feet, respectively. 2.64 acres of the 225 total acreage (1.17%) of the Sepulveda Dam Wildlife Refuge will be covered by Interstate 405/Highway 101 connector structures.

- c. **Alternative 3:** proposes new Burbank Boulevard on-ramp and off-ramp, new connector from S/B I-405 to N/B US-101, and widening

existing S/B I-405 to S/B US-101 connector. This alternative will occupy approximately 0.25 acres of the spillway outlet area, and 1.07 acres of the upstream dam embankment, 76,950 ft<sup>3</sup> of the dam reservoir, in addition to 0.80 acres of footing easement, 0.59 acres of fill, and 1.90 acres of the downstream embankment into the basin north of Burbank Boulevard. The south end (49,014 ft<sup>3</sup>) and northeast section (27,936 ft<sup>3</sup>) of the Sepulveda Dam would be affected. Length and width of the structure on the dam will be 550 and 41 feet, respectively. 2.92 acres of the 225 total acreage (1.30%) of the Sepulveda Dam Wildlife Refuge will be covered by Interstate 405/Highway 101 connector structures.

- d. **Alternative 4:** proposes new Burbank Boulevard on-ramp, new connector from S/B I-405 to S/B and N/B US-101. This alternative will occupy approximately 5.04 acres of the spillway outlet area, 0.45 acres of permanent footing easement and 0.59 acres of fill, in addition to 0.98 acres of the upstream dam embankment, and 49,014 ft<sup>3</sup> of the dam reservoir. The dam reservoir will be affected only on the south end of the Sepulveda Dam. Length and width of the structure on the dam will be 550 and 41 feet, respectively.

#### 4. SEPULVEDA DAM AND PROPOSED ALTERNATIVES

The spillway at Sepulveda dam was originally designed to pass, without danger to the dam or threat of overtopping the dam, a peak outflow of 100,500 cfs from a hypothetical flood or Probable Maximum Flood. This is the greatest rate of discharge that could be expected from the most severe combination of rainfall and runoff conditions that could reasonably occur. The revised Probable Maximum Flood, the computed maximum outflow would be 99,300 cfs.

The Standard Project Flood represents the runoff event that would result from the most severe combination of rainfall and watershed conditions that are considered reasonably characteristic for the region in question; the combined outflow through the ungated outlets and over the spillway would be 41,300 cfs.

Since the Sepulveda Dam has been in operation, the reservoir water surface elevation reached its all-time historical maximum of 705.10 feet during floods of 16 February 1980, and reached 702.53 feet on March 1<sup>st</sup>, 1983 (recall that the designed elevation 712 feet, the spill gates begin to lower to discharge water onto the spillway apron). Based on a recent hydrologic study conducted in February 1988, the maximum flood for which spillway flow will not occur is approximately the 80-year storm event.

The alternatives proposed for the construction of a bridge is to connect the S/B I-405 to N/B and S/B US-101 crossing the spillway outlet area of the dam. Alternatives 1 and 4 will encroach into northeast corner of the spillway outlet area approximately 4.93 acres and 5.04 acres. Alternatives 2 and 3 are 0.28 acres and 0.25 acres. These encroachments

will not substantially affect the dam's operations, since this area is not designated as the reservoir and graded to drain toward the Los Angeles River on the southeast corner.

In order to merge with N/B US-101, all 4 alternatives will have to encroach on the dam reservoir at the upstream slope of the dam embankment. To minimize reservoir volume loss, the ACOE service road will be realigned and the retaining wall will be constructed. The proposals will take approximately 1.07 acres of upstream embankment. In addition, alternatives 2 and 3 will take an extra 0.15 acres and 1.9 acres of the downstream embankment of the basin north of Burbank Boulevard for the proposal of 2 new Burbank on and off- ramps

## **5. MITIGATION PROPOSALS**

The sole purpose of Sepulveda Dam is flood control and its operating criteria were based strictly upon reservoir water surface elevation criteria, irrespective of downstream channel conditions. Also, no water is impounded by the dam for the purpose of recreation.

In order to compensate for the volume loss by the proposed projects, the following alternatives are proposed:

1. The project proposes realignment ACOE service road by constructing a retaining wall that will allow excavating the upstream embankment to restore storage volume removed by realignment ACOE service road.
2. Extension of existing Burbank Boulevard Bridge: Burbank Boulevard is closed during major storm events due to rising water in the basin (the lowest elevation is at Los Angeles River). The space under the bridge will compensate for the volume loss of the basin due to the project. This proposal will avoid closure of Burbank Boulevard during major storm events; however, it is not cost effective, and also requires study and cooperation with the City of Los Angeles.
3. Acquire residential private properties: acquiring some properties at risk, at the southeast corner of the basin, McLellan Avenue and Burbank Boulevard, where the front yards are still lower than the Probable Maximum Flood water surface elevation (712 feet).

## **6. CONCLUSION**

The purpose of this report is to highlight the Sepulveda Dam operations and proposed alternatives for mitigation of the dam storage volume removed by additional roadway embankment. The project is under Project Report (PR) phase, no preferred alternative has been selected, and the project data presented in this report are just preliminary estimates. The project has been conceptual approved by the U.S. Army Corps of

Engineers (USACE), Los Angeles District, which has complete regulatory responsibility for the Dam and the reservoir lands. It is possible that other solutions could be provided by the USACE as the final alternative is selected.

## **REFERENCES**

US Army Corps Of Engineers, Los Angeles District. Water Control Manual, Sepulveda Dam & Reservoir, Los Angeles River, California. May 1989

California Department of Transportation (CalTrans). Project Study Report-Project Development Support. December 2000

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), Flood Insurance Rate Map Los Angeles County, California (City of Los Angeles).  
Community-Panel Number 060137 0038C. December 1980



## **APPENDIX T | WETLAND DELINEATION REPORT**

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# WETLAND DELINEATION REPORT

## Route 405/101 Interchange New alignment of S/B 405 connector to N/B and S/B 101

### Introduction

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) proposes a new alignment of the Interstate 405 southbound connector to the northbound and southbound US-101 connectors. The project will cross the Sepulveda Dam south of the actual dam structure in the City of Los Angeles (Figure 1).

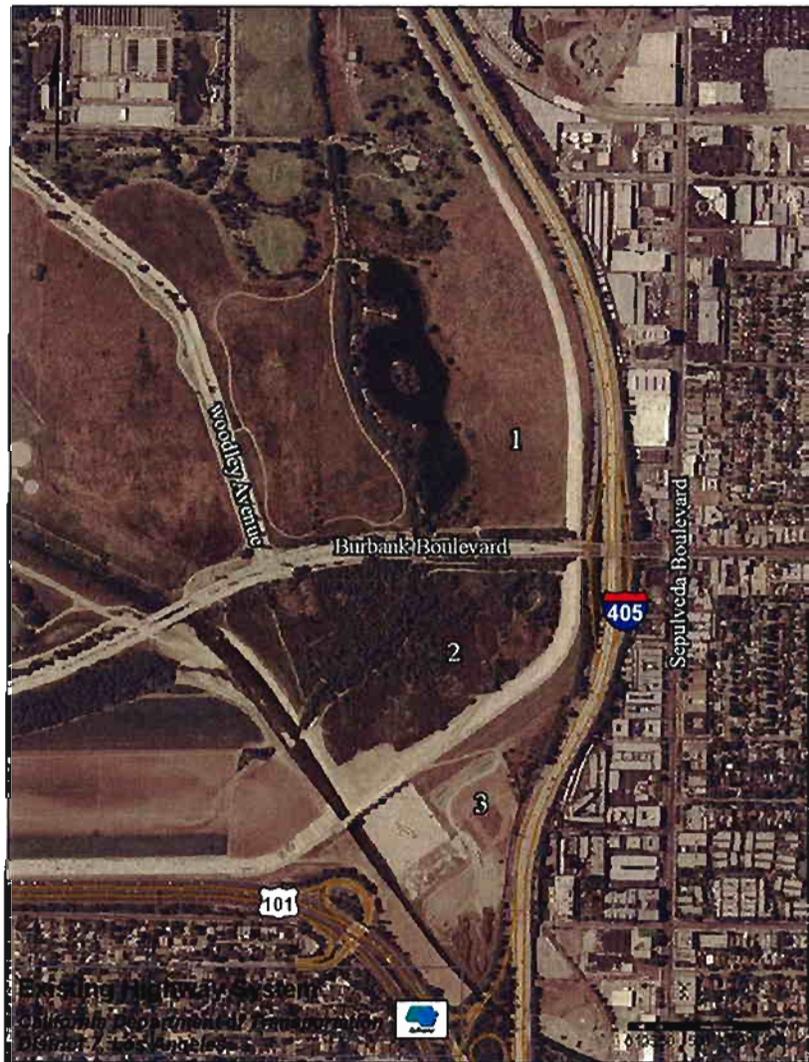


Figure 1: Aerial of project area and surrounding areas

The area of the proposed project is part of the Sepulveda Basin. It is located south of the dam structure and the connectors will span over channelized portion of the Los Angeles River. A wetland delineation was conducted to assess the current conditions at the northeast corner of the project (Section 3). One or more of the proposed Alternatives could potentially impact this area. This delineation will provide information to the resources agencies, so that the 'No Net Loss Policy' may be accurately implemented.

## 1 History of Project Area

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers completed the Sepulveda Dam in 1941 for the purpose of flood control. The dam was designed to collect waters from several drainages upstream, temporarily store it, and then release it into the Los Angeles River at a rate that would not exceed the rivers capacity. The river south of the dam was later channelized with concrete, more than doubling the capacity of the river and decreasing the likelihood of flooding in areas that were quickly becoming urbanized. The channelization of the Los Angeles River has eliminated the water source to areas outside to the channel and into urban areas.

## 2 Project Setting

The project proposes a new alignment of the southbound I-405 connectors to the northbound and southbound US-101 connectors. The area of impact is surrounded by US-101 on the south and west sides, I-405 on the east side, and the Sepulveda Dam on the north side. The Los Angeles River intersects the project area in the western portion and is completely concrete lined. North of the Sepulveda Dam is the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve (Section 1), to the northwest is agricultural land, and heavy urbanization borders the east and south sides.

### 2.1 Vegetation

The southeast corner of the project area, along I-405, is where two soil pits were dug as part of the wetland delineation. The area identified as a potential wetland runs along a drainage area and is composed of vegetation consistent with a riparian habitat. Table 1 lists those species that were identified at the Soil Pit 1 location. Table 2 lists those species that were identified at Soil Pit 2.

Species	Absolute Cover	Dominant Species	Indicator Status
2.1.1.1.1 <i>Baccharis salicifolia</i>	50	YES	FACW-
<i>Rumex crispus</i>	20	NO	FACW-
<i>Cynodon dactylon</i>	30	NO	FAC
<i>Raphanus raphanistrum</i>	< 1	NO	UP
<i>Brassica nigra</i>	< 1	NO	UP
<i>Lolium perenne</i>	100	YES	FAC
<i>Phalaris minor</i>	2	NO	UP
<i>Alnus glutinosa</i>	10	NO	-

Table 1: Soil Pit 1 Vegetation

<b>2.2 Species</b>	<b>2.3 Absolute Cover</b>	<b>2.4 Dominant Species</b>	<b>2.5 Indicator Status</b>
<b>2.6 Bromus hordeaceus</b>	<b>2.7 10</b>	<b>2.8 NO</b>	<b>2.9 FACU-</b>
<b>2.10 Conium maculatum</b>	<b>2.11 &lt;1</b>	<b>2.12 NO</b>	<b>2.13 FACW</b>
<b>2.14 Avena fatua</b>	<b>2.15 &lt;1</b>	<b>2.16 NO</b>	<b>2.17 UP</b>
<b>2.18 Rumex crispus</b>	<b>2.19 10</b>	<b>2.20 NO</b>	<b>2.21 FACW-</b>
<b>2.22 Lolium perenne</b>	<b>2.23 75</b>	<b>2.24 YES</b>	<b>2.25 FAC</b>
<b>2.26 Baccharis salicifolia</b>	<b>2.27 50</b>	<b>2.28 YES</b>	<b>2.29 FACW-</b>
<b>2.30 Juglans californica</b>	<b>2.31 20</b>	<b>2.32 NO</b>	<b>2.33 FAC</b>
<b>2.34 Alnus glutinosa</b>	<b>2.35 15</b>	<b>2.36 NO</b>	<b>2.37 -</b>
<b>2.38 Baccharis pilularis</b>	<b>2.39 15</b>	<b>2.40 NO</b>	<b>2.41 UP</b>

**2.42 Table 2: Soil Pit 2 Vegetation**

### **2.43 Hydrology**

Before the Sepulveda Dam was built and the Los Angeles River was channelized, flooding from the river most likely inundated the proposed project area with water. Due to the construction of the dam and the channelized river, water no longer enters the adjacent areas south of the Sepulveda Dam. The wetland delineation was performed at two (2) locations along the southeast corner of the proposed project area due to the concave impression (ditch) in the soil that runs along I-405 from approximately the southern most point of the project to Burbank Blvd. There are two storm-water outlets located in Caltrans right-of-way that most likely empty into this ditch. These storm-water outlets are the likely source of water for this wetland.

### **2.44 Soils**

No soil records were found for this area; however, it is likely that some type of alluvial soils existed since the area is located adjacent to the river. Once the river was channelized sediment was no longer deposited into the area. Much of the soil is sandy loam in nature.

## **3 Methodology**

A routine wetland delineation was done by Caltrans biologist Maureen Doyle, with assistance from Anthony Baquiran and Eddie Munoz on May 08, 2008. The delineation was done to determine whether the area adjacent to I-405 along the southeast portion of the project area, constituted a jurisdictional wetland. A field visit of the general area was conducted in the Spring of 2002, and 2007 to determine the vegetation and wildlife species in the area. Soil survey maps of the exact location were not found.

The wetland survey evaluated the vegetation, hydrology, and soils within the project area. Due to the presence of mature mulefat and other hydrophytic plant species, hydrological indicators and hydric soils were looked at to determine whether or not this area might be a jurisdictional and/or state wetland. The

objective was to quantify whether the necessary hydrology and soils conditions exist to determine the presence of a jurisdictional wetland.

## 4 Results

### 4.1 Soil Pit 1

There was no water present in or around the soil pit, however the topography is a concave form along this area. The pit was dug to 12 inches and showed two observable horizons. The soil was fine sandy clay loam with some larger sands and rocks mixed in. There was presence of mottles in the soil and the matrix color was indicative of hydric soil. Table 3 describes the soil profiles. The dominant vegetation within the delineation area was primarily composed of mature mulefat, and perennial ryegrass. The soil pit location is indicated on Figure 2.



Figure 2: Soil Pit 1 Location



Figure 2.1: Soil pit 1

The wetland delineation indicates that all of the three necessary parameters were present at the survey area. Mulefat is a FACW species (occurs in wetlands 67-99% of the time according to the National Wetland Inventory List) as well as perennial ryegrass. Hydrological indicators are present at the site and the soil is hydric. Therefore, this site meets all three parameters for being a wetland.

Depth inches	Matrix Color	Matrix %	Redox Color	Redox %	Redox Type	Redox Loc	Texture	Remarks
6	2.5yr3/2	70	10yr2/8	30	C	M	Crumb	Med to course loamy
6	2.5yr3/2	80	10yr6/8	20	C	M	Crumb	Med loamy

Table 3: Soil Pit 1 Profiles

#### 4.2 Soil Pit 2

The second soil pit is very similar in characteristics as Soil Pit 1. There was no water present in or around the soil pit, however the topography is a concave form along this area. The pit was dug to 13 inches and showed two observable horizons. The soil was fine loamy clay with some larger rocks mixed in. There was presence of mottles in the soil and the matrix color was indicative of hydric soil. Table 4 describes the soil profiles. The dominant vegetation within the delineation area was primarily composed of mature mulefat, and perennial ryegrass. The soil pit location is indicated on Figure 3.

Depth inches	Matrix Color	Matrix %	Redox Color	Redox %	Redox Type	Redox Loc	Texture	Remarks
7	10YR 3/2	100					Med	Loamy clay
6	2.5yr3/2	80	2.5Y 6/6	20	C	M	Med	Loamy clay

Table 4: Soil Pit 2 Profiles



Figure 3: Soil Pit 2 Location



Figure 3.1: Soil Pit 2

## 5 Discussion

The three parameters necessary for an area to be considered a federal jurisdictional wetland are hydric soils, hydrophytic vegetation, and hydrology. All three parameters must be met according to the Army Corps of Engineers Wetland Delineation Manual for the area to be designated a federal wetland. The definition for a federal wetland is as follows:

"Those areas that are inundated or saturated by surface or ground water at a frequency and duration sufficient to support, and that under normal circumstances do support, a prevalence of vegetation typically adapted for life in saturated soil conditions. Wetlands generally include swamps, marshes, bogs, and similar areas."

Under the federal jurisdictional definition, this area qualifies as a wetland.

The California Department of Fish and Game (DFG) uses the following definition:

"Wetlands are lands transitional between terrestrial and aquatic systems where the water table is usually at or near the surface or the land is covered by shallow water. For purposes of this classification, wetlands must have one or more of the following attributes: (1) at least periodically, the land supports hydrophytes, (2) the substrate is predominantly undrained hydric soil; and (3) the substrate is non-soil and is saturated with water or covered by shallow water at some time during the growing season of year."

Under this definition the area surveyed may be considered a state wetland since the area meets the hydrophytic vegetation criteria. This area does appear to function as a wetland, and supports a diversity of bird and mammal species.

## 6 Mitigation

Figure 4 shows a polygon area that has been identified as a wetland based on this delineation report. The area of impact is approximately 2.46 acres. Mitigation proposals for the impacts to this wetland area are discussed in the Environmental Document for this project.

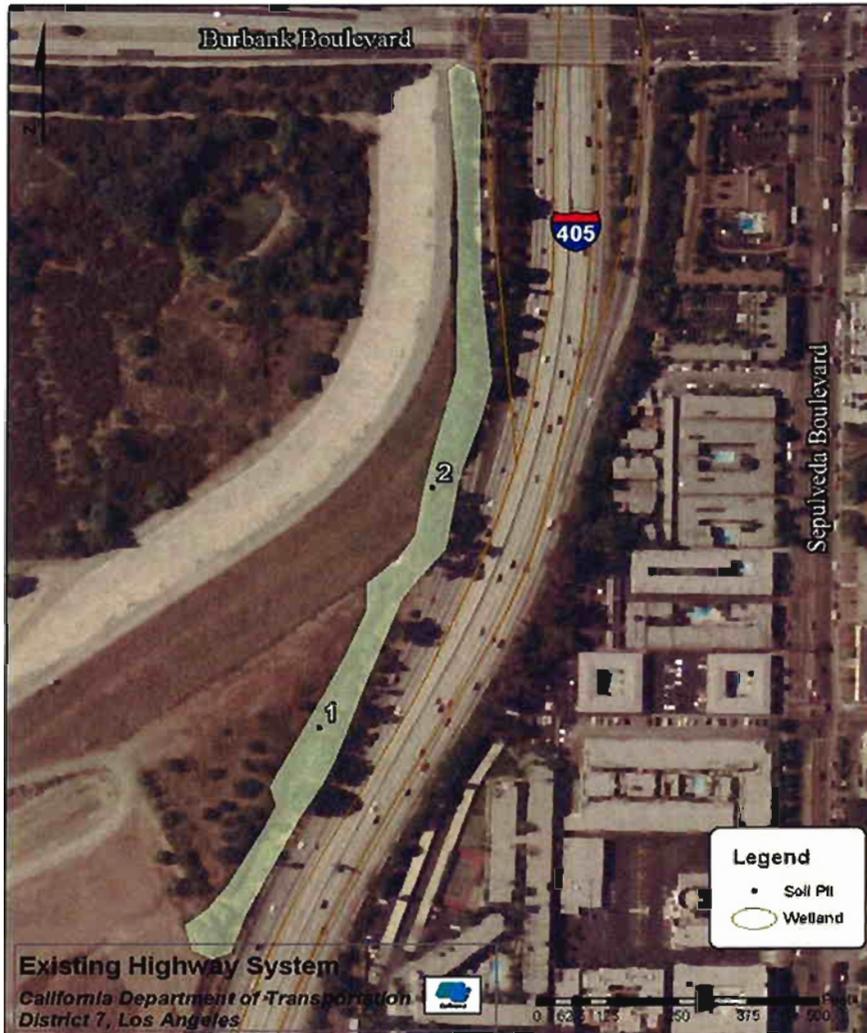


Figure 4: Polygon of wetland area

## **APPENDIX U | SUPPLEMENTAL TRAFFIC DATA**

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07-LA-405 P.M. (40.5-39.09)  
07-LA-101 P.M. (17.05-17.53)  
June 19, 2008  
EA#199610

## TRAFFIC ANALYSIS REPORT

### Southbound 405 to Eastbound and Westbound 101 Connectors Connector Improvement Project Level of Service (LOS) for 2035 No-Build vs. Alternative I

PREPARED BY:

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Ashraf W. Hanna P.E.  
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DATE

APPROVAL RECOMMENDED:

Original Signed

Kirk Patel P.E.  
Branch Chief  
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DATE

**Marco Ruano**  
CHIEF, OFFICE OF FREEWAY OPERATIONS  
DIVISION OF OPERATIONS

## Level of Service (LOS) Analysis for the 2035 No-Build vs. 2035 Alternative I

### Assumptions:

- 1- This analysis is done to evaluate the LOS utilizing all of the three design criteria, namely, combining Density along with the corresponding Travel Speeds and Demand.
- 2- LOS based on Density would take into account weaving effects.
- 3- LOS based on Demand would take into account the maximum capacity of the mainline lanes.
- 4- LOS based on speed would take into account the projected speeds on the mainline based on Density.
- 5- Posted speed limits on the existing and the proposed connectors and mainline were used with a reduction of 10 ~ 15 mph to obtain FFS on them during peak hours.
- 6- Same Density on the connectors and the mainline would yield a different speed between them.
- 7- Travel distance proposed is 5 miles to include upstream and downstream the connector including the connector itself.
- 8- Multilane Highways criteria for LOS and Density was used.

### **I- 2035 No-Build Condition**

Segment Description	Demand AM Peak vphpl	Demand PM Peak vphpl	Density AM Peak pc/mi/ln	Density PM Peak pc/mi/ln	LOS AM Peak	LOS PM Peak
SB 405- PM 39.75-40.28	3430	3658	112.0	103.5	F4	F4
SB 405 to rte 101 connector PM 39.754	2614	2117	81.7	72.5	F4	F3
405 SB to WB 101 Connector	2664	2043	101.0	108.9	F4	F4
405 SB to EB 101 Connector	2333	2005	80.4	99.8	F4	F4
US - 101 EB	2996	2500	75.7	63.7	F4	F1
US - 101 WB	2826	2981	60.5	71.1	F1	F3

## II- 2035 Build Alternative I

Segment Description	Demand AM Peak vphpl	Demand PM Peak vphpl	Density AM Peak pc/mi/ln	Density PM Peak pc/mi/ln	LOS AM Peak	LOS PM Peak
SB 405- PM 39.75- 40.28	3430	3652	104.6	99.4	F4	F4
SB 405 to rte 101 connector PM 39.754	1496	1262	39.6	35.7	E	E
405 SB to WB 101 Connector	1332	1022	25.8	27.9	C	C
405 SB to EB 101 Connector	2333	2005	61.0	100.2	F1	F4
US – 101 EB	2970	2483	75.1	63.3	F4	F1
US – 101 WB	2832	2985	62.7	72.6	F1	F3

### III- Conclusion and Recommendations:

By 2035 and based on the foregoing discussion, the improvement in LOS (level of service) associated with the Build Alternative I over the No-Build Alternative for the mainline and the connectors are anticipated to be mainly due to:

- 1- Widening the existing SB 405/ WB 101 connector from one to two lanes, and hence doubling the capacity and a considerable decrease in the lane density and hence, a better LOS.
- 2- Constructing a longer SB 405/WB 101 connector with a lot more storage space on it, hence, relieving the mainline SB 405 from the existing backups due to the short storage length on the existing connector.
- 3- The wider and faster new SB 405/WB 101 connector allows for a better transition of vehicles from the SB 405 to the WB 101, and hence, a better traveling speed and a better LOS.
- 4- The LOS at the SB 405/ US 101 junction would improve due to a decrease in demand by the amount of the Burbank traffic detoured to local streets.
- 5- No further interference or weaving from the added demand on the EB 101 on ramp at Sepulveda and originating from the Burbank IC due to an ample weaving length to the Van Nuys off ramp.
- 6- Longer storage length onto the new SB 405/EB 101 connector, and hence, lesser interference with the mainline SB 405 and therefore an improved LOS.
- 7- Based on the above, the Office of Freeway Operations recommends the implementation of Alternative I as presented due to its significant benefits in enhancing the operational capacity of this critical interchange.





07-LA-405 P.M. (40.5-39.09)  
07-LA-101 P.M. (17.05-17.53)  
June 6, 2008  
EA#199610

## TRAFFIC ANALYSIS REPORT

### Southbound 405 to Eastbound and Westbound 101 Connectors Connector Improvement Project Quantification of Travel Time Savings

PREPARED BY:

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**Marco Ruano**  
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DIVISION OF OPERATIONS

**Minor Delay Cost Analysis for the 2035 No-Build vs. 2035 Alternative I**

Assumptions:

- 1- Average FFS considered is 40 mph.
- 2- Travel distance proposed is 5 miles to include upstream and downstream the connector including the connector itself.
- 3- The main delay is going to occur upstream the connector before the vehicles channel themselves to the mainline SB 405 and the EB and WB 101 connectors.
- 4- Multilane Highways criteria for LOS and Density was used.
- 5- Interpolation was based on a lineal Density-Speed relationship.
- 6- No correction for lane widths or sight distance was done.
- 7- A vehicle-hour of delay cost is equal to \$11.0.
- 8- AM peak and PM peak consist of 5 hours each, for a total daily peak of 10 hrs.
- 9- There are 228 working days per calendar year.
- 10- Each daily hour of delay costs \$2508 annually.

**I- 2004 Existing Condition**

Segment Description	Demand AM Peak vph	Demand PM Peak vph	Density AM Peak pc/mi/ln	Density PM Peak pc/mi/ln	Speed AM Peak Mph	Speed PM Peak Mph	Delay AM Peak veh-min	Delay PM Peak veh-min
405 SB-Burbank to I/C M.L. only	2306	2461	71.6	66.5	15	18	12.5	9.17
405 SB to WB 101 Connector	1792	1374	69.1	69.6	17	17	10.14	10.14
405 SB to EB 101 Connector	1570	1348	56.8	62.2	23	20	5.54	7.5
Total Daily Delay veh-hours							9282	7768
Total Annual Delay -\$ Millions							23.2	19.4

**II- 2035 No-Build Condition**

Segment Description	Demand AM Peak vph	Demand PM Peak vph	Density AM Peak pc/mi/ln	Density PM Peak pc/mi/ln	Speed AM Peak Mph	Speed PM Peak Mph	Delay AM Peak veh-min	Delay PM Peak veh-min
405 SB-Burbank to I/C M.L. only	3430	3658	112.0	103.5	8	10	30	22.5
405 SB to WB 101 Connector	2664	2043	101.0	108.9	10	8	22.5	30
405 SB to EB 101 Connector	2333	2005	80.4	99.8	13	11	15.5	20
Total Daily Delay veh-hours							33,170	30,615
Total Annual Delay -\$ Millions							83.19	76.8

**III- 2035 Build Alternative I**

Segment Description	Demand AM Peak vph	Demand PM Peak vph	Density AM Peak pc/mi/ln	Density PM Peak pc/mi/ln	Speed AM Peak Mph	Speed PM Peak Mph	Delay AM Peak veh-min	Delay PM Peak veh-min
405 SB-Burbank to I/C M.L. only	3430	3652	104.6	99.4	9	11	26	20
405 SB to WB 101 Connector	2664	2043	51.7	55.8	26	23	4	5.5
405 SB to EB 101 Connector	2333	2005	61.0	100.2	20	11	7.5	20
Total Daily Delay vehicle-hours							19,556	20,729
Total Annual Delay -\$ Millions							49.04	51.9

**IV- Conclusion and Recommendations:**

By 2035 and based on the foregoing discussion, the net annual savings in travel delay cost associated with the Build Alternative I over the No-Build Alternative are anticipated to be approximately:

- 1- For Alternative I:  $(83.19 + 76.8 - 49.04 - 51.9) = \$ 59.05$  millions/year.
- 2- This alternative provides the maximum savings in travel time delay over all the other alternatives as was previously discussed in another report.

- 3- In Alternative I, access to US 101 from the Burbank Blvd. on ramp is denied. This would lead to local traffic detouring to neighboring on ramps utilizing other routes including Sepulveda Blvd., Van Nuys Blvd., and Burbank Blvd.
- 4- Diverting the Burbank traffic heading for US 101 to other ramps would require a full analysis of these ramps for possible mitigation to alleviate the expected increase in demand.
- 5- The mitigation plan which have already been considered with this alternative includes adding a new westbound 101 on ramp from Hayvenhurst, widening the existing Hayvenhurst WB 101 off ramp and the EB 101 on ramp, and adding an auxiliary lane between the new Hayvenhurst on ramp to WB 101 and the existing off ramp at Balboa.



07-LA-405 PM (41.4/39.0)  
07-LA-101 PM (15.0/20.3)  
EA#07-244-199610  
June 8, 2008

## OPERATIONAL ANALYSIS REPORT

ON SOUTHBOUND ROUTE 405 CONNECTORS TO EASTBOUND AND  
WESTBOUND ROUTE 101  
ALTERNATIVE I  
TRAVEL DELAY ANALYSIS FOR DETOURING BURBANK/101 TRAFFIC TO  
LOCAL STREETS – YEAR 2035

PREPARED BY:

Original Signed

ASHRAF W. HANNA P.E.  
Lead Project Engineer  
Area Management – West  
Location: 05-355, @ 7-7916

DATE

APPROVAL RECOMMENDED:

Original Signed

KIRK PATEL P.E.  
Senior Transportation Engineer  
Branch Chief  
Area Management – West  
Location: 05-368, @ 7-1825

DATE

**Marco Ruano**  
**CHIEF, OFFICE OF FREEWAY OPERATIONS**  
**DIVISION OF OPERATIONS**

## I- INTRODUCTION

Routes 101 and 405 are part of the National Highway System (NHS) and serve as Interstate/Inter-regional/Intra-regional and commute travel highways.

In the limits of this project Route 101 traverses in east-west direction and route 405 in a north south one.

This study was done as a part of the SB 405/101 Connectors Improvement Project to evaluate the impact of Alternative I, which calls for denying access from the Burbank Blvd. interchange to route 101 on the local streets in the vicinity of the interchange.

Alternative I as presented in the project report (PR) would prohibit vehicles utilizing the Burbank Blvd. on ramp to SB 405 from connecting to either directions of route 101.

By this, it is expected that this traffic would be detoured to local streets to be able to connect to both east and west bounds route 101 through other neighboring on ramps.

## II- BACKGROUND

As part of the Operational Analysis process for this project, it is required to examine the severity and magnitude of delays in travel time that would be anticipated on local streets due to the implementation of Alternative I.

A preliminary operational study was conducted to examine the traffic patterns throughout the 405/101 interchange, this study went as far north as Victory Boulevard, and as far south as Ventura Boulevard, and from Van Nuys Boulevard on the east to Balboa Boulevard on the west.

This study included tachometer runs, manual traffic counts and traffic modeling for the interchange and it's surrounding ramps and streets.

## III- NEED AND PURPOSE

LARTS figures show that the area under study is experiencing an average traffic growth rate of 1.05% to 1.20% annually.

Due to this fast growth rate, and the importance of providing acceptable freeway operation for commuters by the year 2035, improvements are sought for this segment of routes 101 and 405 to enhance the existing and future operations of these important arteries.

### A. **Deficiency and Justification**

The implementation of Alternative I as stated would prohibit the traffic currently utilizing the Burbank Boulevard on ramp to southbound 405 from connecting to route 101.

This traffic would have several options to detour as explained later in this report.

## **B. Existing Conditions**

- ❖ Route 101 in the vicinity of the 101/405 interchange is composed mainly of 5 SOV lanes in both directions with lane drops and lane additions.
- ❖ Southbound route 405 north and south of the 405/101 IC has 4 and 5 SOV lanes and one HOV lane.
- ❖ Sepulveda Boulevard in the vicinity of the project is a 6-lane artery running north south with multiple left-turn and right-turn only pockets.
- ❖ The EB 101 on ramp at Sepulveda is a 2-lane metered ramp with an HOV bypass lane.
- ❖ The EB 101 on ramp at Van Nuys is a 3-lane metered ramp with an HOV bypass and a bus lane.
- ❖ The WB 101 on ramp at Van Nuys is a 3-lane metered ramp with an HOV bypass and a bus lane.
- ❖ The WB 101 on ramp at Balboa is a 2-lane merging to one metered ramp.
- ❖ The SB 405 on ramp at Victory is a 1-lane on ramp.
- ❖ The distance between the SB 405/Burbank Blvd. IC and the EB101 on ramp at Sepulveda is approximately 0.8 miles.
- ❖ The distance between the SB 405/Burbank Blvd. IC and the EB and WB 101 on ramps at Van Nuys is approximately 2.0 miles.
- ❖ The distance between the SB 405/Burbank Blvd. IC and the newly proposed WB 101 on ramp at Hayvenhurst is approximately 1.75 miles.
- ❖ The distance between the SB 405/Burbank Blvd. IC and the WB 101 on ramp at Balboa is approximately 2.1 miles

## **C. Existing and Future (2035) Traffic Demand – No Build Option – Peak Hours**

- a- EB 101 on ramp at Van Nuys is at 1198 and 980 vph for AM and PM peak respectively.
- b- EB 101 on ramp at Sepulveda is at 850 and 1157 vph for AM and PM peak respectively.
- c- WB 101 on ramp at Balboa is at 1248 and 1313 vph for AM and PM peak respectively.
- d- WB 101 on ramp at Haskell is at 385 and 812 vph for AM and PM peak respectively.
- e- SB 405 on ramp at Burbank is at 1103 and 718 vph for AM and PM peak respectively.
- f- The 2002 AADT for southbound 405 connecting to route 101 was 49,200.
- g- The 1998 AADT for the northbound 405 traffic off to Burbank Boulevard was 14,200.
- h- The 2002 AADT for the southbound 405 traffic off to Burbank Boulevard was 13,200.
- i- The Haskell Avenue off ramp from westbound 101 is being utilized by 810 vph during morning peak with a 2003 AADT of 6400.
- j- The Haskell Avenue on ramp to westbound route 101 had an AADT of 3400 in 2003.

- k- The 2003 AADT for the Sepulveda Boulevard on ramp to eastbound route 101 was 8300.
- l- The 2003 AADT for the Van Nuys Boulevard on ramp to westbound 101 was 17,200.
- m- The 2003 AADT for the Van Nuys Boulevard on ramp to eastbound 101 was 12,400.
- n- The 2000 AADT for the Van Nuys Boulevard off ramp to eastbound 101 was 19,700.
- o- The 2002 AADT for the eastbound Victory Boulevard on to southbound route 405 was 4600.
- p- The 2002 AADT for the Haskell/Victory on to southbound 405 was 7500.

**D. Future (2035) Traffic Demand – Alternative I – Peak Hours**

- q- EB 101 on ramp at Van Nuys is at 1231 and 1002 vph for AM and PM peak respectively.
- r- EB 101 on ramp at Sepulveda is at 982 and 1243 vph for AM and PM peak respectively.
- s- WB 101 on ramp at Balboa is at 1469 and 1457 vph for AM and PM peak respectively.
- t- WB 101 on ramp at Haskell is at 385 and 811 vph for AM and PM peak respectively.
- u- SB 405 on ramp at Burbank is at 662 and 431 vph for AM and PM peak respectively.

**IV- DETOUR ALTERNATIVES**

The Burbank traffic connecting to route 101, and due to the implementation of Alternative I could be detoured to the neighboring ramps as follows:

- a- Drive south on Sepulveda Boulevard and connect to EB 101 through the Sepulveda on ramp.
- b- Drive north on Sepulveda and then west on Victory through the Victory Blvd. on ramp to SB 405 and onto route 101 in both directions.
- c- Drive east on Burbank Blvd. then south onto Van Nuys Blvd. to connect to EB 101 through the Van Nuys on ramp.
- d- Drive east on Burbank Blvd. then south onto Van Nuys Blvd. to connect to WB 101 through the Van Nuys on ramp.
- e- Drive west on Burbank Blvd. then south on Hayvenhurst to connect to the new proposed WB 101 on ramp.
- f- Drive west on Burbank Blvd. then south on Balboa to connect to the existing on ramp to WB 101.
- g- Drive north on Sepulveda, then west on Victory, then north on Haskell to the Victory/Haskell on ramp to SB 405.
- h- Detour options b, d, and g above would require motorists to deviate from their original routes and add an unwarranted distance and delay to their travel. Hence, they will not be studied or considered any further.

## V- METHODOLOGY AND CRITERIA FOR ANALYSIS

### A. General

The methodology and criteria for analysis utilized in this traffic report could be summarized as follows:

- 1- For the proposed detour alternatives, traffic volumes for the year 2035 will be used.
- 2- Delays on the ramps, due to added demand and possible backups to City streets, would need to be evaluated.
- 3- Delays on the mainline freeway due to increased weaving and how would they affect the LOS.
- 4- Travel time and travel time delays on City streets due to the detours and their magnitude.
- 5- Net travel time delay for the detoured vehicles utilizing City streets versus going through the 405/101 busy interchange.
- 6- Savings in travel time for vehicles onto the 405/101 interchange due to a decrease in the number of vehicles, which were detoured, to local streets.
- 7- The need to adjust the ramp meter cycles and street signal timing to cope up with the new demand.
- 8- Storage problems at the new ramps and possible reconfiguration/reconstruction of these ramps.

### B. Tachometer Runs

- 9- For the proposed viable detour alternatives, a tachometer run was performed during the month of May 2008 and on a weekday.
- 10- The average run time and speed for each detour option, considering the Burbank Blvd. /SB 405 IC as the base starting point was:
  - a- To the EB 101 on ramp at Sepulveda = 3m and 4s and an average speed of 15.6 mph.
  - b- To the EB 101 on ramp at Van Nuys = 7m and 10s and an average speed of 16.7 mph.
  - c- To the new WB 101 on ramp at Hayvenhurst = 2m and 40s and an average speed of 39.4 mph.
  - d- To the WB 101 on ramp at Balboa = 3m and 40s and an average speed of 34.3 mph.

### C. Analysis

- 11- The demand on the Burbank Blvd. on ramp to SB 405 for 2035 – No Build = 1103 and 718 vph for AM and PM peak respectively.
- 12- The demand on this Burbank on ramp for 2035 and with Alternative I = 662 and 431 vph for AM and the PM peak respectively.
- 13- Therefore, the total detoured traffic in 2035 after implementing Alternative I = 441 and 287 vph for the AM and the PM peak respectively.

- 14- Also, these figures in #13 above represent the reduction in traffic demand going through the 405/101 interchange.
- 15- This detoured traffic will be distributed to the neighboring ramps leading to EB101 and WB101.
- 16- For the ramps leading to EB and WB101, the additional traffic in 2035 due to Alternative I over the No-Build would be:
- a- EB101 on ramp at Sepulveda: 132 and 86 vph for AM and PM peak respectively.
  - b- EB101 on ramp at Van Nuys: 33 and 22 vph for the AM and the PM peak respectively.
  - c- WB101 on ramp at Balboa: 221 and 144 vph for the AM and the PM peak respectively.
  - d- WB101 newly proposed on ramp at Hayvenhurst: 55 and 36 vph for AM and PM peak respectively.
  - e- Furthermore, and once the new Hayvenhurst on ramp would be completed, it can be reasonably assumed that Balboa and Hayvenhurst would split the WB101 traffic in half.
  - f- Therefore, the detoured traffic to WB101 on ramps at Balboa and Hayvenhurst would be = 138 and 90 vph for the AM and the PM peak respectively for each.
  - g- The 2035 No Build traffic volumes on Sepulveda Blvd. going south from the Sepulveda/Burbank intersection and heading towards the EB101 on ramp are 2389 and 2786 vph during the AM and the PM peak respectively.
  - h- The 2035 No Build traffic volumes on Burbank Blvd. going west from the Burbank/405 to the Burbank/Balboa intersections are 2100 and 3647 vph during the AM and the PM peak respectively.
  - i- For Van Nuys Blvd., and for the Van Nuys/Burbank intersection, the 2035 No-Build demand for traffic heading south from this intersection towards route 101 is approximately 2929 vph and 2272 vph for the AM and the PM peak respectively.
  - j- The 2035 peak traffic for the same segment with the build Alternative I would be about 2994 vph and 2356 vph for the AM and the PM respectively.
  - k- Averaging added demand from both the ramp and the street analysis for Van Nuys Blvd. Starting from the Burbank intersection and heading south towards route 101, the net average demand due to Alternative I over the No-Build would be about 1.7% and 2.3% for the AM and the PM peak hours respectively.

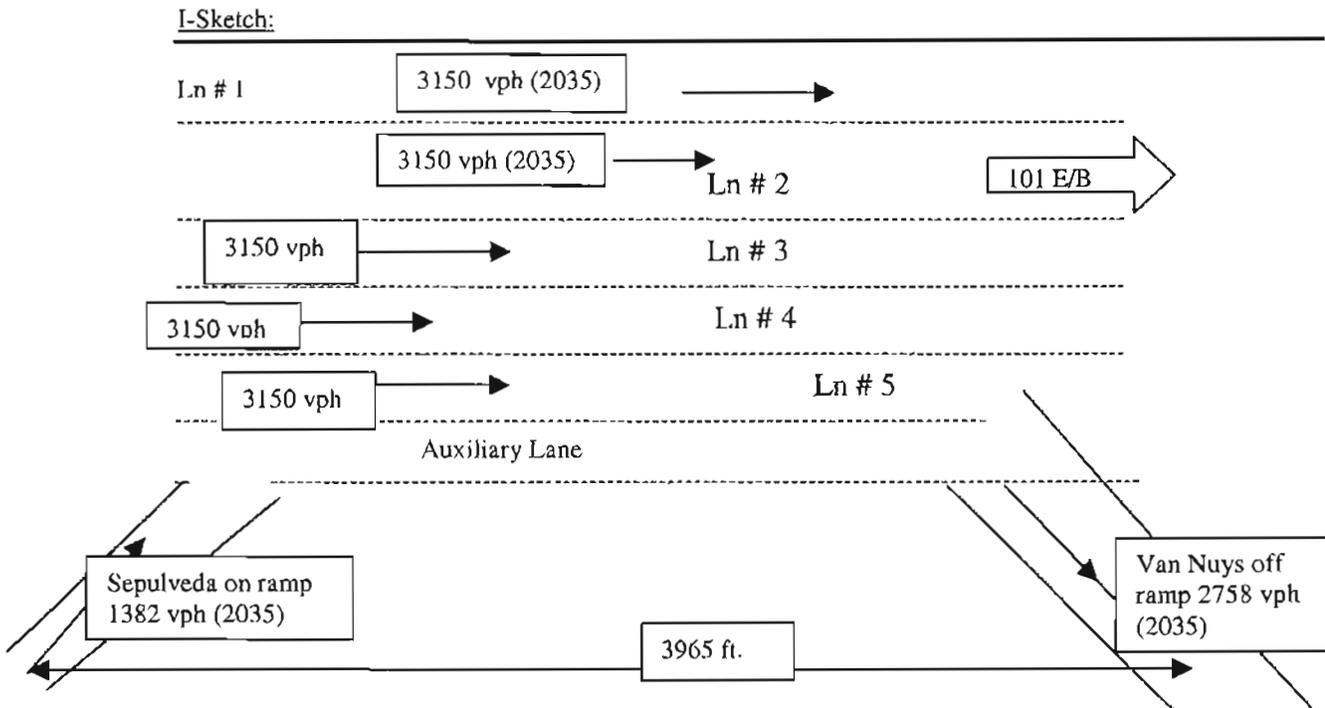
#### **D. Weaving**

- 17- Weaving segments due to implementing Alternative I need to be checked for possibly deteriorating the LOS on the mainline due to added weaving volumes.
- 18- The two most critical weaving segments would be the EB101 on ramp at Sepulveda with the Van Nuys off ramp, and the newly proposed WB101 on ramp at Hayvenhurst with the Balboa off ramp.

19- The second weaving segment between Hayvenhurst and Balboa would be mitigated and eliminated through the proposed new auxiliary lane between these two ramps.

20- The other segment between the SB405/WB101 connector and the Haskell off ramp does not need to be checked at the present time for the purpose of this study.

A- Year 2035 weaving on E/B Rte 101 between the Sepulveda Blvd. on-ramp and off ramp at Van Nuys Blvd. Due to Alternative I



### E. Mitigation

The following mitigation was proposed for Alternative I:

- 21- Add a new WB101 on ramp at Hayvenhurst.
- 22- Add a new auxiliary lane on WB101 from the new Hayvenhurst on ramp to the Balboa off ramp.
- 23- Widen the existing WB101 off ramp at Hayvenhurst from two to three lanes.
- 24- Widen the existing EB101 on ramp at Hayvenhurst from two to three lanes.

## VI- CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Based on the above, the Office of Freeway Operations concludes and recommends the following:

1. By the year 2035, and by implementing Alternative I as presented, about 132 and 86 vph would be detoured during AM and PM peak from the Burbank on ramp to SB405 to the Sepulveda on ramp to EB101.

2. This traffic represents an increase of about 5% and 3% for Sepulveda traffic over the No Build condition for both the AM and the PM peak hours respectively.
3. Similarly, by the year 2035, the westbound Burbank Blvd. would experience an increase of about 13% and 5% in its demand during the AM and the PM peak hours respectively due to implementing Alternative I.
4. The corresponding peak hour speeds are about 17 mph down from about 20 mph on Sepulveda Blvd. on the segment from the Burbank Blvd. to the EB101 on ramp, and about 30-33 mph on Burbank Blvd. versus the 40 mph posted speed limit.
5. Therefore, the average delay in travel time for the detoured vehicles on both Sepulveda and Burbank would be about 30-80 seconds per vehicle during peak hours.
6. The vehicles being detoured to the EB101 on ramp at Van Nuys will suffer a lesser impact due to their small numbers compared to the ones going to Sepulveda.
7. Therefore, this expected travel delay due to Alternative 1 would not represent a major deficiency, and the benefits expected from this improvement out weighs the setbacks.
8. As a mean of mitigation to minor added delay due to Alternative 1, we would suggest to LADOT to re-synchronize the signal timings along Sepulveda Boulevard.

**VII- SYSTEM PLANNING**

The proposed project is consistent with the goals and objectives of the region to provide adequate capacity for improved traffic movement.

**VIII- TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT PLAN (TMP)**

Implementing the construction elements, and detouring the existing ramps' traffic during construction can be accomplished without long term closures of freeway or ramp lanes by using K-rails. All construction works can be done behind the K-rail and some elements of TMP would be required. Existing traffic lanes would be reduced during construction except for short-term closures when traffic would be manageable. Transportation Management Plan would be necessary for this project. Traffic control will be accomplished through Planned Lane Closure specifications.

**IX- DISTRICT CONTACTS**

The following individuals should be contacted for information pertaining to this Operational Analysis Report:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Organization/Branch</u>	<u>Phone</u>
Ashraf W. Hanna	Lead Project Engineer/Office of Freeway Operations. Location: 05-355	(213) 897-7916
Kirk Patel	Senior TR. Engineer/ Office of Freeway Operations. Location: 05-368	(213) 897-1825

## **APPENDIX V | AIR QUALITY CONFORMITY ANALYSIS**

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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION  
CALIFORNIA DIVISION  
650 Capitol Mall, Suite 4-100  
Sacramento, CA 95814  
June 4, 2008

IN REPLY REFER TO  
HDA-CA  
File # LA0D77  
EA # 199610  
Document # P58438

Doug Failing, District Director  
California Department of Transportation  
District 7  
100 South Main Street, Suite 100  
Los Angeles, CA 90012-3606

Attention: Andrew Yoon, Senior Transportation Engineer

Dear Mr. Yoon:

On June 4, 2008, the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) submitted to the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) a request for the project-level conformity determination for the Southbound I-405 to US-101 Connector Improvement Project pursuant to 23 U.S.C. 327(a)(2)(B)(ii)(1). The project is in an area that is designated Nonattainment or Maintenance for Ozone, Carbon Monoxide (CO), Particulate Matter (PM<sub>10</sub>), and Fine Particle Particulate Matter (PM<sub>2.5</sub>).

The project level conformity analysis submitted by Caltrans indicates that the project-level transportation conformity requirements of 40 C.F.R. Part 93 have been met. The project is included in the Southern California Association of Government's (SCAG) currently conforming *2004 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP)*, and the *2006 Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP)*. The current conformity determinations for the RTP and RTIP were approved by FHWA and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) on October 2, 2006. The design concept and scope of the preferred alternative have not changed significantly from those assumed in the regional emissions analysis.

As required by 40 C.F.R. 93.116 and 93.123, the localized CO, PM<sub>10</sub>, and PM<sub>2.5</sub> analyses are included in the documentation. The CO hotspot analysis was performed with the Caltrans' *Transportation Project-Level Carbon Monoxide Protocol*. The analyses demonstrate that the project will not create any new violation of the standards or increase the severity or number of existing violations.

**MOVING THE  
AMERICAN  
ECONOMY**



Based on the information provided, FHWA finds that the Conformity Determination for the I-405 to US-101 Connector Improvement Project conforms to the State Implementation Plan (SIP) in accordance with 40 C.F.R. Part 93.

If you have any questions pertaining to this conformity finding, please contact Aimee Kratovil, FHWA Air Quality Specialist, at (916) 498-5866.

Sincerely,

*/s/ K. Sue Kiser*

For  
Gene K. Fong  
Division Administrator

**MOVING THE**  
**AMERICAN**  
**ECONOMY**



cc: (email)  
Mike Brady, Caltrans  
Steve Luxenberg, FHWA

AKratovil/ac

**MOVING THE**  
**AMERICAN**  
**ECONOMY** 2



## **APPENDIX W | CALTRANS DESIGN COMMENTMENTS**

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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS  
441 G STREET NW  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20314-1000

CECW-PB

OCT 23 2006

## MEMORANDUM FOR MAJOR SUBORDINATE COMMANDS

SUBJECT: Policy and Procedural Guidance for the Approval of Modification and Alteration of Corps of Engineer Projects

### 1. REFERENCES:

- a. ER 1165-2-119, dated 20 September 1982, Modifications to Completed Projects
- b. 33 CFR 208.10, Local flood protection works; maintenance and operation of structures and facilities
- c. 33 USC 408, Taking possession of, use of, or injury to harbor and river improvements
- d. 33 CFR 320.4, General policies for evaluating permit applications
- e. Section 404 of the Clean Water Act
- f. Section 10 of the River and Harbors Act of 1899

2. PURPOSE. Recent events have demonstrated the need to provide clarification and additional guidance on the policy and procedures for dealing with proposals to modify or alter completed Corps of Engineers projects that are either locally or federally maintained. Often requests for modifications to Corps projects come up in the context of Section 404 permitting actions or for modifications to existing Corps projects for the purposes of O&M. This memorandum addresses the use of the appropriate authority and the proper level of approval for such proposals.

### 3. BACKGROUND.

a. ER 1165-2-119 provides policy and guidance on the modification of completed Corps of Engineers projects, and describes the specific circumstances under which modifications can be approved and accomplished. In general, proposed significant modification of a completed project, involving new Federal construction or real estate acquisition, and any proposed modification that would make the project serve new purposes, or increase the scope of services to authorized purposes beyond that intended at the time of construction, or to extend services to new beneficiaries (areas), requires authorization by Congress. There may be instances where reporting officers find that proposed significant changes to a completed project may be desirable, in which case investigations may be undertaken to document the need for and the feasibility of such project modifications. To the extent practicable, such changes should be accomplished under existing authorities. However, the circumstances under which such modifications can be approved and made are limited, as discussed in the ER, and are briefly summarized below.

b. For projects constructed, operated and maintained by the Corps, the Corps may, as part of its operations and maintenance efforts, make reasonable changes and additions needed to

CECW-PB

SUBJECT: Policy and Procedural Guidance for the Approval of Modification and Alteration of Corps of Engineer Projects

properly operate the project or minimize maintenance. In addition, multiple purpose projects operated and maintained by the Corps may be modified within existing authorities for dam safety assurance, changes in water control plans, addition of water supply, changes to meet water quality needs, and recreation and fish and wildlife enhancement, as discussed in the ER. The Chief of Engineers also has limited discretion to modify navigation projects. For Corps-constructed projects operated and maintained by local interests, any proposed Federal work at these projects usually requires congressional authorization, with the exception of work required to correct a design deficiency.

c. Guidance on the responsibilities for the operation and maintenance of local protection projects is found in 33 CFR 208.10. This regulation describes local sponsors' responsibilities for operating and maintaining the structural soundness and functionality of the project in order to assure that the project meets its authorized purposes. Specifically, 33 CFR 208.10 a (5) requires that "no improvement shall be passed over, under, or through the walls, levees, improved channels or floodways, nor shall any excavation or construction be permitted within the limits of the project right-of-way, nor shall any change be made in any feature of the works without prior determination by the District Engineer" that such changes will not adversely affect the functioning of the protective facilities. The types of changes that can be considered and approved by a District Engineer under 33 CFR 208.10 are relatively minor, low impact modifications, such as pipes or pipelines proposed to pass over or through a Federal work, or a road or similar type of infrastructure improvement proposed to pass over a Federal levee. Such minor proposed modifications are considered part of a District Engineer's responsibilities related to normal O&M of such facilities. Any proposed modification of a Federal work, such as a levee or channel, which would involve significant changes to the authorized project's scope, project purpose, or functioning, cannot be approved by the District Engineer, but instead must be forwarded through the Division Commander for the approval of the Chief of Engineers, as explained hereinafter. That is, any proposed change to a Federal work exceeding the level of ordinary District O&M responsibilities for a project must be sent through the Division Commander to the Chief of Engineers for approval, as discussed in the following paragraphs.

d. Any proposed modification to an existing Corps projects (either federally or locally maintained) that go beyond those modifications required for normal O&M require approval under 33 USC 408. 33 USC 408 states that there shall be no temporary or permanent alteration, occupation or use of any public works including but not limited to levees, sea walls, bulkheads, jetties and dikes for any purpose without the permission of the Secretary of the Army. Under the terms of 33 USC 408, any proposed modification requires a determination by the Secretary that such proposed alteration or permanent occupation or use of a Federal project is not injurious to the public interest and will not impair the usefulness of such work. The authority to make this determination and to approve modifications to Federal works under 33 USC 408 has been delegated to the Chief of Engineers.

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SUBJECT: Policy and Procedural Guidance for the Approval of Modification and Alteration of Corps of Engineer Projects

#### 4. POLICY.

Any significant alteration or modification to either a locally or federally maintained Corps of Engineers project must be approved by the Chief of Engineers under 33 USC 408 unless covered by ER 1165-2-119. Modifications to a Corps projects beyond those necessary to properly operate the project or to minimize maintenance costs as well as any significant alteration or modification requested by any non-Federal interest for their own benefit also requires the Chief's approval under 33 USC 408.

#### 5. PROCEDURES.

a. The following information will be provided with any request for the approval of significant modifications or alterations to a locally or federally maintained Corps project requiring the Chief of Engineers approval under 33 USC 408.

1. A written request by the non-Federal interests for approval of the project modification/alteration.
2. A physical and functional description of the existing project
3. A detailed description of the proposed modification
4. The purpose/need for the modification
5. A description of any related, ongoing Corps studies/efforts in the watershed
6. A Public Interest Determination
7. Appropriate NEPA documentation
8. Any Administrative Record
9. A discussion of indirect effects
10. A discussion of E.O. 11988 Considerations
11. Technical Analysis
  - Technical adequacy of the design
  - Changes in water surface profiles and flow distribution
  - Assessment of anticipated local and system-wide resultant impacts, i.e., impacts on system integrity
  - Upstream and downstream impacts of the proposed alterations, including potential impacts to existing floodplain management and water control management plans of Federal projects within the basin
  - A discussion of residual risk

b. If there is an associated Section 404/10 permit action, the required public interest and technical evaluations under 33 USC 408 can be done concurrently with that action. Upon completion of the public interest determination and of the technical analyses regarding the impact of the proposed modification on the usefulness of the project, the District Engineer will make a recommendation (with supporting documentation) through the Division Commander to

CECW-PB

SUBJECT: Policy and Procedural Guidance for the Approval of Modification and Alteration of Corps of Engineer Projects

the Chief of Engineers (Attn: Appropriate RIT) for his consideration and approval under 33 USC 408. The District Engineer will make the final Section 404/10 permit decisions following the Chief of Engineers decision under 33 USC 408. A minimum of 30 days must be allowed for HQUSACE review.

c. For locally operated and maintained Corps projects, the operations and maintenance for any approved project modifications or alterations will be the responsibility of the non-Federal sponsor and the Project Cooperation Agreement or other appropriate document must be updated to address non-Federal sponsor responsibilities for the approved modifications.

6. If the desired modifications cannot be suitably pursued or approved under any of the preceding approaches, additional congressional authorization may be required. Section 216 of the Flood Control Act of 1970 is the appropriate authority to use to consider such modifications.

7. Consideration will be given to further delegation of the approval authority to a lower level as we gain more experience with the types of changes that are proposed for approval under 33 USC 408.

FOR THE COMMANDER:



for

DON T. RILEY  
Major General, USA  
Director of Civil Works

CECW-PB

SUBJECT: Policy and Procedural Guidance for the Approval of Modification and Alteration of  
Corps of Engineer Projects

DISTRIBUTION:

Commander, Great Lakes and Ohio River Division (CELRD)

Commander, Mississippi Valley Division (CEMVD)

Commander, North Atlantic Division (CENAD)

Commander, Northwestern Division (CENWD)

Commander, Pacific Ocean Division (CEPOD)

Commander, South Atlantic Division (CESAD)

Commander, South Pacific Division (CESPD)

Commander, Southwestern Division (CESWD)



**DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY**  
**SOUTH PACIFIC DIVISION, CORPS OF ENGINEERS**  
333 Market Street, Room 923  
San Francisco, California 94105-2195

REPLY TO  
ATTENTION OF:

CESPD-MT-E (1110-2-1)

18 DEC 2001

MEMORANDUM FOR

Commander, Albuquerque District  
Commander, Los Angeles District  
Commander, Sacramento District  
Commander, San Francisco District

SUBJECT: SPD Regulation 1110-2-1, Land Development Proposals at Corps Reservoir Projects

1. References:

- a. Memorandum, CESPD-PD-R, 7 May 1992, subject: Policy of Corps Reservoir Lands.
- b. Policy Guidance Letter No. 32, 28 April 1993, subject: Use of Corps Reservoir Flowage Easement Lands.
- c. Memorandum, CESPD-ET-EW, 20 May 1999, subject: Hydrologic and Hydraulic Evaluation of Balancing Cut and Fill Volumes for Land Development Proposals at Corps Reservoir Projects.

2. Enclosed is the completed CESPD Regulation 1110-2-1, Land Development Proposals at Corps Reservoir Projects. This regulation accounts for previously issued USACE regulations, interim policy guidance, SPD memorandums, internal correspondence and the latest analysis of impacts by land developments proposals under consideration. It is a valuable tool. It establishes SPD policy and procedures, including checklists and diagrams your districts must use in evaluating land development proposals at Corps reservoirs within SPD.

3. Land development within Corps reservoir projects continue to present new challenges. They require a thorough analysis of negative impacts on flood storage space especially those that effect critical features of the Spillway Design Flood and the Probable Maximum Flood. There are an increasing number of developments being proposed within Corps project lands. There is a balance between the requirements to adhere to established policy guidance, while at the same time working with the developers.

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
SOUTH PACIFIC DIVISION, CORPS OF ENGINEERS  
333 Market Street, Room 923  
San Francisco, California 94105-2195

CESPD-MT

CESPD REGULATION  
NO. 1110-2-1

November 2001

Engineering and Design  
LAND DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS AT CORPS RESERVOIR PROJECTS

1. Purpose. This regulation establishes South Pacific Division (SPD) policy for evaluating land development proposals within reservoirs and flood basins of the Corps, and for documenting the results of the evaluation. Land development proposals are those by companies, organizations, private parties, governments, agencies, or any other entities to construct buildings, roads, or other facilities or in any other way to modify the land forms, vegetation, surface characteristics, or use of lands within a reservoir or basin operated by the Corps for flood control. The Corps has responsibility to assure that the project purposes are not compromised, that the public is not endangered, and that natural and cultural resources associated with project lands are not harmed. The points and procedures for evaluation of development proposals in this regulation are to assist in meeting these responsibilities and complying with applicable laws and directives.

2. Applicability. This regulation is applicable to all SPD Districts and other field operating activities within this command.

3. References.

a. EO 11988, Floodplain Management, 42 F.R. 26951, 24 May 1977.

b. ER 1165-2-26, Implementation of Executive Order 11988 on Floodplain Management,

30 March 1984.

c. ER 405-1-12, Real Estate Handbook, 20 November 1985.

d. ER 200-2-2, Procedures for Implementing NEPA, 4 March 1988.

e. ER 1110-2-240, Water Control Management, 24 May 1990.

f. EP 1165-2-314, Flood Proofing Regulations, 31 March 1992.

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This regulation supercedes: CESPD-DE Memorandum, Subject: Interim Guidance for Evaluating Development within Corps Reservoir Projects; Dated 7 May 92 and CESPD-ET-FW Memorandum, Subject: Hydrologic and Hydraulic Evaluation of Balancing Cut and Fill Volumes for Land Development Proposals at Corps Reservoir Projects; Dated 20 May 99.

5. Factors To Be Considered for Developments in SPD Reservoirs. A formula cannot be developed to calculate the acceptability of a development project but numerous factors should be considered in the evaluation of a land development proposal.

a. Real Estate Requirements. Proposed developments need to be evaluated to ensure they do not conflict with the terms of real estate interests held for the project or constrain future operational flexibility of the project. Provisions to be put into new real estate out grant instruments should include recognition of the fact that the water control plan is expected to change in the future and that flood releases are based on the most current water control plan. A decision to limit developments on project lands must be consistent with the underlying provisions of the applicable real estate interest held by the Government or the project sponsors. Before making a final determination on the proposed development, the Offices of Real Estate and Counsel should be consulted.

b. Reservoir Storage.

(1) Developments that occur within an SPD reservoir (i.e., on either lands held in fee or on lands in which USACE or local sponsors may have real estate interests) will not be allowed to reduce the reservoir's project storage space. This requirement includes the space for the Spillway Design Flood (SDF). The Probable Maximum Flood (PMF) design space is a critical feature in the operation of a Corp reservoir project. The primary consideration in approving excavations or landfill placements is the preservation of "project storage capacity" of the project. "Project storage capacity" is herein defined to include all hydrologic and hydraulic needs of the project, which encompasses the volume for the entire project, i.e., sedimentation, hydropower, recreation, agriculture, water supply, and spillway design flood.

(2) Most developments require cut and fill operations that change the original topography of the flood control basin. Even if there is a balance of cut and fill, there may be an adverse effect on flooding frequency within the basin due to the change in the area-capacity curve. The cut and fill operations must not cause any property to be flooded more frequently than before the development was in place. This can be done by ensuring that for every elevation on the modified area-capacity curve, an equal or larger reservoir volume would be created by the development, i.e., for any "fill" volume, an equal or greater volume of "cut" must be removed at an elevation below the fill. Impoundment areas such as lakes or spreading basins should be evaluated as "fill" if they are not designed to release their water from the reservoir (i.e., gravity flow, pumping or recharge) prior to a flood.

(3) Cumulative degradation of project storage through land development that does not mitigate for this lost volume has an insidious effect on the hydrologic design and operation of the project. Therefore, proposals for excavation and grading of the flowage easement that result in loss of project storage will not be approved unless substitute flood storage is provided.

(4) Normally, to account for losses in volumetric space caused by vertical development, the best engineer practices would require developers to balance cut and fill up to the elevation at Maximum Reservoir Level (MRL). Unfortunately, from the point of volumetric calculations and legal control, real estate rights are not generally acquired for land between the elevation of the guide acquisition line (or take line) and the elevation of the top of the dam. Clearly, for land developments beyond our acquisition line we have no legal authority to regulate incursions in the vertical space that would otherwise be available for floodwaters in a design flood event. This acquisition policy represents an attempt in balancing hydrologic design requirements and political realities of real estate acquisition.

(5) When reviewing proposed developments that at least partially occur on project-owned lands, best engineering practices should be taken into account in considering any adverse impacts to dam safety during a design flood. In such instances, when the proposed development would interfere with the purpose for which the project easement or fee interest was acquired, the Government has the authority to require volumetric mitigation for that portion of the development proposal over which the Corps has real estate rights to the top of the MRL. (See Appendix A, figure 1)

(6) The Government has no jurisdiction for vertical space above un-acquired land. However, as stewards of the project, the Corps can encourage the developer to mitigate for that volumetric area (storage space) that is removed from the project storage space above the project acquisition line by the proposed development. (See Appendix A, figure 2 and 3).

(7) In cases where there is a new development on lands that would be inundated by the PMF, but over which the Corps has no real estate interests, or when a new PMF has been developed, there exists a need to ascertain the integrity of the Corps project and any dam safety issues resulting from the routing of the PMF. In such cases, the following analysis should be performed, in coordination with the Dam Safety Assurance Program. The PMF inflow flood should be (mathematically) routed through the reservoir making the assumption that over such lands, the storage space is not available. This assumption should reflect actual and reasonably projected development throughout the life of the project. Such an analysis would relieve the District from a need to seek volume mitigation over lands over which we have no control, and also ensure that 100 percent of the PMF can be safely passed over the spillway. This new routing may result in a higher water surface elevation, and may indicate a deficient spillway. In such cases, the Dam Safety Assurance Program should be engaged resulting in a study to determine appropriate corrective action. Corrective action might take the form of either enlarging the spillway, raising the dam, use of a parapet wall on top of the dam to meet freeboard deficiencies, re-operation of spillway gates, acquiring rights over private land between the elevation of the dam's spillway and the elevation of the top of dam, or a combination of these alternatives. In some cases, it may prove more acceptable to purchase easement rights, as opposed to raising the dam (or some other combination of solutions).

c. Flood Damage to Property. In general, it is acceptable to have floodable types of development at lower elevations in the flood control pool. Buildings that contain utilities, records and/or equipment should either be flood proofed or should have contingency plans developed for evacuation of moveable items before the flood. A modified version of the Los Angeles' District Minimum Criteria for Reservoir Land Use Projects has been adopted for regional use and is presented as Appendix B. Use of this table will provide consistent criteria for developers upon which to base their conceptual plans.

d. Flood Damage to the Reservoir.

(1) Floatables. If the development has storage tanks, vehicles, or any other article that could float during a flood, each item must be adequately anchored to prevent it from becoming dislodged due to buoyancy and/or swift currents. A floating object could get drawn into the intake structure (act as a plug) and potentially cause loss of control of the project. They also could get swept over the spillway, creating the potential for serious damage to structures or property downstream.

(2) Release of Pollutants. The water quality of water stored or released from Corps reservoir projects is the responsibility of the Corps. If a development stores or handles pollutants, leakage or accidental discharge into the flood waters could lead to environmental problems, both within and downstream of the project. Operational constraints during this event could include a need to hold polluted floodwaters until they can be treated or recovered. This could create a dangerous situation in which scheduled releases cannot be made. This additional operation constraint would narrow the range of options for water control decisions.

(3) Debris Build-up and Cleanup within the Flood Control Basin. Some development proposals are large enough to affect the natural flow of sediment into the reservoir. This could cause larger quantities of sediment and/or debris to deposit in the reservoir where it had not been anticipated. If debris impinges on inflow into the reservoir, the problem could cause additional flooding. Also, the designs of the outlet works, spillway and embankment are based on the net area-capacity curve, which is developed based on the sediment distribution. Extreme changes in sediment distribution may affect the operation of the project as designed. Additionally, the build-up of debris or sediment in an area that used to be free flowing could lead to redirection of flows that produce detrimental erosive forces. If the redirected flows were to impinge upon the dam embankment, the safety of the dam could be compromised. Cleanup of the development could be very costly. Therefore, flow paths must be examined to avoid these problems.

e. Existing and Planned Project Use. Many projects have Master Plans that guide the use of resources and the orderly development of project lands. All development proposals should be reviewed for consistency with the Master Plan to assure that the proposed development will not conflict with existing or planned uses. If the review indicates that the proposed development is

either inconsistent with the Master Plan or may conflict with existing or planned uses, the Master Plan will be updated or supplemented prior to approval of the proposed development.

f. **Induced Constraints to System Flexibility.** Reservoir projects need operational flexibility in order to deal with forecast errors, operational inefficiencies, and delays in meeting operational objectives, emergencies, and unique situations. Flexibility is needed to allow the water control manager to adapt the water control plan to special circumstances that may arise in the river system. If a rising pool level in the reservoir were to approach a development where damages could result, the water control manager should not be placed under pressure to release flood waters that otherwise may have been held back to prevent further flooding of the downstream system. In most cases, one of the primary purposes of the project is to provide flood protection for these downstream areas. Real-time flexibility gives the water control manager the ability to make modifications to the water control plan, and, if necessary, to make best use of the reservoir and the overall reservoir system. Therefore; the proposed development must not adversely affect the system operations.

g. **Constraints to Future System Flexibility.** Water control managers must also deal with future changes in the watershed (physiography and development), new hydrologic data and technology, operational experience, changed downstream conditions (increased/decreased channel capacity), changing emphases (e.g. environmental concerns, water quality, water conservation, recreation, etc.). Many Corps reservoir projects are no longer able to provide the degree of protection for which they were originally designed, due to one or more of the above reasons. Re-regulation studies are undertaken to try to optimize the operational objective function, i.e., to determine how the project can best be operated to maximize the public benefit. Developments that may appear to be acceptable under present conditions may not be acceptable when considering future needs for operational flexibility. The future flexibility of the project and the entire river system to meet authorized purposes should not be compromised by inappropriate reservoir development.

h. **Public Safety Problem** Some development proposals result in an increase in the number of people or animals within the reservoir. The size of a proposed development should be evaluated. Facilities that can hold a large number of people might be denied for safety reasons. Examples of large facilities that might not be allowed in flood control basins are: hospitals, schools, libraries, museums, theaters, shopping centers, and amusement parks. A development may also attract a larger number of people than it was designed for. For example, an underground parking lot may attract children as a play area or may attract transients as a sleeping area. Because these developments were not originally intended to have people playing in, or occupying them, contingencies would likely not have been set up to evacuate the people in the event of a flood. Therefore, public safety would be at risk. Part of the liability could be attributed to the Corps, adding risk and potential delays to water management decisions. Flooding of electrical circuits and wiring may create special hazards to evacuation procedures. Some developments create hidden dangers and must be carefully evaluated for potential public safety problems.

i. Environmental Stewardship. Environmental ramifications of any proposed development must be fully explored and all requirements for assessing, coordinating, and reporting possible impacts must be followed. Some of the basic responsibilities for environmental stewardship at Corps-operated reservoirs are described in reference 3i, though there are numerous other pertinent directives dealing with requirements relating to NEPA, the Endangered Species Act, the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act, the Clean Water Act, the Clean Air Act, the National Historic Preservation Act, etc. Any land development proposal should be coordinated as soon as possible with the Operations and Environmental elements so that the necessary steps to gather information and to deal with environmental requirements and procedures can be planned out, as some of these might be expensive and time consuming.

6. Contingency Plan. A Contingency Plan should be developed for any development within the flood control basin that is subject to hazardous conditions and damages from a flood event. A thorough technical analysis by the developers will force them to consider what emergencies could arise within a flood control basin and determine what contingency measures are required to deal with them. The agreement, which allows development, should state that it is the sole responsibility of the developer to evacuate the area. At projects where monitoring exists, the District would attempt to make notifications to affected interests. The agreement should further state that: "Prior to commencement of construction, the developer will produce and finalize an evacuation contingency plan." This will ensure that a procedure has been worked out beforehand. The plan shall not be reviewed or require approval from the Corps; however, its contents should include standard operating procedures for: regular patrols of the area (if warranted); warning systems, their triggering mechanisms, their thresholds and minimum warning times based on the hydrology of the watershed; mobilization of equipment and manpower for evacuation of humans, animals and/or records, utilities and equipment; emergency notifications (phone number and personnel lists); access roads and escape routes; and clean-up and repair.

7. Reporting. The evaluation of any land development within a flood control basin must be well documented. The report must explain what factors were evaluated and what the results of the evaluations were. The level of detail appropriate in the documentation will vary depending on the specifics of the proposal, but must be sufficient to explain and support the recommendation and decision. The completed evaluation package, including the proposal and environmental documentation, is to be submitted to SPD for review to insure national and regional consistency in policy application, prior to approval action by the District Commander. A checklist of minimum requirements for a report is outlined in Appendix C, Evaluation Criteria Checklist for Land Development Proposals.



ROBERT L. DAVIS  
COL (P), EN  
Commanding

CESPD R 1110-2-1  
November 2001

4 Appendices

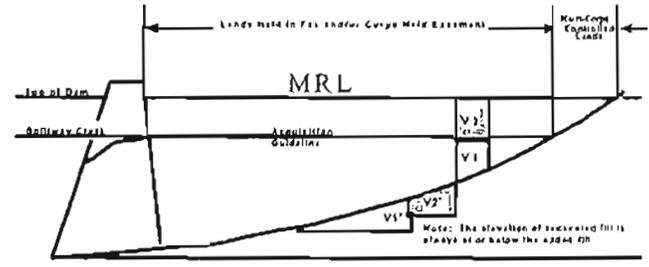
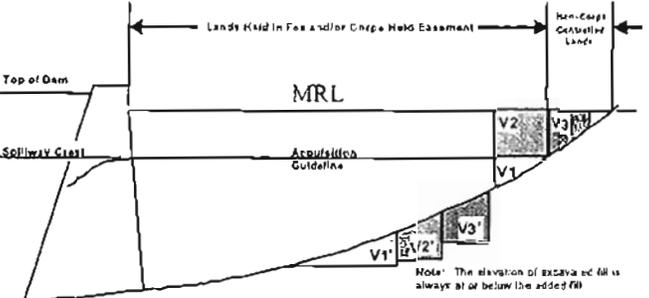
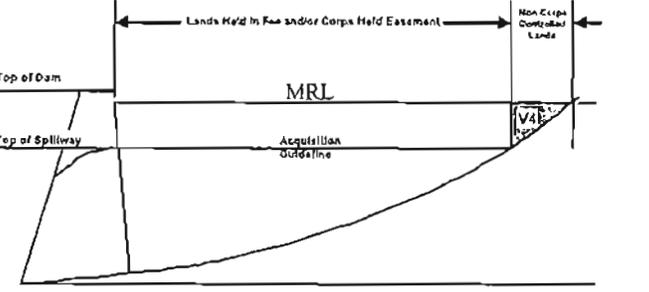
App A – Typical Cut and Fill Volumes for Land Development Proposals (Figures 1 thru 3)

App B -- Minimum Criteria for Reservoir Land Use Projects

App C – Evaluation Criteria Checklist for Land Development Proposals

App D – Glossary

# Appendix A – Typical Cut and Fill Volumes for Land Development Proposals

<p><b>Figure 1</b></p> <p>Projects entirely on Corps controlled lands</p>	 <p>V1 &amp; V2: Volume of fill added to reservoir due to new development.  V1' &amp; V2': Volume of fill required to be removed from reservoir to mitigate for V1 &amp; V2</p> <p>MRL: Maximum Reservoir Level</p>
<p><b>Figure 2</b></p> <p>Projects that straddle Corps and non-Corps controlled lands</p>	 <p>V1 &amp; V2: Volume of fill added to reservoir over Corps controlled lands due to new development.  V3: Volume of fill that the new development would add to reservoir over non-Corps controlled lands.  V1' &amp; V2': Volume of fill removed from reservoir to mitigate for V1 &amp; V2.  V3': Volume of fill that developer should be encouraged to remove from reservoir lands.</p> <p>MRL: Maximum Reservoir Level</p>
<p><b>Figure 3</b></p> <p>Volumes to be excluded from consideration in PMF computations</p>	 <p>V4: This volume (or a percentage thereof) will be assumed to be unavailable to ratings for dam safety design (PMF) calculations/determinations.</p> <p>MRL: Maximum Reservoir Level</p>



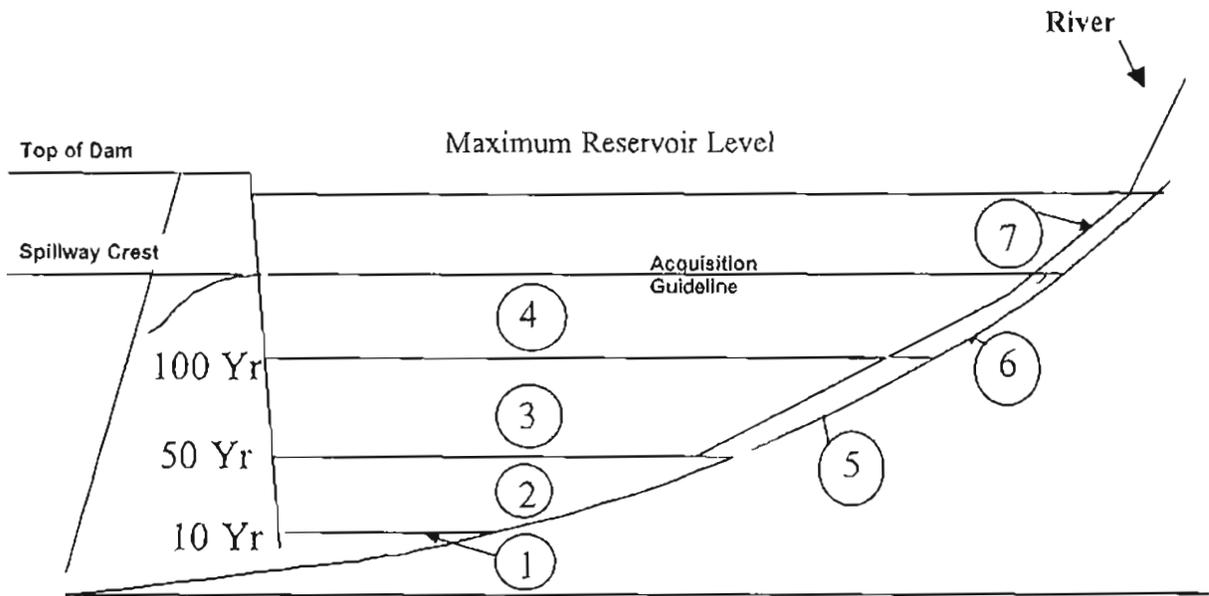
## Appendix B -Minimum Criteria for Reservoir Land Use Projects

Location	Figure Level	(*)Elevation Frequency Range	Development Constraints	Acceptable Land Uses
Reservoir	1	Up to 10-yr flood	Subject to prolonged inundation, sedimentation, and wave erosion	Structures are not recommended. Nature trails and open play fields are acceptable.
	2	10-yr flood to the 50-yr flood	Subject to frequent flooding, sedimentation, and wave erosion	Open or floodable structures and field facilities that can sustain inundation with acceptable maintenance costs. Concession stands with portable contents, bridle trails, shade and picnic armadas, backstops, goalposts, etc. are considered appropriate.
	3	50-yr flood to the 100-yr flood	Subject to periodic flooding, sedimentation, and wave erosion	Floodable structures and multipurpose paved surfaces that can sustain inundation with acceptable maintenance costs. Floodable restrooms and picnic area are considered appropriate.
	4	100-yr flood to the Reservoir Design Flood	Subject to infrequent flooding, sedimentation, and wave erosion	Flood-proofed, closed structures are permitted. Structures conducive to human habitation are prohibited.
River floodplains	5	Below the reservoir 100 yr flood elevation and up to the 100-yr river flood	Subject to frequent flooding, sedimentation, and wave erosion	Open-type or floodable structures and field facilities that can withstand flood-flow velocities for 100-yr conditions and will not impede the passage of flood flows.
	6	Above the reservoir 100 yr flood elevation and up to the 100-yr river flood	Subject to frequent flooding, sedimentation, and wave erosion	Structures are not recommended. This area must be reserved in an open manner to provide for conveyance of the 100-yr flood.
	7	Above the reservoir 100 yr elevation and above the 100-yr river flood	Subject to variable flooding, sedimentation, and wave erosion	Flood-proofed, closed structures are permitted along the floodway fringe. All development must meet Federal regulatory floodway regulations and be approved by the District Engineer.

\* Frequency criteria shall be for a reservoir and watershed conditions of at least 50 yrs in the future. Most current frequency curve may be used as guidance in estimating future conditions. Note: Land uses at lower elevations may be developed at higher elevations

Before making a final determination on the proposed development, the Offices of Real Estate and Counsel should be consulted.

## Appendix B - Minimum Criteria for Reservoir Land Use Projects



Note: Refer to Table B of Minimum Criteria for Reservoir Land Use Projects for description

## Appendix C –Evaluation Criteria Checklist for Land Development Proposals

**Each Question that is answered contrary to the guidance should have an explanation.**

1. Corps Reservoir or Basin: \_\_\_\_\_

2a. Name of Development Proposal: \_\_\_\_\_ 2b. Project No.: \_\_\_\_\_

2c. Project Manager: \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone No. \_\_\_\_\_

2d. District Reviewers:

Environmental: \_\_\_\_\_ Legal: \_\_\_\_\_

Real Estate: \_\_\_\_\_ Operations: \_\_\_\_\_

Engineering: \_\_\_\_\_ Reservoir Regulation: \_\_\_\_\_

3. General Project Description:

4. Summary comment/recommendation for the proposed development:

5. Materials Reviewed:  Report(s)  Plan(s)  Other(s)

6. Titles and Date of Reviewed Materials:

7. Will the proposed development be located within the reservoir (defined as all land below the Maximum Reservoir Level?)  Yes  No  Cannot be Determined

8. Do any of the potentially affected easements conflict with the approved water control plan?  Yes (explain)  No  Cannot be Determined

9a. Will there be any "cut and fill" operations in preparation for the proposed development?  Yes  No  Cannot be Determined

9b. If "Yes", would they allow drainage by gravity?  Yes  No  Cannot be Determined

10. Is there any loss of storage at any elevation below the Maximum Reservoir Level?  Yes (Explain)  No  Cannot be Determined

**Appendix C –Evaluation Criteria Checklist for Land Development Proposals**

11. Do any buildings, ponds, etc. remove or have the potential to remove (e.g., by sandbagging to save expensive property) flood control volume from the Corps project?

Yes       No       Cannot be Determined

12. If located within the reservoir, what is the elevation frequency range (currently) associated with the location?

below 10 Yr     10-50 Yr     50-100 Yr     greater than 100 Yr

13. Do the facilities/structures of the proposed development comply with the attached Appendix B “Minimum Criteria for Reservoir Land Use Projects?”

Yes       No (If No, explain)

14.a. Do you have a copy of the title, leasehold, or easement?

Yes       No

14b. Will the proposed development conflict with the Corps flowage easements or other Real Estate interests?  
( explain why)

Yes(explain)       No       Cannot be Determined

15. Is there a proposal for sale or exchange of land, or change in easement between the Government and the Developer?

Yes       No

16. Is a Categorical Exclusion (CATX) Required per ER 200-2-2?

Yes       No

17. Has the review been coordinated with Fish and Wildlife Service or the State Fish and Game Department?

Yes       No

18. Are there any existing or potential endangered species identified? (If Yes, provide list)

Yes       No

19. If Yes, what steps have or are being taken to mitigate for issues related to endangered species (present or future)?

## Appendix C – Evaluation Criteria Checklist for Land Development Proposals

20. What other environmental compliance requirements, if any, are to be met and what actions have been taken to satisfy the requirements? (For example, cultural resources, water quality, air quality, permit requirements, FAA coordination, non-source pollutant discharges, etc.)

21. Can any potential hidden constraints or dangers be identified (e.g., submergence of electrical wiring, underground parking, etc.)?  Yes  No  Cannot be Determined

22. Will there be impacts to reservoir operations or potential impacts regarding operation constraints as a result of the proposed development (e.g., loss of reservoir storage capacity, increase of inflow volume into the reservoir, etc.)?

Yes  No

23a. Are there any possibilities of damage to the Corps project as a result of the proposed development due to floatable objects/structures?

Yes  No

23b. If "Yes", is there a plan in place to mediate the problems with floatables?

Yes  No

24a. Will there be any pollutants stored within the proposed development?

Yes  No

24b. If "Yes", what steps are being taken to minimize or eliminate contamination by pollutants?

25a. Will there be an increase in the quantity of debris/sediment inflow to the flood control reservoir as a result of the proposed development?

Yes  No  Cannot be Determined

25b. If Yes, how much (what rate?)

26. Will the proposed development include facilities/structures that can hold large number of people (e.g., hospitals, schools, libraries, museums, theaters, shopping centers, amusement parks)?  Yes  No  Cannot be Determined

27. What are the proposed development's impacts to the future operational flexibility of the dam?

28. Does the proposed development have any potential impact on ongoing studies (in-basin, downstream, or re-operation studies)?  Yes  No  Cannot be Determined

29. Will any part of the proposed development conflict with Corps' project Master Plans for the area of proposed development?  Yes  No  Cannot be Determined

**Appendix C –Evaluation Criteria Checklist for Land Development Proposals**

30. Recommendations:

31. Other Comments?

Submitted By: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix D - Glossary

Acquisition Guideline - Often referred to as the Take Line or Guide Acquisition Contour, is the contour line established with a reasonable freeboard allowance above the top pool elevation for storing water for flood control, navigation, power, and irrigation.

Corps Controlled – Used to refer to lands held in fee and/or Corps held easements

Fill – Any earth, water, or man-made structure that, when placed on the reservoir land, reduces the storage capacity of the reservoir.

Floodplain - The lowland and relatively flat areas adjoining inland and coastal waters, and including, at a minimum, that area subject to flooding in any given year.

Maximum Reservoir Level (MRL) – The Maximum Reservoir Level is the elevation resulting from the routing of the Spillway Design Flood.<sup>1</sup>

Probable Maximum Flood (PMF) - Is the flood that may be expected from the most severe combination of critical meteorological and hydrologic conditions that are reasonably possible in the region. The PMF is calculated from the Probable Maximum Precipitation (PMP). The PMP values encompass the maximized intensity-duration values obtained from storms of a single type. Storm type and variations of precipitation are considered with respect to location, area coverage of a watershed, and storm duration. The probable maximum storm amounts are determined in much the same way as are standard project flood amounts, except the precipitation amounts are first increased to correspond to maximum meteorological factors such as wind speed and maximum moisture content of the atmosphere.<sup>1</sup>

Project Storage Capacity - As defined in this reference, project storage refers to the hydrologic and hydraulic needs of the project, which encompasses the volume of the entire project, i.e. sedimentation, hydropower, recreation, agricultural, water supply, reservoir design, and spillway design.

Reservoir Design Flood (RDF) - The Reservoir Design Flood is that flood, along with associated antecedent conditions, that was originally used to determine the design benefits and level of flood protection provided by the project. In most cases this is the event that determined the original spillway crest, or the boundary between the flood control pool and storage provided primarily for dam safety issues.

Spillway Design Flood (SDF) – Spillway Design Flood is the flood hydrograph used in the design of a dam and its appurtenant works particularly for sizing the spillway and outlet works, and for determining maximum temporary storage and height of dam requirements.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Reference EM 1110-2-1420, Hydrologic Engineering Requirements For Reservoirs, dated 31 October 1997.

U.S. Department of Homeland Security  
FEMA Region IX  
1111 Broadway, Suite 1200  
Oakland, CA. 94607-4052



FEMA

RECEIVED

APR 25 2008

April 21, 2008

Mr. Ronald Kosinski *RK*  
Deputy District Director  
California Department of Transportation, Division of Environmental  
Planning (405/101 Connector)  
100 Main Street, MS 16A  
Los Angeles, California 90012

Dear Mr. Kosinski:

This is in response to your request for comments on the Draft Environmental Assessment/Initial Study for the San Diego Freeway (Interstate 405/101).

Please review the current effective Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs) for the County of San Diego (Community Number 060284), Map revised September 29, 2006. Please note that the County of San Diego, California is a participant in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). The minimum, basic NFIP floodplain management building requirements are described in Vol. 44 Code of Federal Regulations (44 CFR), Sections 59 through 65.

A summary of these NFIP floodplain management building requirements are as follows:

- All buildings constructed within a riverine floodplain, (i.e., Flood Zones A, AO, AII, AE, and A1 through A30 as delineated on the FIRM), must be elevated so that the lowest floor is at or above the Base Flood Elevation level in accordance with the effective Flood Insurance Rate Map.
- If the area of construction is located within a Regulatory Floodway as delineated on the FIRM, any *development* must not increase base flood elevation levels. **The term *development* means any man-made change to improved or unimproved real estate, including but not limited to buildings, other structures, mining, dredging, filling, grading, paving, excavation or drilling operations, and storage of equipment or materials.** A hydrologic and hydraulic analysis must be performed *prior* to the start of development, and must demonstrate that the development would not cause any rise in base flood levels. No rise is permitted within regulatory floodways.

