California Department of Transportation
U.S. Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration

RECORD OF DECISION

ALBION RIVER BRIDGE PROJECT

Mendocino County, California
District 1 – State Route 1 (PM 43.3 to 44.2)
EA 01-40110 / Project ID 0100000154

The environmental review, consultation, and any other actions required by applicable Federal environmental laws for this project are being, or have been, carried out by Caltrans pursuant to 23 USC 327 and the Memorandum of Understanding dated May 27, 2022, and executed by FHWA and Caltrans.

This Record of Decision (ROD) was developed pursuant to 40 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 1505.2 and 23 CFR 771.127 for the Albion River Bridge Project on State Route (SR) 1 in Mendocino County, California. The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) has identified this project to address deficiencies associated with the existing bridge. The proposed action and project's purpose and need are described in Chapter 1 of the project's *Final Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement and Final Section 4(f) Evaluation* that was signed on July 31, 2025. The Notice of Availability of the final environmental document was published in the Federal Register on August 8, 2025.

A. Decision

This ROD approves the preferred alternative identified in the Final Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement (EIR/EIS) (Alternative 2, Design Option 2B). After circulation of the Draft EIR/EIS and consideration of various criteria, including environmental and construction considerations, construction schedule and cost, right of way requirements, and public and agency input received during circulation of the Draft EIR/EIS, Caltrans has selected Alternative 2, Design Option 2B (herein referred to as "Design Option 2B") for addressing the deficiencies associated with the Albion River Bridge.

B. Alternatives Considered

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 circulation of the Draft EIR/EIS due to environmental impacts, community impacts,

constructability concerns, extensive right of way requirements, and/or failure to meet most of the basic project objectives.

Three build alternatives, with a total of five design options, as well as a no-build alternative, were evaluated in the EIR/EIS. All build alternatives considered would replace the existing bridge with a 47-foot-wide structure with two 12-foot-wide travel lanes, 6-foot-wide shoulders, and a 6-foot-wide separated pedestrian walkway. In addition, the alternatives would widen roadway shoulders on SR 1, lengthen the left turn lane on SR 1 south of Spring Grove Road, realign and improve Albion River North Side Road, and reconstruct the SR 1/Albion Little River Road intersection within the project limits. The build alternatives included the following:

- **Alternative 1:** A replacement bridge would be constructed approximately 60 feet west of the existing bridge centerline. The existing bridge would be removed after construction of the replacement bridge. The two design options include:
    - ***Design Option 1A:*** A four-span segmental box girder bridge
    - ***Design Option 1B:*** A spandrel arch with box girder approaches
- **Alternative 2:** A replacement bridge would be constructed up to approximately 190 feet east of the existing bridge centerline. The existing bridge would be removed after construction of the replacement bridge. The two design options include:
    - ***Design Option 2A:*** A three-span segmental box girder bridge
    - ***Design Option 2B:*** A spandrel arch with box girder approaches
- **Alternative 3:** A replacement bridge would be constructed approximately 16 to 46 feet west of the existing bridge centerline. The replacement bridge would be constructed in two general stages. In Stage 1, the western half of the replacement bridge would be built immediately west of the existing bridge while traffic is carried on the existing bridge. In Stage 2, the existing bridge would be removed, and the remainder of the new structure would be constructed in its place. Stage 2 traffic would be carried on the western half of the replacement bridge. The design option includes:
    - ***Design Option 3A:*** A four-span box girder bridge

Under the No-Build Alternative, the proposed project would not occur, and the existing bridge would remain in its current condition. The bridge would continue to deteriorate and become increasingly susceptible to damage or failure due to the marine environment, seismic events, heavy cyclical loads, or tsunamis. Given the condition of the existing bridge, extensive recurring maintenance and structural improvement projects to maintain the bridge are being implemented currently and are anticipated. Decay and corrosion are expected to continue at an increased rate over time. It is expected that eventual bridge replacement would be necessary; however, future

necessary replacement or other future improvement projects are not included or evaluated as part of the No-Build Alternative. The No-Build Alternative does not meet the proposed project's purpose and need.

C. Preferred Alternative

Caltrans is the lead agency under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), as assigned by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), has selected Design Option 2B, as the preferred alternative.

After circulation of the Draft EIR/EIS, the Project Development Team (PDT) met to discuss the identification of a preferred alternative. The PDT was an interdisciplinary team with representatives from environmental, project management, project engineering, structures, right of way, and construction. Various criteria were used for comparing the proposed alternatives, including environmental and construction considerations, construction schedule and cost, right of way requirements, and input from the public and regulatory agencies during circulation of the Draft EIR/EIS. Above all, the preferred alternative would also need to meet the purpose and need of the project.

