



Project Name: Albion River Bridge Project
DIST-CO-RTE-PM: 01-MEN-1-PM 43.3/44.2
EA: 01-40110
EFIS ID: 0100000154

**CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
STATEMENT OF OVERRIDING CONSIDERATIONS**

FOR

THE ALBION RIVER BRIDGE PROJECT ON STATE ROUTE 1 BETWEEN

POST MILES 43.3 AND 44.2 IN MENDOCINO COUNTY

The following information is presented to comply with State CEQA Guidelines (Title 14 California Code of Regulations, Division 6, Chapter 3, Section 15093), and the Department of Transportation and California Transportation Commission Environmental Regulations (Title 21 California Code of Regulations, Division 2, Chapter 11, Section 1501 et seq.). Reference is made to the Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR) for the project, which is the basic source for the information.

The following impacts have been identified as significant and not fully mitigable:

- **Aesthetics:** The project would require the removal of the Albion River Bridge, which is considered a scenic resource in views from the surrounding areas. Under CEQA, a significant impact could occur if a project would have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista, substantially damage scenic resources within a state scenic highway, or substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views in non-urbanized areas. Given the aesthetics of the bridge, removal of the bridge would remain substantial and adverse even with the implementation of mitigation measures because the project could not replace the aesthetic qualities of the existing bridge.
- **Cultural Resources:** The project would require the removal of the Albion River Bridge, which is listed in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) and the California Register of Historic Resources (CRHR). Under CEQA, a significant impact would occur if a proposed project causes a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource such as the Albion River Bridge. Because the bridge would be removed and replaced, the project would materially alter the qualities that justify the bridge's eligibility for inclusion in the NRHP and CRHR. Even with the implementation of mitigation measures, impacts would remain substantial and adverse.



Overriding considerations that support approval of this recommended project are as follows:

The purpose of the Albion River Bridge Project is to provide a bridge across the Albion River that meets modern seismic safety standards, provides safe and reliable multimodal access, and minimizes ongoing maintenance costs. The proposed project's objectives are as follows:

- Eliminate the bridge's structural and seismic deficiencies
- Eliminate the truss main span's fracture critical condition
- Provide shoulder widths consistent with local coastal plan goals
- Provide improved road alignment and sight distance
- Provide safe, multimodal bridge access for bicyclists and pedestrians
- Minimize ongoing maintenance costs
- Minimize traffic delays associated with bridge inspection, maintenance, and repairs
- Improve resilience to sea level rise, storm surges, and tsunamis
- Prevent further preservative treatment leaching from existing bridge timbers
- Minimize construction-related impacts to the community and environment

The project is needed to address functional, safety, and structural deficiencies of the existing bridge.

During project development, a wide range of possible alternatives were considered, identified based on past studies and comments received from stakeholders, including regulatory agencies and the community. Several potential alternatives, including rehabilitation of the existing bridge, were considered but eliminated prior to the preparation of the draft environmental document due to various reasons, including environmental impacts, community impacts, constructability concerns, extensive right of way requirements, and failure to meet most of the basic project objectives.

Three Build Alternatives (with a total of five design options) and a No-Build Alternative were evaluated in the draft environmental document. The Build Alternatives included the following:

- Alternative 1: West Alignment
 - Design Option 1A: Four-span segmental box girder bridge
 - Design Option 1B: Spandrel arch with box girder approaches
- Alternative 2: East Alignment
 - Design Option 2A: Three-span segmental box girder bridge
 - Design Option 2B: Spandrel arch with box girder approaches
- Alternative 3: On-Alignment (Half-Width)
 - Design Option 3A: Four-span box girder bridge

After circulation of the draft environmental document, the Project Development Team (PDT)—which consisted of an interdisciplinary team with representatives from environmental, project management, project engineering, structures, right of way, and



construction—met to discuss the identification of a preferred alternative. Various criteria were used for comparing the proposed alternatives, including environmental and construction considerations, right of way requirements, public input received during circulation of the Draft EIR/EIS, and construction schedule. The preferred alternative would also need to meet the purpose and need of the project.

Alternative 2 (East Alignment), Design Option 2B, was identified as the preferred alternative. This alternative met the purpose and need of the project and, after comparing and weighing various factors, was selected because of primary advantages including those related to fewer environmental impacts in key resource categories, less constructability concerns, less permanent right of way acquisitions, and lower construction costs. In addition, as an arch-type bridge, it had advantages over the non-arch alternatives (Design Options 1A, 2A, and 3A) related to aesthetics and public and agency preference for an arch structure.

California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Section 15093(a) states: “If the specific economic, legal, social, technological, or other benefits of a proposed project outweigh the unavoidable adverse environmental effects, the adverse environmental effects may be considered ‘acceptable’.”

Overall, the proposed project would:

- Address the critical deficiencies associated with the existing bridge;
- Improve mobility and safety;
- Reduce maintenance activities;
- Remove the pollution burden of the existing bridge; and
- Provide higher resilience to climate change and natural disasters.

For these reasons, and the substantial evidence included in the administrative record as a whole, Caltrans finds that the benefits of the proposed project outweigh the projects adverse, significant impacts to the Albion River Bridge related to cultural resources and aesthetics.

Tom Fitzgerald for Matt Brady
 District Director (or designee)


 Signature

8/15/2025
 Date