Ronald Kosinski, Deputy District Director

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April 21, 2008

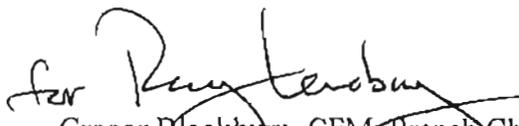
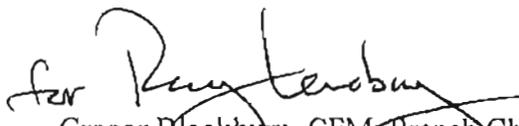
- All buildings constructed within a coastal high hazard area, (any of the "V" Flood Zones as delineated on the FIRM), must be elevated on pilings and columns, so that the lowest horizontal structural member, (excluding the pilings and columns), is elevated to or above the base flood elevation level. In addition, the posts and pilings foundation and the structure attached thereto, is anchored to resist flotation, collapse and lateral movement due to the effects of wind and water loads acting simultaneously on all building components.
- Upon completion of any development that changes existing Special Flood Hazard Areas, the NFIP directs all participating communities to submit the appropriate hydrologic and hydraulic data to FEMA for a FIRM revision. In accordance with 44 CFR, Section 65.3, as soon as practicable, but not later than six months after such data becomes available, a community shall notify FEMA of the changes by submitting technical data for a flood map revision. To obtain copies of FEMA's Flood Map Revision Application Packages, please refer to the FEMA website at <http://www.fema.gov/business/nfip/forms.shtm>.

**Please Note:**

Many NFIP participating communities have adopted floodplain management building requirements which are more restrictive than the minimum federal standards described in 44 CFR. Please contact the local community's floodplain manager for more information on local floodplain management building requirements. The San Diego County floodplain manager can be reached by calling Cid Tesoro, Flood Control District Manager, at (858) 694-3672.

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to call Marshall Marik of the Mitigation staff at (510) 627-7057.

Sincerely,

  
for   
Gregor Blackburn, CFM, Branch Chief  
Floodplain Management and Insurance Branch

cc:

Cid Tesoro, Flood Control District Manager, San Diego County

Garret Tam Sing/Salomon Miranda, State of California, Department of Water Resources  
Southern District

Marshall Marik, Floodplanner, CFM, DHS/FEMA Region IX

Alessandro Amaglio, Environmental Officer, DHS/FEMA Region IX



U.S Department  
of Transportation  
**Federal Aviation  
Administration**

Western-Pacific Region  
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May 27, 2008

Mr. Ronald Kosinski, Deputy District Director  
California Department of Transportation  
Division of Environmental Planning (405/101 Connector)  
100 South Main Street MS 16A  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

**Southbound Interstate-405 (San Diego Freeway) To the U.S. Highway-101  
(Ventura Freeway) Connector Improvement Project  
Draft Environmental Assessment/Initial Study**

Mr. Kosinski:

I am in receipt of your Draft Environmental Assessment/Initial Study for the Southbound Interstate-405 (San Diego Freeway) To the U.S. Highway-101 (Ventura Freeway) Connector Improvement Project that proposes various alternatives to improve the connector from the southbound San Diego Freeway (Interstate-405) to the westbound Ventura Freeway (U.S. Highway-101).

It is necessary under Part 77 of the Federal Aviation Regulations to notify the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) of any proposal which would exceed certain elevations with respect to the ground and neighboring airports. Van Nuys Airport is located approximately 2.5 miles northwest of the 405/101 interchange.

CFR Title 14 Part 77.13 states that any person/organization who intends to sponsor any of the following construction or alterations must notify the Administrator of the FAA:

- any construction or alteration exceeding 200 ft above ground level

Any construction or alteration:

- within 20,000 ft of a public use or military airport which exceeds a 100:1 surface from any point on the runway of each airport with at least one runway more than 3,200 ft
- within 10,000 ft of a public use or military airport which exceeds a 50:1 surface from any point on the runway of each airport with its longest runway no more than 3,200 ft
- within 5,000 ft of a public use heliport which exceeds a 25:1 surface
- any highway, railroad or other traverse way whose prescribed adjusted height would exceed that above noted standards when requested by the FAA

- any construction or alteration located on a public use airport or heliport regardless of height or location.

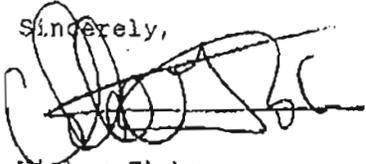
To fulfill this requirement, it is necessary to complete and return a copy of the Form 7460-1, Notice of Proposed Construction or Alteration. This form is found on the web at: <http://forms.faa.gov/forms/7460-1.pdf>. Once completed please forward the 7460-1, and any related plans for obstruction evaluation to:

Federal Aviation Administration  
Southwest Regional Office  
Air Traffic Airspace Branch, ASW-520  
2601 Meacham Blvd.  
Fort Worth, TX 76137-4298

Additionally, you may coordinate with the FAA's Western-Pacific Region System Obstruction Specialist Karen McDonald to address any potential air space obstruction issues. Ms. McDonald may be contacted at 310-725-6557 or [karen.mcdonald@faa.gov](mailto:karen.mcdonald@faa.gov).

If you have any questions regarding this matter, please feel free to give me a call at (310) 725-3637.

Sincerely,



Victor Globa  
Environmental Protection Specialist



**Federal Aviation  
Administration**

**To:** Mr. Ronald Kosinski, Deputy District Manager

**Company:** CALTRANS, District 7

**Phone:** 213-897-0703

**Fax:** 213-897-0685

**From:** Victor Globa

**Title:** Environmental Protection Specialist

**Date:** May 27, 2008

*Pages w/cover: 3*

Western-Pacific Region Airports Division  
Los Angeles Airports District Office  
P.O. Box 92007  
Los Angeles, CA 90009-2007  
Phone: 310-725-3608  
Fax: 310-725-6849

Facsimile

Original comment letter has been sent via U.S. Mail.

**APPENDIX X | CALTRANS RESPONSE TO FORMAL COMMENT  
LETTERS REGARDING THE EA/IS**

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## CALTRANS RESPONSE TO USACE FORMAL COMMENT LETTER REGARDING THE DRAFT EA/IS

COMMENTS OF THE U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS, LOS ANGELES DISTRICT, ON THE DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT/INITIAL STUDY AND SECTION 4(f) EVALUATION FOR THE SOUTHBOUND INTERSTATE-405 (SAN DIEGO FREEWAY) TO THE U.S. HIGHWAY-101 (VENTURA FREEWAY) CONNECTOR IMPROVEMENT PROJECT, DATED APRIL 2008

The United States Army Corps of Engineers ("Corps") submits the following comments on the draft environmental assessment/initial study and section 4(f) evaluation for the Interstate-405 to Highway-101 Connector Improvement Project ("Project"), dated April 2008 ("EA").

Although all of the proposed "build" alternatives described in the EA would substantially impact Federal property, the EA does not address critical elements of the Corps' flood control, land management, and regulatory responsibilities. The draft EA appears to assume that the Corps' only criterion for evaluating whether to grant relevant agency approvals is the extent of the Project's effects on the operation of Sepulveda Dam and the Flood Control Basin. While the Corps does manage the Sepulveda Dam property for flood control purposes, the Corps has additional responsibilities as the manager and steward of Federal lands.

The Project would require three separate approvals from the Corps: (1) approval of proposed alterations to the Dam, (2) a grant of an easement to use Federal land managed by the Corps, and (3) a permit for the Project's impacts upon waters of the United States. Each of these approvals would require the Corps to evaluate the proposed Project under one or more Federal statutes and regulations, and each approval would be a major Federal action for which we, as a Federal agency, would have independent legal responsibility to comply with the National Environmental Policy Act ("NEPA"). These comments focus primarily upon the areas of the EA most relevant to whether these approvals could be granted.

The Corps' responsibilities to maintain the safety of its flood control features are of paramount importance. Corps review of your proposals is governed by 33 USC 408, a Federal law which requires that, before allowing any alteration, occupation, or use of a flood control work, the Corps must determine that such use will not be injurious to the public interest and will not impair the usefulness of such work. The "public interest" is a broad standard, which encompasses the full range of requirements set forth in Federal environmental laws, as well as other Federal statutes and regulations. This determination, which may only be made by the Chief of Engineers, requires a searching evaluation.

Property acquired by the Corps for the safe and effective operation of a flood control project must be managed in accordance with Federal regulation and policy. While prohibiting any use of alteration of a structure that would compromise its integrity or effectiveness for flood control is an absolute requirement, the Corps must also consider numerous other factors in determining whether to grant an easement for use of Federal land managed by the Corps, including environmental considerations.

### CALTRANS RESPONSE #1:

Comments noted.

CALTRANS believes that the recently provided guidance, and some of the recently provided comments, may have been best provided by the USACE to CALTRANS during any of the various coordination sessions between the two agencies (as described in the Consultation and Coordination Section of the EA/IS), including but not limited to:

- The preliminary consultation that ended with the USACE granting conceptual approval to the project in a letter dated December 15, 2000 (please view the letter in the Appendices section of this document).
- The August 2003 Value Analysis phase of the project
- The May/June 2006 Scoping Phase of the project
- The June 2007 Meeting between CALTRANS and the USACE

Also, CALTRANS through its own research, has had to itself obtain more detailed and current information about the resources within the USACE managed Sepulveda Basin, such as:

- The Status of the Least Bell's Vireo and Southwestern Willow Flycatcher at Los Angeles County Drainage Area Detention Basins and Flood Control Channels (dated July 2007 and prepared for the USACE)
- A June 2001 Sepulveda Basin Master Plan Land Use Map, which was part of the Sepulveda Wetlands Park Draft Concept Report as prepared by the City of Los Angeles Department of Public Works

CALTRANS sought very early involvement and coordination with the USACE so as to tailor the EA/IS and Section 4(f) Evaluation to the USACE's needs to the maximum extent. CALTRANS remains committed to working with the USACE in order to achieve a mutually acceptable project.

As we have noted in our previous correspondence, it had been the hope of the Corps that the environmental document prepared by your agency would support our environmental requirements as well as those of Caltrans. We think it likely, however, that the Corps could not approve any of the currently proposed alternatives without the completion of an Environmental Impact Statement ("EIS").

The impacts of the proposed "build" alternatives described in the EA appear to be significant in terms of both context and intensity. The proposed alternatives all appear to require excavation and/or modification of the Dam, with potential impacts to structural and hydraulic integrity. In addition, all of the proposed "build" alternatives would require substantial adverse impacts to the historic property of the Sepulveda Dam, and two of the alternatives would require substantial impacts to the locally and regionally significant resource of the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve. More information should be provided in the EA to identify alternatives not discussed in the EA and explain why they were discarded.

The following comments first raise general concerns of the Corps applicable to any project that proposes to make use of Sepulveda Dam or Sepulveda Basin. Then they address: (1) the Project's potential impacts upon the dam's operation and the dam as an historic property; (2) its potential impacts upon the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve; and (3) the formulation and consideration of alternatives. We conclude with comments pointing out miscellaneous errors or omissions that do not fit within the categories above.

#### CALTRANS RESPONSE #2:

CALTRANS has selected Alternative 1. The proposed project would therefore not impact the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve, nor pose an extensive encroachment onto the Sepulveda Flood Control Basin Reservoir, as did rejected Alternatives 2 and 3. A Section 106 Finding of Effect, however, did determine that Alternative 1 would have an adverse effect on the historic Sepulveda Dam. Determination of the significance of the impact, according to the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations (40 CFR §§ 1500-1508), is a function of both context and intensity.

In regards to context, the Sepulveda Dam provides a locally significant flood control function. It is also associated with events that have made a locally and regionally significant contribution to Los Angeles history, and embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, and method of construction. However, any notion that the Sepulveda Dam is iconic and/or Nationally Significant, is in error as it implies that the dam is on the same level as: the Hollywood Sign, the Statue of Liberty, the Washington Monument, Mount Rushmore, or the Golden Gate Bridge. As locally and regionally significant as the Sepulveda Dam is, it is neither iconic, nor Nationally significant. The State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), pursuant to Section 106 of the Historic Preservation Act, concurred with this assessment.

CALTRANS has also considered the intensity of the effects to the uniqueness of the Sepulveda Dam and its viewshed. As discussed in this EA/IS, Caltrans and FHWA **commit** to mandating that a qualitative/aesthetic approach be taken to mitigate any visual quality loss in the project area to a level below significance. CALTRANS invites the USACE to join in and ensure the success of this endeavor, rather than simply assuming and allowing a significant impact to occur because an EIR/EIS and Statement of Overriding Considerations has been prepared. Minimizing these impacts to a level below significance is possible, and therefore should be the primary goal and full focus of CALTRANS, FHWA, and USACE resources. CALTRANS, in full coordination with the USACE and FHWA, **commits** to implementing, at the very least, the following measures:

- New retaining walls will be visually compatible with the surrounding community and architectural detail and style of the Sepulveda Dam. Architectural detailing will be specified appropriately; pilasters, wall caps, interesting block patterns, color, and materials to match existing color palette of surrounding area.
- Visual interest will be created to reduce the apparent height of walls
- Slope pavement at undercrossings will be enhanced with texture to deter graffiti
- The bents and piers of the new elevated connector structures that cross through the spillway would be similar in shape to the Streamline Modern gates of the dam
- The new elevated connector structures that cross through the spillway would have as low a profile as current safety/design guidelines will allow in order to reduce the visual impacts on views of the dam
- All new concrete would match, in color and texture, that of the dam outlet structure.

Furthermore, CALTRANS **commits** not to, nor attempt to, move past the PS&E phase of the project (i.e. move toward construction) without first securing USACE approval of the new connectors' architectural design.

In regards to the intensity of the project's impacts to the structural and hydraulic function of the Sepulveda Dam, CALTRANS has determined that the project's impacts would not result in a significant adverse impact to the dam, nor pose a significant risk to public safety. CALTRANS' top strategic goal is safety, and this project is no different. Upon the securing of project funding, the engineering design of Alternative 1 will commence as part of the next phase of the project, which is termed the "Project Specifications and Estimates (PS&E)".

During PS&E, CALTRANS will formally provide to the USACE the required information pursuant to 33 USC 408 ("Section 408"). Section 408 requires the submittal of both the completed NEPA document and the completed detailed engineering of the selected alternative, which in this case is Alternative 1. These items are not available during "environmental phase" (current phase), but rather, become available during the PS&E phase.

Then, CALTRANS and the Federal Highway Administration would design the new connector from the southbound I-405 to the westbound US-101, in close coordination with the USACE, ensuring the strictest

conformity to all three agencies' engineering design and safety standards, as well as, minimizing impacts to the maximum extent. Furthermore, CALTRANS **commits** not to, nor attempt to, move past the PS&E phase of the project (i.e. move toward construction) without first securing USACE approval of the project's engineering design.

In regards to the USACE's concern for the structural integrity of the Sepulveda Dam:

The Sepulveda Dam has a crest elevation of 723.7 ft with a freeboard of 7.3 ft. For portion of the dam west of the access road, the elevation of the soil behind the dam is close to the crest elevation so the dam has a small hydraulic head and the risk of slope failure is very small. The 16 inch diameter Cast in Drilled Hole (CIDH) piles that are constructed through the dam will cross the potential failure plane and thus help to stabilize the earthen dam. The concrete lining that is disturbed temporarily in order to drill the holes for the piles will be repaired and the overall condition of the concrete lining will be improved so that the risk of water seeping through the dam will be reduced. The retaining wall will basically replace a portion of the soil slope with a vertical face. This does not affect the global stability of the earthen dam and the stability of the retaining wall is designed to the highest standard including traffic loads on the service road. Again, any portion of the concrete lining that is temporarily disrupted during construction will be repaired and the overall condition of the concrete lining will be improved.

In regards to the USACE's concern for the storage capacity of the reservoir:

The storage capacity of the reservoir at the spillway crest is 17,425 Acre-feet. The CIDH piles will reduce the storage capacity of the reservoir by approximately 0.048 Acre-feet or less than 3/10,000<sup>th</sup> of the reservoir capacity. The retaining is mostly within the freeboard, but a level spot in front of the retaining wall will increase the storage volume of the reservoir.

In regards to the USACE's concern for the water flow down the spillway:

The columns for the new connector (designated Piers 4, 5, and 6) are at the lowest elevation in the spillway about 500 ft from the spillway gates at a spillway elevation of approx. 680 ft., which is 43.5 ft below the crest elevation. The placement of these piers should not impact the spillway gate operations. We assume energy dissipation is desirable at the tail end of spillways to slow the water down. To design hydraulically efficient columns is not difficult but is it consistent with the energy dissipation goals? Perhaps it would appear to make more sense to have the columns be part of an energy dissipation system to slow the water down before it continues down the river. Regardless, upon commencement of the PS&E phase of the project, CALTRANS and the Federal Highway Administration would design the project in close coordination with the USACE, ensuring the strictest conformity to all three agencies' engineering design and safety standards, and to minimize impacts to the most practicable extent, to a level below significance. And, since CALTRANS **commits** not to, nor attempt to, move past the PS&E phase of the project (i.e. move toward construction) without first securing USACE approval of the project's engineering and architectural design, **the USACE will ensure that significant impacts to the Sepulveda Dam do not come to fruition.**

CALTRANS has also considered the intensity of the public controversy associated with the proposed project's impacts to the Sepulveda Dam. It is almost non-existent. The vast majority of the negative formal comments received during the EA/IS public comment period are associated with the adverse impacts that Alternatives 2 and 3 would have had upon the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve. With the rejection and elimination of Alternatives 2 and 3, CALTRANS has eliminated any public controversy associated with this project, as well as, any potential impacts to State or Federal listed species.

Lastly, any continued assertions that CALTRANS' comprehensive and extensive Alternatives Analysis is not adequate, would be in error. CALTRANS has selected Alternative 1, which is not only the Least Environmentally Damaging Practicable Alternative (LEDPA), but the only practicable alternative pursuant to E.O. 11988 – Floodplain Management. Alternative 1 is the least environmentally disruptive build alternative **possible**, given the numerous environmental, community, right-of-way, and engineering constraints. Any insinuations that there exists another practicable alternative, or another alternative that is less environmentally damaging, less disruptive to the community, or more reasonable and prudent than Alternative 1, would be in error. CALTRANS stands by the project's Alternatives Analysis as discussed in the EA/IS. Also, please refer to CALTRANS RESPONSE #21.

#### I. General Comments

1) Section 1.5 of the EA states that the Corps is required to give "permission" in order for any portion of the Project to take place on land managed by the Corps. More accurately, the Corps must grant an easement to Caltrans and/or the Federal Highway Administration before construction could take place on Corps-managed lands. Before the Corps may grant such an easement, the Corps is required to comply with the Federal statutes and regulations governing its Civil Works projects and real estate activities.

2) The Corps is a project-funded organization and does not receive funds from Congress that would enable us to perform the extensive reviews required to approve a project of this nature. Pursuant to 10 USC 2695, the Corps is authorized to charge administrative fees to fund the review of a request for an easement or other interest in land that is owned by the United States and managed by the Corps. Such administrative fees would include the costs of conducting environmental reviews of the proposed project. If Caltrans intends to request an easement from the Corps for its proposed project, as the draft EA indicates, it should enter into negotiations with the Corps to develop a Memorandum of Agreement ("MOA") to cover these costs. To avoid delays, this should occur as soon as possible. Neither execution of an MOA, nor the receipt of funds pursuant to it, obligates the Corps in any way to grant an easement or any other interest in land sought by a project proponent.

3) Section 1.3.1 of the EA reads, in part, "After the public circulation period, all comments will be considered, and the Department will select a preferred alternative and make the final determination of the project's effect on the environment. In accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act, if no unmitigable significant adverse impacts are identified, the Department will prepare a Negative Declaration (ND) or Mitigated ND. Similarly, if the Department determines the action does not significantly impact the environment, the Department, as assigned by the Federal Highway Administration, will issue a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)." The EA does not describe the process you intend to undertake should unmitigable significant adverse impacts be found during this process. The EA should describe the process that will be undertaken should unmitigable significant impacts be identified.

4) The EA does not include adequate information for the Corps to determine the size of the easement Caltrans would request under each alternative. The areas of impact are not consistent throughout the document, and it is unclear whether Caltrans would seek to incorporate all impacted areas into its transportation facility. The EA should make clear the total size of easement that Caltrans would request for each alternative.

5) The EA should include a description of the authorizations governing the operation of the Sepulveda Basin. The Sepulveda Dam flood control project was authorized as part of the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1936. The Corps of Engineers maintains Sepulveda Dam and appurtenant flood control facilities. Under the authority of the Flood Control

#### CALTRANS RESPONSE #3:

Comments noted. Per the USACE's request, Caltrans has updated Section 1.5 of the EA/IS. CALTRANS intends to request an easement from the USACE, and therefore intends to enter into negotiations with the USACE to develop a Memorandum of Agreement ("MOA") to cover the USACE's administrative fees. This shall be done in the PS&E phase of the proposed project.

Per the USACE's request, CALTRANS has updated and corrected Section 1.3.1 of the EA/IS. And per the USACE's request, CALTRANS has included in Section 2.1.1 of the EA/IS a description of the authorizations governing the operation of the Sepulveda Basin.

The following are the easement requirements for selected Alternative 1:

Highway Easement = 5.12 acres

Temporary Construction Easement = 10.20 acres

Aerial Easement = 3.08 acres

Permanent Footing easement = 0.45 acres

Access for personnel and equipment for operation, maintenance, repair, rehabilitation, and flood fighting will be maintained during construction of the project. This will be done by constructing the new service road first then "bridging over" to the existing service road. Detailed plans for the staging of work will be provided during the design phase for the Army Corp of Engineers approval.

Act of 1941, the Secretary of the Army granted the City of Los Angeles a license to develop part of the Sepulveda Basin for recreational purposes. That Act was subsequently supplemented by the more encompassing Flood Control Acts of 1944 and 1946, which provided nationwide guidelines for recreational developments at Corps projects. Under the authority of the Flood Control Act of 1944, as amended by the Flood Control Act of 1946, two leases for recreational development were granted – one to the City and one to a non-profit corporation. The Flood Control Act of 1944, as amended by the Flood Control Acts of 1946, 1954, 1960, and 1962, authorizes the Corps of Engineers to construct, maintain, and operate public park and recreational facilities at water resources development projects and to permit local interests to construct, maintain, and operate such facilities.

6) Executive Order 11988 requires that we avoid, to the extent possible, the long- and short-term adverse impacts associated with the occupancy and modification of floodplains and avoid direct or indirect support of floodplain development wherever there is a practicable alternative. E.O. 11988 is mentioned only in passing in the EA. The EA should explain how the project would comply with E.O. 11988.

7) The Corps must ensure compliance with the requirements of 33 USC 408. Under 33 USC 408, it is

*"unlawful for any person to take possession of or make use of for any purpose, or build upon, alter, ... or in any manner whatever impair the usefulness of any...work built by the United States...in whole or in part,...to prevent floods...."* Provided, That the Secretary of the Army may, on the recommendation of the Chief of Engineers, grant permission for the temporary occupation or use of any of the aforementioned public works when in his judgment such occupation or use will not be injurious to the public interest: Provided further, that the Secretary may, on the recommendation of the Chief of Engineers, grant permission for the alteration or permanent occupation or use of any of the aforementioned public works when in the judgment of the Secretary such occupation or use will not be injurious to the public interest and will not impair the usefulness of such work." (Emphasis added.)

Assuming that Caltrans provides us with specific engineering data and information that it regards as sufficient to address fully our concerns regarding potential damage to structural and hydraulic integrity, any alternative that involves building on or altering the Dam itself would require review and approval by our Headquarters. The evaluation by the Chief of Engineers of any proposed modification to the Dam would require a detailed description of the proposed modification, a public interest determination, a discussion of indirect effects, and a detailed technical analysis of design adequacy, including a discussion of residual risk. We are attaching to these comments Corps policy guidance addressing the implementation of Section 408.

8) The EA acknowledges that the Project would require a Clean Water Act Section 404 Permit. It states, "Because the potential impacts of the proposed Alternatives fall within an area designated as a retention basin, and because those impacts are estimated to

#### **CALTRANS RESPONSE #4:**

Executive Order 11988 (Floodplain Management) directs all federal agencies to refrain from conducting, supporting, or allowing actions in floodplains unless it is the only practicable alternative. As previously discussed in CALTRANS RESPONSE #2, CALTRANS has not only proven that Alternative 1 is the LEDPA, CALTRANS has proven that Alternative 1 is the only practicable alternative. As proven by the Alternatives Analysis, Alternative 1 is the least environmentally disruptive build alternative **possible**, given the numerous environmental, community, right-of-way, and engineering constraints.

Also, as previously discussed, CALTRANS has evaluated the risks and implications of Alternative 1 upon the Sepulveda Dam, and CALTRANS has determined that the project's impacts would not result in a significant adverse impact to the dam, nor pose a significant risk to public safety. CALTRANS' top strategic goal is safety, and this project is no different. Upon securing funding, the engineering design of Alternative 1 will commence as part of the next phase of the project (PS&E). Then, during PS&E, CALTRANS will formally provide to the USACE the required information pursuant to 33 USC 408. Also during PS&E, CALTRANS and the Federal Highway Administration would design the project in close coordination with the USACE, ensuring the strictest conformity to all three agencies' engineering design and safety standards, as well as, minimizing impacts to the maximum possible extent.

#### **CALTRANS RESPONSE #5:**

33 USC 408 ("Section 408") requires the submittal of both the completed NEPA document and the completed detailed engineering of the selected alternative, which in this case is Alternative 1. These items are not available during "environmental phase", but rather, become available during the "design" phase (PS&E) of a CALTRANS project. In other words, the CALTRANS PS&E phase and the USACE Section 408 phase appear to be intended to run concurrent. Otherwise, Section 408 would not require a completed NEPA document as a prerequisite. It is clear that the USACE's own protocols require that the environmental issues be addressed first, in the NEPA document, subsequently followed by the engineering issues being addressed later and in detail during the Section 408 process. Otherwise, Section 408 would require a concurrent and integrated NEPA/Section 408 process. That is not the case. Therefore, CALTRANS will formally provide to the USACE the required items, pursuant to Section 408, during the PS&E phase of the project.

#### **CALTRANS RESPONSE #6:**

Please refer to the following page.

be greater than 0.5 acres, the Department believes that this project will fall within the jurisdiction of the Army Corps of Engineers and would require a Section 404 Permit and Section 401 Water Quality Certification." (EA 2.3.2). It also states, "Caltrans is required to delineate wetlands, identify impacts and evaluate avoidance alternatives in the environmental phase of project development, which is to be performed upon selection of a preferred alternative and by the time the final environmental document is circulated." (Id.) The EA's identification and characterization of Corps Regulatory jurisdiction, and impacts to our jurisdiction, should be expanded to satisfy Corps Regulatory purposes. This basic information is required for further analysis of the Project for Section 404 issues.

9) As we noted in our previous letters, no Section 404 permit application or request for a jurisdictional determination for this Project has been received by our Regulatory Division. In addition, no pre-application meetings have occurred. Section 2.2.2 of the EA indicates that Caltrans does not intend to seek an Individual or Nationwide Permit until the Project Specifications and Estimates phase of the project. Regulatory involvement is encouraged early on in the project development process, especially for those projects involving larger impacts, or projects that are complex or controversial in nature. When the CEQA and NEPA processes are undertaken concurrently, the selection of a preferred alternative is premature without advance coordination with the Corps' Regulatory Division. A permit may be issued under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act only for the least environmentally damaging practicable alternative that meets the project purpose (LEDPA). Absent early involvement, viable alternatives, including a potential LEDPA, may be prematurely dismissed.

Procedures for such coordination have been memorialized in a Memorandum of Understanding for the NEPA and Clean Water Act Section 404 Integration Process for Federal Aid Surface Transportation Projects in California (April 2006), to which Caltrans is a signatory. More generally, such advance coordination is also required by the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU), Section 6002.

10) The Corps decision on any permit request would occur after the Section 408 determination but prior to determining whether any easement request may be approved. The evaluation of a Section 404 application can and should proceed concurrently with the evaluation of other factors relevant to the final decision of the Corps.

## II. Potential Impacts Upon Sepulveda Dam

1) Our letters to Caltrans of June and October 2007 stated that we needed assurances and detailed information demonstrating that any features proposed will not reduce the structural stability of any dam feature under any design loading condition. We also expressed concern regarding effects on the hydraulic integrity of the spillway. In addition, access must be maintained to all dam features for personnel and equipment for operation, maintenance, repair, rehabilitation, and flood fighting. The EA does not provide detailed information on the structural, hydraulic, and access issues.

### **CALTRANS RESPONSE #6 continued:**

Section 2.3.2 of the EA/IS merely summarizes the regulatory setting that exists at the project location. It acknowledges CALTRANS' awareness of the regulatory setting, and CALTRANS' intention to comply with the requirements set forth by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act. Since the EA/IS is a NEPA/CEQA document, it is not intended, nor cannot satisfy, the USACE's Section 404 regulatory requirements. The Department will begin the Section 404 permitting process after completion of the NEPA document; during the PS&E phase of the project.

NEPA/Clean Water Act Section 404 Integration process is only required when the NEPA document being prepared is an EIS, and when the required Section 404 permit will be an Individual Permit. At this time, the NEPA document is not an EIS, and when CALTRANS project biologist Maureen Doyle spoke with Mark Cohen of the USACE Regulatory Division on February 26, 2008 regarding the appropriate permit to pursue pursuant to Section 404, Mr. Cohen indicated that it was too early to make any definite determination as to which level of Section 404 permit would be required. He indicated that there were "several things that needed to happen" before CALTRANS and the USACE Regulatory Division could discuss the appropriate level of 404 permit that would be needed, as well as, any associated mitigation.

Therefore, since at this time neither an EIS nor a Section 404 Individual Permit are on the table, NEPA/Section 404 Integration process is not required. Regardless, the USACE was a major factor why CALTRANS deemed Alternative 1 as the LEDPA, and why CALTRANS selected Alternative 1 as the alternative that will be pursued for implementation. The USACE made its position and sentiment clear; Alternative 1 is more prudent and less environmentally damaging than Alternatives 2 and 3.

### **CALTRANS RESPONSE #7:**

As mentioned, at this time neither an EIS nor a Section 404 Individual Permit are on the table. Therefore NEPA/Section 404 Integration is not required. Also as mentioned, the CALTRANS PS&E phase and the USACE Section 408 phase appear to be intended to run concurrent, otherwise, Section 408 would not require a completed NEPA document as a prerequisite. Thus CALTRANS intends to finish the NEPA document, then during the PS&E phase, CALTRANS will submit to the USACE the items required pursuant to Section 408 while **concurrently** working with the USACE Regulatory Division to identify and apply for the pertinent permit pursuant to Section 404 of the Clean Water Act.

### **CALTRANS RESPONSE #8:**

**Please refer to CALTRANS RESPONSE #2 for a discussion of the impacts to the Sepulveda Dam.**

2) From the limited information that is provided in the Environmental Assessment regarding the specific impacts to the dam embankment and spillway, the Corps is concerned that the proposal appears to include cutting into and/or excavating the embankment. The EA states,

"The elevated connectors that pass through the dam spillway will be approximately fifty (50) feet high, the same approximate height as the Sepulveda Dam gates. The USACE service road adjacent to northbound 101 will be realigned to accommodate the new connector, which would drop down on top of the earthen embankment as it merges with northbound 101. The proposed encroachment on the embankment is approximately 550 feet long and 39 feet wide. A retaining wall will be built along the earthen embankment (northbound US-101) to mitigate for a loss of volume in the reservoir due to the realigned service road.... [T]he dam embankment along northbound US-101 will be excavated for footings for the descending ramp structure, the retaining wall and the realigned USACE access road (1.07 acres). This alternative would... entail the physical destruction of or damage to all or part of the property. Additionally, this alternative would constitute an Adverse Effect on the Sepulveda Dam ... as the elevated structures to be built through the dam spillway (4.93 acres) and upon the earthen embankment, as well as the proposed retaining wall, are alterations of the property that are not consistent with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties (36 CFR part 68) and applicable guidelines. Moreover, this alternative would constitute an Adverse Effect on the Sepulveda Dam under Adverse Effect Criterion 2(iv) as the addition of elevated freeway connector ramps through the dam spillway, and the utilization of the earthen embankment for the descending freeway connector ramp, change the character of the Sepulveda Dam's use (flood control) and physical features within the dam setting that contribute to its historic significance." (EA 2.1.7, p. 85).

It also includes the following statement: "...[A]ll four (4) of the proposed project design alternatives call for a direct encroachment on portions of the dam structure itself, and therefore, may potentially/theoretically pose an adverse impact to its structural integrity and a reduction to its flood volume storage capacity." (EA 2.2.1, p. 88)

The Corps cannot consent to any action which could impair the structural integrity of Sepulveda Dam or interfere with its operation. Also, any structure that spans over the dam without affecting the embankment must maintain space for access by personnel and equipment. The specific dimensions of such space requirements should be coordinated with Corps staff. The potential impacts to the spillway are not clear from the information provided, but these impacts would also require close evaluation by Corps personnel. Please provide additional detailed information on the impacts to the dam and the spillway.

**CALTRANS RESPONSE #8 continued:**

**Please refer to CALTRANS RESPONSE #2 for a discussion of the impacts to the Sepulveda Dam.**

3) The Corps must ensure compliance with the requirements of 33 USC 408. Assuming that Caltrans is able to demonstrate that its specific proposals would not impair the structural integrity of Sepulveda Dam or interfere with its operation, they appear to trigger the need for a Section 408 review, as described in our general comments above.

4) The EA reveals that each of the alternatives has the potential to impact the Corps' Service Road. The Service Road is a critical operational feature of the dam and is heavily used by personnel for the day-to-day operation and maintenance activities as well as for the dam's periodic inspections. It is essential that any modifications to the Service Road ensure that the Corps does not lose any existing use of the road. The EA should explain in detail the manner in which Caltrans proposes to modify the Service Road, including how it would provide access to the dam during construction of any modification to the Service Road.

5) Caltrans has previously been provided with a copy of SPD Regulation 1110-2-1 related to land development proposals at Corps reservoir projects. The EA should discuss the plan for adhering to that regulation.

6) It is the Corps' understanding that the presence of freeway structures on Corps-managed property may result in an increased homeless population because the homeless often shelter underneath freeway structures. The Corps is concerned that the possibility of human habitation under freeway structures on Corps-managed property may result in potential safety risks during flood season as well as damage to adjacent natural resources. The presence of freeway structures may attract increased vandalism and defacement of Corps land and structures. Freeways often result in increased trash from a variety of sources, particularly from litter from passing traffic. It is the experience of the Corps that an increase in the homeless population and the presence of vandals can also lead to an increase in trash and debris. The EA does not discuss the increase in these elements or how the increase will impact the Wildlife Reserve or dam operations area. The EA should be amended to describe these elements and how they will affect the Wildlife Reserve, dam operations area, and the other recreational elements of the basin. The EA should also describe what, if any, mitigation measures are planned to alleviate these impacts, and which agency or agencies would be responsible for the costs associated with these issues.

7) The EA states that Alternatives 1, 2, and 3 would impact the dam's spillway, embankment, and reduce the reservoir's project storage space by 49,014 cubic feet. The EA should explain the methodology used to compute the loss of 49,014 cubic feet of storage for each alternative.

8) Section 2.1.7 of the EA, entitled "Cultural Resources," states that a Historic Property Survey Report, completed by Caltrans in January 2007, concludes that Sepulveda Dam, including the outlet works, structures, spillway, earthen embankment, and reservoir, is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places, a conclusion with which the State Historic Preservation Officer concurs. The EA does not contain a full

**CALTRANS RESPONSE #9:**

Please refer to CALTRANS RESPONSE #5.

**CALTRANS RESPONSE #10:**

Access for personnel and equipment for operation, maintenance, repair, rehabilitation, and flood fighting will be maintained during construction of the project. This will be done by constructing the new service road first then "bridging over" to the existing service road. Detailed plans for the staging of work will be provided during the design phase for USACE approval.

CALTRANS certainly intends to comply with SPD Regulation 1110-2-1 related to land development proposals at Corps reservoir projects. However, like Section 408, SPD Regulation 1110-2-1 requires a level of engineering design, hydraulic design, and construction phasing/staging/planning that is not available until the engineering design (PS&E) phase of a CALTRANS project. CALTRANS commits to submit a plan for compliance with SPD Regulation 1110-2-1 concurrently during the Section 408 process, which would happen during the PS&E phase of this project.

**CALTRANS RESPONSE #11:**

As mentioned, CALTRANS has selected Alternative 1. CALTRANS Maintenance Crews will be responsible for the care and upkeep of new connectors and its appurtenant facilities, not just to maintain sanitary conditions (i.e. removal of trash and debris), but also to conserve the public's investment in the highway system and ensure the maximum benefit to the traveling public. If the USACE is interested, perhaps CALTRANS and the USACE could enter into a Cooperative Agreement (during the Section 408 and/or Section 404 process) whereby CALTRANS Maintenance Crews would also enter the spillway area and jointly maintain the areas beneath the new freeway structures.

When CALTRANS surveyed the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve, numerous homeless individuals were detected already living inside the reserve. Since CALTRANS has rejected Alternatives 2 and 3, there is no reason to believe that the proposed project would in anyway increase the numbers of the homeless individuals whom already reside in the reserve and adjacent recreational areas.

**CALTRANS RESPONSE #12:**

The methodology used to compute the loss of storage was the Average End Method.

**CALTRANS RESPONSE #13:**

The Sepulveda Dam is a structure that is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). A property is considered eligible for listing on the NRHP if it meets one or more of the following criteria:

The quality of significance in American history, architecture, archeology, engineering, and culture is present in districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects that possess integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association, and:

- a) That are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history; or
- b) That are associated with the lives of significant persons in our past; or
- c) That embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or
- d) That have yielded or may be likely to yield, information important in history or prehistory.

explanation of how Caltrans reached that conclusion. The Corps suggests that the EA expand the explanation and incorporate the following description of Sepulveda Dam's historic status.

Sepulveda Dam (the Dam) is a structure that is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). A property is considered eligible for listing on the NRHP if it meets one or more of the following criteria:

The quality of significance in American history, architecture, archaeology, engineering, and culture is present in districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects that possess integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association and

- a) that are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history; or
- b) that are associated with the lives of persons significant in our past; or
- c) that embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or
- d) that have yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history. (36 CFR § 60.4)

In addition to significance, a property must also have physical integrity to be listed on or eligible for listing on the NRHP. Integrity does not demand absolute purity, but the historic property must be a "preservable entity" that still communicates what makes it significant.

The Dam has protected lives and property, as well as permitted the development of the very densely populated area around the Dam (i.e., the San Fernando Valley, America's first suburb), which is a very important region in the development of the State of California and the United States as a whole. Without Sepulveda Dam, and the Los Angeles County Drainage Area (LACDA) of which it is an element, the development of Los Angeles as we know it could not have occurred. This makes the Dam an integral part of Los Angeles history and therefore American history as well. It satisfies criterion a.

The Dam's designers and builders (i.e., the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Los Angeles District) could be considered persons significant in our past, satisfying criterion b.

Under criterion c, Sepulveda Dam evokes the distinctive characteristics of the important Works Progress Administration ("WPA") period of

**CALTRANS RESPONSE #13 continued:**

In addition to significance, a property must also have physical integrity to be listed on or eligible for listing on the NRHP. Integrity does not demand absolute purity, but the historic property must be a "preservable entity" that still communicates what makes it significant.

The Sepulveda Dam is a "preservable entity" that still conveys what makes it significant. Its appearance remains distinctive, and it maintains its physical integrity and functionality.

The Sepulveda Dam was found eligible under Criterion A and C. The Sepulveda Dam was not found eligible under Criterion B as the designers and or builders are not considered significant persons in our past history. The Sepulveda Dam as not found eligible under Criterion D as this resource is not likely to yield information important in history or prehistory as it is a contemporary structure. Criterion D is normally reserved for archaeological properties or ruins.

American History (1935-1943). The particular architectural style is known as PWA Moderne, which is closely associated with federal architecture (Ewing-Toledo 2007:23). One unique feature of the spillway is the moveable panels to raise or lower its elevation (Wormer 1985:117).

Being an excellent example of WPA period structures, it conveys a sense of the importance of the period and the immensity of its impact for American society. Unlike many WPA structures which were small bridges not significant on their own, it is a very large and visually impressive structure. Therefore, it serves a valuable role for researchers of American history. For this reason, among others, the Dam satisfies criterion d.

Finally, the Dam is definitely a "preservable entity" that still conveys what makes it significant. Its appearance remains distinctive, and it maintains its physical integrity and functionality.

9) In the Corps' opinion, the Project would result in significant impacts to the historic qualities of Sepulveda Dam that could not be easily mitigated. Thus, it appears that the Corps could not grant an easement for the Project unless an EIS is prepared. In support of this conclusion, the Corps considered the fact that blocking the views of the dam with the proposed connector would result in substantial impairment to the viewshed and the historic character of the Dam, along with other impacts. The dam is iconic, having appeared in many films and television advertisements. The dam is an important example of PWA Moderne architecture and of federal engineering. In addition, the Dam and its setting comprise a visual document of Los Angeles' past.

10) Furthermore, the connector structure itself would be anticipated to interfere with aesthetic features of the Dam that provide important contributing elements. According to the EA, it appears that the dam itself would be physically altered by the proposal. (EA 2.1.7). As noted above, the Corps could not permit excavation of the embankment or other modifications that would interfere with the dam's structural integrity; assuming they would not, these changes would likely affect the historical values of the Dam. Although Caltrans proposes to coordinate the design of the connector with that of the dam, the inclusion of the connector would still detract from the appearance of the dam. While some mitigation through Historic American Buildings Survey / Historic American Engineering Record ("HABS/HAER") would be possible, data recovery cannot fully mitigate the impacts to the historic structure. For these reasons, it appears an EIS would be required to fully assess the impacts proposed to the Dam. The EA should address this.

11) The Corps notes that the preliminary proposals to mitigate for loss of volume in Section 2.2.1 would require additional review. For example, one mitigation proposal includes "Widening the existing dirt canal inside the basin between Route 405 and Woodley Avenue (Haskell Channel). This proposal will fulfill requirements to increase storage volume inside the basin and no water impounded." Haskell Channel operates as a riparian corridor which has been the subject of planting by local groups. Excavating

#### CALTRANS RESPONSE #14:

In the preparation of Section 106 documents, particularly the Finding of Effect (FOE) document, CALTRANS determined that this undertaking will have an adverse effect on the historic property (Sepulveda Dam).

Section 106 requires that CALTRANS involve certain parties to participate as consulting parties in the consultation to resolve adverse effects to historic properties. If a proposed project may affect federal or state lands, the appropriate land-holding agency (USACE in this case) shall be contacted for information regarding historic properties on their land and shall be formally invited to be parties to any subsequent actions.

In October 2005 contact was made with D. Stephen Dibble, Sr. Archaeologist for USACE, Los Angeles District prior to preparation of the Historic Property Survey Report (HPSR). The results of that HPSR and Determination of Eligibility (DOE) were sent to USACE May 3, 2007 with no response. In June 2007, a meeting was held between CALTRANS and the USACE. At that time the FOE was in process. CALTRANS Architectural Historian Kelly Ewing-Toledo informed the USACE at this meeting that the preliminary study showed that all four build alternatives would most likely result in an adverse effect upon the historic Sepulveda Dam. Ms. Ewing received no formal response as a result of that meeting. The FOE was sent to USACE in February 2008. The State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) concurred with the findings on March 31, 2008. Ms. Ewing received no response from the USACE regarding that document or its findings. In March 2008, the USACE issued a letter of non-cooperation with Caltrans on this project. On April 4, 2008 in a meeting with CALTRANS, the USACE legal counsel verbally disagreed that the Sepulveda Dam was a historic property and said they would issue a letter shortly stating their official opinion. Ms. Ewing was in the process of completing the Draft Memorandum of Agreement (DMOA) at that point. On April 23, 2008 USACE agreed that Sepulveda Dam was 4(f) property, thus a historic property. To that point Ms. Ewing had received no response or willingness to be involved on the part of the USACE regarding mitigation of adverse effects for the historic property. The DMOA was sent to the USACE on May 1, 2008. On May 27, 2008 Ms. Ewing received an email from John Killeen, USACE Archaeologist/Environmental Coordinator, regarding the DMOA stating that it was imperative that the USACE be added as a signatory party on the DMOA. This letter, and the above mentioned email, was the first time the USACE has expressed any opinion about project effects to the historic property.

The FOE explains the Criteria of Adverse Effect and details how this project will affect the historic property. The Draft MOA then details the mitigation measures to be completed by CALTRANS to mitigate for those adverse effects.

The determination of the significance of the impact, according to the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations (40 CFR §§ 1500-1508), is a function of both context and intensity. Please refer to CALTRANS RESPONSE #2.

Filming has taken place on the spillway, with the Sepulveda Dam directly in the background. However, the proposed project would not adversely impact that cinematic function since the distance between the new connector and the dam structure itself (from that cinematic vantage point) would be 500ft, and therefore, the new connector would not obstruct that cinematic vantage point. In other words, all types of previous filming that has occurred on the spillway, with the Sepulveda Dam in the background, would remain possible after implementation of the proposed by this project.

#### CALTRANS RESPONSE #15:

CALTRANS has rejected and eliminated the excavation of Haskell Creek as a mitigation option for loss of flood capacity volume.

Haskell Channel would require additional permitting and environmental compliance from various agencies as well as additional mitigation.

### III. Potential Impacts Upon the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve

1) Please add the phrase "locally and regionally significant wildlife reserve" to the first paragraph of Section 2.2.1 of the EA on page 85. The paragraph would then read:

"The Los Angeles River drains the vast watershed of the San Fernando Valley and surrounding mountains—finally emptying into the Pacific Ocean at Long Beach. In years of heavy rainfall, this normally tame watercourse becomes a mighty force, as was the case in 1938 when torrential rains caused the river to flood adjacent farms and homes. Consequently, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers channelized the river and built the Sepulveda Dam to capture and hold floodwaters for later gradual release down the river. Except for infrequent but dramatic flood episodes, this otherwise dry-land flood control basin, most of which is leased from the Corps by the City of Los Angeles Department of Recreation & Parks, plays host to diverse uses today including athletic fields, agriculture, golf courses, a fishing lake, parklands, a sewage treatment facility, *and a locally and regionally significant wildlife reserve.*" (Added language italicized.)

2) The EA should discuss more fully the ecological significance of the Wildlife Reserve. The Corps considers the Wildlife Reserve to be locally and regionally significant; in reaching this conclusion, the Corps looked at the purpose and use of the wildlife area as well as the land surrounding the Wildlife Reserve. The Corps provides the following information regarding the significance of the wildlife refuge and requests that it be incorporated into the EA.

The Wildlife Reserve plays an important role regionally and locally in providing wildlife habitat and opportunities for exploration of that habitat in an extremely urbanized and built-out part of the Los Angeles basin. Any loss of wildlife habitat from this area would be extremely difficult to replace. The wildlife area was developed with the following objectives: develop a wetlands system; enhance habitat for wildlife; increase wildlife interpretive opportunities within the eastern portion of the Flood Control Basin.

Improvements to the area have been made through several initiatives. Both the Corps and the City of Los Angeles have spent substantial funds on the area through cost-shared improvements such as creation of the wildlife lake, plantings, and restoration measures. Local conservation and community groups have also made substantial investments of time and resources. As a result of these improvements, the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve is a unique area of open space and

### CALTRANS RESPONSE #16:

In light of the USACE's and the community's overwhelming concern and opposition to any encroachment upon the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve, as well as the requirements set forth by Section 4(f) of the U.S. Department of Transportation Act, **Alternatives 2 and 3 have been rejected**. CALTRANS agrees with the USACE in regards to the significance of the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve, as well as the significance of, and difficulty of mitigating, the impacts posed by Alternatives 2 and 3 upon the reserve. CALTRANS will only pursue Alternative 1 despite LADOT's continued opposition to this alternative.

Due to the selection of Alternative 1, and rejection of Alternatives 2 and 3:

- CALTRANS will focus its resources only on the impacts posed by selected Alternative 1.
- Further discussion of the impacts posed by rejected Alternatives 2 and 3 upon the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve, or the oaks located north of Burbank Boulevard, will no longer be necessary.
- Noise levels within the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve are not expected to exceed the Noise Abatement Criteria (NAC) of 57dBA. Per the project's noise technical study, the projected increase in ambient noise after the implementation of Alternative 1 would be less than 1 dBA (decibel), which is well below any significant noise level impacts or increases.
- The potential for a lighting impact to the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve has been eliminated.
- Sepulveda Basin, as a regional park, will continue to function at its current level
- Any biological mitigation necessary as a result of the biological impacts associated with Alternative 1 will continue to be refined and developed as the project enters the Section 404 permitting phase after the completion of the NEPA phase (i.e. PS&E project phase).

Note: As discussed in the Consultation and Coordination of the EA/IS, CALTRANS provided to the USACE, on June 19, 2007, the draft Natural Environment Study Report (the biological impact study report, which is the basis for the biological impact portion of the EA/IS). At that time, CALTRANS requested that the USACE review the study and provide its valuable technical input. The USACE's May 28, 2008 formal comment letter, regarding this EA/IS, is the first time that the USACE has provided to CALTRANS specific and detailed technical comments regarding the project's potential biological impacts.

biodiversity located in the middle of an urban area. It is a riparian, grassland, woodland, and aquatic habitat for numerous species of plants and animals, including numerous species of resident and migratory birds.

This wildlife area is unique in the San Fernando Valley and was specifically set aside as an area for both ecological development and for viewing of wildlife by locals in an otherwise developed portion of southern California. In addition to its functions in providing wildlife habitat in the middle of an urban area, the Wildlife Reserve is also a place for humans to recreate and commune with nature. The San Fernando Valley Audubon chapter conducts numerous programs in the north reserve area, leading activities for nearly five thousand children and adults annually. In addition to these organized educational programs are thousands of additional visits by individual bird watchers, photographers, families with small children, and other nature lovers. The monthly Sunday walks for San Fernando Valley Audubon Society bring about five hundred visitors annually.

3) Some of the improvements to the Wildlife Reserve were undertaken as mitigation for impacts of increased recreation plans within the Basin. In addition, a court order required the formation of the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Areas Consortium, consisting of local environmental groups, to oversee the spending of fines levied on two local companies that spilled hazardous materials into Haskell Creek. The EA should include a discussion of the impact of the proposal on these mitigation requirements.

4) The Size and Location of Impact Area/Volume section of the EA states on pages 11 and 14 that Alternative 2 will encroach on 2.64 acres of the wildlife refuge whereas Alternative 3 will encroach on 2.92 acres of the wildlife refuge. It appears that the 2.64-acre value and the 2.92-acre value account for the footprint of the proposed structure only. The diagrams that accompany the description of Alternatives 2 and 3 show that a large portion of the wildlife refuge will be surrounded by roadways on all sides creating a de facto highway median out of a portion of the wildlife refuge. The EA should describe the full acreage of the de facto highway median in the Size and Location of Impact Area/Volume section and should evaluate its reasonably foreseeable impacts upon the use of the area by wildlife.

5) The Corps has performed a preliminary analysis of the impacted acreage of Alternatives 2 and 3 which includes the de facto median area. Our calculations suggest that the total area impacted, including the de facto median area, will be no less than 14 acres. Both the area taken for the connector structures themselves and the area segmented from the remainder of the refuge as a median should be considered directly impacted areas for the purpose of the EA, and the EA should be amended to reflect the full area of direct impact. Including the de facto median in the area of direct impact will require additional analysis under Section 4(f) (49 USC 303, 23 USC 138). It is not clear from the EA whether an easement would be requested over the entire segmented area, but the de facto median or segmented area should be considered as proposed for use. Under

**CALTRANS RESPONSE #16 continued:**

As mentioned, in light of the USACE's and the community's overwhelming concern and opposition to any encroachment upon the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve, as well as the requirements set forth by Section 4(f) of the U.S. Department of Transportation Act, **Alternatives 2 and 3 have been rejected**. CALTRANS agrees with the USACE in regards to the significance of the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve, as well as the significance of, and difficulty of mitigating, the impacts posed by Alternatives 2 and 3 upon the reserve. CALTRANS will only pursue Alternative 1 despite LADOT's continued opposition to this alternative.

Section 4(f), a site is considered used when land is taken by a project or the project has significant adverse air, water, noise, land accessibility, aesthetic, or other environmental impacts on or around the site. (See 23 CFR 774.17). Because the segmented area would face proximity impacts and be isolated in a way that would substantially impair the protected features and activities, the EA should address these impacts.

6) The Corps believes that the construction of multi-lane ramps on the east side of the Wildlife Reserve, close to the wildlife lake, would cause irreparable damage to the reserve by fragmentation of the landscape and by pollution. The damage caused by air, light, noise, and ground pollution, due to construction and to indefinite vehicle use, would be likely to pollute the lake, damage and/or remove surrounding vegetation and trees, fragment the habitat, eliminate a foraging area, and increase the invasion of non-native or exotic plant species. The EA should include additional discussion of these impacts and include a plan to mitigate for this damage.

7) The EA asserts that "although there may be temporary disruptions or impacts during the construction phase, there are not anticipated to be any permanent direct or indirect impacts to [wildlife species identified in the biological study area] resulting from the project." (EA, 2.3.4). The EA should explain the basis for its conclusion that the project will not have any permanent impacts upon the wildlife that make use of the refuge. The explanation should address with scientific evidence the Corps' concern that the addition of freeway overpass on- and/or off-ramps in the eastern portion of the Wildlife Reserve would seriously fragment the current habitat, which, among other impacts, would likely damage it for raptor or goose foraging. Currently, the eastern portion of the Wildlife Reserve is open habitat with scattered *Baccharis sp.* especially conducive for birds of prey and serves as a nesting area for a variety of bird species. This is also the main Canada goose foraging area in the Wildlife Reserve. The Corps is concerned that the functions provided by the existing area would be damaged, and the use of the area cut off from the rest of the reserve would result in less overall area for use by the animal species that are currently within the area.

8) On page 38 of the EA, under the section entitled "Sepulveda Basin Recreation Area," the last two sentences of the first paragraph read, "It features a lake with a bird-refuge island, extensive native plant revegetation, and some of the best bird-watching opportunities in the Los Angeles Basin. Migratory birds gather here in the fall and winter, and are strongly attracted to water within the basin." This statement is not completely accurate. Please replace the last sentence with the following: "Migratory birds gather here in the *spring*, fall and winter, and are strongly attracted to water within the basin. *Included in the spring migratory birds is the least Bell's vireo, a federally endangered species, which, according to surveys in 2005, 2007, and 2008, breeds and nests within one thousand feet of the proposed project.*" (Added language italicized.)

9) The EA contains limited information on impacts to vegetation, though it notes that twenty-five to thirty of the coast live oaks bordering Burbank Boulevard would likely have to be removed. Some of these trees were planted using mitigation funds as described in our comments above. In recognition of their value to the area, coast live oaks

#### CALTRANS RESPONSE #16 continued:

As mentioned, in light of the USACE's and the community's overwhelming concern and opposition to any encroachment upon the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve, as well as the requirements set forth by Section 4(f) of the U.S. Department of Transportation Act, **Alternatives 2 and 3 have been rejected**. CALTRANS agrees with the USACE in regards to the significance of the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve, as well as the significance of, and difficulty of mitigating, the impacts posed by Alternatives 2 and 3 upon the reserve. CALTRANS will only pursue Alternative 1 despite LADOT's continued opposition to this alternative.

are protected under a City of Los Angeles ordinance. The EA should explain the impacts to the functions provided by vegetation in the area, including but not limited to the impacts upon coast live oaks.

10) The EA does not discuss the noise impacts to the wildlife refuge in Section 2.2.7, mentioning the area only as "undeveloped land," and the 4(f) discussion mentions noise impacts only briefly. The serenity and quiet provided for wildlife and for human visitors are important attributes of the area. In the Corps' opinion, the wildlife refuge should be evaluated as an area in which serenity and quiet are important characteristics, with a Noise Abatement Criteria of 57 dBA. The Supplemental Traffic and Construction Noise Study Report (November 2006) provided to the Corps suggests that substantial temporary noise impacts from construction will occur. The study further suggests that overall noise levels will rise in certain areas of the wildlife refuge. The EA should provide a detailed discussion of noise impacts to the wildlife refuge and include information on how Caltrans proposes to mitigate these impacts.

11) The ability to view wildlife in the San Fernando Valley is an important value of the Wildlife Reserve that should be discussed in the EA. Los Angeles is considered "park poor," as open space in the region is extremely limited in comparison to other major urban areas. The Sepulveda and Hansen Basins are the only accessible, designated, protected wildlife viewing areas within the San Fernando Valley. If Alternative 2 or 3 were constructed, the viewing opportunities provided, along with the sense of "wild nature" that is available, would be seriously reduced. As noted above, the Wildlife Reserve is used by school groups and environmental organizations for educational purposes. A discussion in the EA of the effects of habitat fragmentation on wildlife should also incorporate an examination of the potential impacts on the ability of human users to view wildlife in the area.

12) The Sepulveda Dam Master Plan dated 1981 reflects on the Sepulveda Basin as a regional park oriented to a population (i.e., noted as of 1981 as 335,000) and area of the four districts surrounding the basin: Encino-Tarzana, Reseda-West Van Nuys, Van Nuys-North Sherman Oaks, and Sherman Oaks-Studio City. According to the Master Plan, "The area of the Sepulveda Basin correlates generally with criteria set by the City of Los Angeles Department of Recreation and Parks, calling for six acres of regional park land for each 1,000 people. On the basis of the present regional population, 2,190 acres should be provided." The EA should assess how the various alternatives will affect the Sepulveda Basin's ability to continue to function as a Regional Park and how Caltrans plans to mitigate for its project's impact upon parks and wildlife viewing in the region.

13) To a substantial extent, the impacts to the Wildlife Reserve noted in our comments could be difficult to mitigate because there is no large parcel of land available in the immediate area to add to the wildlife area as compensatory mitigation. The mitigation proposals included in the EA are vague and do not appear to address the Corps' specific concerns. The EA should elaborate on the mitigation proposals and how they would compensate for the values and functions of the Wildlife Reserve.

**CALTRANS RESPONSE #16 continued:**

As mentioned, in light of the USACE's and the community's overwhelming concern and opposition to any encroachment upon the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve, as well as the requirements set forth by Section 4(f) of the U.S. Department of Transportation Act, **Alternatives 2 and 3 have been rejected**. CALTRANS agrees with the USACE in regards to the significance of the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve, as well as the significance of, and difficulty of mitigating, the impacts posed by Alternatives 2 and 3 upon the reserve. CALTRANS will only pursue Alternative 1 despite LADOT's continued opposition to this alternative.

14) Given that Alternative 1 does not directly impact the Wildlife Reserve while Alternatives 2 and 3 substantially impact the Reserve, it is not clear how the EA reached the conclusion that the estimated mitigation costs for Alternatives 2 and 3 would be identical to the mitigation costs for Alternative 1. The EA should explain the basis for the cost estimates provided.

15) All of the proposed build alternatives have an adverse impact on the historic property located in the Sepulveda Flood Control Basin; however, only two of the alternatives have an impact on the Wildlife Reserve. Based on this, it appears that there is a feasible and prudent alternative to impacting the Wildlife Reserve and that the alternatives that impact on the Reserve may not be constructed in light of the provisions of Section 4(f). The EA should either so state or explain how Caltrans has reached a different conclusion.

16) The description of "pros" for Alternative 2 contains the statement, "Due to the constricted loop on-ramp, the encroachment onto the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife refuge is minimized to the maximum extent." While the proposed impact to the Wildlife Reserve is less than that of Alternative 3, the EA presents an alternative that avoids all impacts to the Wildlife Reserve. The EA should correct the statement to reflect the relative impacts of the alternatives with respect to the Wildlife Reserve.

17) Section 2.2.1 of the EA reads in part, "Environmental Coordination with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has been ongoing since 2003, and the Department submitted to the Corps the project Natural Environment Study Report (biological study) and the Floodplain Evaluation Report (including the 5 mitigation proposals) on June 19, 2007 for their input, review, and comment. As of the date of this Draft EA/IS, the Corps is still reviewing those materials." This statement and a similar statement in Section 2.3.2 are not completely accurate. The Corps did not receive the Floodplain Evaluation Report until March 2008. Further, Caltrans declined to share with the Corps the analysis contained in the draft EA and 4(f) statement until March 2008.

Page 139 of the EA states incorrectly that the Floodplain Evaluation Report and the Historic Preservation Study were provided to the Corps in June 2007. The Corps received a number of documents from Caltrans in June 2007, including an agenda; colored depictions of the proposed alternatives; a written description of the proposed alternatives; a Natural Environment Study Report; a Supplemental Traffic and Construction Noise Study Report; and a "Summary of VA Alternatives." The Floodplain Evaluation Report was not among those reports. When, in a letter dated December 27, 2007, Caltrans stated that the Floodplain Evaluation Report had been provided to the Corps at the June 2007 meeting, the Corps contacted Caltrans to obtain a copy of the report and was told that it was not provided to the Corps in June 2007. The Corps' point of contact at Caltrans attempted to send an electronic version to the Corps at that time, but the electronic document sent to the Corps was not properly named; Caltrans instead provided a mislabeled second copy of the Location Hydraulic Study at that time. The Floodplain Evaluation Report was not provided to the Corps until March 17, 2008.

#### CALTRANS RESPONSE #16 continued:

As mentioned, in light of the USACE's and the community's overwhelming concern and opposition to any encroachment upon the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve, as well as the requirements set forth by Section 4(f) of the U.S. Department of Transportation Act, **Alternatives 2 and 3 have been rejected**. CALTRANS agrees with the USACE in regards to the significance of the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve, as well as the significance of, and difficulty of mitigating, the impacts posed by Alternatives 2 and 3 upon the reserve. CALTRANS will only pursue Alternative 1 despite LADOT's continued opposition to this alternative.

#### CALTRANS RESPONSE #17:

Selected Alternative 1, which does not encroach nor impact the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve, is a prudent and feasible alternative to Rejected Alternatives 2 and 3 (which would have required encroachment impacts to the reserve).

CALTRANS stands by the Consultation and Coordination section of the EA/IS, as well as, all the correspondence sent to the USACE regarding this matter. CALTRANS went to great lengths to provide the specified information and component technical studies to the USACE nearly a year prior to the completion of the draft EA/IS and Section 4(f) Evaluation. By providing those materials early and exclusively to the USACE, CALTRANS was soliciting the USACE's early input so that EA/IS and Section 4(f) Evaluation could have been tailored to the USACE's needs.

Additionally, according to CALTRANS Architectural Historian Ms. Kelly Ewing-Toledo, she completed the Historic Property Survey Report (HPSR) in January 2007 (SHPO concurred March 14, 2007), and then she submitted a copy of the document to Ms. Katie Parks (USACE) on May 3, 2007. In other words, the USACE had a copy of the HPSR at the time of the June 19, 2007 meeting, even if CALTRANS had indeed failed to hand-deliver that document to USACE the day of that meeting. Then at that meeting, Ms. Ewing-Toledo did not advise the Corps that she was almost finished with that portion of the report, rather she informed the USACE that the Dam was found eligible in the HPSR, and at that time she was working on completing the **Finding of Effect Report (FOE)** for the project. Ms. Ewing-Toledo then stated that the FOE would most likely show, that all four build alternatives, there would be an adverse effect on the historic Sepulveda Dam.

In August 2003, CALTRANS invited both the USACE and LADOT to participate in the alternatives creation/elimination Value Analysis phase of this project. The USACE attended, but did not raise objections to LADOT's proposal to create a loop onramp within the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve. That loop onramp went on to become Alternatives 2 and 3. Had the USACE indeed objected and countered LADOT's proposal, Alternatives 2 and 3 would not have been created.

The USACE did not indicate concern over Alternatives 2 and 3 until the Scoping phase of the project back in May/June 2006. Upon which time, LADOT's continued opposition to Alternative 1 necessitated that CALTRANS be fair and keep Alternatives 2 and 3 on the table for continued analysis. Understandably, USACE staff was disappointed with CALTRANS for not eliminating Alternatives 2 and 3 at that time. However, with the recent rejection of Alternatives 2 and 3, CALTRANS looks forward to increased coordination and cooperation between the two agencies.

Lastly, there has never existed more than nine (9) project alternatives. The Value Analysis Study of August 2003 was a multi-agency, multi-disciplinary brainstorming session, out of which Alternatives 2 and 3 were conceived (and Alternative A was eliminated). However, to believe that the Value Analysis Study is filled with rejected alternatives would be in error. Since Mr. Carvel Bass and Mr. Bill Ziegler of the USACE attended and **participated** in the Value Analysis Study (in particular Mr. Ziegler), the USACE should have a copy of that study.

The Historic Preservation Study was not provided to the Corps at the June 2007 meeting. At the meeting, a representative of Caltrans advised the Corps that they were almost finished preparing that portion of the report. The Corps requested a copy of the report at that time, but the request was denied because the document was not ready for distribution.

The Corps has been objecting to the proposed encroachment into the Wildlife Reserve since 2003. At the meeting that took place in June 2007, the Corps requested that Caltrans consider some alternatives that did not require encroaching on the Wildlife Reserve. Caltrans has added no feasible alternatives that avoid the Wildlife Reserve. Additional rejected alternatives C and D were added to the list of infeasible options following the June 2007 meeting. The goal of those proposals when formulated by Caltrans was to avoid not only the Wildlife Reserve, but all lands managed by the Corps. While the Corps would like to avoid impacts on both the Wildlife Reserve and the dam, the Corps renews its request for the EA to recommend an alternative that avoids the Wildlife Reserve.

#### IV. The Formulation and Consideration of Alternatives

- 1) The EA does not adequately describe the genesis of its purpose and need statement. For example, the Corps is concerned that the selection of alternatives may have been artificially constrained by the inclusion of a specific connector solution (i.e., replacement of the single, 20-mph connector with a two-lane, 50-mph connector) or by economic considerations that improperly regard the Federal lands as free. The EA should include more information on the level of service and volume flow the project seeks to achieve and any cost analysis that was employed in formulating or screening out alternatives.
- 2) Very little information is provided about the alternatives' performance in satisfying the purpose and need. While some information is provided on reduction of weaving segments and traffic delay cost savings, more information on the results that each alternative is projected to achieve in meeting the purpose and need should be included in the EA.
- 3) In June 2007, Caltrans met with the Corps to discuss the Project. At that time, Caltrans explained that Alternative A was rejected because it included slip ramps, which are generally not recommended by the Federal Highway Administration ("FHWA"). At that time, Alternative 4, now described as "recently rejected," was still being promoted as a feasible alternative. Caltrans did not disclose to the Corps that Alternative 4 included slip ramps and was not recommended by the FHWA. The EA should explain why this information was not provided to the Corps in June 2007. The EA should also address what changes might be made to the design of Alternative 4 or its alignment that would allow its construction without slip ramps.
- 4) In the EA, Caltrans has provided some information on the alternatives dismissed based on FHWA policy, as we requested in our October 2007 letter. The EA cites the

#### CALTRANS RESPONSE #18:

**Cost was not a factor in the elimination of avoidance Alternatives C and D, nor Alternatives 2, 3, 4, A, or B.** Hence, any assertion that CALTRANS should compare the right-of-way cost of each alternative to the fair market value of USACE land, serves no purpose as it would change nothing. Also, please refer to CALTRANS RESPONSE #21.

#### CALTRANS RESPONSE #19:

Please refer to the "Supplemental Traffic Data" in the Appendices section of the final EA/IS. Fortunately, Alternative 1 is both the LEDPA and the best alternative from a freeway improvement and operations standpoint; therefore is best suited to meet the Purpose and Need. Unlike rejected Alternatives 2 and 3, selected Alternative 1 eliminates the existing weave segment on the southbound I-405, between Burbank Boulevard and the U.S.-101. Additionally, with the new, much larger, two-lane connector's ability to "store" stopped vehicles during heavy congestion (**improved capacity**), the southbound I-405 would experience less congestion-related back-ups and queuing at the interchange. Simply by removing/alleviating these risk factors, which are known to cause/contribute to accidents, CALTRANS can reliably postulate that safety would improve after implementation of Alternative 1, thereby achieving the "**improve safety**" component of the project's Purpose and Need. Please refer to the "Supplemental Traffic Data" to see how Alternative 1 would **improve operation and traffic flow** through the interchange (i.e. "Level of Service"). Also, please refer to CALTRANS RESPONSE #77.

#### CALTRANS RESPONSE #20:

CALTRANS thanks the USACE for catching that mistake. Rejected Alternative 4 does not contain slip ramps, and therefore, that was not the basis for the rejection of Alternative 4. That mistake was an internal misunderstanding between the CALTRANS Design team and the CALTRANS environmental team.

CALTRANS rejected Alternative 4 on the basis that it would make the eastbound US-101 less safe by introducing a **new** traffic weaving segment between the interchange and the Van Nuys Boulevard off-ramp. This would defeat the safety component of the project's Purpose and Need. Per the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), an agency can eliminate an alternative from further consideration if fails to achieve the project's Purpose and Need. Furthermore, before its elimination, Alternative 4 offered the worst freeway operational improvements when compared to Build Alternatives 1, 2, and 3.

The April 2008 draft EA/IS, in Appendix E, contains a written exchange that Caltrans had with Federal Highway Administration regarding the use of slip ramps as part of this project. That exchange directly resulted in the eventual elimination of Alternative A.

FHWA policy and explains that slip ramps are discouraged. The EA also states that "FHWA has already once denied Caltrans' request for a slip ramp design exemption." The EA should include information concerning any discussions that Caltrans has had with FHWA of using slip ramps on this project or suggestions from FHWA concerning potential alternatives to slip ramps.

5) The Corps is concerned that alternatives that would be prudent under the Section 4(f) analysis may have been overlooked in scoping. Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act of 1966 predates NEPA and contains a prescriptive element. When public land qualifies for protection under Section 4(f), it permits the land's use for a highway project only if there is no prudent and feasible alternative. In addition, the concept of prudence is broader than that of reasonableness under NEPA. In order to rule out an avoidance alternative under Section 4(f), the alternative must be infeasible or imprudent rather than unreasonable. As stated in FHWA guidance, "...[S]imply because under NEPA an alternative (that meets the purpose and need) is determined to be unreasonable, does not by definition mean it is imprudent under the higher substantive test of Section 4(f). Therefore, it is possible for an alternative that was examined but dismissed during the preliminary NEPA alternative screening process to still be a feasible and prudent avoidance alternative under Section 4(f). In other words, there is more room to reject alternatives as unreasonable under NEPA than there is to find those same alternatives are imprudent under Section 4(f)." (FHWA Policy Paper, 5). The EA should clarify where alternatives were dismissed due to imprudence rather than unreasonableness. To properly evaluate the prudence of alternatives, the costs and impacts of avoidance alternatives should be compared to the impacts and costs of a typical project of the kind in a comparable setting.

6) Section 4(f) requires that no use of a 4(f) resource be made unless there is no feasible and prudent avoidance alternative and that all possible planning has been undertaken to minimize impacts to the 4(f) resource. The EA should include additional information on whether certain alternatives could be modified or refined further to reduce impacts to the 4(f) resources at issue.

7) The set of alternatives considered before the public scoping process occurred appear to include a wider range of possibilities than those included in the EA. The Corps would like more information on the viability of the discarded alternatives considered but not discussed in the EA.

8) The Corps would like additional information concerning whether the impacts of the build alternatives on the dam could be reduced by moving the alignment of the NB 101 connector to the south and/or east, potentially affecting the Haskell Avenue interchange but avoiding the dam. In examining the alternatives considered in materials developed before the EA or the public scoping, it appears that Caltrans considered modifications or elimination of part or all of the Haskell Avenue Interchange to eliminate weaving issues. The EA should address why this alternative was dropped from consideration, and whether it could be used in combination with and/or to modify Alternative 1 to reduce impacts to the dam.

#### CALTRANS RESPONSE #20 continued:

The April 2008 draft EA/IS, in Appendix E, contains a written exchange that Caltrans had with Federal Highway Administration regarding the use of slip ramps as part of this project. That exchange directly resulted in the eventual elimination of Alternative A.

#### CALTRANS RESPONSE #21:

Quite to the contrary, during the Scoping period of May/June 2006, there only existed 5 (five) project alternatives: No Build Alternative + Alternatives 1, 2, 3, and 4. After Scoping, and after continued coordination with the USACE, CALTRANS added rejected Alternatives A, B, C, and D to show the full range of alternatives that CALTRANS has considered over the years. In other words, after Scoping, the number of project alternatives increased to nine (9) alternatives.

There has never existed more than nine (9) project alternatives. The Value Analysis Study of August 2003 was a multi-agency, multi-disciplinary brainstorming session, out of which Alternatives 2 and 3 were conceived (and Alternative A was eliminated). However, to believe that the Value Analysis Study is filled with rejected alternatives would be in error. Since Mr. Carvel Bass and Mr. Bill Ziegler of the USACE attended and **participated** in the Value Analysis Study (in particular Mr. Ziegler), the USACE should have a copy of that study.

Any continued insinuations or assertions that CALTRANS' comprehensive and extensive Alternatives Analysis is not adequate, would be in error. CALTRANS has selected Alternative 1, which is not only the Least Environmentally Damaging Practicable Alternative (LEDPA), but the only practicable alternative pursuant to E.O. 11988 – Floodplain Management. Selected Alternative 1 is the least environmentally disruptive build alternative **possible**, given the numerous environmental, community, right-of-way, and engineering constraints. Any insinuations/assertions that there exists another practicable alternative, or another alternative that is less environmentally damaging, less disruptive to the community, or more reasonable and prudent than Alternative 1, would be in error.

CALTRANS has carefully considered nine (9) alternatives, including the No-Build alternative. After nearly ten years of study, CALTRANS has proven that Alternative 1 is the LEDPA, the only practicable alternative pursuant to E.O. 11988, as well as, the most reasonable and prudent alternative:

- Alternative 1 has the smallest project impact footprint of any possible build alternative, and would result in the least overall harm.
- Alternative 1 would result in by far the least biological impacts of any reasonable and prudent alternative
- Alternative 1 would result in the least residential right-of-way and community impacts of any possible alternative
- Alternative 1 would result in the best freeway operational improvement, thereby achieving the best congestion relief, and best commute savings as vehicles on the southbound I-405 would travel quicker and more efficiently through the busiest interchange in the nation.
- CALTRANS and LADOT have coordinated extensively, and successfully identified mitigation to the local City street impacts posed by Alternative 1.

CALTRANS rejected the No Build Alternative on the basis that it is unacceptable to the community, the City of Los Angeles, elected officials, the Federal Highway Administration, and CALTRANS.

CALTRANS has rejected Alternatives 2 and 3 on the basis that Alternative 1 is a prudent and feasible alternative to encroaching upon the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve. This is consistent with the requirements set forth by Section 4(f) of the U.S. Department of Transportation Act.

CALTRANS rejected Alternative 4 on the basis that it would make the eastbound US-101 less safe by introducing a new traffic weaving segment between the interchange and the Van Nuys Boulevard off-ramp. This would defeat the safety component of the project's Purpose and Need. Per the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), an agency can eliminate an alternative from further consideration if fails to achieve the project's Purpose and Need. Furthermore, before its elimination, Alternative 4 offered the worst freeway

**CALTRANS RESPONSE #21 continued:**

operational improvements when compared to Build Alternatives 1, 2, and 3.

CALTRANS rejected Alternative A also on the basis that it is not compatible with the project's Purpose and Need. This alternative was a creative effort, on the part of Caltrans, to avoid impacts to the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve (caused by Alternatives 2 and 3), as well as, the impacts to the residential properties on the southeast side of the interchange (caused by Alternative 4). However, to accomplish this, Alternative A required what are termed "slip ramps". A slip ramp is an onramp, such as the onramp from Burbank Boulevard, that connects directly to a connector to retain an access that would otherwise be lost (i.e. from Burbank to the U.S.-101). Unfortunately, the Federal Highway Administration states that the implementation of slip ramps is "poor public policy" because slip ramps violate driver expectancy and introduce additional decision points in an area where the information-processing task is already complex. They also stated that slip ramps create a high potential for traffic queuing back onto the through freeway lanes, which in this case, is the southbound I-405 mainline. This defeats the Purpose and Need of this project, which seeks to reduce the traffic queuing and back-ups onto the southbound I-405. For this reason, Alternative A was rejected. As mentioned, per the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), an agency can eliminate an alternative from further consideration if fails to achieve the project's Purpose and Need.

CALTRANS rejected Alternative B, which was a creative effort on the part of the Los Angeles Department of Transportation to avoid the same impacts that Alternative A sought to avoid. Unfortunately, Alternative B was fatally flawed from an engineering standpoint. It would not have been possible to build Alternative B, due to the grade differences that would exist between the proposed and existing structures.

CALTRANS rejected Alternatives C and D on the basis of not being reasonable, per the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), nor prudent per Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act. CALTRANS created Alternatives C and D, as necessary avoidance alternatives that would avoid any impact to any Section 4(f) protected resources on U.S. Army Corps of Engineers land. Unlike any of the previously mentioned alternatives, Alternatives C and D would have had zero impacts to the historic Sepulveda Dam. Alternative C, however, would have required the full acquisition of 329 residential properties. Alternative D would have required the full acquisition of 2,422 residential properties. It can therefore be stated that the community disruption and environmental impacts posed by Alternatives C and D are of extraordinary magnitude when compared to all the previously-mentioned alternatives, and thus CALTRANS rejected Alternatives C and D on the basis of not being reasonable, nor prudent.

**Cost was not a factor in the elimination of avoidance Alternatives C and D, nor Alternatives 2, 3, 4, A, or B.** Hence, any assertion that CALTRANS should compare the right-of-way cost of each alternative to the fair market value of USACE land, serves no purpose as it would change nothing.

Furthermore, avoidance Alternatives C and D prove that going completely around USACE managed land to completely avoid any impact to the Sepulveda Dam cannot be justified as reasonable by either the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), nor prudent by Section 4(f) of the U.S. Department of Transportation Act. In accordance with NEPA, determining the scope of alternatives to be considered, the emphasis is on what is "reasonable". Hence, alternatives that are not "reasonable" can be eliminated from further consideration. In accordance with Section 4(f), an alternative may be rejected as not prudent if it would cause extraordinary community disruption. CALTRANS stands by the project's Alternatives Analysis, as discussed in the EA/IS.

**CALTRANS RESPONSE #22:**

Rejected Alternative C would have shifted the connectors southeast to avoid the Sepulveda Dam, while not impacting Haskell Avenue nor its on and offramps. Alternative C, however, would have required the full acquisition of 329 residential properties.

The removal of the Haskell Av/westbound U.S.101 on and offramps, as part of this project, were considered but were never adopted as alternatives. With the strong possibility of losing access from Burbank Bl to both directions of the U.S.-101 (selected Alternative 1), compounded by also losing access from Haskell Av to the westbound U.S.-101, the cumulative and disproportionate adverse traffic impacts to LADOT were deemed too severe if both were to occur; the associated community impacts would have reached extraordinary magnitude. Therefore to salvage Alternative 1, CALTRANS needed to discard any possibility of adopting the removal of the Haskell Av/westbound U.S.101 on and offramps, as part of the new connector's implementation.

9) The EA should provide more information on whether alternative ramp designs could be used for the Burbank Boulevard ramp. In particular, the EA should address whether there are other ramp designs, such as a roundabout or a single point urban interchange, that would occupy space comparable to the existing right of way.

10) In our letter of October 2007, we noted that a calculation of the costs of each alternative should include a calculation of the fair market value of Federal land. The cost analysis provided does not include a calculation of the fair market value of the land of the United States. Without this information, alternatives cannot be compared fairly.

#### V. Miscellaneous Comments

1) The phrase "five (4) alternatives" appears on page 7, Section 1.3 of the EA and again on page 4 of the Section 4(f) portion of the document. This typographical error should be corrected.

2) The Corps manages land owned by the United States in the Sepulveda Dam Flood Control Basin. The United States, not the Corps, owns the land and facilities. Throughout the EA, there are references to land or facilities owned by the Corps. These references are not accurate. Please correct this language within the document.

3) On page 38, under the section entitled "Sepulveda Basin Recreation Area," the EA reads in part, "The Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve is the only unpaved stretch of the Los Angeles River, which is also a source of reclaimed water for the area and the Donald C. Tillman Water Reclamation Plant." This statement should be corrected. The Tillman Water Reclamation Plant, and not the Los Angeles River, is a source of reclaimed water for the area. The reclaimed water flows into the Los Angeles River. In addition, the Sepulveda Basin does not contain the only unpaved stretch of the Los Angeles River, though the stretch of the river does play an important role in the area.

4) The "Impact" column for Alternative 2 and Alternative 3 on Table 9, located on page 46 of the EA, should be amended by adding a sentence that reads, "Unlike Alternative 1, this Alternative also poses right-of-way impacts to the Wildlife Refuge, a Section 4(f) protected property."

#### CALTRANS RESPONSE #23:

Per the CALTRANS Division of Design, roundabouts and single point urban interchanges would actually require **more** right-of-way at the project location than the proposed new connector (Alternative 1). Thus, if the purpose of such an exercise is to reduce or eliminate right-of-way impacts to USACE managed land, CALTRANS does not see the point of pursuing such an exercise. CALTRANS stands by its Alternatives Analysis as previously discussed: Selected Alternative 1 is the least environmentally disruptive build alternative **possible**, given the numerous environmental, community, right-of-way, and engineering constraints. Any insinuations/assertions that there exists another practicable alternative, or another alternative that is less environmentally damaging, less disruptive to the community, or more reasonable and prudent than Alternative 1, would be in error.

#### CALTRANS RESPONSE #24:

The only basis used for the elimination of alternatives was: a) Incompatibility with the project Purpose and Need b) Incompatibility with Section 4(f) of the U.S. Department of Transportation Act, and c) Fatal engineering flaw. **Cost was not a factor in the elimination of avoidance Alternatives C and D, nor Alternatives 2, 3, 4, A, or B.** Hence, any assertion that CALTRANS should compare the right-of-way cost of each alternative to the fair market value of USACE land, serves no purpose as it would change nothing. Also, please refer to CALTRANS RESPONSE #21.

#### CALTRANS RESPONSE #25:

Comments noted. CALTRANS has made the requested corrections to the EA/IS.

CALTRANS RESPONSE TO CDFG FORMAL COMMENT LETTER REGARDING THE DRAFT EA/IS



State of California - The Resources Agency  
DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME  
<http://www.dfg.ca.gov>  
South Coast Region  
4949 Viewridge Avenue  
San Diego, CA 92123  
(858) 467-4201

ARNOLD SCHWARZENEGGER, Governor



May 28, 2008

Mr. Ron Kosinski, Deputy District Director  
California Department of Transportation, District 7  
Division of Environmental Planning  
100 South Main Street-Mail Stop 28A  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Dear Mr. Kosinski:

**Notice of Completion of an Initial Study/Environmental Assessment for I-405 to the Westbound US-101 Connector Project, City of Los Angeles, Los Angeles County, SCH# 2008041100**

Dear Mr. Kosinski:

The Department of Fish and Game (Department), has reviewed the Notice of Completion for the Initial Study/Environmental Assessment (IS/EA) for a new elevated two-lane connector from the southbound (SB) Interstate-405 freeway, at the Burbank Boulevard over-crossing, to the northbound (NB) Ventura Freeway (Route 101), in the San Fernando Valley, City of Los Angeles. The Proposed connector would be a structure crossing over the spillway of the Sepulveda Dam. There are five alternatives under consideration. The purpose of the project is to upgrade the SB I-405 connector to the NB US-101 freeway to current design standards to improve safety and correct operational problems incurred as a result of the traffic queues formed by slow moving vehicles and a curve with an operational speed of 20 miles-per-hour.

Caltrans identified three "Build" Alternatives (1, 2 and 3) in this IS/EA document, but did not identify a preferred alternative to base environmental impacts upon. Each of the three alternatives share the following common features:

- Replacing the existing 20 mph single-lane connector from the SB I-405 to the NB U.S.-101 with a new 50 mph two-lane connector bridge that encroaches upon and spans over the spillway of the Sepulveda Dam,
- Eliminating the existing erratic and conflicting traffic weaving patterns between the Burbank Blvd on-ramp and the SB I-405 mainline as well as the traffic weaving patterns with SB I-405 mainline traffic attempting to access the US-101 connectors,
- Realignment and reconstruction of the Burbank Boulevard on-ramp to the SB I-405 and/or the US-101,
- Realignment and reconstruction of the current U.S. Army Corps of Engineers service road (northwest side of the Interchange) for the operation and maintenance of the Sepulveda Dam,
- Each poses an adverse impact to the historic Sepulveda Dam, which is a Section 4(f) resource, and
- All alternatives will impact the Sepulveda Wildlife Area via the two-lane connector from the SB I-405 to the NB U.S.-101 with a new 50 mph two-lane connector bridge that encroaches upon and spans over the spillway of the Sepulveda Dam. The Los Angeles River transverses this portion of the project.

*Conserving California's Wildlife Since 1870*

**CALTRANS RESPONSE #26:**

CALTRANS responses to CDFG's comments regarding the draft EA/IS are included in the pages that follow.

Mr. Kosinski  
May 28, 2008  
Page 2 of 9

The project proposes two alternatives (Alternatives 2 and 3) that would require the partial acquisition of the Sepulveda Wildlife Refuge in addition to the impacts that will occur to wildlife habitat below the Sepulveda Dam Spillway area. The Department has concerns with any project alternatives which would result in the reduction of wildlife habitat or buffer areas within or adjacent to the refuge, especially since this habitat supports several sensitive species including the Federally and State Listed least Bell's vireo (*Vireo bellii pusillus*), Canada goose (*Branta canadensis*), arroyo chub (*Gila orcutti*) a Fish Species of Special Concern, burrowing owl (*Athene cunicularia*) a Bird Species of Special Concern, pond turtle (*Actinemys (Clemmys) marmorata pallida*) a California Species of Special Concern, and several sensitive species which may occur but were not surveyed for including Los Angeles pocket mouse (*Perognathus longimembris brevinasus*), and numerous bat species.

1. **Assessment** -The IS/EA provided to the department did not contain sufficient detail as to the level and nature of potential impacts to the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Area, both above and below the dam, for the Department to concur with Caltrans findings of no significance. A preferred alternative should be identified and the appropriate document (Negative Declaration, Mitigated Negative Declaration, or Environmental Impact Report) should be prepared and circulated to the Department for comment. The document provided to the Department was only an Initial Study, is very preliminary in nature, does not identify a preferred alternative, and does not include any technical reports for Department review.

- A complete, recent assessment of botanical resources within and adjacent to the project area, with particular emphasis upon identifying endangered, threatened, and locally unique species and sensitive habitats (see Attachment 1 and Attachment 2) needs to be conducted. This should include a complete floral and faunal species compendium of the entire project site, undertaken at the appropriate time of year.
- The biological section of the IS/EA indicates that potential impacts to species were only analyzed "within project limits". This document should address both direct and indirect impacts, including indirect impacts from new lighting (both from cars using a new on-ramp within the wildlife area at night and from ambient street lighting), noise, trash, potential spills, increase fire risk from introducing vehicles into an area where currently they do not have access, etc.). Additionally, the document did not indicate whether impacts were analyzed for the project footprint only, or if the entire disturbance footprint for construction and ongoing maintenance were included in this document.
- The Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Area has documented occurrences of several sensitive status wildlife species occurring on-site, including pond turtle (*Actinemys (Clemmys) marmorata pallida*), but that focused surveys were not completed. Additionally, it is unclear if trapping for pond turtle (*Actinemys (Clemmys) marmorata pallida*) occurred, or if the biologists just did not observe this elusive species during general biological assessment site visits. Trapping for pond turtle is recommended as the site provides high quality habitat for this species and there is a high likelihood for its occurrence. Pond Turtles not only utilize ponds and deeper pools within streams, they also utilize adjacent upland habitat to complete portions of their lifecycle. Please analyze potential impacts, both direct and indirect, from construction related as well as permanent project related impacts to this species. Of major concern is the increased level of noise and human disturbance to this species during construction and potential water quality issues, increased predation from nuisance wildlife such as crows that may

#### CALTRANS RESPONSE #27:

In light of the overwhelming concern and opposition to any encroachment upon the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve, as well as the requirements set forth by Section 4(f) of the U.S. Department of Transportation Act, **Alternatives 2 and 3 have been rejected.** CALTRANS will only pursue Alternative 1 despite LADOT's continued opposition to this alternative. Unlike rejected Alternatives 2 and 3, Selected Alternative 1 does not carry with it the numerous encroachment impacts to the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve, or to the numerous species that live within the reserve. The Alternative 1 impact area is of low biological habitat value and inconsistent with the requirements of many of the endangered, threatened, or locally unique species and sensitive habitats identified in CDFG's comments. Impacts from selected Alternative 1 will be limited to the drainage area that runs adjacent to the southbound I-405, as well as, the highly disturbed area located immediately northeast to the Sepulveda Dam spillway. The biological impacts posed by selected Alternative 1 are sufficiently covered by the flora, fauna, and wetlands discussions of the final EA/IS and do not reach a level of significance that would require further study.

#### CALTRANS RESPONSE #28:

CALTRANS would like to provide some clarification on California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA):

- 1) CALTRANS, or any other government agency, cannot prepare a Negative Declaration (ND) or Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) without having first prepared an Initial Study (IS). The notion of bypassing an IS in order to prepare a ND or MND is equivalent to recommending that an EIR be bypassed so that a Findings/Statement of Overriding Considerations may instead be prepared. In other words, an IS is the environmental study that substantiates whether a ND or EIR needs to be prepared. And although an IS is not a necessary prerequisite to an EIR, it is a legally required prerequisite and justification document that accompanies a ND or MND.
- 2) CEQA does not require that an IS identify a preferred alternative, whereas NEPA requires that both an Environmental Assessment (EA) and Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) rigorously explore a reasonable range of alternatives rather than encouraging the unilateral selection of a preferred alternative. Likewise, CEQA requires the same for an Environmental Impact Report (EIR).

That is why CALTRANS rigorously considered nine (9) project alternatives in the draft EA/IS, as well as, ways to avoid and minimize project impacts to all affected resources. Also, during the Scoping phase and draft EA/IS comment period, CALTRANS solicited the input from all pertinent elected officials, all pertinent review and responsible government agencies, and the community. Then, before recently selecting Alternative 1, CALTRANS weighed the traffic data, the engineering data, the alternatives analysis data, the environmental impact data, and **the entire public comment record.** CALTRANS can therefore state with confidence that Alternative 1 is the least environmentally disruptive build alternative **possible**, given the numerous environmental, community, right-of-way, and engineering constraints. There exists no other alternative that is less environmentally damaging, less disruptive to the community, or more reasonable and prudent than Alternative 1.

#### CALTRANS RESPONSE #29:

The "sufficient detail" that CDFG is referring to is available, and was available during the EA/IS comment period. Unlike other EA/IS reviewers, CDFG did not request from CALTRANS the EA/IS component technical studies. The NEPA/CEQA document technical studies are always available upon request. As an important technical review and resource/regulatory agency, CDFG often makes such requests for additional information.

#### CALTRANS RESPONSE #30:

With the selection of Alternative 1, the potential for lighting impacts to the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve has been eliminated. Also, per the project's noise technical study, the projected increase in ambient noise after the implementation of Alternative 1 would be less than 1 dBA (decibel), which is well below any significant noise level impacts or increases. The interchange is currently the busiest in the nation, possibly even the world. CALTRANS does not expect the biological impacts posed by selected Alternative 1 to be significant.

Measures to minimize noise impacts during construction, as well as, measures to prevent trash and potential spills are defined in the final EA/IS Environmental Commitment Record (ECR).

result from new sources of trash into the wildlife area, and habitat degradation and loss.

- The IS/EA described in one paragraph a noise study that was completed for the area, but did not go into any detail other than to declare there would be no negative effect to sensitive wildlife in the area. It is not clear whether noise measurements for this study were obtained at various height levels from the ground into the tree canopies to accurately reflect the true noise exposure to birds in the area. The tree canopy is closer to the level of the proposed fly-way overcross below the dam. If noise measurements were only calculated using methods to assess noise impacts to humans the true impacts to birds using higher portions of the tree canopy to nest may have been underestimated. Please address potential impacts from both long term project noise levels, as well as acute, short-term construction noise (both noise levels and the effect of repetitive noise on wildlife) which may adversely affect wildlife in the area. Additionally, several construction techniques, including pile driving, can have extremely high mortality levels on wildlife from both noise levels and vibration. Pile driving has been documented to cause severe trauma to aquatic life via compression waves that injure swim bladders of fish. In addition, pile driving that occurs next to a waterbody in saturated soils may have the potential to transmit sound and/or pressure waves to this lake and injure aquatic wildlife. The wildlife lake is located within 500 feet of the construction zone and the Los Angeles River is within the construction zone. This document did not indicate whether or not this issue was assessed for both the Los Angeles River and the Wildlife Lake areas.
- The IS/EA did not indicate if or when any focused botanical surveys were conducted on-site, yet concludes that the site has no potential to support any rare, endangered, or threatened (RTE) plant species. This statement is not backed by any supporting documentation in the IS/EA. There is the potential for several sensitive plants to occur on this site and surveys are needed during the appropriate blooming period per Department Guidelines (Attachment 1). It is not known whether the habitat assessment was during the appropriate season to detect most sensitive plant species and the IS/EA did not include a botanical species compendium. Please clearly list field methodology for all site visits in all biological assessments.
- Furthermore, several plant species that have the potential to occur on-site, including *Erodium macrophyllum* (round-leaved filaree) and San Fernando Valley spine (*Chorizanthe parryi* var. *fermandina*) can occur in areas dominated by non-native plants and grasses such as *Bromus* sp. and *Brassica* sp. Presence or domination by non-native plant species is not a reason to discount the potential presence of most RTE plant species. The IS/EA also discounts the presence of many sensitive plant species due to the lack of appropriate habitat on-site, but provides no information about the condition of the project site such as a botanical compendium, soils, etc. Any species associated with coastal sage scrub, riparian, oak woodland, or other habitat types that occur on-site, either currently or historically, need to be surveyed for following Department protocol (Attachment 1).
- Page 140 of the EA states that because Nevin's barberry (*Berberis nevadensis*) and San Fernando Valley spine (*Chorizanthe parryi* var. *fermandina*) are anticipated to be absent from the project site, even through suitable habitat occurs, no impacts are anticipated.

**CALTRANS RESPONSE #31:**

Also, please refer to CALTRANS RESPONSE #29.

There will be no pile driving in any surface water body, including the concrete-lined Los Angeles River, or in saturated soils. Due to the selection of Alternative 1, CALTRANS does not expect vibration or habitat impacts to fish species (including Arroyo Chub) as a result of this project. Furthermore, through the use of noise blankets during construction, noise levels can be reduced by at least 20 dBA (decibels), which would be equivalent to the current ambient noise levels at the project site. Also, per the project's noise technical study, the projected increase in ambient noise after the implementation of Alternative 1 would be less than 1 dBA (decibel), which is well below any significant noise level impacts or increases.

**CALTRANS RESPONSE #32:**

General botanical surveys were conducted during the development of the draft EA/IS. With the selection of Alternative 1, and a much smaller project footprint to assess, focused floral and faunal surveys can and will be conducted within the scope and context of Alternative 1. These focused surveys will be conducted during the PS&E phase of the project, prior to the application of the required Streambed Alteration Agreement from CDFG, and other regulatory agency permits.

Also, please refer to CALTRANS RESPONSE #27.

"Project Impacts (*Nevin's Barberrry*). Although coastal scrub habitat is present, the proposed project is not expected to affect this plant, due to its anticipated absence from the project area.  
Cumulative Effects (*Nevin's Barberrry*). Cumulative effects resulting from the proposed project area not anticipated for this species because the proposed project will not affect this species.  
Projects Impacts (*San Fernando Valley Spine Flower*). Although coastal scrub habitat is present, the proposed project is not expected to affect this plant, due to its anticipated absence from the project area.  
Cumulative Effects (*San Fernando Valley Spine Flower*). Cumulative effects resulting from the proposed project area not anticipated for this species because the proposed project will not affect this species."

If the potential for any listed or sensitive plant exists on the project site, focused surveys according to Department Guidelines (Attachment 1) should be conducted. The fact that Caltrans anticipates something as being absent is not sufficient to declare it not present without accompanying surveys to back up this claim. CEQA provides protection not only for state-listed plants, but for any species which can be shown to meet the criteria for state listing (CEQA Section 15390). The Department recognizes that plants listed as 1A, 1B and 2 by the California Native Plant Society, in a majority of cases, would qualify for listing and require a mandatory finding of significance by the Lead Agency. The document provided to the Department did not appear to include a complete analysis of these plants which may occur on the project site.

- In several places within the IS/EA, the statement "A search of the California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDDB) did not reveal any occurrences of this species" is used to justify the absence of a species within the area potential affected by the project. The CNDDDB is a positive sighting database, and lack of data for a species in an area is in no way an indication that the species does not occur. Only a survey conducted using proper protocols during the appropriate season by qualified individuals can be used to determine if a species is absent from a project site. Additionally, the dominance of non-native vegetation can not be used as the sole determination that a species will not be found in an area. Many rare, native plant species have been discovered on sites with 100% non-native cover. An assessment of the historical condition of the property should be used to determine the habitat that used to be on the site, and that information should be factored into whether historically suitable habitat may have existed. Additionally, most areas have not been exhaustively searched for all species, therefore species and habitat types that are not documented in the species records can be found in project areas. For this reason, the Department recommends an eight quadrangle CNDDDB search for the project area as species found in adjacent areas do have the potential to occur in similar habitat types within the project area. Please list the date of your CNDDDB search as they expire, and list the quadrangles included in your search. The Department conducted a search of the CNDDDB on May 27, 2008 resulting in a list indicating more species occurring in the project area than was listed in the IS/EA.
- Department biologists have indicated that burrowing owl (*Athene cunicularia*) a Bird Species of Special Concern, was documented overwintering in the area where the proposed on-ramp loops for Alternatives 2 and 3 are proposed to impact the Sepulveda Wildlife Refuge. Additionally, burrowing owls have been observed historically below the Sepulveda Dam, in the area where the flyway connector for all project alternatives is proposed. Please include an analysis of potential impacts to this species in the CEQA document. If a complete burrowing

**CALTRANS RESPONSE #32 continued:**

General botanical surveys were conducted during the development of the draft EA/IS. With the selection of Alternative 1, and a much smaller project footprint to assess, focused floral and faunal surveys can and will be conducted within the scope and context of Alternative 1. These focused surveys will be conducted during the PS&E phase of the project, prior to the application of the required Streambed Alteration Agreement from CDFG, and other regulatory agency permits.

Also, please refer to CALTRANS RESPONSE #27.

owl survey was not conducted on the project site, the Department recommends a complete survey following the Department's 1995 Staff Report on Burrowing Owl Mitigation and the Burrowing Owl Consortium's 1992 Burrowing Owl Protocol and Mitigation Guidelines including the passive relocation guidelines. Results should be included in any CEQA document so impacts from the project are disclosed and appropriate mitigation measures can be included in the document prior to Lead Agency approval.

- Arroyo chub (*Gila orcutti*), a Fish Species of Special Concern have been documented in the tributary streams above Burbank Boulevard, within close proximity to the project. Please assess the range, distribution, and potential impacts that may result to this species from both direct and indirect impacts, temporary construction related, and permanent impacts from this project.
- A detailed discussion on fuel modification requirements and impacts to habitat should be included in the DEIR. It is not clear how habitat that will not be directly effected by grading may be effected by fire clearance activities. Potential thinning and clearing of herbs and shrubs in the riparian understory could greatly impact sensitive resources known to utilize the Sepulveda Wildlife Refuge at this location. Additionally, a buffer analysis should be conducted to ensure adequate, undisturbed, upland habitat is left adjacent to the wildlife refuge lake to ensure reptiles and amphibians have the necessary habitat to complete all of their lifecycle requirements.
- Bats are considered non-game mammals and are afforded protection by state law from take and/or harassment, (Fish and Game Code Section 4150, California Code of Regulations, Section 251.1). Several bat species are also considered California Species of Special Concern (CSSC) and are known to occur in the project area. The Department recommends surveys be conducted to determine the presence of bat species that may be impacted by the project, results should be included in any CEQA document so impacts from the project are disclosed and appropriate mitigation measures can be included in the document prior to Lead Agency approval. The Department recommends avoiding disturbances to all bat roosting and nursery habitat including on-site structures between March 1 and September 15 to avoid the breeding season for bats unless preconstruction surveys are conducted by a qualified biologist and no bat roosts or nurseries are found within the project area.
- The Department's Biogeographic Data Branch in Sacramento should be contacted at (916) 322-2493 to obtain current information on any previously reported sensitive species and habitats, including Significant Natural Areas identified under Chapter 12 of the Fish and Game Code. Also, any Significant Ecological Areas (SEAs) or Environmentally Sensitive Habitats (ESHs) or any areas that are considered sensitive by the local jurisdiction that are located in or adjacent to the project area must be addressed.
- A thorough discussion of direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts expected to adversely affect biological resources, with specific measures to offset such impacts. This discussion should focus on maximizing avoidance, and minimizing impacts.
  1. CEQA Guidelines, Section 15125(a), direct that knowledge of the regional setting is critical to an assessment of environmental impacts and that

**CALTRANS RESPONSE #32 continued:**

General botanical surveys were conducted during the development of the draft EA/IS. With the selection of Alternative 1, and a much smaller project footprint to assess, focused floral and faunal surveys can and will be conducted within the scope and context of Alternative 1. These focused surveys will be conducted during the PS&E phase of the project, prior to the application of the required Streambed Alteration Agreement from CDFG, and other regulatory agency permits.

Also, please refer to CALTRANS RESPONSE #27 and #31.

**CALTRANS RESPONSE #33:**

Selected Alternative 1 does not pose any impacts to any bridges that may contain bat roosting or nursery habitat. Furthermore, as discussed in the Environmental Commitment Record (ECR) of the final EA/IS, CALTRANS will require that all vegetation/tree clearing and grubbing be **performed outside the time period of February 15 through September 15.**

Regardless, surveys would be conducted at the appropriate time prior to the start of any construction activities so as to ensure zero impact tree roosting bats. Therefore, impacts to bats are not expected as a result of selected Alternative 1.

**CALTRANS RESPONSE #34:**

Please refer to CALTRANS RESPONSE #27.

special emphasis should be placed on resources that are rare or unique to the region.

2. Project impacts should also be analyzed relative to their effects on off-site habitats and populations. Specifically, this should include nearby public lands, open space, adjacent natural habitats, and riparian ecosystems. Impacts to and maintenance of wildlife corridor/movement areas, including access to undisturbed habitat in adjacent areas are of concern to the Department and should be fully evaluated and provided. The analysis should also include a discussion of the potential for impacts resulting from such effects as increased vehicle traffic, outdoor artificial lighting, noise and vibration.
  3. A cumulative effects analysis should be developed as described under CEQA Guidelines, Section 15130. General and specific plans, as well as past, present, and anticipated future projects, should be analyzed relative to their impacts on similar plant communities and wildlife habitats.
  4. Impacts to migratory wildlife affected by the project should be fully evaluated including proposals to removal/disturb native and ornamental landscaping and other nesting habitat for native birds. Impact evaluation may also include such elements as migratory butterfly roost sites and neo-tropical bird and waterfowl stop-over and staging sites. All migratory nongame native bird species are protected by international treaty under the Federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) of 1918 (50 C.F.R. Section 10.13). Sections 3503, 3503.5 and 3513 of the California Fish and Game Code prohibit take of birds and their active nests, including raptors and other migratory nongame birds as listed under the MBTA.
2. California Endangered Species Act (CESA) – A CESA Permit must be obtained, if the project has the potential to result in “take” of species of plants or animals listed under CESA, either during construction or over the life of the project. CESA Permits are issued to conserve, protect, enhance, and restore State-listed threatened or endangered species and their habitats. Early consultation is encouraged, as significant modification to the proposed project and mitigation measures may be required in order to obtain a CESA Permit. Revisions to the Fish and Game Code, effective January 1998, require that the Department issue a separate CEQA document for the issuance of a CESA permit unless the project CEQA document addresses all project impacts to listed species and specifies a mitigation monitoring and reporting program that will meet the requirements of a CESA permit. For these reasons, the following information is requested:
- Biological mitigation monitoring and reporting proposals should be of sufficient detail and resolution to satisfy the requirements for a CESA Permit.
  - A Department-approved Mitigation Agreement and Mitigation Plan is required for plants listed as rare under the Native Plant Protection Act.
3. Regulated Waters - The IS/EA did not quantify the impacts or acres of Department regulated waters that would be impacted from this project. Please address this issue as this project appears to encroach into several regulated waters including the Los Angeles River. Impacts associated from fire roads, bridges, storm drains, fire clearance, etc. appear to encroach into regulated jurisdiction. The Department opposes the elimination

**CALTRANS RESPONSE #34 continued:**  
Please refer to CALTRANS RESPONSE #27.

**CALTRANS RESPONSE #35:**  
Please refer to CALTRANS RESPONSE #27 and #30.

**CALTRANS RESPONSE #36:**  
Please refer to CALTRANS RESPONSE #27.

**CALTRANS RESPONSE #37:**  
As discussed in the Environmental Commitment Record (ECR) of the final EA/IS, CALTRANS will require that all vegetation/tree clearing and grubbing be **performed outside the time period of February 15 through September 15.**

Furthermore, bird protection pursuant to the Migratory Bird Treaty Act is identified in the draft EA/IS. With the selection of Alternative 1, the project is anticipated to have minimal impacts to this resource. Standard bird surveys will be performed prior to start of any construction activities.

**CALTRANS RESPONSE #38:**  
Since selected Alternative 1 would not impact the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve, impacts to listed plant or animal species are highly unlikely. For that reason, CALTRANS does not anticipate the need for a 2081 Incidental Take Permit from CDFG.

**CALTRANS RESPONSE #39:**  
With the selection of Alternative 1, CALTRANS has since completed the wetland delineation and report for the Alternative 1 impact area. Please refer to the wetlands discussion of the final EA/IS, as well as, the Appendices section of the EA/IS to view the wetland delineation report. Impacts to State and Federal wetlands are identified and discussed.

of watercourses (including concrete channels) and/or the canalization of natural and manmade drainages or conversion to subsurface drains. All wetlands and watercourses, whether intermittent, ephemeral, or perennial, must be retained and provided with substantial setbacks which preserve the riparian and aquatic habitat values and maintain their value to on-site and off-site wildlife populations. The Department recommends a minimum natural buffer of 500 feet from the outside edge of the riparian zone on each side of a drainage.

- The Department requires a Streambed Alteration Agreement (SAA), pursuant to Section 1800 et seq. of the Fish and Game Code, with the applicant prior to any direct or indirect impact to a lake or stream bed, bank or channel or associated riparian resources. The Department's issuance of a SAA may be a project that is subject to CEQA. To facilitate our issuance of the Agreement when CEQA applies, the Department as a responsible agency under CEQA may consider the local jurisdiction's (Lead Agency) document for the project. To minimize additional requirements by the Department under CEQA the document should fully identify the potential impacts to the lake, stream or riparian resources and provide adequate avoidance, mitigation, monitoring and reporting commitments for issuance of the Agreement. Early consultation is recommended, since modification of the proposed project may be required to avoid or reduce impacts to fish and wildlife resources.
4. Native Bird Avoidance - The project site supports nesting habitat for native birds. Additionally, Department biologists have observed swallows and swifts nesting in the culvert where the Los Angeles River crosses under several connector roads and the I-405, below the Sepulveda Dam.
- Nesting bird surveys should continue on a weekly basis with the last survey being conducted no more than three days prior to the initiation of clearances/construction work. If a protected native bird is found, the project proponent should delay all clearance/construction disturbance activities in suitable nesting habitat or within 200 feet of nesting habitat (within 500 feet for raptor nesting habitat) until August 31 or continue the surveys in order to locate any nests. If an active nest is located, clearing and construction within 200 feet of the nest (within 500 feet for raptor nests) shall be postponed until the nest is vacated and juveniles have fledged and when there is no evidence of a second attempt at nesting. Limits of construction to avoid a nest should be established in the field with flagging and stakes or construction fencing. Construction personnel should be instructed on the sensitivity of the area. The project proponent should record the results of the recommended protective measures described above to document compliance with applicable State and federal laws pertaining to the protection of native birds.
5. Mitigation - The Monies acquired from the Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) were used to perform improvements to the refuge. A 25 year sub lease and operating agreement was entered into between the Wildlife WCB/Department and the City of Los Angeles in September of 1985. The sub lease and operating agreement specifies that changes to the use of the refuge would be considered a breach if these changes impact refuge improvements that were paid for by the WCB. The Department recommends a project alternative which does not necessitate impacting the refuge, its buffers or any other areas considered as significant wildlife habitat. If the impacts to the refuge cannot be

**CALTRANS RESPONSE #40:**

CALTRANS will apply for a Streamed Alteration Agreement pursuant to Fish and Game Code 1602. This will be done after the completion of the NEPA/CEQA document, and during the PS&E phase of the project.

**CALTRANS RESPONSE #41:**

Please refer to CALTRANS RESPONSE #37.

**CALTRANS RESPONSE #42:**

With the Selection of Alternative 1, which does not impact the "Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve, its buffers, or any other areas considered as significant wildlife habitat", CALTRANS does not anticipate a potential impediment or breach to the Wildlife Conservation Board's refuge improvement program.

Mr. Kosinski  
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avoided, one possible remedy could be a prorated reimbursement to the WCB of the original refuge improvement cost.

- Impacts to state and/or federal listed species are considered significant under CEQA unless fully mitigated and would require additional consultation with the Department and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service under the state and federal Endangered Species Acts. Impacts to CSSC and/or 1B listed plant species should be considered significant under CEQA unless mitigated below a level of significance. The IS/EA does not describe in enough detail how impacts to special status species will be mitigated sufficiently to justify a Notice of Completion for the environmental review period. Simply stating that the applicant will consult with the Department of Fish and Game to determine impacts to species, does not constitute appropriate disclosure or satisfy mitigation measures under CEQA. At the time the lead agency notices a draft environmental document for a project, the presence of any rare, threatened, endangered, or other sensitive resources should have already been determined along with any proposed avoidance and mitigation measures. Without knowing if in fact special status species occur on a project site, it would be difficult to plan for avoidance and appropriate mitigation measures once grading is about to commence and the project has been designed.
- The Department recommends avoidance of special status species as detected during focused surveys as warranted by habitat types found on the site using a BA. If avoidance is not feasible, on-site protection in perpetuity and/or off-site acquisition or habitat of similar or superior quality and protection in perpetuity under a conservation easement is recommended. The Department does not recommend translocation of special status plant species as these efforts often fail and do not mitigate below a level of significance under CEQA. Given the unique resource the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Area represents spatially, avoidance to all resources within the Wildlife Area is recommended by the Department. The incremental loss of this important wildlife area is resulting in significant cumulative impacts to species that depend on this island of habitat in a heavily developed urban landscape. Potential mitigation should include looking at ways to obtain land within the Sepulveda Basin, such as agricultural fields, grass, etc. and convert this area to habitat to provide a no net loss of habitat in the basin.

The Department recommends that the above concerns be addressed prior to Lead Agency approval of the proposed project. Based on the sensitive nature of this important regional wildlife refuge, and potential impacts from all alternatives to wildlife resources, the Department recommends an Environmental Impact Report be prepared for any alternative selected, since one was not identified in the IS/EA provided. The Department does not concur with the Notice of Completion filed with the State Clearinghouse based on an initial study that did not identify a preferred alternative, nor biological impacts in sufficient detail.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide comment. Questions regarding this letter and further coordination on these issues should be directed to Ms. Kelly Schmoker, Staff Environmental Scientist, at (825) 335-4369.

Sincerely,  
  
Edmund J. Pert  
Regional Manager  
South Coast Region

**CALTRANS RESPONSE #42 continued:**

With the Selection of Alternative 1, which does not impact the "Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve, its buffers, or any other areas considered as significant wildlife habitat", CALTRANS does not anticipate a potential impediment or breach to the Wildlife Conservation Board's refuge improvement program.

**CALTRANS RESPONSE #43:**

CDFG did not identify any specific, adopted thresholds of significance, particularly in regards to selected Alternative 1, and therefore, CALTRANS cannot empirically gage, measure, nor substantiate CDFG's assertions/insinuations that Alternative 1 poses significant impacts. For that reason, CALTRANS cannot accept CDFG's recommendation that an EIR be prepared.

As discussed in CALTRANS RESPONSE #27, the biological impacts posed by selected Alternative 1 are sufficiently covered by the flora, fauna, and wetlands discussions of the final EA/IS and do not reach a level of significance that would require further study.

As discussed in CALTRANS RESPONSE #28, CEQA does not require that an IS identify a preferred alternative, whereas NEPA requires that both an Environmental Assessment (EA) and Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) rigorously explore a reasonable range of alternatives rather than encouraging the unilateral selection of a preferred alternative. Likewise, CEQA requires the same for an Environmental Impact Report (EIR). Therefore, since CDFG is asking that an EIR be prepared, CDFG may in a way be contradicting itself.

Lastly, as discussed in CALTRANS RESPONSE #29, the "sufficient detail" that CDFG claims to have needed, is available, and was available, during the EA/IS comment period. Unlike other EA/IS reviewers, CDFG did not request from CALTRANS the EA/IS component technical studies. The NEPA/CEQA document technical studies are always available upon request. As an important technical review and resource/regulatory agency, CDFG typically requests additional information rather than drawing major conclusions based on what it has itself deemed insufficient information.

Mr Kosinski  
May 28, 2008  
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Enclosures: Attachments 1 and 2

cc: Ms. Heen Birs, Los Alamitos  
Ms. Terri Dickerson, Laguna Niguel  
Mr. Scott Harro, Pasadena  
HCP-Fab Con-Chron, Department of Fish and Game  
State Clearinghouse, Sacramento

Mr. John Nuhn  
General Manager  
Los Angeles City Department of Recreation and Parks  
1200 West 7<sup>th</sup> Street, Room 748  
Los Angeles, CA 90017

Mr. Carvel Bass  
Operations Branch  
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers  
911 Wishire Boulevard  
P.O. Box 53711, DESPL-CO-0  
Los Angeles, CA 90053-2325

California Native Plant Society  
San Gabriel Mountains Chapter  
1750 North Allardria Drive  
Pasadena, California 91107-1046

Los Angeles Audubon Society  
7377 Santa Monica Blvd  
West Hollywood CA 90046-9694

Sierra Club  
San Fernando Valley Chapter  
P.O. BOX 370485  
Reseda, CA 91337

EP ks

# CALTRANS RESPONSE TO RESOURCE CONSERVATION DISTRICT FORMAL COMMENT LETTER REGARDING THE DRAFT EA/IS



## RESOURCE CONSERVATION DISTRICT OF THE SANTA MONICA MOUNTAINS

3000 MULHOLLAND HIGHWAY, AGOURA HILLS, CALIFORNIA 91301  
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A Political Subdivision of the  
State of California

DANIEL C. PEFECCE  
Executive Officer

May 28, 2008

Mr. Ronald J. Kosinski  
Deputy District Director  
Division of Environmental Planning  
California Department of Transportation  
100 S. Main Street, Suite MS 16A  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

**RE:** Southbound Interstate-405 to the U.S. Highway 101 Connector Improvement Project

Mr. Kosinski,

These comments on the proposed I-405 to Highway 101 connector improvement project are provided on behalf of the Resource Conservation District of the Santa Monica Mountains. We have reviewed both the Draft EA/IS and Section 4 (F) Evaluation (dated April 2008) and the Draft Natural Environment Study Report (NESR), dated June 2007.

We are opposed to two of the three alternatives that remain under consideration: Alternatives 2 and 3. Both alternatives would result in significant impacts to wetlands, sensitive habitats and several special status wildlife species of the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve. According to the City of Los Angeles Recreation and Parks website, the 60-acre habitat north of Burbank Boulevard between the dam and Haskell Creek was formally established as a wildlife area in 1988 and involved grading for the wildlife lake and extensive planting of native annuals, shrubs, and trees.

It is important to consider the direct and indirect impacts of Alternatives 2 and 3 on wildlife species. Direct impacts would involve the destruction of individuals or removal of habitat for numerous species, including birds, mammals and reptiles. Additional habitat degradation would occur through grading or excavation, increases in water or air pollutants, increased noise, light, or vibration, reduction in food supplies or foraging areas, and interference with established wildlife movement patterns on or between habitat areas.

A Bioacoustics and Highway Noise Impacts study conducted for the project found that the ambient noise levels in the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve would increase significantly due to traffic noise from the new freeway connector and on/off ramps and may experience temporary but significant noise increase during the construction phase of the project.

### **CALTRANS RESPONSE #44:**

In light of the overwhelming concern and opposition to any encroachment upon the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve, as well as the requirements set forth by Section 4(f) of the U.S. Department of Transportation Act, **Alternatives 2 and 3 have been rejected.**

CALTRANS will only pursue Alternative 1 despite LADOT's continued opposition to this alternative. Unlike rejected Alternatives 2 and 3, Selected Alternative 1 does not carry with it the numerous encroachment impacts to the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve, or to the numerous species that live within the reserve.

With the selection of Alternative 1, the potential for lighting impacts to the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve has been eliminated. Also, per the project's noise technical study, the projected increase in ambient noise after the implementation of Alternative 1 would be less than 1 dBA (decibel), which is well below any significant noise level impacts or increases.

With the selection of Alternative 1, there would be no pile driving with the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve, nor any pile driving in any surface water body, including the concrete-lined Los Angeles River, or in saturated soils. Due to the selection of Alternative 1, CALTRANS does not expect vibration or habitat impacts within the reserve. Furthermore, through the use of noise blankets during construction, noise levels can be reduced by at least 20 dBA (decibels), which would be equivalent to the current ambient noise levels at the project site. Therefore, CALTRANS does not expect any biological impacts posed by selected Alternative 1 to be significant.

### Birds

Over 200 birds have been documented by the San Fernando Audubon Society (SFV Audubon) within the wildlife reserve. Many of these birds are found year round, while the remainder of the species use the reserve as an important migratory corridor. Among the birds sighted are the state and federally listed least Bell's vireo (*Vireo bellii pusillus*) and burrowing owl (*Athene cunicularia*), a state Species of Special Concern. The NESR includes a comprehensive species list provided by SFV Audubon which includes numerous migratory waterfowl, shorebirds, raptors, and passerines. The area is one of only five areas of the San Fernando Valley that is regularly used by wintering Canada geese. Bird species flock to this wildlife refuge due to the varied habitats which occur within it, including wetland areas, riparian vegetation, and oak and walnut woodland. Alternatives 2 and 3 would have a far greater impact to bird species due to the encroachment upon the sensitive habitats north of Burbank Boulevard, including potential wetlands.

### Wetlands

A formal jurisdictional delineation has not been conducted on the project site. It is imperative for the NESR to include the results of the delineation, with temporary and permanent impact acreages of wetland areas under the jurisdiction of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB), and the California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG). Without these calculations, mitigation cannot be addressed and necessary permits from the regulatory agencies cannot be identified. As part of the permit application package, an Approved Jurisdictional Delineation Form will have to be submitted along with the jurisdictional delineation.

Furthermore, we question the methods of the preliminary wetland delineation that was performed along the east edge of the project site, since no information was provided on the results of the three parameter test (soil, hydrology, and hydrophytic vegetation) that indicate the presence of a wetland.

The encroachment onto the wildlife reserve by Alternative 2 and 3 would increase the discharge of storm water pollutants into the wetlands, riparian areas, Haskell Creek and Reach 5 of the Los Angeles River, an already impaired water body on the RWQCB's 303(d) list. The EA/IS states that all the alternatives would have to encroach on the dam reservoir at the upstream slope of the dam embankment. However, only Alternatives 2 and 3 would cross the Dam Maintenance Access Road at grade, encroaching upon the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Refuge, inside the flood control basin, and reduce the flood volume storage capacity of the Sepulveda Dam, posing an additional adverse impact to the dam.

### Oak Trees

According to the EA/IS, a coast live oak woodland occurs along the north side of Burbank Boulevard within the proposed site for Alternatives 2 and 3. Approximately 25 to 30 out of 73 trees would be removed or encroached upon, causing severe habitat fragmentation of a woodland that connects to Haskell Creek, which eventually drains into the Los Angeles River.

The NESR does not include an oak tree report or any information on the regulatory framework for oaks and oak woodland protection within section 2.1 "Regulatory Requirements". The Los Angeles County Oak Tree Protection Ordinance specifically calls project designs that allow for the retention of mature oaks on a given property. This project is designed in such a way that the disturbance footprint impacts almost half of the oak trees on the project site. This is in direct contrast to the goals of the ordinance. Additionally, Significant Oak Woodlands are further identified as critical resources within LA County. The Board of Forestry and Fire Protection's defines an oak woodland as those stands with a canopy cover

### **CALTRANS RESPONSE #44 continued:**

As previously discussed, **Alternatives 2 and 3 have been rejected.**

Also, as discussed in the Environmental Commitment Record (ECR) of the final EA/IS, CALTRANS will require that all vegetation/tree clearing and grubbing be **performed outside the time period of February 15 through September 15.**

Furthermore, bird protection pursuant to the Migratory Bird Treaty Act is identified in the draft EA/IS. With the selection of Alternative 1, the project is anticipated to have minimal impacts to this resource. Standard bird surveys will be performed prior to start of any construction activities.

### **CALTRANS RESPONSE #45:**

With the selection of Alternative 1, CALTRANS has since completed the wetland delineation and report for the Alternative 1 impact area. Please refer to the wetlands discussion of the final EA/IS, as well as, the Appendices section of the final EA/IS to view the wetland delineation report. Impacts to State and Federal wetlands are identified and discussed.

Also, please refer to CALTRANS RESPONSE #44.

of 10% or greater (1/19/06). The Board has regulatory authority over oak woodlands at the local or state level.

#### Sensitive Wildlife Species

##### *Least Bell's Vireo*

The NESR claims that least Bell's vireo was not determined within the project site, and therefore compensatory mitigation will not be required. This assessment is inadequate, given that no federal protocol surveys have been conducted for the least Bell's vireo on the project site.

Although the applicant does not expect this species within the project site, one individual was observed in 2004 adjacent to the project site. In order to adequately address impacts to this species, and determine the need for a formal Section 7 Consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), the applicant must conduct a protocol-level survey for this species according to the approved U.S. Fish and Wildlife survey guidelines (eight surveys from April 10 to July 30). Given the close proximity of the site to suitable riparian vegetation, and previous examples of vireos establishing within flood control basins, the CDFG and USFWS is likely to require these surveys.

##### *Burrowing Owl*

The NESR states that habitat associated with this species may be present within the project limits since the species is historically known to be present in the area and signs of possible presence were found during the general surveys. The same NESR claims that the "Presence of burrowing owl was not determined within the project site, therefore compensatory mitigation will not be required." This statement is not only based on inadequate surveys, but is in direct contradiction to the first statement regarding the presence of suitable habitat. Our suggestion is that protocol surveys be performed in order to make a proper determination and avoid confusion.

By now, either spring or winter protocol surveys (or both) should have been conducted for burrowing owl on site in order to properly discuss impacts and mitigation. According to the *California Department of Fish and Game Staff Report on Burrowing Owl Mitigation*, both spring and winter protocol surveys should be conducted for burrowing owls or their sign within suitable habitat, unless the species is detected on the first survey. Since suitable habitat for burrowing owl occurs on sites, surveys should be conducted within the project site and a 500-foot buffer, where possible and appropriate based on habitat. In addition to protocol surveys, a 30 day pre-construction survey should be conducted if the species is not detected but likely to occur on the project site.

Lastly, Section 4.4.2.3 concludes that Alternative 1 will have impacts to burrowing owl habitat, but does not mention Alternatives 2 and 3, which could have similar impacts.

##### *Other Species*

Although the NESR recognizes the potential for bats to occur in the area, no focused surveys for bat species have been conducted, which makes it impossible to assess impacts and establish mitigation. Local occurrences of the silver-haired bat (*Lasiurus noctivagans*) and hoary bat (*Lasiurus cinereus*) have been documented in the vicinity of the project site.

#### **CALTRANS RESPONSE #46:**

As previously discussed, **Alternatives 2 and 3 have been rejected.**

#### **CALTRANS RESPONSE #47:**

The Alternative 1 impact area is of low biological habitat value. Impacts from selected Alternative 1 will be limited to the drainage area that runs adjacent to the southbound I-405, as well as, the highly disturbed area located immediately northeast to the Sepulveda Dam spillway. Furthermore, with the selection of Alternative 1, which results in a much smaller project footprint to assess, focused floral and faunal surveys can and will be conducted within the scope and context of Alternative 1. These focused surveys will be conducted during the PS&E phase of the project.

#### **CALTRANS RESPONSE #48:**

Selected Alternative 1 does not pose any impacts to any bridges that may contain bat roosting or nursery habitat. Furthermore, as discussed in the Environmental Commitment Record (ECR) of the final EA/IS, CALTRANS will require that all vegetation/tree clearing and grubbing be **performed outside the time period of February 15 through September 15.**

Also, surveys would be conducted at the appropriate time prior to the start of any construction activities so as to ensure zero impact tree roosting bats. Therefore, impacts to bats are not expected as a result of selected Alternative 1.

### Determination of Significance

The NBSR contains a poor discussion on potential impacts and mitigation for the sensitive biological resources potentially occurring within or adjacent to the project site (including least Bell's vireo, burrowing owl, raptors, and wetlands). It does not present sufficient evidence for the conclusions it reaches regarding significance of impacts. The City of Los Angeles CEQA Thresholds of Significance clearly defines the following as having significant impacts on biological resources:

- The loss of individuals, or the reduction of existing habitat, of a state or federal listed endangered, threatened, rare, protected, or candidate species, or a Species of Special Concern or federally listed critical habitat;
- The loss of individuals or the reduction of existing habitat of a locally designated species or a reduction in a locally designated natural habitat or plant community;
- Interference with wildlife movement/migration corridors that may diminish the chances for long-term survival of a sensitive species;
- The alteration of an existing wetland habitat; or
- Interference with habitat such that normal species behaviors are disturbed (e.g., from the introduction of noise, light) to a degree that may diminish the chances for long-term survival of a sensitive species.

Alternatives 2 and 3 would result in all five of the above listed significant impacts to biological resources. Therefore, we suggest that the NBSR be revised to properly address impacts and that the applicant utilizes the City of LA's CEQA threshold guidelines for biological resources to define significance of impacts.

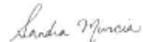
### Conclusion

After careful review of the Draft EA/IS and Draft NESR, it is clear that several focused surveys for wildlife species (bats, least Bell's vireo, and burrowing owl) and a jurisdictional delineation must be still be conducted to accurately assess project impacts to biological resources, and to remain in compliance with NEPA, CEQA, and other federal, state regulations (including the Endangered Species Act, Migratory Bird Treaty Act, and Clean Water Act). Due to the incomplete state of the Draft NESR, we recommend that results of the additional surveys be obtained prior to selecting any project alternative.

Based on the information presented in the Draft NESR, we strongly urge Caltrans to remove Alternatives 2 and 3 from consideration for the proposed connector improvement project. Both alternatives would seriously compromise previous efforts to restore native habitat north of Burbank Boulevard and result in significant impacts to sensitive wildlife species on site due to degradation of wetlands and encroachment on sensitive habitats, not to mention a lengthy and expensive permitting process with the regulatory and resource agencies.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this project.

Sincerely,



Sandra Murcia  
Conservation Biologist  
Resource Conservation District of the Santa Monica Mountains

CC: Rosi Dagil, Senior Conservation Biologist

### **CALTRANS RESPONSE #49:**

#### **Alternatives 2 and 3 have been rejected.**

And as previously discussed, CALTRANS does not expect any biological impacts posed by selected Alternative 1 to be significant.

The City of Los Angeles is neither a resource, nor a regulatory, agency. Furthermore, the City of Los Angeles DOT is the reason why Alternatives 2 and 3 were created, and why those alternatives could not be rejected until a full alternatives analysis was completed by CALTRANS, as discussed in the EA/IS. The City's position still remains in opposition of Alternative 1, and in support of either Alternatives 2 or 3. Therefore, CALTRANS cannot place much weight on the City's thresholds of significance, particularly in regard to the preservation of the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve.

### **CALTRANS RESPONSE #50:**

General botanical surveys were conducted during the development of the draft EA/IS. With the selection of Alternative 1, and a much smaller project footprint to assess, focused floral and faunal surveys can and will be conducted within the scope and context of Alternative 1. These focused surveys will be conducted during the PS&E phase of the project, and certainly, prior to construction.

CALTRANS agrees, and therefore has rejected **Alternatives 2 and 3**, and eliminated those alternatives from further consideration.

# California Native Plant Society

May 28, 2008

Mr. Ronald Kosinski, Deputy District Director  
California Department of Transportation, District 7  
Division of Environmental Planning (I405/101 Connector)  
100 S. Main Street – Mail Stop 16A  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Also transmitted by email to [eduardo\\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov](mailto:eduardo_aguilar@dot.ca.gov)

Re: Draft Environmental Assessment 405-101 Connector Improvement Project

Dear Sirs:

These comments will supplement the comments previously submitted by the Los Angeles / Santa Monica Mountains Chapter of the California Native Plant Society.

On page 73 (2.1.6) in the paragraph describing the “Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve Landscape Unit” you state that “Existing visual resources include established and newly planted willow, cottonwood, and sycamore trees, various shrubs, nesting, and foraging areas for migratory waterfowl and shorebirds.” That is an incomplete description. The “various shrubs” represent the dominant natural community – mule fat / coyote bush scrub (*Baccharis salicifolia* / *Baccharis emoryi* and *B. pilularis*) – that regenerates itself without human help, and it is this emerging plant community that will be disturbed by the on and off ramps proposed to be built in the Wildlife Reserve. Furthermore, it is not just migratory waterfowl and shorebirds that utilize that area, but resident raptors that forage and passerines (such as mourning doves) that nest there.

On page 76, Figure 21 is not an accurate “Post-Construction Visual Simulation” of the site, as the ramps “disappear” into a forest of oak trees that would be partially displaced to accommodate the ramps.

On page 78, Figure 23 is also not an accurate “Post-Construction Visual Simulation” of the site, as the ramps “disappear” into a forest of oak trees that would be partially displaced to accommodate the ramps.

On page 87, paragraphs 4 and 5, you calculate the number of acres that would be covered by the new connector structures. However, nowhere in the document do you discuss the acreage cut-off from the Wildlife Reserve (by the connector structures) that would be rendered little value to wildlife due to its isolation. CNPS strongly believes that the entire footprint of the project including the area between the connectors, the dam face and Burbank Blvd. plus the “work area” around the site (that would be impacted during construction) be considered “sacrifice” zones and not valuable wildlife habitat



Dedicated to the preservation of California native flora



## CALTRANS RESPONSE #51:

In light of the overwhelming concern and opposition to any encroachment upon the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve, as well as the requirements set forth by Section 4(f) of the U.S. Department of Transportation Act, **Alternatives 2 and 3 have been rejected.**

## CALTRANS RESPONSE #52:

Since **Alternatives 2 and 3 have been rejected**, that particular visual simulation will not come to fruition. However, the “forest of oak trees” would have been planted by CALTRANS part of the proposed visual impact mitigation. The intent would have been to shield the new structure from view.

Comment noted.

On page 88, Mitigation Proposals, item 2 states: "Widening the existing dirt canal inside the basin between Route 405 and Woodley Avenue (Haskell Channel). This proposal will fulfill requirements to increase storage volume inside the basin and no water impounded." First off, Haskell Channel is better known as Haskell Creek – the centerpiece of the Wildlife Reserve. In fact, the area west of Haskell Creek was annexed into the Wildlife Reserve in order to make Haskell Creek the center of the Reserve, not the edge, because this riparian corridor of cottonwood and willow forest has the oldest, tallest and least disturbed areas within the Reserve. Any widening of the existing channel would likely require removing existing trees and this would not be acceptable. The implementation of this "mitigation" would destroy the only riparian forest in the San Fernando Valley.

On page 136, Biological Conditions in the Biological Study Area, you state that "the area at the southern point of the project [is] made up of primarily ruderal vegetation. Once again you ignore the presence of representatives of the dominant natural community – mule fat / coyote bush scrub (*Baccharis salicifolia* / *Baccharis emoryi* and *B. pilularis*) – that is the essence of this formerly ruderal area now (albeit slowly) returning to a natural community. This area was burned in a wildfire a few years ago and the shrubs that were burnt to the ground have not yet reached their former size.

On page 145, Table 41 Sensitive Species, states that for Davidson's bush mallow (*Malacothamnus davidsonii*) "the habitat within the project limits is not suitable for this species." That is incorrect. A population of Davidson's bush mallow is thriving on Hummingbird Hill, just west of the tunnel under Burbank Blvd., adjacent to the location of the proposed connectors.

On page 36 of the "Draft Section 4(f)/Section 6(f) Evaluation", you describe the acreage the proposed alignment would take from the entire reserve (225 total acres) as opposed to the area of the "north" Reserve of 48 acres (as you do on page 87 of the DE/IS). You state "These easements will not alter the land use of the location; the primary uses of open space and recreation would be maintained." That statement is in error. The primary purpose of that area is wildlife refuge (not open space and recreation), as visitors are not even allowed to wander out into that area (the seasonal goose foraging area); and even if it were "open space and recreation," who would want to recreate under or adjacent to freeway onramps?

On page 37, 4-2.3 Measures to Minimize Harm, your list of possible measures includes the Sepulveda Wetlands Park Project, a project that was previously rejected by the Wildlife Areas Steering Committee, a project with a main purpose to treat reclaimed water, not enhance the wildlife values of the Sepulveda Basin. We also disagree with the suggestion for off-site mitigation, as there are plenty of unmet needs within the Sepulveda Basin.

Finally, nowhere does this proposal even mention the importance and significance of this wildlife area for the multitude of volunteers, school children, and Girl and Boy Scout

**CALTRANS RESPONSE #53:**

CALTRANS has rejected and eliminated the excavation of Haskell Creek as a mitigation option for loss of flood capacity volume.

Comment noted.

Comment noted.

Comment noted.

Comment noted.

**Alternatives 2 and 3 have been rejected.**

Troops who have spent countless hours for over two decades planting, weeding and caring for the plants; of the members of the Wildlife Areas Steering Committee who have spent over two decades and countless personal hours advising the City and the Army Corp of Engineers in the development of a wildlife refuge that could survive the existing urban onslaught yet still provide what your report calls "a high level of diversity of birds," or recognize the paucity of wildlife areas in the flatlands of the San Fernando Valley and how unique and rare the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Refuge is - a truly a world-class urban wildlife refuge.

The traffic will continue to increase. Will we continue to remove wildlife reserves to accommodate growth? Or will we take a stand here and now, and put Earth health ahead of commute times. I am confident that the engineers at the California Department of Transportation can figure out a way to improve the connectors for the 101-405 freeways without impacting the existing Wildlife Reserve.

Sincerely,



Steve Hartman

Treasurer

California Native Plant Society

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Reseda, CA 91335

voice 818 881 3706

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naturebase@aol.com

[www.cnps.org](http://www.cnps.org)

**CALTRANS agrees. Alternatives 2 and 3 have been rejected.**

**CALTRANS RESPONSE TO SIERRA CLUB FORMAL COMMENT LETTER REGARDING THE DRAFT EA/IS**

3435 Wilshire Boulevard  
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Los Angeles, CA 90010-1904



(213) 387-4287 phone  
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www.angelessierraclub.org

May 27, 2008

Mr. Ronald J. Kosinski   
Deputy District Director  
Division of Environmental Planning  
California Department of Transportation  
100 S. Main Street, Suite MS 16A  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Re: I-405/U.S.-101 Connector Project

Dear Mr. Kosinski,

The Sierra Club just recently became aware that Caltrans is planning major modifications of the transition from the I-405 to the US-101. We have examined the alternatives as available in the Draft EA/IS, and the Club has adamantly opposed both Alternatives 2 and 3. If you are considering modifications to these or other alternatives, we request that we be notified as soon as they are available. We respectfully request that we receive notice of all subsequent actions or hearings on the project, and that our comments be addressed.

**Animal Species:** The report minimizes the impact on wildlife in the Reserve. This is the habitat of hundreds of species of migrating and resident birds, and a number of small mammals, coyotes and reptiles. Many of the migrating species are protected by the International Migratory Bird Treaty. Protecting the extremely limited wetlands and nearby habitat should be a primary concern. Our concerns are not focused simply on the noise and dust due to construction, nor the dust from periodic winds on the disturbed soil, which will make the Reserve uninhabitable during that period, but the continuing encroachment of freeway ramps which will reduce the number of acres available for wildlife. Much of the area which will be impacted is actually in an almost "human-free" zone where shy and sensitive species of birds may nest and procreate without even well-meaning birdwatchers disturbing them. This sort of habitat is extremely rare, especially in Los Angeles; we feel this impact has not adequately been assessed. Dust will also have a negative impact on the species that live in the Wildlife Lake: fish, crawfish, turtles, and frogs/toads. The species of carp that live in the lake are extremely sensitive to disturbances from noise, high winds causing rough water, and flooding that affect the lake which is, after all, in a flood control basin. The fish are frequently found dead along the shoreline. While a number of these species are non-native and considered invasive, they are food for the resident herons, egrets, osprey and migrating American White Pelicans. An inevitable decline in the small mammal population, due to dislocation during construction, and permanent loss due to loss of acres of habitat, will have a profound affect on the raptor population. Disruption of insect populations will have an affect on other bird species.

**Plant Species:** Since the Army Corps of Engineers constructed the dam and established the flood control basin, the Wildlife Reserve has undergone many changes, from barren land to a lush oasis. Over 60 years ago there were other enclaves of remaining native habitats in the San Fernando Valley, and maintaining habitat in this area was less of a concern. Now with the Valley covered with airports, business and industry, roads and houses, the percent of native habitat has shrunk to nearly zero. It has made the reconstructed habitat even more valuable. Native coastal live oaks and cottonwoods have been planted by environmental groups and a number of the oaks are just now reaching maturity. While great reaches of the basin are focused on recreation and displays of non-native plants, great efforts by Army Corps of Engineers, Los Angeles Parks and Recreation, and environmental

**CALTRANS RESPONSE #54:**

In light of the overwhelming concern and opposition to any encroachment upon the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve, as well as the requirements set forth by Section 4(f) of the U.S. Department of Transportation Act, **Alternatives 2 and 3 have been rejected.**



organizations, including the Sierra Club, participated in the planning for the restoration of natural habitat in this area. They continue their work now to control and remove non-native and invasive plants. The impact of soil disturbance due to construction will not only have a negative impact on the native vegetation and trees, but will promote the growth of non-native and invasive plant species.

**Threatened and Endangered Species:** The report minimizes the impact on threatened and endangered species: apparently none were actually seen at the time of the surveys, although the report indicates evidence of burrowing owls was found. We believe that this review must have been superficial at best and is inexcusable. The least bell's vireo uses the far southeast section of the reserve, as does the burrowing owl. Not seeing them in the project area, or in adjacent areas does not indicate that they are not there. Also, the importance of the area cannot be minimized simply because it is not uncommon for birds to be blown off-course or "just migrants". Protecting "just migrants" is the whole idea behind treaties which protect species as they migrate. We know that other extremely sensitive species, such as the tri colored blackbird, yellow breasted chat, sharp shinned hawk, golden eagle and a number of others have been seen in the Reserve and surrounding habitat adjacent to the area proposed for Alternatives 2 and 3. As the Reserve continues to mature and change, and with the onset of global climate change, more and different species are likely to be found in the Reserve and surrounding habitat. There is no way to predict the changes in bird species in the Reserve, therefore it is important for them to have a place for food, rest, and solace between long journeys.

**Water Quality and Hazardous Waste Impacts:** There is a major fault in that there does not appear to be any safeguard of the water quality of the refuge area from pollutants generated by the new traffic, including sustained generation of particulates which will add additional load on the already impacted area from existing problems. Water moving slowly through wetlands is a major force in cleaning up polluted streams. That is one of the features that makes the Reserve valuable. Where will runoff from the ramps drain? into the the Los Angeles River? into the lake first and then the river? what will the mitigation be? Why, in the report, is there a neglect to refer to, even in the most general manner, what the best management practices are and how you intend to implement bmp for storm water runoff, not only during construction, but in the ramp design. The report indicates that the proposed constructed activities will include two new bridges over the Los Angeles River, which are anticipated to "result in the discharge of dredged or fill materials into waters", and are anticipated to "divert, obstruct, or change the natural flow, bed, channel, or bank of any river, stream, or lake", requiring permits from various state and federal agencies. This report absolutely minimizes these tremendous negative impacts on the Reserve. This is not about just open space habitat, this is also about the damage and destruction to the riparian areas of Wildlife Lake, Haskell Creek and the Los Angeles River. For every square foot of impact to the Reserve, there should be at least a 5 for 1 mitigation provided-- preferably in the immediate area. Another concern not properly addressed in the report has to do with the 5 businesses located near the construction site, with risk classifications rating from moderate to high. Any contaminated soils moved or excavated from the risk areas must have special treatment, and cannot be mixed with uncontaminated soil. Where is the contaminated soil to be disposed?

**Impact Area/Volume:** The report indicates that Alternatives 2 and 3 will affect 41 ft (2.64 – 2.92) acres of the 225 acres of the Wildlife Reserve. The report makes clear that the Wildlife Reserve is fragmented into a number of sections: Haskell Creek, Burbank Blvd., Woodley Avenue, and the turf park which includes the Amphitheatre and restrooms. The report does not make clear that the project is to be built within the 60 acres that is the very heart of the Wildlife Reserve—the area most remote from humans on foot with their dogs, kites and ball games. This area, which includes protected Wildlife Lake, contains restored grasslands, woodlands and riparian areas that would be lost forever. We saw no mention of offsets or mitigation for this loss of habitat, and the new ramps will have the effect of exacerbating the existing fragmentation. The Sierra Club has been involved for a number of years in protecting natural corridors for wildlife so that populations are not isolated. There is no mention of any efforts to recognize the new barriers which the wider freeway right of way will pose, nor to mitigate the negative effects.

**Noise and lighting:** The report minimizes the irreparable damage to the soundscape during years of

**CALTRANS RESPONSE #54 continued:**

In light of the overwhelming concern and opposition to any encroachment upon the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve, as well as the requirements set forth by Section 4(f) of the U.S. Department of Transportation Act, **Alternatives 2 and 3 have been rejected.**

**CALTRANS RESPONSE #55:**

Storm water runoff from the new structures, associated with selected Alternative 1, would drain into the highway drainage system, which drains into the underground storm water drainage system, which eventually drains into the LA River, along with the storm water runoff from every freeway, City street, alley, driveway, and yard within the entire watershed.

Pages 91-93 of the draft EA/IS certainly did discuss storm water runoff, as well as permanent and construction BMPs that CALTRANS would implement. Pursuant to the Clean Water Act, Caltrans has a comprehensive program for preventing water pollution during construction activities via the preparation and implementation of a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan.

CALTRANS has rejected and eliminated the excavation of Haskell Creek as a mitigation option for loss of flood capacity volume.

As discussed in page 100 of the draft EA/IS, contaminated soil (typically contaminated with aerially deposited lead) require disposal at a Class I Facility (Hazardous Waste disposal facility).

**Alternatives 2 and 3 have been rejected.**

construction. The noise will cause the Reserve to be uninhabitable for numerous species of wildlife, and will not be a place for the thousands of humans, who annually come to the Reserve, to commune with nature. Also, the report minimizes the effect of vehicle noise to the soundscape following completion of the project. The tranquility of the Reserve will be forever altered.

**Purpose and need:** While the mention of "capacity" in the report is explained as the expected increase in the volume of traffic by the year 2030, it does not mention that the "capacity" on the ramps includes "storage" for 500 vehicles for periods when traffic is stalled due to accidents or for large volumes of vehicles at peak times.

When the I-405/US-101 interchange was originally planned, there were obvious flaws in the engineering and projections of future use patterns, including the failure to plan for a smooth transition from southbound to westbound. This late attempt to fix the problem also seems to neglect projections for future use patterns. Publicly available reports indicate that people will be getting out of their cars and into public transportation as gasoline prices escalate. The Sierra Club supports these efforts to expand public transportation and is appalled that Caltrans continues to focus its funds and intellectual capital on freeways as opposed to aiding public transportation solutions. We note that there is little accommodation for public transportation options in this area, although the Metropolitan Transit Authority's Orange line is immediately north of the basin.

It is for these reasons the Sierra Club – Angeles Chapter is opposed to Alternatives 2 and 3, and any construction in the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve.

Sincerely,



Sharon Ford  
Sierra Club – Angeles Chapter  
San Fernando Valley Group  
13028 Aetna St  
Van Nuys, CA 91401

**CALTRANS RESPONSE #56:**

With the selection of Alternative 1, the projected increase in ambient noise after the implementation of Alternative 1 would be less than 1 dBA (decibel), which is well below any significant noise level impacts or increases.

**CALTRANS RESPONSE #57:**

CALTRANS does not fully understand this question. Please feel free to rephrase and resubmit it.

However, please bear in mind:

- 1) When traffic is gridlocked at the interchange, traffic on the southbound I-405 seeking to access the westbound US-101, would be "stored" on the new, much larger 2-lane connector, rather than stuck on the southbound I-405 and clogging-up the southbound I-405 mainline.
- 2) With the continued breakthroughs in electric car, hybrid car, hydrogen cell car, and other car technologies, traffic congestion may continue in the long run.
- 3) As discussed on page 29 of the EA/IS, at first glance, TSM, TDM, and modal alternatives (**including rail and transit**) may seem like reasonable and attractive strategies/alternatives for such a congested interchange. However, such strategies are outside the scope of this particular project for the following reasons:
  - a) Those strategies do not meet the proposed project's Need and Purpose, specifically, the safety component. The Department seeks to remove the tight, non-standard radius of the existing connector from the SB I-405 to the NB U.S.-101. Currently, the accident rate at the project location exceeds the state average.
  - b) The proposed project size (just north of Burbank Boulevard to the U.S.-101) and focus is too small for any meaningful implementation and integration of TSM, TDM, and modal alternatives.
  - c) **TSM, TDM, and modal alternatives would best serve as stand alone projects to be implemented not only at the interchange, but along both the entire I-405 and U.S.-101 corridors. The political will and funding must be adequate to allow Caltrans to successfully pursue and implement an endeavor of such a magnitude.**

# CALTRANS RESPONSE TO LA CITY RECREATION AND PARKS FORMAL COMMENT LETTER REGARDING THE DRAFT EA/IS

## BOARD OF RECREATION AND PARK COMMISSIONERS

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## CITY OF LOS ANGELES CALIFORNIA



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MICHAEL A. SHULL  
Superintendent  
Planning and Development

May 29, 2008

Ronald Kosinski, Deputy District Director  
California Department of Transportation  
Division of Environmental Planning  
100 South Main Street, MS 16A  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Dear Mr. Kosinski:

### COMMENTS ON DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT/INITIAL STUDY-I-405/US-101 CONNECTOR

The City of Los Angeles Department of Recreation and Parks (LADRP) has reviewed the Draft Environmental Assessment/Initial Study (EA/IS) for the proposed improvement to the I-405/US-101 Freeway Connector Project and has the following comments. The Department operates and maintains various recreational facilities within the Sepulveda Basin Recreation Area under a long term lease agreement with the US Army Corps of Engineers. Some of these leased areas would be directly affected by the proposed project, and our comments have been directed specifically towards those areas with respect to effects on our recreational facilities, programs and operations.

The California Department of Transportation has proposed several alternatives for the I-405/US-101 Connector Project, two of which would involve the placement of a new elevated on/off ramp with the basin that is a known forage area within a designated wildlife reserve, which is maintained and operated by LADRP. These ramps are expected to introduce a substantial new source of traffic and its associated noise and disruption to wildlife activities in the reserve. While the Draft EA/IS states that a Natural Environment Study involving various biological surveys as well as a Bioacoustics Study were performed, very few of the results of these studies were incorporated into the discussion of the project impacts in Section 2.3.1-Natural Communities. Since these studies were not included in the EA/IS, LADRP was unable to determine the basis for the conclusions about project-related impacts.

In addition, the impact analysis seems to focus primarily on operational impacts after the construction would be complete. There is insufficient description and discussion of construction-related project effects and the potential impacts, which the document simply concludes are temporary, short-term impacts that are implied to be less than significant. For example there is no discussion of how construction activities might impact wildlife nesting or foraging activities during migratory seasons. Where mitigation was discussed to avoid or compensate for potential impacts, the document simply states that "standard avoidance and minimization practices" will be followed. There is no further identification or detailed discussion of these mitigation measures, how they would be implemented, or what effect they would have in reducing the impacts on wildlife. Regardless of which alternative is ultimately selected, the detailed mitigation measures would be essentially the same and should be included in the environmental evaluation.

### **CALTRANS RESPONSE #58:**

In light of the overwhelming concern and opposition to any encroachment upon the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve, as well as the requirements set forth by Section 4(f) of the U.S. Department of Transportation Act, **Alternatives 2 and 3 have been rejected.**

CALTRANS will only pursue Alternative 1 despite LADOT's continued opposition to this alternative. Unlike rejected Alternatives 2 and 3, Selected Alternative 1 does not carry with it the numerous encroachment impacts to the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve, or to the numerous species that live within the reserve.

With the selection of Alternative 1, the potential for lighting impacts to the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve has been eliminated. Also, per the project's noise technical study, the projected increase in ambient noise after the implementation of Alternative 1 would be less than 1 dBA (decibel), which is well below any significant noise level impacts or increases.

Also, with the selection of Alternative 1, there would be no pile driving with the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve. And due to the selection of Alternative 1, CALTRANS does not expect vibration or habitat impacts within the reserve. Additionally, through the use of noise blankets during construction, noise levels can be reduced by at least 20 dBA (decibels), which would be equivalent to the current ambient noise levels at the project site. CALTRANS does not expect any biological impacts posed by selected Alternative 1 to be significant.

Ronald Kosinski, Deputy District Director  
May 29, 2008  
Page 2

The Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve is one of a few remaining open space refuges for wildlife in this otherwise urbanized area, and LADRP is very concerned that continued encroachment by urban uses will reduce the health and long-term viability of wildlife resources, and the associated recreational opportunities of the reserve. Therefore, there needs to be a more robust evaluation and treatment of the potential biological impacts of construction, operations, and long-term maintenance activities of the proposed project on the wildlife reserve. This should include an evaluation of the potential shading effects of the elevated ramp on the forage vegetation.

In addition, a detailed Mitigation, Monitoring and Reporting Plan (MMRP) as required under CEQA for adoption of a Mitigated Negative Declaration. Assuming that the impacts can be mitigated to a level less than significant, the MMRP should at a minimum include identification of each mitigation measure, a detailed description of the measure and how it will be implemented, when it will be implemented during the project, who will be responsible for implementation of the mitigation, and how the implementation will be monitored and reported.

The Department is willing to coordinate with Caltrans and the Army Corps of Engineers on the further evaluation of impacts of this project, and the development of effective mitigation measures. Please coordinate this effort with Mr. David Attaway of our Department Environmental Management Division at (213) 928-9130.

Sincerely,

JON KIRK MUKRI  
General Manager



MICHAEL A. SHULL  
Superintendent

JKM/MAS/DA/PD:ar

cc: Reacing File

**CALTRANS RESPONSE #58 continued:  
Alternatives 2 and 3 have been rejected.**

**CALTRANS RESPONSE #59:**

Please refer to the Environmental Commitment Record (ECR) of the final EA/IS. All of the project's avoidance, minimization, and compensatory mitigation measures are listed in the ECR table. The ECR is equivalent to the MMRP.

Comment noted.

CALTRANS RESPONSE TO AUDOBON SOCIETY FORMAL COMMENT LETTER REGARDING THE DRAFT EA/IS



San Fernando Valley Audubon Society

Incorporated as California Audubon Society 1913

*For nature education and conservation of wildlife*

P.O. Box 7769 Van Nuys, CA 91409-7769

May 26, 2008

Mr. Ronald Kosinski, Deputy District Director  
Division of Environmental Planning  
California Department of Transportation, District 7  
100 South Main Street, MS 16A  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Dear Mr. Kosinski,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit these comments on the EA/IS for the proposed SB I-405 to WB US-101 Connector Project on behalf of San Fernando Valley Audubon Society (SFVAS). SFVAS is a 2,100 member environmental organization that operates an extensive environmental educational program for school children in the wildlife reserve. Our mission is to protect habitat and promote wildlife education. We urge Caltrans to reject both Alternative 2 and Alternative 3 because of the unacceptable harm either of these Alternatives would inflict on the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve.

San Fernando Valley Audubon Society adamantly opposes any project that would adversely impact the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve. Alternatives #2 and #3 would permanently impair the natural resources of the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Refuge with noise and light pollution, as well as significantly diminishing its value to its human visitors. SFVAS urges Caltrans to adopt either Alternative #1 or the No Build Alternative. If Alternatives #1, #2, and #3 would require widening of Haskell Creek to maintain flood control capacity of Sepulveda Basin, SFVAS urges Caltrans to adopt the No Build Alternative.

This letter will first address why protecting the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve is so important. Then it will note significant errors and deficiencies that we have found in the EA/IS.

**CALTRANS RESPONSE #60:**

In light of the overwhelming concern and opposition to any encroachment upon the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve, as well as the requirements set forth by Section 4(f) of the U.S. Department of Transportation Act, **Alternatives 2 and 3 have been rejected.**

CALTRANS has also **rejected and eliminated the excavation of Haskell Creek** as a mitigation option for loss of flood capacity volume.

CALTRANS will only pursue Alternative 1 despite LADOT's continued opposition to this alternative. Unlike rejected Alternatives 2 and 3, Selected Alternative 1 does not carry with it the numerous encroachment impacts to the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve, or to the numerous species that live within the reserve.

With the selection of Alternative 1, the potential for lighting impacts to the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve has been eliminated. Also, per the project's noise technical study, the projected increase in ambient noise after the implementation of Alternative 1 would be less than 1 dBA (decibel), which is well below any significant noise level impacts or increases. Therefore, CALTRANS does not expect any biological impacts posed by selected Alternative 1 to be significant.

The Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve is a unique urban wildlife refuge, sheltering fine examples of riparian, grassland and woodland habitat. Over 240 species of resident and migratory birds forage and nest in the reserve. Additionally there are outstanding communities of California native plants and insects.

Thousands of public school children, birdwatchers, photographers, joggers, walkers and families with small children visit the reserve, finding a nearby refuge from the hubbub of the city. Neighbors, as well as nature lovers from the greater area visit frequently to hear the wind rustle through the cottonwood leaves or to marvel at a wading Great Blue Heron.

San Fernando Valley Audubon Society's outstanding Sepulveda Basin Environmental Education Program provides environmental education for 3,000 schoolchildren, many from low income homes, every year. While at the Wildlife Reserve, children enjoy watching White Pelicans, cormorants, egrets, herons and hawks through binoculars. They study tiny plankton from the lake under microscopes and learn about native plants and animals. The trained naturalists introduce concepts like ecology, reclaimed water, riparian habitat and flood control.

In addition to the guided nature walks in the Wildlife Reserve that SFVAS offers students, scouting groups, and the public, other groups also bring their students to the reserve. These groups include public and private schools, colleges and universities, and teacher-training programs.

San Fernando Valley Audubon urges that Alternatives #2 and #3 be discarded. Both of these Alternatives would permanently intrude into the peace and tranquility of the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve, in particular into the 60-acre heart of the Reserve, the area near the lake where most strolls, bird walks and field trips take place. Alternative #2 would cover or cut off 17 acres from the rest of the Wildlife Reserve with an on-ramp and an off-ramp. Alternative #3 would cover or cut off 21.5 acres. Both Alternatives would cause noise and light pollution to intrude into the heart of the Wildlife Reserve. The impact on both wildlife and human users of the refuge is grim to contemplate. After the clangor and disruptions of a long construction period, the quiet and tranquility will be forever lost to the roar of traffic.

Although Alternative #1 would eliminate access to the 101 from the intersection of Burbank Boulevard and the 405, the improved traffic conditions would benefit the

public by enhancing safety and alleviating traffic congestion on the freeway. Under Alternative #1, motorists would still be able to access the 101 at Balboa Boulevard, Hayvenhurst Avenue and Van Nuys Boulevard

If traffic analyses show that Alternative #1 will increase surface street congestion by an unacceptable amount, San Fernando Valley Audubon endorses the No Build Alternative. We contend that expanding the connector will not improve the flow of traffic on the heavily congested 405 and 101 freeways sufficiently to justify the destructive impacts of the other Alternatives

SFVAS found no discussion of a significant issue and several errors in the EA/IS and disagrees with some of its findings

Widening of Haskell Creek for Flood Capacity

This possibility is only mentioned in one line of the EA/IS but it is extremely significant. If widening of Haskell Creek to mitigate reduction to the flood control function of the Sepulveda Basin is a necessary consequence of all three Alternatives, none of the Alternatives is acceptable. If Haskell Creek is widened anywhere within the Wildlife Reserve, actual and developing nesting habitat of the endangered Least Bell's Vireo would be destroyed. This habitat is important to other sensitive species of migratory songbirds, including the Yellow-breasted Chat.

As indicated in the EA/IS, Alternatives 1, 2, and 3 would all reduce the flood water capacity of the Sepulveda Basin and require mitigation measures. One proposed on page 88 of the EA/IS is "Widening the existing dirt canal inside the basin between Route 405 and Woodley Avenue (Haskell Channel). This proposal will fulfill requirements to increase storage volume inside the basin and no water impounded."

Haskell Creek is bordered by mature riparian trees along its banks as it flows south between the Tillman Water Treatment Plant and Woodley Park, then between Woodley Park and the turf grass section of the Wildlife Reserve, and then through the Wildlife Reserve, where it separates the North and West Reserve and finally flows between sections of the South Reserve and into the Los Angeles River.

Over the years, starting in 1979, public agencies and volunteers have planted hundreds of Fremont Cottonwood trees and other riparian trees next to Haskell Creek. The most recent such planting was a mitigation project by the Los Angeles

Department of Water and Power. In 1998, the section of Haskell Creek between the North and West Reserve was recontoured and willows and mulefat shrubs were planted on the banks. At that time two bridges across Haskell Creek for pedestrians and park service vehicles were built here and a third bridge was built over Haskell Creek near the Los Angeles River in the South Reserve. The creek widening would destroy the three bridges, as well as extensive riparian habitat that supports nesting by threatened and endangered species.

Size of Wildlife Reserve and Portion Impacted:

The EA/IS inaccurately minimizes the impacts of Alternatives 2 and 3 on the Wildlife Reserve.

The map on page 25, Generalized Land Use, shows as Wildlife Area (Reserve) only the 48 acre portion south of Burbank Boulevard (the South Reserve) and the 60 acre heart of the reserve (the North Reserve). That would imply that these two parcels comprised the entirety of the 225 acre Wildlife Reserve, whereas they total only around 108 acres.

In fact, the 225 acres also include approximately 60 acres north of Burbank Boulevard, west of Haskell Creek, and east of Woodley Avenue (the West Reserve) that was added to the reserve in 1998. The West Reserve is incorrectly labeled "Woodley Avenue Park" on the map.

The area west of Woodley Avenue to the Los Angeles River that is south of the Model Airplane Field is also part of the official 225 acre Wildlife Reserve. Because model airplanes almost incessantly fly over that area, the wildlife value of the area is reduced, trees and tall shrubs may not be planted there, and people may not walk there because of the danger of being hit by model planes, including model jets. The area also sees fairly frequent brush fires caused by crashes of the model planes.

Further, the map shows areas to the north of the North Reserve as Park and Archery Range. The "Park" area does include the Wildlife Reserve's parking lot, amphitheater and educational staging area, as well as serving as a portion of adjacent Woodley Park. Only a small part of the area labeled Archery Range is archery range. The rest is officially part of the Wildlife Reserve, although serving primarily as part of Woodley Park landscaped with turf grasses and scattered trees, and used primarily for sports and picnics. (Viewpoint 1 in the EA/IS, labeled as "Facing East from Woodley Park" is in fact part of this portion of the Wildlife

Reserve, to the south of the amphitheater) We hope that the wildlife value of this area will be enhanced in the future by planting of California native trees and shrubs, but for now it does not have the character of a wildlife reserve.

Thus an on-ramp and off-ramp as would be built if Alternative 2 or 3 were adopted would have a much greater impact on the Wildlife Reserve than depicted in the EA/IS.

Errors in Summary of Impacts Table:

The Summary of Impacts table before numbered pages shows that Alternatives 1, 2 and 3 would all increase noise 2 decibels after construction. We do not believe that this reflects changes to the noise level within the Wildlife Reserve by Alternatives 2 and 3.

The same Summary of Impacts table shows that all three Alternatives would impact approximately 25-30 Coast Live Oak Riparian Trees. Alternative 1 would not have such an impact.

The same Summary of Impacts table shows that all three Alternatives have potential to impact Burrowing Owl Habitat. Alternative 1 would not have such an impact.

Errors in Table 41, Sensitive Species:

Davidson's Bush Mallow is shown in the table to not have suitable habitat in the project area. In fact, this plant is thriving on Hummingbird Hill, the Burbank Boulevard berm, just west of the tunnel under Burbank Boulevard. This is a short distance from the ramps proposed for Alternatives 2 and 3.

Impacts on Wildlife:

Sensitive Species that have been seen in the exact area of the Wildlife Area that would be removed by Alternatives 2 and 3 include White-tailed Kite, Northern Harrier, Great Egret, Great Blue Heron, Snowy Egret, Peregrine Falcon, Golden Eagle, Bald Eagle, Burrowing Owl, and Loggerhead Shrike. Although Golden Eagle, Bald Eagle and Burrowing Owl have only been seen there for short periods of time in the last two decades, this does not eliminate the importance of this area for off-course migrants or wandering immature birds that have preferred this habitat, and only this habitat.

The area impacted by Alternatives 2 and 3 also serves as an essential buffer area for the nearby breeding territory of Least Bell's Vireo, Cooper's Hawk, Yellow-breasted Chat, Yellow Warbler, Double-crested Cormorant, Snowy Egret, Blue Grosbeak, and Black-crowned Night Heron. Light and noise pollution from the on and off-ramp within the Wildlife Reserve may reduce viability of this breeding territory.

As discussed in the Section 4(f)/6(f) Evaluation, page 35:

"Within the Reserve, a number of coastal live oak trees and walnut trees located north of Burbank Blvd. and approximately 18 acres of an area that has been designated as a migratory forage corridor directly adjacent to the I-405 will be permanently impacted by Alternatives 2 and 3. The proposed alternatives may have both permanent and temporary impacts to sensitive species such as burrowing owl (*Athene cunicularia*) and least Bell's Vireo (*Vireo bellii*), as well as to other bird species that utilize this area as an important stopping point along their migratory routes. The proposed project may result in permanent habitat loss, which would be subject to minimization measures and compensatory mitigation. Although the project is anticipated to be completed in one season, some impacts primarily those due to an increase in noise to nesting birds and the local avian populations, are anticipated to be temporal prolonged impacts."

The area is still in a state of flux and is still maturing. There is the potential in the very near future for additional "sensitive species" to not only be present but to breed in the area proposed for construction.

An accident on a freeway ramp could cause hazardous material to spill into the Wildlife Reserve. Clearing up a hazardous material from the Reserve would be far more problematic than a clean up from a similar accident on a hard-surfaced roadway.

#### Inadequate Mitigation Measures

The mitigation measures proposed on page 36 of the EA/IS for Alternatives 2 and 3 is built are inadequate.

The proposal to fund other proposed projects outside the Wildlife Reserve (Bul Creek Restoration Project and Sepulveda Wetlands Park Project) is unacceptable. While we look forward to the Bul Creek Restoration Project, that project will be located almost two miles from the Wildlife Reserve and visits to one will not

typically involve a visit to the other. The Sepulveda Wetlands Park is a proposal by the Bureau of Sanitation that was discarded.

Offsite mitigation to SMMC restoration projects within the San Fernando Valley Watershed would not be acceptable. It is the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve that uniquely affords easily accessible viewing of wildlife and a lake, that is located in the central San Fernando Valley, and that can be visited without hiking steep slopes.

The other mitigation measures mentioned are minimal.

"Develop and implement a restoration plan for the Sepulveda Basin forage area." Such restoration is desirable. However, if an elevated on- and off-ramp are built on and adjacent to the migratory waterfowl forage area, it is unlikely that migratory Canada Geese will continue to use the area because they will not have the long sight lines they require.

The other mitigation measures mentioned all amount to planting native trees along the new connector. This is a desirable measure, but does not constitute mitigation for harm to the Wildlife Reserve.

#### The Environmental Significance Checklist

The document does not explain why some check marks are in red. Many items that are checked as Less Than Significant Impact or Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporation should have been checked as Potentially Significant Impact. These incorrect categorizations include most items in the BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES section, one in NOISE, and all in MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE.

In closing, we urge Caltrans to discard Alternatives #2 and #3 as these proposals would permanently impair the wildlife reserve. Our organization believes that Alternative #1 offers the best opportunities for preserving open space and valley communities and alleviating our traffic congestion problems. If Alternative #1 is not feasible, we support the No Build Alternative. However, any of the three build Alternatives, including Alternative #1 is unacceptable if it requires widening of Haskell Creek.

Sincerely,

Muriel S. Kotin, President  
San Fernando Valley Audubon Society  
6801 Las Ocas Way  
Malibu, CA 90265  
310 457-5796

Co Mayor Antonio Villaragosa  
City Council Member Wendy Graci  
City Council Member Dennis Zinc  
City Council Member Tom LaBarga  
City Council Member Jack Weiss  
City Council Member Tony Cardenas  
City Council Member Richard Alarcon  
City Council Member Greg Smith  
City Council Member Eric Garcetti  
Los Angeles County Supervisor Michael Antonovich  
Los Angeles County Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky  
California State Assembly Member Mike Feuer  
California State Assembly Member Julia Brownley  
California State Assembly Member Lloyd Levine  
California State Assembly Member Cameron Shortell  
California State Assembly Member Audra Stokland  
California State Assembly Member Paul Krekorian  
California State Assembly Member Felipe Fuentes  
California Senate Member Alex Padilla  
California Senate Member Jack Scott  
California Senate Member Sheila Kuehl  
California Senate Member George Runner  
California Senate Member Tom McClintock  
California Senate Member Bob Margitt  
US Congressional Representative Howard L. Berman  
US Congressional Representative Henry Waxman  
US Congressional Representative Brad Sherman

**CALTRANS RESPONSE TO AUDOBON SOCIETY (2) FORMAL COMMENT LETTER REGARDING THE DRAFT EA/IS**



**LOS ANGELES AUDUBON SOCIETY**

7377 Santa Monica Boulevard, West Hollywood, California 90046-6694  
Tel: (323) 876-0202 (888) 522-7428 Fax: (323) 876-7609  
Website: www.LAAudubon.org E-mail: LAAS@LAAudubon.org

May 26, 2008

Mr. Ronald Kosinski, Deputy District Director  
California Department of Transportation  
Division of Environmental Planning (405/101 Connector)  
100 South Main Street MS 16A  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Re: draft EA/IS for 405/101 Connector

Dear Mr. Kosinski:

Los Angeles Audubon is a California non-profit 501(c)(3) corporation established in 1910. The mission of Los Angeles Audubon is to promote the enjoyment and protection of birds and other wildlife through recreation, education, conservation and restoration.

We take special interest in the impacts of the proposed 405/101 connector on Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve and the biological resources therein. Los Angeles Audubon along with San Fernando Valley Audubon Society played a key role in the designation, restoration, and protection of the 225 acres of native habitat open space area designated as wildlife habitat and serve on the Steering Committee with jurisdiction over this area.

We would like to make the following comments on the draft EA/IS released April 14, 2008 and thank you for the opportunity:

1) **The analysis of Environmental Consequences of the project on Least Bell's Vireo (*Vireo bellii pusilla*) is inadequate, contradictory and inconsistent.**

In the discussion of Least Bell's Vireo the EA/IS states "Habitat for this species is found at approximately 500 ft from where the new connector alignment is proposed."<sup>1</sup> However in Table 41 the EA/IS states "This species is known to be present adjacent to the impact area, but was not observed during general surveys."<sup>2</sup> Additionally, in Environmental Consequences the EA/IS states "Due the to lack of suitable habitat found within the project site as well as directly adjacent to the project area, it is not likely that the proposed alternatives would have a direct impact on this species."<sup>3</sup> These statements are contradictory in that one finds the species habitat 500 feet using one standard yet directly adjacent using another standard, and inconsistent in varying the location

<sup>1</sup> SOUTHBOUND INTERSTATE-405 (SAN DIEGO FREEWAY) TO THE U.S. HIGHWAY-101 (VENTURA FREEWAY) CONNECTOR IMPROVEMENT PROJECT draft EA/IS, page 146;

<sup>2</sup> Ibid, p. 145

<sup>3</sup> Ibid, p. 147

**CALTRANS RESPONSE #61:**

Also, please refer to CALTRANS RESPONSE #60.

CALTRANS biologist Maureen Doyle, in coordination with Steve Kirkland from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, formulated a No Effect Determination (for selected Alternative 1) pursuant to Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act.

It is stated quite plainly that habitat is approximately 500 feet from the project impact area. No matter the terminology used, the distance is clearly stated. Furthermore, through the use of noise blankets during construction, noise levels can be reduced by at least 20 dBA (decibels), which would be equivalent to the current ambient noise levels at the project site. Also, per the project's noise technical study, the projected increase in ambient noise after the implementation of Alternative 1 would be less than 1 dBA (decibel), which is well below any significant noise level impacts or increases.

from which to analyze impacts, and varying where the new connector alignment is proposed as "impact area," "project site" and "project area" from which to analyze impacts. In discussion or analysis of impacts on an endangered species a scientific standard should be consistent especially if that standard is integral to the description of the proposed project.

2) The analysis of Environmental Consequences of the project and the avoidance and minimization efforts on Burrowing Owl (*Athene cunicularia*) are inadequate.

The EA/IS states the following: "Avoidance and Minimization Efforts (Burrowing Owl): If burrowing owls are determined to be present within the project area, passive translocation will be employed during the non-breeding season to encourage nesting in an area away from the project location. This passive translocation technique will be used in accordance to the guidelines outlined by the Department of Fish and Game."<sup>4</sup>

This effort is inadequate.

The Lead agency does not outline avoidance and minimization efforts if burrowing owls are determined to be present within the project area during breeding or nesting season, nor what efforts will be expended to discover Burrowing owls during the non-breeding or the breeding season other than through vague reference to the level of "protocol". A lead agency should specify whose protocol will be used for these important surveys.

Lead agency also fails to mention the cumulative impacts of the loss of habitat for burrowing owls in Los Angeles County that the project might increase, and how the lead agency might compensate for that loss in Los Angeles County.

Lead agency also fails to disclose how much habitat in Los Angeles County is available for translocation of Burrowing owls. Translocation of owls to a distant location cannot be considered true minimization or mitigation of the impacts of destruction of habitat for Burrowing owls in Los Angeles County.

3) The analysis of Environmental Consequences of the project on Swainson's Hawk (*Buteo swainsoni*) is inadequate.

The EA/IS states "However, the San Fernando Audubon Society lists the bald eagle as having a historic presence within the reserve. During surveys of the project area, no sightings of this bird were observed."

Presumably the writer means Swainson's Hawk and not Bald Eagle, and this is a typo or confusion by the writer.

This analysis is inadequate as it is written.

4) The EA/IS is inconsistent in descriptions of the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve as "Sepulveda Wildlife Basin," "Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Refuge," "Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve" and "Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Area."

Such internal inconsistency can lead to confusion in the enforcement of any policies that relate to the EA/IS.

This should be standardized with the legal name of the 225 acre natural area.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid, p. 148

**CALTRANS RESPONSE #62:**

The ultimate avoidance measure is the selection of Alternative 1, which will not impact the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve, and the known sensitive habitats that are known to occur within that area. Per project biologist Maureen Doyle, the marginal, highly disturbed, low quality, potential burrowing owl habitat located near the spillway of the dam (outside the Reserve), as recently as last year, had large piles/mounds of seemingly non-native dirt placed there, which recently (this year), appear to have been removed. This work was not done by CALTRANS. The likelihood of burrowing owl in that area is highly unlikely. Furthermore, per the California Department of Fish and Game's California Natural Diversity Database, burrowing owl habitat does not occur within the project area.

Regardless, CALTRANS will conduct burrowing owl focused surveys prior to construction, and in coordination with the California Department of Fish and Game, will devise avoidance, minimization, and mitigation measures, if needed.

**CALTRANS RESPONSE #63:**

CALTRANS stands corrected, and stands by its findings.

**CALTRANS RESPONSE #64:**

Comment noted.

**5) The EA/IS is inadequate in describing Jurisdiction of the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve.**

The EA/IS states: "Serving as an advisory to the City is the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Areas Steering Committee, whose members include the Audubon Society, Canada Goose Project, California Native Plant Society, Friends of the LA River, Resource Conservation District of the Santa Monica Mountains, and the Sierra Club."<sup>5</sup>

However, two members of the Committee are Los Angeles Audubon and San Fernando Valley Audubon Society. These are two certified chapters of Audubon and two distinct California non-profit corporations with 501(c)(3) tax exempt status.

**6) Los Angeles Audubon opposes absolutely Alternatives 2 and 3 for this project due to unacceptable impacts on the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Refuge habitat and its wildlife.**

The EA/IS states "Alternatives 2 and 3 of the proposed project do carry the potential to adversely impact beneficial floodplain values such as the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Refuge."<sup>6</sup>

This risk is unacceptable to our organization.

Sincerely,

Garry George  
Executive Director

GG:sc

**CALTRANS RESPONSE #64 continued:**

Comment noted.

Comment noted.

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<sup>5</sup> Ibid, p.28

<sup>6</sup> Ibid, p.87 Other Impacts

**CALTRANS RESPONSE TO DONNA ANDREWS'S FORMAL COMMENT LETTER REGARDING THE DRAFT EA/IS**

Mr. Ron Kosinski   
California Department of Transportation  
100 South Main Street  
Los Angeles, California 90012-3606

Subject: SOUTHBOUND INTERSTATE-405 (SAN DIEGO FREEWAY) TO THE U.S.  
HIGHWAY-101 (VENTURA FREEWAY) CONNECTOR IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

The following public comments are being submitted for the above-named project:

It was stated that funding is not yet available for the construction of this project. How will the public be informed that funding has been acquired and the project will begin moving toward construction?

Construction areas are noisy, dirty, dusty, dangerous places for everyone.

- 1) How will the public be informed about upcoming construction work for this project? What information will be available for non-motorists?
- 2) How long will this project take to construct? How will Caltrans determine the construction schedule, so as to disrupt as few people (motorists and otherwise) as possible? How will construction minimize effects near the wildlife refuge and park areas?
- 3) What work will require closing local roads, and how long will they be closed? How much construction traffic will be routed next to homes?
- 4) What work will take place at night, and how long will this occur next to homes?
- 5) How will Caltrans maintain safe access on local streets for non-motorized traffic during construction? What processes are in place to guarantee accessibility for everyone during, and following, construction?
- 6) How will Caltrans prevent an increase in homeless encampments, illegal dumping, graffiti and other quality of life issues that arise near construction areas?
- 7) How will Caltrans address questions and complaints during construction?

Respectfully,



**CALTRANS RESPONSE #65:**

1. Prior to the start of construction of selected Alternative 1, CALTRANS and/or a CALTRANS public relations consultant shall oversee and be responsible for implementation of the following elements of the project's Public Awareness Campaign:
  - a) Coordinate and implement a pre-construction community meeting, as well as, other construction information meetings as necessary
  - b) Create, operate, and maintain a 1-800 hotline which interested individuals would call to find out the latest construction information, as well as, to ask questions and make complaints
  - c) Create and implement newspaper ads, radio ads, and press releases to announce new detours, road closures, work schedules, staging, and other pertinent construction information.
  - d) Mail construction notice flyers to all residences within a 1 to 2 mile radius of construction zones
  - e) Work in a coordination and advisory role with the construction resident engineer and inspector to ensure that the contractor is implementing correct, accurate, clear, intuitive, and conscientious construction signage throughout the entire project area to ensure motorist and pedestrian safety and convenience
  - f) Work in a coordination and advisory role with the construction resident engineer and inspector to ensure that the contractor immediately eradicates the following within the construction zones: i) homeless encampments ii) illegal dumping iii) graffiti iv) and other adverse quality of life issues that could negatively affect the community
  - g) Work in a coordination and advisory role with the construction resident engineer and inspector to ensure that complaints are immediately addressed and the reported problems immediately eradicated.
2. Selected Alternative 1 would take approximately 3 years to construct. Caltrans would stage the work in order to minimize the impact to the traveling motorists as well as the non-motorists. Alternative 1 would not pose impacts to the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve or Woodley Park.
3. Construction work on local streets would require taking (reducing) lanes during the day although access in each direction would still be maintained. At this time, it is not possible to gage how long this would remain. **CALTRANS does not detour traffic into residential neighborhoods.**
4. Construction often requires night work. CALTRANS would conform to all City of Los Angeles noise ordinances. At this time, it is not possible to gage how long night work would be required.
5. Construction work would be done in stages (in pieces rather than all at once) to allow non-motorists access through the project site during construction. Pedestrian crossings would be maintained through the construction zone.
6. Please refer to item #1 above.
7. Please refer to item #1 above. Furthermore, on each construction project, CALTRANS assigns a resident engineer who oversees the construction of the project. The resident engineer will also handle any questions and complaints. Once the construction is about to begin, the resident engineer's phone number will be made available by the means discussed in item #1 above.

# CALTRANS RESPONSE TO GERRY SILVER'S (1) FORMAL COMMENT LETTER REGARDING THE DRAFT EA/IS

SENT BY: GERALD A. SILVER;

8:8 9607273;

MAY-12-08 9:07AM;

PAGE 1



## Homeowners of Encino

May 14, 2008

◆ Serving the Homeowners of Encino ◆

Mr. Ronald J. Kosinski, Deputy District Director  
Division of Environmental Planning  
Caltrans (Department of Transportation)  
100 South Main Street, Suite 100  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

GERALD A. SILVER  
President  
PO BOX 260206  
ENCINO, CA 91426  
Phone (818)990-2757

SUBJECT: CALTRANS NEW CONNECTOR SAN DIEGO-405 FREEWAY TO NORTH US 101

We have had an opportunity to review your handouts and Environmental Assessment (EA) regarding the 101/405 connector project. Caltrans proposes to replace the existing non-standard connector, from the southbound San Diego Freeway (Interstate-405) to the northbound Ventura Freeway (U.S. Highway-101), with an upgraded connector. The new 50 mph two-lane connector would replace the current 20 mph single-lane connector. This would be accomplished by constructing a new bridge structure crossing over the spillway of the Sepulveda Dam.

Currently, four alternatives remain under consideration, including the No-Build Alternative. The existing non-standard connector experiences extensive congestion, delays, and queue lengths throughout the day. The purpose of the project is to improve safety, operation, capacity, and traffic flow through the interchange by replacing the existing 20 mph single-lane connector, with a new 50 mph two-lane connector.

Your Draft Environmental Assessment (EA/IS) shows a significant increase in accidents and injuries at the interchange. We have observed many vehicles stacking up in the southbound 405 connector lane waiting to transfer to the 101 freeway north-bound. This creates a significant accident potential, and a daily danger to residents using the freeway. This situation must be remedied as soon as possible.

We understand that the Haskell on- and off-ramps would not be affected by this project.

We understand that four alternatives are being considered by Caltrans to address this connector problem:

Alternative 1: No Build

The no build alternative would provide no additional improvements to the I-405/101 connector, leaving the current accident situation. We oppose this option.

Of the remaining three options, each calls for the replacement of the existing 20 mph single-lane connector from the southbound I-405 to the northbound U.S.-101, with a new 50 mph two-lane connector bridge that encroaches upon and spans over the spillway of the Sepulveda Dam. Each eliminates the existing erratic and conflicting traffic weaving patterns between the Burbank Boulevard on-ramp traffic seeking to access the southbound I-405 mainline, versus the traffic attempting to access the U.S.-101 connectors from the southbound I-405 mainline.

There are significant differences between the cost and impacts of Alternatives 2, 3, and 4. Homeowners of Encino favors the fourth alternative, Alternative C.

Alternative 2: (A) We oppose Alternative 2, because it would eliminate access to the 101 freeway from Burbank Blvd. While this alternative does not take any land in the Sepulveda Basin, it cuts off major access to Encino, greatly increasing street traffic. We understand the LA Dept. of Transportation also opposes this alternative for the same reason.

### CALTRANS RESPONSE #66:

In light of the overwhelming concern and opposition to any encroachment upon the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve, as well as the requirements set forth by Section 4(f) of the U.S. Department of Transportation Act, **Alternatives 2 and 3 have been rejected.** CALTRANS has selected Alternative 1.

As discussed in the EA/IS, CALTRANS and LADOT have coordinated extensively and successfully identified mitigation to the local City Streets to ensure that any traffic impacts as a result of selected Alternative 1 are mitigated to a level below significance.

Page 2

Alternative 2: (B) We oppose Alternative 2 because of its substantial increase in cost, and because it would require the reconstruction of the Burbank Blvd. bridge over the 405. Shutting down that arterial to reconstruct the Burbank bridge would create a horrendous traffic nightmare during construction.

Alternative 4: (C) We support Alternative 4 (C) for several reasons. It would provide access from Burbank Blvd. to the 405 Freeway. It costs substantially less than Alternative 2: (B) and would only take a relatively small amount of land in the Sepulveda Basin. While we would normally oppose any land takes in the Basin, the significant improvements to traffic flow, reduced accidents and injuries, all weigh in favor of Alternative 4. This is our preferred choice.

Cordially yours,



Gerald A. Silver,  
President, Homeowners of Encino

## CALTRANS RESPONSE TO SHARON FORD FORMAL COMMENT LETTER REGARDING THE DRAFT EA/IS

May 27, 2008

Mr. Ronald J. Kosinski   
Deputy District Director  
Division of Environmental Planning  
California Department of Transportation  
100 S. Main Street, Suite MS 16A  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Re: I-405/U.S.-101 Connector Project

Dear Mr. Kosinski,

After reading and stumbling through numerous pages of the Draft EA/IS, I feel that the report absolutely minimizes the negative impact of building multi-lane, flyover ramps through the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve. I am particularly opposed to Alternatives 2 and 3.

The report is very misleading as it stresses that the Reserve is a total of 225 acres, and that the project will take only 41 ft of this acreage. The maps included in the report clearly show just how fragmented the Reserve currently is, and therefore shows what the report fails to mention, which is that the 41 ft arc in the 60 acres, which includes Wildlife Lake, and is the very heart of the Reserve. This 60 acre section, plus the remaining adjacent acres are the only open space and habitat for over 200 hundred species of resident and migrating birds, many of which nest in the Reserve. The Reserve is also the habitat of many small mammals, including rabbits, opossums, and raccoons, and is also frequented by coyotes. It is the habitat of a number of varieties of fish, turtles and frogs and other species which reside in the lake and Haskell Creek. A variety of lizards and insects make their homes in the Reserve. Any construction in the Reserve will destroy the biodiversity. Food chains that are lost or destroyed will have negative impact on all wildlife.

If I am reading the report correctly, it appears that all alternatives 1 – 3 will have a negative impact on the waterways in the Basin and Reserve. I am concerned about the reference to the businesses near the construction site, that are leaking hazardous waste into the soil, and am concerned that construction will cause contamination to the Reserve soil and waters. I am adamantly opposed to any negative impacts to the water quality or the banks of Wildlife Lake, Haskell and the Los Angeles River, and feel that these issue have not been properly addressed, outside of the possibility of requiring permits from various state and federal agencies.

Army Corps of Engineers, Los Angeles Recreation and Parks, and a number of environmental organizations have spent years restoring and maintaining the Reserve as a natural habitat. In the 14 years since I have been visiting the Reserve, I have seen how it has changed. Trees matured, and now provide much needed shade from the baking hot sun, as well as nesting places for numerous birds. The lake, which dried up every summer, became permanent, and lush riparian vegetation grew around the lake and along Haskell Creek, creating habitat for more species. The grasslands became habitat for more and different species.

The Wildlife Reserve is not just a place of refuge for our local and migrating wildlife, it is a place of refuge for thousands and thousands of human visitors, trying to get away from the noise and stress of every day life, and for a chance to commune with nature. Years of construction, as well as the continuing noise of traffic from the flyover ramps, will forever alter the soundscape.

My husband and I took our two granddaughters, now 18 and 14 years of age, on numerous walks into the Reserve, from the time they were 2 years old to well into their teens. They learned about plants, animals, birds, insects on these walks. As they became older, around 6 years of age, we would walk from the parking lot at the north end of the Reserve, all the way to the dam and the Los Angeles River. We took evening/night flashlight walks with San Fernando Valley Audubon, and were amazed by the size and colors of the spiders.

### **CALTRANS RESPONSE #67:**

Please refer to CALTRANS RESPONSE #66.

### **CALTRANS RESPONSE #68:**

Selected Alternative 1 would not impact the habitat or waterways within the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve. Furthermore, the reason why CALTRANS identifies potential hazardous waste contamination in the areas within and around the project site is to ensure that CALTRANS does not “stumble across” hazardous waste contamination during construction, and inadvertently expose the environment and the community to those hazardous materials. Fortunately, the hazardous waste initial site assessment has not yielded a potential for hazardous waste contamination within the selected Alternative 1 project impact footprint. A Site Investigation will continue the studies during the PS&E phase of the project and fully confirm it. Any notion that the proposed project would expose the Los Angeles River, Haskell Creek, or any other waterway, to hazardous waste is highly speculative, and most likely in error.

As discussed in the EA/IS, CALTRANS will obtain a Streambed Alteration Agreement from the California Department of Fish and Game pursuant to Fish and Game Code 1602, a Water Quality Certification from the Regional Water Quality Control Board pursuant to Section 401 of the Clean Water Act, and a 404 permit from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers pursuant to Section 404 of the Clean Water Act. Each of these agencies impose stringent water quality protection measures that CALTRANS must implement during construction.

Pages 91-93 of the draft EA/IS certainly did discuss storm water runoff, as well as permanent and construction BMPs that CALTRANS would implement. Pursuant to the Clean Water Act, Caltrans has a comprehensive program for preventing water pollution during construction activities via the preparation and implementation of a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan.

Each year thousands of school children are introduced to nature through the educational program of San Fernando Valley Audubon in the Reserve. It is the Reserve where I became a birder, joining dozens of other birdwatchers on monthly hikes.

It is extremely important that open space and wildlife habitats are protected. With the onset of climate change, all wildlife will need places of refuge and will need to migrate between habitats. As man continues to fragment open spaces and habitat, it is becoming increasingly difficult for wildlife to move between sustainable habitats. The transition ramps will create *dead* zones within the heart of the Reserve.

Like our wildlife, humans also need to move between areas, and we do this mainly by driving our cars on streets, roads, highways and freeways. The population of the Los Angeles area will continue to grow, and a band-aid ramp construction will not solve the problem. With the price of gasoline rapidly rising, people are trying to find other ways to commute to and from work, and are combining errands to save trips, and money. Our federal and state tax dollars should be invested in ways to get people out of their cars. We should be focusing on mass transit solutions.

Because of the negative impacts of building multi-lane transition ramps, from the I-405 to the US-101, in the Wildlife Reserve, the negative impacts to our existing waters, and the fact that this project is only a band-aid solution, I am opposed to Alternatives 1, 2 and 3, and am in favor of the "no-build" alternative.

Sincerely,  
  
Mrs. Sharon L. Ford  
13028 Aetna St  
Valley Glen, CA 91401-3203

**Please refer to CALTRANS RESPONSE #57.**

**CALTRANS RESPONSE TO RON KAPLAN FORMAL COMMENT LETTER REGARDING THE DRAFT EA/IS**

Eduardo  
Aguilar/D07/Caltrans/CAGov  
05/07/2008 02:51 PM

To "Ron Kaplan" <rkaplan1@socal.rr.com>  
cc  
bcc  
Subject Re: Connector from I-405 S. to 101-N

Dear Mr. Kaplan,

Thank you for your question. We will respond.

"Ron Kaplan" <rkaplan1@socal.rr.com>



"Ron Kaplan"  
<rkaplan1@socal.rr.com>  
05/07/2008 11:27 AM

To <Eduardo\_Aguilar@dot.ca.gov>  
cc  
Subject Connector from I-405 S. to 101-N

Dear Mr. Aguilar,

Not only is the transition from I-405-S to 101-N very congested, it leads to some dangerous practices by impatient drivers. Too oftentimes, a driver in lane 2 of the transition road to 101-S will go up to the front of the line of cars making the transition from I-405-S to 101-N and force their way into the front of the line. This takes them some time, and creates a dangerous situation for cars traveling south on the 405 in the no. 2 lane of the transition to 101-S.

Just as there were barriers put up preventing drivers making a transition from 405-N to 101-N from making the dangerous quick 4-lane change to get off at Haskell Ave., could there not be some similar barriers put up between lane 2 of the transition from 405-S to 101-S and the transition road from 405-S to 101-N—perhaps somewhere at the southern end of these adjacent lanes?

I would very much appreciate a reply to the proposal I present in this e-mail.

**CALTRANS RESPONSE #69:**

Selected Alternative 1 will address the two root causes of the problem:

- a) Heavy queuing and congestion-related back-ups onto the southbound I-405 mainline as a result of the existing outdated connectors
- b) Aggravation of the aforementioned problem as a result of weaving ("criss-crossing") between traffic from Burbank Boulevard seeking to access the southbound I-405 mainline versus southbound I-405 mainline traffic seeking to access the U.S.-101 connectors.

The new, much longer, two-lane 50mph connector would alleviate the congestion and **completely eliminate the weaving** on the southbound I-405, between Burbank Boulevard and the U.S.-101.

Furthermore, since southbound I-405 mainline traffic would need to access the new connector to the westbound U.S.-101 starting at roughly in the vicinity of the Burbank Boulevard overcrossing, the reckless, last-minute maneuver you describe will no longer be possible. CALTRANS thus anticipates that selected Alternative 1 would alleviate the problem you describe.

In regards to the barriers you recommend, CALTRANS would need to conduct studies to determine whether they would be appropriate at the specified locations.

Thank you.

Sincerely,  
Ron Kaplan

**CALTRANS RESPONSE TO USACE (2) FORMAL COMMENT LETTER REGARDING THE DRAFT EA/IS**



**DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY**  
LOS ANGELES DISTRICT, CORPS OF ENGINEERS  
P.O. BOX 532711  
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90053-2325

April 23, 2008

REPLY TO  
ATTENTION OF  
Office of the  
District Counsel

Mr. Ronald J. Kosinski *RL*  
Deputy District Director  
Division of Environmental Planning  
California Department of Transportation, District 7  
100 South Main Street, MS-16A  
Los Angeles, California 90012

Dear Mr. Kosinski:

In follow-up to our April 3, 2008 meeting, I am writing to clarify the Corps' position on the application of Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act of 1966, as amended, to areas within the Sepulveda Basin located at the junction of the I-405 and US-101 freeways in the San Fernando Valley, City of Los Angeles, California. According to your Draft Section 4(f)/Section 6(f) Evaluation of March 2008, your agency concluded Woodley Park, the wildlife refuge, and Sepulveda Dam are Section 4(f) resources.

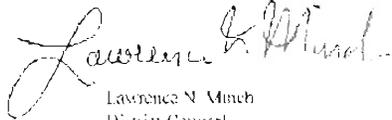
As you are aware, Section 4(f) only applies if the transportation project at issue will use land from a significant publicly owned public park, recreation area, or wildlife or waterfowl refuge, and any land from a historic site of national, State, or local significance. 49 U.S.C. § 303(c). A publicly owned park, recreation area or wildlife and waterfowl refuge are presumed to be significant unless the official having jurisdiction over the site concludes that the entire site is not significant. 23 C.F.R. § 774.11 (c). An historic site is significant only if it is on or eligible for the National Register of Historic Places, unless the Federal Highway Administration determines that the application of Section 4(f) is otherwise appropriate. 23 C.F.R. § 774.11(e).

Upon review of Corps policy and coordination of this issue with our Headquarters Office in Washington, D.C., we agree Woodley Park, the wildlife refuge and Sepulveda Dam are Section 4(f) resources. Pursuant to 23 C.F.R. § 774.3(e) and Federal Highway Administration's Section

**CALTRANS RESPONSE #70:**  
Comment noted.

4(D) Policy Paper dated March 1, 2005, in the event all alternatives use land from 4(t) resources, the alternative that results in the least overall harm in light of the statute's preservation purpose must be selected. Should you have any questions concerning the information presented in this letter, please contact me at (212) 452-3946.

Sincerely,



Lawrence N. Minch  
District Counsel

CALTRANS RESPONSE TO LILLIAN SALTER FORMAL COMMENT LETTER REGARDING THE DRAFT EA/IS



INTERSTATE 405/US-101 CONNECTOR PROJECT

Comment Card

To Mr. Kosinski at  
Born in USA

Name: Lillian Salter 85 yrs old Phone: 818-995-7424

Organization (if applicable): homeowners in question (speaking for all in question)

Address: 15113 La Maids st City: Sherman Oaks Ca 91403

Comments: When you take our home "You at least have to pay us enough to replace another!" not leave us homeless. No one should be left without a home to live in and "call their home" Not taken away without enough money to replace it. That would be a crime to leave us homeless.

"Do with others as you would do unto yourself"  
PS. I worked all my life and I am now 85 years old. I do have a right in the USA to live my last years in home of my own that I worked for all my life + have to leave my home now - call that the American way of life

Please submit to staff or mail to:  
Mr. Ronald Kosinski, Deputy District Director  
Caltrans, District 7, Division of Environmental Planning  
100 South Main Street, MS 16A  
Los Angeles, CA 90012  
or e-mail to: Eduardo\_Agailar@dot.ca.gov

PS. I don't ride or drive the freeways - why should I pay the price.

CALTRANS RESPONSE #71:

Selected Alternative 1 **DOES NOT** require any residential right of way acquisition. Your home will not be impacted.

**CALTRANS RESPONSE TO LADOT FORMAL COMMENT LETTER REGARDING THE DRAFT EA/IS**

RITA ROBINSON  
GENERAL MANAGER

**CITY OF LOS ANGELES**

CALIFORNIA



**ANTONIO R. VILLARAIGOSA**  
MAYOR

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

100 S. Main St., 10<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Los Angeles, CA 90012  
(213) 872-8460  
FAX: (213) 972-8410

May 28, 2008

Mr. Ronald Kosinski, Deputy District Director *RK*  
Caltrans, District 7  
Division of Environmental Planning  
100 S. Main Street MS 16A  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

*Ron*  
Dear Mr. Kosinski:

**DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT/INITIAL STUDY FOR SOUTHBOUND I-405 TO US-101 CONNECTORS IMPROVEMENT PROJECT**

Thank you for submitting Draft Environmental Assessment/Initial Study (EA/IS) for the Southbound I-405 to US-101 Connector Improvement Project for our review. We fully support Caltrans efforts to improve safety, operation, capacity and traffic flow through this heavily congested interchange as long as the alternative selected does not negatively impact the surrounding arterial network, and the neighboring residential and business areas.

After careful consideration of all of the proposed alternatives, The Los Angeles Department of Transportation (LADOT) has the following comments:

1. Alternatives 2 or 3, both of which provide access to US-101 from Burbank Boulevard on-ramp are still our preferred alternatives.
2. We do not support Alternative 4 which would negatively impact residential neighborhoods of Sherman Oaks.
3. In the event there is a substantial opposition to Alternatives 2 and 3, LADOT is willing to consider Alternative 1, which would eliminate access to US-101 from Burbank Boulevard on-ramp as long as the following mitigation measures to reduce negative impacts on the surrounding arterial network are implemented:
  - A. Construct a new US-101 northbound on-ramp and off-ramp at Hayvenhurst Avenue. The new on-ramp is needed to compensate for lost access to the northbound US-101 from Burbank Boulevard on-ramp. The new off-ramp would complete the interchange and relieve traffic at the non-standard Haskell Avenue off-ramp.

**Please refer to CALTRANS RESPONSE #60.**

**CALTRANS RESPONSE #72:**

CALTRANS and LADOT are in continued negotiation and have been working closely to devise City street traffic mitigation proposals as part of selected Alternative 1. LADOT has been present, active, and vocal in all phases of this project. Based on all successful coordination thus far, CALTRANS can at this time commit to implementing the following City street improvements, in order to mitigate to a level below significance, selected Alternative 1's City street traffic impacts:

- 1) Add an additional left turn lane from westbound Burbank Boulevard to southbound Hayvenhurst Avenue
- 2) Add a right turn lane from eastbound Burbank Boulevard to southbound Hayvenhurst Avenue
- 3) Northbound US-101 off-ramp at Hayvenhurst Avenue – add left turn lane to southbound Hayvenhurst Avenue
- 4) Construct new northbound US-101 on-ramp from Hayvenhurst Avenue
- 5) Add an additional left turn lane from southbound Hayvenhurst Avenue to southbound US-101 on-ramp
- 6) Add additional lane on southbound US-101 on-ramp at Hayvenhurst Avenue
- 7) Add additional lane to eastbound Magnolia Boulevard at Hayvenhurst Avenue
- 8) Provide a traffic signal at the new intersection of the new connector, the southbound I-405 off-ramp, and Burbank Boulevard.
- 9) Modify the Burbank Boulevard roadway at the above location to provide adequate right-turn and left turn storage to the new connector.

- B. Implement proposed mitigations at Hayvenhurst Avenue/Magnolia Boulevard intersection, and existing on- and off-ramps at Hayvenhurst Avenue as shown on the LADOT plan previously submitted to Mr. Derek Higa of your staff with our letter dated February 25, 2008 (copy attached).
- C. Provide adequate improvements along Burbank Boulevard to accommodate increased traffic. This includes Burbank Boulevard/Woodley Avenue, and Burbank Boulevard/Hayvenhurst Avenue intersections (see the attached plans).
- D. Reconstruct/relocate the northbound US-101 on and off-ramps at Van Nuys Boulevard and widen Van Nuys Boulevard between Riverside Drive and southbound on/off ramps to accommodate the diverted traffic and relieve the existing severe congestion caused by the freeway-bound motorists at this diamond interchange.
- E. Construct a new off-ramp from the NB I-405 connector with the SB US-101 connector to Sepulveda Boulevard across from the existing southbound US-101 on-ramp (near the Sherman Oaks Galleria). This mitigation measure will relieve congestion caused by the diverted traffic at the Ventura Boulevard/Sepulveda Boulevard intersection (which is necessary since this intersection will be impacted by additional traffic that will no longer be able to exit at Haskell Ave off-ramp).

4. The traffic diverted on to City streets due to Alternative 1 will have significant impact on City street intersections that are already operating at the level of service (LOS) E or F. According to the City policy, these impacts have to be mitigated to the level of non-significance. Definition of Significant Transportation Impact for projects within the City of Los Angeles is attached for your information.

We look forward to continue working with Caltrans and other involved agencies to help deliver this important transportation improvement project. If you have any questions, please contact me at (213) 972-5008 or Irwin Chodash of my staff at (213) 972-5027.

Sincerely,



Ken A. Husting  
Senior Transportation Engineer  
Regional Surface Transportation Improvements Division

Attachments

- c: Michael Tou, Congressman Sherman  
Jennifer Cohen, Second Council District  
Paul Backstrom, Fifth Council District  
Maria Ventura, Sixth Council District

**CALTRANS RESPONSE #72 continued:**

- 10) Provide a traffic signal at the new intersection of the new connector/southbound I-405 off-ramp at Burbank Boulevard
- 11) Modify the Burbank Boulevard roadway at the above location to provide adequate right-turn and left-turn storage to the new connector.
- 12) Provide three lanes on the reconfigured southbound I-405 off-ramp at Burbank Boulevard.
- 13) Provide adequate improvements along Burbank Boulevard to accommodate increased traffic. This includes Burbank Boulevard/Woodley Avenue, and Burbank Boulevard/Hayvenhurst Boulevard intersections

**CALTRANS RESPONSE TO SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA GAS COMPANY FORMAL COMMENT LETTER REGARDING THE DRAFT EA/IS**



A  Sempra Energy company

May 1, 2008

Mr. Ronald Kosinski, Deputy District Director *OK*  
California Department of Transportation  
Division of Environmental Planning (405/101 Connector)  
100 South Main Street MS 16A  
Los Angeles, Ca 90012

**Re: Draft Environmental Assessment/ Initial Study – EA 199510  
Southbound I-405 (San Diego Freeway) to U.S. Hwy 101 (Ventura Freeway)  
Connector - I/S Magnolia Blvd & Densmore and Camarillo & Sepulveda**

Southern California Gas Company-Transmission Department (The Gas Company) has received your request for pipeline locations within the general area of your proposed project. The Gas Company operates and maintains (30)-inch high pressure natural gas lines (3000, 3001) within the limits of your construction project. Attached are copies of our pipeline Atlas sheets (LA 972, 1039) which show the location of our pipelines. While we cannot guarantee the accuracy of these maps they are included to assist you in your planning and design.

One design parameter The Gas Company requires is that:

- Consideration be given to the safety of our pipeline during the design and construction stages.
- No mechanical equipment will be permitted to operate within three feet of the pipeline, and any closer work must be done by hand.
- A representative of The Gas Company must observe the excavation around or near our facilities to insure protection and to record pertinent data necessary for our operations.

Upon request, at least two (2) working days prior to the start of construction, we will locate and mark our active underground facilities for the contractor at no cost. Please call Underground Service Alert (USA) at (800) 422-4133.

Arrangements for someone to stand-by and observe can be made by calling (562) 806-4844 two working days prior to the start of construction. We would appreciate it if you would place a note on your plans to that effect.

Southern California  
Gas Company

9809 Cukale Avenue  
Chatsworth, CA  
91313

Mailing Address:  
P. O. Box 2300  
Chatsworth, CA  
91313-2300  
M/L 9314

tel 818-701-4346  
fax 818-701-3441

**CALTRANS RESPONSE #73:**

The CALTRANS Division of Design is in receipt of this letter, and will use the enclosed information accordingly. COMMENTS NOTED.

Mr. Ronald Kosinski, Deputy District Director  
Page 2

Re: Draft Environmental Assessment/Initial Study - EA 199610  
Southbound I-405 (San Diego Freeway) to U.S. Hwy 101 (Ventura Freeway)  
Connector - I/S Magnolia Blvd & Densmore and Camarillo & Sepulveda

---

We will also require "final" grading plans and construction profiles prior to the start of construction.

Within the limits of your proposed construction, if you have not already done so, please contact the Northern Distribution Region of The Gas Company for information on their pipelines. You can contact them at (818) 701-3324 and they will furnish you with any information you may require.

If a conflict is identified and can only be resolved by the relocation of our facilities, please be advised that the projected timetable for the completion of this relocation is one year. This includes planning, design, material procurement, cathodic protection, permits, environmental issues and construction.

Please refer to our Document Control Plan File # 105-08-3000, 3001 and any correspondence directed to this office, in connection with this project. If you have further questions or require additional assistance, please contact Ray Carroll at (818) 701-3225.

Sincerely,



Rosalyn Squires  
Pipeline Planning Assistant  
Transmission Department

CALTRANS RESPONSE TO FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION FORMAL COMMENT LETTER REGARDING THE DRAFT EA/IS

05/27/2008 10:08 3107256949

FAA LAX ADD

PAGE 02



U.S. Department  
of Transportation  
Federal Aviation  
Administration

Western-Pacific Region  
Los Angeles Airports District Office

Federal Aviation Administration  
P.O. Box 82007  
Los Angeles, CA 90009-2007

May 27, 2008

Mr. Ronald Kosinski, Deputy District Director  
California Department of Transportation  
Division of Environmental Planning (405/101 Connector)  
100 South Main Street MS 16A  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Southbound Interstate-405 (San Diego Freeway) To the U.S. Highway-101  
(Ventura Freeway) Connector Improvement Project  
Draft Environmental Assessment/Initial Study

Mr. Kosinski:

I am in receipt of your Draft Environmental Assessment/Initial Study for the Southbound Interstate-405 (San Diego Freeway) To the U.S. Highway-101 (Ventura Freeway) Connector Improvement Project that proposes various alternatives to improve the connector from the southbound San Diego Freeway (Interstate-405) to the westbound Ventura Freeway (U.S. Highway-101).

It is necessary under Part 77 of the Federal Aviation Regulations to notify the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) of any proposal which would exceed certain elevations with respect to the ground and neighboring airports. Van Nuys Airport is located approximately 2.5 miles northwest of the 405/101 interchange.

CFR Title 14 Part 77.13 states that any person/organization who intends to sponsor any of the following construction or alterations must notify the Administrator of the FAA:

- any construction or alteration exceeding 200 ft above ground level

Any construction or alteration:

- within 20,000 ft of a public use or military airport which exceeds a 100:1 surface from any point on the runway of each airport with at least one runway more than 3,200 ft
- within 10,000 ft of a public use or military airport which exceeds a 50:1 surface from any point on the runway of each airport with its longest runway no more than 3,200 ft
- within 5,000 ft of a public use heliport which exceeds a 25:1 surface
- any highway, railroad or other traverse way whose prescribed adjusted height would exceed that above noted standards when requested by the FAA

**CALTRANS RESPONSE #74:**

The CALTRANS Division of Design is in receipt of this letter, and will use the enclosed information accordingly. COMMENTS NOTED.



**CALTRANS RESPONSE TO FEMA FORMAL COMMENT LETTER REGARDING THE DRAFT EA/IS**

U.S. Department of Homeland Security  
FEMA Region IX  
1111 Broadway, Suite 1200  
Oakland, CA, 94607-4052



**FEMA**

**RECEIVED**  
**APR 25 2008**

April 21, 2008

Mr. Ronald Kosinski *RK*  
Deputy District Director  
California Department of Transportation, Division of Environmental  
Planning (405/101 Connector)  
100 Main Street, MS 16A  
Los Angeles, California 90012

Dear Mr. Kosinski:

This is in response to your request for comments on the Draft Environmental Assessment/Initial Study for the San Diego Freeway (Interstate 405/101).

Please review the current effective Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs) for the County of San Diego (Community Number 060284), Map revised September 29, 2006. Please note that the County of San Diego, California is a participant in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). The minimum, basic NFIP floodplain management building requirements are described in Vol. 44 Code of Federal Regulations (44 CFR), Sections 59 through 65.

A summary of these NFIP floodplain management building requirements are as follows:

- All buildings constructed within a riverine floodplain, (i.e., Flood Zones A, AO, AH, AE, and A1 through A30 as delineated on the FIRM), must be elevated so that the lowest floor is at or above the Base Flood Elevation level in accordance with the effective Flood Insurance Rate Map.
- If the area of construction is located within a Regulatory Floodway as delineated on the FIRM, any *development* must not increase base flood elevation levels. **The term *development* means any man-made change to improved or unimproved real estate, including but not limited to buildings, other structures, mining, dredging, filling, grading, paving, excavation or drilling operations, and storage of equipment or materials.** A hydrologic and hydraulic analysis must be performed *prior* to the start of development, and must demonstrate that the development would not cause any rise in base flood levels. No rise is permitted within regulatory floodways.

[www.fema.gov](http://www.fema.gov)

**CALTRANS RESPONSE #75:**

The CALTRANS Division of Design is in receipt of this letter.  
Comments noted.

Also, please refer to CALTRANS Response #2.

Ronald Kosinski, Deputy District Director

Page 2

April 21, 2008

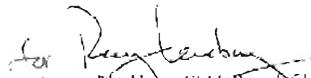
- All buildings constructed within a coastal high hazard area (any of the "V" Flood Zones as delineated on the FIRMs) must be elevated on piers and columns, so that the lowest horizontal structural member (excluding the pilings and columns) is elevated to or above the base flood elevation level. In addition, the posts and pilings foundation and the structure attached thereto, is anchored to resist flotation, collapse and lateral movement due to the effects of wind and water loads acting simultaneously on all building components.
- Upon completion of any development that changes existing Special Flood Hazard Areas, the NFIP districts all participating communities to submit the appropriate hydrologic and hydraulic data to FEMA for a FIRM revision. In accordance with 44 CFR, Section 65.5, as soon as practicable, but not later than six months after such data becomes available, a community shall notify FEMA of the changes by submitting technical data for a flood map revision. To obtain copies of FEMA's Flood Map Revision Application Packages, please refer to the FEMA website at <http://www.fema.gov/business/spotnots.shtml>.

**Please Note:**

Many NFIP participating communities have adopted floodplain management building requirements which are more restrictive than the minimum federal standards described in 44 CFR. Please contact the local community's floodplain manager for more information on local floodplain management building requirements. The San Diego County floodplain manager can be reached by calling Cid Tesoro, Flood Control District Manager, at (858) 694-3672.

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to call Marshall Mark, of the Mitigation staff at (510) 627-7057.

Sincerely,

  
Gregor Blackburn, CFM, Branch Chief  
Floodplain Management and Insurance Branch

cc:

Cid Tesoro, Flood Control District Manager, San Diego County  
Garret Tur-Sing/Salomon Miranda, State of California, Department of Water Resources  
Southern District  
Marshall Mark, Floodplanner, CFM, DHS/FEMA Region IX  
Alessandro Amaglio, Environmental Officer, DHS/FEMA Region IX

CALTRANS RESPONSE TO SCAG FORMAL COMMENT LETTER REGARDING THE DRAFT EA/IS



ASSOCIATION of GOVERNMENTS
Main Office
818 West Seventh Street
12th Floor
Los Angeles, California
90017-3435

1 (213) 236-1800
1 (213) 236-1825
www.scag.ca.gov

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May 16, 2008

Mr. Ronald Kosinski
Deputy District Director
California Department of Transportation
Division of Environmental Planning
100 South Main Street MS 16A
Los Angeles, CA 90012

RE: SCAG Clearinghouse No. 1 20080235 Southbound I-405 to the Westbound U.S.-101 Connector Improvement Project; and SCAG Clearinghouse No. 1 20080254 Los Angeles Avenue Road Widening Moorpark Avenue to Spring Road

Dear Mr. Kosinski:

Thank you for submitting the projects for review and comment:

- Southbound I-405 to the Westbound U.S.-101 Connector Improvement Project
• Los Angeles Avenue Road Widening Moorpark Avenue to Spring Road

As an areawide clearinghouse for regionally significant projects, SCAG reviews the consistency of local plans, projects and programs with regional plans. This activity is based on SCAG's responsibilities as a regional planning organization pursuant to state and federal laws and regulations. Guidance provided by these reviews is intended to assist local agencies and project sponsors to take actions that contribute to the attainment of regional goals and policies.

We have reviewed the proposed Projects and have determined that the Projects are not regionally significant per SCAG Intergovernmental Review (IGR) Criteria and California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines (Section 15206). Therefore, the proposed Projects do not warrant comments at this time. Should there be a change in the scope of the proposed Projects, we would appreciate the opportunity to review and comment at that time.

A description of the proposed Project was published in SCAG's April 1-30, 2008 Intergovernmental Review Clearinghouse Report for public review and comment.

The project title and SCAG Clearinghouse number should be used in all correspondence with SCAG concerning these Projects. Correspondence should be sent to the attention of the Clearinghouse Coordinator. If you have any questions, please contact me at (213) 236-1857. Thank you.

Sincerely,
Laverne Jones
LAVERNE JONES, Planning Technician
Environmental Planning Division

The Regional Council is comprised of 75 elected officials representing 187 cities, six counties, four County Transportation Commissions, and a Tribal Government representative within Southern California.

CALTRANS RESPONSE #76:
Comment Noted.

## CALTRANS RESPONSE TO GERRY SILVER'S (2) FORMAL COMMENT LETTER REGARDING THE DRAFT EA/IS



"Gerald A. Silver"  
<gsilver4@sbccglbbal.net>  
05/15/2008 08:50 AM

To: "Eduardo Aguilar" <eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov>  
cc: "Tom LaBonge" <tlabonge@council.lacity.org>, "Lexi Richards" <Lexi.Richards@lacity.org>, "Jack Weiss" <jweiss@council.lacity.org>, "Michael Tou"  
bcc:  
Subject: HOME's Position re: 101/405

May 15, 2008

Mr. Eduardo Aguilar  
Division of Environmental Planning  
Caltrans (Department of Transportation)  
100 South Main Street, Suite 100  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

SUBJECT: CALTRANS NEW CONNECTOR SAN DIEGO-405 FREEWAY TO NORTH US 101

### CLARIFICATION OF ALTERNATIVE NAMES:

We would like to clarify our position regarding the Alternatives to the 101/405 that Homeowners of Encino supports. We understand that there are different numbering systems used for the alternatives in the various documents released by Caltrans. We would also like to pose several questions regarding this project.

Currently, only three alternatives remain under consideration, these are **labeled Alternatives 1, 2, and 3**, plus the No-Build.

The existing non-standard connector experiences extensive congestion, delays, and queue lengths throughout the day. The purpose of the project is to improve safety, operation, capacity, and traffic flow through the interchange by replacing the existing 20 mph single-lane connector, with a new 50 mph two-lane connector.

Your Draft Environmental Assessment (EA/IS) shows a significant increase in accidents and injuries at the interchange. We have observed many vehicles stacking up in the south-bound 405 connector lane waiting to transfer to the 101 freeway north-bound. This creates a significant accident potential, and a daily danger to residents using the freeway. **This situation must be remedied as soon as possible.**

We understand that the Haskell on and off ramps would not be affected by this project.

We understand that **three** alternatives are being considered by Caltrans to address this connector problem:

#### No Build

The no build choice would provide no additional improvements to the I-405/101 connector, leaving the current accident situation. We oppose this option.

Of the remaining **three** options, each calls for the replacement of the existing 20 mph single-lane connector (from the southbound I-405 to the northbound U.S.-101), with a new 50 mph two-lane connector bridge that encroaches upon and spans over the spillway of the Sepulveda Dam. Each eliminates the existing erratic and conflicting traffic weaving patterns between the Burbank Boulevard on-ramp traffic seeking to access the southbound I-405 mainline, versus the traffic attempting to access the U.S.-101 connectors from the southbound

### CALTRANS RESPONSE #77:

Fortunately, selected Alternative 1 is the best alternative from a freeway improvement and operations standpoint, and therefore, is the best alternative suited to meet the project's Purpose and Need. Unlike rejected Alternatives 2 and 3, selected Alternative 1 eliminates the existing weave segment on the southbound I-405, between Burbank Boulevard and the U.S.-101. Additionally, with the new, much larger, two-lane connector's ability to "store" stopped vehicles during heavy congestion (**improved capacity**), the southbound I-405 would experience less congestion-related back-ups and queuing at the interchange. Simply by removing/alleviating these risk factors, which are known to cause/contribute to accidents, CALTRANS can reliably postulate that safety would improve after implementation of Alternative 1, thereby achieving the "**improve safety**" component of the project's Purpose and Need. Also, please refer to the "Supplemental Traffic Data" in the Appendices section of the final EA/IS to see how Alternative 1 would **improve operation and traffic flow** through the interchange (i.e. "Level of Service").

Please note that CALTRANS does not "forecast" accident rates.

I-405 mainline.

There are significant differences between the cost and impacts of **Alternatives 1, 2, and 3**. Homeowners of Encino **favours the third alternative, Alternative 3**.

**Alternative 1:** We oppose *Alternative 1*, because it would eliminate access to the 101 freeway from Burbank Blvd. While this alternative does not take any land in the Sepulveda Basin, it cuts off major access to Encino, greatly increasing street traffic. We understand the LA Dept. of Transportation also opposes this alternative for the same reason.

**Alternative 2:** We oppose *Alternative 2*, because of its substantial increase in cost, and because it would require the reconstruction of the Burbank Blvd. bridge over the 405. Shutting down this arterial to re-construct the Burbank bridge would create a horrendous traffic night-mare during construction.

**Alternative 3:** We support **Alternative 3** for several reasons. It would provide access from Burbank Blvd. to the 101 Freeway. It costs substantially less than **Alternative 2** and would only take a relatively small amount of land in the Sepulveda Basin. While we would normally oppose any land takes in the Basin, the significant improvements to traffic flow, reduced accidents and injuries, all weigh in favor of **Alternative 3**. This is our preferred choice.

**QUESTION THAT NEED TO BE ANSWERED:**

1. Assuming that the new connector is constructed, please estimate the number of lives saved, amount of injuries and property damage avoided by this project? In our view, Caltrans needs to stress this issue in its presentations, since safety is a major and significant justification for the project. It did not receive adequate explanation in your presentation at VBS on May 14, 2008.

2. Please expand on the issue of "emergency" access to hospitals, due to greater mobility. Mr. Hanna stated that a major benefit of the new connector would be better access from the freeway in emergencies. Please explain this in more detail. In our view, Caltrans needs to stress this issue in its presentations, since access to emergency hospitals, such as the Encino Hospital, etc. is a major and significant justification for the project. It did not receive adequate explanation in your presentation at VBS on May 14, 2008.

3. Mr. Hanna stated that there would be a \$28,000,000 dollar savings to the community, as a result of the new connector. Please expand on this issue, and how the amount was calculated, and over what period. In our view, Caltrans needs to stress this issue in its presentations, since cost saving is a major and significant justification for the project. It did not receive adequate explanation in your presentation at VBS on May 14, 2008.

4. Caltrans did not fully explain the increased traffic impacts on local City streets, including Burbank Blvd., Sepulveda and Ventura Blvd., if access from Burbank Blvd. to the 101 freeway is cut off. In our view, Caltrans needs to stress this issue in its presentations, since increased traffic on City streets is a major and significant concern. It did not receive adequate explanation in your presentation at VBS on May 14, 2008.

5. Caltrans did not explain the time frame for the construction of each Alternative. In particular how long will it take to construct each Alternative, and how long would it take to rebuild the Burbank bridge over the 405, if Alternative 2 is selected. In our view, Caltrans needs to stress this issue in its presentations, since construction delays are a major and significant concern. It did not receive adequate explanation in your presentation at VBS on May 14, 2008.

6. Please explain in more detail the amount of outreach to the Encino, Van Nuys, Sherman Oaks and Lake Balboa communities regarding this project. There appeared to be few members of the public in attendance at the hearing (short of a group of Basin supporters), and little understanding of the consequences of closing the Burbank access to the 101 freeway. How

**CALTRANS RESPONSE #77 continued:**

In light of the overwhelming concern and opposition to any encroachment upon the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve, as well as the requirements set forth by Section 4(f) of the U.S. Department of Transportation Act, **Alternatives 2 and 3 have been rejected**. CALTRANS will only pursue Alternative 1.

Section 4(f) of the U.S. Department of Transportation Act mandates that if there is any prudent or feasible alternative to encroaching upon a wildlife reserve, a transportation agency must select that alternative. In this case, that alternative is selected Alternative 1.

**CALTRANS RESPONSE #78:**

Also, please refer to CALTRANS RESPONSE #77 and the "Supplemental Traffic Data" in the Appendices section of the final EA/IS. Please note that CALTRANS does not "forecast" accident rates. **Alternative 1 would improve the commute through the interchange by 4 to 6 minutes, depending upon one's origin or destination**. In an emergency situation, obviously, 4 to 6 minutes can mean the difference between life and death. And as discussed in CALTRANS RESPONSE #77, by improving safety, the implementation of Alternative 1 will aid in the prevention of emergencies. Currently, the existing connector experiences accident rates that are nearly four times higher than the state average.

Mr. Hanna indicated that the savings would be \$38,000,000. CALTRANS feels that the safety improvement that the project provides is of higher value. Please refer to the "Supplemental Traffic Data" in the Appendices section of the final EA/IS.

**CALTRANS RESPONSE #79:**

Please refer to the "Supplemental Traffic Data" in the Appendices section of the final EA/IS. Also, please refer to CALTRANS RESPONSE #72.

**Please refer to CALTRANS RESPONSE #61**

**CALTRANS RESPONSE #80:**

The 45 day public comment period for this project:

- Began on April 14, 2008
- Ended on May 28, 2008

The public notice newspaper ad appeared in the following papers:

- Daily News: April 14, 2008
- Jewish Journal: April 18, 2008
- Telemundo: April 17, 2008
- L.A. Watts Times: April 17, 2008

Additionally, the Caltrans Division of Public Affairs issued a press release on April 14, 2008.

were residents in adjacent communities informed of the Alternatives and the consequences of each?

Thank you,

Gerald A. Silver

Pres. Homeowners of Encino

**CALTRANS RESPONSE #80 continued:**

A second public notice newspaper ad, advertising the project and the May 14th public hearing, appeared in the following newspapers:

Daily News: May 7, 2008

Jewish Journal: May 9, 2008

Telemundo: May 8, 2008

L.A. Watts Times: May 8, 2008

The draft environmental document and notices letters were sent to all pertinent federal, state, county and local elected officials and government agencies, as well as, to private organizations and interested individuals. Included were representatives of the Sherman Oaks Homeowner's Association, Encino Neighborhood Council, Homeowner's of Encino, and other local organizations. These items were all sent via U.S. mail.

**CALTRANS RESPONSE TO JOYCE BATTEN FORMAL COMMENT LETTER REGARDING THE DRAFT EA/IS**



"E. Stanley Batten"  
<esbatten@earthlink.net>  
05/27/2008 03:27 PM

To: eduardo\_egular@dot.ca.gov.  
cc:  
bcc:  
Subject: Proposed Caltrans Project, 405-101

Dear Mr. Aguilar:

I am writing in opposition to options 2 and 3 of the proposed Caltrans project to redo the transition between the southbound 405 and the westbound (or northbound) 101. Both of these options would cause the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife area to be devastated and no longer provide recreational and educational opportunities for Los Angeles residents and visitors. Wildlife areas such as the Sepulveda Basin are too few and far between in Southern California. Options 1, or the no-build option, are the only acceptable proposals.

I had the opportunity to attend the recent public meeting organized by Caltrans at the Temple in Encino. At that event, a person on the Caltrans staff identified himself as a professional biologist, and implied that since Caltrans had biologists on staff, our wildlife areas would automatically be protected from devastation. Let me assure you that this argument fooled no one. Biologists, like others, are not immune from having vested interests in projects proposed by their employers.

There is one positive step Caltrans can take in this area, at much less cost to the taxpayer and aggravation to wildlife lovers everywhere. Your agency can decide, once and for all, whether the portion of the 101 freeway leading from the San Fernando Valley to Thousand Oaks, Oxnard, Ventura, etc., is actually west or north, and change all relevant signs accordingly. Otherwise, confusion to residents but especially visitors will continue.

Thank you.

Joyce Batten  
22678 Cass Avenue  
Woodland Hills, CA 91364

**Please refer to CALTRANS RESPONSE #60.**

**CALTRANS RESPONSE TO SETH SHTEIR FORMAL COMMENT LETTER REGARDING THE DRAFT EA/IS**



sshteir@aol.com  
05/28/2008 03:42 PM

To: eduardo\_aguilar@cot.ca.gov  
cc:  
bcc:  
Subject: Public Comment for 405/101 Connector from Seth Shteir

Eduardo Aguilar, District 7 Environmental Planning  
Caltrans  
Los Angeles CA

Dear Mr. Aguilar,

Several years ago, upon returning from the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Area Reserve, my first and second grade class wrote a poem from the point of view of a great blue heron. The last line read "If you build a supermarket on my wetland, I'll be mad".

However, the recent threat to the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Area does not come from a shopping center, but the expansion of the southbound 405/westbound 101 freeway connector.

Caltrans has proposed several possible alternatives including a "No build" proposal. Alternative 1 calls for the expansion of the connector and would address safety issues, but without significant impact to the wildlife refuge. San Fernando Valley Audubon is not opposed to Alternative 1, but is opposed to Alternatives 2 and 3, which call for the development of 17 or 21 acres of the wildlife area. Under Alternatives 2 and 3, the wildlife reserve land would be used to construct a long on and off ramp so that traffic from Burbank Boulevard can exit the 405 or enter the 405 to transition to the 101.

The proposals for development are in response to studies conducted by Caltrans that shows that the southbound 405/westbound 101 connector is not safe and does not have sufficient size or speed to facilitate traffic merging between these two freeways. Los Angeles' burgeoning population suggests that the traffic problem on this artery will only worsen in coming years.

It's clear that Caltrans' proposal to expand the 405/101 connector is guided by extensive research and a sophisticated knowledge of engineering. Caltrans is attempting to alleviate traffic congestion and ensure the safety of motorists- a job they have been mandated to do by the state of California.

But such an expansion inside the wildlife area under alternatives 2 and 3 would not only permanently damage the wildlife habitat below the onramp, but adversely impact the rest of the refuge. The encroachment would cause increased noise and light pollution from the new construction and traffic.

The Sepulveda Basin wildlife area serves as a nesting and migratory refueling stop for over 200 species of birds and contains fine examples of riparian, grassland and oak woodland habitat. My

**Please refer to CALTRANS RESPONSE #60.**

organization, the San Fernando Valley Audubon Society, runs an environmental education program that currently serves over 3000 children many from low income homes. We also conduct bimonthly bird walks for the public. Each year, other public and private schools, as well as several local colleges bring students to the wildlife refuge. The proposed development would jeopardize education initiatives, but also impact the experience of being in a nature preserve for families, recreational walkers and joggers.

In the event the connector is expanded, one can't help wondering how it will do anything to alleviate the persistent heavy traffic on both the 405 and 101 freeways. It is possible that the flow of traffic on the connector can be improved, but where will the cars go once they merge onto between the 101 and 405? The traffic issues of the 405/101 connector and freeways are symptomatic of transportation problems all over the state. Our grinding traffic jams are the result of urban sprawl and a lack of public transportation. Expanding the connector is tantamount to replacing the pipes in your home when the city water main is plugged. It is a piecemeal approach to a regional problem.

There are larger questions to consider, too. Does the value of an expanded connector outweigh the value of open space? How can we quantify the enjoyment of children and adults visiting a natural sanctuary in the city? Will the connector proposal be remembered as visionary planning or will it be considered a mistake - another concrete lining of the Los Angeles River? Should we continue to expand the Freeway into the refuge when the new connector is no longer adequate?

I plan to continue to teach my students about California's natural heritage. The wildlife area's diverse habitats and avian fauna will provide a wonderful, outdoor laboratory. I can only hope that when we visit in the future, the only sound we hear is the wind rustling through cottonwood leaves and not the din of a jackhammer.

Sincerely,

Seth Shter, Vice President  
San Fernando Valley Audubon Society  
14355 Huston St. #225  
Sherman Oaks, CA 91423  
818-998-6429  
sshter@aol.com

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**CALTRANS RESPONSE TO LAKE BALBOA NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL FORMAL COMMENT LETTER REGARDING THE DRAFT EA/IS**



**Lake Balboa Neighborhood Council**

15701 Sherman Way, P.O. Box 7720  
Van Nuys, CA 91409  
Voice-mail (818) 779-9026  
www.LakeBalboaNC.org



May 23, 2008

Mr. Ronald Kosinski   
Deputy District Director  
**California Department of Transportation**  
Division of Environmental Planning (I-405/U.S. 101 Connector)  
100 S. Main Street – Mail Stop 16A  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Dear Mr. Kosinski,

The Lake Balboa Neighborhood Council ("LBNC") represents approximately 80,000 stakeholders who live, work and participate in the Lake Balboa community. The LBNC boundaries include the entire Sepulveda Dam Basin, including the wildlife area. Given that the stakeholders of Lake Balboa are the individuals to be most directly affected, the California Department of Transportation ("Caltrans") should strongly consider the position of the LBNC prior to selecting a project alternative for the I-405/U.S. 101 Improvement Project.

On May 21, 2008, the LBNC held a Special Meeting to consider the I-405/U.S. 101 Improvement Project. During the Special Meeting, the four project alternatives were discussed, including the no-build alternative. The public was also invited to comment on the project alternatives. After discussion by the LBNC and considering input from the public, the LBNC voted and hereby advises Caltrans that the LBNC is *in favor of Alternative 1, or no-build*, and is *strongly opposed to Alternatives 2 and 3*.

Please also consider that the Los Angeles City Council recognizes that the LBNC is the official voice of our community as our board represents all of the individuals who reside, work, and/or own businesses in Lake Balboa and are directly affected by the I-405/U.S. 101 Improvement Project. The LBNC trusts that Caltrans will give this resolution the serious consideration that it deserves.

Please do not hesitate to contact me directly or any member of our board should you have any questions, comments, or require additional information.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "David A. Bernardoni".

David A. Bernardoni  
President  
Lake Balboa Neighborhood Council

**Please refer to CALTRANS RESPONSE #60.**

CALTRANS RESPONSE TO ENCINO NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL FORMAL COMMENT LETTER REGARDING THE DRAFT EA/IS

**ENCINO  
NEIGHBORHOOD  
COUNCIL**

(A CERTIFIED NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL)  
MAIL: P. O. BOX 260439  
ENCINO, CA 91426-0439  
OFFICE: 4933 BALBOA BLVD.  
(818) 255-1040  
WWW.ENCINOCOUNCIL.ORG

OFFICERS

ROB GLUSHON  
PRESIDENT

L. LAURIE KELSON  
VICE-PRESIDENT

JESSE WOODS  
TREASURER

SHELLEY RIVLIN  
SECRETARY

GERALD A. SILVER  
SERGEANT AT ARMS



Encino  
Neighborhood  
Council

Wednesday, April 30, 2008

Ron Kosinski *ek*  
Deputy District Director  
Division of Environmental Planning  
California Dept. of Transportation  
100 S. Main Street, Suite MS16A  
Los Angeles, CA 90012



Dear Mr. Kosinski,

After careful review, the Traffic/Transportation Committee of the Encino Neighborhood Council supports Alternative 3 for the I-405 S to the I-101 W project. This alternative will be the least disruptive to local streets and neighborhoods. This project will help alleviate a very dangerous and tight interchange that currently exists.

Sincerely,

*Laurie Kelson*  
Laurie Kelson  
Chairperson, Traffic/Transportation Committee  
Encino Neighborhood Council

Please refer to CALTRANS RESPONSE #60.



CALTRANS RESPONSE TO DENNIS HAGEN SMITH FORMAL COMMENT LETTER REGARDING THE DRAFT EA/IS

May 16, 2008

Dear Mr. Ronald Kosinski, 

We are writing this letter to discourage you from accepting Alternatives #2 or #3 for building an off-ramp for I-405 near Burbank Boulevard. Either of these choices would do significant damage to one of the few environmental jewels remaining in the San Fernando Valley, the Sepulveda Wetlands Wildlife Area.

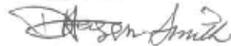
Our 5<sup>th</sup> grade class took a field trip this wonderful area earlier this year. Some of us even got to visit there in 4<sup>th</sup> grade. It's like no other place we've ever visited. Please don't destroy it!

The Sepulveda Wetlands Wildlife Area is very important to us. It provides a location for us to go observe wildlife in their natural habitats. Actually, it's the only place that we can do that around here. On our field trip, we learned about wetland birds and their adaptations. For example, white pelicans have webbed feet and practice communal hunting, while egrets have long legs and spread-out toes so that they don't sink in the mud, and female mallard ducks are all brown so they can camouflage themselves and protect their eggs. The Sepulveda Wildlife Area is one of the few areas in the San Fernando Valley where we can see and learn firsthand about such a diversity of birds living in their natural habitat. Our Audubon Society guides love this wildlife area so much that they work there for free!

In addition to being a great place for kids to view wildlife, the Sepulveda Wildlife Area is good for our environment. It recycles water from the Tillman Reclamation Center, provides a home for birds migrating on the Pacific Flyway, and is a quiet place where there are no cars. And, it's a cool spot for our families to take us on the weekend!

We think that you should make more space for these wetland animals instead of threatening to destroy their homes because we've done too much damage to their habitats with our overbuilding. For example, it would be great if you would expand the wetlands area across Burbank Boulevard and add a visitor's center with naturalists and displays. Then, more people would visit this amazing location. People need to start thinking more about the importance of our natural environment instead of destroying more precious places like this. Otherwise, what will be left for us to share with our kids when we're grown up? We're counting on you to help us protect this area for future generations! Please do not allow a freeway off-ramp to harm the Sepulveda Wetlands Wildlife Area!

Thank You,



The Fifth Graders of  
Toluca Lake Elementary School  
(Dennis Hagen-Smith is our teacher)

p.s. - We've each written you a personal letter to show you how important this issue is to us!

**Please refer to CALTRANS RESPONSE #60.**

**CALTRANS RESPONSE TO LA COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION FORMAL COMMENT LETTER REGARDING THE DRAFT EA/IS**



COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES  
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION  
*"Creating Community Through People, Parks and Programs"*  
Russ Guiney, Director

April 28, 2008

Ron Kosinski, Deputy District Director  
Division of Environmental Planning (405/101 Connector)  
California Department of Transportation, District 7  
100 S. Main Street, Suite 100-Mail Stop 16A  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Dear Mr. Kosinski:

**IMPROVEMENT OF THE CONNECTOR FROM THE SOUTHBOUND I-405  
TO THE WESTBOUND U.S. HIGHWAY-101**

The Draft Environmental Assessment/Initial Study for the above project has been reviewed for potential impacts on the facilities of the Los Angeles County Department of Parks and Recreation. We have determined that the proposed project will not affect facilities under the jurisdiction of this Department.

Thank you for including this Department in the environmental review process. If we may be of further assistance, please contact me at (213) 351-5127.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'C. Lau'.

Clement Lau, AICP  
Park Planner

**Please refer to CALTRANS RESPONSE #60.**  
Comment Noted.

**CALTRANS RESPONSE TO CAROL MAGID'S FORMAL COMMENT LETTER REGARDING THE DRAFT EA/IS**



Carol Magid  
<carolmagid@yahoo.com>

05/26/2008 08:47 PM

Please respond to  
Carol Magid  
<carol@carolmagid.com>

To: eduardo\_aguila@dot.ca.gov

cc: jackiewollner@hotmail.com

bcc:

Subject: sepulveda dam

Please do everything possible to preserve wildlife preserve in Sepulveda Dam. With all the construction in the Valley, there is very little wildlife habitat left for animals to live in and people to enjoy. Also, is there something that can be done there about the flooding every time it rains heavily? I'm not concerned about it being closed to traffic, but rabbits and other animals get stranded and may not survive the floods.

Thank you and let us know that it won't be destroyed or impaired.

Carol Ann Magid  
new email address: carol@carolmagid.com

Call (818) 787-2496 if your message is "timely!"

**Please refer to CALTRANS RESPONSE #60.**

The area behind the Sepulveda Dam (Sepulveda Flood Control Basin) is intended to flood during heavy rain events so as to prevent the areas downstream of the dam (homes, businesses, etc.) from flooding.



**APPENDIX Y | CALTRANS RESPONSE TO E-MAILS FROM  
SUPPORTERS OF THE WILDLIFE RESERVE**

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**CALTRANS RESPONSE TO SUPPORTERS OF THE SEPULVEDA BASIN WILDLIFE RESERVE:**

In light of the overwhelming concern and opposition to any encroachment upon the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve, as well as the requirements set forth by Section 4(f) of the U.S. Department of Transportation Act, Alternatives 2 and 3 have been rejected.

CALTRANS will only pursue Alternative 1 despite the Los Angeles Department of Transportation's (LADOT) continued opposition to this alternative. Unlike rejected Alternatives 2 and 3, Alternative 1 does not require an encroachment upon the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve.



Eduardo  
Aguilar/D07/Caltrans/CAGov  
05/07/2008 02:51 PM

To "Ron Kaplan" <rkaplan1@socal.rr.com>  
cc  
bcc  
Subject Re: Connector from I-405 S. to 101-N 

Dear Mr. Kaplan,

Thank you for your question. We will respond.

"Ron Kaplan" <rkaplan1@socal.rr.com>



"Ron Kaplan "  
<rkaplan1@socal.rr.com>  
05/07/2008 11:27 AM

To <Eduardo\_Aguilar@dot.ca.gov>  
cc  
Subject Connector from I-405 S. to 101-N

Dear Mr. Aguilar,

Not only is the transition from I-405-S to 101-N very congested, it leads to some dangerous practices by impatient drivers. Too oftentimes, a driver in lane 2 of the transition road to 101-S will go up to the front of the line of cars making the transition from I-405-S to 101-N and force their way into the front of the line. This takes them some time, and creates a dangerous situation for cars traveling south on the 405 in the no. 2 lane of the transition to 101-S.

Just as there were barriers put up preventing drivers making a transition from 405-N to 101-N from making the dangerous quick 4-lane change to get off at Haskell Ave., could there not be some similar barriers put up between lane 2 of the transition from 405-S to 101-S and the transition road from 405-S to 101-N—perhaps somewhere at the southern end of these adjacent lanes?

I would very much appreciate a reply to the proposal I present in this e-mail.

Thank you.

Sincerely,  
Ron Kaplan



"Gerald A. Silver"  
<gsilver4@sbcglobal.net>  
05/15/2008 08:50 AM

To "Eduardo Aguilar" <eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov>  
cc "Tom LaBonge" <tlabonge@council.lacity.org>, "Lexi Richards" <Lexi.Richards@lacity.org>, "Jack Weiss" <weiss@council.lacity.org>, "Michael Tou"  
bcc

Subject HOME's Position re: 101/405

May 15, 2008

Mr. Eduardo Aguilar  
Division of Environmental Planning  
Caltrans (Department of Transportation)  
100 South Main Street, Suite 100  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

SUBJECT: CALTRANS NEW CONNECTOR SAN DIEGO-405 FREEWAY TO NORTH US 101

**CLARIFICATION OF ALTERNATIVE NAMES:**

We would like to clarify our position regarding the Alternatives to the 101/405 that Homeowners of Encino supports. We understand that there are different numbering systems used for the alternatives in the various documents released by Caltrans. We would also like to pose several questions regarding this project.

Currently, only three alternatives remain under consideration, these are **labeled Alternatives 1, 2, and 3**, plus the No-Build.

The existing non-standard connector experiences extensive congestion, delays, and queue lengths throughout the day. The purpose of the project is to improve safety, operation, capacity, and traffic flow through the interchange by replacing the existing 20 mph single-lane connector, with a new 50 mph two-lane connector.

Your Draft Environmental Assessment (EA/IS) shows a significant increase in accidents and injuries at the interchange. We have observed many vehicles stacking up in the south-bound 405 connector lane waiting to transfer to the 101 freeway north-bound. This creates a significant accident potential, and a daily danger to residents using the freeway. **This situation must be remedied as soon as possible.**

We understand that the Haskell on- and off-ramps would not be affected by this project.

We understand that **three** alternatives are being considered by Caltrans to address this connector problem:

**No Build**

The no build choice would provide no additional improvements to the I-405/101 connector, leaving the current accident situation. We oppose this option.

Of the remaining **three** options, each calls for the replacement of the existing 20 mph single-lane connector (from the southbound I-405 to the northbound U.S.-101), with a new 50 mph two-lane connector bridge that encroaches upon and spans over the spillway of the Sepulveda Dam. Each eliminates the existing erratic and conflicting traffic weaving patterns between the Burbank Boulevard on-ramp traffic seeking to access the southbound I-405 mainline, versus the traffic attempting to access the U.S.-101 connectors from the southbound

I-405 mainline.

There are significant differences between the cost and impacts of **Alternatives 1, 2, and 3**. Homeowners of Encino **favours the third alternative, Alternative 3** .

**Alternative 1:** *We oppose Alternative 1* , because it would eliminate access to the 101 freeway from Burbank Blvd. While this alternative does not take any land in the Sepulveda Basin, it cuts off major access to Encino, greatly increasing street traffic. We understand the LA Dept. of Transportation also opposes this alternative for the same reason.

**Alternative 2:** *We oppose Alternative 2* , because of its substantial increase in cost, and because it would require the reconstruction of the Burbank Blvd. bridge over the 405. Shutting down this arterial to re-construct the Burbank bridge would create a horrendous traffic night-mare during construction.

**Alternative 3:** *We support Alternative 3* for several reasons. It would provide access from Burbank Blvd. to the 101 Freeway. It costs substantially less than **Alternative 2** and would only take a relatively small amount of land in the Sepulveda Basin. While we would normally oppose any land takes in the Basin, the significant improvements to traffic flow, reduced accidents and injuries, all weigh in favor of **Alternative 3**. This is our preferred choice.

**QUESTION THAT NEED TO BE ANSWERED:**

1. Assuming that the new connector is constructed, please estimate the number of lives saved, amount of injuries and property damage avoided by this project? In our view, Caltrans needs to stress this issue in its presentations, since safety is a major and significant justification for the project. It did not receive adequate explanation in your presentation at VBS on May 14, 2008.

2. Please expand on the issue of "emergency" access to hospitals, due to greater mobility. Mr. Hanna stated that a major benefit of the new connector would be better access from the freeway in emergencies. Please explain this in more detail. In our view, Caltrans needs to stress this issue in its presentations, since access to emergency hospitals, such as the Encino Hospital, etc. is a major and significant justification for the project. It did not receive adequate explanation in your presentation at VBS on May 14, 2008.

3. Mr. Hanna stated that there would be a \$28,000,000 dollar savings to the community, as a result of the new connector. Please expand on this issue, and how the amount was calculated, and over what period. In our view, Caltrans needs to stress this issue in its presentations, since cost saving is a major and significant justification for the project. It did not receive adequate explanation in your presentation at VBS on May 14, 2008.

4. Caltrans did not fully explain the increased traffic impacts on local City streets, including Burbank Blvd., Sepulveda and Ventura Blvd., if access from Burbank Blvd. to the 101 freeway is cut off. In our view, Caltrans needs to stress this issue in its presentations, since increased traffic on City streets is a major and significant concern. It did not receive adequate explanation in your presentation at VBS on May 14, 2008.

5. Caltrans did not explain the time frame for the construction of each Alternative. In particular how long will it take to construct each Alternative, and how long would it take to rebuild the Burbank bridge over the 405, if Alternative 2 is selected. In our view, Caltrans needs to stress this issue in its presentations, since construction delays are a major and significant concern. It did not receive adequate explanation in your presentation at VBS on May 14, 2008.

6. Please explain in more detail the amount of outreach to the Encino, Van Nuys, Sherman Oaks and Lake Balboa communities regarding this project. There appeared to be few members of the public in attendance at the hearing (short of a group of Basin supporters), and little understanding of the consequences of closing the Burbank access to the 101 freeway. How

were residents in adjacent communities informed of the Alternatives and the consequences of each?

Thank you,

Gerald A. Silver

Pres. Homeowners of Encino



Susan Bernardo  
<susansbernardo@yahoo.com>

05/19/2008 02:47 PM

Please respond to  
susan.bernardo@gmail.com

To: eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov

cc

bcc

Subject: Don't Harm the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve!!!

I am an Encino resident and mom of two boys. We love hiking in the wildlife reserve and appreciating this natural space, especially in light of how much of Los Angeles' open spaces we have already paved over or developed!

It is totally unnecessary to add a ramp transitioning the 405 south to the 101 north in this area. Burbank Blvd is a satisfactory, quick route. An alternative would be to add a dedicated left turn arrow at Burbank Blvd, to make it easier for folks to get onto the 101 north at that entrance.

Please - send a message to our kids that we care about the environment and want to preserve some natural, "wild" spaces for local birds and animals - and the delight of people young and old.

Thank you --

Susan Bernardo  
A concerned Encino resident!

Susan Schaefer Bernardo



"Jane and Bob Anderson" <janeandboband@roadrunner.com>

05/22/2008 07:05 AM

To "Ed Aguilar" <eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov>

cc

bcc

Subject: 101 Onramp Suggestion

History:  This message has been forwarded.

Hi Ed -- My name is Bob Anderson and we met at the Sherman Oaks Homeowners Association meeting on Tuesday night. I had mentioned an idea about the timing of the metering lights for the 101 onramp located at Sepulveda and Greenleaf. The 101 portion of the onramp has two fairly long lanes, but these merge into a single lane immediately following the metering lights. Currently, the metering lights both go "green" at the same time, forcing two drivers to "drag race" for position. It's clumsy at best. If possible, it would sure seem better to me if the metering lights were staggered so one went green, then the other. This would let the same amount of cars through in a given amount of time, i.e., if both lights are going green every 10 seconds, then stagger them by 5 seconds so one goes green then 5 seconds later the other goes green, and so on. I think it would work well.

Also, you mentioned that you could give me contact information for the city street traffic folks. I would like to try and get an automated stop sign (with photo ticketing) installed at my corner (Woodcliff Road and Rayneta) in Sherman Oaks.

Thanks.

Bob Anderson



"Sandra Murcia "  
<sandramurcia@gmail.com>  
05/22/2008 06:31 PM

To eduardo\_agullar@dot.ca.gov  
cc "Rosi Dagit" <oaksrus@mac.com>  
bcc  
Subject Request for NES - 405 to 101 Connector Improvement  
Project

Mr. Aguilar,

Our agency is planning to comment on the "Southbound Interstate 405 to the US Highway 101 Connector Improvement Project - Draft EA/IS and 4(f) Evaluation" document. However, it would be helpful to have access to the Natural Environment Study for the project, as I have some questions regarding the biological resources section of the Draft EA/IS. Could you provide an electronic copy of the NES?

Thank you,

Sandra Murcia  
Conservation Biologist  
Resource Conservation District of the Santa Monica Mountains  
Office: 818-597-8627 x106  
Cell: 909-262-4618  
[smurcia@rcdsmm.org](mailto:smurcia@rcdsmm.org)



"Muriel Kotin"  
<akotin@earthlink.net>  
05/25/2008 02:53 PM

To "Eduardo Aguilar" <eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov>  
cc  
bcc  
Subject Correct E-mail Address for Comments

Hi Eduardo,

I understand that several people who tried to e-mail their comments to you on the SB 405 - WB 101 Connector found their messages bounced.

Do you have any idea what the problem is?

Thank you,

Muriel Kotin

310.457-5796



"Muriel Kotin"  
<akotin@earthlink.net>  
05/26/2008 10:23 PM

To "Eduardo Aguilar" <eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov>  
cc  
bcc

Subject SB-405 / WB-101 Connector Comments for SFV Audubon

Dear Mr. Aguilar,

Since the deadline for comments on the proposed connector is this Wednesday, I am e-mailing you a copy (attached as a .PDF) of San Fernando Valley Audubon Society's comments. I will mail the original to Deputy District Director Ronald Kosinski tomorrow morning.

I would appreciate your ensuring that our comments are received by Caltrans. Please let me know if there are any problems or you have any questions.

Thank you,

Muriel Kotin, President

San Fernando Valley Audubon Society



(home) 310.457-5796 Connector Comments EA-15 May 2008 SFVAS.pdf



# San Fernando Valley Audubon Society

Incorporated as California Audubon Society 1913

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*For nature education and conservation of wildlife*

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P.O. Box 7769 Van Nuys, CA 91409-7769

May 26, 2008

Mr. Ronald Kosinski, Deputy District Director  
Division of Environmental Planning  
California Department of Transportation, District 7  
100 South Main Street, MS 16A  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Dear Mr. Kosinski,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit these comments on the EA/IS for the proposed SB I-405 to WB US-101 Connector Project on behalf of San Fernando Valley Audubon Society (SFVAS). SFVAS is a 2,100 member environmental organization that operates an extensive environmental educational program for school children in the wildlife reserve. Our mission is to protect habitat and promote wildlife education. We urge Caltrans to reject both Alternative 2 and Alternative 3 because of the unacceptable harm either of these Alternatives would inflict on the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve.

San Fernando Valley Audubon Society adamantly opposes any project that would adversely impact the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve. Alternatives #2 and #3 would permanently impair the natural resources of the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Refuge with noise and light pollution, as well as significantly diminishing its value to its human visitors. SFVAS urges Caltrans to adopt either Alternative #1 or the No Build Alternative. If Alternatives #1, #2, and #3 would require widening of Haskell Creek to maintain flood control capacity of Sepulveda Basin, SFVAS urges Caltrans to adopt the No Build Alternative.

This letter will first address why protecting the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve is so important. Then it will note significant errors and deficiencies that we have found in the EA/IS.

The Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve is a unique urban wildlife refuge, sheltering fine examples of riparian, grassland, and woodland habitat. Over 240 species of resident and migratory birds forage and nest in the reserve. Additionally there are outstanding communities of California native plants and insects.

Thousands of public school children, birdwatchers, photographers, joggers, walkers and families with small children visit the reserve, finding a nearby refuge from the hubbub of the city. Neighbors, as well as nature lovers from the greater area visit frequently to hear the wind rustle through the cottonwood leaves or to marvel at a wading Great Blue Heron.

San Fernando Valley Audubon Society's outstanding Sepulveda Basin Environmental Education Program provides environmental education for 3,000 schoolchildren, many from low income homes, every year. While at the Wildlife Reserve, children enjoy watching White Pelicans, cormorants, egrets, herons and hawks through binoculars. They study tiny plankton from the lake under microscopes and learn about native plants and animals. The trained naturalists introduce concepts like ecology, reclaimed water, riparian habitat and flood control.

In addition to the guided nature walks in the Wildlife Reserve that SFVAS offers students, scouting groups, and the public, other groups also bring their students to the reserve. These groups include public and private schools, colleges and universities, and teacher-training programs.

San Fernando Valley Audubon urges that Alternatives #2 and #3 be discarded. Both of these Alternatives would permanently intrude into the peace and tranquility of the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve, in particular into the 60-acre heart of the Reserve, the area near the lake where most strolls, bird walks and field trips take place. Alternative # 2 would cover or cut off 17 acres from the rest of the Wildlife Reserve with an on-ramp and an off-ramp. Alternative # 3 would cover or cut off 21.5 acres. Both Alternatives would cause noise and light pollution to intrude into the heart of the Wildlife Reserve. The impact on both wildlife and human users of the refuge is grim to contemplate. After the clangor and disruptions of a long construction period, the quiet and tranquility will be forever lost to the roar of traffic.

Although Alternative #1 would eliminate access to the 101 from the intersection of Burbank Boulevard and the 405, the improved traffic conditions would benefit the

public by enhancing safety and alleviating traffic congestion on the freeway. Under Alternative #1, motorists would still be able to access the 101 at Balboa Boulevard, Hayvenhurst Avenue and Van Nuys Boulevard.

If traffic analyses show that Alternative #1 will increase surface street congestion by an unacceptable amount, San Fernando Valley Audubon endorses the No Build Alternative. We contend that expanding the connector will not improve the flow of traffic on the heavily congested 405 and 101 freeways sufficiently to justify the destructive impacts of the other Alternatives.

**SFVAS found no discussion of a significant issue and several errors in the EA/IS and disagrees with some of its findings.**

Widening of Haskell Creek for Flood Capacity:

This possibility is only mentioned in one line of the EA/IS, but it is extremely significant. If widening of Haskell Creek to mitigate reduction to the flood control function of the Sepulveda Basin is a necessary consequence of all three Alternatives, none of the Alternatives is acceptable. If Haskell Creek is widened anywhere within the Wildlife Reserve, actual and developing nesting habitat of the endangered Least Bell's Vireo would be destroyed. This habitat is important to other sensitive species of migratory songbirds, including the Yellow-breasted Chat.

As indicated in the EA/IS, Alternatives 1, 2, and 3 would all reduce the flood water capacity of the Sepulveda Basin and require mitigation measures. One proposed on page 88 of the EA/IS is "Widening the existing dirt canal inside the basin between Route 405 and Woodley Avenue (Haskell Channel). This proposal will fulfill requirements to increase storage volume inside the basin and no water impounded."

Haskell Creek is bordered by mature riparian trees along its banks as it flows south between the Tillman Water Treatment Plant and Woodley Park, then between Woodley Park and the turf grass section of the Wildlife Reserve, and then through the Wildlife Reserve, where it separates the North and West Reserve and finally flows between sections of the South Reserve and into the Los Angeles River.

Over the years, starting in 1979, public agencies and volunteers have planted hundreds of Fremont Cottonwood trees and other riparian trees next to Haskell Creek. The most recent such planting was a mitigation project by the Los Angeles

Department of Water and Power. In 1998, the section of Haskell Creek between the North and West Reserve was recontoured and willows and mulefat shrubs were planted on the banks. At that time two bridges across Haskell Creek for pedestrians and park service vehicles were built here and a third bridge was built over Haskell Creek near the Los Angeles River in the South Reserve. The creek widening would destroy the three bridges, as well as extensive riparian habitat that supports nesting by threatened and endangered species.

Size of Wildlife Reserve and Portion Impacted:

The EA/IS inaccurately minimizes the impacts of Alternatives 2 and 3 on the Wildlife Reserve.

The map on page 25, *Generalized Land Use*, shows as Wildlife Area (Reserve) only the 48 acre portion south of Burbank Boulevard (the South Reserve) and the 60-acre heart of the reserve (the North Reserve). That would imply that those two parcels comprised the entirety of the 225 acre Wildlife Reserve, whereas they total only around 108 acres.

In fact, the 225 acres also include approximately 60 acres north of Burbank Boulevard, west of Haskell Creek, and east of Woodley Avenue (the West Reserve) that was added to the reserve in 1998. The West Reserve is incorrectly labeled "Woodley Avenue Park" on the map.

The area west of Woodley Avenue to the Los Angeles River that is south of the Model Airplane Field is also part of the official 225 acre Wildlife Reserve. Because model airplanes almost incessantly fly over that area, the wildlife value of the area is reduced, trees and tall shrubs may not be planted there, and people may not walk there because of the danger of being hit by model planes, including model jets. The area also sees fairly frequent brush fires caused by crashes of the model planes.

Further, the map shows areas to the north of the North Reserve as Park and Archery Range. The "Park" area does include the Wildlife Reserve's parking lot, amphitheater and educational staging area, as well as serving as a portion of adjacent Woodley Park. Only a small part of the area labeled Archery Range is archery range. The rest is officially part of the Wildlife Reserve, although serving primarily as part of Woodley Park, landscaped with turf grasses and scattered trees, and used primarily for sports and picnics. (Viewpoint 1 in the EA/IS, labeled as "Facing East from Woodley Park" is in fact part of this portion of the Wildlife

Reserve, to the south of the amphitheater.) We hope that the wildlife value of this area will be enhanced in the future by planting of California native trees and shrubs, but for now it does not have the character of a wildlife reserve.

Thus an on-ramp and off-ramp as would be built if Alternative 2 or 3 were adopted would have a much greater impact on the Wildlife Reserve than depicted in the EA/IS.

Errors in Summary of Impacts Table:

The Summary of Impacts table before numbered pages shows that Alternatives 1, 2 and 3 would all increase noise 2 decibels after construction. We do not believe that this reflects changes to the noise level within the Wildlife Reserve by Alternatives 2 and 3.

The same Summary of Impacts table shows that all three Alternatives would impact approximately 25-30 Coast Live Oak Riparian Trees. Alternative 1 would not have such an impact.

The same Summary of Impacts table shows that all three Alternatives have Potential to impact Burrowing Owl Habitat. Alternative 1 would not have such an impact.

Errors in Table 41, Sensitive Species:

Davidson's Bush Mallow is shown in the table to not have suitable habitat in the project area. In fact, this plant is thriving on Hummingbird Hill, the Burbank Boulevard berm, just west of the tunnel under Burbank Boulevard. This is a short distance from the ramps proposed for Alternatives 2 and 3.

Impacts on Wildlife:

Sensitive Species that have been seen in the exact area of the Wildlife Area that would be removed by Alternatives 2 and 3 include White-tailed Kite, Northern Harrier, Great Egret, Great Blue Heron, Snowy Egret, Peregrine Falcon, Golden Eagle, Bald Eagle, Burrowing Owl, and Loggerhead Shrike. Although Golden Eagle, Bald Eagle and Burrowing Owl have only been seen there for short periods of time in the last two decades, this does not eliminate the importance of this area for off-course migrants or wandering immature birds that have preferred this habitat, and only this habitat.

The area impacted by Alternatives 2 and 3 also serves as an essential buffer area for the nearby breeding territory of Least Bell's Vireo, Cooper's Hawk, Yellow-breasted Chat, Yellow Warbler, Double-crested Cormorant, Snowy Egret, Blue Grosbeak, and Black-crowned Night Heron. Light and noise pollution from the on-and off-ramp within the Wildlife Reserve may reduce viability of this breeding territory.

As discussed in the Section 4(f)/6(f) Evaluation, page 35:

"Within the Reserve, a number of coastal live oak trees and walnut trees located north of Burbank Blvd. and approximately 18 acres of an area that has been designated as a migratory forage corridor directly adjacent to the I-405 will be permanently impacted by Alternatives 2 and 3. The proposed alternatives may have both permanent and temporary impacts to sensitive species such as burrowing owl (*Athene cunicularia*) and least Bell's Vireo (*Vireo bellii*), as well as to other bird species that utilize this area as an important stopping point along their migratory routes. The proposed project may result in permanent habitat loss, which would be subject to minimization measures and compensatory mitigation. Although the project is anticipated to be completed in one season, some impacts primarily those due to an increase in noise to nesting birds and the local avian populations, are anticipated to be temporal prolonged impacts."

The area is still in a state of flux and is still maturing. There is the potential in the very near future for additional "sensitive species" to not only be present, but to breed in the area proposed for construction.

An accident on a freeway ramp could cause hazardous material to spill into the Wildlife Reserve. Cleaning up a hazardous material from the Reserve would be far more problematic than a clean up from a similar accident on a hard-surfaced roadway.

#### Inadequate Mitigation Measures:

The mitigation measures proposed on page 36 of the EA/IS for Alternatives 2 and 3 is built are inadequate.

The proposal to fund other proposed projects outside the Wildlife Reserve (Bull Creek Restoration Project and Sepulveda Wetlands Park Project) is unacceptable. While we look forward to the Bull Creek Restoration Project, that project will be located almost two miles from the Wildlife Reserve and visits to one will not

typically involve a visit to the other. The Sepulveda Wetlands Park is a proposal by the Bureau of Sanitation that was discarded.

Offsite mitigation to SMMC restoration projects within the San Fernando Valley Watershed would not be acceptable. It is the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve that uniquely affords easily accessible viewing of wildlife and a lake, that is located in the central San Fernando Valley, and that can be visited without hiking steep slopes.

The other mitigation measures mentioned are minimal:

"Develop and implement a restoration plan for the Sepulveda Basin forage area." Such restoration is desirable. However, if an elevated on- and off-ramp are built on and adjacent to the migratory waterfowl forage area, it is unlikely that migratory Canada Geese will continue to use the area because they will not have the long sight lines they require.

The other mitigation measures mentioned all amount to planting native trees along the new connector. This is a desirable measure, but does not constitute mitigation for harm to the Wildlife Reserve.

#### The Environmental Significance Checklist:

The document does not explain why some check marks are in red.

Many items that are checked as Less Than Significant Impact or Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporation should have been checked as Potentially Significant Impact. These incorrect categorizations include most items in the BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES section, one in NOISE, and all in MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE.

In closing, we urge Caltrans to discard Alternatives #2 and #3 as these proposals would permanently impair the wildlife reserve. Our organization believes that Alternative #1 offers the best opportunities for preserving open space and valley communities and alleviating our traffic congestion problems. If Alternative #1 is not feasible, we support the No Build Alternative. However, any of the three build Alternatives, including Alternative #1 is unacceptable if it requires widening of Haskell Creek.



Sincerely,

Muriel S. Kotin, President  
San Fernando Valley Audubon Society  
6801 Las Olas Way  
Malibu, CA 90265  
310.457-5796

Cc: Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa  
City Council Member Wendy Greuel  
City Council Member Dennis Zine  
City Council Member Tom LaBonge  
City Council Member Jack Weiss  
City Council Member Tony Cardenas  
City Council Member Richard Alarcon  
City Council Member Greig Smith  
City Council Member Eric Garcetti  
Los Angeles County Supervisor Michael Antonovich  
Los Angeles County Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky  
California State Assembly Member Mike Feuer  
California State Assembly Member Julia Brownley  
California State Assembly Member Lloyd Levine  
California State Assembly Member Cameron Smyth,  
California State Assembly Member Audra Strickland  
California State Assembly Member Paul Krekorian  
California State Assembly Member Felipe Fuentes  
California Senate Member Alex Padilla  
California Senate Member Jack Scott,  
California Senate Member Sheila Kuehl  
California Senate Member George Runner  
California Senate Member Tom McClintock  
California Senate Member Bob Margett  
US Congressional Representative Howard L. Berman  
US Congressional Representative Henry Waxman  
US Congressional Representative Brad Sherman



Carol Magid  
<carolmagid@yahoo.com>

05/26/2008 08:47 PM

Please respond to  
Carol Magid  
<carol@carolmagid.com>

To eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov

cc jackiewollner@hotmail.com

bcc

Subject sepulveda dam

Please do everything possible to preserve wildlife preserve in Sepulveda Dam. With all the construction in the Valley, there is very little wildlife habitat left for animals to live in and people to enjoy. Also, is there something that can be done there about the flooding every time it rains heavily? I'm not concerned about it being closed to traffic, but rabbits and other animals get stranded and may not survive the floods.

Thank you and let us know that it won't be destroyed or impaired.

Carol Ann Magid  
new email address: carol@carolmagid.com

Call (818) 787-2496 if your message is "timely!"



"E. Stanley Batten "  
<esbatten@earthlink.net>  
05/27/2008 03:27 PM

To eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov.  
cc  
bcc

Subject Proposed Caltrans Project, 405-101

Dear Mr. Aguilar:

I am writing in opposition to options 2 and 3 of the proposed Caltrans project to redo the transition between the southbound 405 and the westbound (or northbound) 101. Both of these options would cause the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife area to be devastated and no longer provide recreational and educational opportunities for Los Angeles residents and visitors. Wildlife areas such as the Sepulveda Basin are too few and far between in Southern California. Options 1, or the no-build option, are the only acceptable proposals.

I had the opportunity to attend the recent public meeting organized by Caltrans at the Temple in Encino. At that event, a person on the Caltrans staff identified himself as a professional biologist, and implied that since Caltrans had biologists on staff, our wildlife areas would automatically be protected from devastation. Let me assure you that this argument fooled no one. Biologists, like others, are not immune from having vested interests in projects proposed by their employers.

There is one positive step Caltrans can take in this area, at much less cost to the taxpayer and aggravation to wildlife lovers everywhere. Your agency can decide, once and for all, whether the portion of the 101 freeway leading from the San Fernando Valley to Thousand Oaks, Oxnard, Ventura, etc., is actually west or north, and change all relevant signs accordingly. Otherwise, confusion to residents but especially visitors will continue.

Thank you.

Joyce Batten  
22678 Cass Avenue  
Woodland Hills, CA 91364



"Mark Osokow"  
<hopebird@lafn.org>  
05/27/2008 10:34 PM

To "Aguilar, Eduardo" <eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov>  
cc  
bcc  
Subject Comments on Draft EA/IS for I 405/U. S. 101 Connector  
Proposal

Dear Mr. Aguilar:

Attached, please find a letter of comments pertaining to the Draft EA/IS for the I 405/U. S. 101 connector proposal. I have also attached my previous letter to you, referenced therein, on this subject. Thank you for your consideration.

Mark Osokow



[hopebird@lafn.org](mailto:hopebird@lafn.org) 405\_101 Interchange\_Original e\_mailed.wps.doc EA\_IS Comments.wps.doc

June 28, 2006

Mark Osokow  
22035 Burbank Bl., #310  
Woodland Hills, CA 91367

Eduardo Aguilar  
Stat of California  
Department of Transportation  
[Eduardo\\_Aguilar@dot.ca.gov](mailto:Eduardo_Aguilar@dot.ca.gov)

Dear Mr. Aguilar:

I recently became aware of a DOT (CALTRANS) proposal to reconfigure the ramp structure at the junction of I 405 and U.S. 101. This proposal is of interest to me both as a commuter and as a visitor to the Sepulveda Basin.

I am acutely aware of the traffic problems associated with the current configuration of on/off ramps and transition segments affecting the southbound lanes of I 405 in the vicinity of Burbank Boulevard south to U.S. 101. This is because I used this section of highway on a daily basis for afternoon commuting for a period of more than eleven years, ending in April 2006. More often than not, this section of highway would be backed up causing as much as a fifteen minute delay. Ordinarily the delays were no more than five minutes. It is difficult to ascertain the cause of the delay. Some have theorized that the relatively sharp curve leading to U.S. 101 north causes the backup. No doubt, this causes some slowing. However, the primary cause seems to be that there is simply more traffic on the westbound 101 than that for which the highway was designed. This is evidenced by the extended distance of slowing northbound, usually beyond the Reseda Boulevard exit, more than two miles further north. The upshot of this is that traffic merging onto the 101 north at any time of day, but especially during the afternoon rush hour, must slow down significantly in order to merge. I have considered the proposal to modify the ramp configuration, including the various alternatives, and I have concluded that none of the alternatives would significantly improve traffic flow in the area. On the contrary, traffic on Burbank Boulevard in the vicinity of the newly configured ramp entrance and exit would likely be made much worse under some alternatives, thereby negating any hypothetical improvement in traffic flow on I 405 south. Therefore, proceeding with construction of any of the alternatives would be a waste of public funds that could be better spent elsewhere.

As a frequent visitor to Sepulveda Basin for recreation and rejuvenation, I am especially troubled by Alternatives 2 and 3, which contain as part of their elements the construction of elevated ramps cutting through the southeast section of the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Area. This area has been undergoing ecological restoration now for more than eighteen years. During this time, the area has witnessed a notable increase in both wildlife species, especially birds, and human use around the periphery (primarily for wildlife

observation). Species, such as Blue Grosbeaks, found rarely at other locations in Los Angeles County can be fairly common breeders here. An abundance of migrants and over-wintering species are also here. From an ecological point of view, this area is becoming a key link in the chain of migratory stopovers and wintering areas so important to migratory birds while other links in the chain in Los Angeles County succumb to development. The construction of ramps through the wildlife area would permanently disrupt both the continuing restoration and the attractiveness of the area to both wildlife and people. The ramps would divide portions of the wildlife area into sections that would be too small to support wildlife. Dead zones would be created in the areas under the ramps. These areas would soon be colonized by derelicts and illegal aliens, thereby significantly adding to fear of crime (if not crime itself). This would also add to the danger of fires from campfires and actual damage to wildlife area vegetation by trampling and disruption of wildlife breeding cycles. Unauthorized hunting of waterfowl could also occur, as it once did in the past. The added noise from the traffic utilizing the ramps in both directions would negate any remaining sense of peace that now exists in the area. This noise would be much greater than that now originating from I 405 south, which is currently shielded by the Sepulveda Dam. The sweeping views of the basin and the city beyond would be ruined. There will also be an increased probability of hazardous materials spills from the ramps into the wildlife area, spills that would be particularly difficult to clean up.

On balance then, there is no benefit to be gained by reconfiguring the interchange and many costs -- economic, social, and ecological -- that cannot be mitigated. Therefore, the proposal should be terminated.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Mark B. Osokow,  
Commuter and Basin Visitor

May 27, 2008

Mark Osokow  
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Eduardo Aguilar  
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Dear Mr. Aguilar:

The purpose of this letter is to follow up on my previous letter to you, e-mailed on June 28, 2006, and on remarks I made at the public hearing on this issue on May 14, 2008 in Encino. In my previous letter, included as an attachment and herein incorporated by reference, I briefly expressed my opposition to alternatives 1, 2, and 3 based on what I perceive to be a lack of need and public benefit for this project and for the negative environmental impact it will have. In particular, I am opposed to alternatives 2 and 3, based on the destruction of the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve that will result. I am also opposed to any alternative that would include widening, and therefore destruction of, the riparian area of Haskell Creek.

Below, I elaborate on these issues in the wake of the circulation of the Environmental Assessment/Initial Study (EA/IS) for the project and the May 14 hearing. These occurrences served to greatly amplify my concern and strengthened my opposition. Here's why.

### **LACK OF PROJECT NEED AND BENEFITS**

Ostensibly, the need for this project is based on safety and traffic flow considerations alone. No other needs were identified in the EA/IS. The EA/IS greatly exaggerates both the need for the project and the benefits to be derived from it. (Please refer to my previous letter for some background information.) For the purposes of this argument, I accept the data presented as accurate, although future analysis might find fault with it.

#### **Accident Data**

The EA/IS states that the accident rate at the I 405/U.S.101 interchange is much higher than the statewide average. According to Table 1, this rate is 1.45 accidents per million vehicle miles (mvm) for the southbound 405 mainline interchange versus 1.08 for the statewide average for what is claimed are "similar facilities." However, there are no measures of statistical variability included with the data by which one could gain some idea as to the statistical significance of such a comparison. It could very well be that the statewide range is very broad, and the accident rate for the southbound I-405 falls within one standard deviation or less of the statewide mean.

In addition, no other data is shown that would make the comparison more meaningful. Such data might include figures for vehicle passage rates per day on similar highways. It is logical to assume that accident rates may be correlated with traffic rates. In other words, higher accident rates (as well as higher numbers of total accidents) would occur on the most heavily traveled highways of similar design regardless of the nature of "improvements" made to them. Given that the I 405/101 interchange is the busiest in the country, one might expect accident rates to be higher there on that basis alone.

However, there are other reasons for questioning the interpretation of the data presented in the EA/IS. Comparing the accident rates on the I 405 northbound and the southbound I 405 mainlines may be useful in this regard. Unfortunately, the EA/IS does not include accident rate data for the I 405 northbound, a serious omission. Nevertheless, the lack of need for this project can be demonstrated by comparing the data for the southbound I 405 mainline with that for the southbound I 405 to U.S. 101. Here we have 1.45 accidents per mvm on the I 405 mainline versus 0.63 accidents per mvm in the connector area, that is, a much lower accident rate. Thus, the connector appears to be safer than the I 405 mainline. CALTRANS is not proposing to rebuild the I 405 mainline, even though the accident rate there is more than twice as high as that at the connector area. Clearly, reconstruction of the connector is not warranted based on these accident rate data. In fact, the accident rate for the connector area is the lowest for any of the areas presented in the EA/IS, except for the southbound U.S. 101 to southbound I 405 connector with which it is of the same order! It may very well be that the slow transition speed reduces the accident rate by allowing drivers more time to consider the traffic and react to it. ***It is important to note, in this regard, that no fatalities have occurred in any section of the interchange for which data was presented.*** Thus, promoting faster speeds, assuming they would be achieved, through rebuilding the connector may actually result in increased accident rates. In addition, any accidents that occur will be more likely to result in injury or death as a result of increased speeds at impact.

It is also useful to examine the actual number of accidents occurring on various segments of the interchange area. The total number of accidents at the Burbank on-ramp, for example, was eleven. This results in a slightly higher accident rate for this facility when compared to the statewide data. However, the higher figure could be due to a few unusual episodes caused by severe weather or other unusual occurrences. Without additional data, it is impossible to know. The same argument pertains to the data tabulated for other sections of the interchange. CALTRANS has simply not presented sufficient data to justify such an expensive and destructive project based on accident data.

### **Traffic Flow**

The logic for the reconstruction of the interchange based on traffic flow data is also faulty. The highest peak traffic volume noted for the connector is at the AM peak of 1792 vehicles per hour, whereas the connector was designed for 1500 vehicles per hour. Thus, for almost the entire day, other than a few peak hours or less on weekdays, the connector functions at better than design capacity. The peak flows could be reduced by carefully considered alternative measures (discussed below). Therefore, there is little or no justification for this enormously expensive and destructive project based on traffic flow considerations.

Furthermore, since, after project completion, the northbound U. S. 101 would continue to carry the same or greater traffic volume, this project would merely move the traffic congestion further west on the U.S. 101 freeway as the increased traffic flow from the connector attempts to merge onto the 101. The EA/IS does not consider this effect.

### **Less Costly, Destructive, and More Effective Alternatives Not Considered**

CALTRANS has completely overlooked alternatives that do not involve major highway reconstruction projects. However, there are far less costly, disruptive or destructive, and probably more effective alternatives available. One possible alternative is discussed below.

A relatively simple and less costly alternative to any of the large construction projects proposed would be to establish a “safety zone” in the vicinity of the interchange. This would entail construction of overhead signage in the approaches to the interchange cautioning drivers that they are entering a congested area with a reduced speed limit. The speed limits could be flashed on the overhead signs and would be linked to automatic traffic flow monitoring sensors. Speed monitoring sensors providing feedback to drivers could also be included. Periodic traffic law enforcement would help establish the system’s function. Other improvements, such as dividing traffic lanes on the Burbank Boulevard on-ramp, such that appropriate lanes could be directed to the U. S. 101 freeway, while another lane would be directed to the southbound I 405. The lanes could be controlled by traffic signals and would help to minimize weaving. Such systems already exist on other highways throughout the state. In addition, a barricade could be built to separate the exiting right lanes of the I 405 from the mainline to prevent cutting in by impatient drivers.

The failure by CALTRANS to consider less costly alternatives may be symptomatic of a certain bias within the organization towards large highway construction-oriented projects. This possibility is worthy of internal CALTRANS review. The potential savings to the state from all funding sources, including Proposition B funding, is enormous. The savings to the environment is incalculable. Furthermore, I believe CALTRANS is required to consider such alternatives under CEQA, NEPA, or other laws or regulations.

### **UNACCEPTABLE ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES**

In my earlier letter, I briefly touched on the value of the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Area to both wildlife and people. I also briefly discussed some of the negative impacts that will occur. While many of the issues I raised were discussed in the EA/IS, albeit with a lack of insight or understanding, others were completely ignored. In the EA/IS, CALTRANS has severely underestimated both the value of this Wildlife Reserve to both wildlife and people, while also underestimating the harm that will be done to the reserve if either alternatives 2 or 3 are adopted or if Haskell Creek is widened.

#### **Value of the Wildlife Reserve**

This relatively small area of approximately 175 acres (see under Negative Impacts below for explanation) supports over 240 species of birds (from rare to common),

including the endangered Least Bell's Vireo, and others that are in ecological trouble, notwithstanding the presence or lack of a formal designation to that effect. Many other species can be observed only here and at a few other locations in the San Fernando Valley. This includes a long list of warblers, vireos, flycatchers, waders, ducks and others. However, not only is the area significant as a refuge for birds, it is a magnet for birders, nature lovers, photographers, artists, students, scientists (including myself), and others who have no other natural or semi-natural places to go for many miles around that are as accessible and worthwhile. This accessibility is especially important for the disabled. The well-maintained trail through the wildlife area provides *the only access to a natural area for the wheelchair-bound in the entire San Fernando Valley* and, perhaps, the entire City of Los Angeles.

In addition, while these nature-oriented visitors tend to visit only the Wildlife Reserve, other park visitors frequently visit the Wildlife Reserve as an added activity following picnicking, cycling, jogging, and other park-oriented activities. Thus, the area becomes heavily used, especially on weekends and holidays. One can see parents pointing out a duck to a small child, who may be seeing one in real life for the first time. For children, and for many adults, the sight of an Osprey or a Great Egret catching and eating a fish, or a hawk sounding its scree as it flies overhead, is nothing less than thrilling. Someone who sees a nest of Double-crested Cormorants is likely to remember not only the sight but also the place. Of course, many people visit here just to enjoy the tranquility of this publicly accessible oasis of peace in the San Fernando Valley, perhaps to sit for a while as they overlook the calm waters of the lake.

The area is also an outdoor classroom for thousands of Los Angeles area children, who participate in programs run by the San Fernando Valley Audubon Society and Resource Conservation District of the Santa Monica Mountains. Here children learn about many facets of nature -- from birds and plants to microscopic plankton and water quality testing and its importance. They also learn what a flood control basin is and how water reclamation is connected with the health of the wildlife lake, Haskell Creek, and the Los Angeles River.

## **Negative Impacts**

### *Area impacted*

The CALTRANS approach in the EA/IS has been to treat the relatively small, isolated reserve as if it is, or is part of, some vast complex in which it is acceptable to sacrifice 7 to 15% of the acreage to what will become an expensive, noise generating, graffiti-covered eyesore, that will provide little, if any, benefit to motorists or the community-at-large. It must be noted that the CALTRANS claim of a 225 acre reserve is an overestimate, which includes park areas that are not dedicated to wildlife. There are additional areas that may be, technically, included in the Wildlife Reserve that are permanently unsuitable for wildlife use. The actual acreage, based on scale map measurements, that can realistically be considered a wildlife reserve is approximately 175 acres. Thus, alternatives 2 and 3 will directly impact more than 10% of the Wildlife Reserve by occupying 18 acres of the designated migratory foraging corridor (Section 4.2.1). Additional acreage will be negatively impacted by construction through the

reserve along its south side along the Sepulveda Dam and destruction of riparian habitat along Haskell Creek, depending on whether the creek is widened or not.

Alternatives 2 and 3 will negatively impact the Wildlife Reserve and all of its functions in the following ways.

#### *Visual and Noise Impact on Wildlife Reserve Visitors*

As noted above, the freeway on-ramp will become a noise-producing, graffiti-covered eyesore. The post-construction photographic simulations of what the ramp will look like from certain viewpoints in the basin are CALTRANS's optimistic view at best.

The eye sees in a manner different from that depicted in the photographs. We are talking here of an area that will be no more than a few hundred feet away from any point in the main portion of the Wildlife Reserve west of the wildlife lake. When one looks to the east now, what one sees is a calm scene of a lake with birds feeding on it, fish jumping, and insects buzzing around. In the background, one sees plants swaying in the breeze. Birds are perched or nesting on shrubs and trees, flying by, or feeding on the ground. Rabbits and ground squirrels cautiously enter open areas to look for food, while keeping a wary eye out for hawks.

What one will see if the ramp is built through the reserve is an ugly concrete elevated roadway over a barren dirt strip required for maintenance access. This barren dirt strip will remain even after construction. At best, it may be partially vegetated by invasive weed species, such as tumbleweed, which volunteer effort and funds are now attempting to control. The sides and support columns for the roadway will quickly be covered with graffiti, creating a dangerous looking environment, where gangs rule. Instead of birds flying, one will see trucks, and possibly cars, speeding along the ramp, distracting one's vision from the formerly tranquil view. This will be made worse by the distraction of increased road noise from many sources (discussed below). In addition, one will see the so-called homeless (many criminals, alcoholics, or drug addicts) and illegal aliens, who will find refuge under the ramp, thereby adding to the atmosphere of danger and unwholesomeness.

The projected overall 2 dB increase in sound level caused by the ramp is significant in itself, but it does not take into account the unexpected additional noises discussed below. At best, the increased noise level and unexpected noises will impair the experience of tranquility for reserve visitors. The actual impact may be much greater and could result in a reduction in visitor use, including that resulting from the perception of the area as having reduced desirability for outdoor education programs.

#### *Visual and Noise Impact on Birds in the Wildlife Reserve*

Noise impacts will include, sirens, screeching tires, horns honking, and, no doubt, collisions, as well as the engines of trucks, cars and roaring motorcycles. As noted above, the projected overall 2 dB increase in sound level caused by the ramp is significant in itself, but it does not take into account the unexpected additional noises also mentioned above. Not only will the ugliness, background movement, and noise detract from visitor enjoyment of the area, the movement, noise, and, at night, additional light pollution, as well as the presence of the structure itself and the loss of useable habitat,

will affect birds as well. In addition, to what has been discussed in the previous paragraph, the movement will often cause birds to take unnecessary evasive action to avoid predators. They will also often miss targeted flying prey, which will get lost in the moving background. Others, especially during migration, will meet their deaths by flying into the structure or into vehicles, perhaps in fog, sometimes causing accidents at high rates of speed.

By rights, the area should fall under Category A of Noise Abatement Criteria used in NEPA 23 CFR 772 analysis. The Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve is a very special area made even more important by its scarcity in the heavily urbanized San Fernando Valley. The emphasis for this area should be on noise abatement rather than allowing more projects to create more noise impacting it.

The EA/IS underestimates the impacts of the increased noise due to the project. For the purposes of this argument, I accept the accuracy of the data presented, although this might subsequently be found to be faulty at a later date.

One serious flaw in the data presented is that in the noise study protocol, noise receivers were placed near ground level (5 feet above ground surface). By such placement, the receivers measured noise that was subject to ground attenuation. While such measurements may be valid for estimating the impact on humans, they are not for birds. Since nearly all of the birds present at Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve will fly or perch at substantially greater elevations than 5 feet above ground, the analysis at that level is deficient for determining impacts on birds. Birds flying or perched above that level will be exposed to much greater, unattenuated noise levels than the analysis indicates, as well as being exposed to a wide variety of unexpected sounds.

These levels will cause disruption of avian communication, interference with the detection of environmental hazards (such as predators), interference with prey detection, and generalized increases in stress -- just to name a few impacts. The result of this is that birds may leave the area, fail to flock effectively for winter foraging, migration, or predator avoidance, experience impaired body condition or increased mortality, and experience reduced breeding success (as measured by the number of young fledged). The actual effects depend upon the species and how it utilizes the resources of the Wildlife Reserve. While approximately 15 to 20 species of birds have shown themselves to be highly adaptable to noisy urban environments and may not be affected to any great extent, all other species will be affected. There is a reason urban environments are typically depauperate in avian species. Noise plays a major part in that.

Construction activities will exacerbate the noise problems greatly. The noise from the construction site combined with the physical disruptions of the construction itself will destroy the Wildlife Reserve north of Burbank Boulevard outright. While the actual construction may or may not be completed in one season, as is claimed in the EA/IS, the effects will be essentially permanent. This is not only due to noise, but also to the presence of the structures themselves and the permanent clearing of vegetation needed to provide maintenance access (see below).

Taken together, these processes will cause bioenergetic stress on the affected species. The result will be fewer birds able to occupy the area than a simple reduction in acreage might indicate. Owls and bats will be particularly affected, as the added noise and glare of traffic lights and headlights will interfere with the quiet and dark adaptation mechanisms needed for calibrating differential auditory and visual thresholds needed for

locating prey items.

### *Habitat Loss*

As noted above, from 7 to 15% of the Wildlife Reserve acreage will be lost permanently to the ramp and other modifications resulting from alternatives 2 and 3. This habitat presently supports many species of birds. Of note are Great Blue Herons, Great Egrets, Red-tailed Hawks, White-tailed Kites, and Northern Harriers that forage for gophers and other small animals in the area. Owls, including an occasional Burrowing Owl, also utilize the area. Nesting species include Blue Grosbeaks and finch species, among others. The loss of this area cannot be mitigated, as the connectivity of habitats serving different functions for different species would be destroyed by the project.

The loss of a couple of dozen oak trees may seem trivial to CALTRANS analysts. However, these oak trees were hand planted, as was virtually all of the native vegetation in the reserve, and have grown into mature plants over a period of more than twenty years. These oak trees and the neighboring vegetation support nesting hummingbirds, foraging California Thrashers, which nest in the south reserve, and many other species. They provide escape shelter for birds fleeing from human passers by. It would take ten to fifteen years before oaks planted in their place could perform similar functions. This is much longer than the typical lifespan of small, or even of most, large birds. To be sure, it is longer than the expected lifespan of many current human visitors to the Wildlife Reserve.

The construction of a new bridge carrying Burbank Boulevard over the I 405 freeway will create additional problems for wildlife. Additional noise will result, and wildlife will have difficulty in crossing the area. Essentially, alternatives 2 and 3 carve up the Wildlife Refuge into three (or four) small pieces that will have reduced viability as wildlife habitat both individually and collectively. Wildlife needs space in which to forage, escape from predators (including humans), generally to maneuver and for enough security in which to nest. Forage itself requires the appropriate conditions for it to flourish. Carving up the Wildlife Reserve into small pieces will destroy the forage, as well as the functions dependent upon it. The result will be the proliferation of invasive plant species with reduced value to wildlife.

As noted above, the habitat loss cannot be mitigated. All of the areas of the Wildlife Reserve now functioning as such are undergoing environmental restoration, which is in various stages. This includes all of the areas proposed by CALTRANS as mitigation sites, including Bull Creek. Thus, CALTRANS mitigation effort is not needed nor desired for these areas. The idea that CALTRANS would attempt to piggyback onto environmental restoration projects already in progress, some for more than twenty years, with the apparent object of eventually taking full or partial credit for their success under the banner of mitigation is patently offensive. This is especially so in view of CALTRANS's persistence in attempting to pursue a project in the Wildlife Reserve that is overwhelmingly opposed by the community. There are no mitigation opportunities for CALTRANS to claim at this location. At the aforementioned hearing, a CALTRANS representative wishes to claim part of its function is "stewardship." Then, be *good* stewards. Do not build alternatives that would impact the Wildlife Reserve and no mitigation will be necessary. However, if after the alternatives impacting the Wildlife

Reserve are formally rejected CALTRANS then wishes to contribute to the restoration effort, such efforts would probably be welcomed.

### *Impact to Haskell Creek*

Plans to widen Haskell Creek as one part of a proposal to mitigate for loss of reservoir storage capacity require further exploration. The wording of item 2 under Section 2.2.1, "Mitigation Proposals," suggests that only the creek north of Burbank would be affected by the widening. I base this assumption on the fact that Woodley Ave. does not extend south of Burbank, and the statement refers to "between Route 405 and Woodley Avenue." However, increasing the flow capacity here would also affect the flow through the creek south of Burbank. Hence, the creek below Burbank Boulevard may also require widening in order to accommodate the increased flow, but this was not even mentioned in the EA/IS, let alone discussed. This would have a devastating impact on this well-developed riparian habitat. This also might require re-alignment of the path that now parallels the creek on the south side, depending on where the widening would take place. It was also not mentioned that a portion of the concrete structure at the outlet of Haskell Creek to the L. A. River would also have to be rebuilt to accommodate the higher flows. All of this would require heavy equipment entering the area causing further devastation. The path would have to be widened sufficiently to allow for two-way passage of equipment. This also opens up the prospect of introducing (or re-introducing) invasive plants (such as *Arundo* and *Tamarix*, just to name a couple) that volunteer effort and funding have been trying to control with some success.

The first sentence beginning with "mitigation proposals" states "operating criteria were based strictly upon water surface elevation, irrespective of downstream channel conditions." The quoted section is misleading. The operation of the flood gates at the dam were calculated to take into consideration the existing flows in and the capacity of the L. A. River. Higher flows in the river caused by higher discharges into it from Haskell Creek will force storage capacity modifications to compensate for that increased flow. The widening of the creek itself will not compensate for reduced capacity. This will not only affect Sepulveda Basin, but may affect Hansen Dam Basin as well, since the L. A. River below Tujunga Wash will also be running higher on average. The effects may not be all that great, in terms of water volume. The EA/IS references 49,014 cubic feet (a little more than one acre foot or roughly a third of a million gallons) of the dam reservoir. However, the actual mitigation need may be much higher. Assuming Haskell Creek is roughly one mile long, that translates to removing a strip of soil five feet wide and one foot deep from both sides of the creek or some other equal amount with other dimensions. This is sufficient to destroy the riparian area, which would take many years to recover and might never recover all of its functions with the new dimensions allowing more sunlight to penetrate to the ground surface, thereby altering the microclimate.

### *Impacts to the Spillway*

The casualness with which the spillway acreage is discussed seems to reflect a deep lack of understanding about how water control structures operate and what is needed to maintain them. The proposal is to usurp virtually the entire spillway area. It is

not much larger than the 5 acres for which impact is admitted. In addition, while not part of the Wildlife Reserve, some wildlife is found on either side of the spillway. The spillway itself is rarely visited, except for filming and for construction. Areas on the east side support oaks and abandoned ACE experimental vegetation plots, formerly planted with *Nisella (Stipa) pulchra* and other natives. Study is needed.

#### *Additional Impacts*

Further hazards to the Wildlife Refuge would occur in the event of a spill of toxic material resulting from a tanker accident. Any toxic materials spilled into the refuge would be very difficult to clean up and would engender additional damage.

The risk of fire would also increase both as a result of vehicle fires and careless smokers tossing cigarette butts into the flammable vegetation below. As noted in my previous letter, campers would take advantage of the shelter offered by the overhead roadway. This would create additional risk of fire to the reduced area of the Wildlife Reserve.

Also, there is a claim that "no water is impounded by the dam for the purpose of recreation." This is false. Although the water source is *usually* the Tillman Plant effluent, Lake Balboa is a recreational impoundment, which receives runoff and direct precipitation. The Wildlife Reserve Lake is also an impoundment indirectly connected with recreation. It too receives runoff and direct precipitation. While the dam does not operate to produce recreational lakes directly, its operation certainly does impact recreation.

#### **ADDITIONAL SAFETY ISSUES**

The EA/IS specifies a maximum likely earthquake strength of 7.5 on the Richter Scale. Presumably, the ramp, roadways and bridge would be built to withstand such an earthquake. However, unfortunately, CALTRANS's record of elevated roadway safety in earthquakes is less than sterling. During the 6.7 magnitude Northridge Earthquake, at least three elevated highway sections collapsed, one involving loss of life. Had this earthquake occurred during the active portion of a normal workday, instead of at 5:15 a.m. on a national holiday, many more lives would have been lost. The Loma Prieta Earthquake also resulted in elevated highway collapse and involved the loss of a number of lives. CALTRANS simply lacks credibility when it comes to earthquake safety.

#### **CONCLUSION**

Based on the foregoing analysis, neither the need for or the benefits to be derived from the proposed project have been demonstrated. The environmental consequences of alternatives 2 and 3 would be devastating to the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve, both in terms of human and wildlife usage. Alternatives 1, 2, and 3 would be permanently damaging to the restored riparian area along Haskell Creek. No meaningful mitigation for the impact is possible. In addition, reasonable alternatives were not considered. Accordingly, the no-build alternative should be adopted as preferred.

Sincerely,

Mark B. Osokow,  
Biologist, Commuter, and Basin Visitor



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To <Eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov>  
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Subject Comment on draft EIR/EIS for 405 to 101 connector

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**May 26, 2008**

**Mr. Ronald Kosinski, Deputy District Director  
California Department of Transportation  
Division of Environmental Planning (405/101 Connector  
100 South Main Street MS 16A  
Los Angeles, CA 90012**

**Re: draft EA/IS for 405/101 Connector**

Dear Mr. Kosinski:

Los Angeles Audubon is a California non-profit 501(c)(3) corporation established in 1910. The mission of Los Angeles Audubon is to promote the enjoyment and protection of birds and other wildlife through recreation, education, conservation and restoration.

We take special interest in the impacts of the proposed 405/101 connector on Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve and the biological resources therein. Los Angeles Audubon along with San Fernando Valley Audubon Society played a key role in the designation, restoration, and protection of the 225 acres of native habitat open space area designated as wildlife habitat and serve on the Steering Committee with jurisdiction over this area.

We would like to make the following comments on the draft EA/IS released April 14, 2008 and thank you for the opportunity:

**1) The analysis of Environmental Consequences of the project on Least Bell's Vireo (*Vireo bellii pusilla*) is inadequate, contradictory and inconsistent.**

In the discussion of Least Bell's Vireo the EA/IS states "Habitat for this species is found at approximately 500 ft from where the new connector alignment is proposed."<sup>1</sup> However in Table 4.1 the EA/IS states "This species is known to be present adjacent to the impact area, but was not observed during general surveys,"<sup>2</sup> Additionally, in Environmental Consequences the EA/IS states "Due to the lack of suitable habitat found within the project site as well as directly adjacent to the project area, it is not likely that the proposed alternatives would have a direct impact on this species."<sup>3</sup> These statements are contradictory in that one finds the species habitat 500 feet using one standard yet directly adjacent using another standard, and inconsistent in varying the location

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<sup>1</sup> SOUTHBOUND INTERSTATE-405 (SAN DIEGO FREEWAY) TO THE U.S. HIGHWAY-101 (VENTURA FREEWAY) CONNECTOR IMPROVEMENT PROJECT draft EA/IS, page 146,

<sup>2</sup> Ibid, p. 145

<sup>3</sup> Ibid, p. 147

from which to analyze impacts, and varying where the new connector alignment is proposed as “impact area,” “project site” and “project area” from which to analyze impacts. In discussion or analysis of impacts on an endangered species a scientific standard should be consistent especially if that standard is integral to the description of the proposed project.

**2) The analysis of Environmental Consequences of the project and the avoidance and minimization efforts on Burrowing Owl (*Athene cunicularia*) are inadequate.**

The EA/IS states the following: “**Avoidance and Minimization Efforts (Burrowing Owl):** If burrowing owls are determined to be present within the project area, passive translocation will be employed during the non-breeding season to encourage nesting in an area away from the project location. This passive translocation technique will be used in accordance to the guidelines outlined by the Department of Fish and Game.<sup>4</sup>

This effort is inadequate.

The Lead agency does not outline avoidance and minimization efforts if burrowing owls are determined to be present within the project area during breeding or nesting season, nor what efforts will be expended to discover Burrowing owls during the non-breeding or the breeding season other than through vague reference to the level of “protocol”. A lead agency should specify whose protocol will be used for these important surveys.

Lead agency also fails to mention the cumulative impacts of the loss of habitat for burrowing owls in Los Angeles County that the project might increase, and how the lead agency might compensate for that loss in Los Angeles County.

Lead agency also fails to disclose how much habitat in Los Angeles County is available for translocation of Burrowing owls. Translocation of owls to a distant location cannot be considered true minimization or mitigation of the impacts of destruction of habitat for Burrowing owls in Los Angeles County.

**3) The analysis of Environmental Consequences of the project on Swainson’s Hawk (*Buteo swainsoni*) is inadequate.**

The EA/IS states “However, the San Fernando Audubon Society lists the bald eagle as having a historic presence within the reserve. During surveys of the project area, no sightings of this bird were observed.”

Presumably the writer means Swainson’s Hawk and not Bald Eagle, and this is a typo or confusion by the writer.

This analysis is inadequate as it is written.

**4) The EA/IS is inconsistent in descriptions of the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve as “Sepulveda Wildlife Basin,” “Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Refuge,” “Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve” and “Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Area.”**

Such internal inconsistency can lead to confusion in the enforcement of any policies that relate to the EA/IS.

This should be standardized with the legal name of the 225 acre natural area.

---

<sup>4</sup> Ibid, p. 148

**5) The EA/IS is inadequate in describing jurisdiction of the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve.**

The EA/IS states: "Serving as an advisory to the City is the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Areas Steering Committee, whose members include the Audubon Society, Canada Goose Project, California Native Plant Society, Friends of the LA River, Resource Conservation District of the Santa Monica Mountains, and the Sierra Club."<sup>5</sup>

However, two members of the Committee are Los Angeles Audubon and San Fernando Valley Audubon Society. These are two certified chapters of Audubon and two distinct California non-profit corporations with 501(c)(3) tax exempt status.

**6) Los Angeles Audubon opposes absolutely Alternatives 2 and 3 for this project due to unacceptable impacts on the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Refuge habitat and its wildlife.**

The EA/IS states "Alternatives 2 and 3 of the proposed project do carry the potential to adversely impact beneficial floodplain values such as the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Refuge."<sup>6</sup>

This risk is unacceptable to our organization.

Sincerely,

Garry George  
Executive Director

GG:sc

---

<sup>5</sup> Ibid, p.28

<sup>6</sup> Ibid, p.87 **Other Impacts**



NatureBase@aol.com  
05/28/2008 02:34 PM

To eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov  
cc  
bcc  
Subject 405-101 Connector Proposal

May 28, 2008

Mr. Ronald Kosinski, Deputy District Director  
California Department of Transportation, District 7  
Division of Environmental Planning (I405/101 Connector)  
100 S. Main Street – Mail Stop 16A  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Also transmitted by email to eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov

Re: Draft Environmental Assessment 405-101 Connector Improvement Project

Dear Sirs:

These comments will supplement the comments previously submitted by the Los Angeles / Santa Monica Mountains Chapter of the California Native Plant Society.

On page 73 (2.1.6) in the paragraph describing the “Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve Landscape Unit” you state that “Existing visual resources include established and newly planted willow, cottonwood, and sycamore trees, various shrubs, nesting, and foraging areas for migratory waterfowl and shorebirds.” That is an incomplete description. The “various shrubs” represent the dominant natural community – mule fat / coyote bush scrub (*Baccharis salicifolia* / *Baccharis emoryi* and *B. pilularis*) – that regenerates itself without human help, and it is this emerging plant community that will be disturbed by the on and off ramps proposed to be built in the Wildlife Reserve. Furthermore, it is not just migratory waterfowl and shorebirds that utilize that area, but resident raptors that forage and passerines (such as mourning doves) that nest there.

On page 76, Figure 21 is not an accurate “Post-Construction Visual Simulation” of the site, as the ramps “disappear” into a forest of oak trees that would be partially displaced to accommodate the ramps.

On page 78, Figure 23 is also not an accurate “Post-Construction Visual Simulation” of the site, as the ramps “disappear” into a forest of oak trees that would be partially displaced to accommodate the ramps.

On page 87, paragraphs 4 and 5, you calculate the number of acres that would be covered by the new connector structures. However, nowhere in the document do you discuss the acreage cut-off from the Wildlife Reserve (by the connector structures) that would be rendered little value to wildlife due to its isolation. CNPS strongly believes that the entire footprint of the project

including the area between the connectors, the dam face and Burbank Blvd. plus the “work area” around the site (that would be impacted during construction) be considered “sacrifice” zones and not valuable wildlife habitat.

On page 88, Mitigation Proposals, item 2 states: “Widening the existing dirt canal inside the basin between Route 405 and Woodley Avenue (Haskell Channel). This proposal will fulfill requirements to increase storage volume inside the basin and no water impounded.” First off, Haskell Channel is better known as Haskell Creek – the centerpiece of the Wildlife Reserve. In fact, the area west of Haskell Creek was annexed into the Wildlife Reserve in order to make Haskell Creek the center of the Reserve, not the edge, because this riparian corridor of cottonwood and willow forest has the oldest, tallest and least disturbed areas within the Reserve. Any widening of the existing channel would likely require removing existing trees and this would not be acceptable. The implementation of this “mitigation” would destroy the only riparian forest in the San Fernando Valley.

On page 136, Biological Conditions in the Biological Study Area, you state that “the area at the southern point of the project [is] made up of primarily ruderal vegetation. Once again you ignore the presence of representatives of the dominant natural community – mule fat / coyote bush scrub (*Baccharis salicifolia* / *Baccharis emoryi* and *B. pilularis*) – that is the essence of this formerly ruderal area now (albeit slowly) returning to a natural community. This area was burned in a wildfire a few years ago and the shrubs that were burnt to the ground have not yet reached their former size.

On page 145, Table 41 Sensitive Species, states that for Davidson’s bush mallow (*Malacothamnus davidsonii*) “the habitat within the project limits is not suitable for this species.” That is incorrect. A population of Davidson’s bush mallow is thriving on Hummingbird Hill, just west of the tunnel under Burbank Blvd., adjacent to the location of the proposed connectors.

On page 36 of the “Draft Section 4(f)/Section 6(f) Evaluation”, you describe the acreage the proposed alignment would take from the entire reserve (225 total acres) as opposed to the area of the “north” Reserve of 48 acres (as you do on page 87 of the DEA/IS). You state “These easements will not alter the land use of the location; the primary uses of open space and recreation would be maintained.” That statement is in error. The primary purpose of that area is wildlife refuge (not open space and recreation), as visitors are not even allowed to wander out into that area (the seasonal goose foraging area); and even if it were “open space and recreation,” who would want to recreate under or adjacent to freeway onramps?

On page 37, 4-2.3 Measures to Minimize Harm, your list of possible measures includes the Sepulveda Wetlands Park Project, a project that was previously rejected by the Wildlife Areas Steering Committee, a project with a main purpose to treat reclaimed water, not enhance the wildlife values of the Sepulveda Basin. We also disagree with the suggestion for off-site mitigation, as there are plenty of unmet needs within the Sepulveda Basin.

Finally, nowhere does this proposal even mention the importance and significance of this wildlife area for the multitude of volunteers, school children, and Girl and Boy Scout Troops who have

spent countless hours for over two decades planting, weeding and caring for the plants; of the members of the Wildlife Areas Steering Committee who have spent over two decades and countless personal hours advising the City and the Army Corp of Engineers in the development of a wildlife refuge that could survive the existing urban onslaught yet still provide what your report calls "a high level of diversity of birds," or recognize the paucity of wildlife areas in the flatlands of the San Fernando Valley and how unique and rare the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Refuge is – a truly a world-class urban wildlife refuge.

The traffic will continue to increase. Will we continue to remove wildlife reserves to accommodate growth? Or will we take a stand here and now, and put Earth health ahead of commute times. I am confident that the engineers at the California Department of Transportation can figure out a way to improve the connectors for the 101-405 freeways without impacting the existing Wildlife Reserve.

Sincerely,

Steve Hartman  
Treasurer  
California Native Plant Society  
6117 Reseda Blvd. Suite H  
Reseda, CA 91335  
voice 818 881 3706  
fax 818 881 3206  
naturebase@aol.com  
[www.lacnps.org](http://www.lacnps.org)

---

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"Sandra Murcia"  
<sandramurcia@gmail.com>  
05/28/2008 03:43 PM

To "Eduardo Aguilar" <eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov>  
cc "Rosi Dagit" <oaksrus@mac.com>  
bcc  
Subject RCDSMM Comment Letter - Caltrans 405 to 101 Connector  
Improvement Project

Mr. Aguilar,

Thank you for sending the NESR to me this morning for review. I have attached our Comment Letter for the I-405 to 101 Connector Improvement Project. If you would like me to address the letter to you, I can send a revised version.

Please confirm your receipt of this comment letter. Thanks very much.

Sincerely,  
Sandra Murcia  
Conservation Biologist  
Resource Conservation District of the Santa Monica Mountains



RCDSMM Comment Letter - 405 to 101 Connector - 5-28-08.pdf



RESOURCE CONSERVATION DISTRICT  
OF THE  
SANTA MONICA MOUNTAINS

30000 MULHOLLAND HIGHWAY, AGOURA HILLS, CALIFORNIA 91301  
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A Political Subdivision of the  
State of California

DANIEL C. PREECE  
Executive Officer

May 28, 2008

Mr. Ronald J. Kosinski  
Deputy District Director  
Division of Environmental Planning  
California Department of Transportation  
100 S. Main Street, Suite MS 16A  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

**RE:** Southbound Interstate-405 to the U.S. Highway-101 Connector Improvement Project

Mr. Kosinski,

These comments on the proposed I-405 to Highway 101 connector improvement project are provided on behalf of the Resource Conservation District of the Santa Monica Mountains. We have reviewed both the Draft EA/IS and Section 4 (F) Evaluation (dated April 2008) and the Draft Natural Environment Study Report (NESR), dated June 2007.

We are opposed to two of the three alternatives that remain under consideration: Alternatives 2 and 3. Both alternatives would result in significant impacts to wetlands, sensitive habitats and several special status wildlife species of the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve. According to the City of Los Angeles Recreation and Parks website, the 60-acre habitat north of Burbank Boulevard between the dam and Haskell Creek was formally established as a wildlife area in 1988 and involved grading for the wildlife lake and extensive planting of native annuals, shrubs, and trees.

It is important to consider the direct and indirect impacts of Alternatives 2 and 3 on wildlife species. Direct impacts would involve the destruction of individuals or removal of habitat for numerous species, including birds, mammals and reptiles. Additional habitat degradation would occur through grading or excavation, increases in water or air pollutants, increased noise, light, or vibration, reduction in food supplies or foraging areas, and interference with established wildlife movement patterns on or between habitat areas.

A Bioacoustics and Highway Noise Impacts study conducted for the project found that the ambient noise levels in the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve would increase significantly due to traffic noise from the new freeway connector and on/off ramps and may experience temporary but significant noise increase during the construction phase of the project.

## **Birds**

Over 200 birds have been documented by the San Fernando Audubon Society (SFV Audubon) within the wildlife reserve. Many of these birds are found year round, while the remainder of the species use the reserve as an important migratory corridor. Among the birds sighted are the state and federally listed least Bell's vireo (*Vireo bellii pusillus*) and burrowing owl (*Athene cunicularia*), a state Species of Special Concern. The NESR includes a comprehensive species list provided by SFV Audubon which includes numerous migratory waterfowl, shorebirds, raptors, and passerines. The area is one of only five areas of the San Fernando Valley that is regularly used by wintering Canada geese. Bird species flock to this wildlife refuge due to the varied habitats which occur within it, including wetland areas, riparian vegetation, and oak and walnut woodland. Alternatives 2 and 3 would have a far greater impact to bird species due to the encroachment upon the sensitive habitats north of Burbank Boulevard, including potential wetlands.

## **Wetlands**

A formal jurisdictional delineation has not been conducted on the project site. It is imperative for the NESR to include the results of the delineation, with temporary and permanent impact acreages of wetland areas under the jurisdiction of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB), and the California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG). Without these calculations, mitigation cannot be addressed and necessary permits from the regulatory agencies cannot be identified. As part of the permit application package, an Approved Jurisdictional Delineation Form will have to be submitted along with the jurisdictional delineation.

Furthermore, we question the methods of the preliminary wetland delineation that was performed along the east edge of the project site, since no information was provided on the results of the three parameter test (soil, hydrology, and hydrophytic vegetation) that indicate the presence of a wetland.

The encroachment onto the wildlife reserve by Alternative 2 and 3 would increase the discharge of storm water pollutants into the wetlands, riparian areas, Haskell Creek and Reach 5 of the Los Angeles River, an already impaired water body on the RWQCB's 303(d) list. The EA/IS states that all the alternatives would have to encroach on the dam reservoir at the upstream slope of the dam embankment. However, only Alternatives 2 and 3 would cross the Dam Maintenance Access Road at grade, encroaching upon the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Refuge, inside the flood control basin, and reduce the flood volume storage capacity of the Sepulveda Dam, posing an additional adverse impact to the dam.

## **Oak Trees**

According to the EA/IS, a coast live oak woodland occurs along the north side of Burbank Boulevard within the proposed site for Alternatives 2 and 3. Approximately 25 to 30 out of 73 trees would be removed or encroached upon, causing severe habitat fragmentation of a woodland that connects to Haskell Creek, which eventually drains into the Los Angeles River.

The NESR does not include an oak tree report or any information on the regulatory framework for oaks and oak woodland protection within section 2.1 "Regulatory Requirements". The Los Angeles County Oak Tree Protection Ordinance specifically calls project designs that allow for the retention of mature oaks on a given property. This project is designed in such a way that the disturbance footprint impacts almost half of the oak trees on the project site. This is in direct contrast to the goals of the ordinance. Additionally, Significant Oak Woodlands are further identified as critical resources within LA County. The Board of Forestry and Fire Protection's defines an oak woodland as those stands with a canopy cover

of 10% or greater (1/19/06). The Board has regulatory authority over oak woodlands at the local or state level.

### **Sensitive Wildlife Species**

#### *Least Bell's Vireo*

The NESR claims that least Bell's vireo was not determined within the project site, and therefore compensatory mitigation will not be required. This assessment is inadequate, given that no federal protocol surveys have been conducted for the least Bell's vireo on the project site.

Although the applicant does not expect this species within the project site, one individual was observed in 2004 adjacent to the project site. In order to adequately address impacts to this species, and determine the need for a formal Section 7 Consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), the applicant must conduct a protocol-level survey for this species according to the approved U.S. Fish and Wildlife survey guidelines (eight surveys from April 10 to July 30). Given the close proximity of the site to suitable riparian vegetation, and previous examples of vireos establishing within flood control basins, the CDFG and USFWS is likely to require these surveys.

#### *Burrowing Owl*

The NESR states that habitat associated with this species may be present within the project limits since the species is historically known to be present in the area and signs of possible presence were found during the general surveys. The same NESR claims that the "Presence of burrowing owl was not determined within the project site, therefore compensatory mitigation will not be required." This statement is not only based on inadequate surveys, but is in direct contradiction to the first statement regarding the presence of suitable habitat. Our suggestion is that protocol surveys be performed in order to make a proper determination and avoid confusion.

By now, either spring or winter protocol surveys (or both) should have been conducted for burrowing owl on site in order to properly discuss impacts and mitigation. According to the *California Department of Fish and Game Staff Report on Burrowing Owl Mitigation*, both spring and winter protocol surveys should be conducted for burrowing owls or their sign within suitable habitat, unless the species is detected on the first survey. Since suitable habitat for burrowing owl occurs on sites, surveys should be conducted within the project site and a 500-foot buffer, where possible and appropriate based on habitat. In addition to protocol surveys, a 30 day pre-construction survey should be conducted if the species is not detected but likely to occur on the project site.

Lastly, Section 4.4.2.3 concludes that Alternative 1 will have impacts to burrowing owl habitat, but does not mention Alternatives 2 and 3, which could have similar impacts.

#### *Other Species*

Although the NESR recognizes the potential for bats to occur in the area, no focused surveys for bat species have been conducted, which makes it impossible to assess impacts and establish mitigation. Local occurrences of the silver-haired bat (*Lasiurus noctivagans*) and hoary bat (*Lasiurus cinereus*) have been documented in the vicinity of the project site.

## Determination of Significance

The NESR contains a poor discussion on potential impacts and mitigation for the sensitive biological resources potentially occurring within or adjacent to the project site (including least Bell's vireo, burrowing owl, raptors, and wetlands). It does not present sufficient evidence for the conclusions it reaches regarding significance of impacts. The City of Los Angeles CEQA Thresholds of Significance clearly defines the following as having significant impacts on biological resources:

- The loss of individuals, or the reduction of existing habitat, of a state or federal listed endangered, threatened, rare, protected, or candidate species, or a Species of Special Concern or federally listed critical habitat;
- The loss of individuals or the reduction of existing habitat of a locally designated species or a reduction in a locally designated natural habitat or plant community;
- Interference with wildlife movement/migration corridors that may diminish the chances for long-term survival of a sensitive species;
- The alteration of an existing wetland habitat; or
- Interference with habitat such that normal species behaviors are disturbed (e.g., from the introduction of noise, light) to a degree that may diminish the chances for long-term survival of a sensitive species.

Alternatives 2 and 3 would result in all five of the above listed significant impacts to biological resources. Therefore, we suggest that the NESR be revised to properly address impacts and that the applicant utilizes the City of LA's CEQA threshold guidelines for biological resources to define significance of impacts.

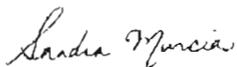
## Conclusion

After careful review of the Draft EA/IS and Draft NESR, it is clear that several focused surveys for wildlife species (bats, least Bell's vireo, and burrowing owl) and a jurisdictional delineation must be still be conducted to accurately assess project impacts to biological resources, and to remain in compliance with NEPA, CEQA, and other federal, state regulations (including the Endangered Species Act, Migratory Bird Treaty Act, and Clean Water Act). Due to the incomplete state of the Draft NESR, we recommend that results of the additional surveys be obtained prior to selecting any project alternative.

Based on the information presented in the Draft NESR, we strongly urge Caltrans to remove Alternatives 2 and 3 from consideration for the proposed connector improvement project. Both alternatives would seriously compromise previous efforts to restore native habitat north of Burbank Boulevard and result in significant impacts to sensitive wildlife species on site due to degradation of wetlands and encroachment on sensitive habitats, not to mention a lengthy and expensive permitting process with the regulatory and resource agencies.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this project.

Sincerely,



Sandra Murcia  
Conservation Biologist  
Resource Conservation District of the Santa Monica Mountains

CC: Rosi Dagit, Senior Conservation Biologist



sshteir@aol.com  
05/28/2008 03:42 PM

To: eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov  
cc  
bcc  
Subject: Public Comment for 405/101 Connector from Seth Shteir

Eduardo Aguilar, District 7 Environmental Planning  
Caltrans  
Los Angeles CA

Dear Mr. Aguilar,

Several years ago, upon returning from the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Area Reserve, my first and second grade class wrote a poem from the point of view of a great blue heron. The last line read "If you build a supermarket on my wetland, I'll be mad".

However, the recent threat to the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Area does not come from a shopping center, but the expansion of the southbound 405/westbound 101 freeway connector.

Caltrans has proposed several possible alternatives including a "No build" proposal. Alternative 1 calls for the expansion of the connector and would address safety issues, but without significant impact to the wildlife refuge. San Fernando Valley Audubon is not opposed to Alternative 1, but is opposed to Alternatives 2 and 3, which call for the development of 17 or 21 acres of the wildlife area. Under Alternatives 2 and 3, the wildlife reserve land would be used to construct a long on and off ramp so that traffic from Burbank Boulevard can exit the 405 or enter the 405 to transition to the 101.

The proposals for development are in response to studies conducted by Caltrans that shows that the southbound 405/westbound 101 connector is not safe and does not have sufficient size or speed to facilitate traffic merging between these two freeways. Los Angeles' burgeoning population suggests that the traffic problem on this artery will only worsen in coming years.

It's clear that Caltrans' proposal to expand the 405/101 connector is guided by extensive research and a sophisticated knowledge of engineering. Caltrans is attempting to alleviate traffic congestion and ensure the safety of motorists- a job they have been mandated to do by the state of California.

But such an expansion inside the wildlife area under alternatives 2 and 3 would not only permanently damage the wildlife habitat below the onramp, but adversely impact the rest of the refuge. The encroachment would cause increased noise and light pollution from the new construction and traffic.

The Sepulveda Basin wildlife area serves as a nesting and migratory refueling stop for over 200 species of birds and contains fine examples of riparian, grassland and oak woodland habitat. My

organization, the San Fernando Valley Audubon Society, runs an environmental education program that currently serves over 3000 children, many from low income homes. We also conduct bimonthly bird walks for the public. Each year, other public and private schools, as well as several local colleges bring students to the wildlife refuge. The proposed development would jeopardize education initiatives, but also impair the experience of being in a nature preserve for families, recreational walkers and joggers.

In the event the connector is expanded, one can't help wondering how it will do anything to alleviate the persistent, heavy traffic on both the 405 and 101 freeways. It is possible that the flow of traffic on the connector can be improved, but where will the cars go once they merge onto between the 101 and 405? The traffic issues of the 405/101 connector and freeways are symptomatic of transportation problems all over the southland. Our grinding traffic jams are the result of urban sprawl and a lack of public transportation. Expanding the connector is tantamount to replacing the pipes in your home when the city water main is plugged. It is a piecemeal approach to a regional problem.

There are larger questions to consider, too. Does the value of an expanded connector outweigh the value of open space? How can we quantify the enjoyment of children and adults visiting a natural sanctuary in the city? Will the connector proposal be remembered as visionary planning or will it be considered a mistake- another concrete lining of the Los Angeles River? Should we continue to expand the freeway onto the refuge when the new connector is no longer adequate?

I plan to continue to teach my students about California's natural heritage. The wildlife area's diverse habitats and avian fauna will provide a wonderful, outdoor laboratory. I can only hope that when we visit in the future, the only sound we hear is the wind rustling through cottonwood leaves and not the din of a jackhammer.

Sincerely,

Seth Shteir, Vice President  
San Fernando Valley Audubon Society  
14355 Huston St., #225  
Sherman Oaks, CA 91423  
818-995-6429  
[sshteir@aol.com](mailto:sshteir@aol.com)

---

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"Maryam Burcham "  
<maryamburcham@roadrunner.com>

05/18/2008 08:31 PM

Please respond to  
"Maryam Burcham"  
<maryamburcham@roadrunner.com>

To <eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov>

cc

bcc

Subject Wildlife Reserve

Hello,

I do support the Wildlife Reserve strongly. I think putting a freeway on- and off ramp through the Wildlife Reserve is absolutely unacceptable.

I am sure there are other..better alternate plans that would still reserve the wildlife.

Thank you for your support

Maryam Burcham



"arlene"  
<arlenebl@msn.com>  
05/18/2008 11:29 AM

To <eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov>  
cc  
bcc

Subject 405/101 connector and the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Refuge

I Strongly oppose alternatives 2 and 3 which would place an on-ramp and off-ramp in the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Refuge. The only acceptable alternatives are alternative 1 or the no build alternative. The reserve is important to me as one of the only places in the Valley to see Birds and Wildlife in a safe environment. I run there daily and enjoy the escape from congestion and the opportunity to be close to birds and natural wildlife. The cranes and hawks and canadian geese are beautiful, and the Sepulveda basin is about the only place to see these without driving great distances. It also provides a safe place to run without cars. Please do not put a connector through the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Refuge.



Susan Berk  
<SusanBerk@pobox.com>  
05/18/2008 04:40 PM

To eduardo.aguilar@dot.ca.gov  
cc  
bcc  
Subject sepulveda wildlife refuge

we have so few nature spots in the valley, Please do NOT chose alternatives 2 or 3 that would cut into the birding area of the sepulveda dam.

Susan Berk  
Encino California



"RUNNERGY"  
<runnergy@sbcglobal.net>  
05/17/2008 04:24 PM

To <eduardo\_agullar@dot.ca.gov>  
cc  
bcc  
Subject No additional on ramp, please!

To whom this concerns

Please do not put an additional and unceded on ramp around the territory of the Woodley Basin Wildlife area at the 405 FWY and 101 FWY. This as with all the wildlife areas are a limited resource. Cutting off any of this would negatively affect the nature animals and as well as the community that enjoys using the area for part of their healthy lifestyle. I respect your concern for monitoring traffic and congestion, but lets not hurt one group of community to simply help another group. Especially when it comes to traffic...I think anyone who come to L.A. and travels/ commutes in L.A. county knew what they were getting themselves into. Traffic in L.A. is common knowledge by now.

Thanks

Jeff R.

Runnergy

Internal Virus Database is out-of-date.

Checked by AVG.

Version: 7.5.524 / Virus Database: 269.23.3 -- Release Date: 4/21/2008 12:00 AM

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Michael Kukuchka  
Owner/Photographer/Editor

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<http://www.makphotography.net/main/index.html>

Email: [makphotography@mac.com](mailto:makphotography@mac.com)

---



Michael Kukuchka  
<mkukuchka@socal.rr.com>  
05/17/2008 11:59 AM

To <eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov>  
cc  
bcc  
Subject Letter from a Lake Balboa Native, Distance Runner, and  
Photographer, to Preserve the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife  
Reserve

Dear Mr. Aguilar,

This letter is in response to a meeting, that was held regarding the proposed Connector Project, from the southbound I-405 to the westbound 101:

I urge Caltrans to adopt either Alternative 1 or the No Build Alternative for this project. I strongly oppose alternatives 2 and 3 because they would disturb the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve.

My wife Ellen and I are current residents, I was born and raised here in the Lake Balboa area, and have been running in the Basin since 1988. This has been an oasis from the concrete and steel of the city and makes it bearable to live here. It goes without saying that I enjoy at the Wildlife Reserve, because of its beauty and tranquility. I do my marathon training runs in the Wildlife Reserve three or more times a week, since it is like having a national park right outside my door! In addition to running in the Wildlife Preserve, I also conduct my Photography Business there, bringing models and support crew, to create lasting images that enhance the beauty of my clients in such a natural setting. At least once a week, I just go there with camera in hand to simply relax, and capture the wonders of nature.

It would be a sad day if this area was taken away!

Sincerely,



Marilyn Judson  
<marilynjudson@roadrunner.com>

05/17/2008 12:23 PM

To <eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov>

cc

bcc

Subject Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve - Recommend "No Action"  
or Alternative No 1

Dear Mr. Aguilar  
California Dept. of Transportation:

This is to register my strong opposition to Alternative Nos. 2 and 3 for construction of a new connector from the 405 to the 101 freeways here in the San Fernando Valley. Please provide further justification for this new connector, especially considering the rich bird and wildlife supported by the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve in a part of the state with precious few such refuges.

If a change in this part of the state's freeway system is absolutely not avoidable, please recommend Alternative no. 1, which would involve a new connector from southbound 405 to northbound 101 and would allow the Reserve to remain intact. Although this first alternative does not allow traffic entering the southbound 405 from Burbank Blvd. to transition onto the 101, the cost to bird and wildlife of this additional convenience is not justified. Both Alternative Nos. 2 and 3 would allow this convenience, but involve a bridge or expanded on-ramp directly through the Reserve. This would greatly disrupt the habitats of many threatened and endangered species that depend on the Reserve either for stopovers on their migratory routes or as their year-round residence. Such destruction to habitat often pushes these types of fragile species closer to extinction.

In all your decision-making, thank you for thinking about the kind of state we are leaving to our children and our grandchildren.

Regards,

Marilyn E. Judson  
Educator  
in  
Environmental Issues and Naturalist Topics

850 Princeton St.  
Santa Monica, CA 90403-2218  
Phone: 310-453-1892  
Cell: 310-804-5300  
FAX: 310-453-9072



"Lou Ann Denison "  
<LAnnD4animals@charter.net>  
t>  
05/17/2008 01:12 PM

To <eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov>  
cc  
bcc  
Subject PLEASE SAVE SEPULVEDA BASIN WILDLIFE RESERVE

We join many other Californians who are very concerned about the negative effects Alternatives 2 and 3 could have on the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Refuge.

We have so

few areas where families can go to enjoy wildlife now, that it is important to protect what we have from such destructive impacts.

We understand that Caltrans is planning to build a new connector road from the southbound I-405 to the westbound US-101. They are offering three alternative versions of the project plus a No Build.

We strongly support Alternative 1 or the No Build Alternative because we are very concerned about the threat to the Wildlife Reserve that would result from Alternatives 2 and 3 by placing an on-ramp and off-ramp in the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Refuge. The refuge is such a small natural area, that each acre of wetland is precious. It is one of those places where our family can still go to enjoy and appreciate nature. Please don't let it be destroyed!

Thank you.

Mr. and Mrs. James Denison  
6931 E 11 TH ST  
Long Beach, CA, 90815



AnnGadfly@aol.com  
05/17/2008 11:39 AM

To eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov  
cc  
bcc  
Subject New connector roads in the Sepulveda Basin

To Whom it May Concern:

I understand Caltrans is planning to build a new connector road from the southbound I-405 to the westbound US-101.

There are three alternative versions of the project plus a No Build. Although I would prefer a No Build alternative, as my main concern is the damage to wildlife that the freeway ramps will create, I am told that Alternative One is an acceptable solution.

Please do not approve Alternative 2 or 3.

Sincerely,

Ann Cantrell  
Bird Watcher and Wildlife Lover  
Long Beach, CA

\*\*\*\*\*

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(<http://food.aol.com/dinner-tonight?NCID=aolfod00030000000001>)



"John"  
<JohnAalto@roadrunner.com>  
>

05/17/2008 02:41 PM

To <eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov>

cc

bcc

Subject Southbound I-405 to the Westbound 101

Dear Mr. Aguilar,

Regarding the proposed Connector Project from the southbound I-405 to the westbound 101:

I urge Caltrans to adopt either Alternative 1 or the No Build Alternative for this project. I strongly oppose alternatives 2 and 3 because they would disturb the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve.

I have enjoyed running in the area for more than 20 years. I especially enjoy the Wildlife Reserve because of its beauty and tranquility, because it is an escape from the noise and stress of our very urban area. I go to the Wildlife Reserve at least once a week to run or walk and enjoy a bit of nature. Please help preserve this vital area for all generations.

Thank you,  
John Aalto  
4534 Van Noord Ave  
Studio City, CA 91604  
[johnaalto@roadrunner.com](mailto:johnaalto@roadrunner.com)



Alpat62@aol.com  
05/16/2008 11:32 AM

To eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov  
cc aKotin@earthlink.net  
bcc  
Subject 101-405 interchange

Sir:

If modifications to the interchange must be built, I am strongly in favor of alternative 1 and strongly opposed to alternatives 2 and 3, both of which would severely impact the wildlife preserve. The preserve is an oasis in a desert...a home and breeding ground for many species of plants and animals in our very urbanized valley. Yes, people and transportation of people are important, but so is our wildlife. It is biodiversity that makes life on earth possible. To quote Chief Sealth (aka Seattle): "What is man without the beasts? If all the beasts were gone, men would die from a great loneliness of spirit. For whatever happens to the beasts, soon happens to man. All things are connected."

Thank you for your consideration.  
Alan Pollack, M.D.  
Audubon-at-Home Chair  
Wildlife Habitat Steward/NWF

Wondering what's for Dinner Tonight? [Get new twists on family favorites at AOL Food.](#)



"Cindy Lieurance"  
<cindy@gpvideo.com>

05/16/2008 08:30 AM

Please respond to  
"Cindy Lieurance"  
<cindy@gpvideo.com>

To <eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov>

cc

bcc

Subject No traffic ramps in Sepulveda Basin W.R.

Dear Mr. Aguilar:

I am writing to strongly oppose alternatives 2 and 3 for the I-405/101 connector, which would place an on-ramp and off-ramp in the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Refuge.

The only acceptable alternatives are alternative #1 or the no build alternative.

Wild places truly are refuges, for people as well as for the abundant wildlife they host. We all need to get away from pavement, asphalt, traffic and the busy-ness of our lives. As a race, we humans have pretty much used up all the space in this state. Please act to preserve one of the few wildlife refuges left in the San Fernando Valley, an area that is so teeming with people and vehicles.

To me, it would be a horrible abomination to destroy this area, and it would be very destructive to place these ramps in it. Once destroyed, there is no putting it back. It would be a great and irreversible loss to the valley and the state of California if this valuable remaining bit of habitat were sacrificed for traffic ramps.

Thank you --

Cindy Lieurance

101 Parnassus Avenue #1

San Francisco CA 94117

these changes have been based upon natural laws – with a little help from a wide community of human volunteers.

Permanently removing 10-20 percent of this core area (and disturbing a much greater area during construction) would have significant direct impacts on the entire existing Wildlife Area and all future evolutionary changes therein. The wide variety of habitats that we have established is directly responsible for the wide variety of species seen. And, each individual component of the Wildlife Area is integral to the health and stability of the Area as a whole. Alternatives 2 + 3 would remove nearly all of the most mature Live Oaks within the Wildlife Area and more than 50% of the core grassland area.

But, this is not just about Biology, Ecology, or Habitat Restoration. It is also about the cultural evolution that has taken place there. During the last 30 years we have had more than 10,000 people join San Fernando Valley Audubon Society sponsored bird walks, environmental education programs, nature festivals, trash cleanups, weeding projects, and more. Many of those people have been so impressed that they themselves have become dedicated volunteers, docents, and active environmentalists. It has changed their lives ! They have evolved ! They have become better individuals, and better citizens. And this process is still in its infancy. The Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Area is a biological and cultural classroom where wildlife can thrive and humans can be inspired. It is a place where nature was given a second chance and where people are given a purpose. It is a process in itself – with benefits to all. Please do not remove this important part of the body and soul of the San Fernando Valley.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Linda Jones". The signature is fluid and elegant, with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Linda Jones  
11116 Vanalden Avenue  
Northridge, CA 91326

Ronald J. Kosinski - Deputy District Director 

Division of Environmental Planning

Ca. Department of Transportation - District 7

100 S. Main Street - MS 16A

Los Angeles, CA 90012

Dear Mr. Kosinski:

Regarding the proposed change to the 405-101 interchange, I am strongly opposed to Alternatives 2 + 3.

During this public comment period you have already been made aware of the sensitive species that will be impacted, the habitats that will be destroyed, and the human uses that will be significantly altered in a negative fashion. Now I would like to bring to your attention that Alternatives 2 + 3 would not merely extinguish organisms, ecosystems, and societal values (to temporarily resolve what amounts to no more than a public nuisance), but they would extinguish a biological and cultural process.

The original core of the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Area is the 50-60 acres west of the 405, north of Burbank Boulevard, east of Haskell Creek, and south of the Archery Range. This is the only area within the Sepulveda Basin that is officially designated as "a wildlife management area" by a Lease and Operating Agreement between the City of Los Angeles and the State of California Department of Fish and Game (effective September 17, 1985). This area, and an additional 60-70 acres (total combined acreage of 120) directly south of Burbank Boulevard are the only areas within the Sepulveda Basin that are designated as "a wildlife management area" in the current Sepulveda Basin Master Plan (March 1981). Additional adjacent areas within the Sepulveda Basin have been added to this designation within more recent years.

The Sublease between the City and the State includes the following words under the heading Purpose and Use: "The leased premises and every part thereof shall be used only for wildlife habitat development and recreation activities not incompatible thereto."

The previous 2 paragraphs point out the significance of the project area (and seem to rule out Alternatives 2 + 3) in both physical and symbolic terms. This is the first area to be so designated, and therefore the first area to be planned, planted, weeded, cared for, and used (specifically and only) for nature values, study, and appreciation.

Therefore, the plants in this area have had the longest period of time to become established, mature, adapt to one another and the conditions, and evolve into a complex of interactive mini ecosystems that are still growing, changing, and evolving. When the Wildlife Lake was put in, the entire area (50 acres) was graded and left barren for several months. As the native plants were introduced, and non-natives removed, a different palette of birds has used this area. Every year, as these systems change, new species find their way here. And, for the last 20 years, all of

May 16, 2008

Dear Mr. Ronald Kosinski, 

We are writing this letter to discourage you from accepting Alternatives #2 or #3 for building an off-ramp for I-405 near Burbank Boulevard. Either of these choices would do significant damage to one of the few environmental jewels remaining in the San Fernando Valley, the Sepulveda Wetlands Wildlife Area.

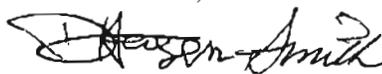
Our 5<sup>th</sup> grade class took a field trip this wonderful area earlier this year. Some of us even got to visit there in 4<sup>th</sup> grade. It's like no other place we've ever visited. Please don't destroy it!

The Sepulveda Wetlands Wildlife Area is very important to us. It provides a location for us to go observe wildlife in their natural habitats. Actually, it's the only place that we can do that around here. On our field trip, we learned about wetland birds and their adaptations. For example, white pelicans have webbed feet and practice communal hunting, while egrets have long legs and spread-out toes so that they don't sink in the mud, and female mallard ducks are all brown so they can camouflage themselves and protect their eggs. The Sepulveda Wildlife Area is one of the few areas in the San Fernando Valley where we can see and learn firsthand about such a diversity of birds living in their natural habitat. Our Audubon Society guides love this wildlife area so much that they work there for free!

In addition to being a great place for kids to view wildlife, the Sepulveda Wildlife Area is good for our environment. It recycles water from the Tillman Reclamation Center, provides a home for birds migrating on the Pacific Flyway, and is a quiet place where there are no cars. And, it's a cool spot for our families to take us on the weekend!

We think that you should make more space for these wetland animals instead of threatening to destroy their homes because we've done too much damage to their habitats with our overbuilding. For example, it would be great if you would expand the wetlands area across Burbank Boulevard and add a visitor's center with naturalists and displays. Then, more people would visit this amazing location. People need to start thinking more about the importance of our natural environment instead of destroying more precious places like this. Otherwise, what will be left for us to share with our kids when we're grown up? We're counting on you to help us protect this area for future generations! Please do not allow a freeway off-ramp to harm the Sepulveda Wetlands Wildlife Area!

Thank You,



The Fifth Graders of  
Toluca Lake Elementary School  
(Dennis Hagen-Smith is our teacher)

p.s. – We've each written you a personal letter to show you how important this issue is to us!



Jan Wilson  
<janfreedom@pacbell.net>  
05/15/2008 03:20 PM

To: eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov  
cc  
bcc  
Subject: Jan Wilson regarding Sepulveda Basin

Dear Sir,

I am writing to let you know that the proposed on/off ramp or anything that would destroy the Sepulveda Basin wildlife is not in anyone's best interest. Human health, both physical and mental, are in stressed already due to the massive human overgrowth we have committed. I ask you to cease building new highway projects. What would be most constructive for everyone is to invest the CALTRANS funds into something that will transport people in mass like a monorail and to put it on the existing freeways. All animals, including humans, do not need "same old" ineffecient and outdated transportation methods to improve our lives.

Conclusion: do not build anything in the Sepulveda Basin area.

Cordially,  
Jan Wilson, M.S, RD  
2720 Long Beach, CA  
90815



"Hill Penfold"  
<hpenfold@gmail.com>  
05/15/2008 11:46 AM

To: eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov  
cc  
bcc  
Subject: Proposed 405/101 connector

Dear Mr. Aguilar,

I am opposed to alternatives 2 and 3 below. I support the Wildlife Reserve, and think that putting a freeway on and/or off ramp through the Reserve is absolutely unacceptable. Each development that takes away from our natural areas seems like just a little nibble, but the cumulative effect each year is a large bite out of what little is left. Especially in our current economic crisis, it has become more and more difficult for people to travel great distances to see natural habitat and real wildlife. Destroying what little remaining habitat there is that is within reach of many leaves fewer people able to see is bad policy.

Alt. 1 (OK): A new connector from the southbound 405 to northbound 101. The Wildlife Reserve would remain intact. (Because there would be no freeway ramps in the Wildlife Reserve, vehicles entering the southbound 405 from Burbank Blvd. would not be able to transition onto the 101.)

Alt. 2: (Bad) A new connector from the southbound 405 to northbound 101. A constrained (tight curve) on- and off-ramp would be built through the Wildlife Reserve, north of Burbank Blvd. This would require building a new Burbank Blvd. bridge over the 405.

Alt. 3 (Even worse): Like alternative 2, but the on- and off-ramps would have a larger curve and footprint through the Wildlife Reserve. There would not be a new Burbank Blvd. bridge, even worse

A no build alternative would be OK.

Hill Penfold  
Tujunga

--  
Hill

Jim Houghton  
4620 Petit Ave.  
Encino, CA 91436

Mr. Ronald J. Kosinski, Deputy District Director   
Division of Environmental Planning  
Caltrans (Department of Transportation)  
100 South Main Street, Suite 100  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

May 15, 2008

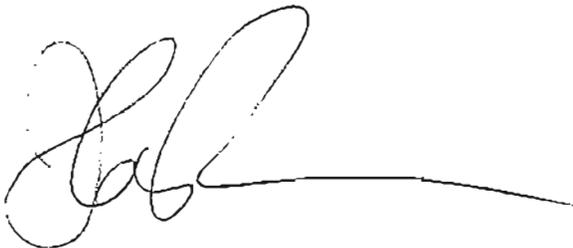
**RE: CALTRANS NEW CONNECTOR SAN DIEGO-405 FREEWAY TO  
NORTH US 101**

Dear Mr. Kosinski:

I have two points I would like to make concerning this "improvement." First, our precious transportation dollars should be spent in ways that discourage people from driving cars and encourage them to take public transportation or at the very least, carpool. Easing transitions from one freeway to another is just one more way of encouraging people to drive their cars.

Second, the Wildlife Refuge in Sepulveda Basin is just that, a refuge. There is so very little land in our city that's left for migrating birds to rest in, for adults and children to get "into nature," why do anything to diminish that tiny amount of space? Especially in order to encourage automobile traffic – something we know we must have less of in the future?

Thank you,



Jim Houghton

May 15, 2008

Mr. Ronald Kosinski *rk*  
Deputy District Director  
California Department of Transportation  
Division of Environmental Planning (I405/101 Connector)  
100 S. Main Street - Mail Stop 16A  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Re: Proposed I405/101 Connector in Sepulveda Basin

Dear Mr. Kosinski,

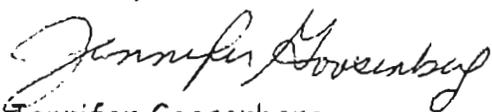
I oppose CalTrans's proposal to build a new connector road between I405 and the 101 freeway in any manner that impinges on the Wildlife Reserve in the Sepulveda Basin. I urge you to vote against them. I am aware that three alternative proposals as well as a No Build option have been made by CalTrans. It is my understanding that Alternative 1 proposes a new connector from the southbound 405 to northbound 101 which would not harm the Wildlife Reserve. I am informed that CalTrans's Alternative 2 will yield a constrained on-ramp and off-ramp through the Wildlife Reserve north of Burbank Blvd. Similarly, it is my understanding that Alternative 3 will result in an on- and off-ramp that would have a larger curve and footprint through the Wildlife Reserve.

I oppose any new construction that impinges upon the Wildlife Reserve. Therefore, I urge you to vote for CalTrans's Alternative 1 or No Build options. Personally, I value this nature sanctuary as a peaceful enclave within our city. As an Encino resident, I appreciate this natural setting practically in my backyard. I enjoy walking there with my children to view or listen to the birds, rabbits and other wildlife. I just spent Mother's Day morning there with my family, and I hope to return many times during the year. It is wonderful for my children to see firsthand the city wildlife about which they study in school.

I use the on-ramp to the southbound 405 from Burbank and the transition to the westbound 101 when returning home from Costco or Target. While there is often traffic at that transition point, I disagree that the benefits to be gained by the proposed new connector road will outweigh the detriment of losing a part of all of the Wildlife Reserve.

Please protect the Wildlife Reserve! Thank you.

Sincerely,



Jennifer Goosenberg

5151 Gloria Ave., Encino 91436



"Linda Doebel"  
<ldoebel@ca.rr.com>  
05/15/2008 09:49 PM

To <eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov>  
cc  
bcc  
Subject connector road from I-405 to westbound US-101

I support the wildlife reserve and am against putting a freeway on-and-off ramp thru the reserve.

Linda Doebel  
3618 Grand Canal  
Marina del Rey



margery brown  
<probationdiva@yahoo.com>

05/15/2008 05:34 PM

Please respond to  
probationdiva@yahoo.com

To eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov

cc

bcc

Subject The 405 connector.

Regarding your draft EIR and plans to improve the connector between the S. bound 405 and the W. bound 101 freeways, I find plans #2 and #3 to be totally unacceptable. The net result would be the destruction of the wild life preserve, and L.A. city cannot afford to have this happen. Plan #1 would seem to avoid the aforementioned destruction and still provide a desirable connector.

There are already too many cars on the LA freeways as it is, and adding a connector will only improve the situation slightly and just in this particular spot. Meanwhile, the wild life preserve cannot be replaced.

Margery Brown

22500-8 Jeffrey Mark Ct.,

Chatsworth, CA 91311



warbler5@aol.com  
05/14/2008 12:38 PM

To: eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov  
cc:  
bcc:  
Subject: Please protect Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve I

Dear Mr. Aguilar,

I have recently learned of a Caltrans proposal to build a new connector road from the southbound I-405 to the westbound US-101. If your Alternative 2 or Alternative 3 is selected, an on-ramp and off-ramp will be built in the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve, north of Burbank Blvd., from the rock wall of the dam to around halfway to the Wildlife Lake.

I am strongly opposed to Alternatives 2 and 3 which would place an on-ramp and off-ramp in the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Refuge. Placing highways through the Wildlife Refuge would damage the integrity of the refuge! The only acceptable alternatives are Alternative 1 or the No Build Alternative, neither of which would harm the Wildlife Reserve.

Dee Warenycia  
104 Stratford Court  
Roseville CA 95661

Plan your next roadtrip with [MapQuest.com](http://MapQuest.com): America's #1 Mapping Site.

Muriel Kotin

to 8:30PM at Valley Beth Shalom, 15739 Ventura Blvd. , Encino on the various alternatives for improving the connector. Let Caltrans know (especially in writing if they have comment cards there) that you support the Wildlife Reserve, and that you think putting a freeway on- and off ramp through the Reserve is absolutely unacceptable.

2. Send an e-mail (by May 28 at the latest) to [eduardo\\_aquilar@dot.ca.gov](mailto:eduardo_aquilar@dot.ca.gov).
3. Or mail Mr. Ronald Kosinski, Deputy District Director; California Department of Transportation; Division of Environmental Planning (I405/101 Connector); 100 S. Main Street - Mail Stop 16A; Los Angeles , CA 90012 .
4. Forward this information to everyone you know who cares about the Wildlife Reserve and ask them to help too.

We can influence which alternative is selected. If many people indicate in writing at the meeting or by letter that they greatly value the Wildlife Reserve and consider alternatives 2 and 3 totally unacceptable, we may be able to keep the Reserve the oasis of nature and tranquility we enjoy.

The alternatives on the table are:

\* Alt. 1 (OK): A new connector from the southbound 405 to northbound 101. The Wildlife Reserve would remain intact. (Because there would be no freeway ramps in the Wildlife Reserve, vehicles entering the southbound 405 from Burbank Blvd. would not be able to transition onto the 101.)

\* Alt. 2 (Terrible): A new connector from the southbound 405 to northbound 101. A constrained (tight curve) on- and off-ramp would be built through the Wildlife Reserve, north of Burbank Blvd. This would require building a new Burbank Blvd. bridge over the 405.

\* Alt. 3 (Even worse): Like alternative 2, but the on- and off-ramps would have a larger curve and footprint through the Wildlife Reserve. There would not be a new Burbank Blvd. bridge.

\* No build alternative (OK).

You can send in written comments. Caltrans is accepting public comments through May 28, 2008.

Please let Caltrans know on paper or by email that you are strongly opposed to alternatives 2 and 3 which would place an on-ramp and off-ramp in the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Refuge. Let them know the only acceptable alternatives are alternative 1 or the no build alternative. Let Caltrans know why the reserve is important to you. However you do it, please express your feelings to them. Please write a letter, email, and/or attend the public hearing Wednesday May 14.



Vanessa Tobias  
<vanessadtobias@yahoo.com>

05/14/2008 08:09 AM

To eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov

cc akotin@earthlink.net

bcc

Subject Fw: HELP SAVE SEPULVEDA BASIN WILDLIFE RESERVE

I agree with Muriel Kotin that alternatives 2 and 3 are completely unacceptable. It is unreasonable to build a freeway on-ramp through a wildlife reserve.

I really only have one main point for the decision-makers on this project: Please remember the purpose of a "Wildlife Reserve" when you make your decision. Wildlife (mammals, reptiles, birds, etc.) require a place to live, eat, and breed. The Sepulveda Basin is already a small fragment of the habitat that used to be available for wildlife in the area and it is totally unreasonable to fragment it further or take away more habitat just for the sake of an on-ramp.

Thank you for considering my points.

Vanessa Tobias

"Whatever you are- Be a good one" -Abe Lincoln

----- Forwarded Message -----

From: Muriel Kotin <akotin@earthlink.net>

To: Muriel Kotin <akotin@earthlink.net>

Sent: Monday, May 12, 2008 11:28:44 PM

Subject: HELP SAVE SEPULVEDA BASIN WILDLIFE RESERVE

### **Your help is needed to keep a freeway on and off ramp from being built in the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve!!!**

Caltrans proposes to build a new connector road from the southbound I-405 to the westbound US-101. Caltrans has not selected a preferred alternative but is offering three alternative versions of the project plus a No Build alternative. If their Alternative 2 or Alternative 3 is selected, an on-ramp and off-ramp will be built in the Wildlife Reserve north of Burbank Blvd., from the rock wall of the dam to around halfway to the Wildlife Lake. Neither Alternative 1 nor the No Build Alternative would harm the Wildlife Reserve.

You can help in several ways. Helping in as many as possible is best:

1. Please attend the public hearing on Wednesday May 14, 2008 from 5:30PM



Tekulsky@aol.com  
05/14/2008 05:57 PM

To eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov  
cc  
bcc  
Subject sepulveda basin wildlife reserve

I am a bird photographer and have used the reserve many times for my photos. Here's a link to my website. Please don't put a freeway ramp through it. Mathew Tekulsky [Mathew Tekulsky Photography](#)

Wondering what's for Dinner Tonight? [Get new twists on family favorites at AOL Food.](#)



"Bob and Susan Steele "  
<steele7@verizon.net>  
05/14/2008 04:01 PM

To <eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov>  
cc  
bcc

Subject new connector road from the southbound I-405 to the  
westbound 101

Mr. Aguilar, I stongly oppose building a new connector road from the southbound I-405 to the westbound US-101 through the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve. I can support Alt. 1 with a new connector from the southbound 405 to northbound 101, which would keep the Wildlife Reserve intact.

Thank you, Susan Steele  
Inyokern, CA



kathrynspace @att.net  
<kathrynspace @att.net>  
05/14/2008 10:33 AM

To eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov  
cc  
bcc

Subject Sepulveda Basin Reserve Offramp

Dear Sir,

I am deeply distressed about the proposed plan to build an on and off ramp through the Sepulveda Basin Reserve. This is a peaceful and favorite birding area and should be valued for what it is.

Please choose the no build Alternative or Alternative #1.

Thank you,  
Kathryn Spence  
San Francisco



LarSchmahl@aol.com  
05/14/2008 06:03 AM

To: eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov  
cc:  
bcc:  
Subject: Freeway ramp through the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Refuge

Dear Mr. Aguilar,

It has been brought to my attention that Caltrans is contemplating a new ramp in the area of Burbank Blvd, the 405 Freeway and the 101 Freeway.

I wish to inform you that I am absolutely against any design that will adversely impact the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Refuge.

It is my understanding that there are 4 alternative plans. Please be informed that plans 2 and 3 are unacceptable.

As a driver that often uses the 405/101 interchange and the Burbank Blvd exit, I feel that the benefit of a proposed improvement in that area would not compensate for the loss to the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Refuge. The refuge is not a blank area on a map that can be used by Caltrans or any other government agency to suite their purpose.

Yours truly,

Lawrence J. Schmahl  
11209 Howard Street  
Whittier Ca. 90606

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LucienPlauzoles@aol.com  
05/14/2008 09:41 AM

To eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov  
cc jeandrum2001@yahoo.com, caniswatch@earthlink.net,  
marghuffman@earthlink.net, majasb@earthlink.net,  
chukar5@att.net, ljohnson@att.net, cgbraggjr@att.net,  
bcc  
Subject 101-405 Transition ramp project. Comment from Santa  
Monica Bay Audubon Society

Dear Mr. Aguilar,

Thank you for mailing the CD-ROM to us prior to the public meeting. The question of the proposed alternatives has been raised in a number of our gatherings. There has not been a single voice raised defending alternatives 2 and 3., no matter what mitigation measures are taken. The overwhelming opinion of our membership has been for alternative 1, if building must take place, or No.4, if other measures can be taken to "tame " traffic at the transition. We are not aware of what work Caltrans has undertaken to improve traffic other than the seemingly endless "build more roads."

Even though none of our members lives in the immediate area of the proposed project, we estimate by straw count that two out of seven, or roughly 200 members of our chapter regularly use the Wildlife Refuge for bird study and recreation. All expressed concern that alternatives 2 and 3 would reduce the size of the refuge and further shrink habitat of the Los Angeles River natural area. This would run entirely against public policy of revitalizing the L.A. River corridor as wildlife habitat.

As a personal note, may I ask you to imagine the ponderous take-off of a majestic bird that regularly winters at the wildlife refuge, the White Pelican. We as humans cannot make this bird a STOL aircraft. We urge you to preserve its "runway." Keep the habitat, don't shrink it.

Lucien (Lu) Plauzoles *President*  
Santa Monica Bay Audubon Society

res 310 395-6235 cell 310 779-0966  
533 Fourth St. Santa Monica, CA 90402-2701  
LucienPlauzoles@aol.com  
at work call me at 310 434.4529 Mon-Thur 11-7, Fri 7-3 Plauzoles\_Lucien @ smc.edu

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"Jennifer Pecor"  
<Jennifer@Pecor.com>  
05/14/2008 07:15 PM

To <eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov>  
cc  
bcc  
Subject save what little LA has left!

We have to stop pushing our wild life away- This is crazy I see birds in place they don't go because we keep taking lands away. This has got to STOP.  
I say a NO BUILD ALTERNATIVE  
Jennifer Pecor



"Shawn Nelson"  
<shawn@nelsondaniels.com  
>  
05/14/2008 04:57 PM

To <eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov>  
cc  
bcc  
Subject: Plans for freeway construction in the Sepulveda basin

I would like to voice my opposition to any plan that would involve freeway construction (or commercial development for that matter) in the Sepulveda Basin, and specifically in the Wildlife Refuge area. We use the local park and specifically the wildlife refuge on a regular basis for weekly runs and to walk the DG paths there around the lake. Living in the middle of a large sprawling city there are not many opportunities for us to let our kids see wild open space, and it is such a huge benefit for all the residents of the San Fernando Valley to have this wild area there. My boys love walking through there and seeing the ducks and other wild birds.

I know there is a meeting tonight on this and I can not be there, but I am strongly opposed to the several options that involve construction in this area.

Thank you for your time and attention.

Shawn Nelson  
14752 Weddington Street  
Sherman Oaks, CA 91411



John Z Montgomerie  
<[johnmont@usc.edu](mailto:johnmont@usc.edu)>  
Sent by: [johnmont@usc.edu](mailto:johnmont@usc.edu)

To [eduardo\\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov](mailto:eduardo_aguilar@dot.ca.gov)

cc

bcc

05/14/2008 09:48 AM

Please respond to  
John Z Montgomerie  
<[johnmont@usc.edu](mailto:johnmont@usc.edu)>

Subject Sepulveda Basin project

Caltrans is planning to build a new connector road from the southbound I-405 to the westbound US-101. They are offering three alternative versions of the project plus a No Build.

My wife and I strongly support Alternative 1 or the No Build Alternative because we are very concerned about the threat to the Wildlife Reserve that would result from Alternatives 2 and 3 by placing an on-ramp and off-ramp in the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Refuge. The refuge being such a small area of wildlife, each acre of wetland is precious. We live in West Los Angeles but like many in greater Los Angeles, visit the Sepulveda basin to see the birds and wildlife 6 to 9 times a year with birding groups and family.

Sincerely

John and Deirdre Montgomerie  
310 3912689  
12231 Lawler St  
Los Angeles CA 90066  
[Johnmont@usc.edu](mailto:Johnmont@usc.edu)



"Geri Miller"  
<gerigmiller@verizon.net>  
05/14/2008 10:11 PM

To <eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov>  
cc  
bcc

Subject proposed freeway on ramp in the Sepulveda Dam Basin  
wildlife reserve

Dear Mr. Aguilar,

I am a certified Master Gardener and the garden program coordinator at Lanai Road Elementary School in Encino. For the past 10 years of my Encino residency I have enjoyed the wildlife reserve almost daily. In addition to my friends and I taking our morning walk through this exquisite retreat from city life, I have taken many of my students on walks through the reserve; many times giving these youngsters their first glimpse into the absolute treasure that lies virtually in their backyards not to mention the priceless educational moment that will stay with them for a lifetime. It has been a shining example of the wisdom of a city that once treasured its open spaces. We in Encino are now under siege of this latest movement by developers and city planners to continue the super dense urban development and freeway expansion that threatens what once made Encino one of the last outposts of "un-dense" neighborhoods of spacious single family lots and open space. Unfortunately, my family chose to relocate out of Encino rather than have our own property (one of the few remaining original historic Encino residences) subjected to years of construction and the certain negative impact on property value once the development was complete. This was after spending 4 years battling the proposed project. If the course we set now means that our future homeowners will have no choice but to live on lots with virtually no outside space, please...at least leave the residents of this community its last bastion of open space intact.

I urge you and the Department of Transportation to abandon these plans and preserve this area for the enjoyment of generations of wildlife and humankind to come.

Sincerely,

Geri Miller  
Certified Master Gardener  
University of California, Davis  
LA County Extension Office

Garden Program Coordinator  
Lanai Road Elementary School  
4241 Lanai Rd.  
Encino, CA 91436  
LAUSD

May 14, 2008  
101 Parnassus Avenue #1  
San Francisco CA 94117

Mr. Ronald Kosinski, Deputy District Director   
California Department of Transportation  
Division of Environmental Planning  
100 S. Main Street, Mail Stop 16A  
Los Angeles CA 90012

Re: I-405/101 Connector

Dear Mr. Kosinski:

I am writing to strongly oppose alternatives 2 and 3 for the I-405/101 connector, which would place an on-ramp and off-ramp in the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Refuge.

The only acceptable alternatives are alternative 1 or the no build alternative.

Wild places truly are refuges, for people as well as for the abundant wildlife they host. We all need to get away from pavement, asphalt, traffic and the busy-ness of our lives. As a race, we humans have pretty much used up all the space in this state. Please act to preserve one of the few wildlife refuges left in the San Fernando Valley, an area that is so teeming with people and vehicles.

To me, it would be a horrible abomination to destroy this area, and it *would be* very destructive to place these ramps in it. Once destroyed, there is no putting it back. It would be a great and irreversible loss to the valley and the state of California if this bit of habitat were sacrificed for traffic ramps.

Thank you –



Cindy Lieurance



Mikki Lesowitz -Sollday  
<mikkl@thesolldays.com>  
05/14/2008 04:13 PM

To eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov  
cc  
bcc  
Subject Sepulveda Basin On Ramp

Mr. Kosinski,

Please consider the alternative (below) that is on the table to the current situation with the Sepulveda basin on ramp, which is a threat to the wildlife reserve.

Thank you for making humanity your priority!

Alternative: A new connector from the southbound 405 to northbound 101. The Wildlife Reserve would remain intact. (Because there would be no freeway ramps in the Wildlife Reserve, vehicles entering the southbound 405 from Burbank Blvd. would not be able to transition onto the 101.)

Sincerely,

Mikki Lesowitz  
Sherman Oaks Resident



Gay Lannon  
<glannon@ucla.edu>  
05/14/2008 04:37 PM

To: eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov  
cc  
bcc  
Subject: 405-101 connector roads

Please do not encroach on the Sepulveda Wildlife Preserve in the plans to improve the 405-101 connections.

Alt. 1 (OK): A new connector from the southbound 405 to northbound 101. The Wildlife Reserve would remain intact. (Because there would be no freeway ramps in the Wildlife Reserve, vehicles entering the southbound 405 from Burbank Blvd. would not be able to transition onto the 101.) This would be my strong preference. If it is inconvenient to enter the 101 freeway if you get on at Burbank, that's too bad...drive to Van Nuys Blvd or the next one west, if that is which way you are going. The current southbound connector road for the 101 is worth your life anyway, so few people I know transition that way if they are coming from this neighborhood. We have paved over enough wildlife habitat, we need to preserve what little we have. I have seen bald eagles nesting in that area, and there's a hawk that comes from there and sits in my big tree once in a while. I'd like to see them again.

Thank you for considering my recommendation.

Elizabeth Gay Lannon  
14831 McCormick St.  
Sherman Oaks, CA 91411  
818-905-9109  
glannon@ucla.edu



Sandra Garber  
<sanducgarb@yahoo.com>  
05/14/2008 09:12 AM

To eduardo\_agullar@dot.ca.gov  
cc  
bcc

Subject connector for 101 and 405 freeways

I am opposed to any construction that would impinge on the Sepulveda Dam Wildlife Reserve. What is the point of setting aside habitat for wildlife if we are going to build roads through it? California has lost 98% of its wetlands. Migratory birds have fewer and fewer places along their long journeys to stop to rest and feed. Humans, especially in Southern California, have inadequate open space where we can experience our connection with nature and therefore with ourselves. I believe that these things are more important than being able to drive places quickly.

Sincerely,  
Sandra Garber, 2405 S. Holt Av., Los Angeles, Ca. 90034



Snowdy Dodson  
<snowdy.dodson@csun.edu>

To eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov

cc

05/14/2008 02:37 PM

bcc

Subject: fest message

Hi- just testing your email for people to send responses to the Sepulveda Basin issue. I was told a message to you bounced.

Snowdy Dodson  
Library Technical Services  
Calif. State University, Northridge  
18111 Nordhoff St.  
Northridge, CA 91330  
818-677-6298

"What we're saying today is that you're either part of the solution or you're part of the problem." Eldridge Cleaver



Laura Debole  
<laura@matsunodeslgn.com  
>

05/14/2008 02:40 PM

To eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov

cc

bcc

Subject please don't put a freeway ramp

Please don't put a freeway ramp in the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve. That park is a haven for all kinds of wildlife, and I love running through Balboa Park in the early mornings, accompanied by a cacaphony of birds, and truly remarkable large bird fly overs. It can be breathtaking.

There is so little open space, so close to the city, for these animals to live in...we've encroached enough. There must be a better solution to the problem.

Sincerely

Laura Debole  
resident  
15131 Weddington Blvd.  
Sherman Oaks CA 91411

Laura Debole  
[laura@matsunodesign.com](mailto:laura@matsunodesign.com)  
818 247-4200



Manuel Carrera  
<mancarrera@sbcglobal.net>

05/14/2008 04:43 PM

To: eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov

cc

bcc

Subject: Fw: Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve

Manuel H. Carrera

----- Forwarded Message -----

From: Manuel Carrera <mancarrera@sbcglobal.net>

To: eduardo\_@dot.ca.gov

Sent: Wednesday, May 14, 2008 4:38:35 PM

Subject: Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve

It is inconceivable that the unique and irreplaceable Wildlife Reserve be partially paved over for more freeway on and off-ramps.

There is nothing else like the Reserve in the Valley certainly and the City probably. It is too special and precious to lose to more concrete for cars, regardless of the traffic problems.

I go there several times a week for exercise and relaxation. It is free and close to my home in Van Nuys.

In a city with so little open space and parks, it is simply unconscionable that it is under threat.

It is a place of beauty and tranquility in a frenzied city that desperately needs spiritual healing and solace.

**There must be a better way.**

We owe it to our children and their children to use our creativity and intelligence to leave them a legacy we can be proud of.

The only acceptable alternative is Alternative #1, but a no build alternative would be even better.

**PLEASE THINK PROGRESSIVELY AND IMAGINATIVELY BEFORE RENDERING A DECISION.**

Thank you!

Manuel H. Carrera



Delcylb9@aol.com  
05/14/2008 08:37 PM

To eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov  
cc delcy@earthlink.net  
bcc  
Subject Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Refuge

Dear Sir,

I Just wanted to let you know that I deeply care about the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve. It provides a green belt that is need for our great city. It is a home for may birds and animals and a safe place for migrating birds and it also helps by replenish the water table. The citizens of our city and visitors for around the world come to this place to have a an outdoor experience that is one of a kind. Any type of construction will threaten the genetic diversity of every living organism in the Sepulveda Basin. The Reserve is an oasis of nature and tranquility we citizens enjoy.

Caltrans proposes to build a new connector road from the southbound I-405 to the westbound US-101.

I am strongly opposed to alternatives 2 and 3 which would place an on-ramp and off-ramp in the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Refuge. I respectfully request that you support \* Alt. 1: A new connector from the southbound 405 to northbound 101. The Wildlife Reserve would remain intact. (Because there would be no freeway ramps in the Wildlife Reserve, vehicles entering the southbound 405 from Burbank Blvd. would not be able to transition onto the 101.)

Or \* No build alternative

Debra Carlson  
3048 Stevely Ave  
Long Beach Ca 90808

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Barbara Broide  
<bbroide@hotmail.com>  
05/14/2008 03:13 PM

To <eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov>  
cc  
bcc

Subject 405/101 project comments for record and consideration

Dear Mr. Aguilar,

I am unable to attend the public meeting to be held this evening at Beth Shalom Temple to discuss alternatives for the 405 south/101 west connector project. Those of us who regularly travel in the area are aware of the need for improvements in this area. However, those improvements should not come at the loss of land to the nearby Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve which is adjacent to this freeway interchange.

Alternative 1 seems to be the the only construction alternative that does not have a serious negative impacts on the Wildlife Reserve. Because of the intrusions into the Reserve from Alternatives 2 and 3, I must oppose them. The Reserve is a relatively small area "reserved" for the wildlife in the area. Most of the open space in the San Fernando Valley that could serve as rest areas for fly-over or wintering bird populations is now gone. This area serves a critical role in the series of layover locations for migrating birds across the state and west coast. Because of the loss of so many former habitats to development, each acre of this land is critical.

I strongly support Alternative 1. Traffic patterns suggest that a project is needed so it is difficult to support a "no project" alternative. However, if Alternative 1 cannot be selected for some reason, new alternatives other than numbers 2 and 3 are needed. It is inappropriate to place an on-ramp and off-ramp in the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Refuge. While the birds and other residents of the Reserve cannot register their comments, those of us who value it and who work to protect the natural environment around us in the face of large and crushing urban pressures around us, must speak and speak loudly. The intrusion of any new roadway improvements into the Reserve cannot be absorbed. The negative impacts are not acceptable.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Barbara Broide  
2001 Malcolm Avenue  
Los Angeles, CA 90025-6303  
[bbroide@hotmail.com](mailto:bbroide@hotmail.com)



Clea Bowdery  
<cleawb22@yahoo.com>  
05/14/2008 11:15 AM

To: eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov  
cc  
bcc  
Subject: Re: 101-405 Connector Road and the Wildlife Reserve

Dear Mr. Aguilar,

I will not be able to attend tonight's hearing regarding the options for the 101-405 connector road, but I wish to register a comment expressing my opposition to the two options presently under consideration that involve building the connector road across parts of the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve.

I believe it would be a great loss to harm or impinge upon the already-scarce habitat and sanctuary offered by this part of the Reserve, and as an amateur birder and naturalist, I can say it would be a great loss to the people who visit the Reserve as well.

Thank you very much for your time and attention.

Sincerely,

Clea Bowdery  
1445 6th Street, Apt 301  
Santa Monica, CA 90401



Del Williams  
<Del.Williams@csun.edu>  
05/13/2008 09:33 AM

To "eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov"  
<eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov>  
cc  
bcc

Subject Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve must be saved!

Dear Mr. Aguilar,

I am writing to ask you to help save the Wildlife Reserve. I strongly oppose alternatives 2 and 3 of the Caltrans proposal to build a new connector road which would place an on-ramp and off-ramp in the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Refuge. The only acceptable alternatives are alternative 1 or the no build alternative. Sepulveda Basin was built as a refuge for the families of the San Fernando Valley as well as the small animals that inhabit the area. In this world of growing pollution and global warming we need more Wildlife Reserves not fewer. Let's leave this in tact for our children and theirs. Thank you for listening and protecting the Reserve.

Delphia Williams



Donna Timlin  
<donnatimlin@sbcglobal.net>

05/13/2008 03:30 PM

To eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov

cc

bcc

Subject Sep. Basin Wildlife Area/405-Burbank Blvd remodel

Dear Mr. Aguilar,

I do not live in the area that you are interested in, but I do drive there and I also just walk and bird watch in the Wildlife Area, practice running in the Balboa Park complex.

I support keeping the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Area as it is. There are not enough urban habitat oases in Los Angeles and taking land here and there from it for roads defeats the purpose. Please do not cut into the Wildlife Area.

I am in favor of Alternate 1 or NO BUILD.

Thanks,  
Donna Timlin  
10539 Hillview Ave.  
Chatsworth, CA 91311  
818 341-9354



"Patti Shoupe"  
<chicadee@frazmtn.com>  
05/13/2008 12:23 PM

To <eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov>  
cc  
bcc  
Subject Connector 405 to 101

Please do not let Caltrans put the connector road through/in Sepulveda Wildlife Reserve.  
We have so few nice places like it now, and it would be ruined.  
Thank you,  
Mrs. Patricia Shoupe  
Member: San Fernando Audubon Soc.

FREE Emoticons for your email! [Click Here!](#)





"Patrick Santinello "  
<patrick@qprocorp.com>  
05/13/2008 08:02 AM

To <eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov>  
cc  
bcc  
Subject Sepulveda Basin

Please don't chooses alternatives 2 or 3 of the proposals to build a new connector road from the southbound I-405 to the westbound US-101. We want to protect as much of the wildlife preserve as possible. In such a large city we have lost too many links to the natural beauty of our area. It is time to start thinking about how to keep such protections in place.

Sincerely.....

Patrick Santinello  
14001 Palawan Way  
Marina Del Rey, CA 90292



"Phil P."  
<philszone59@yahoo.com>  
05/13/2008 09:23 PM

To eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov  
cc  
bcc

Subject NO FREEWAY EXPANSION PLEASE IN THE SEPULVEDA  
BASIN WILDLIFE RESERVE!

Dear Mr Aguilar,

the freeway expansion is crazy.  
Please find an alternate solution.  
Freeways do not belong in our Sepulveda Wildlife Basin.

Thank you.

Philip Parenteau  
5447 Zelzah Ave 132  
Encino, CA 91316  
8183445914



Carolyn Oppenheimer  
<carolopp@sbcglobal.net>  
05/13/2008 10:58 AM

To eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov  
cc  
bcc

Subject Opposition to encroachment through Wildlife Area

Dear Mr. Aguilar

I very much want to urge that you do not encroach upon any section of the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve in your proposed freeway interchange project. I am the chairperson of the Sepulveda Basin Environmental Education Program for the San Fernando Valley Audubon Society. Each year we bring out 30 or more busloads of L.A. Unified School District children to view and learn about the needs of wildlife and the value of undeveloped nature habitat.

This Wildlife Reserve is a valuable asset to the city, which is simply irreplaceable. There is no place else to move this program to. The encroachment of a freeway ramp will ruin the experience that we provide on these field trips and deprive these inner city children of a valuable lesson about how man can preserve nature.

I understand that it is expedient to build on an area that looks "empty". I assure you this area is not "empty". It is used heavily by thousand of migratory birds and people who appreciate their ability to exist. The very meaning of the name of the place as a "reserve" means that it is intended to be reserved for wildlife. There is no exception for "unless we want to build a freeway here".

I also understand that the area does not quite compare with nature reserves that are far more spectacular in far away locations like our State and National Parks. It is the accessibility to the residents of Los Angeles that makes it special. Also, one should concenter that it is still maturing as a natural habitat every year that it is left undisturbed.

Please choose Option 1 or the "No Build" option for your freeway improvement project. Let us have one small piece of land that is truly reserved for wildlife in the San Fernando Valley.

Carolyn Oppenheimer  
Sepulveda Basin Environmental Education, Chairperson  
San Fernando Valley Audubon  
8933 Darby Ave , Northridge, CA 91325  
818-885-7493



peggy ogata  
<ppogata@yahoo.com>  
05/13/2008 08:06 PM

To eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov  
cc  
bcc  
Subject 405 Buildout

I am writing this letter to tell you that the only alternative for the 405/101 buildout is

Alt. 1 (OK): A new connector from the southbound 405 to northbound 101.  
The Wildlife Reserve would remain intact. (Because there would be no  
freeway ramps in the Wildlife Reserve, vehicles entering the southbound 405  
from Burbank Blvd. would not be able to transition onto the 101.)

The small amount of wildlife habitat in Southern California needs to be protected.

Peggy Ogata  
2002 Mentone Avenue  
Pasadena CA 91103

>  
>  
> Hello Mr. Longcore,  
> The project biologist Maureen Doyle will email you electronic  
> copies  
> of the above-mentioned items.  
> I also mentioned to Maureen your disappointment with the  
> Caltrans  
> compilation bioacoustics data analysis.  
> She would love to get your input on it.  
> Anyway, look out for the requested items.  
>  
> Maureen, please send the items to both of Mr. Longcore's emails.  
> Thanks.  
> <caltrans\_birds\_10-7-2007b.pdf>  
>  
>

> Best regards,  
> Travis  
>  
>  
> ...  
> Travis Longcore, Ph.D.  
> Science Director, The Urban Wildlands Group  
> Director of Urban Ecological Research, USC Center for Sustainable  
> Cities  
> Lecturer, UCIA Institute of the Environment  
> longcore@urbanwildlands.org  
> (310) 247-9719

> On May 12, 2008, at 4:51 PM, Maureen Doyle wrote:

>  
> Mr. Longcore,  
>  
> Attached is the Bioacoustics Study.

>  
> Maureen Doyle  
> Environmental Planner NS  
> D7 Environmental Planning  
> Office: 213-897-0404  
> Fax: 213-897-0685

> Eduardo  
> Aguilar/D07/Caltrans/CAGov

> To  
> 05/12/2008 03:17 PM  
> longcore@urbanwildlands.org,

longcore@usc.edu

> cc  
>  
> CAGov@DOT

Maureen  
Doyle/D07/Caltrans/

> Subject  
> Bioacoustics

405/101 NESR and  
Study



Travis Longcore  
<longcore@usc.edu>  
Sent by: longcore@usc.edu

05/13/2008 05:58 PM

To Eduardo Aguilar <eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov>  
cc  
bcc  
Subject Re: 405/101 NESR and Bioacoustics Study

Thanks for trying. Please mail to:

Travis Longcore  
P.O. Box 24020  
Los Angeles, CA 90024-0020

On May 13, 2008, at 6:16 AM, Eduardo Aguilar wrote:

> Mr. Longcore, we were for the better half of yesterday.  
> The NESR is too big for either of your email servers.  
>  
> If you give us your snail mail address, we can snail mail a hard  
> copy to  
> you.  
> Or, we can provide a hard copy to you tomorrow at the public hearing.  
>  
> Maureen, can you prepare a hard copy?

>  
>  
>  
>  
> Travis Longcore  
> <longcore@usc.edu>  
>> To  
> Sent by: Maureen Doyle  
> longcore@usc.edu <maureen\_doyle@dot.ca.gov>  
> cc  
> Eduardo Aguilar  
> 05/12/2008 06:58 <eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov>  
> PM  
> Subject Re: 405/101 NESR and  
> Bioacoustics Study

>  
>  
>  
>  
>  
>  
>  
>  
>  
>  
>  
> Thanks, I already have this document, would it be possible to get  
> the NESR  
> for the 405/101 connector?  
>



BLeon39086@aol.com  
05/13/2008 11:51 AM

To eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov  
cc  
bcc  
Subject Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve

I want to let you know that putting a freeway on and off ramp through the Sepulveda Basin Reserve is totally and absolutely unacceptable. This is a beautiful and tranquil place with much wildlife. I consider alternatives 2 and 3 totally unacceptable. Alternative 1 is the only acceptable solution to me.

Thank you!

Betty M. Leonard  
Encino, CA

Wondering what's for Dinner Tonight? [Get new twists on family favorites at AOL Food.](#)



Courtney Lamb  
<cglamb@earthlink.net>  
05/13/2008 03:31 PM

To eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov  
cc  
bcc

Subject Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Refuge: opposed to Alternatives 2  
and 3

Hello,

I'm writing in regards to the Build Alternatives on the table for the new connector road from I-405S to US-101W.

Alternatives 2 and 3 would impact the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Refuge by placing ramps in them, which would be a terrible infringement on some of the rare open wildlife space in the greater Los Angeles area. My husband and I frequent Sepulveda Basin for the birding opportunities there and are appalled at the idea that even this space might be violated.

Please consider either Alternative 1 or the No-Build alternative for the connector road and leave the Wildlife Refuge intact for people from all over SoCal to use and enjoy.

Thanks very much for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Courtney Lamb  
4201 Duquesne Ave #4  
Culver City CA 90232  
310-842-3734



"JODI HOTCHKISS"  
 <JODI.HOTCHKISS@pacific  
 capitalbank.com>  
 05/13/2008 04:51 PM

To: eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov  
 cc:  
 bcc:  
 Subject: Sepulveda Basin

Please do not build the freeway on and off ramp on part of the Sepulveda Basin... The San Fernando Valley has hardly any more wildlife areas if any at all besides this one and we all greatly value the wildlife... No on this...it is unacceptable...  
 Thanks Jodi H.

Jodi Hotchkiss  
 30343 Canwood St. Ste. 100  
 Agoura Hills, CA 91301  
 Direct (818)-865 3280  
 Fax (818)-865-3232

\*\*\*\*\*  
 This e-mail is intended only for the use of the individual or entity to which it is addressed and may contain information which is privileged, confidential, and exempt from disclosure under applicable law. If you are not the intended recipient, or an employee or agent of the intended recipient, you are hereby notified that any dissemination, distribution, or copying of this communication is strictly prohibited. If you have received this communication in error please notify us immediately by replying to postmaster@pcbancorp.com.  
 \*\*\*\*\*



Rachael Gordon  
<rachael.gordon@csun.edu>  
05/13/2008 08:22 AM

To eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov  
cc  
bcc  
Subject Wildlife Resere

Dear Mr. Aguilar,

I've lived in the San Fernando Valley for 29 years. I'm concerned about Caltrans proposal to build new freeway ramps through the Wildlife Reserve. We need to save what we can for our children and grandchildren. Please see what you can do to push alternate #1 or #4 so no ramps go through the Reserve.

Thank you,

Rachael Gordon  
24516 Starlight Ln  
West Hills

--

---

Rachael J. Gordon  
Library Technical Services  
818-667-2265



"Karin Duran Ph.D"  
<karin.duran@csun.edu>  
05/13/2008 08:20 AM

To eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov  
cc  
bcc  
Subject Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve

I am strongly opposed to destruction in any form of the Wildlife Reserve  
so I favor Alternative 1 which would keep the reserve intact.  
Karin Duran

--

Karin Durán. Ph.D.  
Librarian  
Oviatt Library  
CSU Northridge  
18111 Nordhoff Street  
Northridge, CA 91330-8327  
818-677-2501  
karin.duran@csun.edu



Polly-DSL  
<pollychu@sbcglobal.net>  
05/13/2008 08:44 PM

To <eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov>  
cc  
bcc  
Subject Please preserve Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve

Dear Mr. Aguilar and colleagues,

I am writing to comment on the proposed new connector road from the southbound I-405 to the westbound US-101 because I feel strongly that it is important to protect the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve. We are fortunate to have such a beautiful natural area here in the Los Angeles area which provides a refuge not only to the many beautiful and even majestic birds and other creatures which live or visit there, but also to the people in this city. To have such a refuge is not only a gift, but also a tremendous asset in our urban life.

I am strongly opposed to alternatives 2 and 3, which would place an on-ramp and off-ramp in the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Refuge. The only acceptable choices currently proposed would be alternative 1 or the no build alternative.

Thank you very much for your time and consideration of this important matter.

Sincerely,  
Polly Chu



MEBTeach@aol.com  
05/13/2008 06:43 PM

To eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov  
cc  
bcc

Subject Wildlife Reserve ad the 405

Building and extending the 405 through the Wildlife Reserve and the Sepulveda Basin is totally unacceptable. I am a teacher and take a class through there every year as well as go there myself for the peace and tranquility that it offers in this maddening world of ours. Please keep this area free for our wildlife and people without benefit of traffic and fumes from vehicles.

Marie Berry

Wondering what's for Dinner Tonight? [Get new twists on family favorites at AOL Food.](#)

Topanga, CA 90290



robandjeanne@earthlink.net

05/13/2008 02:53 PM

Please respond to  
robandjeanne@earthlink.net

To eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov

cc

bcc

Subject proposed offramp at Sepulveda Basin to take place

Dear Mr. Aguilar,

Hello, my name is Jeanne Dancs Arthur and my husband and I are Los Angeles County residents, who are both very concerned about the proposal to build an offramp at the Sepulveda Basin, right at the wildlife refuge.

I was born not far from that area in 1946, and grew up hearing stories from my parents about how, in 1943, they would drive up to Mullholland Highway, above Encino and look down at the San Fernando Valley at Sunset. The air, then, they say was fragrant with orange and lemon blossoms in the springtime, and there were very few lights below. Most the Valley at that time was ranches or undeveloped.

Now, I'm a docent with a non-profit organization (9 years with The Children's Nature Institute), and I have the wonderful opportunity to introduce the youngest of Los Angeles' children, their parents and teachers to the natural areas of Los Angeles County. I see the importance that nature has in maintaining the mental and physical balance of people of all ages despite the tremendous pressure and stress that come from living in Los Angeles County. Although an offramp, and easing congestion are important considerations, I feel the cost is too great to put an offramp at this very beautiful and much-utilized natural treasure of the San Fernando Valley.

I urge you do do what you can to ensure this area remain a place where people of all ages and walks of life can renew themselves. It would also be a gift to wildlife that is in need of our kindly stewardship now. Everyone would win.

Although the traffic congestion in Los Angeles County is a concern to us all, more and more, with fuel shortages and pollution, it will be desirable for metropolitan areas to have great public transportation. In the coming decades, the way of life that has defined Los Angeles: 1 car for every adult (!) will be a thing of the past. We want to learn more sustainable ways of living together, for the sake of us all. Although another offramp is a quick fix, it would cost us dearly in terms of quality of living in the San Fernando Valley and adjacent areas. My husband and I often visit the Sepulveda Wildlife Basin, although we live about 40 minutes away. Our relatives live close to the Basin and the area is a joy for their entire family. Their young children will soon be riding bikes there and learning about the migrating birds that grace our Valley each year.

I apologize for writing such a long letter to you, in advance, and hope you understand that it is because this issue is so important to me, personally, and to our wonderful community in the San Fernando Valley.

Thanks for the good work you do. If there is anything more I can do to help protect this precious resource, please don't hesitate to ask me.

Sincerely yours,  
Jeanne Dancs Arthur (Mrs. Robert Arthur)  
310 455-0027



margitahlin@aol.com  
05/13/2008 08:22 AM

To eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov  
cc  
bcc  
Subject Sepulveda Basin

Dear Sir:

Please vote to use ALTERNATIVE #1 for the proposed freeway bypass lane in Sepulveda Basin.

As a naturalist that teaches at the Basin every year, I see dozens of bird species find food and shelter at the Basin. They have NO WHERE ELSE to go. We've decimated their habitat and wetlands. Please remember what Emily Dickinson wrote about birds:

"I hope you love birds too. It is economical. It saves going to Heaven."

Please save the birds, and you too will go to Heaven.

- Margit Ahlin  
Glendale, CA  
(818) 502-0902

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Cody Westheimer  
<codymusic@mac.com>  
05/12/2008 11:36 PM

To eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov  
cc  
bcc  
Subject Sepulveda Wildlife Preserve

Dear Mr Aguilar:

Building a free ramp through Sepulveda Wildlife Preserve is absolutely unacceptable. I can't imagine the public would tolerate destroying one of the few natural areas where people (and especially children) can learn about birds, other wildlife and their habitat. I strongly encourage you to not build or to go with Alternative 1 - both of which leave our favorite place in the LA area completely intact.

Please view the following video so you can see for yourself how amazing this spot is, and what Caltrans would potentially be destroying: <http://youtube.com/watch?v=cTgMtIqsH48>

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Cody Westheimer  
213-709-5643



"Walter Lamb"  
<walter.lamb@earthlink.net>  
05/12/2008 11:08 PM

To <eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov>  
cc  
bcc  
Subject I STRONGLY oppose Alternatives 2 and 3 for the I-405/101  
Connector

Dear Mr. Aguilar,

I am not an environmental activist and I understand the practicality of traffic mitigation. However, as a mainstream southern california resident, it is abundantly clear that we have already been wildly irresponsible with our few remaining open spaces. No where are we tearing down off-ramps to make more room for parks. It is a one-way street that is leading us to a bleak quality of life and it has to stop.

I urge Caltrans to consider no building at all, or to adopt Alternative 1, which would not negatively impact the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Preserve.

Regards,

Walter Lamb  
Culver City



"Dennis & Heather  
Hagen-Smith"  
<hagensmith@gmail.com>  
05/12/2008 11:04 PM

To eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov  
cc  
bcc  
Subject Sepulveda Wildlife Area

Mr. Aguilar,

I will not be able to attend the public hearing this week, but I would like voice strong opposition to alternatives numbers 2 and 3 that are on the table that would jeopardize the wildlife refuge in the Sepulveda basin. My family and I have lived in the San Fernando Valley for over 40 years.

In addition, I teach public school at a Title I campus located in North Hollywood (Toluca Lake E.). Each year our students take field trips to the wildlife area. This trip provides a remarkable experience that these youngsters will remember for their entire lives. Please do not allow this amazing site to be jeopardized!

We would all hate to see this last space in the middle of the Valley for wildlife refuge disturbed forever. Please pass along our concerns as part of your public hearing process.

Thank you.

Gary S. Pancer



"Marie Gaworecki"  
<marie.gaworecki@gmail.com>

05/12/2008 10:36 PM

To eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov

cc

bcc

Subject Don't hurt our Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Refuge!

In regards to your proposition to build a new connector road from southbound I-405 to westbound US-101, I am *vehemently* opposed to Alternative #2 and Alternative #3, both of which would place an on-ramp and off-ramp in the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Refuge.

**The ONLY acceptable alternatives are Alternative #1 or the No Build Alternative.**

This wildlife reserve is an oasis of nature and tranquility whose importance is beyond words. I know I speak for countless numbers of people when I say for you to harm *any* part of it would break my heart. You would be destroying a desperately needed getaway spot for the thousands who live nearby and enjoy it regularly. Every time I go there, I see countless families, couples, children and solo individuals basking in this invaluable natural gem that we're lucky enough to have in the stressful concrete jungle that is LA.

This city is so void of natural places of beauty. PLEASE don't take away our one refuge and source of mental serenity! There are already so many species being ruthlessly destroyed, due to man. Please don't add the wildlife of the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve to that list!

Thank you,  
Marie Gaworecki



"Pancer, Gary"  
<gary.pancer@sdma.com>  
05/12/2008 10:51 PM

To <eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov>  
cc  
bcc

Subject 405/101 OPPOSITION to Alternatives 2 & 3

Mr. Aguilar,

I will not be able to attend the public hearing this week, but I would like voice strong opposition to alternatives numbers 2 and 3 that are on the table that would jeopardize the wildlife refuge in the Sepulveda basin. I lived in the San Fernando Valley for over 40 years between 1962- 2004. I would hate to see this last space in the middle of the Valley for wildlife refuge disturbed forever. I now live in Ventura County and most definitely need the assistance of improved freeway access in this area for my daily commute to Downtown LA. However, only option 1 provides an alternative that is acceptable. Please pass along my comments as part of your public hearing process.

Thank you.

**Gary S. Pancer**

**SEDGWICK, DETERT, MORAN & ARNOLD LLP**

801 S. Figueroa Street, 18th Floor

Los Angeles, CA 90017-5556

Tel: 213.426.6900

Fax: 213.426.6921

[Gary.Pancer@sdma.com](mailto:Gary.Pancer@sdma.com)

[www.sdma.com](http://www.sdma.com)

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GoofysKld@bbl.com  
05/03/2008 12:23 PM

To: eduardo\_aguitar@dot.ca.gov  
cc:  
bcc:  
Subject: 405 / 101 Freeway Interchange Proposals

Hello:

I would like to express my opinion regarding the various proposals for the 405 / 101 Freeway Interchange.

There are not enough places around for wild animals to seek refuge. I feel that the Wildlife Reserve should be left alone.

Please choose alternative #1, which would allow the Wildlife Refuge to remain intact. Although people entering the southbound Burbank Blvd. onramp would no longer be able to merge onto to 101, this is really the best solution.

Thank you,

Tanya Nelson

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"Bette Simons"  
<Bettesimons@att.net>  
05/02/2008 03:39 PM

To <eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov>  
cc  
bcc  
Subject Caltrans and our environment

**I am willing to endure slow traffic due to over population and lack of good public transportation.**

**I am not willing to see anything done to harm the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve.**

**I work with volunteers to teach young school children how precious our urban vegetation and wildlife is. Maybe we should teach CAI trans as well.**



"Alan and Cindy Epstein "  
<aandcepstein@hotmail.com  
>

05/02/2008 01:54 PM

To <eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov>

cc

bcc

Subject Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve

Dear Mr. Aguilar,

We would like to voice our opinion against proposals (2) and (3) concerning a new connector between the southbound 405 and the northbound 101 freeways. We certainly understand the delays that sometimes occur at that transition point. However, we do not want any impingement on the wildlife reserve. It is a welcome respite in a sea of concrete, etc. We would prefer either option (1), [even though it would impinge upon those entering the 405 southbound at Burbank Blvd. from accessing the 101 northbound], or option (4) [no changes].

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Alan and Cindy Epstein  
Northridge, CA

April 23, 2008

Mr. Ronald J. Kosinski, Deputy District Director *RK*  
California Department of Transportation  
Division of Environmental Planning  
100 S. Main Street, Suite MS 16A  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

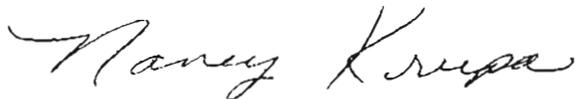
Re: Southbound 405 to 101 Connector Improvement Project

Dear Mr Kosinski,

After reviewing descriptions of the various alternatives for improving the connector from southbound 405 to 101, it's clear to me **the best option is number one**. Beside being the most cost effective option, it also avoids taking land from the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Refuge in the Sepulveda Flood Control Basin, which is a very important community asset. In my opinion the loss of access from Burbank Boulevard to the U.S.-101 is a plus for this option – not a minus. It will greatly reduce severe traffic congestion that currently exists on Burbank Blvd at the 405 by moving 101 access traffic to various other locations.

Thank you for providing this opportunity for public review and comments.

Sincerely,



Nancy Krupa  
14676 Deervale Place  
Sherman Oaks, CA

> various alternatives for improving the connector from the southbound I 405  
> to the westbound US-101.

>

>

>

> Robert W. Farn  
> 2512 Aiken Avenue

> Los Angeles CA 90064-3306

>

Downloading it will be most adequate. Thank you.

-rwp





"heirs@netzero.net"  
<heirs@netzero.net>  
04/23/2008 11:35 AM

To: eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov  
cc  
bcc  
Subject: 405 Fwy and 101 Fwy

Dear Mr. Aguilar,

My family is opposed to any new construction within the wildlife preserve area.

Less concrete; more green space makes sense.

Patricia Heirs



"Pixie Klemic"  
<pklemic@roadrunner.com>  
04/22/2008 03:57 PM

To <eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov>  
cc  
bcc  
Subject Draft Environmental Assessment/Initial Study (DEA/IS) -  
Comments

Dear Mr. Aguilar,

Thank you for the DVD copy of the **Draft Environmental Assessment/Initial Study (DEA/IS) on various alternatives for improving the connector from the southbound I-405 to the westbound US-101**. I have reviewed the options and wanted to give you my opinion.

Even though it will personally inconvenience me (as a [currently] frequent driver from the 405 S to the 101 E), I **prefer OPTION 1**. As I wrote before, the Sepulveda Wildlife Reserve is already so very small, any intrusion would be devastating to the wildlife there and hence our enjoyment of one of the few local "wild" areas we have that are easily accessible.

Thank you for your concern and interest in asking for our (the public) input.

Sincerely,

Priscilla Klemic  
Sherman Oaks



"Dexter"  
<pinicola@earthlink.net>  
04/19/2008 12:57 PM

To <eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov>  
cc  
bcc  
Subject 405-101 Interchange alternatives

Mr. Aguilar:

As a resident of the San Fernando Valley, and a board member and past president of the Los Angeles Audubon Society, I would like to register my strong opposition to alternatives 2 and 3 of the projected reconstruction of the 101-405 interchange. These alternatives would be unacceptably invasive of the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Area. It would severely threaten the wildlife in the area, while consuming valuable open space. This rare wildlife resource, visited by thousands of valley residents every year, would be irreperably damaged.

For the many people who love and cherish the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Area, only the first alternative, or the no build alternative, would be acceptable.

Dexter Kelly  
Woodland Hills



"James Quinn"  
<jquinn6@socal.rr.com>  
04/18/2008 10:31 PM

To <eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov>  
cc  
bcc  
Subject 405/101 Interchange

I would endorse Alternative 1, or Alternative 4. Neither of these would adversely impact the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Preserve, one of the few such wildlife sanctuaries remaining in this urban area.

James D. Quinn  
26313 Green Terrace Drive  
Newhall, CA 91321-1324  
Member San Fernando Valley Audubon Society



"Paulson"  
<dpaulson@socal.rr.com>  
04/19/2008 06:21 PM

To <eduardo.aguilar@dot.ca.gov>  
cc  
bcc  
Subject 405-101 connector

I am writing to you as a concerned citizen, community member and educator. Any proposal for the 405-101 connector that affects the Sulpeveda Basin Wildlife Reserve is completely unacceptable. This is one of the few remaining unspoiled areas for urban wildlife. As an educator, I have taken my students to the Reserve for many years. They see so many amazing things there and grow to truly appreciate the variety of wildlife this area supports. This is also an urban oasis for the people of the San Fernando Valley. Please do whatever you can to spare this beautiful gem.

Thank you,  
Cathy Paulson



"Fox Conner"  
<foxconner@verizon.net>  
04/18/2008 10:05 AM

To <eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov>  
cc  
bcc

Subject New Connector from the Southbound 405 to Westbound  
101

Caltran

I oppose any plan to "upgrade" the connector from the southbound 405 freeway to the westbound 101 freeway which would pass thru the Sepulveda Basin west of the dam thru a wild area. Chopping into the Basin for a west-of-the dam connector is construction money ill spent. An upgraded connector east of the dam - maybe, but west of the dam, **NO!** There is a wild area with forest and fields and a wild pond without equal in the Valley. Keep it that way, more concrete isn't everything.

April 18, 2008

Fox Conner



"Walker, Daniel"  
<daniel.walker2@boeing.com  
>

04/16/2008 12:28 AM

To "Judy Gish" <judy\_gish@dot.ca.gov>,  
<Eduardo\_Aguilar@dot.ca.gov>

cc

bcc

Subject Official comments: 101-405 Connector Project

Dear Ronald Kosinski, Deputy District Director, Division of Environmental  
Planning, CalTrans;

CC: July Gish, Eduardo Aguilar

Subject: EA / IS Proposed improvements to the connector from the  
southbound San Diego Freeway (I-405) to the westbound Ventura Freeway  
(U.S. 101)

After reviewing the draft EA/IS, we support Alternative 3 because it  
appears to provide the best overall improved connection between south  
405 and west 101 freeway with minimum negative impact on street traffic  
during/after construction. This interchange 101/405 is one of the  
busiest in the whole USA and clearly needs to be upgraded as much as  
feasible. The impact of the 50 ft. encroachment onto the Supulveda  
Basin Wildlife Refuge appears quite small and almost negligible (only  
about 1.3% of total area affected), and it can be easily mitigated.  
Alternative 3 (unlike 1) would not cause loss of access to the 101 from  
Burbank Blvd. The No-Build Option is the worst choice.

Thanks,  
Daniel and Lucia Walker  
7416 West 82nd Street  
Los Angeles, CA 90045



Maritsa Darman  
<maritsadarman27@hotmail.com>

05/18/2008 12:56 PM

To <eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov>

cc

bcc

Subject HELP SAVE SEPULVEDA BASIN WILDLIFE RESERVE

Dear Mr. Eduardo Aguilar,

I am writing to you in concern of plans to build a connection between the 101 and 405. CalTRANS has suggested three alternatives to this project and I would like to say that I am firmly against the second and third methods because they are endangering our fragile Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve.

Alternative one would provide a connector from the southbound 405 to northbound 101. The Wildlife Reserve would remain intact. (Because there would be no freeway ramps in the Wildlife Reserve, vehicles entering the southbound 405 from Burbank Blvd. would not be able to transition onto the 101.)

I am a big supporter of both causes to enrich and sustain our environment and to also build transportation systems for the good of the public, however, scientists are strongly suggestive that encroachment on an already fragile environmental systems is a irreversible and detrimental.

People can really learn to have it all with a little care and consideration and I believe that beauty of the natural kind is one that will be pleasing to humans in all it's essential benefits. The benefits I speak of is something we can all understand and it's that we would like our children, the future, to enjoy the bounties of nature just as we would like them to enjoy clean air, water, non contaminantated lakes and streams.

Thank you for your consideration on this important topic.

Maritsa Darman  
10063 Mountair Ave Apt 3  
Tujunga, CA 91042  
818-618-7997

---

E-mail for the greater good. [Join the i'm Initiative from Microsoft.](#)

May 18, 2008

Ronald J. Kosinski – Deputy District Director *RJK*  
Division of Environmental Planning  
Ca. Dept. of Transportation – District 7  
100 S. Main St., MS 16A  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Re: 405 / 101 interchange improvement proposals

Mr. Kosinski:

I am strongly opposed to Alternatives 2 + 3.

During this public comment period you have already been made aware of the many sensitive species that will be impacted, the habitats that will be destroyed, and the human uses that will be significantly altered in a negative fashion. Now I would like to bring to your attention that Alternatives 2 + 3 would not merely extinguish organisms, ecosystems, and societal values (to temporarily resolve what amounts to no more than a public nuisance), but they would extinguish a biological and cultural process.

The original core of the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Area is the 50-60 acres west of the 405, north of Burbank Boulevard, east of Haskell Creek, and south of the Archery Range. This is the only area within the Sepulveda Basin that is officially designated as “a wildlife management area” by a Lease and Operating Agreement between the City of Los Angeles and the State of California Department of Fish and Game (effective September 17, 1985). This area, and an additional 60-70 acres (total combined acreage of 120) directly south of Burbank Boulevard are the only areas within the Sepulveda Basin that are designated as “a wildlife management area” in the current Sepulveda Basin Master Plan (March 1981). Additional adjacent areas within the Sepulveda Basin have been added to this designation within more recent years.

The Sublease between the City and the State includes the following words under the heading Purpose and Use: “The leased premises and every part thereof shall be used only for wildlife habitat development and recreation activities not incompatible thereto.”

The previous 2 paragraphs point out the significance of the project area (and seem to rule out Alternatives 2 + 3) in both physical and symbolic terms. This is the first area to be so designated, and therefore the first area to be planned, planted, weeded, cared for, and used (specifically and only) for nature values, study, and appreciation.

Therefore, the plants in this area have had the longest period of time to become established, mature, adapt to one another and the conditions, and evolve into a complex of interactive mini ecosystems that are still growing, changing, and evolving. When the Wildlife Lake was put in, the entire area (50 acres) was graded and left barren for several months. As the native plants were introduced, and non-natives removed, a different palette of birds has used this area. Every year, as these systems change, new species find their way here. And, for the last 20 years, all of these changes have been based upon natural laws – with a little help from a wide community of human volunteers.

Permanently removing 10-20 percent of this core area (and disturbing a much greater area during construction) would have significant direct impacts on the entire existing Wildlife Area and all future evolutionary changes therein. The wide variety of habitats that we have established is directly responsible for the wide variety of species seen. And, each individual component of the Wildlife Area is integral to the health and stability of the Area as a whole. Alternatives 2 + 3 would remove nearly all of the most mature Live Oaks within the Wildlife Area and more than 50% of the core grassland area.

But, this is not just about Biology, Ecology, or Habitat Restoration. It is also about the cultural evolution that has taken place there. During the last 30 years we have had more than 10,000 people join San Fernando Valley Audubon Society sponsored bird walks, environmental education programs, nature festivals, trash cleanups, weeding projects, and more. Many of those people have been so impressed that they themselves have become dedicated volunteers, docents, and active environmentalists. It has changed their lives ! They have evolved ! They have become better individuals, and better citizens. And this process is still in its infancy. The Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Area is a biological and cultural classroom where wildlife can thrive and humans can be inspired. It is a place where nature was given a second chance and where people are given a purpose. It is a process in itself – with benefits to all. Please do not remove this important part of the body and soul of the San Fernando Valley.

Sincerely,



Kris Ohlenkamp  
30638 Tick Canyon Road  
Canyon Country, CA 91387  
(661) 299-6986



MMSigman@aol.com  
05/18/2008 07:39 AM

To eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov  
cc  
bcc  
Subject off and on ramps

Dear Sir:

As a birder, I would hope the connecting ramps between the southbound I-405 and the westbound U.S.-101 that are to be built don't impinge on the wildlife areas of the Sepulveda Basin.

Sincerely,  
Mel Sigman, M.D.

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Malka Tasoff  
<malka@tasoff.com>  
05/18/2008 12:18 PM

To <eduardo.aguilar@dot.ca.gov>  
cc  
bcc

Subject: Wild Life reserve - do not destroy it, please!

Mr. Ronald Kosinski, Deputy District Director;  
California Department of Transportation; Division of  
Environmental Planning (405/101 Connector); 100 S.  
Main Street ^ Mail Stop 16A; Los Angeles , CA 90012 .

Dear Mr. Kosinski,

We greatly value the Wildlife Reserve and consider alternatives 2 and 3 totally unacceptable. We would like to keep the Reserve the oasis of nature and tranquility we enjoy. Alternative 1 and the No build alternative, (A new connector from the southbound 405 to northbound 101 - keeping the Wildlife Reserve intact, even though vehicles entering the southbound 405 from Burbank Blvd. would not be able to transition onto the 101) are the only acceptable alternatives.

Malka Tasoff  
Educator/Teacher/Magnet Coordinator

May 18, 2008

To: Mr. Ronald Kosinski   
Deputy District Director; California Department of Transportation  
Division of Environmental Planning (1405/101 Connector)  
100 S. Main Street - Mail Stop 16A; Los Angeles, CA 90012.

Dear Mr. Kosinski

I am typing this because I hurt my hand a few years ago and my handwriting is very bad.

I go to the Sepulveda Wildlife Basin often to get away from the stress of the city. I am sending you this letter because I want to voice my disapproval of Alternatives #2 and #3 to build a ramp into the Sepulveda Wildlife Reserve. We need a place like the Reserve where people of all ages can go to experience wildlife and so does the Wildlife need the reserve. Many of the birds come from around the world and their places to live during a certain season are shrinking. I feel that the building process and the end result being the ramp would disturb these creatures while nesting and also diminish the food, like fish, toads etc., that they depend upon. They would have to find another place to rest and live.

The Audubon Society takes about 3,000 school children a year to the reserve to help them get in touch with nature. Please reconsider your idea to build in the reserve.

**I do approve of the Alternative #1 proposal.** I went to the hearing and I noticed that somebody was speaking for the business community in the San Fernando Valley. They mentioned they preferred Alternative #1, also.

I hope you will take <sup>my</sup> ~~my~~ letter seriously.

Sincerely,



Elaine Trogman  
(818) 780-8345  
6709 Calhoun Ave.  
Van Nuys, CA 91405



JWWLA@aol.com  
05/18/2008 12:29 PM

To eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov  
cc  
bcc  
Subject New 405-101 connector

I would like to make it known to you and your department that any construction that would negatively impact the wildlife habitat in the Sepulveda Basin would be completely unacceptable to myself and my family ( 4 registered voters). With green areas shrinking constantly in and around our cities and our children growing up more and more removed from the natural world, the Sepulveda Basin represents a priceless resource for the residents of Los Angeles county. On that note only alternatives #1 and #4 (no build) would be acceptable.

Sincerely,  
James W. Walters DVM

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Pat Bates  
<PBates@lghcpa.com>  
05/19/2008 09:31 AM

To "eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov"  
<eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov>  
cc "Walton, Duffy E" <duffy.walton@alcoa.com>  
bcc

Subject Proposed connector - I 405 South to 101 North

Dear Mr. Aguilar,

Regarding the proposed Connector Project from the southbound I-405 to the westbound 101:

I urge Caltrans to adopt either Alternative 1 or the No Build Alternative for this project. I strongly oppose alternatives 2 and 3 because they would disturb the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve.

The Wildlife Reserve is a treasure of the San Fernando Valley because of its beauty and tranquility, because it is an escape from the noise and stress of our very urban area. I run or walk in the area virtually every day. The quality of life of the many people, plants, and wildlife which use and live in the preserve would be very negatively impacted by building in this area.

I would further like to urge Caltrans to contemplate running a train/monorail/whatever along the 405 from the Santa Clarita Valley to Long Beach. In case no one has noticed, the 405 is usually a parking lot, and adding more lanes, more connectors, etc. will simply turn it into a bigger parking lot. It is painful to imagine the amount of gasoline that is burned, pollution that is created by these thousands of creeping cars, and the time that is wasted by commuters.

Sincerely,

Patricia Bates

PATRICIA L. BATES, CPA  
LODGEN LACHER GOLDITCH SARDI  
SAUNDERS & HOWARD, LLP  
16530 VENTURA BLVD. STE. 305  
ENCINO, CA 91436  
(818) 783-0570 FAX (818) 783-7902

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"heldi gott"  
<heidigott@gmail.com>  
05/19/2008 09:19 PM

To eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov  
cc  
bcc  
Subject No to freeway Alternatives 2 and 3

Dear Mr. Aguilar and the good people at the Department of Transportation,

Although I value the movement of traffic on our congested freeways I am asking that you not consider the Alternative 2 or 3 for the 405/101 interchange that is being proposed. As a native to the valley I value and take pride in our ability to have maintained as much green space in Los Angeles as we have. What is extremely important though within this greenspace is the habitat that it provides to the birds who migrate through here each year. The waterway that the Sepulveda Wildlife Reserve is a prime piece of real estate for the countless animals that make this wetland home despite that fact that is amazingly exists right next to a busy freeway.

The wetlands, additionally provide a vital educational opportunity for the citizens of Los Angeles, including my 5th grade students who visited the reserve earlier this year. They were amazed by what they saw there and would never otherwise have been able to experience such close encounters with birds that they have only seen in books. These LAUSD school kids found something within our city limits that gave them a look into the greater natural world. It allowed them to see beyond our built up city and they learned extensively about the value of such wetlands. Cutting into this land, although being a short term fix for traffic, would have long term ramifications on our natural world and educational opportunities that thousand of school children among others take advantage of each year.

Thank you for listening to the caring citizens of this city. It is our city and I appreciate being able to voice opinions on decisions that affect us all.

Sincerely,  
Heidi Gott  
Teacher, Eagle Rock Elementary, LAUSD



bradverde@earthlink.net

05/19/2008 04:30 PM

Please respond to  
bradverde@earthlink.net

To eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov

cc

bcc

Subject freeway offramps

Dear Eduardo,

As a Native Valley boy and one who works near the Sepulveda flood basin I was surprised and horrified to learn they were planning to build new ramps that could effect the bird sanctuary. I am a teacher in the area and we use this as a wonderful opportunity for our students. I drive this area all the time and do not see a reason to change anything. Even if the cost was not destroying such important land. If something must be done please let it be option 1. Remember very few large cities are so blessed to have a wild area in the heart of such a dense population. It helps people remember we are a part of an entire planet and if we are careful we can share it and make it work for all living creatures.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,  
Brad Green



<skeithley@kelthleys.com>  
05/19/2008 03:59 PM

To <eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov>  
cc  
bcc  
Subject SEPULVEDA BASIN WILDLIFE RESERVE

Dear Mr. Aguilar,

Regarding the proposed Connector Project from the southbound I-405 to the westbound 101:

I urge Caltrans to adopt either Alternative 1 or the No Build Alternative for this project. I strongly oppose alternatives 2 and 3, because they would disturb the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve.

I enjoy running at the Wildlife Reserve because of its beauty and tranquility, because it is an escape from the noise and stress of our very urban area. The air is cleaner as well. I go to the Wildlife Reserve at least twice a week for running. I also take my two small children there on weekends. I want them to continue to enjoy the benefit of this wonderful place, not an ugly polluted freeway.

Sincerely,  
Susan Keithley  
16314 Meadowridge Rd  
Encino, CA 91436

---

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Ellen Kukuchka  
<elsway80@hotmail.com>  
05/19/2008 03:15 PM

To <eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov>  
cc  
bcc  
Subject New freeway off-ramp on the 405 (Sepulveda Basin area)

Dear Mr. Aguilar:

Alternative Nos. 2 and 3 are UNACCEPTABLE! The Sepulveda Basin offers a refuge from this concrete city. Leave it alone!

I've lived in this area for over 10 years and run there nearly every day. Do you realize all the life that is there?!? I've seen rabbits, coyotes, turtles, and birds and fish too numerous to mention. Leave this place alone! We humans and non-humans need this area left intact without another freeway off-ramp raping the area.

Enough!

NO! NO! NO! to any construction!

Angry citizen,

Ellen Kukuchka

---

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Diane McEvoy  
<jrzgrr13@yahoo.com>  
05/19/2008 11:18 AM

To eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov  
cc  
bcc

Subject Wildlife Reserve

Please do not consider building a freeway on/off ramp through the Wildlife Reserve. Please consider Alternative 1.

\* **Alternative 1 (OK):** A new connector from the southbound 405 to northbound 101. The Wildlife Reserve would remain intact. (Because there would be no freeway ramps in the Wildlife Reserve, vehicles entering the southbound 405 from Burbank Blvd. would not be able to transition onto the 101.)

Thank you,  
Diane McEvoy



RECEIVED

MAY 23 2008

**LINDA NAVROTH**

4213 Jackson Avenue, Culver City, CA 90232  
(310) 367-6699 / lnavroth@sbcglobal.net

May 19, 2008

Mr. Ronald Kosinski, Deputy District Director *pk*  
California Department of Transportation  
Division of Environmental Planning (I405/I01 Connector)  
100 S. Main Street – Mail Stop 16A  
Los Angeles, CA 90012.

RE: Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Refuge

Dear Mr. Kosinski:

As an amateur naturalist, bird watcher, and member of Los Angeles Audubon Society, I strongly oppose Alternative 2 and 3 of the proposed freeway modifications. Better yet, a "No Build" is in order. These proposed alternatives are unsound and insensitive to wildlife habitat, which is already in a pitiful state in California. With the Governor's proposed closures of many of our State Parks, it is even more imperative to leave the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Refuge alone--for us *and* the wildlife, or else we will all soon have fewer places to go.

I spend several days a month birding in this area, as I have for many years, so the place is very special to me. It is therefore appalling to find out that CalTrans proposes to plow right through the heart of this valuable wildlife refuge to accommodate traffic. The City has had years to figure out the transportation problems in Los Angeles; now it once again comes down to a crisis and CalTrans decides the best way to do it is right through a wildlife refuge!

No matter how many lanes are put in or off/on ramps are built, the traffic in Los Angeles will always be a nightmare. There are no easy remedies; however, the ones chosen should not be at the expense of public recreation and at the risk of spoiling a wildlife refuge. This is unacceptable. I respectfully request that CalTrans reconsider its options and does not build in this important recreational and bird habitat.

Kind regards,

Linda Navroth



Linda Navroth  
<lnavroth@sbcglobal.net>  
05/19/2008 03:14 PM

To eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov  
cc  
bcc  
Subject No Freeway Ramps or Connectors in Sepulveda Basin  
Wildlife Reserve!

Dear Mr. Aguilar,

As an amateur naturalist, bird watcher, and member of Los Angeles Audubon Society, I strongly oppose Alternative 2 and 3 of the proposed freeway modifications. Better yet, a "No Build" is in order. These proposed alternatives are unsound and insensitive to wildlife habitat, which is already in a pitiful state in California. With the Governor's proposed closures of many of our State Parks, it is even more imperative to leave the Sepulveda Wildlife Refuge alone--for us and the wildlife.

I spend several days a month birding in this area, as I have have for over four decades (since a teenager living in Canoga Park), so the place is very special to me. It is appalling to me to find out that CalTrans proposes to plow right throught the heart of this valuable wildlife refuge to accomodate traffic. The City has had years to figure out the transportation problems in Los Angeles; yet it once again comes down to a crisis and CalTrans decides the best way to do it is right thorough a wildlife refuge!

No matter how many lanes are put in or off/on ramps are build, the traffic in Los Angeles will always be a nightmare. There are no easy remedies; however, the ones chosen should not be at the expense of public recreation and at the risk of spoiling wildlife refuges. This is unacceptable. I respectfully request that CalTrans reconsiders its options.

Kind regards,

Linda Navroth  
4213 Jackson Avenue  
Culver City, CA 90232  
(310) 367-6699



Robert Plotke  
<bobplotke@sbcglobal.net>  
05/19/2008 06:38 PM

To eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov  
cc  
bcc  
Subject Sepulveda Basin

I have introduced the Sepulveda Basin to many students, teachers, and parents to learn about the wildlife reserve as part of our 4th grade life science. I found that students have a more positive respond to learning when they experience it. I think that taking that away from the students by putting any freeway system right in the middle of the Basin is a disservice to the students. It has been a great learning experience for all the students, teachers and parents that have partaken in any field trips or family trips.

Susan Plotke  
4th grade teacher in LAUSD



Lisa Smithline  
<lisa.smithline@gmail.com>  
05/19/2008 08:11 AM

To eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov  
cc  
bcc  
Subject PROPOSED CONNECTOR PROJECT FROM  
SOUTHBOUND I-405 TO WESTBOUND 101:

Dear Mr. Aguilar,

I am an avid runner, member of a San Fernando Valley based running club called New Basin Blues, (<<http://www.newbasinblues.org/>>) and am very concerned about what might happen to our training location, which includes the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve.,as a result of proposed changes to the I-405 connector to the 101.

I have recently learned that Caltrans proposes to remedy the alleged problem with the southbound I-405 connector to the westbound/northbound 101. I do not oppose finding a solution to the congestion of this freeway transition but I strongly oppose any alternative that will disturb the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve.

As I understand it, there are 4 proposals on the table. I urge Caltrans to adopt either Alternative 1 or the No Build Alternative for this project. I strongly oppose alternatives 2 and 3 because they would disturb the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve.

I run through the Wildlife Reserve several times every week; it is an important part of my training routine. I enjoy running in the Wildlife Reserve because of its beauty and tranquility, it is an escape from the noise and stress of our very urban area.

I will appreciate your efforts to find a solution that improves the freeway transition but also protects this rare and important area.

Sincerely,

Lisa Smithline  
3939 Blackbird Way  
Calabasas, California 91302

-- ls

**Lisa Smithline**  
818 437 8325 (m)  
Lisa.Smithline@gmail.com  
<http://www.aclu.tv/>



"Walton, Duffy E"  
<duffy.walton@alcoa.com>  
05/19/2008 01:35 PM

To <eduardo\_agullar@dot.ca.gov>  
cc <Lynn.Walton@usi.biz>  
bcc  
Subject Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Preserve

Dear Sir-

The value of the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Preserve far and away exceeds the value of the land as a freeway connector. The social, economic and intrinsic value of the Preserve is well known to local and visiting users. To disrupt or in any way degrade the preserve would be detrimental to the community - especially when there is an alternative that is acceptable and non invasive.

Option 1 is acceptable

Options 2 and 3 are unacceptable

Option 4 no build is the only option that is within the actual guidelines and purposes of the basin plan and would be preferred.

Sincerely,

Roger Walton  
16419 Napa St  
No. Hills, Ca 91343  
818-893-5274



Lynn.Walton@usi.biz  
05/19/2008 02:27 PM

To eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov  
cc  
bcc  
Subject Sepulveda Wildlife Basin

Sir,

Please consider the importance of the Wildlife Basin as a public use space for several highly dense areas : Van Nuys, Lake Balboa, Reseda, Encino. This area is used extensively by the people of these neighborhoods and it would be a great injustice to deprive them of this green space in the name of a Freeway connector. This park has already been significantly reduced for a water treatment plant and the Orange Line Bus route, do not take away any more of this significant space.

Options 1 & 4 of the proposed plan are acceptable.  
Options 2 & 3 are not acceptable.

"Sooner or later we all sit down to a banquet of consequences" Robert Louis Stevenson

Lynn Walton  
(818)251-3129  
USI of Southern California  
Direct Bill/Accounting Dept  
lynn.walton@usi.biz

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"Barry Erbsen"  
<erbsen@adelphia.net>  
05/20/2008 08:49 PM

To <eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov>  
cc  
bcc  
Subject Wildlife preserve Sepulveda Basin

Dear Mr. Aguilar:

I am a lifetime resident of the Los Angeles area. (I'm 67 years old). I have seen us go from no freeways to jammed freeways and congested surface streets. Please preserve the wildlife reserve for what little open space and wild areas are left. Enough is enough with traffic. There was a saying in a movie a few years ago "If you build it they will come!" If either alternative 2 or 3 is built it will damage the preserve and there will still be tons of traffic. Please do Alternative 1 or leave it alone. Isn't there some more deserving project that the money could be spent on.

Sincerely,  
Barry S Erbsen DDS



"Barry Erbsen "  
<erbsen@adelphia.net>  
05/20/2008 08:53 PM

To <eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov>  
cc  
bcc  
Subject Wildlife Reserve

One add to my email that I just sent to you. My daughter is a 5th grade teacher and she has taken classes there to study and see real wildlife, not just on TV. This is very valuable education for these young people. Please preserve the reserve.

Thanks for listening.  
Barry S Erbsen DDS



Pam Hartop  
<pamhartop@hotmail.com>  
05/20/2008 06:36 PM

To <eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov>  
cc  
bcc

Subject Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Area

Mr. Aguilar,

I am a teacher who annually takes children from Sylmar Elementary School to Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Area. For most of my students, this is their only exposure to nature as most live in apartments and are rarely exposed to the ecological concepts that they are able to experience there.

I strongly urge you to use Alternate One or No Build when considering the freeway interchange. Please DO NOT use 2 or 3. Many children would no longer have the kind of experience that is so vital to their having a better understanding of nature and our relationship with our environment.

Thank you, Pam Hartop

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[http://im.live.com/Messenger/IM/Join/Default.aspx?source=EML\\_WI\\_MakeCount](http://im.live.com/Messenger/IM/Join/Default.aspx?source=EML_WI_MakeCount)



David L Perkins  
<david.perkins@csun.edu>

05/20/2008 11:07 AM

Please respond to  
david.perkins@csun.edu

To eduardo\_aguitar@dot.ca.gov

cc

bcc

Subject Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve and the 405 and 101  
ramps

Sir:

I strongly oppose infringing on the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve to build these ramps. The Wildlife Reserve is small enough when compared to most wildlife reserves. This reserve is one of the Valley's highlights. To shrink it would be to say again to an area already impinged by transportation infrastructure that the real priority of this administration is only infrastructure.

Neither Alternative 1 nor the No Build Alternative would harm the Wildlife Reserve.

Sincerely,

David Perkins



Jennifer Erbsen  
<jerbsen@yahoo.com>  
05/21/2008 07:47 AM

To: eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov  
cc  
bcc  
Subject: Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve

Hello,

I am writing to express my support of the preserving the Sepulveda Wildlife Preserve. Putting a freeway on/off ramp in it is absolutely unacceptable -- it will wipe out a badly needed oasis of calm and tranquility in this city. It is a known fact that this city has one of the lowest ratios of housing to green space amongst US cities and I truly hope that this already low ratio is not degraded further.

The following alternatives are acceptable.

\* Alt. 1 (OK): A new connector from the southbound 405 to northbound 101. The Wildlife Reserve would remain intact. (Because there would be no freeway ramps in the Wildlife Reserve, vehicles entering the southbound 405 from Burbank Blvd. would not be able to transition onto the 101.)

\* No build alternative (OK).

Thank you for considering the quality of life of this city.

Best Regards,  
Jennifer Beinash

May 21, 2008

To: Mr. Ronald Kosinski 

Re: Connector Road Through Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Refuge

Dear Mr. Kosinski,

This is just a letter of concern alluding to your proposed plan to connect the 101 and 405 freeways. I have lived in this Valley for more than forty years and there is nothing so great as coming out to the Sepulveda Basin and spending time. Whether running, hiking, or just enjoying the wildlife, me and my friends know what a special place this is. This is a major stop for many of the migratory birds and their role as peacemakers and entertainers can not be exaggerated. They are the greatest mediators in the world for an uptight and frustrated world which we are. Please do what you need to do but *do not cut into their turf*. They will pay you back in full. And so will we.

Sincerely,

R. Fagan and friends



"David Iler"  
<davidiler.one@gmail.com>  
05/21/2008 01:54 PM

To: eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov  
cc  
bcc  
Subject: Connector Project

Dear Mr. Aguilar,

Regarding the proposed Connector Project from the southbound I-405 to the westbound 101. I strongly urge Caltrans to adopt either Alternate 1 or the No Build Alternative for this project. I enjoy the greenness and the oasis from the hustle and bustle of the city. I am going to run many miles in and through the bird sanctuary training for the Long Beach marathon and want to enjoy this land in its natural state.

Please consider the importance of the Wildlife Basin as being more of a value to its surrounding than a black top connector!

Sincerely,  
David A. Iler

4240 W. Sarah St.  
Burbank Ca 91505



Runsultras@aol.com  
05/22/2008 10:56 PM

To eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov  
cc  
bcc  
Subject Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve

Dear Mr. Eduardo Aguilar

I'm 70 years old. I was born in Los Angeles and lived in the SF Valley for many years. Until the reserve was built in the basin, I had never seen a heron in Los Angeles County.

We finally have a place where birds can congregate and not get shot. Maybe, just maybe the next generation can enjoy this little corner of nature and marvel at all the beauty that surrounds us.

Even a Maserati, Saleen, Ferrari or Lamborghini can't hold a candle to the wondrous water fowl that resides in the Sepulveda Basin. Please don't destroy such a beautiful corner of the Valley just for those luxury (or lesser) cars.

Sandra Gitmed  
3490 North Knoll Dr.  
Los Angeles, CA 90068  
323-851-8691

---

Get trade secrets for amazing burgers. [Watch "Cooking with Tyler Florence" on AOL Food.](#)

4956 Rubio Ave.  
Encino, CA 91436-1121  
May 22, 2008  
[nghall2000@aol.com](mailto:nghall2000@aol.com)

Ronald Kosinski, Deputy District Director *UK*  
California Dept. of Transportation  
Division of Environmental Planning  
100 S. Main St., Mail Stop 16A  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

**RE: I-405/101 Connector concerns**

Dear Mr. Kosinski,

There are several proposals for a connector between the I-405 and the 101, which *supposedly* will relieve traffic jams on the southbound I-405 and the westbound US 101. The best plan, in my opinion, is to have no new connector at all. This option, however, does not have an official number.

The first alternative is to build a connector from the southbound 405 to the westbound 101. This would close the southbound ramp to the I-405 at Burbank Boulevard. Most environmentalists favor this choice. Second and third alternative: a connector that would cut through a significant part of the wildlife reserve.

I am strongly opposed to alternatives 2 and 3, since it would cut into wildlife areas which are desperately needed by migrating birds and by people who wish to enjoy limited open space.

Please consider doing nothing to change the existing connector at this time.

Yours very truly,

Natalie G. Hall



May 22, 2008

Mr. Ronald Kosinski *rk*  
Deputy District Director  
California Dept. of Transportation  
Division of Environmental Planning (I-405/101 connector)  
100 S. Main Street—Mail Stop 16A  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Dear Mr. Kosinski:

As the Membership Chair of the San Fernando Valley Sierra Club group, I am writing to ask that Caltrans suspend altogether its plan to put a connector ramp in the vicinity of the Sepulveda Wildlife Basin. If this is not feasible, I would vote for Alternative #1, which would build a connecting ramp from the southbound 405 to the northbound 101. Construction of this ramp would close traffic to the 405 at Burbank Boulevard. And it would keep the proposed ramp clear of the Sepulveda Basin!

For some time I and many others have been active in attempting to improve conditions for wildlife in the Basin. Several months ago a huge crew of some 70 volunteers spent most of one Saturday cleaning countless plastic bags, cans, bottles, clothing, mattresses, and other types of debris from Haskell Creek. It gave us a wonderful feeling of accomplishment to realize we were making conditions better for the wildlife who inhabit the creek and the Basin.

If your proposed ramp were to be constructed in the Basin, noise, dirt, and dust from the construction would destroy the Wildlife Lake, killing the fish, crawfish, frogs/toads, and turtles who inhabit it, and who in turn provide food for the herons, egrets, pelicans, and ospreys who spend part of the year there. Trees and vegetation would be disturbed and probably destroyed. The 240 types of migrating bird species, including Canadian geese, would no longer stop in the Basin. Teachers would no longer take classes for field trips there; birdwatchers would no longer hike there, or families relax there.

There are many intelligent and capable people working at Caltrans. They spoke at the meeting last week held at the Encino Beth Shalom Temple. Surely if they put their heads together, these engineers could come up with a solution that would ease the traffic congestion in that particular area without destroying a lovely, peaceful refuge that Valley citizens have created painstakingly over the years.

Sincerely yours,

*Julie Szende*

Julie R. Szende, Membership Chair  
San Fernando Valley Group, Sierra Club



"Jean Brandt"  
<JeanBrandt@sbcglobal.net>

05/25/2008 04:32 PM

To <eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov>

cc

bcc

Subject: Sepulveda Wildlife Reserve

Sir:

The lack of protected wilderness area in the San Fernando Valley is appalling. After long years of discussion and votes, the Sepulveda Wildlife Reserve was created. It is a vitally needed and protected haven for many many species of wildlife and a source of joy for many many people. The very thought of any CalTrans intrusion on this magnificent reserve is more than distressing.

It seems that we have been given four alternatives - and, of course, the "No build" alternative would be the best choice for the preserve. That being said, the only possible other choice that would protect the preserve is "Alternative 1". Numbers 2 and 3 are out of the question.

As President of Los Angeles Audubon, I joined the Sepulveda Basin Coalition back in the '70's to fight Hollywood Park when they wanted to turn the basin into a race track. In fact, I coined the phrase "No Dam Racetrack", which became a very popular bumper sticker and T-shirt at the time. We "won" that battle.

Then Peter Uberoff and the Olympic Committee decided that the basin would be a fine place to put various venues for the 1984 Olympics, and we again stopped this invasion on the basin. There have been many threats to the wildlife preserve over the years but public outcry has met them with decisive unanimity and the basin has been protected.

Now CalTrans poses a very serious threat and we, once again, are faced with "alternatives". Since "No build" or Alternative Number 1 would not harm the Reserve, I support either of those alternatives. I vehemently oppose Numbers 2 and 3.

Thank you,

Jean Brandt  
3846 Sapphire Drive  
Encino, CA 91436  
818-788-5188

4059 Madelia Avenue  
Sherman Oaks, California 91403  
May 25, 2008

Mr. Ronald Kosinski  
Deputy District Director  
California Department of Transportation  
Division of Environmental Planning (1-405/101 connector)  
100 S. Main Street – Mail Stop 16A  
Los Angeles, Ca. 90012

Dear Mr. Kosinski,

I am writing to urge you to consider a 405/101 connector that does not impact the Sepulveda Dam Basin Wildlife Refuge. As a teacher I took classrooms of children there to learn about migratory birds. Now, as a senior citizen I and others seek our own refuge in the park from an increasingly urban environment.

You are smart people and I know you can come up with an alternative plan that does not use or impact this valuable habitat. In the end, no connector would be better than destroying any of this Wildlife Refuge.

Thank you for your consideration.

Vanae Ehret





Amy Mainzer  
<amainzer123@yahoo.com>

05/25/2008 08:29 PM

Please respond to  
amainzer123@yahoo.com

To Eduardo\_Aguilar@dot.ca.gov

cc

bcc

Subject please do not destroy part of the wildlife refuge!

Dear Mr. Aguilar,

I am writing to oppose the Caltrans freeway expansion options of the 101-405 interchange that involve destroying part of the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Refuge.

I live in Pasadena and have commuted to UCLA for many years, so I know the interchange all too well.

However, I would rather sit in traffic for hours every day than destroy one of the few remaining wild places in Los Angeles.

The world isn't worth living in if all the beautiful places are systematically stamped out to make room for more concrete and more freeways. No one goes to visit a freeway interchange for vacation. Please leave our one beautiful oasis in the concrete jungle alone.

Sincerely,  
Dr. Amy Mainzer  
Pasadena, CA



Ed Bosworth  
<ed.bosworth@sbcglobal.net  
>

05/26/2008 07:04 AM

To Eduardo Aguilar <eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov>

cc Ed Bosworth Home <ed.bosworth@sbcglobal.net>

bcc

Subject Proposed Connector From Southbound I-405 to Westbound  
101

Dear Mr Aguilar,

We have enjoyed hiking, biking and especially bird watching in the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve for several years. The location is unique in the area. We urge you to follow a plan for this connector that would minimally impact this area. We understand that Alternative 1 would best accomplish this. Please do all you can to preserve the Wildlife Reserve. We would hate to loose it.

Thank you for your consideration.

Edwin and Teresa Bosworth  
6610 Royer Ave.  
West Hills, Ca. 91307



Carol Clements  
<carolclements@sbcglobal.net>

05/26/2008 02:38 PM

To: eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov

cc

bcc

Subject: Preserving the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve

Dear Mr. Aguilar:

My husband and I have frequented the natural acreage surrounding the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve for many years. It is especially idyllic in the spring and affords all of us who live in this very urban and congested area a glimpse of what importance nature and its precious and delicate creatures are to us. The connector road that Caltrans has just proposed would be a sure end to this nearly pristine habitat and its diverse and necessary wildlife population.

I understand that there are 3 alternative versions of the project plus a 'no build' alternative.

Of course the 'no build' alternative would be the best.

But if a thruway must be made Alternative #1 would be the least destructive to the native environment.

-No freeway ramps in the Wildlife Reserve.

Alt.#2 would be terrible and Alt#3 would be even worse. And Unacceptable.

Both of these solutions have construction encroaching dramatically on the Reserve.

The amounts of heavy duty equipment & possies of construction workers- with all of their

debris and fallout- would choke the delicate water systems that sustain the beautiful and endangered species

that can exist in only such an area. This construction would go on for years.

The Reserve would be a disaster after such an aggressive intrusion.

Not only will the flora and fauna suffer. All of the citizens who respect and need a broader vision-one that embrace#

a natural wonderland-would be robbed of a place that provides respite and peace from this proposed asphalt jungle.

Please keep these sentiments in mind-and I do think I speak for all those who enjoy and value our natural environments.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Carol Clements and Csaba Horvath

May 26, 2008

Deputy District Director; *PK*  
CA Dept. of Transportation;  
Division of Environmental Planning  
(I405/101 Connector)  
100 S Main Street Mail Stop 16A  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Dear Mr. Ronald Kosinski:

I am enclosing an email that I sent to Mr.  
Eduardo Aguilar.

It addresses the encroachment on the Sepulveda Basin  
Wildlife Reserve by a new connector road proposed by  
Caltrans.

Please read it and take to heart my concerns and try to  
limit the amount of potential damage and death to the  
Inhabitants of the reserve by voting for a 'no build'  
Alternative or at least one that limits the long term  
destruction (Alt. #1) to this wonderful and necessary  
Place.

Thank you  
Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Carol Clements & Csaba Horvath". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the typed name.

Carol Clements & Csaba Horvath

From: Carol Clements <carolclements@sbcglobal.net>  
Subject: **Preserving the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve**  
Date: May 26, 2008 2:38:16 PM PDT  
To: eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov



Dear Mr. Aguilar:

My husband and I have frequented the natural acreage surrounding the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve for many years. It is especially idyllic in the spring and affords all of us who live in this very urban and congested area a glimpse of what importance nature and its precious and delicate creatures are to us.

The connector road that Caltrans has just proposed would be a sure end to this nearly pristine habitat and its diverse and necessary wildlife population.

I understand that there are 3 alternative versions of the project plus a 'no build' alternative.

Of course the 'no build' alternative would be the best.

But if a thruway must be made Alternative #1 would be the least destructive to the native environment.

-No freeway ramps in the Wildlife Reserve.

Alt.#2 would be terrible and Alt#3 would be even worse. And Unacceptable.

Both of these solutions have construction encroaching dramatically on the Reserve.

The amounts of heavy duty equipment & possies of construction workers-wlth all of their debris and fallout- would choke the delicate water systems that sustain the beautiful and endangered species that can exist in only such an area. This construction would go on for years.

The Reserve would be a disaster after such an aggressive intrusion.

Not only will the flora and fauna suffer. All of the citizens who respect and need a broader vision-one that embraces a natural wonderland-would be robbed of a place that provides respite and peace from this proposed asphalt jungle.

Please keep these sentiments in mind-and I do think I speak for all those who enjoy and value our natural environments.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Carol Clements and Csaba Horvath



Carol Clements  
<carolclements@sbcglobal.net>

05/26/2008 02:55 PM

To eduardo\_aguiar@dot.ca.gov

cc

bcc

Subject letter to Mr. Kosinski



Document1.doc





"Jon Davison "  
<jondavison@earthlink.net>  
05/26/2008 11:41 AM

To <eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov>  
cc  
bcc  
Subject SEPULVEDA WILDLIFE BASIN

Dear Mr. Aguilar,

I live in the San Fernando Valley and I strongly oppose building any road in the Wildlife Basin. If you want to close the Burbank entrance, "Alternative 1", that's OK by me.

This area is one of the few nice places left in the whole area and I enjoy it on numerous occasions. I take the 405 everyday, so I know about its problems. But destroying one of the last nice places is not definitely not worth it.

Best Wishes,  
Jon Davison  
Northridge, CA.

Judy  
Gish/D07/Caltrans/CAGov  
06/02/2008 09:11 AM

To Eduardo Aguilar/D07/Caltrans/CAGov@DOT  
cc Mine Struhl/D07/Caltrans/CAGov@DOT  
bcc  
Subject Fw: Caltrans web inquiry

Hi Ed,

I'm sending this to Environmental.

Thanks.

Judy Gish  
Public Information Officer  
California Department of Transportation  
External Affairs Division  
100 S. Main Street  
Los Angeles, CA 90012  
(213) 897-3487

----- Forwarded by Judy Gish/D07/Caltrans/CAGov on 06/02/2008 09:10 AM -----

Deborah  
Harris/D07/Caltrans/CAGov  
05/30/2008 11:17 AM

To judy.gish@dot.ca.gov  
cc  
Subject Fw: Caltrans web inquiry

please handle

----- Forwarded by Deborah Harris/D07/Caltrans/CAGov on 05/30/2008 11:05 AM -----

Marcy  
Freer/HQ/Caltrans/CAGov  
05/30/2008 11:04 AM

To Deborah Harris/D07/Caltrans/CAGov@DOT  
cc  
Subject Fw: Caltrans web inquiry

Marcy Freer  
Public Records Officer  
California Department of Transportation  
1120 N Street, MS 49  
Sacramento, CA 95814  
(916) 654-3644

----- Forwarded by Marcy Freer/HQ/Caltrans/CAGov on 05/30/2008 11:04 AM -----



cfishler@yahoo.com  
05/26/2008 11:59 AM

Please respond to  
cfishler@yahoo.com

To Web\_Admin@dot.ca.gov  
cc  
Subject Caltrans web inquiry



Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by  
cfishler@yahoo.com on May 26th, 2008 at 11:59AM (PDT).

URL: <http://>

message: Re: I-405 Sepulveda Pass Project Public Comment

Please do not disturb the wildlife reserve in the Sepulveda Basin. Please  
choose the closure of the Burbank Blvd. entrance to the freeway. This nature  
corridor is critical for wildlife and bird migration. No matter what you  
build, there will be vehicles to fill it up so let's allow nature to exist.  
The plants and animals should be honored and protected. People in cars can  
drive a little farther to get on the freeway.  
email: cfishler@yahoo.com

----- Env Report -----

REMOTE\_HOST:

REMOTE\_ADDR: 76.94.89.229

HTTP\_USER\_AGENT: Mozilla/4.0 (compatible; MSTN 7.0; Windows NT 5.1; .NET CLR  
1.1.4322; .NET CLR 2.0.50727)



"ethan greenspan , o.h.b."  
<ethanski@yahoo.com>

05/26/2008 09:08 AM

Please respond to  
ethanski@yahoo.com

To eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov

cc

bcc

Subject do not destroy the sepulveda nature reserve II

please do NOT alter or intrude on the wonderful nature preserve next to the freeway.

there are so few open natural places left.

please make sure the new ramp does not destroy any of this habitat.

gracias.

ethan greenspan

Cheerio!

Mr. Ronald Kosinski  
Deputy District Director  
California Dept. of Transportation  
Division of Environmental Planning (405/101 connector)  
100 S. Main Street-Mail Stop 16A  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Dear Mr. Kosinski:

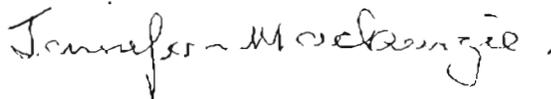
I have read of the threat to the Sepulveda Wildlife Refuge in the L.A. Times of Monday, May 26, by the erection of a proposed ramp for the 101-405 interchange that would destroy part of a wildlife reserve in the Sepulveda Basin.

I have lived in Los Angeles for almost forty years but it has only been just recently that I have discovered the Wildlife Refuge. On one of the days I was there I saw several groups of school children, what a wonderful place to take them and introduce them To wildlife in the wild! For some of those children it was probably the only time in their lives that they have visited such a place.

Please, please do all you can to prevent the destruction of this wonderful place.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Mackenzie



5/26/08



Rosemary Leibowitz  
<rlbowi@sbcglobal.net>  
05/26/2008 04:00 PM

To: eduardo\_aguiar@dot.ca.gov  
cc  
bcc

Subject: Sepulveda Basin Wildlife reserve

i wish to express my strong feelings that any alternative for the 405/101 connector that trespasses on the Wildlife Reserve is a wrong alternative. The reserve is a pocket of peace and nature in the middle of a big city that is vital both to the flora and fauna there and to the humans (including me) who visit regularly. Please do not interfere with the oasis so that people can cut a few minutes off a trip from the north to the west of the valley! I support either no change or the alternative to close the offramp at Burbank (which could have the positive side effect of improving the wildlife reserve!

Rose Leibowitz

Mr. Ronald Kosinski  
Deputy District Director  
California Dept. of Transportation  
Division of Environmental Planning (405/101 connector)  
100 S. Main Street-Mail Stop 16A  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Dear Mr. Kosinski:

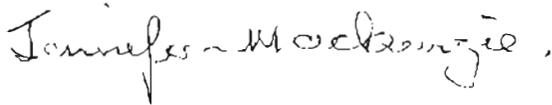
I have read of the threat to the Sepulveda Wildlife Refuge in the L.A. Times of Monday, May 26, by the erection of a proposed ramp for the 101-405 interchange that would destroy part of a wildlife reserve in the Sepulveda Basin.

I have lived in Los Angeles for almost forty years but it has only been just recently that I have discovered the Wildlife Refuge. On one of the days I was there I saw several groups of school children, what a wonderful place to take them and introduce them To wildlife in the wild! For some of those children it was probably the only time in their lives that they have visited such a place.

Please, please do all you can to prevent the destruction of this wonderful place.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Mackenzie

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jennifer Mackenzie".

5/26/08



Danila Oder  
<doder@usc.edu>  
05/26/2008 10:29 AM

To eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov  
cc  
bcc

Subject Comment on southbound I-405 to the westbound US-101  
connector

Dear Mr. Aguilar:

I support Alternative 1 or no-build for this project. Both would protect the wildlife reserve.

As a side note, I wish transportation planners would factor global warming and gasoline prices that will never again go below \$3.00/gallon into their projections of highway use. Once the current fleet of approximately 50% SUVs is retired, you will see much less congestion because of smaller cars, and people switching to motorcycles and scooters and mass transit. Given the central location of this connector, I don't know if traffic will decrease enough to warrant no-build. But please, don't fight the last war: the assumptions of the past are no longer viable today.

Sincerely,  
Danila Oder  
530 S. Kingsley Dr. #402  
Los Angeles CA 90020  
doder@usc.edu

-



Patricia van Hartesveldt  
<deerfield323@yahoo.com>  
05/26/2008 09:42 AM

To: eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov  
cc  
bcc  
Subject: 101 - 405 Transition Road

Dear Mr. Aguilar:

In addition to being a regular 101 and 405 freeway traveler, I am a San Fernando Valley birder who treasures the Sepulveda Wildlife Reserve and uses it often. It is the only wildlife area within a reasonable distance from my house. It is a jewel, created by the efforts of innumerable nature enthusiasts over the years, and I cannot accept its degradation by the proposed construction of new freeway ramps in the area.

Alternative #1 would be acceptable, as would the "no build" solution. Alternatives #2 and #3 are horrors, and unnecessary ones, at that.

Please do not harm the Wildlife Reserve. It is of immeasurable value to all of us.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Patricia van Hartesveldt  
7719 Nestle Ave.  
Reseda, CA 91335



TNTREP1@aol.com  
05/27/2008 05:24 PM

To eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov  
cc  
bcc

Subject Threat To Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve

I urge Caltrans to adopt either Alternative 1 or the No Build Alternative for this project. I strongly oppose alternatives 2 and 3 because they would disturb the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve. What the heck is the matter with Caltrans!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!! The reserve is a stop and a destination for southbound birds as well as a home to our own population of birds. What is going on? This is a proposed travesty to our environment. Are you people sleeping or are you paying attention....dumping tons of money into being 'green' and letting this happen!!!! Cal trans has some really, really bad ideas....but this is one of the worst!!!!!!!!!!

As a hiker and jogger, I enjoy jogging at the Wildlife Reserve because of its beauty and tranquility. It is an escape from the noise and stress of our very urban area. I go to the Wildlife Reserve almost every week late Fall, Winter and Spring.....and the not too too hot mornings in the Summer. My wife is a teacher who enjoys bringing classes to the reserve. And, as a grandparent, it is one of the few natural places for my granddaughter to visit locally.

Please don't let this beautiful spot be messed with.....

Sincerely,

Steven Ades  
19617 Valdez Dr.  
Tarzana, CA 91356

[tntrep1@aol.com](mailto:tntrep1@aol.com)

---

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Snustr@aol.com  
05/27/2008 02:57 PM

To eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov  
cc  
bcc  
Subject Sepulveda Basin Proposals - NO on Alternatives 2 and 3

To Whom it May Concern:

I only read about this proposal in the LA Times **yesterday** giving Wednesday as the last day for public comments. Thank goodness for emails as apparently today is the last day.

My husband and I are long time Valley residents and have watched developers with the help of our city officials chip away or pave any acreage remaining. We are supporters of preserving the little we have left and putting a freeway on and off ramp through the Wildlife Reserve is Sepulveda Basin in absolutely unacceptable and outrageous. As we understand the proposals, we say NO to Alternatives 2 and 3. Alternative 1 or the NO BUILD seems to be the least destructive proposals.

Once these habitat areas are destroyed there is no getting them back. We need these sanctuaries not only for the wildlife but for our own sanity living in LA.

Thank you!

Susanne and Michael Belcher  
18527 Tarzana Dr.  
Tarzana, CA 91356  
818-344-5683

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Dawn  
Kukla/D07/Caltrans/CAGov  
05/27/2008 07:33 AM

To Eduardo Aguilar/D07/Caltrans/CAGov@DOT, Eddie  
Isaacs/D07/Caltrans/CAGov@DOT, Anthony  
Baquiran/D07/Caltrans/CAGov@DOT

cc

bcc

Subject Fw: Leave the wildlife alone!!

This email comment belongs to your 405/101 project.....Dawn

----- Forwarded by Dawn Kukla/D07/Caltrans/CAGov on 05/27/2008 07:31 AM -----



Stephanie Bennett  
<stephanie@harpworld.com>

To <Dawn\_Kukla@dot.ca.gov>

cc

05/26/2008 01:33 PM

Subject Leave the wildlife alone!!

There are few enough places in LA where the wildlife have a fighting chance!  
Please DON'T widen the freeway through Sepulveda Dam rec area! This is where  
the Canada geese forage in the winter, and is part of an important habitat  
for many species of birds, animals and native plants.  
There would be less traffic if there were fewer illegal immigrants, I'd  
rather LA spent the same amount of money on that battle, rather than taking  
parkland away from the people and animals!!  
Stephanie Bennett  
North Hills



"Carter, Laurie"  
<lcarte3@lausd.net>  
05/27/2008 11:09 AM

To <eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov>  
cc  
bcc  
Subject

hello, I am a parent education teacher at Rinaldi Adult School in the San Fernando Valley. I am employed by the LAUSD. I teach parenting skills to parents of toddlers and preschoolers. I have been taking my classes to the Sepulveda Wildlife Area for the past eight years, and my own children have benefitted by visiting the area with their own schools. My students are always amazed and impressed that such a beautiful, peaceful free area exists in the valley; many of them have never been there. Some of my parents are from disadvantaged backgrounds and are thrilled at the prospect of having a free, peaceful place to take their children. If the proposed freeway interchanges go through, then it would have serious consequences on humans, not to mention the animals...please support #1 as this is the least harmful...thank you, Laurie Carter 818 486 9597



Lynda/Cliff  
<CFLF@netscape.com>

05/27/2008 12:47 PM

Please respond to  
<CFLF@netscape.com>

To <eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov>

cc

bcc

Subject Birds vs the 405

Dear Caltrans,

Do we really want to be perceived as big giant human bullies trampling our way through life, smashing everything in our way to Progress? (Our most important product", as an old GE ad used to proclaim,) I wonder. What do you say to the children?

For many years diverse birds and wildlife have eked out an existence in a little corner of what's left of open space in the valley, thanks to the efforts of the Audubon Society and many others, and have been appreciated by the many who visit simply to observe what's left of Mother Natures gifts.

Respect for others is a concept we like to talk about, but when it comes to how fast we can get our cars to go from one place to another...Respect takes a back seat, especially if only a defenseless, tiny song bird or a spindly legged Egret is standing in the way...of Mans' more important issues.

Dave over the lake? Make it a parking lot or freeway? Soon there will be nothing left of the Paradise that so many have labored to preserve in the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve.

Progress is our most important product? Where are we going in such a hurry that we feel justified in destroying valuable habitat and disrespecting others... just to get there in a hurry? I wonder.

Please consider any options protecting the Bird Reserve in the Sepulveda Basin.

Lynda Fenneman  
818-785 3239  
13007 Debby Street.  
Valley Glen

---

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Paul R Cooley  
<Paul.R.Cooley@aero.org>  
05/27/2008 11:15 AM

To: eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov  
cc: Paul R Cooley <Paul.R.Cooley@aero.org>  
bcc:

Subject: Sepulveda Basin: Please select Alternative 1, or the No Build  
option

Mr Aguilar: I hope that Caltrans will not opt for Alternatives 2 or 3, which would devastate the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve.

I have visited the Reserve many times. It is one of the few places migratory birds have left in Southern California to stop, rest, and feed on their migration routes. It is a wonderful place for both adults and children to see wildlife. Building freeway ramps through the Reserve (with either Alternative 2 or 3) would irreparably damage it.

Paul Cooley  
4061 Van Buren Place  
Culver City, California 90232  
310.837.4022 (H)  
310.336.6129 (W)



"David De Lange PhD "  
<dr.delange@verizon.net>  
05/27/2008 02:07 PM

To <eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov>  
cc  
bcc  
Subject Opposed to Alternatives 2 and 3-Sepulveda Basin

Dear Mr. Aguilar and Mr. Kosinski,

The Coalition to Save the Marina is a non-profit organization dedicated to the conservation of wildlife and human habitat in the Marina del Rey and surrounding area. Our individual interests however extend to the wildlife and people, ourselves included, who cherish the restored Sepulveda Basin. The Sepulveda Basin provides a geo-spatially unique and very important wildlife and recreation setting relative to its surroundings.

As you know, Caltrans proposes to build a new connector road from the southbound I-405 to the westbound US-101. Alternatives 2 and 3 for realizing that plan will clearly adversely impact the Sepulveda Basin habitat both from both a human and a wildlife perspective. We humans have other ways to resolve our transportation and traffic issues, but we are running out of choices when it comes to our recreational needs and the preservation of non-human species populating our region. Some of the wildlife supported by the Sepulveda Basin is headed toward threatened or endangered status. It is important to maintain the status and distribution of these species at current levels and further to reverse the declines in species viability that threaten a number of animal, including avian, genres, including some who depend locally on the Sepulveda Basin. Alternatives 2 and 3 would have a destructive impact on wildlife. Recreational uses of the Sepulveda Basin would likewise be adversely affected by alternatives 2 and 3.

For many additional reasons, instead of increasing freeway capacities, the entire Los Angeles Region is in need of transportation practices that reward reduced motor vehicle use and thereby the demand for increased traffic intensities. Alternatives 2 and 3, which do not question the acceptability of supporting increased traffic intensities, are headed in the wrong direction. The result of this kind of approach to increased traffic demands will be ever increasing urban glut, blight, and overcrowding along with deteriorating air and water quality.

David De Lange, PhD  
Executive Director  
Coalition to Save the Marina



"Alan Dunn"  
<alandunn@roadrunner.com  
>

05/27/2008 07:44 PM

To <eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov>

cc

bcc

Subject SBWR

*Sir,*

*I feel very strongly that an encroachment of this area is being considered. With all due respects this area is currently being used by a multitude of people, of all walks of life, it is one of the few places in our Valley that one can escape the rigors of everyday life, and turmoil, Please consider the least alternative possible to avoid disrupting it.*

*Yours Sincerely,*

*Alan Dunn.*



Ecker91011@aol.com  
05/27/2008 08:28 AM

To eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov  
cc 5thdistrict@lacbos.org,  
assemblymember.Portantino@assembly.ca.gov  
bcc

Subject Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve

As an avid birder in the southern california area, I urge you to reject Plans 2 & 3 for the new connector road for the freeway and accept either Plan 1 or do nothing at all. Dottie Ecker 3944 Windsor Pl. La Canada Flintridge, CA, 91011

Get trade secrets for amazing burgers. [Watch "Cooking with Tyler Florence" on AOL Food.](#)



Barry H Engelman  
<barry.h.engelman@ampf.com>  
m>  
05/27/2008 11:52 AM

To eduardo\_aguilar <eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov>  
cc  
bcc  
Subject (I405/101 Connector) Vote for Alt # 1

Dear Mr. Aguilar,

I am writing to ask you to please help save the Sepulveda Wildlife Reserve by adopting Alternative #1 of the three proposed route's. Please reject alternative 2 and 3!

We need your help to keep a freeway on- and off- ramp from being built in the heart of the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve. Help save this oasis of nature and tranquility!

Barry Engelman:

> > > > > > >  
Barry Engelman  
Senior Financial Advisor  
Ameriprise Financial

Ameriprise Financial Services, Inc.  
12400 Wilshire Blvd Suite 1200 | Los Angeles, CA 90025  
Office: 310.582.3500 x150 | Fax: 310.405.7101  
barry.h.engelman@ampf.com  
ameriprise.com  
CA Insurance License # 0C21936

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\*\*\*\*\*

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\*\*\*\*\*



"Roger Eston"  
<reston@robbinsbros.com>  
05/27/2008 02:44 PM

To <eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov>  
cc  
bcc  
Subject: I405/101 Connector - Sepulveda Wildlife Reserve

Dear Sirs:

I was born and raised in the San Fernando Valley and have called the San Fernando Valley my home for the last 51 years.

Over the years I have watched wistfully as the surrounding hillsides, vacant lots, large properties, etc. have been gobbled up and developed until there is barely any open space left

The Sepulveda Wildlife Reserve and the entire Sepulveda Dam Basin is one of the Valley's only and largest last pieces of open space. This open space is critical not only for the flora and fauna that are native to the Valley but also as one of the last accessible areas that people can go to experience the birds, plants and animals that call the San Fernando Valley home. It is also one of the last areas available where one can get a small glimpse of the past natural aspects of the Valley, or even to just get an experience of the vast open spaces the Valley once represented.

Have you ever stopped to watch a Red Tailed Hawk soaring effortlessly in the early morning sun?

Have you ever marveled as a gaggle of Canadian Geese flies in perfect formation as they come in for the evening to roost?

Have you ever watched the Swallows twisting and turning in flight, like miniature jet fighters, as they catch and eat mosquito after mosquito on the fly?

Have you ever experienced a Child's wonderment and excitement as they watch a Frog's egg turn first in to a tadpole, and then evolve in to a perfectly complete tiny little frog?

Have you ever laughed and wondered at a lizard doing "pushups" (That's how they judge distance when hunting their prey) as it suns itself?

I have... All in the Sepulveda Wildlife Reserve!

It would be a terrible shame to mar the interior space of the Sepulveda Dam Basin in any way particularly with Freeway Connectors, Bridges and Overpasses.

Don't get me wrong... I'm not a No Growth proponent. I transition from the 405 Southbound to the 101 Westbound several times a week and I agree that it needs to be fixed... Just keep it out of the interior of the Dam Basin... Follow the front face of the Dam... Use the spillway area... Take away the Haskell On/Off Ramps... Take away the Burbank On-Ramp completely if you need to... Just keep it out the interior of the Dam Basin.

Please do your best to save what little remaining open spaces that we have for future generations so that they too can experience the same wonderment and awe that I have...

Thank You for your time and patience  
Roger Eston

Roger Eston

Merchandising Systems Manager  
Robbins Bros.  
(626) 224-9400 Ext. 8273

[reston@robbinsbros.com](mailto:reston@robbinsbros.com)  
[www.robbinsbros.com](http://www.robbinsbros.com)

Dawn  
Kukla/D07/Caltrans/CAGov  
05/27/2008 07:35 AM

To Eduardo Aguilar/D07/Caltrans/CAGov@DOT, Eddie  
Isaacs/D07/Caltrans/CAGov@DOT, Anthony  
Baquiran/D07/Caltrans/CAGov@DOT

cc

bcc

Subject Fw: WWW Form Submission

This email submission belongs to your 405/101 project. Please add them to the mailing list....Dawn

----- Forwarded by Dawn Kukla/D07/Caltrans/CAGov on 05/27/2008 07:34 AM -----



Egclarsach@aol.com ()  
05/26/2008 12:13 PM

To Dawn Kukla@dot.ca.gov

cc

Subject WWW Form Submission

Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by  
(Egclarsach@aol.com) on Monday, May 26, 2008 at 12:13:47

---

checkbox: Add to Mailing List

FirstName: Eve

LastName: Gordon

Address1: 5708 Chimineas Ave

City: Tarzana

State: CA

ZipCode: 91356

Title: Dr.

Phone: 818-375-1720

Comments: This morning I read the Los Angeles Times article about the proposed plan to build a new connector/on-ramp between the 101 and 405 freeways, using land in the Sepulveda Wildlife Refuge. I am very much opposed to this plan, because the Wildlife Refuge is so important to the migrating birds and other animals and plants in this area. There is so little open land available as it is in our area, for recreation or for wildlife habitat. Building a connector on this important haven for native plants and animals would likely lead to further degradation of our local environment. I would prefer the alternative of not allowing access to the 101 via Burbank Blvd. Please take this into consideration.

Sincerely,  
Dr. Eve Gordon

Submit: Submit

-----



Peggy Hamner  
<sswlms2001@yahoo.com>  
05/27/2008 10:53 AM

To eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov

cc

bcc

Subject proposed freeway connector in Sepulveda Basin

Dear Mr. Aguilar,

I read in the Los Angeles Times about the proposal to build a freeway connector between the 405 and 101 Freeways through the Sepulveda Basin. Please don't do it! I do know from too-frequent personal experience that those freeways need upgrading, but surely a better solution to this transition road can be found. Refuges for local and migrating wildlife have diminished so drastically in California - and elsewhere - that it is imperative to protect our remaining refuges in order to keep more species from disappearing from the Earth.

I hope that every effort will be made to develop and approve an alternative that will protect this irreplaceable refuge in the Sepulveda Basin.

Thank you,  
Peggy Hamner  
Topanga, CA

Peggy Hamner  
Staff Research Associate  
Dept. Ecology & Evolutionary Biology

UCLA  
Box 951606  
Los Angeles, CA 90095 1606  
tel. 310-206-8247, fax 310-206-3987



WJHOUGH@aol.com  
05/27/2008 02:51 PM

To eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov  
cc  
bcc

Subject ON AND OFF RAMP US-101 AND I-405

IT IS ABSOLUTELY UNACCEPTABLE TO BUILD ACCESS RAMPS TO THE US-101 AND I-405 THROUGH THE SEPULVEDA BASIN WILDLIFE RESERVE. VOTE NO ON ALTERNATIVES 2 AND 3.

Get trade secrets for amazing burgers. [Watch "Cooking with Tyler Florence" on AOL Food.](#)



Judy Howell  
<judyjah@sbcglobal.net>  
05/27/2008 11:46 AM

To eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov  
cc  
bcc

Subject 405/101 connector proposals

The proposals (#2 & #3) that impact the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife area should not be considered. This area is a wonderful place for children & adults to enjoy the outdoors and the attendant wildlife and has been one of my favorite places to birdwatch. Just the noise & pollution of the construction for proposals 3 & 4 would drive away the birds that have made this area their home or a place to visit during migration and they would be unlikely to return because of the traffic noise of the new connector.

Many school children who have no other access to wildlife visit this area with their classes to learn about the birds, plants and wildlife. For most it is their only exposure to this type of environment and the only way they learn that it must be protected.

I live near the wildlife area and use it often. I would hope that Proposal #1 or no action at all will be the plan selected.

Thank you.

Judy Howell  
Van Nuys, CA



"Michael W. Irving"  
<michaelwirving@yahoo.com  
>  
05/27/2008 11:29 AM

To: eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov  
cc  
bcc  
Subject: Proposed 405-101 connector road

Mr. Aguilar:

I am opposed to the any proposed connector road which would encroach upon or disturb the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve.

Volunteers have spent countless hours cultivating the Reserve, and in making it a treasured destination for the schoolchildren of the city. Disrupting the Reserve with a freeway ramp would impair a distinctive and valued wildlife haven in our community.

Traffic congestion is unquestionably a problem. Caltrans and California municipalities might consider various alternatives to address the problem, such as "congestion pricing" to discourage avoidable travel (as is done in London), or by structuring tax and other incentives to encourage proximity of employers and employees. But further road building -- which will quickly be saturated by further "exurb" development -- may not be the way to go. This is especially true where traffic remediation efforts destroy community institutions and flout community values.

I am reminded of an exchange from "Mr. Holland's Opus" in which the bean-counting vice-principal tells Mr. Holland that if he has to choose between reading, writing, and long-division (on the one hand) and Mozart (on the other hand), he'll take reading, writing, and long division. Mr. Holland replies, sarcastically, that they can cut the arts as much as they like, because "sooner or later these kids won't have anything to read or write about."

A new connector road may get commuters to their jobs in law, accounting, advertising, or public relations more smoothly. But the underlying structure, value, and beauty of the world which those workaday pursuits presuppose and upon which they depend will be eroded.

Please choose wisely.

Michael W. Irving  
Atty at Law  
11150 W. Olympic Boulevard, Suite 900  
Los Angeles, CA 90064

Phone: 310-478-3530

Fax: 310-943-3870

Email: [michaelwirving@yahoo.com](mailto:michaelwirving@yahoo.com)



CHALJOHN@aol.com  
05/27/2008 09:08 AM

To: eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov  
cc  
bcc  
Subject: New connector from 405 to 101

As 30 year plus homeowners in the Sherman Oaks area we appalled at Caltran's proposal #2 and #3 for a new connector from the 405 to the 101. We consider the Wild Life Reserve one of our greatest assets and it should not be diminished or disturbed in any way! Sincerely, Carol Johnson & David Chalberg

Get trade secrets for amazing burgers. [Watch "Cooking with Tyler Florence" on AOL Food.](#)



Brenda J Kanno  
<brenda.j.kanno@csun.edu>  
05/27/2008 02:44 PM

To "eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov"  
<eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov>  
cc  
bcc

Subject 405/101 Connector - Comment on Alternatives (please disregard previous message, sent in error)

Dear Mr. Aguilar,

As a concerned citizen of Los Angeles and inhabitant of Southern California, I would like to express my concern about the 3 alternatives (actually 4, if the "No Build" alternative is included) that are under consideration for the 405/101 connector. The current single-lane connector from the 405 to the 101 requires a significant reduction in speed from 55/60 to 30 m.p.h. (during peak traffic, cars must come to a complete stop) as well as merging over a short distance; a safer transition is definitely needed.

In selecting amongst the 3 alternatives, safety, cost, and other factors must be considered, if the resulting project is to produce the most benefits. Alternative 1 offers the most all-around benefits, as it addresses more concerns of the many affected parties. It allows for the 2-lane connector between the 405 and 101 but does not impact the Sepulveda Wildlife Basin. Although it does not enable access to the 101 for vehicles entering the southbound 405 from Burbank Boulevard, the number of drivers affected by this is relatively small, especially as "frequent drivers" in the area realize it is quicker to access the 101 directly (or alternatively, drive half a mile north of Burbank Boulevard to Oxnard Street to enter the 405 and then transition to the 101).

Preserving the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Area should be a priority with your agency. As a major open space located within the metropolis of Los Angeles, it is a source of recreation and education for people of all ages and it is a favorite place for families to enjoy quality time together as they observe nature in action. As a natural resource, the SBWA serves as a rest stop for migratory birds (and insects) and also hosts the numerous species of birds, mammals, reptiles, insects, and plants that consider the SBWA their home. Situating the connector road within the Wildlife Area will seriously impact the ability of wildlife to survive there, not just during construction but forever after. Noise, road debris, and vehicle exhaust will degrade the quality of the environment and the experience that is currently enjoyed by the inhabitants of and visitors to the SBWA.

Please give serious consideration to Alternative 1, and do not select Alternatives 2 or 3.

Brenda Kanno  
P.O. Box 280067  
Northridge, CA 91328-0067  
brenda.kanno@csun.edu



PhotoOut@aol.com  
05/27/2008 04:52 PM

To: eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov  
cc  
bcc  
Subject: Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve

Dear Mr. Aguilar,

I am a resident of Lake Balboa. I am against any freeway project that would destroy the Sepulveda Wildlife Reserve. Living so close to the Basin I visit often. It is hard to believe that this beautiful reserve is in the heart of the SF Valley. Please visit this beautiful area before you make a decision that will destroy it.

Thank you,

Venida Korda  
Lake Balboa

---

Get trade secrets for amazing burgers. [Watch "Cooking with Tyler Florence" on AOL Food.](#)



Margaret Guy  
<mguylevine@sbcglobal.net>

05/27/2008 08:47 PM

To: eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov

cc

bcc

Subject: Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Preserve

Dear Mr. Aguilar,

I am writing to let you know that I support the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Preserve. With so much of our open land being developed, this area needs to be protected.

I am a frequent visitor to the preserve with my children and often their friends. The pond and surrounding riparian area is an oasis for many bird species.

Putting a concrete on/off ramp through this area is unacceptable. I do not support options 2 or 3. I would support Option 1 if necessary.

Thank you for the opportunity to give my opinion.

Margaret Levine  
Studio City, California

Margaret Levine

Studio City, Ca 🐾

May 27, 2008

**Alex MacInnis**  
1475 1/2 Silver Lake Blvd.  
Los Angeles, Ca 90026  
323 666 9420  
alexmacinnis@sbcglobal.net

Mr. Ronald Kosinski,  
Deputy District Director  
California Department of Transportation  
Division of Environmental Planning (405/101 Connector)  
100 South Main Street MS 16A  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

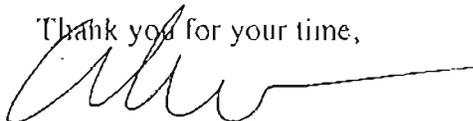
Dear Mr. Kosinski,

I would strongly urge you to consider the "No Build" option for the 405/101 Connector. Option 1 would only trade one traffic problem for another, at great cost. Options 2 and 3 would have too adverse an effect on the Wildlife Refuge, which I consider to be one of the great natural resources of the San Fernando Valley and a destination spot for wildlife enthusiasts from all over the city, not to mention a remarkable population of birds.

We are entering a new era of reduced gasoline consumption that will bring a sea change in transit expectations. Already traffic is on the decrease as gasoline prices rise. Our state is in too big a financial crisis to spend money on a solution that encourages more individual vehicle use, especially at the expense of an island of natural life (as opposed to a park) in the middle of the city.

In this case, the best option is to leave things as they are.

Thank you for your time,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Alex MacInnis', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Alex MacInnis



Trish Meyer  
<trish@wildscaping.com>  
05/27/2008 11:29 AM

To: eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov  
cc  
bcc  
Subject: Sepulveda Wildlife Preserve

Eduardo,

I went through the training from the Audubon Society to teach LAUSD kids about the wildlife preserve. I got the feeling that many of these kids had never before been in such a natural environment. One kid even asked me if we'd see "lions and tigers" on the walk.

To damage this preserve for the convenience of freeway drivers would be a huge shame. I strongly object to Alternatives 2 and 3.

thank you  
Trish Meyer  
--

-----  
<http://www.wildscaping.com> - supporting native plants for wildlife



Jess Morton  
<jmorton@igc.org>  
05/27/2008 12:38 PM

To eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov  
cc Muriel Kotin <akotin@earthlink.net>, John Nieto  
<nietoent@aol.com>, Martin Byhower  
<avitropic@sbcglobal.net>, Lillian Light  
bcc

Subject Re: Opposition to Caltrans Alternatives 2 and 3 for the  
405-101 Interchange

Dear Sir,

The Palos Verdes/South Bay Audubon Society, which serves the southwestern portion of the Los Angeles basin, is strongly opposed to any reconstruction of the present 405-101 Freeway interchange that encroaches on areas presently set aside for wildlife and habitat preservation. While we recognize that the interchange in question has problems serving the needs of vehicle drivers, and virtually all of our members have driven through this particular interchange, "solutions" which encroach on existing open space are simply not solutions to be tolerated.

The Los Angeles basin is sorely lacking in open space, and extensive tracts of open space are especially scarce. We must not accept short-term solutions that only serve a single purpose while exacerbating other problems. When it comes to freeway traffic, improving safety is an important factor in solving short-term troubles, but in the long-term, the only viable solution is in significantly reducing freeway driving through alternative transport means and better land-use planning. When those solutions finally come about, it will be to our ultimate cost if we have needlessly lost precious open space in the meantime.

Sincerely yours,

Jess Morton  
Treasurer, Palos Verdes/South Bay Audubon Society



"robert munsey"  
<k6piu@instanet.com>  
05/27/2008 10:34 PM

To <eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov>  
cc  
bcc  
Subject Proposed 405-101 Transition

Sir:

I urge the application of the proposal number 1 or of No Transition. The development of the Wildlife Area is the result of decades of effort on the part of many volunteers and and much expense and construction which would violate this Area should not even be further considered. The Wildlife Area is a treasure benefiting countless people weekly and will be increasingly used into the future. There is no practical way that construction could be mitigated. The work would be very disruptive while in progress and then the space would be gone forever.

Thank You for considering my input.

Robert Munsey  
Winnetka



Lisamldariono@cs.com  
05/27/2008 10:54 AM

To eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov  
cc  
bcc  
Subject 101/405-Sepulveda Wildlife Basin

Dear Mr. Aguilar,

Please see attached copy of the letter we left for Mr. Ronald Kosinski at the public hearing on May 14, 2008.

I marvel daily at the work both the Department of Transportation and Caltrans do to move our families between home and our destinations, and I thank you and your department for your hard work, but please continue to look into other alternatives so that we may keep the wildlife reserve intact and accessible to wildlife.

Thank you for reading this and the attached letter.

Sincerely,  
Lisa Ono & Family



Sepulveda Wildlife Basin.doc

Valdez-Ono Family  
2408 Sweetwood St.  
Simi Valley, CA 93063

May 14, 2008

Mr. Ronald Kosinski  
Deputy District Director, Caltrans District 7  
Division of Environmental Planning  
100 S. Main St.  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Dear Mr. Kosinski,

I respectfully ask that Caltrans continue to look at solutions and alternatives to the 101/405 Connector Project which will not disrupt the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve.

The Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve is a special place. My eight-year-old son viewed his first plankton there---as have many other schoolchildren brought to visit their local Wildlife Reserve by their teachers. He had the opportunity to learn about food webs, watch how different birds eat, and see firsthand how people can pull together to keep that little bit of nature for kids like him to enjoy.

Thank you for your efforts.

Sincerely,

Lisa Ono & Family

cc: Eduardo Aguilar (email)

Mr. Ronald Kosinski *MK*  
Deputy District Director  
California Department of Transportation  
Division of Environmental Planning (I405/101 Connector)  
100 South Main Street  
Mail Stop 16A  
Los Angeles ,CA 90012

As a long time resident of the San Fernando Valley who has observed and enjoyed the evolution of the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Area I am aware of what this area means to the people who live in the valley and to the children who visit and learn in the Sepulveda Basin from all over this city.

People come here to experience outdoor life in a rare green spot in a highly urbanized area. For the many schoolchildren who learn about water, plants, trees and the animals which are part of this ecosystem every part of the Wildlife Area is a precious commodity. This area must be preserved and not invaded by freeway ramps which not only will diminish this space but will promote exhaust fumes and particulate matter. Recent medical reports state that more children are becoming asthmatic, especially those children who live in densely populated areas near freeways. What Options 2 and 3 do is to place a freeway ramp in the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Area right in the path of the children who come here to learn to appreciate the outdoor environment.

For these reasons I am opposed to the planned connector from the southbound I-405 to the westbound US-101 as described in proposals 2 and 3. Proposals 1 and 4 are acceptable.

I urge you to consider only options one and four.

*Jeanne Polak-Recht*

Jeanne Polak-Recht  
11002 Garden Grove Avenue  
Northridge, CA 91326

*(818) 360-1438*



Colleen Rooney  
<[eco-arts@pachell.net](mailto:eco-arts@pachell.net)>  
05/27/2008 02:24 PM

To [eduardo\\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov](mailto:eduardo_aguilar@dot.ca.gov)  
cc  
bcc  
Subject Plans for 405/101

We are long-time residents of the San Fernando Valley and small business owners. We frequently use the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve. It is one of the few places in our area that has slowly established itself as a wildlife magnet and habitat for many birds that nest or stop over during migration.

Having reviewed the three alternatives being considered, we strongly oppose alternatives 2 and 3 and find alternative 1 to have the least impact on the valuable resource we cherish.

We also ask you to consider not building at all. We should not be planning for more traffic, we should be investing in alternatives to freeway usage. Let's not make freeways easier to use in the short term and thereby facilitating our dependence on cars. Let's plan for the long term, taking into account depleted oil availability, higher gas prices, improved public transportation, etc.

Respectfully,

Colleen Rooney and Eloise Klein Healy  
Eco-Arts  
Nature Travel with a Difference  
[www.eco-arts.net](http://www.eco-arts.net)

Eco-Arts  
Colleen Rooney, PhD  
Eloise Klein Healy, MFA  
818-789-7229  
[eco-arts@pachell.net](mailto:eco-arts@pachell.net)  
[www.eco-arts.net](http://www.eco-arts.net)



"Julie Rosa"  
<julierosa@charter.net>  
05/27/2008 09:33 PM

To <eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov>  
cc  
bcc

Subject Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Area

I would like to express my opposition to Alternatives 2 and 3 regarding the freeway connector project. I am a 63 year resident of the Los Angeles area and I understand the needs for traffic control updates, but the value of the wildlife area that these alternatives would impact would be devastating. There are so few areas where people, especially children, can go and experience the natural wetland setting that is in question. Lake Balboa is an entirely different type of lake. Once this wetland is gone, like so many others, it cannot be replaced. Please keep it in mind while you are planning connector routes. Thank you very much for your attention to this matter. Julie Rosa, 1807 N. Topanga Canyon Blvd., Topanga, Ca. 90290 (310) 455-2468



betty schaar  
<belynn60@yahoo.com>

05/27/2008 06:23 PM

Please respond to  
belynn60@yahoo.com

To eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov

cc

bcc

Subject Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve/DEA/IS

Dear Mr. Aguilar:

I am a resident of the San Fernando Valley. I realize that our transportation system needs improvement, but I strongly OPPOSE doing this at the expense of the Wildlife Reserve. I urge you NOT to accept Alternatives 2 and 3 which would build an on/off ramp in the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve. The "no build alternative" and "Alternative 1" are acceptable because they would not put freeway ramps in the Wildlife Reserve.

I have lived in the San Fernando Valley for many years and treasure our open space and natural areas in the Sepulveda Basin. Not only is it a natural laboratory for school children and other students of nature, but it is a beautiful area that provides respite and rejuvenation of body and spirit for those of us who must live and work in the concrete/urban jungle that our Valley has become.

It's taken us 30 years to rehabilitate the Reserve, and we need it. It's a part of my life. Let's find other alternatives to the traffic problem. I'm thinking that with the cost of gas going up, people driving less, and more rapid transit options, that the 101/405 interchange will not be such a big problem in the coming years, and therefore does not require the drastic actions presented in Alternatives 2 and 3.

Once again, please OPPOSE freeway ramps in the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve.

Sincerely yours, Betty L. Schnaar

Jane M. Spitzer  
17500 Sherman Way, Unit 105  
Lake Balboa, CA 91406

May 27, 2008

Mr. Ronald Kosinski *RK*  
Deputy District Director  
**California Department of Transportation**  
Division of Environmental Planning (I-405/U.S. 101 Connector)  
100 S. Main Street – Mail Stop 16A  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

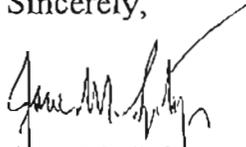
Dear Mr. Kosinski,

Be advised, as a stakeholder of the area, I urge you to not to build any ramps, bridges, overpasses concerning the I-405/U.S. 101 Improvement Project and the various alternatives being considered by Caltrans.

The Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Preserve will be affected and wildlife irreparably altered. It took so long to finally establish an accessible wildlife area for Valley residents to enjoy and for children to learn about various birds, plants and trees. And now you want to take it all away for more traffic lanes!!

I strongly ask you consider this letter when you make this important decision, which has a direct impact on us, the people who live, work, and participate in the Lake Balboa Neighborhood Council area.

Sincerely,

  
Jane M. Spitzer



"Edd Stepp"  
<2stepps@ca.rr.com>  
05/27/2008 04:27 PM

To <eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov>  
cc  
bcc  
Subject Sepulveda Basin

Dear Sir:

I am emailing to ask you to help save the wetlands in the Sepulveda Basin from destruction.

I favor a No Build solution or Alternative 1----not 2 or 3.

I know that the traffic is horrible but destroying an area so carefully developed for wildlife and so used by the public is no answer.

You and I both know that Caltrans never finishes a job in the time promised and that the construction will be devastating to the area.

Please help the people of this area save Sepulveda Wildlife Reserve.

Thanks-Carole Stepp  
10363 Glenbarr Ave.  
Los Angeles 90064  
2stepps@ca.rr.com

Tel.: Los Angeles: 310-836-7368

Tel.: Santa Fe: 505-984-8709

Fax: 1-800-848-2821

Email: [2stepps@ca.rr.com](mailto:2stepps@ca.rr.com)



"PETER STERN"  
<pstern2@msn.com>  
05/27/2008 08:44 AM

To <eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov>  
cc  
bcc  
Subject

Re: 101 - 405 freeway interchange

If possible, might you consider another routing so the Sepulveda Dam wildlife refuge might suffer less impact?

Thank you for your consideration.

Peter Stern



Elaine Trogman  
<ektrogman@yahoo.com>  
05/27/2008 12:55 PM

To: eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov  
cc:  
bcc:  
Subject: Against Alt. 2 & 3 101-405 connector Ramp into Sep. Wildlife Res. (ea)

Dear Mr. Aguilar

**I do approve of the Alternative #1 proposal.** I went to the hearing and I noticed that somebody was speaking for the business community in the San Fernando Valley. They mentioned they preferred Alternative #1, also.

I go to the Sepulveda Wildlife Basin often to get away from the stress of the city. I am sending you this letter because I want to voice my disapproval of Alternatives #2 and #3 to build a ramp into the Sepulveda Wildlife Reserve. We need a place like the Reserve where people of all ages can go to experience wildlife and so does the Wildlife need the reserve. Many of the birds come from around the world and their places to live during a certain season are shrinking. I feel that the building process and the end result being the ramp would disturb these creatures while nesting and also diminish the food, like fish, toads etc., that they depend upon. They would have to find another place to rest and live.

The Audubon Society takes about 3,000 school children a year to the reserve to help them get in touch with nature. Please reconsider your idea to build in the reserve.

**I do approve of the Alternative #1 proposal.** I went to the hearing and I noticed that somebody was speaking for the business community in the San Fernando Valley. They mentioned they preferred Alternative #1, also.

I hope you will take by letter seriously.

Sincerely,  
Elaine Trogman  
(818) 780-8345  
6709 Calhoun Ave.  
Van Nuys, CA 91405



"Libby Wachter"  
<libbylaws@hotmail.com>  
05/27/2008 04:13 PM

To <eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov>  
cc  
bcc  
Subject NO to alternatives 2 and 3

Hello-

I am writing as a concerned citizen. I have been to the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve several times and it is a wonderful place where wildlife lives peacefully. Please do not build freeway on/off ramps through the wildlife reserve. It would be a tragedy. There are so few places for animals to live in a natural habitat. We do not need more freeways! Please choose Alternative 1, or even better, do not build at all!

Thank you,

Elizabeth Wachter



Dave Weeshoff  
<weeshoff@sbcglobal.net>  
05/27/2008 11:26 PM

To eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov  
cc  
bcc  
Subject 101-405 Interchange Ramp

Dear Mr. Aguilar:

Please preserve the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve. Support Alternative 1 (or no change) and leave our precious San Fernando Valley natural area as it is, truly a jewel of nature in our blighted megalopolis.

Every year tens of thousands of children, families and other nature lovers find peace, tranquility, and the opportunity to enjoy a truly natural setting, near their homes, and do so without extensive travel, carbon emissions, and gasoline expenses.

Dave Weeshoff  
Cell phone 818-618-1652  
5131 Briggs Ave. LaCrescenta, CA 91214

May 27, 2008

Mr. Ronald Kosinski   
Deputy District Director  
Division of Environmental Planning  
Caltrans District 7  
100 S. Main Street  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

RE: 101-405 Connector Project

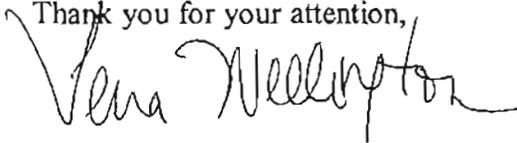
Dear Mr. Kosinski,

I am a resident of Burbank and am concerned about the impact of your 101-405 Connector Project on the surrounding environment.

**I oppose any construction on the nearby wildlife reserve in the Sepulveda Basin and urge your organization to select alternatives that would leave that habitat area untouched.**

It concerns me that our urban habitats have dwindled to such a degree that often cannot support a varied or even a native ecosystem, and not only for now but for the future we must be more responsible in how we address environmental impacts. I am also a mother, and feel that the decisions we make today with regard to our environment affect not only the safety and health of future generations but also their quality of life. Morally, ethically, and for survival reasons we must begin to give larger consideration to creating a sustainable world - not destroying it.

Thank you for your attention,



Terra Wellington  
414 N. Lamer St.  
Burbank, CA 91506



"Kindra Windish "  
<KWindish@bwscampus.com  
>  
05/27/2008 04:25 PM

To <eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov>  
cc  
bcc  
Subject No to alternatives 2 and 3

Hello. My name is Kindra Windish and I am writing today to say that the proposal to build a freeway on/off ramp through the wildlife reserve is unacceptable. I am against alternatives 2 and 3.  
Best  
Kindra Windish



christie flum  
<catflum@hotmail.com>  
05/28/2008 01:34 PM

To <eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov>  
cc  
bcc  
Subject Save the Sepulveda Basin!

Dear Mr Aguilar,

I read with great sadness about the proposed Connector Project from the southbound I-405 to the westbound 101.

I beseech Caltrans to adopt the No build Alternative for this project.

This area is a unique jewel for all communities to enjoy. Once disturbed and destroyed ..its gone. Sure there will be continued delays in the traffic as the population continues to soar unchecked but that will happen regardless.

Please give your valuable consideration to the 'no build" alternative.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely  
Christie Flum

---

E-mail for the greater good. [Join the i'm Initiative from Microsoft.](#)



"Peggy Forster"  
<peggy.forster@prodigy.net>  
05/28/2008 02:57 PM

To <eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov>  
cc  
bcc  
Subject Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve

SUBJECT: PLEASE DO NOT DISTURB THE ECOLOGY OF THE  
SEPULVEDA BASIN WILDLIFE RESERVE

Dear Mr. Aguilar:

We are writing to express our strong opposition to Alternatives 1, 2 and 3 regarding placement of a freeway on/off ramp in the heart of Sepulveda Basin. This is a recklessly conceived proposal and one that places in jeopardy a well established resting and feeding area for migratory birds, as well as an important natural out-door sanctuary and park for the people of Los Angeles. Please re-think this proposal and elect the NO BUILD ALTERNATIVE.

We believe gridlock relief needs to begin with an increase in mass transit options and stronger air-quality controls to reduce global warming. Your dedication to public health and environmental protection is much appreciated.

Sincerely,  
Peggy Forster  
Director  
The Environmental Relief Center  
www.environmentalrelief.net  
peggy.forster@prodigy.net



maria gritsch  
<mariafgritsch@yahoo.com>  
05/28/2008 06:54 PM

To eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov  
cc  
bcc

Subject NO to Alternatives 2 and 3

### I-405 / US- 101 CalTrans Letter

I am strongly opposed to Alternatives 2 + 3.

During this public comment period you have already been made aware of the sensitive species that will be impacted, the habitats that will be destroyed, and the human uses that will be significantly altered in a negative fashion. Now I would like to bring to your attention that Alternatives 2 + 3 would not merely extinguish organisms, ecosystems, and societal values (to temporarily resolve what amounts to no more than a public nuisance), but they would extinguish a biological and cultural process.

The original core of the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Area is the 50-60 acres west of the 405, north of Burbank Boulevard, east of Haskell Creek, and south of the Archery Range. This is the only area within the Sepulveda Basin that is officially designated as "a wildlife management area" by a Lease and Operating Agreement between the City of Los Angeles and the State of California Department of Fish and Game (effective September 17, 1985). This area, and an additional 60-70 acres (total combined acreage of 120) directly south of Burbank Boulevard are the only areas within the Sepulveda Basin that are designated as "a wildlife management area" in the current Sepulveda Basin Master Plan (March 1981). Additional adjacent areas within the Sepulveda Basin have been added to this designation within more recent years.

The Sublease between the City and the State includes the following words under the heading Purpose and Use: "The leased premises and every part thereof shall be used only for wildlife habitat development and recreation activities not incompatible thereto."

The previous 2 paragraphs point out the significance of the project area (and seem to rule out Alternatives 2 + 3) in both physical and symbolic terms. This is the first area to be so designated, and therefore the first area to be planned, planted, weeded, cared for, and used (specifically and only) for nature values, study, and appreciation.

Therefore, the plants in this area have had the longest period of time to become established, mature, adapt to one another and the conditions, and evolve into a complex of interactive mini ecosystems that are still growing, changing, and evolving. When the Wildlife Lake was put in, the entire area (50 acres) was graded and left barren for several months. As the native plants were introduced, and non-natives removed, a different palette of birds has used this area. Every year, as these systems change, new species find their way here. And, for the last 20 years, all of these changes have been based upon natural laws with a little help from a wide community of human volunteers.

Permanently removing 10-20 percent of this core area (and disturbing a much greater area during construction) would have significant direct impacts on the entire existing Wildlife Area and all future evolutionary changes therein. The wide variety of habitats that we have established is directly responsible for the wide variety of species seen. And, each individual component of the Wildlife Area is integral to the health and stability of the Area as a whole. Alternatives 2 + 3 would remove nearly all of the most mature Live Oaks within the Wildlife Area and more than 50% of the core grassland area.

But, this is not just about Biology, Ecology, or Habitat Restoration. It is also about the cultural evolution that has taken place there. During the last 30 years we have had more than 10,000 people join San Fernando Valley Audubon Society sponsored bird walks, environmental education programs, nature festivals, trash cleanups, weeding projects, and more. Many of those people have been so impressed that they themselves have become dedicated volunteers, docents, and active environmentalists. It has changed their lives! They have evolved! They have become better individuals, and better citizens. And this process is still in its infancy. The Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Area is a biological and cultural classroom where wildlife can thrive and humans can be inspired. It is a place where nature was given a second chance and where people are given a purpose. It is a process in itself – with benefits to all. Please do not remove this important part of the body and soul of the San Fernando Valley.

Maria Gritsch



Jim Hardesty  
<jnhardesty@adelphia.net>

05/28/2008 05:43 PM

Please respond to  
jnhardesty@roadrunner.com

To eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov

cc

bcc

Subject 405 / 101 Connector Proposals

May 28, 2008

Mr. Ronald Kosinski, Deputy District Director  
California Department of Transportation, District 7  
Division of Environmental Planning (I405/101 Connector)  
100 S. Main Street - Mail Stop 16A  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Also transmitted by email to eduardo.aguilar@dot.ca.gov

Re: Draft Environmental Assessment 405-101 Connector Improvement Project

Dear Sirs:

I am writing in support of the position of the San Fernando Valley Audubon Society (SFVAS) in regard to the above named project. That is, I favor Alternative #1 or the No Build Alternative and strongly oppose Alternatives #2 and #3. My reasons concur with those previously expressed by SFVAS President Muriel Kotin and former President Kris Ohlenkamp.

It would be a great step backward to encroach upon land set aside to provide a 'natural' setting for wildness in the midst of a metropolis if we insist upon whittling away at it a bit at a time until none is left. So I urge you to reject those alternative proposals that would do just that, even though that may cause some delays to those of us who have to travel through that interchange regularly.

Sincerely,

James Hardesty  
Former President, SFVAS  
20708 Dumont St  
Woodland Hills CA 91364  
818/346-6712  
jnhardesty@roadrunner.com  
www.sfvaudubon.org



"Huang, Songqiao S."  
<huangss@lavc.edu>  
05/28/2008 10:49 AM

To <eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov>  
cc  
bcc  
Subject 405 and 101

Dear Mr. Aguilar,

I am writing to you to oppose the 405 and 101 connector project especially alternatives 2 and 3. Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve is one of the few places left in San Fernando Valley which provide the oasis for native plants and animals to live. This area is also a classroom used by more than 2,000 Biology and Environmental Science students from Los Angeles Valley College every year. This area is a flood region. This causes the safety concern of the quality of your proposed construction project. Alternatives 2 and 3 reduce the protect wildlife area, deprive our future generation's ability to enjoy nature, send the wrong messages to our children that it is ok to destruct environment, and it bring more traffic and air pollution to the area. I believe the solution to our traffic problems is not to attract more traffic to the 405 and 101, but to invest more in developing public transportation.

Sincerely yours

Sara Huang

Professor

Department of Biology

Los Angeles Valley College

Valley Glen, CA 91401

Tel. (818) 947 -2877

Fax:( 818) 947 2610





Saran Kirschbaum  
<sarank@mac.com>  
05/28/2008 10:19 AM

To eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov  
cc  
bcc  
Subject Alternative 1 for 405

Comment on the proposed 101-405 interchange:

Fires and drought conditions have plagued us and are predicted to do so for the next 10 or so years. Whatever CALTRANS previous predictions of doing little or no damage to the wildlife reserve are, they are no longer valid. A smaller habitat will cause wildlife deaths and their populations to drop. Because of recent fires, wildlife is showing up in unexpected places. When the first car hits a deer or bird, there will be "I told you so" statements.

Alternative 1 is stated to do no harm to the reserve, that or doing nothing would be the best choices.

Thank you for considering my comments,  
Saran Kirschbaum  
Los Angeles

What we leave is more important than what we take.



"Bill Panzera"  
<bill@panzerains.com>

05/28/2008 09:24 AM

Please respond to  
<bill@panzerains.com>

To <eduardo\_agullar@dot.ca.gov>

cc

bcc

Subject 405 / 101 interchange

I am a 40 year SF Valley resident and small business person.  
Option 1, addresses traffic issue and saves Sepulveda Basin.  
T.Y.  
Bill Panzera

Oh by the way do **you have a friend or family member who would benefit from our services (home, auto or earthquake insurance)?** Every time you refer someone to our office for a FREE, no-obligation comparison quote on their home or auto insurance I will automatically enter your name into our December 2008 **"Thanks for the Referral"** Drawing for a **NEW 42" Flat Screen Plasma Television (\$1500 Value)**. Your name will also be automatically entered into our MONTHLY Drawing for an **Apple iPod Nano \*(\$150 Value)!** Remember there is NO limit to the number of people you can refer or the number of times you can be entered to win. Multiple referrals mean multiple chances for you to win . Ask me for more details about our NEW 2008 Referral Contest... \*Agency must reach 10 referrals per month for Ipod to be awarded.

**www.panzerains.com**

**Thank you for the privilege of handling your insurance!**

Bill Panzera

Panzera Insurance Agency, Inc.

Phone: 818-996-8007 Fax 818-881-1374

Lic. # OC28288



"Jeanne Polak-Recht"  
<jpmor@verizon.net>  
05/28/2008 02:14 PM

To <eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov>  
cc  
bcc  
Subject Connector ramp to from southbound 405 to by Caltrans

Mr. Aguilar:

Of the four options proposed to build a connector from the southbound I-405 to the northbound 101 I support Alternative 1 only or Alternative 4.

Carving up the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Area, the major green space in the San Fernando Valley is unacceptable. The Wildlife area is not only home to Canada Geese, Herons, Egrets, Cormorants and many species of ducks but a learning site for elementary school children from all over Los Angeles County. Besides the environmental destruction which will ensue any person who hikes in the basin, plays cricket in the cricket field, holds parties for children in the Woodley Park will be affected by the increasing noise, pollution and lack of green space. This area is precious. Once it's gone its gone.

I urge you implement Alternatives 1 or 4 only.

Sincerely,

Jeanne Polak-Recht



<jpollakoff@adelphia.net>

05/28/2008 12:45 PM

To eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov

cc

bcc

Subject I-405 to Westbound 101

Dear Sir,

I seldom bother to write public officials however, I believe that the current decision regarding a new connector road from the southbound I-405 to the westbound US-101 deserve even my own cynical attempts to influence public discussion.

After attending the local hearing and as a local resident and commuter, I hope you will consider the broader appeal of Alternative 1. The impact satisfies all but the extreme views on either side!

thanks

Jeff Pollakoff



alana  
<alanareed786@yahoo.com>

05/28/2008 09:59 PM

To eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov

cc

bcc

Subject Preserve the Sepuveda Wildlife!

Mr. Aguilar:

I'm writing to support option #1 or #4 regarding this issue. The smallest build option (#1) will support the community perfectly fine. I live in the immediate area and I wouldn't need to travel from Burbank to southbound 405 and then to the 101. If one is already at Burbank near Sepulveda, it's just as easy to get on the 101 by one of the nearby entrances that already exist.

The wildlife area is a valuable community resource. I visit there 2-3 weekends a month and always am happy to see many people out at the same time enjoying a wild place -- a bit of country in the urban jungle -- so near to their own homes.

Thank you for your consideration.

Alana L. Reed  
Valley Glen, CA

---



Ian Walmsley  
<iwalmsleydesign@sbcglobal.net>

05/28/2008 01:46 PM

To: eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov

cc

bcc

Subject: Wildlife refuge

Dear Mr Aguilar,

The Sepulveda Dam Wildlife Refuge is a community resource which can not be replaced. When it's gone, that's it.

Please make every effort to save the Reserve from invasive building projects. The whole community will thank you.

Sincerely,  
Ian Walmsley



Waltona@aol.com  
05/28/2008 05:53 PM

To eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov  
cc  
bcc  
Subject preservation of the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife area

**URGENT**

We are writing to you to let you know we strongly support the preservation of the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife area and the selection of a new connector from the southbound 405 to northbound 101 where the Wildlife Reserve would remain intact or support no new construction at all.

-----  
Waltona Manion  
6342 Allott Avenue  
Van Nuys, California 91401  
OFC 818-785-5525  
FAX 818-785-5585  
E-MAIL [waltona@waltonamanion.com](mailto:waltona@waltonamanion.com)

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\*\*\*\*\*

Get trade secrets for amazing burgers. Watch "Cooking with Tyler Florence" on AOL Food.  
(<http://food.aol.com/tyler-florence?video=4&?NCID=aolfod00030000000002>)



"sammywhammy@earthlink.net"  
et  
<sammywhammy@earthlink.net>  
et>

05/28/2008 09:20 PM

Please respond to  
sammywhammy@earthlink.net

To: eduardo.aguilar@dot.ca.gov

cc

bcc

Subject: Sepulveda Wetlands in regards to the expansion of the 405 freeway

> [Original Message]

> From: Mail Delivery System

<Mailer-Daemon@elasmtp-masked.atl.sa.earthlink.net>

> To: <sammywhammy@earthlink.net>

> Date: 5/28/2008 9:15:59 PM

> Subject: Mail delivery failed: returning message to sender

>

> This message was created automatically by mail delivery software.

>

> A message that you sent could not be delivered to one or more of its  
> recipients. This is a permanent error. The following address(es) failed:

>

> eduardoaguilar@dot.ca.gov

> SMTP error from remote mail server after RCPT

TO:<eduardoaguilar@dot.ca.gov>:

> host sacspam02.dot.ca.gov [149.136.20.9]: 550 cuda\_nsu  
eduardoaguilar@dot.ca.gov... No such user

>

> ----- This is a copy of the message, including all the headers. --- --

>

> Return-path: <sammywhammy@earthlink.net>

> Received: from [71.189.35.153] (helo=earthlink.net)

> by elasmtp masked.atl.sa.earthlink.net with esmtpa (Exim 4.67)

> (envelope from <sammywhammy@earthlink.net>)

> id 1K1ZYS-00031f 6Q

> for eduardoaguilar@dot.ca.gov; Thu, 29 May 2008 00:15:56 -0400

> Message ID: <380-22008542941652734@earthlink.net>

> X-Priority: 3

> Reply-To: sammywhammy@earthlink.net

> X-Mailer: EarthLink MailBox 2005.2.108.0 (Windows)

> From: "sammywhammy@earthlink.net" <sammywhammy@earthlink.net>

> To: eduardoaguilar@dot.ca.gov

> Subject: Sepulveda Wetlands

> Date: Wed, 28 May 2008 21:16:52 -0700

> MIME-Version: 1.0

> Content-Type: multipart/alternative;

> boundary="-----=\_NextPart\_2338415291417441652734"

>

> -----=\_NextPart\_2338415291417441652734

> Content-type: text/plain; charset US-ASCII

>

>

>

> Dear Sir,

>

> I am a teacher who has been teaching the wetlands for the last  
17 years. I feel it is important that children learn and understand what  
they do for birds and other animals. I have just heard that you are







"Jackie Wollner"  
<jackiewollner@roadrunner.com>

05/28/2008 04:50 PM

Please respond to  
<jackiewollner@roadrunner.com>

To <eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov>

cc

bcc

Subject Preserve Sepuveda Wildlife

I'm writing in support of option #1 or #4. The smallest build option (#1) will support the community perfectly well. I live in the immediate area and I would not need to travel from Burbank to the southbound 405 and then to the 101. If you are already at Burbank near Sepulveda, it's easy to get on the 101 by one of the existing entrances nearby.

The wildlife area is a valuable community resource. I visit there 2-3 weekends a month and always am happy to see many families out at the same time enjoying a wild place so near to their own homes.

Thank you for your consideration.

Jackie Wollner  
Van Nuys, CA

---

My email is now [jackiewollner@roadrunner.com](mailto:jackiewollner@roadrunner.com)  
[www.jackiewollner.com](http://www.jackiewollner.com)



Charlie Woods  
<woodscharlie@hotmail.com>  
>  
05/28/2008 02:36 PM

To <eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov>  
cc  
bcc  
Subject NO TO ALTERNATIVES 2 AND 3!

Dear Eduardo,

Please help to keep a freeway on- and off- ramp from being built in the heart of the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve. Help save this oasis of nature and tranquility!

Caltrans proposes to build a new connector road from the southbound I-405 to the westbound US-101. If Alternative 2 or Alternative 3 is selected, an on-ramp and off-ramp will be built in the Wildlife Reserve near the Wildlife Lake. Neither Alternative 1 nor the No Build Alternative would harm the Wildlife Reserve.

I support the Wildlife Reserve and putting a freeway on- and off-ramp through the Wildlife Reserve is absolutely unacceptable. In other words, NO TO ALTERNATIVES 2 AND 3!

Yours Sincerely,

Charlie Woods

---

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"Ballona Wetlands Land Trust "  
<landtrust@ballona.org>

05/29/2008 01:27 PM

Please respond to  
<landtrust@ballona.org>

To <eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov>

cc

bcc

Subject I405/101 Connector

Dear Mr. Aguilar,

Our organization, the Ballona Wetlands Land Trust, was founded in 1994 with the mission of securing the preservation and restoration of the entire Ballona Wetlands ecosystem. We represent a diverse membership of over 3,000 individuals committed preserving what remains of our ecological heritage here in Los Angeles. It is our fervent belief that thriving natural ecosystems can coexist with our dense human metropolis, and indeed that the proximity of open space and protected wildlife is crucial to the health and wellbeing of city residents.

In our efforts to ensure the most effective stewardship of Ballona, we have looked to the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve as a model mixed-use park. The Department of Recreation and Parks has done an exceptional job of providing recreational opportunities while imbuing visitors with reverence and respect for endangered local wildlife, and we hope to imitate their success with the restoration of Ballona. It is thus with great dismay that we learned of the proposal to construct new on- and off- ramps in the Reserve. These proposals would permanently diminish the wildlife value of the Reserve and irreparably damage one of our city's most noted places of tranquility and ecological diversity.

We strongly urge the California Department of Transportation to consider alternative 1 or the No Build alternative for the I405/101 connector, and consider Alternatives 2 and 3 unacceptably damaging to our shared ecological heritage.

Sincerely,  
Mary Davis  
Chairwoman of the Board

Ballona Wetlands Land Trust  
Box 5623  
Playa del Rey, CA 90296  
(310) 264-9468  
[www.ballona.org](http://www.ballona.org)



"Tom Katsis "  
<greekmoose@adelphia.net>

05/29/2008 02:27 PM

To <eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov>

cc

bcc

Subject: Preservation of Sepulveda Wildlife

Dear Eduardo,

Though it's hard to believe in our crowded valley that so many little creatures still abound, I do want to implore you to support option #1 or #4. The smallest build option (#1) will support the community perfectly well. My wife and I live in the affected area and don't have to travel from Burbank to the southbound 405 and then to the 101. For those already at Burbank near Sepulveda, it's easy to get on the 101 by one of the existing entrances nearby.

The wildlife area is a valuable community resource, and me and my friends enjoy taking our families to a Nature's habitat so near to us!

Most sincerely yours,

Tom Katsis



Tom Katsis  
818.785.5755  
tomkatsis@email.com  
[www.tomkatsis.com](http://www.tomkatsis.com)



teresa tonai  
<tatonai@yahoo.com>  
05/31/2008 10:59 AM

To eduardo\_aguilar@dot.ca.gov  
cc  
bcc

Subject Don't hurt our Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Refuge!

Dear Mr. Aguilar,

As a life long resident of the San Fernando Valley, the Sepulveda Basin is a much needed area for its natural reserve for local wildlife. I have enjoyed walking through the reserve on many occasions as well as enjoying the lake and purchasing produce at Tapia Farms. All of these elements of the Basin makes the toil of the work week seem far away.

Having grown up in the West Valley when there were still many "natural" areas, I know the benefit of interacting with nature and observing wildlife. I have many wonderful memories of walking through the hills, gazing at polliwogs, fish and birds around Calabasas Creek and interacting with nature in my neighborhood.

This wildlife reserve is an oasis of nature and tranquility that is so important to keep the balance within the valley. For many families this is an opportunity to enjoy and teach their children about nature and the environment. As the gasoline prices keep rising, many cannot afford to go outside their neighborhoods, or do not know where to go. As many cities, including our own try to bring back areas to their natural state, we should not take away ones that already exist.

Please do not take allow the proposed connector road to impose upon or ruin the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Refuge.

Thank you,  
Teresa Tonai  
Lake Balboa

May 13, 2008

Mr. Ronald Kosinski, Deputy Director  
California Dept. of Transportation  
Division of Environmental Planning (I405/101Connector)  
100 S. Main Street – Mail Stop 16A  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

**RECEIVED**  
JUN 02 2008

Re: Caltrans Connector Road from sI-405 to wUS-101

I urge the approval of **Alternative 1**. NO FREEWAY RAMPS IN THE WILDLIFE RESERVE!!!!

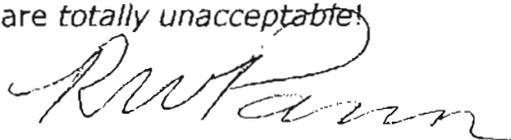
Ever since the inception of the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve (SBWR), my friends and I utilize that area for birdwatching *at least* twice a week, year long, rain or shine.

SBWR is of vital use to wildlife, particularly to birds both local and migratory, both north and south of Burbank Blvd. It is a precious, albeit diminutive, source of food and water to wildlife.

Furthermore, it affords a magnificent opportunity for local residents and school children to observe and learn about California fauna and flora. As such it must be preserved intact and maintained in as natural a condition as possible.

Any more freeway incursions into SBWR are *totally unacceptable!*

Robert W. Pann  
2512 Aiken Avenue  
Los Angeles, CA 90064-3306



bobpann@earthlink.net

June 1, 2008

**RECEIVED**

JUN 03 2008

Mr. Ronald Kosinski  
Deputy District Director  
California Dept of Transportation  
Division of Environmental Planning (I-405/101 Connector)  
100 S. Main Street  
Mail Stop 16A  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

RE: I-405/101 Connector

Dear Mr. Kosinski:

Having been a tax-paying resident of the San Fernando Valley for over 25 years and a long-term member of the Sierra Club, this letter is to strongly request that you consider better options for the proposed I-405/101 connector.

I strongly oppose Cal Trans's pursuit of the proposed Options 1 and 2 whereby an on/off ramp from the southbound 405 to the northbound 101 will go right through the Reserve.

Given that the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve is such a vital area for:

- Migrating wildlife (over 240 species),
- Educational activities (school field trips, parents trips with their own children), and
- One of the few recreational areas within the San Fernando Valley accessible to so many residents and providing access to wildlife watching and peace within the "city".

Please reconsider all options and think twice before you make a move in the name of "progress". If all we have is freeway and cars, what we are giving ourselves and our children. Additionally, we need to protect the wildlife that we have left. It is a moral responsibility that we need to pay heed to in this time of environmental degradation.

Thank you.

Gloria Allen  
5720 Owensmouth Avenue, #159  
Woodland Hills, CA 91367





**APPENDIX Z | WRITTEN FORMAL COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS  
SUBMITTED AT PUBLIC HEARING**

---



**QUESTION/COMMENT CARD**

STATE OF CALIFORNIA  
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
405/US-101 CONNECTOR IMPROVEMENT PROJECT PUBLIC HEARING



NAME \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_  
ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_  
CITY/STATE/ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

I WOULD LIKE TO ASK THE FOLLOWING QUESTION: \_\_\_\_\_  
 I WOULD LIKE TO GIVE THE FOLLOWING QUESTION/ANSWER: \_\_\_\_\_  
 I WOULD LIKE TO HEAR THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT/FEEDBACK/REMARKS: \_\_\_\_\_

**3.1 Joyce MacKinnon, Van Nuys**

Ms. McKinnon made this written comment at the Public Hearing. The main point of her commentary is:

1. Opposes Alternative 2 and 3.

Response to Joyce MacKinnon's May 14, 2008 Public Hearing Written Comment regarding the Draft EA/IS and Section 4(f) Evaluation for the I-405/US-101 Connector Improvement Project

1. In light of the overwhelming concern and opposition to any encroachment upon the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve, as well as the requirements set forth by Section 4(f) of the U.S. Department of Transportation Act, **Alternatives 2 and 3 have been rejected.** CALTRANS will only pursue Alternative 1 despite LADOT's continued opposition to this alternative.

**QUESTION/COMMENT CARD**

STATE OF CALIFORNIA  
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
I-405/US-101 CONNECTOR IMPROVEMENT PROJECT PUBLIC HEARING



NAME \_\_\_\_\_  
ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_  
CITY \_\_\_\_\_  
STATE \_\_\_\_\_  
ZIP \_\_\_\_\_  
PHONE \_\_\_\_\_  
E-MAIL \_\_\_\_\_

I WISH TO SPEAK \_\_\_\_\_  
 I WOULD LIKE TO HAVE THE FOLLOWING QUESTION ANSWERED: \_\_\_\_\_  
 I WOULD LIKE TO HAVE THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT FILED FOR THE RECORD: \_\_\_\_\_

STATEMENT: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**3.2 Donna Timlin, Chatsworth**

Ms. Timlin made these written comments at the Public Hearing. The main points of her commentary are:

1. The Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve should be preserved.
2. Opposes Alternatives 2 and 3.

Response to Donna Timlin's May 14, 2008 Public Hearing Written Comments regarding the Draft EA/IS and Section 4(f) Evaluation for the I-405/US-101 Connector Improvement Project

1. Please see response to 3.1 above.

**QUESTION/COMMENT CARD**  
STATE OF CALIFORNIA  
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
SOUTHBOUND CONNECTOR IMPROVEMENT PROJECT PUBLIC HEARING



NAME \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_  
ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE \_\_\_\_\_  
CITY / STATE / ZIP \_\_\_\_\_  
CITY / COUNTY \_\_\_\_\_

I WANT TO SPEAK AT THE PUBLIC HEARING.  
 I WOULD LIKE TO HAVE MY QUESTION ANSWERED.  
 I WOULD LIKE TO HAVE THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT READ AT THE HEARING.

//

Comments will be reviewed and posted on May 26, 2008. Comments will be made in English. Department of Transportation  
2100 K Street, Los Angeles, CA 90007. For more information, please call (800) 452-4540 or (213) 345-1000. Fax: (213) 345-1000.

**3.3 Carolyn Oppenheimer, Northridge**

Ms. Oppenheimer made this written comment at the Public Hearing. The main point of her commentary is:

1. The Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve should be preserved.

Response to Carolyn Oppenheimer's May 14, 2008 Public Hearing Written Comment regarding the Draft EA/IS and Section 4(f) Evaluation for the I-405/US-101 Connector Improvement Project

1. Please see response to 3.1 above.

K-11

**QUESTION/COMMENT CARD**

STATE OF CALIFORNIA  
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
I-405/S. 101 CONNECTOR IMPROVEMENT PROJECT PUBLIC HEARING



NAME: Elizabeth J. Brainerd      PHONE: 310 312 4111

ADDRESS: 10000 Wilshire Blvd      CITY: Los Angeles

CITY STATE ZIP: Los Angeles CA 90024

E-MAIL ADDRESS: elizabeth@brainerd.com

I WISH TO SPEAK

I WOULD LIKE TO HAVE THE FOLLOWING QUESTION ANSWERED

I WOULD LIKE TO HAVE THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT FILLED FOR THE RECORD

STATEMENT:

*I would like to know how the project will address the sound walls. I would like to know if the project will address the sound walls. I would like to know if the project will address the sound walls.*

**3.4 Elizabeth J. Brainerd, Los Angeles**

Ms. Brainerd made these comments at the Public Hearing. The main points of her commentary are:

1. On the NB 405 car pool lane project, please use decorative bricks for the sound walls.
2. Plant hedges at the SB ramp at Sunset Boulevard and Church Lane.

Response to Elizabeth J. Brainerd's May 14, 2008 Public Hearing Written Comments regarding the Draft EA/IS and Section 4(f) Evaluation for the I-405/US-101 Connector Improvement Project

1. Alternate project (Northbound Interstate 405 High Occupancy Vehicle Lane Project) will address both of these issues.



The construction would create noise, dust & light pollution that simply can't be mitigated. The San Ramon Wildfire Refuge is home to over 200 species of birds and my organization, the San Ramon Valley Audubon Society, uses it for an environmental education program that currently serves over 2000 low-income children/year.

I'd like to point out that is the only wildfire refuge located in the San Ramon Valley and has an estimated 1,000,000 people living in a 10 mile radius.

My organization would support the no build alternative.

Sincerely,  
Seth Shtair

### 3.5 Seth Shtair

Mr. Shtair made this comment at the Public Hearing. The main point of her commentary is:

1. Opposes Alternative 2 and 3.

Response to Seth Shtair's May 14, 2008 Public Hearing Written Comment regarding the Draft EA/IS and Section 4(f) Evaluation for the I-405/US-101 Connector Improvement Project

1. Please see response to 3.1 above.

**QUESTION/COMMENT CARD**

STATE OF CALIFORNIA  
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
I-405/US-101 CONNECTOR IMPROVEMENT PROJECT PUBLIC HEARING



NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_ CITY: \_\_\_\_\_ STATE: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_ TIME: \_\_\_\_\_

I WISH TO SPEAK AT THE PUBLIC HEARING.

I WOULD LIKE TO HAVE THE FOLLOWING QUESTION ANSWERED: \_\_\_\_\_

I WOULD LIKE TO HAVE THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT FILED FOR THE RECORD: \_\_\_\_\_

STATEMENT: \_\_\_\_\_

**3.6 Lisa Reveen, Lake Balboa**

Ms. Reveen made this comment at the Public Hearing. The main point of her commentary is:

1. Opposes Alternative 2 and 3.

Response to Lisa Reveen's May 14, 2008 Public Hearing Written Comment regarding the Draft EA/IS and Section 4(f) Evaluation for the I-405/US-101 Connector Improvement Project

1. Please see response to 3.1 above.





**QUESTION/COMMENT CARD**

STATE OF CALIFORNIA  
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
I-405/U.S. 101 CONNECTOR IMPROVEMENT PROJECT PUBLIC HEARING



NAME: Gerald Silver DATE: 5-14-08  
ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_  
CITY/STATE/ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_  
E-MAIL/PHONE NO.: \_\_\_\_\_

I WISH TO SPEAK (I will speak from the microphone)

I WOULD LIKE TO HAVE THE FOLLOWING QUESTION ANSWERED: \_\_\_\_\_

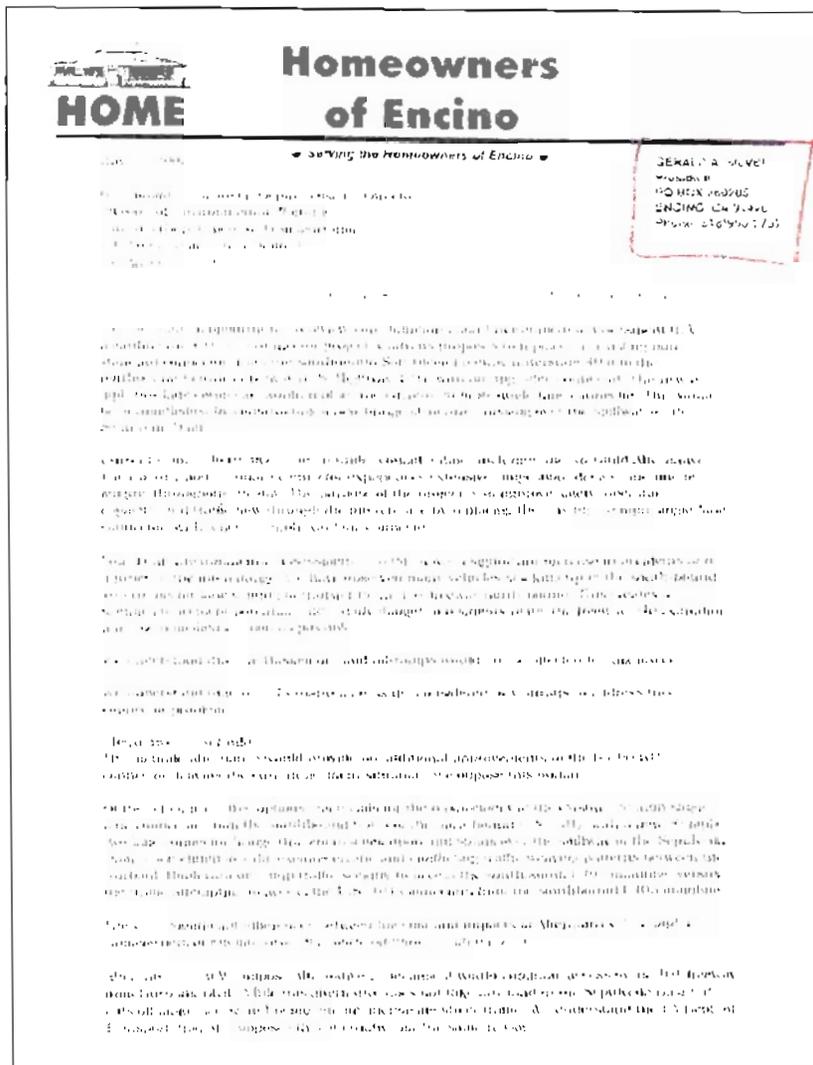
I WOULD LIKE TO HAVE THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT FILED FOR THE RECORD: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
PROTEST      OPPOSED      FAVOR      NEUTRAL

**3.9 Gerald Silver, Encino**

Mr. Silver made these comments at the Public Hearing. The main point of his commentary is:

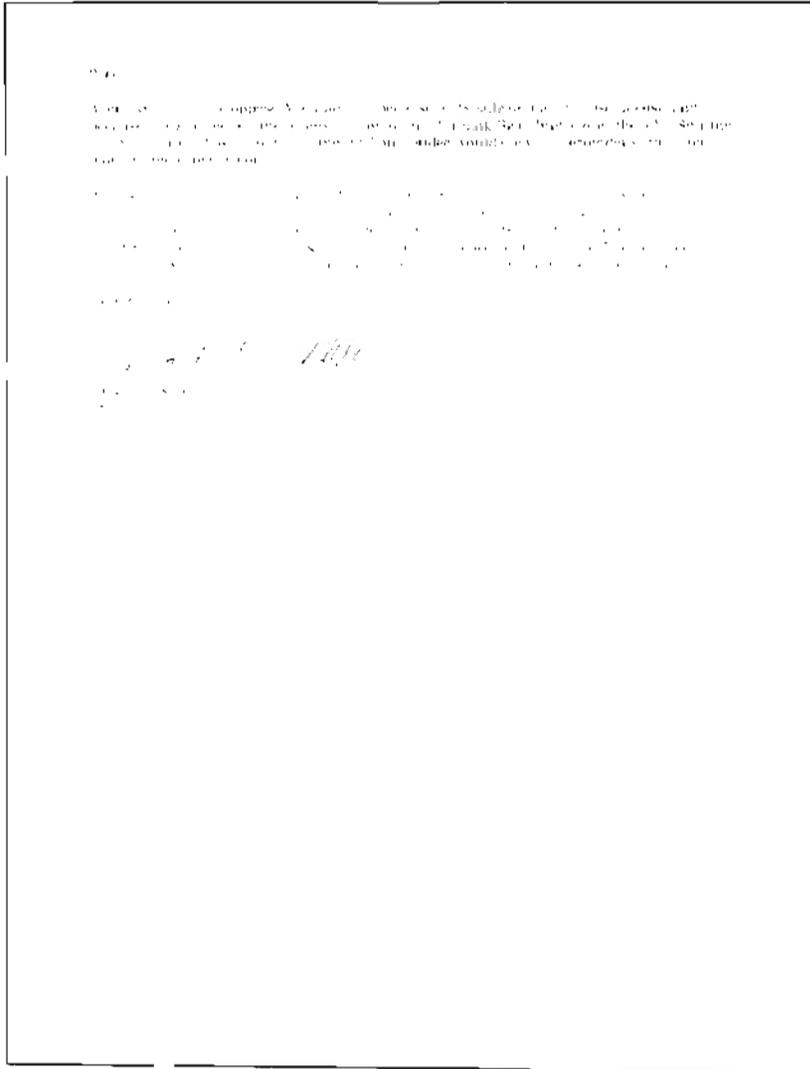
1. See the attached letter on the subsequent pages.



3.9 Gerald Silver

Mr. Silver made these comments at the Public Hearing. The main points of his commentary are:

1. Support Alternative 3.
2. Assuming that the new connector is constructed, please estimate the number of lives saved, amount of injuries and property damage avoided by this project? Caltrans needs to stress this issue in its presentations, since safety is a major and significant justification for the project. It did not receive adequate explanation in your presentation at VBS on May 14, 2008.
3. Please expand on the issue of "emergency" access to hospitals, due to greater mobility. Mr. Hanna stated that a major benefit of the new connector would be better access from the freeway in emergencies. Please explain this in more detail. In our view, Caltrans needs to stress this issue in its presentations, since access to emergency hospitals, such as the Encino Hospital, etc. is a major and significant justification for the project. It did not receive adequate explanation in your presentation at VBS on May 14, 2008.
4. Mr. Hanna stated that there would be a \$28,000,000 dollar savings to the community, as a result of the new connector. Please expand on this issue, and how the amount was calculated, and over what period. In our view, Caltrans



**3.9 Gerald Silver**

needs to stress this issue in its presentations, since cost saving is a major and significant justification for the project. It did not receive adequate explanation in your presentation at VBS on May 14, 2008.

5. Caltrans did not fully explain the increased traffic impacts on local City streets, including Burbank Blvd., Sepulveda and Ventura Blvd., if access from Burbank Blvd to the 101 freeway is cut off. In our view, Caltrans needs to stress this issue in its presentations, since increased traffic on City streets is a major and significant concern. It did not receive adequate explanation in your presentation at VBS on May 14, 2008.
6. Caltrans did not explain the time frame for the construction of each alternative. In particular how long will it take to construct each alternative, and how long would it take to rebuild the Burbank bridge over the 405, if Alternative 2 is selected. In our view, Caltrans needs to stress this issue in its presentations, since construction delays are a major and significant concern. It did not receive adequate explanation in your presentation at VBS on May 14, 2008.
7. Please explain in more detail the amount of outreach to the Encino, Van Nuys, Sherman Oaks, and Lake Balboa communities regarding this project. There appeared to be a few members of the public in attendance at the hearing (short of a group of Basin supporters), and little understanding of the consequences of closing the Burbank

**QUESTION/COMMENT CARD**

STATE OF CALIFORNIA  
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
I-405/US-101 CONNECTOR IMPROVEMENT PROJECT PUBLIC HEARING



DATE: 5/16/08  
TIME: 3:25 PM

NAME: DON NEUMARK  
ADDRESS: NEUMARK + GARDNER

I WISH TO SPEAK  
 I WOULD LIKE TO HAVE THE FOLLOWING QUESTION ANSWERED  
 I WOULD LIKE TO HAVE THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT FILED FOR THE RECORD

SUGGESTION: WHY USE SO MUCH ROADSIDE FOR THE SUBURBAN RAMP & ALTERNATIVE? THIS CAN BE ACCOMPLISHED WITH LESS LAND USE BY MOVING THE ACCESS 200 FT TO THE ARMY CORPS FERRIS ROAD WITH AN INCREASE IN THE TURNING RADIUS AT THE CHANGE IN DIRECTION (SEE MAP)

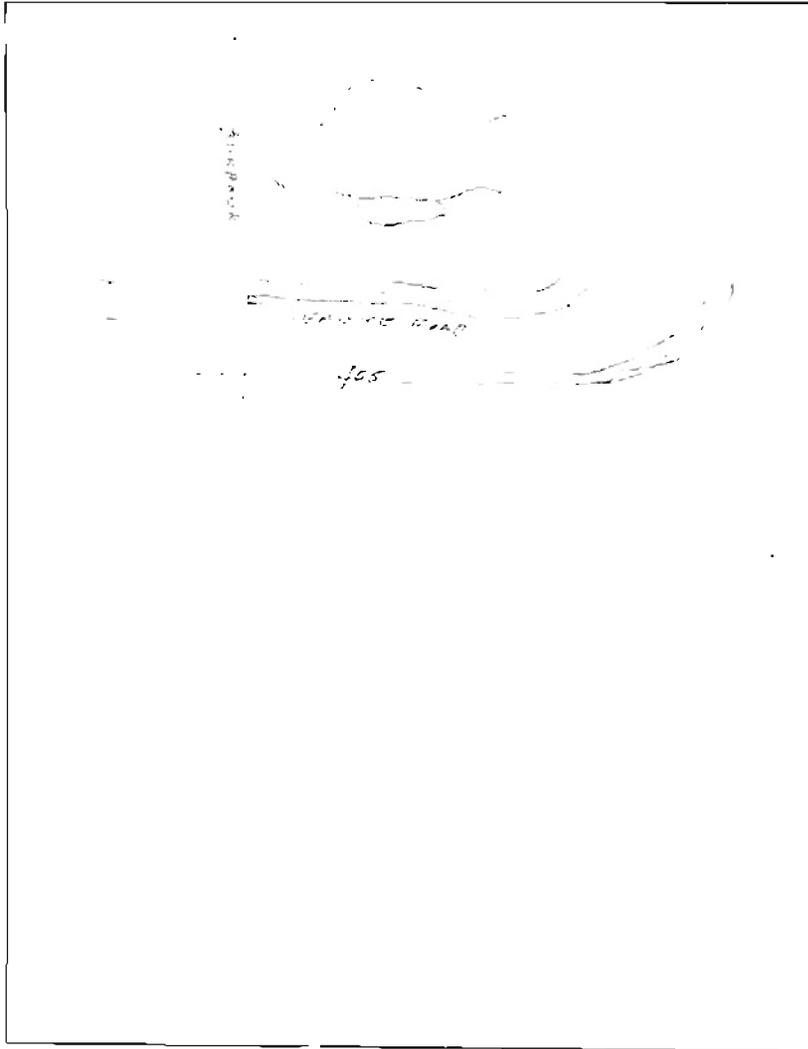
**3.10 Don Neumark, Encino**

Mr. Neumark made this comment at the Public Hearing. The main points of his commentary is:

1. Has suggested a compromise to Alternatives 2 and 3.

Response to Don Neumark's May 14, 2008 Public Hearing Written Comment regarding the Draft EA/IS and Section 4(f) Evaluation for the I-405/US-101 Connector Improvement Project

1. Although the compromise would lessen the impact to the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve, the overwhelming support against Alternative 2 and 3 deem these alternatives as rejected and Caltrans will select Alternative 1.



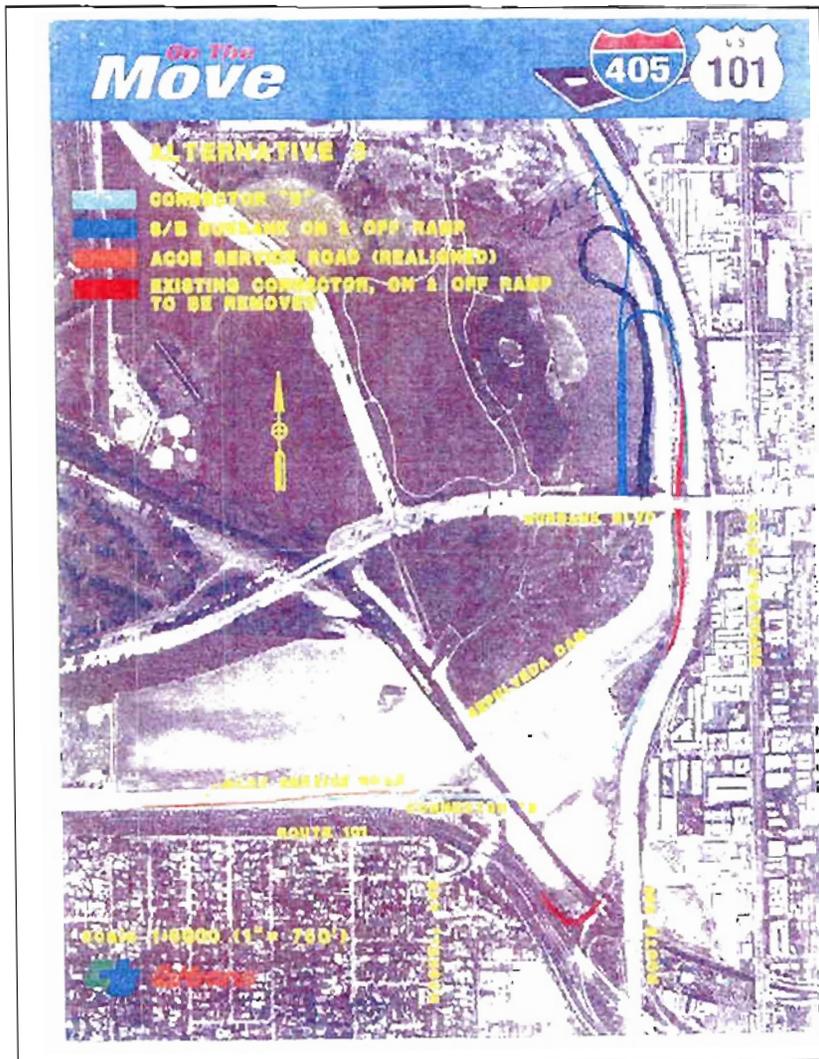
### 3.10 Don Neumark

Mr. Neumark made this comment at the Public Hearing. The main points of his commentary is:

1. Has suggested a compromise to Alternatives 2 and 3.

Response to Don Neumark's May 14, 2008 Public Hearing Written Comment regarding the Draft EA/IS and Section 4(f) Evaluation for the I-405/US-101 Connector Improvement Project

1. Although the compromise would lessen the impact to the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve, the overwhelming support against Alternative 2 and 3 deem these alternatives as rejected and Caltrans will select Alternative 1.



### 3.10 Don Neumark

Mr. Neumark made this comment at the Public Hearing. The main points of his commentary is:

1. Has suggested a compromise to Alternatives 2 and 3.

Response to Don Neumark's May 14, 2008 Public Hearing Written Comment regarding the Draft EA/IS and Section 4(f) Evaluation for the I-405/US-101 Connector Improvement Project

1. Although the compromise would lessen the impact to the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve, the overwhelming support against Alternative 2 and 3 deem these alternatives as rejected and Caltrans will select Alternative 1.

**QUESTION/COMMENT CARD**

STATE OF CALIFORNIA  
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
I-405/US-101 CONNECTOR IMPROVEMENT PROJECT PUBLIC HEARING



NAME LINDA PRUETT DATE 5/14/08  
 ADDRESS 7142 LAKE BALBOA PHONE (415) 491-1214  
 CITY STATE OF LAKE BALBOA  
 E-MAIL ADDRESS CALTRANS@CALTRANS.NET

I WISH TO SPEAK AT THE PUBLIC HEARING AND RECORD  
 I WOULD LIKE TO HAVE THE FOLLOWING QUESTION ANSWERED - OR ANSWERED FROM RECORD - BY THE PROJECT TEAM  
 I WOULD LIKE TO HAVE THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT FILED FOR THE RECORD

I AM SUPPORTING THE PROJECT      I AM OPPOSED      NEUTRAL

I am in support of the project. I am in this area in the city of Lake Balboa and I would like to see the project completed. I am in support of the project and I would like to see the project completed. I am in support of the project and I would like to see the project completed.

**3.11 Linda Pruett, Lake Balboa**

Ms. Pruett made this comment at the Public Hearing. The main points of her commentary is:

1. The Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve should be preserved.

Response to Linda Pruett's May 14, 2008 Public Hearing Written Comment regarding the Draft EA/IS and Section 4(f) Evaluation for the I-405/US-101 Connector Improvement Project

1. Please see response to 3.1 above.

A. 12

**QUESTION/COMMENT CARD**

STATE OF CALIFORNIA  
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
I-405/US-101 CONNECTOR IMPROVEMENT PROJECT PUBLIC HEARING



NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

CITY: \_\_\_\_\_ STATE: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_

I WISH TO SPEAK \_\_\_\_\_

I WOULD LIKE TO HAVE THE FOLLOWING QUESTION ANSWERED \_\_\_\_\_

I WOULD LIKE TO HAVE THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT FILED FOR THE RECORD \_\_\_\_\_

**3.12 David Bernardoni, Lake Balboa**

Mr. Bernardoni made this comment at the Public Hearing. The main point of his commentary is:

1. In favor of Alternative 1.

Response to David Bernardoni's May 14, 2008 Public Hearing Written Comment regarding the Draft EA/IS and Section 4(f) Evaluation for the I-405/US-101 Connector Improvement Project

1. Please see response to 3.1 above.

**QUESTION/COMMENT CARD**

STATE OF CALIFORNIA  
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
I-405/US-101 CONNECTOR IMPROVEMENT PROJECT PUBLIC HEARING



NAME: Mercene Chegwiddden DATE: 7/14/08  
 ADDRESS: 11541 Romero Ln PHONE:  
 CITY/STATE/ZIP: Tarzana CA 91350  
 EMAIL ADDRESS: M.Chegwiddden@ad.rrn.com

I WISH TO SPEAK AT THE PUBLIC HEARING  
 I WOULD LIKE TO HAVE THE FOLLOWING QUESTION ANSWERED: \_\_\_\_\_  
 I WOULD LIKE TO HAVE THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT FILED FOR THE RECORD: \_\_\_\_\_

STATEMENT: \_\_\_\_\_

I am in favor of Alternative 1  
I wish to preserve natural  
resources and

**3.13 Mercene Chegwiddden, Tarzana**

Ms. Chegwiddden made this comment at the Public Hearing. The main point of her commentary is:

1. In favor of Alternative 1.

Response to Mercene Chegwiddden's May 14, 2008 Public Hearing Written Comment regarding the Draft EA/IS and Section 4(f) Evaluation for the I-405/US-101 Connector Improvement Project

1. Please see response to 3.1 above.

**QUESTION/COMMENT CARD**

STATE OF CALIFORNIA  
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
I-405/US 101 CONNECTOR IMPROVEMENT PROJECT PUBLIC HEARING



NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_  
ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_ CITY: \_\_\_\_\_  
PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_

I WISH TO SPEAK AT THE PUBLIC HEARING.

I WOULD LIKE TO HAVE THE FOLLOWING QUESTION ANSWERED: \_\_\_\_\_

I WOULD LIKE TO HAVE THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT FILED FOR THE RECORD: \_\_\_\_\_

STATEMENT: \_\_\_\_\_

**3.14 Lisa Ono, Simi Valley**

Ms. Ono made this comment at the Public Hearing. The main point of her commentary is:

1. See the attached letter on the subsequent pages.

Valdez-Ono Family  
2208 Sweetwood St  
San Valley, CA 91763

May 14, 2008

Mr. Ronald Kosowski  
Deputy District Director, Caltrans District 7  
Division of Environmental Planning  
1705 Main St  
Los Angeles, CA 90013

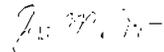
Dear Mr. Kosowski,

I respectfully ask that Caltrans continue to look at solutions and alternatives to the I-405/US-101 Connector Project which will not disrupt the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve.

The Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve is a special place. My eight-year-old son viewed his first plankton there--as have many other schoolchildren brought to visit their local Wildlife Reserve by their teachers. He had the opportunity to learn about food webs, watch how different birds eat, and see firsthand how people can pull together to keep the little bit of nature for kids like him to enjoy.

Thank you for your efforts.

Sincerely,



Lisa Ono & Family

cc: Edmarco Aguilar (email)

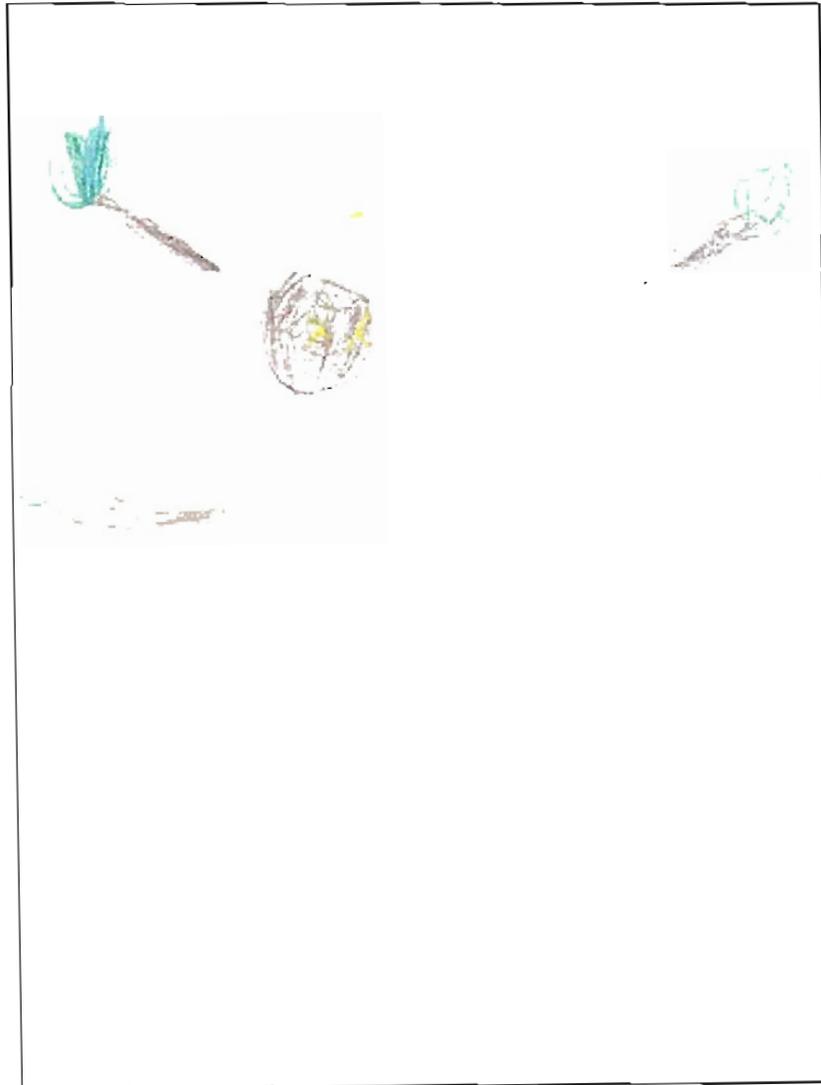
### 3.14 Lisa Ono

Ms. Ono & Family made this comment at the Public Hearing. The main point of her commentary is:

1. The Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve should be preserved.

Response to Lisa Ono & Family's May 14, 2008 Public Hearing Written Comment regarding the Draft EA/IS and Section 4(f) Evaluation for the I-405/US-101 Connector Improvement Project

1. Please see response to 3.1 above.



**3.14**    **Lisa Ono**

Ms. Ono & Family made this comment at the Public Hearing. The main point of her commentary is:

1. The Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve should be preserved.

Response to Lisa Ono & Family's May 14, 2008 Public Hearing Written Comment regarding the Draft EA/IS and Section 4(f) Evaluation for the I-405/US-101 Connector Improvement Project

1. Please see response to 3.1 above.

**QUESTION/COMMENT CARD**

STATE OF CALIFORNIA  
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
CALIFORNIA HIGHWAY IMPROVEMENT PROJECT PUBLIC HEARING



NAME: RICHARD PEDERSON DATE: 5/14/08  
 ADDRESS: 7490 S. PLYMOUTH AVENUE PHONE: 310 347 4622  
 CITY/STATE/ZIP: LA BREA, CA 90001  
 E-MAIL ADDRESS: RICHARD.PEDERSON@SBCOMCAST.COM

WISH TO SPEAK  
 WOULD LIKE TO HAVE THE FOLLOWING QUESTION ANSWERED:  
 I WOULD LIKE TO HAVE THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT FILED FOR THE RECORD:

STATEMENT

I am opposed to ALTERNATIVES TWO AND ONE. I DO NOT WANT TO SEE THE ENVIRONMENT OF CALIFORNIA AND OUR FUTURE WILD LIFE AND OPEN SPACE LOST TO DEVELOPMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE. CITY COUNCIL MEMBERS

**3.15 Richard Pederson, Lake Balboa**

Mr. Pederson made this comment at the Public Hearing. The main point of his commentary is:

1. Opposes Alternative 2 and 3.

Response to Richard Pederson's May 14, 2008 Public Hearing Written Comment regarding the Draft EA/IS and Section 4(f) Evaluation for the I-405/US-101 Connector Improvement Project

1. Please see response to 3.1 above.



**QUESTION/COMMENT CARD**

STATE OF CALIFORNIA  
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
I-405/US-101 CONNECTOR IMPROVEMENT PROJECT PUBLIC HEARING



Name Lillian Johnson DATE 5/14/08  
 ADDRESS 20301 Hillside Dr CITY San Diego  
 CITY STATE ZIP San Diego CA 92128  
 E-MAIL ADDRESS ljohnson@earthlink.net

I WISH TO SPEAK \_\_\_\_\_  
 I WOULD LIKE TO HAVE THE FOLLOWING QUESTION ANSWERED \_\_\_\_\_  
 I WOULD LIKE TO HAVE THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT FILED FOR THE RECORD \_\_\_\_\_

NONE

*As an air breather I strongly support either no build or alt 2  
 I strongly oppose alt 3 as they would negatively impact the residential area  
 the bridge that will be built will be bridging a road with no  
 alt 2 would be extremely disruptive with noise pollution light using the bridge needed  
 the fact that alt 3 steps in from the south side this is a bad idea in my opinion  
 the fact that in a matter of 10 minutes from the decision to the start of the work of*

**3.17 Lillian Johnson, North Hills**

Ms. Johnson made these comments at the Public Hearing. The main points of her commentary are:

1. Opposes Alternative 2 and 3.
2. In favor of Alternative 1 or No-Build.

Response to Johnson's May 14, 2008 Public Hearing Written Comments regarding the Draft EA/IS and Section 4(f) Evaluation for the I-405/US-101 Connector Improvement Project

1. Please see response to 3.1 above.

2008 People will have to wait the 2008/09, simply get on the road - a little further but no big deal

**3.17 Lillian Johnson**

Ms. Johnson made these comments at the Public Hearing. The main points of her commentary are:

1. Opposes Alternative 2 and 3.
2. In favor of Alternative 1 or No-Build.

Response to Johnson's May 14, 2008 Public Hearing Written Comments regarding the Draft EA/IS and Section 4(f) Evaluation for the I-405/US-101 Connector Improvement Project

1. Please see response to 3.1 above.



**QUESTION/COMMENT CARD**

STATE OF CALIFORNIA  
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
HIGHWAY 101 CONNECTOR IMPROVEMENT PROJECT PUBLIC HEARING



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_

FAX: \_\_\_\_\_

E-MAIL ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

I WISH TO SPEAK AT THE PUBLIC HEARING

I WOULD LIKE TO HAVE THE FOLLOWING QUESTION ANSWERED: \_\_\_\_\_

I WOULD LIKE TO HAVE THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT FILED FOR THE RECORD: \_\_\_\_\_

**3.19 Deseire Alvarez, Sherman Oaks**

Ms. Alvarez made this comment at the Public Hearing. The main point of her commentary is:

1. In favor of Alternative 1.

Response to Deseire Alvarez's May 14, 2008 Public Hearing Written Comment regarding the Draft EA/IS and Section 4(f) Evaluation for the I-405/US-101 Connector Improvement Project

1. Please see response to 3.1 above.

**QUESTION/COMMENT CARD**

STATE OF CALIFORNIA  
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
I-405/US-101 CONNECTOR IMPROVEMENT PROJECT PUBLIC HEARING



NAME: Mathew Tekulsky STATE: CA  
ADDRESS: 10000 Wilshire Blvd CITY: Los Angeles  
CITY STATE ZIP: Los Angeles CA 90024  
PHONE: 310 205 1234

I WISH TO SPEAK  
 I WOULD LIKE TO HAVE THE FOLLOWING QUESTION ANSWERED  
 I WOULD LIKE TO HAVE THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT FILED FOR THE RECORD

I hope to see a new highway ramp through Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve. I hope there is some way to preserve the habitat of the birds and other animals that live there.

**3.20 Mathew Tekulsky, Los Angeles**

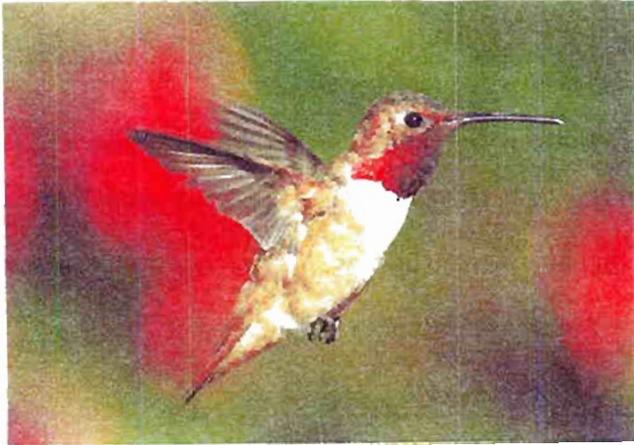
Mr. Tekulsky made this written comment at the Public Hearing. The main point of her commentary is:

- 1. The Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve should be preserved.

Response to Mathew Tekulsky's May 14, 2008 Public Hearing Written Comment regarding the Draft EA/IS and Section 4(f) Evaluation for the I-405/US-101 Connector Improvement Project

- 1. Please see response to 3.1 above.

MATHEW  
TEKULSKY



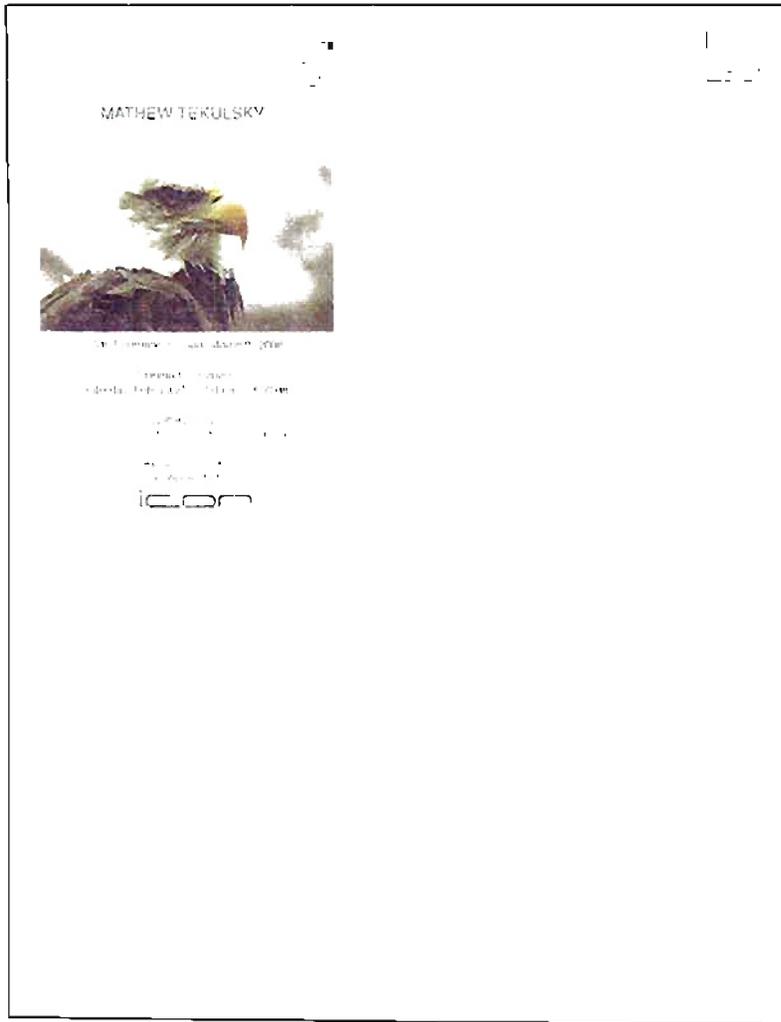
**3.20 Mathew Tekulsky**

Mr. Tekulsky made this written comment at the Public Hearing. The main point of her commentary is:

1. The Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve should be preserved.

Response to Mathew Tekulsky's May 14, 2008 Public Hearing Written Comment regarding the Draft EA/IS and Section 4(f) Evaluation for the I-405/US-101 Connector Improvement Project

1. Please see response to 3.1 above.



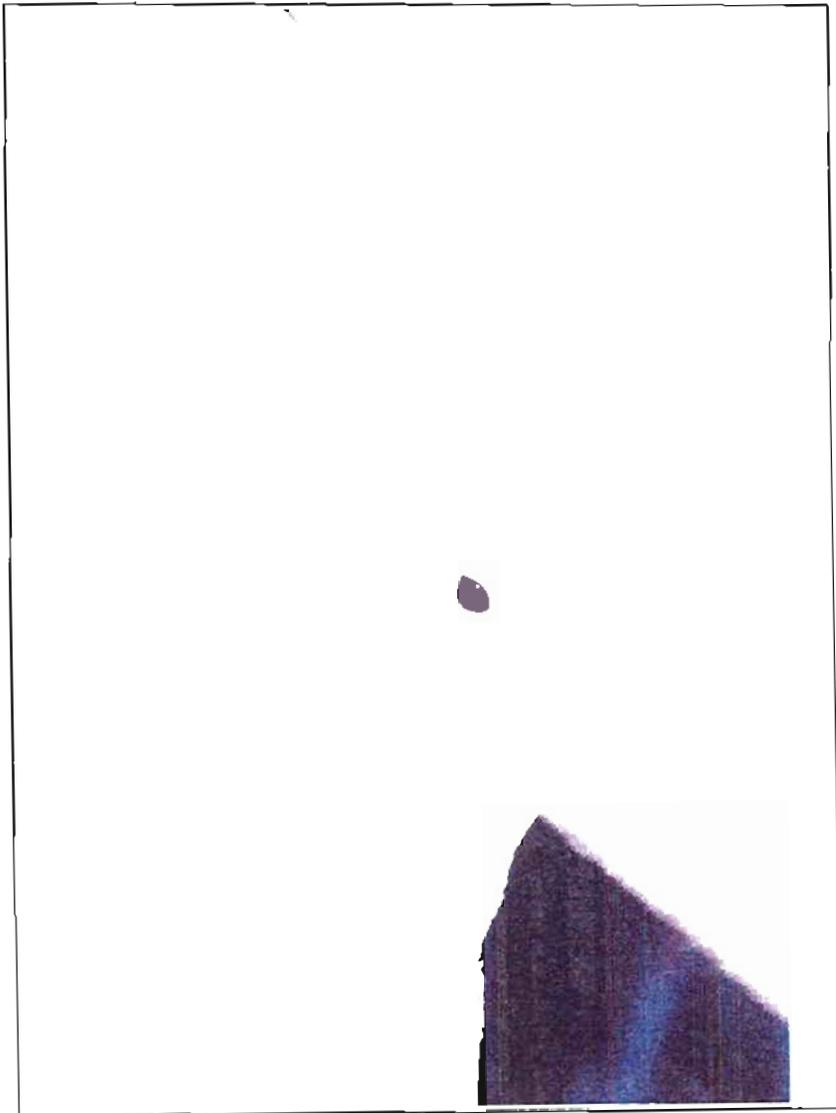
**3.20 Mathew Tekulsky**

Mr. Tekulsky made this written comment at the Public Hearing. The main point of her commentary is:

1. The Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve should be preserved.

Response to Mathew Tekulsky's May 14, 2008 Public Hearing Written Comment regarding the Draft EA/IS and Section 4(f) Evaluation for the I-405/US-101 Connector Improvement Project

1. Please see response to 3.1 above.



**3.20 Mathew Tekulsky**

Mr. Tekulsky made this written comment at the Public Hearing. The main point of her commentary is:

1. The Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve should be preserved.

Response to Mathew Tekulsky's May 14, 2008 Public Hearing Written Comment regarding the Draft EA/IS and Section 4(f) Evaluation for the I-405/US-101 Connector Improvement Project

1. Please see response to 3.1 above.



**3.20 Mathew Tekulsky**

Mr. Tekulsky made this written comment at the Public Hearing. The main point of her commentary is:

1. The Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve should be preserved.

Response to Mathew Tekulsky's May 14, 2008 Public Hearing Written Comment regarding the Draft EA/IS and Section 4(f) Evaluation for the I-405/US-101 Connector Improvement Project

1. Please see response to 3.1 above.



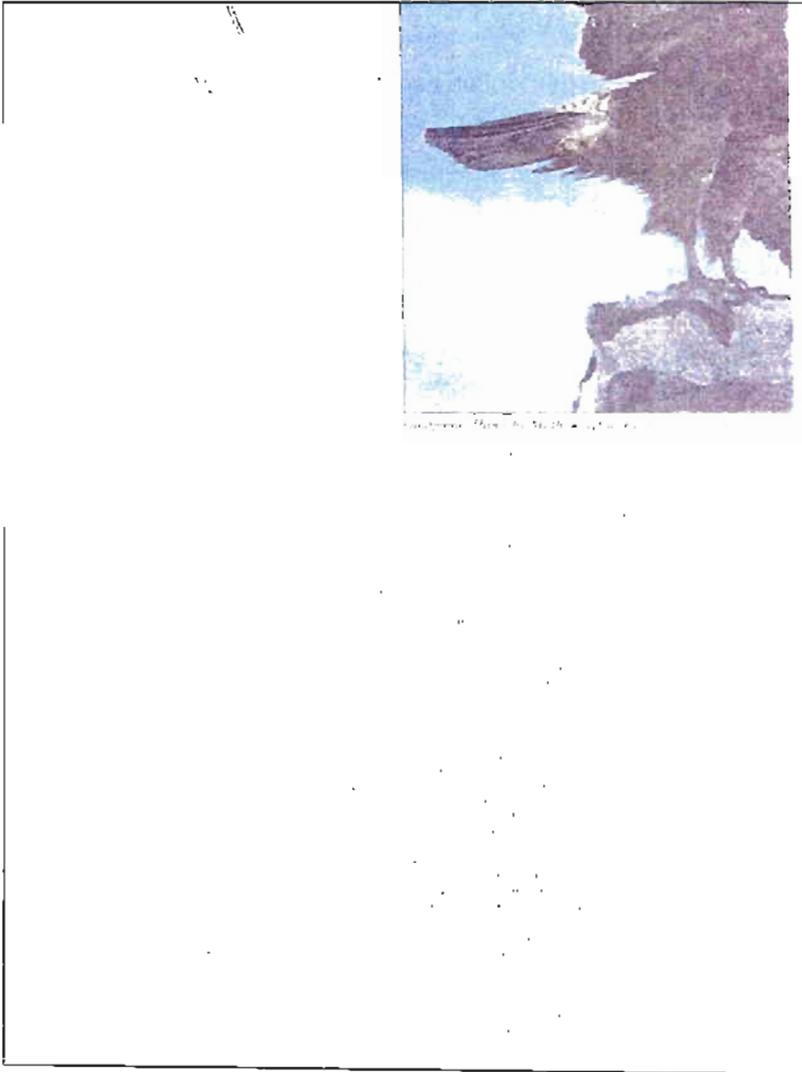
### 3.20 Mathew Tekulsky

Mr. Tekulsky made this written comment at the Public Hearing. The main point of her commentary is:

1. The Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve should be preserved.

Response to Mathew Tekulsky's May 14, 2008 Public Hearing Written Comment regarding the Draft EA/IS and Section 4(f) Evaluation for the I-405/US-101 Connector Improvement Project

1. Please see response to 3.1 above.



**3.20 Mathew Tekulsky**

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1. The Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve should be preserved.

Response to Mathew Tekulsky's May 14, 2008 Public Hearing Written Comment regarding the Draft EA/IS and Section 4(f) Evaluation for the I-405/US-101 Connector Improvement Project

1. Please see response to **3.1** above.



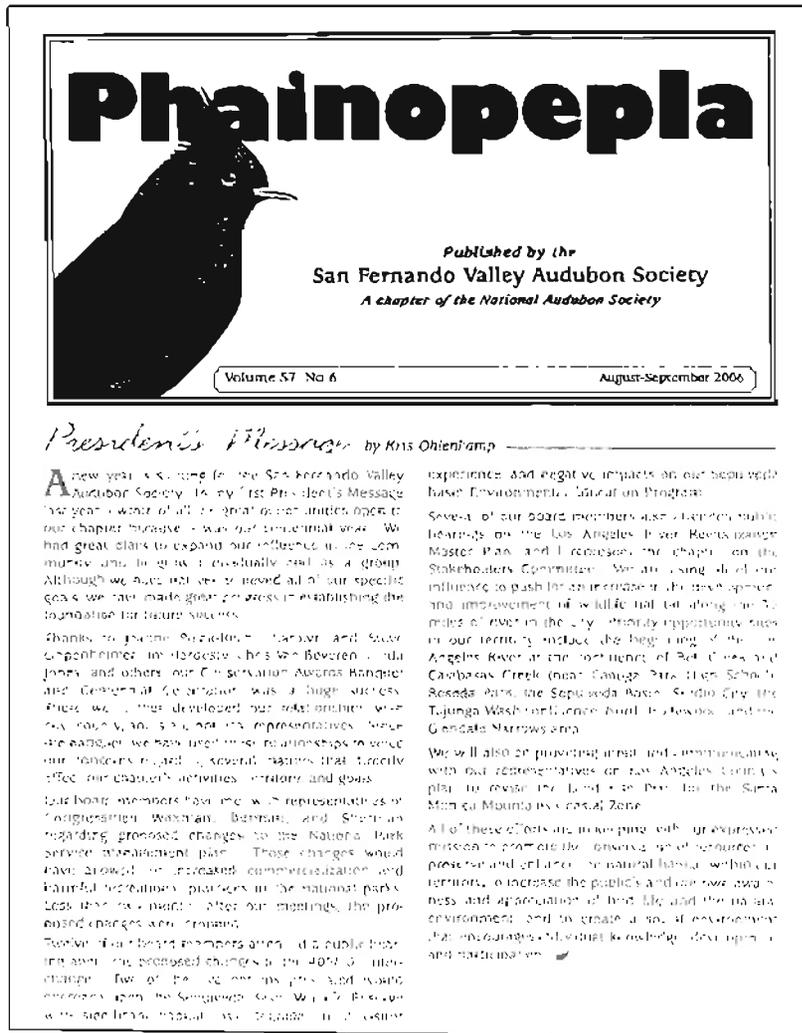
**3.20 Mathew Tekulsky**

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1. The Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve should be preserved.

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1. Please see response to 3.1 above.



### 3.20 Mathew Tekulsky

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1. The Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve should be preserved.

Response to Mathew Tekulsky's May 14, 2008 Public Hearing Written Comment regarding the Draft EA/IS and Section 4(f) Evaluation for the I-405/US-101 Connector Improvement Project

1. Please see response to 3.1 above.



**3.20 Mathew Tekulsky**

Mr. Tekulsky made this written comment at the Public Hearing. The main point of her commentary is:

1. The Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve should be preserved.

Response to Mathew Tekulsky's May 14, 2008 Public Hearing Written Comment regarding the Draft EA/IS and Section 4(f) Evaluation for the I-405/US-101 Connector Improvement Project

1. Please see response to 3.1 above.

*Selected Exhibitions and Displays*

SAN FRANCISCO AIRPORT MUSEUMS—Exhibition of 12 bird photographs entitled "Mathew Tekulsky: Portraits of Birds," February-April, 2009

ENDANGERED SPECIES FLORA AND FAUNA IN PERIL. Mr. Tekulsky's photograph of a Willow Flycatcher is included in this national museum tour that includes the Wilding Art Museum (June 22-September 14, 2008), The Department of the Interior (November 1, 2008-February 28, 2009), and The Wildlife Experience (May 9-July 12, 2009)

JAMES GRAY GALLERY—Exhibit of 50 bird photographs at the James Gray Gallery, Bergamot Station Art Center, Santa Monica, CA 90404 (2/9/08-3/9/08)

"VISIONS OF THE SIERRA NEVADA"—Exhibit of 12 photographs at Cafe Vida, 15317 Antioch Street, Pacific Palisades, CA 90272 (Upcoming)

YONEKO DEAN COLLECTION—Permanent exhibit of bird and landscape photographs at the Brentwood Country Mart, 275 26<sup>th</sup> Street, Santa Monica, CA 90402

HARVARD MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY "EGGS AND NESTS" exhibit—Photograph of an Allen's Hummingbird chick and egg in a nest featured in this exhibit (2007)

AA1 PHOTOGRAPHIC & DIGITAL SERVICES GALLERY—Exhibit of four bird photographs from the 2006 AA1 Nature Photo Competition, 627 South Central Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90021 (2006-2007)

J PAUL GENTRY MUSEUM—Mr. Tekulsky's photograph entitled "Two Moons Over the Getty" may be seen at the offices of the Gentry Leadership Institute, 1200 Getty Center Drive, Suite 800, Los Angeles, CA 90049

MIKO PHOTO LAB—Bird and landscape photographs on display, 718 Montana Avenue, Santa Monica, CA 90403

*Lectures*

San Fernando Valley Audubon Society (11/3/06) "Why We Really, Really Love Birds"

Clickers & Flickers Photography Network (7/25/07) "Photographing Birds and Natural Wonders"

*Corporate and Private Collections*

Greenhaven Associates

Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger

The Mitchell J. Hamillburg Agency

Griffin/Barash Associates, Los Angeles, CA

John D. LeCruz, DDS, Santa Monica, CA

*Photographic Subject*

Mr. Tekulsky is a contributor to VIREO (Visual Resources for Ornithology), the world's most comprehensive collection of ornithological images, at The Academy of Natural Sciences, 1900 Benjamin Franklin Parkway, Philadelphia, PA 19103

### 3.20 Mathew Tekulsky

Mr. Tekulsky made this written comment at the Public Hearing. The main point of her commentary is:

1. The Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve should be preserved.

Response to Mathew Tekulsky's May 14, 2008 Public Hearing Written Comment regarding the Draft EA/IS and Section 4(f) Evaluation for the I-405/US-101 Connector Improvement Project

1. Please see response to 3.1 above.

*Selected Exhibitions and Displays*

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HARVARD MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY "EGGS AND NESTS" exhibit—Photograph of an Allen's Hummingbird chick and egg in a nest, featured in this exhibit (2007)

A&I PHOTOGRAPHIC & DIGITAL SERVICES GALLERY—Exhibit of four bird photographs from the 2005 A&I Nature Photo Competition, 627 South Central Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90021 (2006-2007)

J. PAUL GETTY MUSEUM—Mr. Tekulsky's photograph entitled "Two Moons Over the Getty" may be seen at the offices of the Getty Leadership Institute, 1200 Getty Center Drive, Suite 800, Los Angeles, CA 90049

MIKO PHOTO LAB—Bird and landscape photographs on display, 718 Montana Avenue, Santa Monica, CA 90403

*Organizations*

San Fernando Valley Audubon Society (11/30/06)—"Why We Really, Really Love Birds"

Clickers & Flickers Photography Network (7/25/07)—"Photographing Birds and Nature: Wooders"

*Corporate and Private Collections*

GreenPaver Associates

Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger

The Mitchell J. Flamberg Agency

Gordon/Barash Associates, Los Angeles, CA

John D. Lokrantz, DDS, Santa Monica, CA

*Photographic Agents*

Mr. Tekulsky is a contributor to VIREO (Visual Resources for Ornithology), the world's most comprehensive collection of ornithological images, at The Academy of Natural Sciences, 1900 Benjamin Franklin Parkway, Philadelphia, PA 19103

### 3.20 Mathew Tekulsky

Mr. Tekulsky made this written comment at the Public Hearing. The main point of her commentary is:

1. The Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve should be preserved.

Response to Mathew Tekulsky's May 14, 2008 Public Hearing Written Comment regarding the Draft EA/IS and Section 4(f) Evaluation for the I-405/US-101 Connector Improvement Project

1. Please see response to 3.1 above.

7

*Books*

Mr. Tekulsky is the author of BACKYARD BIRDFEEDING FOR BEGINNERS (Gramercy Books, 2003); THE HUMMINGBIRD GARDEN (Harvard Common Press, 1999); THE BUTTERFLY GARDEN (Harvard Common Press, 1985); and MAKING YOUR OWN GOURMET COFFEE DRINKS (Crown, 1993), among other books.

**3.20 Mathew Tekulsky**

Mr. Tekulsky made this written comment at the Public Hearing. The main point of her commentary is:

1. The Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve should be preserved.

Response to Mathew Tekulsky's May 14, 2008 Public Hearing Written Comment regarding the Draft EA/IS and Section 4(f) Evaluation for the I-405/US-101 Connector Improvement Project

1. Please see response to 3.1 above.

**QUESTION/COMMENT CARD**

STATE OF CALIFORNIA  
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
I-405/US-101 CONNECTOR IMPROVEMENT PROJECT PUBLIC HEARING



NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

CITY: \_\_\_\_\_

STATE: \_\_\_\_\_

ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

TIME: \_\_\_\_\_

LOCATION: \_\_\_\_\_

QUESTION/COMMENT: \_\_\_\_\_

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

**3.21 Glen Wilson**

Mr. Wilson made this written comment at the Public Hearing. The main point of his commentary is:

1. In favor of Alternative 1 because Alternative 2 and 3 causes Wildlife Refuge problems.

Response to Glen Wilson's May 14, 2008 Public Hearing Written Comment regarding the Draft EA/IS and Section 4(f) Evaluation for the I-405/US-101 Connector Improvement Project

1. Please see response to 3.1 above.



**QUESTION/COMMENT CARD**

STATE OF CALIFORNIA  
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
I-405/US-101 CONNECTOR IMPROVEMENT PROJECT PUBLIC HEARING



NAME: Tom Roman DATE: July 2008  
 ADDRESS: 10000 Wilshire Blvd PHONE: 310 206 1000  
 CITY STATE ZIP: Los Angeles CA 90024  
 E-MAIL ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

I WISH TO SPEAK \_\_\_\_\_

I WOULD LIKE TO HAVE THE FOLLOWING QUESTION ANSWERED \_\_\_\_\_

I WOULD LIKE TO HAVE THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT FILED FOR THE RECORD \_\_\_\_\_

STRONGLY OPPOSE     OPPOSE     NEUTRAL     SUPPORT     STRONGLY SUPPORT

TO THE SUPERVISOR

IF THE STATE  
WANTS TO BUILD THE  
CONNECTOR PROJECT IT  
SHOULD TAKE THE  
NECESSARY STEPS TO  
ABATE TRAFFIC ON OUR  
STREETS AND  
FREEWAYS

Comments must be received by the State of California by May 28, 2008. Comments will be mailed to California Department of Transportation, Mark K. Mark, Chief, District Office - Eastern Interstates, Planning 1405 10, 100 South Main Street, MS 104, Los Angeles, CA 90012.

**2.1 Tom Roman, Los Angeles**

Mr. Roman had the following question at the Public Hearing. His question is included in the Caltrans Public Hearing Transcript of Proceedings, Pages 67-68. The question is:

1. What is being done to abate traffic on our streets and freeways?

Response to Tom Roman’s May 14, 2008 Public Hearing Question regarding the Draft EA/IS and Section 4(f) Evaluation for the I-405/US-101 Connector Improvement Project

1. This project does not aim to construct new freeways. Rather, it aims to improve flow and capacity operations in the existing I-405/US-101 Interchange Facility, which is one of the most congested in the United States.

To answer your question about abatement and measures Related to this project mitigation measures by alternative/proposal can be referenced in the environmental document. An alternative/proposal has yet to be selected.

THE PROJECT DOES NOT AIM TO CONSTRUCT NEW FREEWAYS; RATHER, IT AIMS TO IMPROVE FLOW AND CAPACITY OPERATIONS IN THE EXISTING I-405/US-101 INTERCHANGE FACILITY, WHICH IS ONE OF THE MOST CONGESTED IN THE UNITED STATES.

TO ANSWER YOUR QUESTION ABOUT ABATEMENT AND MEASURES RELATED TO THIS PROJECT, MITIGATION MEASURES BY ALTERNATIVE/PROPOSALS CAN BE REFERENCED IN THE ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENT. AN ALTERNATIVE/PROPOSAL HAS YET TO BE SELECTED.

## 2.1 Tom Roman

Mr. Roman had the following question at the Public Hearing. His question is included in the Caltrans Public Hearing Transcript of Proceedings, Pages 67-68. The question is:

1. What is being done to abate traffic on our streets and freeways?

Response to Tom Roman's May 14, 2008 Public Hearing Question regarding the Draft EA/IS and Section 4(f) Evaluation for the I-405/US-101 Connector Improvement Project

1. This project does not aim to construct new freeways. Rather, it aims to improve flow and capacity operations in the existing I-405/US-101 Interchange Facility, which is one of the most congested in the United States.

To answer your question about abatement and measures Related to this project mitigation measures by alternative/proposal can be referenced in the environmental document. An alternative/proposal has yet to be selected.

**QUESTION/COMMENT CARD**

STATE OF CALIFORNIA  
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
I-405/US 101 CONNECTOR IMPROVEMENT PROJECT PUBLIC HEARING



NAME: Kathy Lewicki DATE: 5/14/08  
 ADDRESS: 1711 S. Sherman Oaks Blvd PHONE: 310-440-1234  
 CITY, STATE, ZIP: Los Angeles, CA 90024  
 E-MAIL ADDRESS: kyle@caltrans.ca.gov

I WISH TO SPEAK - You must select this one if you wish to speak.  
 I WOULD LIKE TO HAVE THE FOLLOWING QUESTION ANSWERED - Questions not answered publicly will be responded to in the final document.  
 I WOULD LIKE TO HAVE THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT FILED FOR THE RECORD - Will be added to final document.

OPPOSED    IN FAVOR    NEUTRAL

*I am opposed to the project because it will increase traffic on our streets and freeways. The project is not needed and will be a waste of money. The project will also increase the cost of living in the area.*

Comments must be received by the close of business on May 28, 2008. Comment cards may be mailed to: California Department of Transportation, Ron Kobinski, Deputy District Director, Division of Environmental Planning, 1405/101, 100 South Main Street, MS-16A, Los Angeles, CA 90012.

**2.2 Kathy Lewicki, Sherman Oaks**

Ms. Lewicki had the following question at the Public Hearing. Her question is included in the Caltrans Public Hearing Transcript of Proceedings, Page 67. The question is:

1. What is being done to abate traffic on our streets and freeways?

Response to Kathy Lewicki's May 14, 2008 Public Hearing Question regarding the Draft EA/IS and Section 4(f) Evaluation for the I-405/US-101 Connector Improvement Project

1. Alternate project (Northbound I-405 High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) Lane Project) will address this issue.

ALTERNATE PROJECT WILL ADDRESS THIS -  
PROJECT  
NB 405 HOV<sub>1</sub> QUESTION!  
ANSWER IN E.D.

10' - R/W  
14' - ES

2010 2010 2010 405 HOV<sub>1</sub> PROJECT

## 2.2 Kathy Lewicki

Ms. Lewicki had the following question at the Public Hearing. Her question is included in the Caltrans Public Hearing Transcript of Proceedings, Page 67. The question is:

1. What is being done to abate traffic on our streets and freeways?

Response to Kathy Lewicki's May 14, 2008 Public Hearing Question regarding the Draft EA/IS and Section 4(f) Evaluation for the I-405/US-101 Connector Improvement Project

1. Alternate project (Northbound I-405 High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) Lane Project) will address this issue.

**QUESTION/COMMENT CARD**

STATE OF CALIFORNIA  
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
I-405/US-101 CONNECTOR IMPROVEMENT PROJECT PUBLIC HEARING



NAME \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_  
 ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE \_\_\_\_\_  
 CITY STATE ZIP \_\_\_\_\_  
 E-MAIL ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

I WISH TO SPEAK  
 I WOULD LIKE TO HAVE THE FOLLOWING QUESTION ANSWERED  
 I WOULD LIKE TO HAVE THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT FILED FOR THE RECORD

OPPOSED     IN FAVOR     NEUTRAL

Comments must be received by the clerk of congress on May 28, 2008. Comments cards may be mailed to California Department of Transportation, Ron Kander, Deputy District Director, Division of Transportation Planning, 695 70th Street, 6th Fl., Los Angeles, CA 90012.

**2.3 Wayne L. White, North Hills**

Mr. White had the following question at the Public Hearing. His question is included in the Caltrans Public Hearing Transcript of Proceedings, Pages 71-72. The question is:

1. After all of this, there is no effort indicated that would be a solution to the congestion on the 101 east or west. The inane onramp that puts the NB 405 into the no. 1 lane of 101 WB, is still a contribution to 101 WB confusion and congestion. The disappearing lane, on the WB 101, approaching Havenhurst, is deadly.

Response to Wayne L. White's May 14, 2008 Public Hearing Question regarding the Draft EA/IS and Section 4(f) Evaluation for the I-405/US-101 Connector Improvement Project

1. This project aims to address operational issues on the southbound I-405 freeway and the transition to the US -101 north and southbound mainlines. Corridor studies are currently being performed to address operational issues on the US-101 interchange area.

~~101 CORRIDOR QUESTION~~  
~~CORRIDOR STUDIES BEING DONE~~  
~~TO ADDRESS THE 101~~

THIS PROJECT AIMS TO ADDRESS OPERATIONAL ISSUES ON THE SOUTHBOUND I-405 FREEWAY AND THE TRANSITION TO THE US-101 NORTH AND SOUTHBOUND MAINLINES. CORRIDOR STUDIES ARE CURRENTLY BEING PERFORMED TO ADDRESS OPERATIONAL ISSUES ON THE US-101 THROUGH THE INTERCHANGE AREA.

### 2.3 Wayne L. White

Mr. White had the following questions at the Public Hearing. His question is included in the Caltrans Public Hearing Transcript of Proceedings, Pages 71-72. The question is:

1. After all of this, there is no effort indicated that would be a solution to the congestion on the 101 east or west. The inane onramp that puts the NB 405 into the no. 1 lane of 101 WB, is still a contribution to 101 WB confusion and congestion. The disappearing lane, on the WB 101, approaching Havenhurst, is deadly.

Response to Wayne L. White's May 14, 2008 Public Hearing Question regarding the Draft EA/IS and Section 4(f) Evaluation for the I-405/US-101 Connector Improvement Project

1. This project aims to address operational issues on the southbound I-405 freeway and the transition to the US -101 north and southbound mainlines. Corridor studies are currently being performed to address operational issues on the US-101 interchange area.

**QUESTION/COMMENT CARD**

STATE OF CALIFORNIA  
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
I-405/US-101 CONNECTOR IMPROVEMENT PROJECT PUBLIC HEARING



NAME \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_  
ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE \_\_\_\_\_  
CITY STATE ZIP \_\_\_\_\_  
E MAIL ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

I WISH TO SPEAK. You must submit this card if you wish to speak.

I WOULD LIKE TO HAVE THE FOLLOWING QUESTION ANSWERED. (Comments are subject to the staff's independent evaluation of the question.)

I WOULD LIKE TO HAVE THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT FILED FOR THE RECORD. (Comments are subject to the staff's independent evaluation of the statement.)

I support the project.   
  I oppose the project.   
  I am neutral.   
  I am unsure.

Comments must be received by the staff of no later than May 29, 2008. Comments cards may be mailed to: California Department of Transportation, 1155 North Hollywood Blvd., 11th Floor, Los Angeles, CA 90028. For more information, please call (800) 452-4545 or visit our website at www.caltrans.gov.

**2.4 Chris Van Beveren, Chatsworth**

Mr. Van Beveren had the following questions at the Public Hearing. His question is included in the Caltrans Public Hearing Transcript of Proceedings, Pages 70-71. The question is:

1. In my experience the traffic on 101 NB is stop and go during peak travel times. If the connector is built cars from 405 SB will just be going faster when they try to merge. To me this seems more likely to cause accidents than as now exists. Could you comment?

Response to Chris Van Beveren's May 14, 2008 Public Hearing Question regarding the Draft EA/IS and Section 4(f) Evaluation for the I-405/US-101 Connector Improvement Project

1. With the construction of the proposed SB 405 to NB 101 connector, it will provide a longer merging distance that will improve safety and lessen the accident rate.

THE PROJECT AIMED AT ELIMINATING NEARLY SEGMENTS THAT CREATE CONFLICTS AND ARE A MAJOR CONTRIBUTOR TO THE ABOVE-AVERAGE ACCIDENT RATES AT THE INTERCHANGE.

-----  
Chris Van Beveren, 5/14/08

The main purpose of this project is to reduce the dangerous congestion experienced by motorists trying to merge onto the connector.

The project will improve the speed and safety of the connector through better operational practices. It will also address the elementary cause of the major cause for accidents involving merging.

#### 2.4 Chris Van Beveren

Mr. Van Beveren had the following questions at the Public Hearing. His question is included in the Caltrans Public Hearing Transcript of Proceedings, Pages 70-71. The question is:

1. In my experience the traffic on 101 NB is stop and go during peak travel times. If the connector is built cars from 405 SB will just be going faster when they try to merge. To me this seems more likely to cause accidents than as now exists. Could you comment?

Response to Chris Van Beveren's May 14, 2008 Public Hearing Question regarding the Draft EA/IS and Section 4(f) Evaluation for the I-405/US-101 Connector Improvement Project

1. With the construction of the proposed SB 405 to NB 101 connector, it will provide a longer merging distance that will improve safety and lessen the accident rate.



**QUESTION/COMMENT CARD**

STATE OF CALIFORNIA  
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
I-405/US 101 CONNECTOR IMPROVEMENT PROJECT PUBLIC HEARING



NAME Roxie Esterle DATE 5/14/08  
 ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE \_\_\_\_\_  
 CITY, STATE, ZIP \_\_\_\_\_  
 E-MAIL ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

I WISH TO SPEAK (You will be called on to speak with the group.)  
 I WOULD LIKE TO HAVE THE FOLLOWING QUESTION ANSWERED (Questions are processed through the project website.)  
 I WOULD LIKE TO HAVE THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT FILED FOR THE RECORD (Will be added to the project website.)

SINGLE FOUR POSITION    I AM    OPPOSED    IN FAVOR    NEUTRAL  
Why not just slow speed on connector to make  
it slightly shorter, enough to allow Burbank's  
on ramp?

Comments must be received by the close of business on May 18, 2008. Comment cards may be mailed to California Department of Transportation - Ron Kozinski, Deputy District Director, Division of Environmental Planning (405/101) - 100 South Main Street, MS-16A, Los Angeles, CA 90012

**2.6 Roxie Esterle**

Ms. Esterle had the following questions at the Public Hearing. Her question was not included in the Caltrans Public Hearing Transcript of Proceedings. The question is:

1. Why not just slow speed on connector to make it slightly shorter, enough to allow Burbank's on ramp?

Response to Roxie Esterle's May 14, 2008 Public Hearing Question regarding the Draft EA/IS and Section 4(f) Evaluation for the I-405/US-101 Connector Improvement Project

1. If we reduced the design speed of the connector we would basically have the existing condition. The existing condition causes operational and safety issues.

**APPENDIX AA | VERBAL COMMENTS SUBMITTED AT PUBLIC  
HEARING**

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**QUESTION/COMMENT CARD**

STATE OF CALIFORNIA  
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
I-405/US-101 CONNECTOR IMPROVEMENT PROJECT PUBLIC HEARING



NAME Muriel S. Kotin DATE 5-14-08  
ADDRESS 2401 Lakeview Way PHONE 310-957-2276  
CITY, STATE, ZIP Melrose, CA 90265  
E-MAIL ADDRESS muriel@earthlink.net

I WISH TO SPEAK \_\_\_\_\_  
 I WOULD LIKE TO HAVE THE FOLLOWING QUESTION ANSWERED \_\_\_\_\_  
 I WOULD LIKE TO HAVE THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT FILED FOR THE RECORD \_\_\_\_\_

OPINION: OPPOSED (Circled) IN FAVOR NEUTRAL

In my opinion, the I-405/US-101 connector should be separated from the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve (Opposed to Alternatives 2 and 3)

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT: STATE OF CALIFORNIA, DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION, PUBLIC HEARING, 1201 EAST 9TH STREET, SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA 95833. TEL: (916) 227-1500. FAX: (916) 227-1501. WWW.CALTRANS.GOV

**1.1 Muriel S. Kotin**

Ms. Kotin chose to speak at the Public Hearing. Her comments are included in the Caltrans Public Hearing Transcript of Proceedings, Pages 24-25. The main points of her commentary are:

1. The Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve should be preserved.
2. Opposes Alternatives 2 and 3.

Response to Muriel S. Kotin's May 14, 2008 Public Hearing Spoken Comments regarding the Draft EA/IS and Section 4(f) Evaluation for the I-405/US-101 Connector Improvement Project

In light of the overwhelming concern and opposition to any encroachment upon the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve, as well as the requirements set forth by Section 4(f) of the U.S. Department of Transportation Act, **Alternatives 2 and 3 have been rejected.** CALTRANS will only pursue Alternative 1 despite LADOT's continued opposition to this alternative.

**QUESTION/COMMENT CARD**

STATE OF CALIFORNIA  
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
I-405/US 101 CONNECTOR IMPROVEMENT PROJECT PUBLIC HEARING



NAME: MANUEL CARRERA DATE: 5-14-08  
ADDRESS: 103 E. RAND UNIT 209 PHONE: 323-974-1354  
CITY, STATE, ZIP: MANHATTAN CA 94108  
E-MAIL ADDRESS: MANCARRERA@SBC.COM

I WISH TO SPEAK AT THE PUBLIC HEARING.  
 I WOULD LIKE TO HAVE THE FOLLOWING QUESTION ANSWERED: \_\_\_\_\_  
 I WOULD LIKE TO HAVE THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT FILED FOR THE RECORD: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Comments must be received by the close of business on May 28, 2008. Comment cards may be mailed to California Department of Transportation, For: Katsuki, Deputy District Director - Division of Environmental Planning (405/131) - 100 South Main Street, MS-16A, Los Angeles, CA 900 12.

**1.2 Manuel Carrera**

Mr. Carrera chose to speak at the Public Hearing. His comments are included in the Caltrans Public Hearing Transcript of Proceedings, Pages 25-26. The main point of his commentary is:

1. The Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve should be preserved.

Response to Manuel Carrera's May 14, 2008 Public Hearing Spoken Comments regarding the Draft EA/IS and Section 4(f) Evaluation for the I-405/US-101 Connector Improvement Project

1. Please see response to 1.1 above.

**QUESTION/COMMENT CARD**

STATE OF CALIFORNIA  
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
I-405/US-101 CONNECTOR IMPROVEMENT PROJECT PUBLIC HEARING



NAME (red) Teri Redman DATE 5/14/08

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

CITY STATE ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

E-MAIL ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

I WISH TO SPEAK AT THE PUBLIC HEARING

I WOULD LIKE TO HAVE THE FOLLOWING QUESTION ANSWERED \_\_\_\_\_

I WOULD LIKE TO HAVE THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT FILED FOR THE RECORD \_\_\_\_\_

TOPIC \_\_\_\_\_

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

PROJECT \_\_\_\_\_

LOCATION \_\_\_\_\_

PROJECT NUMBER \_\_\_\_\_

PROJECT TITLE \_\_\_\_\_

PROJECT LOCATION \_\_\_\_\_

PROJECT NUMBER \_\_\_\_\_

PROJECT TITLE \_\_\_\_\_

PROJECT LOCATION \_\_\_\_\_

PROJECT NUMBER \_\_\_\_\_

PROJECT TITLE \_\_\_\_\_

PROJECT LOCATION \_\_\_\_\_

**1.3 Teri Redman, Brentwood School**

Ms. Redman chose to speak at the Public Hearing. Her comments are included in the Caltrans Public Hearing Transcript of Proceedings, Pages 26-29. The main points of her commentary are:

1. If you build more freeways you will attract more cars. What is being done to abate traffic on our streets and freeways?
2. The Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve should be preserved.

Response to Teri Redman's May 14, 2008 Public Hearing Spoken Comments regarding the Draft EA/IS and Section 4(f) Evaluation for the I-405/US-101 Connector Improvement Project

1. The project does not aim to construct new freeways, rather it aims to improve flow and capacity operations in the existing I-405/US-101 interchange facility, which is one of the most congested in the United States. To answer your question about abatement and measures related to this project, mitigation measures by alternative/proposals can be referenced in the environmental document. An alternative/proposal has yet to be selected.
2. Please see response to 1.1 above.

**QUESTION/COMMENT CARD**

STATE OF CALIFORNIA  
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
I-405/US 101 CONNECTOR IMPROVEMENT PROJECT PUBLIC HEARING



NAME: Aaron Green DATE: 5/14/2008  
 ADDRESS: 7271 Van Nuys Blvd #208 PHONE: 818 714 6715  
 CITY STATE ZIP: Van Nuys, CA 91411  
 E-MAIL ADDRESS: agreen@vics.com

I WISH TO SPEAK - You must select this box if you wish to speak.  
 I WOULD LIKE TO HAVE THE FOLLOWING QUESTION ANSWERED - Questions not answered on-site will be responded to in the final document.  
 I WOULD LIKE TO HAVE THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT FILED FOR THE RECORD - Will be added to final document.

OPPOSE   
  FOR   
  OPPOSED   
  BEHAVIOR   
  NEUTRAL

Comments must be received by the close of business on May 26, 2008. Comment cards may be mailed to California Department of Transportation, Tom Kotelnik, Deputy District Director - Division of Environmental Planning 1405/101 - 100 South Main Street, MS-16A, Los Angeles, CA 90012.

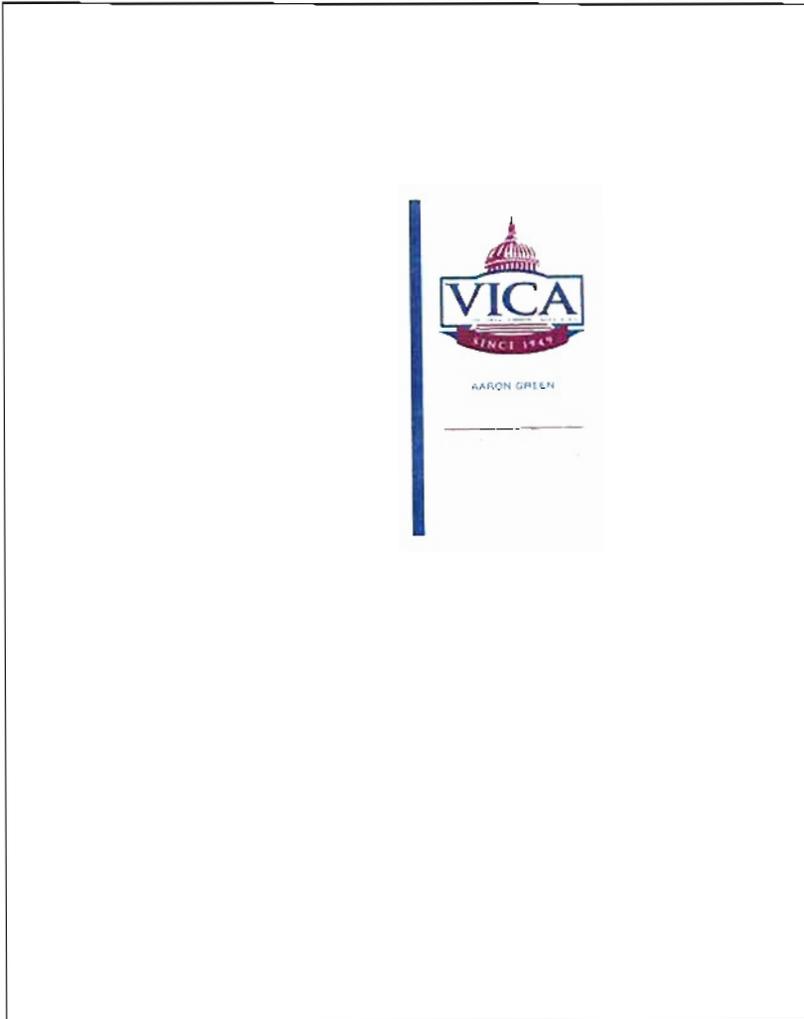
**1.4 Aaron Green, Valley Industry and Commerce Association**

Mr. Green chose to speak at the Public Hearing. His comments are included in the Caltrans Public Hearing Transcript of Proceedings, Pages 29-31. The main points of his commentary are:

1. The Valley Industry and Commerce Association support transportation construction in the San Fernando Valley.
2. Support Alternative 1.

Response to Aaron Green's May 14, 2008 Public Hearing Spoken Comments regarding the Draft EA/IS and Section 4(f) Evaluation for the I-405/US-101 Connector Improvement Project

1. Please see response to 1.1 above.



**1.4 Aaron Green, Valley Industry and Commerce Association**

Mr. Green chose to speak at the Public Hearing. His comments are included in the Caltrans Public Hearing Transcript of Proceedings, Pages 29-31. The main points of his commentary are:

1. The Valley Industry and Commerce Association support transportation construction in the San Fernando Valley.
2. Support Alternative 1.

Response to Aaron Green's May 14, 2008 Public Hearing Spoken Comments regarding the Draft EA/IS and Section 4(f) Evaluation for the I-405/US-101 Connector Improvement Project

1. Please see response to 1.1 above.



**1.4 Aaron Green, Valley Industry and Commerce Association**

Mr. Green chose to speak at the Public Hearing. His comments are included in the Caltrans Public Hearing Transcript of Proceedings, Pages 29-31. The main points of his commentary are:

1. The Valley Industry and Commerce Association support transportation construction in the San Fernando Valley.
2. Support Alternative 1.

Response to Aaron Green's May 14, 2008 Public Hearing Spoken Comments regarding the Draft EA/IS and Section 4(f) Evaluation for the I-405/US-101 Connector Improvement Project

1. Please see response to 1.1 above.

**QUESTION/COMMENT CARD**

STATE OF CALIFORNIA  
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
I-405/US 101 CONNECTOR IMPROVEMENT PROJECT PUBLIC HEARING



NAME: Snowy Dodson DATE: 5/14/08  
 ADDRESS: 2400 West 10th St PHONE: 310 324 1316  
 CITY, STATE, ZIP: Van Nuys, CA 91411  
 E-MAIL ADDRESS: SnowyDodson@earthlink.net

I WISH TO SPEAK You will speak first if you wish to speak.  
 I WOULD LIKE TO HAVE THE FOLLOWING QUESTION ANSWERED Questions not answered tonight will be responded to in the final document.  
 I WOULD LIKE TO HAVE THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT FILED FOR THE RECORD Will be added to final document.

USUAL POSITION: \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_  
FOR: OPPOSED IN FAVOR NEUTRAL

Comments must be received by the close of business on May 23, 2008. Comment cards may be mailed to California Department of Transportation, Ron Korman, Deputy District Director - Division of Environmental Planning (405-101) - 100 South Main Street, MS-164, Los Angeles, CA 90012.

**1.5 Snowy Dodson, Van Nuys**

Ms. Dodson chose to speak at the Public Hearing. Her comments are included in the Caltrans Public Hearing Transcript of Proceedings, Pages 31-33. The main point of her commentary is:

1. The Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve should be preserved.

Response to Snowy Dodson's May 14, 2008 Public Hearing Spoken Comments regarding the Draft EA/IS and Section 4(f) Evaluation for the I-405/US-101 Connector Improvement Project

1. Please see response to 1.1 above.

**QUESTION/COMMENT CARD**

STATE OF CALIFORNIA  
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
I-405/US-101 CONNECTOR IMPROVEMENT PROJECT PUBLIC HEARING



S-6

NAME Kris Ohlenkamp DATE 5-14-08  
 ADDRESS 1000 5th St San Jose CA 95128 PHONE 408 298 4888  
 CITY STATE ZIP San Jose California 95128  
 E-MAIL ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

I WISH TO SPEAK \_\_\_\_\_  
 I WOULD LIKE TO HAVE THE FOLLOWING QUESTION ANSWERED \_\_\_\_\_  
 I WOULD LIKE TO HAVE THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT FILED FOR THE RECORD \_\_\_\_\_

STATEMENT FOR THE RECORD

I am opposed to any alternative that would impact the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve. I have been looking for a way to get the project off the ground. We have to get the project off the ground and get it done. I am not opposed to the project. I am opposed to any alternative that would impact the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve.

Cardstock not to be removed by the State of California on May 28, 2008. Comments and/or questions should be submitted to: California Department of Transportation, San Antonio Creative Design Division, Division of Environment Planning, 1405 I-405, 100 South Main Street, 85-164, San Antonio, CA 95072.

**1.6 Kris Ohlenkamp, Canyon Country**

Mr. Ohlenkamp chose to speak at the Public Hearing. His comments are included in the Caltrans Public Hearing Transcript of Proceedings, Pages 33-35. The main points of his commentary is:

1. Opposes any alternative that impacts the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve.

Response to Kris Ohlenkamp's May 14, 2008 Public Hearing Spoken Comments regarding the Draft EA/IS and Section 4(f) Evaluation for the I-405/US-101 Connector Improvement Project

1. Please see response to 1.1 above.

**QUESTION/COMMENT CARD**

STATE OF CALIFORNIA  
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
I-405/US 101 CONNECTOR IMPROVEMENT PROJECT PUBLIC HEARING



NAME \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_  
ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE \_\_\_\_\_  
CITY STATE ZIP \_\_\_\_\_  
E-MAIL ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

I WISH TO SPEAK You may speak for up to 5 minutes.  
 I WOULD LIKE TO HAVE THE FOLLOWING QUESTION ANSWERED Questions not answered tonight will be responded to in the final document.  
 I WOULD LIKE TO HAVE THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT FILED FOR THE RECORD It will be added to final documents.

OPINION:  AGAINST  **OPPOSED**  IN FAVOR  NEUTRAL

Comments must be received by the close of business on May 28, 2008. Comments cards may be mailed to California Department of Transportation, Ron Kozulak, Deputy District Director, Division of Environmental Planning (405H101), 160 South Main Street, MS 15A, Los Angeles, CA 90012.

**1.7 Mark Osokow, Woodland Hills**

Mr. Osokow chose to speak at the Public Hearing. His comments are included in the Caltrans Public Hearing Transcript of Proceedings, Pages 35-36. The main points of his commentary are:

1. Project is a waste of money and will not improve traffic flow.
2. The Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve should be preserved.

Response to Mark Osokow's May 14, 2008 Public Hearing Spoken Comments regarding the Draft EA/IS and Section 4(f) Evaluation for the I-405/US-101 Connector Improvement Project

1. The project will improve traffic flow on the connector by eliminating the weaving condition at Haskell Avenue.
2. Please see response to 1.1 above.

**QUESTION/COMMENT CARD**

STATE OF CALIFORNIA  
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
I-405/US-101 CONNECTOR IMPROVEMENT PROJECT PUBLIC HEARING



NAME Seth Shteir DATE 5-14-08

ADDRESS 14325 Horton St, #222 PHONE 818-233-6933

CITY STATE ZIP Sherman Oaks, CA 91342

E-MAIL ADDRESS Ssheteir@aol.com

I WISH TO SPEAK - For more info see if you want to speak.

I WOULD LIKE TO HAVE THE FOLLOWING QUESTION ANSWERED - Questions not answered tonight will be reported up in the final document.

I WOULD LIKE TO HAVE THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT FILED FOR THE RECORD - Will be added to final documents.

OPPOSED      OPPOSED      IN FAVOR      NEUTRAL

Comments must be received by the close of business on May 28, 2008. Comment cards may be mailed to California Department of Transportation, Attn: Kenneth Deputy Director, Division of Environmental Planning, 14051611, 100 South Main Street, MS-16A, Los Angeles, CA 90012.

**1.8 Seth Shteir, San Fernando Valley Audubon Society**

Mr. Shteir chose to speak at the Public Hearing. His comments are included in the Caltrans Public Hearing Transcript of Proceedings, Pages 36-38. The main point of his commentary is:

1. Opposes Alternative 2 and 3.

Response to Seth Shteir’s May 14, 2008 Public Hearing Spoken Comments regarding the Draft EA/IS and Section 4(f) Evaluation for the I-405/US-101 Connector Improvement Project

1. Please see response to 1.1 above.

**QUESTION/COMMENT CARD** - all on card -  
(Switch order) 5.3 ✓

STATE OF CALIFORNIA  
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
405/US 101 CONNECTOR IMPROVEMENT PROJECT PUBLIC HEARING



NAME Dr. Rose Marie White DATE May 14, 2008  
 ADDRESS 12425 Santa Anita Rd # 209 Encino CA 91436 PHONE 818 253 7225  
 CITY STATE ZIP Encino CA 91436  
 E-MAIL ADDRESS Rosemarie@earthlink.net

**WISH TO SPEAK** - You must enter this box if you wish to speak.  
 **I WOULD LIKE TO HAVE THE FOLLOWING QUESTION ANSWERED** - Questions not answered tonight will be responded to in the final document.  
 **I WOULD LIKE TO HAVE THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT FILED FOR THE RECORD** - Will be added to final document.

STATE OF CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
to the project regarding the wildlife Preserve of the Sepulveda Basin.

Comments must be received by the close of business on May 28, 2008. Comments cards may be mailed to: California Department of Transportation, Ben Cantor, Deputy District Director, Division of Environmental Planning, 405/101, 100 South Main Street, #3, 16A, Los Angeles, CA 90011.

**1.9 Dr. Rosemarie White, Encino**

Dr. White chose to speak at the Public Hearing. Her comments are included in the Caltrans Public Hearing Transcript of Proceedings, Pages 38-39. The main point of her commentary is:

1. Opposes Alternative 2 and 3 due to the impact of the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve.

Response to Dr. Rosemarie White's May 14, 2008 Public Hearing Spoken Comments regarding the Draft EA/IS and Section 4(f) Evaluation for the I-405/US-101 Connector Improvement Project

1. Please see response to 1.1 above.

5-10

**QUESTION/COMMENT CARD**  
 STATE OF CALIFORNIA  
 DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
 I-405/US-101 CONNECTOR IMPROVEMENT PROJECT PUBLIC HEARING



NAME \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_  
 ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE \_\_\_\_\_  
 CITY STATE ZIP \_\_\_\_\_  
 E-MAIL ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

I WISH TO SPEAK You may select this box if you wish to speak.  
 I WOULD LIKE TO HAVE THE FOLLOWING QUESTION ANSWERED Questions that are addressed might not be provided upon the record for this project.  
 I WOULD LIKE TO HAVE THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT FILED FOR THE RECORD Will be added to final record.

•  OPPOSED     IN FAVOR     NEUTRAL

\_\_\_\_\_

Comments must be received by the close of business on May 28, 2008. Comment cards may be mailed to California Department of Transportation, Ron Koseoff, Deputy District Director - Division of Environmental Planning (405/101), 40 South Plaza Street, MS-16A, Los Angeles, CA 90012.

**1.10 Joyce Batten, Woodland Hills**

Ms. Batten chose to speak at the Public Hearing. Her comments are included in the Caltrans Public Hearing Transcript of Proceedings, Pages 39-40. The main points of her commentary are:

1. Opposes Alternative 2 and 3
2. How is this project funded?

Response to Joyce Batten's May 14, 2008 Public Hearing Spoken Comments regarding the Draft EA/IS and Section 4(f) Evaluation for the I-405/US-101 Connector Improvement Project

1. Please see response to 1.1 above.
2. The project is funded through regional transportation improvement program funds for the Project Report/Environmental Document phase. There is no funding for the Design and Construction phases at this time.

**QUESTION/COMMENT CARD**

STATE OF CALIFORNIA  
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
I-405/US 101 CONNECTOR IMPROVEMENT PROJECT PUBLIC HEARING



NAME: Gerald A. Silver DATE: 5/14/08  
 ADDRESS: 1405 US 101, Encino, CA 91436 PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_  
 CITY STATE ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_  
 E-MAIL ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

I WISH TO SPEAK - You must speak the card if you wish to speak.  
 I WOULD LIKE TO HAVE THE FOLLOWING QUESTION ANSWERED - Questions not answered tonight will be responsible to the public hearing.  
 I WOULD LIKE TO HAVE THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT FILED FOR THE RECORD - Will be added to final document.

I AM \_\_\_\_\_  
 IN FAVOR      OPPOSED      NEUTRAL

Comments must be received by the close of business on May 28, 2008. Comments cards may be mailed to California Department of Transportation, For Record, Deputy District Director - Division of Environmental Planning (405-101), 100 South Main Street, MS-18A, Los Angeles, CA 90012.

**1.11 Gerald A. Silver, Encino**

Mr. Silver chose to speak at the Public Hearing. His comments are included in the Caltrans Public Hearing Transcript of Proceedings, Pages 40-44. The main point of his commentary is:

1. Is in favor of Alternative 3.

Response to Gerald A. Silver's May 14, 2008 Public Hearing Spoken Comments regarding the Draft EA/IS and Section 4(f) Evaluation for the I-405/US-101 Connector Improvement Project

1. Due to the overwhelming comments against Alternative 3 and the preservation of the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife reserve, Alternative 3 will not be selected.

**QUESTION/COMMENT CARD**

STATE OF CALIFORNIA  
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
I-405/US 101 CONNECTOR IMPROVEMENT PROJECT PUBLIC HEARING



NAME \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_  
ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE \_\_\_\_\_  
CITY STATE ZIP \_\_\_\_\_  
E-MAIL ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

I WISH TO SPEAK - You will select this box if you wish to speak.  
 I WOULD LIKE TO HAVE THE FOLLOWING QUESTION ANSWERED - Questions not answered tonight will be responded to in the final documents.  
 I WOULD LIKE TO HAVE THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT FILED FOR THE RECORD - Will be added to final document.

\_\_\_\_\_ I AM \_\_\_\_\_ IN FAVOR \_\_\_\_\_ NEUTRAL \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ 1 \_\_\_\_\_

Comments must be received by the close of business on May 28, 2008. Comments may be mailed to California Department of Transportation, Rene Kormanik, Deputy Director, Office of Director of Environmental Planning, 405/101, 130 South Main Street, MS 18A, Los Angeles, CA 90012.

**1.12 Chuck Almdale, North Hills**

Mr. Almdale chose to speak at the Public Hearing. His comments are included in the Caltrans Public Hearing Transcript of Proceedings, Pages 44-45. The main points of his commentary are:

1. Opposes Alternative 2 and 3.
2. Is in favor of Alternative 1.

Response to Chuck Almdale's May 14, 2008 Public Hearing Spoken Comments regarding the Draft EA/IS and Section 4(f) Evaluation for the I-405/US-101 Connector Improvement Project

1. Please see response to 1.1 above.

5-15

**QUESTION/COMMENT CARD**

STATE OF CALIFORNIA  
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
I-405/US-101 CONNECTOR IMPROVEMENT PROJECT PUBLIC HEARING



NAME Lisa Reveen DATE 5/14/08  
 ADDRESS 2011 Lake Balboa Ave PHONE 310 432 1112  
 CITY STATE ZIP Lake Balboa CA 91466  
 E-MAIL ADDRESS lreveen@caltrans.com

I WISH TO SPEAK  
 I WOULD LIKE TO HAVE THE FOLLOWING QUESTION ANSWERED - Question answered  not answered  not applicable  
 I WOULD LIKE TO HAVE THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT FILED FOR THE RECORD - Statement filed  not filed  not applicable

OPPOSED  IN FAVOR  NEUTRAL

I AM OPPOSED TO EITHER OF THE PLANS THAT CUT INTO THE WILDLIFE AREA. I AM A RESIDENT OF LAKE BALBOA I LIVE RIGHT ACROSS THE STREET FROM THE WILDLIFE AREA. I SERVED ON THE LAKE BALBOA NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL. WHY BOTH PLANS DESIGNATING SOMETHING AS A WILDLIFE AREA. I WOULD LIKE TO SEE SOMETHING LIKE THIS COULD HAPPEN? I THINK IT IS DECISIONS. THANK YOU

Comments must be received by the close of business on May 18, 2008. Comments cards may be mailed to California Department of Transportation, Run Kuslerko, Deputy District Director, Division of Environmental Planning (605)(101), 100 South Main Street, MS 16A, Los Angeles, CA 90012.

**1.13 Lisa Reveen, Lake Balboa**

Ms. Reveen chose to speak at the Public Hearing. Her comments are included in the Caltrans Public Hearing Transcript of Proceedings, Page 46. The main point of her commentary is:

- 1. Opposes Alternative 2 and 3.

Response to Lisa Reveen’s May 14, 2008 Public Hearing Spoken Comments regarding the Draft EA/IS and Section 4(f) Evaluation for the I-405/US-101 Connector Improvement Project

- 1. Please see response to 1.1 above.

**QUESTION/COMMENT CARD**

STATE OF CALIFORNIA  
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
I-405/US 101 CONNECTOR IMPROVEMENT PROJECT PUBLIC HEARING



NAME Walter Lamb DATE 5/14/08  
 ADDRESS 10000 Sycamore Ave #9 PHONE 214-239-2128  
 CITY STATE ZIP Culver City CA 90232  
 E-MAIL ADDRESS w.lamb@att.net

I WISH TO SPEAK - You may select this box if you wish to speak.  
 I WOULD LIKE TO HAVE THE FOLLOWING QUESTION ANSWERED - Questions not answered tonight will be responsible in the final document.  
 I WOULD LIKE TO HAVE THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT FILED FOR THE RECORD - Will be added to final document.

REJECT     GENERAL     IN PASSER     FILTERED

in subject alternatives that integrate in the I-405 to US-101 connector.

Comments must be received by the close of business on May 18, 2008. Comments cards may be mailed to California Department of Transportation, Ron Koshak, Deputy District Director, Division of Environmental Planning (405-101), 100 South Main Street, MS-16A, Los Angeles, CA 90012.

**1.14 Walter Lamb, Culver City**

Mr. Lamb chose to speak at the Public Hearing. His comments are included in the Caltrans Public Hearing Transcript of Proceedings, Pages 46-48. The main points of his commentary is:

1. Opposes Alternative 2 and 3.

Response to Walter Lamb's May 14, 2008 Public Hearing Spoken Comments regarding the Draft EA/IS and Section 4(f) Evaluation for the I-405/US-101 Connector Improvement Project

1. Please see response to 1.1 above.

**QUESTION/COMMENT CARD**

STATE OF CALIFORNIA  
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
I-405/US-101 CONNECTOR IMPROVEMENT PROJECT PUBLIC HEARING

(PLEASE PRINT OR TYPE)  
DATE: 5/14/08

NAME: Miriam Fogler DATE: 5/14/08

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_

CITY: \_\_\_\_\_ STATE: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

E-MAIL ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

I WISH TO SPEAK (You will be asked to speak at the public hearing.)

I WOULD LIKE TO HAVE THE FOLLOWING QUESTION ANSWERED (Questions will be asked by moderators at the public hearing.)

I WOULD LIKE TO HAVE THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT FILED FOR THE RECORD (Will be added to the document.)

I AM IN FAVOR    
  I AM OPPOSED    
  I AM NEUTRAL

Comments must be received by the close of business on May 28, 2008. Comment cards may be mailed to California Department of Transportation - I-405/US-101 Connector Improvement Planning (425-101), 100 South Main Street, MS-166A, Los Angeles, CA 90012.

**1.15 Miriam Fogler, Panorama City**

Ms. Fogler chose to speak at the Public Hearing. Her comments are included in the Caltrans Public Hearing Transcript of Proceedings, Pages 48-49. The main point of her commentary is:

1. Find an alternative that doesn't impact the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve.

Response to Miriam Fogler's May 14, 2008 Public Hearing Spoken Comments regarding the Draft EA/IS and Section 4(f) Evaluation for the I-405/US-101 Connector Improvement Project

1. Please see response to 1.1 above.

**QUESTION/COMMENT CARD** S-16

STATE OF CALIFORNIA  
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
I-405/US-101 CONNECTOR IMPROVEMENT PROJECT PUBLIC HEARING



NAME: Sharon Ford DATE: 5/14/08

ADDRESS: 10000 Sepulveda Blvd PHONE: 310-318-1111

CITY, STATE, ZIP: Van Nuys, CA 91411

E-MAIL ADDRESS: sharon.ford@caltrans.ca.gov

I WISH TO SPEAK - You will fill in the box if you wish to speak.

I WOULD LIKE TO HAVE THE FOLLOWING QUESTION ANSWERED - Questions not answered tonight will be requested from the final meeting.

I WOULD LIKE TO HAVE THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT FILED FOR THE RECORD - Will be added to the public record.

I AM OPPOSED    
  IN FAVOR    
  NEUTRAL

*The Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve should be preserved. The project should not be built through the reserve. The project should be built to the west of the reserve. The project should be built to the east of the reserve. The project should be built to the south of the reserve. The project should be built to the north of the reserve.*

Comments must be received by the close of business on May 28, 2008. Comments cards may be mailed to: California Department of Transportation, Non-Kiosk Card, District Director - Division of Environmental Planning, 499-1011, 100 South Main Street, MS 14A, Los Angeles, CA 90012.

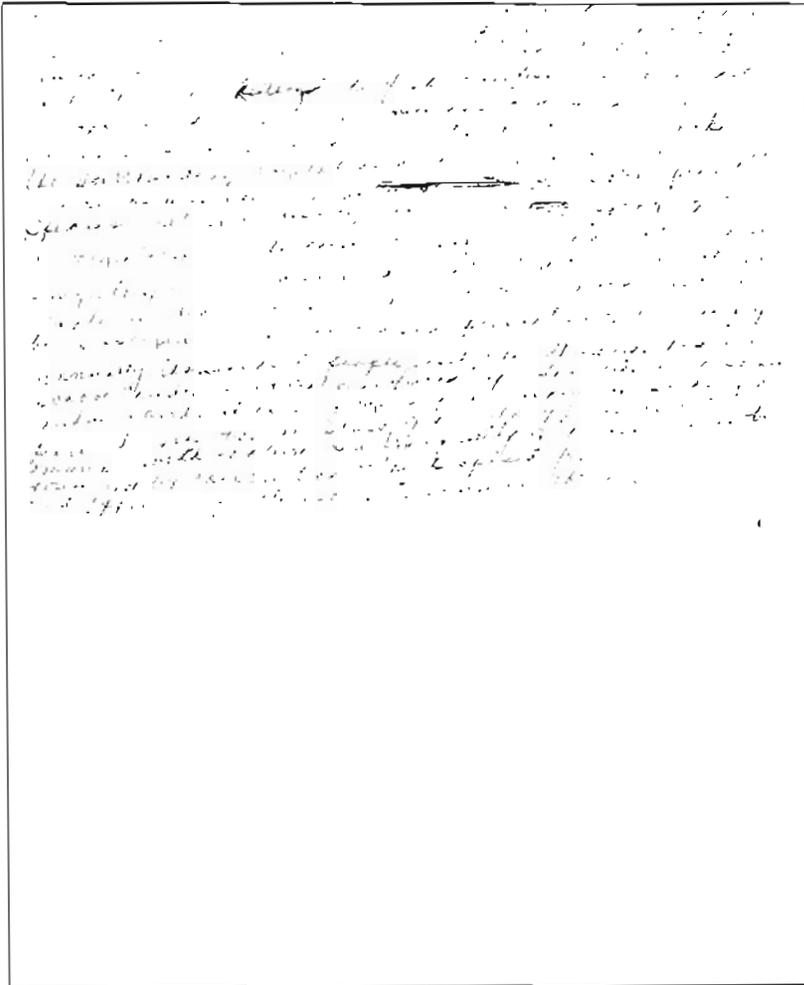
**1.15 Sharon Ford, Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Areas Steering Committee**

Ms. Ford chose to speak at the Public Hearing. Her comments are included in the Caltrans Public Hearing Transcript of Proceedings, Pages 50-51. The main point of her commentary is:

1. The Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve should be preserved.

Response to Sharon Ford's May 14, 2008 Public Hearing Spoken Comments regarding the Draft EA/IS and Section 4(f) Evaluation for the I-405/US-101 Connector Improvement Project

1. Please see response to 1.1 above.



**1.16 Sharon Ford, Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Areas Steering Committee**

Ms. Ford chose to speak at the Public Hearing. Her comments are included in the Caltrans Public Hearing Transcript of Proceedings, Pages 50-51. The main point of her commentary is:

1. The Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve should be preserved.

Response to Sharon Ford's May 14, 2008 Public Hearing Spoken Comments regarding the Draft EA/IS and Section 4(f) Evaluation for the I-405/US-101 Connector Improvement Project

1. Please see response to 1.1 above.

5-17

**QUESTION/COMMENT CARD**

STATE OF CALIFORNIA  
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
I-405/US 101 CONNECTOR IMPROVEMENT PROJECT PUBLIC HEARING



NAME Ronald H. Kulberg DATE 5-14-08  
ADDRESS 8816 Whitaker Ave PHONE 818 893 2822  
CITY, STATE, ZIP Northridge CA 91343  
E-MAIL ADDRESS ronhul@comcast.com

WISH TO SPEAK  
 WOULD LIKE TO HAVE THE FOLLOWING QUESTION ANSWERED  
 WOULD LIKE TO HAVE THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT FILED FOR THE RECORD

APPROVE \_\_\_\_\_ IN EXCESS \_\_\_\_\_



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**1.17 Ronald Kulberg, Northridge**

Mr. Kulberg chose to speak at the Public Hearing. His comments are included in the Caltrans Public Hearing Transcript of Proceedings, Pages 51-53. The main points of his commentary are:

1. What are the traffic mitigation for losing access to Haskell Avenue?
2. What happens to the connector when the westbound 101 is congested?

Response to Ronald Kulberg's May 14, 2008 Public Hearing Spoken Comments regarding the Draft EA/IS and Section 4(f) Evaluation for the I-405/US-101 Connector Improvement Project

1. The traffic mitigation that has been provided by Los Angeles Department of Transportation include improving the intersection at Burbank Boulevard and Hayvenhurst Avenue in both direction, improving the interchange at Hayvenhurst Avenue, and improve the intersection at Hayvenhurst Avenue and Magnolia Avenue.
2. When westbound 101 is congested, the new connector will provide additional storage space without impacting traffic on southbound 405.

**QUESTION/COMMENT CARD**

STATE OF CALIFORNIA  
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
I-405/US 101 CONNECTOR IMPROVEMENT PROJECT PUBLIC HEARING



NAME Don Neumark DATE 5/14/08  
ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE \_\_\_\_\_  
CITY, STATE, ZIP \_\_\_\_\_  
E-MAIL ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

I WISH TO SPEAK You must check this box if you want to speak.  
 I WOULD LIKE TO HAVE THE FOLLOWING QUESTION ANSWERED Questions not answered through this process will be responded to in the final document.  
 I WOULD LIKE TO HAVE THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT FILED FOR THE RECORD Will be added on final document.

I AM SUBJECT  OPPOSED  IN FAVOR  NEUTRAL

Comments must be received by the State of business on May 28, 2008. Comment cards may be mailed to California Department of Transportation, Ron Kozinski, Deputy District Director - Division of Environmental Planning (405/101) 100 South Main Street, MS-6A, Los Angeles, CA 90012.

**1.18 Don Neumark**

Mr. Neumark chose to speak at the Public Hearing. His comments are included in the Caltrans Public Hearing Transcript of Proceedings, Pages 53-56. The main point of his commentary is:

1. Has suggested a compromise to Alternative 2 and 3.

Response to Don Neumark's May 14, 2008 Public Hearing Spoken Comments regarding the Draft EA/IS and Section 4(f) Evaluation for the I-405/US-101 Connector Improvement Project

1. Although the compromise would lessen the impact to the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve, the overwhelming support against Alternative 2 and 3 deem these alternatives as rejected and Caltrans will select Alternative 1.

**QUESTION/COMMENT CARD**

STATE OF CALIFORNIA  
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
I-405/US 101 CONNECTOR IMPROVEMENT PROJECT PUBLIC HEARING



NAME: Todd Royal DATE: 5-14-2008  
 ADDRESS: 11205 S. Harbor Blvd. #100 PHONE: 310-318-2200  
 CITY, STATE, ZIP: Van Nuys, CA 91411  
 E-MAIL ADDRESS: T.Royal@vannc.com

I WISH TO SPEAK - You must speak at a public hearing to speak.  
 I WOULD LIKE TO HAVE THE FOLLOWING QUESTION ANSWERED - Questions not answered tonight will be responded to in the final document.  
 I WOULD LIKE TO HAVE THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT FILED FOR THE RECORD - Will be added to final document.

IN FAVOR OF PROJECT   
  I AM OPPOSED   
  IN FAVOR   
  NEUTRAL

Comments must be received by the date of business on May 28, 2008. Comment cards may be mailed to: Caltrans, Department of Transportation, Ron Kozlowski, Deputy District Director - Division of Environmental Planning 14551/111 - 100 South Main Street, MS-164, Los Angeles, CA 90012.

**1.19 Todd Royal, Studio City Neighborhood Council**

Mr. Royal chose to speak at the Public Hearing. His comments are included in the Caltrans Public Hearing Transcript of Proceedings, Pages 56-58. The main point of his commentary is:

1. Is Caltrans going to acquire the land for the project in order to turn it over to a developmental agency?

Response to Todd Royal's May 14, 2008 Public Hearing Spoken Comments regarding the Draft EA/IS and Section 4(f) Evaluation for the I-405/US-101 Connector Improvement Project

1. No, Caltrans will not acquire the land for the project and turn it over to a developmental agency. In fact, Caltrans will only obtain a highway easement since the area is within Federal Land.

**QUESTION/COMMENT CARD**

STATE OF CALIFORNIA  
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
I-405/US 101 CONNECTOR IMPROVEMENT PROJECT PUBLIC HEARING



NAME: Donna Pearman DATE: 5/14/08

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_

CITY STATE ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

E-MAIL ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

I WISH TO SPEAK You must first fill this box if you wish to speak.

I WOULD LIKE TO HAVE THE FOLLOWING QUESTION ANSWERED Questions and answers will be included in the final draft of the EA/IS.

I WOULD LIKE TO HAVE THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT FILED FOR THE RECORD Statements will be included in the final draft of the EA/IS.

PLEASE CHECK ONE BOX:  IN OPPOSITION  NEUTRAL  IN FAVOR  NEUTRAL

Comments must be received by the close of business on May 28, 2008. Comments should be mailed to California Department of Transportation, Ron Kowalski, Deputy District Director - Division of Environmental Planning (495 101) - 100 South Main Street, MS 1A, Los Angeles, CA 90012.

**1.20 Donna Pearman, Panorama City Council**

Ms. Pearman chose to speak at the Public Hearing. Her comments are included in the Caltrans Public Hearing Transcript of Proceedings, Pages 58-59. The main point of her commentary is:

1. The Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve should be preserved.

Response to Donna Pearman’s May 14, 2008 Public Hearing Spoken Comments regarding the Draft EA/IS and Section 4(f) Evaluation for the I-405/US-101 Connector Improvement Project

1. Please see response to 1.1 above.

**QUESTION/COMMENT CARD**

STATE OF CALIFORNIA  
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
I-405/US 101 CONNECTOR IMPROVEMENT PROJECT PUBLIC HEARING



NAME: Stephen Vodantis RCDSMAN DATE: 5-14-08

ADDRESS: 30000 Mulholland Hwy PHONE: 518-557-8227

CITY STATE ZIP: Agoura Hills CA 91301

E-MAIL ADDRESS: lvodsmansedy@earthlink.net

I WISH TO SPEAK AT THE PUBLIC HEARING.

I WOULD LIKE TO HAVE THE FOLLOWING QUESTION ANSWERED: \_\_\_\_\_

I WOULD LIKE TO HAVE THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT FILED FOR THE RECORD: \_\_\_\_\_

STATEMENT: \_\_\_\_\_

I am strongly opposed to Alternatives 2 and 3. The wildlife reserve must not be impacted by any construction. The success of any road improvement project depends on the money that is put into mass transit alternatives.

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**1.21 Stephen Vodantis, Santa Monica Resource Conservation District**

Mr. Vodantis chose to speak at the Public Hearing. His comments are included in the Caltrans Public Hearing Transcript of Proceedings, Pages 59-60. The main points of his commentary are:

1. The Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve should be preserved.
2. A better alternative is a Mass Transit Alternative.

Response to Stephen Vodantis' May 14, 2008 Public Hearing Spoken Comments regarding the Draft EA/IS and Section 4(f) Evaluation for the I-405/US-101 Connector Improvement Project

1. Please see response to 1.1 above.
2. This project addresses safety issues as well as operational issues. Although mass transit would decrease the amount of cars on the freeway, it would not eliminate the weaving issue that currently exists.

**QUESTION/COMMENT CARD**

STATE OF CALIFORNIA  
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
I-405 U.S. 101 CONNECTOR IMPROVEMENT PROJECT PUBLIC HEARING



NAME: Mathew Tekulsky DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: 177 De Soto Ave PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_

CITY, STATE, ZIP: LA CA 90012

E-MAIL ADDRESS: tekulsky@audubon.org

I WISH TO SPEAK You must wait the top of the line to speak.

I WOULD LIKE TO HAVE THE FOLLOWING QUESTION ANSWERED Questions not answered here will be responded to in the final document.

I WOULD LIKE TO HAVE THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT FILED FOR THE RECORD Statements filed for the record.

I AM IN FAVOR   
  I AM OPPOSED   
  I AM NEUTRAL   
  I AM NOT SURE

Comments must be received by the close of business on May 18, 2008. Comment cards may be mailed to California Department of Transportation, Ron Kowalski, Deputy Director, Division of Environmental Planning, 1405 101st Street, 15th Fl., Los Angeles, CA 90012.

**1.22 Mathew Tekulsky, San Fernando Audubon Society**

Mr. Tehulsky chose to speak at the Public Hearing. His comments are included in the Caltrans Public Hearing Transcript of Proceedings, Pages 61-62. The main point of his commentary is:

1. The Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve should be preserved.

Response to Mathew Tekulsky's May 14, 2008 Public Hearing Spoken Comments regarding the Draft EA/IS and Section 4(f) Evaluation for the I-405/US-101 Connector Improvement Project

1. Please see response to 1.1 above.

**QUESTION/COMMENT CARD**

STATE OF CALIFORNIA  
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
I-405/US 101 CONNECTOR IMPROVEMENT PROJECT PUBLIC HEARING



NAME IRENE SANDLER DATE \_\_\_\_\_  
 ADDRESS 1501 BEL AIR CREST PHONE 310 463 1764  
 CITY STATE ZIP \_\_\_\_\_  
 E-MAIL ADDRESS IRENE@CALTRANS.ORG

I WISH TO SPEAK (I will be speaking at the hearing)  
 I WOULD LIKE TO HAVE THE FOLLOWING QUESTION ANSWERED (Please print your question in the space below)  
 I WOULD LIKE TO HAVE THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT FILLED FOR THE RECORD (Please print your statement in the space below)

ISSUE	DATE	PROBLEM	REASON	SOLUTION
<p><i>There is a concern about the length of the road &amp; how many vehicles it can hold. It should be an entrance lane directly into 101 traffic.</i></p> <p><i>Explain funding for design/build etc?</i></p>				

Comments must be received by the State of California on May 28, 2008. Comments will not be included in the Caltrans Department of Transportation Report/Response. Contact: Director, Division of Environmental Planning, 105101, 100 South Main Street, MS 15A, Los Angeles, CA 90012

**1.23 Irene Sandler, Bel Air Crest**

Ms. Sandler chose to speak at the Public Hearing. Her comments are included in the Caltrans Public Hearing Transcript of Proceedings, Pages 62-64. The main points of her commentary are:

1. Los Angeles Department of Transportation should be sitting on the dais with Caltrans.
2. Please explain the length of new connector road and how many vehicles it can hold. Will there be an entrance lane directly into 101 traffic?
3. Explain funding for design/build etc?

Response to Irene Sandler's May 14, 2008 Public Hearing Spoken Comments regarding the Draft EA/IS and Section 4(f) Evaluation for the I-405/US-101 Connector Improvement Project

1. Los Angeles Department of Transportation was present at the Public Hearing. Caltrans and Los Angeles Department of Transportation have been working together on this project and will continue to work together to find solution to all of the traffic concerns.
2. The new connector is approximately 2900 feet long. It can hold approximately 230 vehicles. The connector will merge into the NB 101 traffic.
3. The project is funded through regional transportation improvement program funds for the Project Report/Environmental Document phase. There is no funding for the Design and Construction phases at this time.

**APPENDIX AB | MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT (SECTION 106)**



**MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT  
BETWEEN THE CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION AND  
THE CALIFORNIA STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER  
REGARDING THE SOUTHBOUND INTERSTATE 405 (SAN DIEGO FREEWAY) TO  
THE U.S. HIGHWAY 101 (VENTURA FREEWAY) CONNECTOR IMPROVEMENT  
PROJECT, LOS ANGELES COUNTY, CALIFORNIA**

**WHEREAS**, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) was assigned and the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) has assumed FHWA responsibility for environmental review, consultation, and coordination under the provisions of the *Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Federal Highway Administration and the California Department of Transportation Concerning the State of California's Participation in the Surface Transportation Project Delivery Pilot Program*, which became effective on July 1, 2007 and applies to this project; and

**WHEREAS** Caltrans has determined that the Southbound Interstate 405 to the U.S. Highway 101 Connector Improvement Project (UNDERTAKING), will have an adverse effect on the Sepulveda Flood Control Dam (Sepulveda Dam), a property determined to be eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places (National Register); and

**WHEREAS**, Caltrans has consulted with the California State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) pursuant to Stipulations X.C., and X.I of the January 2004 *Programmatic Agreement among the Federal Highway Administration, The Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, The California State Historic Preservation Officer, and the California Department of Transportation Regarding Compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, as it Pertains to the Administration of the Federal-Aid Highway Program in California* (PA), and where the PA so directs, in accordance with 36 CFR Part 800, the regulations implementing Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (16 USC Section 470f), as amended (NHPA), regarding the Undertaking's effects on historic properties and has notified the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP) of the adverse effect finding pursuant to 36 CFR§800.6(a)(1); and

**WHEREAS**, Caltrans is the Lead Federal Agency for the Undertaking as they are the funding and implementation agency for this transportation project; and

**WHEREAS**, Caltrans has thoroughly considered alternatives to the Undertaking, has determined that the statutory and regulatory constraints on the design of the Undertaking preclude the possibility of avoiding adverse effects to the historic property during the Undertaking's implementation, and has further determined that it will resolve adverse effects of the Undertaking on the subject historic property through execution and implementation of this Memorandum of Agreement (MOA); and

**WHEREAS**, Caltrans District 7 (District 7) and the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), have participated in the consultation process and have been invited to consult in this MOA; and

**WHEREAS**, for the Preferred Alternative, Caltrans shall ensure that the following stipulations are implemented; and

**NOW, THEREFORE**, Caltrans and the SHPO agree that, upon Caltrans' decision to proceed with the Undertaking, Caltrans shall ensure that the Undertaking is implemented in accordance with the following stipulations in order to take into account the effect of the Undertaking on historic properties, and further agrees that these stipulations shall govern the Undertaking and all of its parts until this MOA expires or is terminated.

## **STIPULATIONS**

### **I. AREA OF POTENTIAL EFFECTS**

- A. The Undertaking's area of potential effects (APE) is depicted in Figure 3 of the February 2008 *Finding of Effect for the Southbound Interstate 405 to US 101 Connector Improvement Project*. The APE includes the maximum existing or proposed right-of-way for the alternative under consideration, easements (temporary and permanent), all improved properties subject to temporary or permanent changes in access (ingress and egress), and areas where visual or audible changes could occur outside the required right-of-way.
- B. If modifications to the Undertaking, subsequent to the execution of this MOA, necessitate the revision of the APE, Caltrans will consult with District 7, the USACE, and the SHPO to facilitate mutual agreement on the subject revisions. If Caltrans, District 7, the USACE, and the SHPO cannot reach such agreement, then the parties to this MOA shall resolve the dispute in accordance with stipulation III. D. below. If Caltrans, District 7, the USACE, and the SHPO reach mutual agreement on the proposed revisions, then Caltrans will submit a final map of the revisions, consistent with the requirements of stipulation VIII.A and attachment 3 of the PA, no later than 30 days following such agreement.

### **II. TREATMENT OF HISTORIC PROPERTIES**

- A. Prior to the start of any work that could adversely affect any characteristics that qualify the Sepulveda Flood Control Dam as an historic property, Caltrans shall ensure that the recordation measures specified in section A of this stipulation are completed.
  1. Caltrans shall take large-format (4" by 5" or larger negative size) photographs showing the Sepulveda Dam in context as well as details of its historic engineering features. Photographs shall be processed for archival permanence in accordance with the Historic American Engineering Record (HAER) photographic specifications. Caltrans shall ensure that all documentation is completed before construction commences on the Sepulveda Dam. Views of

the Sepulveda Dam shall include:

- a. Contextual views showing the Sepulveda Dam in its setting;
  - b. Elevation views;
  - c. Detail of views of significant engineering and design elements.
2. Caltrans shall make a reasonable and good faith effort to locate historic construction drawings for the Sepulveda Dam. If these drawings are located, Caltrans shall photographically reproduce plans, elevations and selected details from these drawings in accordance with HAER photographic specifications. If they are legible in this format, reduced size (8 ½" by 11") copies of construction drawings may be included as pages of the report cited in subsection A.3 of this stipulation rather than photographed and included as photographic documentation. If historic construction drawings for the Sepulveda Dam cannot be located, the requirements of this paragraph shall not apply.
  3. A written historical and descriptive report for the Sepulveda Dam will be completed. This report will provide a physical description of the Sepulveda Dam, discuss its construction and its significance under applicable NRHP criteria, and address the historical context for its construction following the format and instructions in the September 1993 National Park Service (NPS) *HAER Guidelines for Preparing Written Historical and Descriptive Data* guidelines for written documentation.
  4. Upon completion, copies of the documentation prescribed in subsection A.3 of this stipulation shall be retained by Caltrans District 7, deposited in the Caltrans Transportation History Library in Sacramento, the City of Los Angeles Public Library, and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Library.
- B. Caltrans shall prepare a website, or adapt its current website, to make the information from the HABS/HAER report available to the public for at least five (5) years. The information will also be made available to the Caltrans Transportation Library in Sacramento, and the USACE Library in Washington D.C. for inclusion on their website.
  - C. Caltrans shall produce a documentary (motion picture or video) that addresses the history of the Sepulveda Flood Control Dam, and its place in the history of flood control in the Los Angeles basin. The motion picture or video shall be of broadcast quality, of sufficient length for a standard 30-minute broadcast program, and shall be made available to local broadcast stations, public access channels in the local cable systems, and requesting schools/libraries; and one copy shall be submitted to the Caltrans Transportation Library in Sacramento.

D. Caltrans will make every effort to incorporate the following measures in the design phase of the project:

1. The bents or piers of the elevated connector structures that cross through the dam spillway should be similar in shape to the Streamline Moderne gates (outlet structure) of the dam.
2. The elevated connector structures should have as low a profile as current safety/design guidelines will allow in order to reduce the visual impacts and views of the dam.
3. All new concrete material should match in color and texture that of the dam outlet structure.

### III. ADMINISTRATIVE PROVISIONS

- A. Definitions. The definitions provided at 36 CFR§800.16 are applicable throughout this MOA.
- B. Professional Qualifications and Standards. Caltrans shall ensure that only individuals meeting the Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualifications Standards (48 FR 44738-39) in the relevant field of study carry out or review appropriateness and quality of the actions and products required by Stipulations II. A-D in this MOA.
- C. Discoveries and Unanticipated Effects. If Caltrans determines during implementation of the terms of this MOA or after construction of the Undertaking has commenced, that the Undertaking will affect a previously unidentified property that may be eligible for listing in the National Register, or affect a known historic property in an unanticipated manner, Caltrans will address the discovery or unanticipated effect in accordance with 36 CFR Part 800.13(b)(3). Caltrans at its discretion may hereunder assume any discovered property to be eligible for inclusion in the National Register in accordance with 36 CFR 800.13 (c).

#### D. Resolving Objections

1. Should any party to this MOA object at any time in writing to the manner in which the terms of this MOA are implemented, to any action carried out or proposed with respect to implementation of the MOA, or to any document prepared in accordance with and subject to the terms of the MOA, Caltrans shall immediately notify the other parties of the objection, request their comments on the objection within 15 days following receipt of Caltrans' notification, and proceed to consult with the objecting party for no more than 30 days to resolve the objection. Caltrans will honor the request of any other parties to participate in the consultation and will take any comments provided by those parties into account.
2. If the objection is resolved during the 30 day consultation period, Caltrans may proceed with the disputed action in accordance with the terms of such resolution.

3. If at the end of the 30 day consultation period, Caltrans determines that the objection cannot be resolved through such consultation, then Caltrans shall forward all documentation relevant to the objection to the ACHP, including Caltrans' proposed response to the objection, with the expectation that the ACHP will, within 30 days after receipt of such documentation:
  - a. Advise Caltrans that the ACHP concurs in Caltrans' proposed response to the objection, whereupon Caltrans will respond to the objection accordingly. The objection shall thereby be resolved; or
  - b. Provide Caltrans with recommendations, which Caltrans will take into account in reaching a final decision regarding its response to the objection. The objection shall thereby be resolved; or
  - c. Notify Caltrans that the objection will be referred for comment pursuant to 36 CFR Part 800.7(c) and proceed to refer the objection and comment. Caltrans shall take the resulting comments into account in accordance with 36 CFR 800.7(c)(4) and Section 110(1) of the NHPA. The objection shall thereby be resolved.
4. Should the ACHP not exercise one of the above options within 30 days after receipt of all pertinent documentation, Caltrans may assume the ACHP's concurrence in its proposed response to the objection and proceed to implement that response. The objection shall thereby be resolved.
5. Caltrans shall take into account any of the ACHP's recommendations or comments provided in accordance with this stipulation with reference only to the subject of the objection. Caltrans' responsibility to carry out all other actions under this MOA that are not the subject of the objection shall remain unchanged.
6. At any time during implementation of the measures stipulated in this MOA, should a member of the public raise an objection in writing pertaining to such implementation to any signatory party to this MOA, that signatory party shall immediately notify Caltrans. Caltrans shall immediately notify the other signatory parties in writing of the objection. Any signatory party may choose to comment in writing on the objection to Caltrans. Caltrans shall establish a reasonable time frame for this comment period. Caltrans shall consider the objection, and in reaching its decision, Caltrans will take all comments from the other signatory parties into account. Within 15 days following closure of the comment period, Caltrans will render a decision regarding the objection and respond to the objecting party. Caltrans will promptly notify the other signatory parties of its decision in writing, including a copy of the response to the objecting party. Caltrans' decision regarding resolution of the objection will be final. Following issuance of its final decision, Caltrans may authorize the action subject to dispute hereunder to proceed in accordance with the terms of that decision.
7. Caltrans shall provide all parties to this MOA, and the ACHP, if the ACHP has commented, and any parties that have objected pursuant to Section D.6 of the stipulation,

with a copy of its final written decision regarding any objection addressed pursuant to this stipulation.

8. Caltrans may authorize any action subject to objection under this stipulation to proceed after the objection has been resolved in accordance with the terms of this stipulation.

E. Amendments. Any signatory party to this MOA may propose that this MOA be amended, whereupon all signatory parties shall consult to consider such amendment. The amendment will be effective on the date a copy signed by all of the original signatories is filed with the ACHP. If the signatories cannot agree to appropriate terms to amend the MOA, any signatory may terminate the agreement in accordance with Stipulation III. F, below.

F. Termination

1. If this MOA is not amended as provided for in section E of this stipulation, or if either signatory party proposes termination of this MOA for other reasons, the signatory party proposing termination shall, in writing, notify the other MOA parties, explain the reasons for proposing termination, and consult with the other parties for at least 30 days to seek alternatives to termination. Such consultation shall not be required if Caltrans proposes termination because the Undertaking no longer meets the definition set forth in 36 CFR Part 800.16(y).
2. Should such consultation result in an agreement on an alternative to termination, the signatory parties shall proceed in accordance with the terms of that agreement.
3. Should such consultation fail, the signatory party proposing termination may terminate this MOA by promptly notifying the other parties in writing. Termination hereunder shall render this MOA without further force or effect.
4. If this MOA is terminated hereunder, and if Caltrans determines that the Undertaking will nonetheless proceed, then Caltrans shall comply with the requirements of 36 CFR Part 800.3-800.6.

G. Duration of the MOA

1. Unless terminated pursuant to section F. of this stipulation, or unless it is superseded by an amended MOA, this MOA will be in effect following execution by the signatory parties until Caltrans, in consultation with the other signatory parties, determines that all of its stipulations have been satisfactorily fulfilled.
2. The terms of this MOA shall be satisfactorily fulfilled within ten (10) years following the date of execution by the signatory parties. If Caltrans determines that this requirement cannot be met, the MOA parties will consult to reconsider its terms. Reconsideration may include continuation of the MOA as originally executed, amendment of the MOA or termination. In the event of termination, Caltrans will comply with section F.4 of this stipulation, if it determines that the Undertaking will proceed notwithstanding termination of this MOA.

3. If the Undertaking has not been implemented within five (5) years following execution of this MOA, this MOA shall automatically terminate and have no further force or effect. In such event, Caltrans shall notify the other signatory parties in writing and, if it chooses to continue with the Undertaking, shall reinitiate review of the Undertaking in accordance with 36 CFR Part 800.

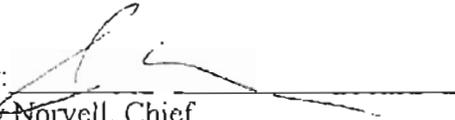
#### H. Effective Date

This MOA will take effect on the date that it has been executed by Caltrans and the SHPO.

**EXECUTION** of this MOA by Caltrans and the SHPO, its filing with the ACHP in accordance with 36 CFR§800.6(b)(1)(iv), and subsequent implementation of its terms, shall evidence, pursuant to 36CFR§800.6(c), that Caltrans has afforded the ACHP an opportunity to comment on the Undertaking and its effects on historic properties, and that Caltrans has taken into account the effects of the Undertaking on historic properties.

**SIGNATORY PARTIES:**

**California Department of Transportation**

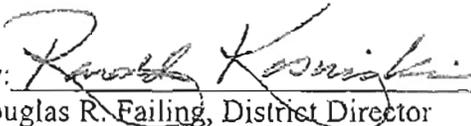
By:  Date: 6/26/08  
Jay Norvell, Chief  
Division of Environmental Analysis

**California State Historic Preservation Officer**

By:  Date: 6/26/08  
Milford Wayne Donaldson  
State Historic Preservation Officer

**CONCURRING PARTIES:**

**California Department of Transportation**

By:  Date: 6/30/08  
*for* Douglas R. Failing, District Director  
District 7, Los Angeles

**United States Army Corps of Engineers**

By: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Thomas H. Magness,  
Colonel, US Army  
District Commander

## EA/IS REFERENCES

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- Caltrans2005a California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), Storm Water Data Report of EA 07-199631
- Caltrans 2007a California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), Guidance for Preparers of Growth-related, Indirect Impact Analyses. Accessed November 7, 2007, from the Caltrans website at: [http://www.dot.ca.gov/ser/Growth-related\\_IndirectImpactAnalysis/GRI\\_guidance06May\\_files/gri\\_guidance.pdf](http://www.dot.ca.gov/ser/Growth-related_IndirectImpactAnalysis/GRI_guidance06May_files/gri_guidance.pdf)
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- Caltrans 2007c California Department of Transportation, Historic Property Survey Report for the Southbound Interstate 405 (San Diego Freeway) to US Highway 101 (Ventura Freeway) connector Improvement Project, Los Angeles County, California. January 2007.
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	<p>Planning website at:  <a href="http://www.ci.la.ca.us/PLN/Cwd/GnlPln/TransElt/TE/T1Intro.htm#purpose">http://www.ci.la.ca.us/PLN/Cwd/GnlPln/TransElt/TE/T1Intro.htm#purpose</a></p>
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