The No-Build Alternative would not meet the purpose and need of the project. Accordingly, it was not identified as the preferred alternative.

Design Options 1A, 2A, and 3A met the purpose and need of the project. However, they were not selected as the preferred alternative due to poor aesthetics related to the non-arch structure and higher environmental impacts (with Design Options 1A and 3A having the highest level of impacts), and because of public and agency preferences for an arch structure.

Design Options 1B and 2B were considered in greater detail:

- **Environmental Considerations:** Design Option 2B is the environmentally preferable alternative. While many of the environmental impacts were similar, Design Option 2B will require less permanent shoring (8,700 square feet) than Design Option 1B (12,800 square feet) would, which will minimize alteration to the natural landform consistent with Coastal Act goals and also result in less energy use and construction-related greenhouse gas emissions.
- **Construction Considerations:** Design Option 1B has more challenging topography during construction and construction would require access through the piers of the existing bridge. In addition to constructability advantages such as topography and access, Design Option 2B will require fewer retaining walls to build foundations plus minimal shoring and underpinning of the existing bridge, and its construction will also require less concrete and steel.

- **Construction Schedule and Cost:** Caltrans anticipated that both Design Options 1B and 2B would have taken three years to construct; however, there was a greater risk of delays to the schedule for Design Option 1B given the construction considerations described above. In addition, based on estimated construction costs at the time of the Draft EIR/EIS, Caltrans anticipated that Design Option 1B would have cost more than Design Option 2B.
- **Right of Way:** While Design Option 2B will require acquisition of a portion of Albion Campground, it will not require permanent right of way acquisition of Albion Beach and will require less overall permanent acquisition than Design Option 1B.
- **Public Input:** Public input indicated a preference for the arch alternatives over the non-arch alternatives. Of the Build Alternatives, Design Option 1B was the most preferred, and Design Option 2B was second.

Overall, based on comparing and weighing the above factors, Design Option 2B was identified as the preferred alternative. It is also the environmentally preferred alternative. The primary advantages of Design Option 2B included fewer environmental impacts in key resource categories, less constructability concerns, less permanent right of way acquisitions, and lower construction costs.

D. Determinations and Findings Regarding Other Laws

Section 4(f) of the U.S. Department of Transportation Act of 1966

Under the preferred alternative, the Albion River Bridge, which is a Section 4(f) resource, will be removed following construction of the replacement bridge. Removal of the bridge will be a “use” of the Section 4(f) resource. Measures to address the impact to the bridge are documented in the Programmatic Agreement between Caltrans and the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) and the attached Cultural Resources Management Plan (CRMP). Measures include Historic American Engineering Record (HAER) documentation, an interpretive exhibit, a short documentary film, and a model of the existing bridge. Based on considerations in the Section 4(f) Evaluation, there is no feasible and prudent alternative to use of the Albion River Bridge, and the project includes all possible planning to minimize harm to the bridge resulting from such use.

Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966

Caltrans conducted consultation in accordance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation act and its implementing regulations. One historical resource (the Albion River Bridge) and three potential archaeological resources are present within the project area.

The Albion River Bridge is listed in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). It was determined that the proposed project would have an adverse effect on the historic property by removing the bridge in its entirety and therefore its characteristics that

qualify it for the National Register. The SHPO did not object to this Finding of Adverse Effect in a letter dated May 14, 2024.

Three potential archaeological resources are present within the area. However, due to access limitations, a phased identification process will be employed to complete identification, evaluation, and application of the Criteria of Adverse Effect to these resources, as permitted under Stipulation XII.A of the Section 106 Programmatic Agreement (executed 2024) and consistent with 36 CFR Sections 800.4(b)(2) and 800.5(a)(3).

A Programmatic Agreement (PA), with attached CRMP was signed on July 30, 2025, by Caltrans and the SHPO. The CRMP guides the further identification, evaluation, and application of Finding of Adverse Effect for the potential archaeological resources. Additionally, the CRMP documents treatment measures for the Albion River Bridge, contains the Archaeological Monitoring Plan, and contains protocols and procedures for environmentally sensitive areas for known cultural resources.

Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act

Pursuant to the requirements of the Endangered Species Act, record searches and habitat assessments were conducted to determine whether threatened and endangered species have the potential to occur within the project area. As described in Section 3.4.5 of the Final EIR/EIS, there is potential habitat for 12 federally threatened and endangered species and/or their critical habitat, including Howell's spineflower (*Chorizanthe howellii*), Menzies' wallflower (*Erysimum menziesii*), lotis blue butterfly (*Lycaeides argyrognomon [Plebejus anna] lotis*), Behren's silverspot butterfly (*Speyeria zerene behrensii*), leatherback sea turtle (*Dermochelys coriacea*), marbled murrelet (*Brachyramphus marmoratus*), humpback whale (*Megaptera novaeangliae*), southern resident killer whale (*Orcinus orca*), California Coastal Chinook salmon (*Oncorhynchus tshawytscha*), Central California Coast coho salmon (*Oncorhynchus kisutch*), Green sturgeon – southern distinct population segment (DPS) (*Acipenser medirostris*), and Northern California steelhead (*Oncorhynchus mykiss*).

Caltrans will initiate FESA Section 7 consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the National Marine Fisheries Service for potential effects to listed species and obtain a Letter of Concurrence from USFWS and a Biological Opinion from NMFS. It is anticipated that the project will have no effect on Howell's spineflower, Menzies' wallflower, or Behren's silverspot butterfly. It is anticipated that the project may affect, but is not likely to adversely affect, Lotis blue butterfly. The project may affect, but is not likely to adversely affect, leatherback sea turtle, marbled murrelet, and humpback whale, but have no effect on their critical habitat. It is anticipated that the project will have no effect on killer whale, but may affect, though not likely to adversely affect its critical habitat. Additionally, it is anticipated that the project may affect, and is likely to adversely affect, Chinook salmon, coho salmon, green sturgeon, and steelhead and their critical habitats.

E. Measures to Minimize Harm

Chapter 3 of the Final EIR/EIS provides a detailed discussion of potential impacts resulting from construction and operation of the project and identifies measures to avoid, minimize, and/or mitigate impacts. Measures to minimize harm are summarized below. Resource areas in which there were no additional avoidance, minimization, or mitigation measures are not included below.

Coastal Zone

Applicable measures from other resource categories that address consistency with coastal zone requirements include Measures AMM-PR-1, AMM-TT-1, and AMM-BR-1 through AMM-BR-10, which are detailed in the relevant sections below.

Parks and Recreational Facilities

During construction, the project will temporarily limit and/or restrict access to the Albion Flat Beach, Albion Campground, and Albion River outlet. There will be no permanent impacts on river or beach access. Several campsites in the private campground may be permanently affected by the project. The following measure will be implemented for the project.

AMM-PR-1: A public outreach program would be implemented that provides notification to the public (e.g., residents, businesses, Albion River users/recreationalists, emergency service providers, transit operators) and applicable agencies with information regarding construction activities and closures.

Community Character and Cohesion

Construction would temporarily affect community character, for reasons such as air pollutant emissions and noise from construction activities. The proposed project will not affect the local population demographics, influence regional population growth, or contribute to changes in housing characteristics. After construction, community cohesion would be improved through the addition of safe and reliable multimodal access across the Albion River, and the bridge will be more structurally sound. However, losing the existing bridge will impact community character, as it may change some residents' perception of their sense of place and community history due to the local importance of the existing bridge.

Measures from other resource categories will be implemented that are applicable to community character and cohesion. These include measures AMM-AR-1 through AMM-AR-6, AMM-AQ-1, AMM-CR-3, AMM-NOI-1, AMM-PR-1, AMM-TT-1, AMM-VIB-1 and AMM-VIB-2.

Utilities/Emergency Services

Traffic control will be required for the project during construction. Additionally, staging for equipment or materials will be located on the parcel of the Albion-Little River Fire Protection District. Utility relocation will be required, though only short-term minor disruptions during construction are anticipated.

Measure AMM-TT-1 will be implemented, as well as the measure listed below, to address emergency access of the project site during construction.

AMM-UE-1 Access to the Albion-Little River Fire Protection District fire station at 34920 Albion Street, Albion, CA would be maintained at all times during construction.

Traffic and Transportation/Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities

Traffic control will be required for the project, causing temporary delays during construction. Upon completion of construction, the function and geometrics of the Albion River Bridge and approach will be improved. During construction AMM-PR-1, discussed above, will be implemented to notify the public and agencies of traffic control. Additionally, AMM-TT-1 will be implemented for emergency services.

AMM-TT-1: A contingency plan would be prepared in coordination with emergency services to accommodate emergency vehicles at all times. The contingency plan would include provisions for access across the bridge for all vehicles during an evacuation (e.g., wildfires).

Visual/Aesthetics

During construction, viewers from SR 1 and surrounding areas will experience short-term visual impacts, including the removal of vegetation and the presence of construction vehicles, equipment, and materials. In addition, the Albion River Bridge will be removed. While the arch bridge of Design Option 2B provides architectural interest, fits into the natural setting, and improves the visual continuity between the river and the coastline, it cannot replicate the distinctiveness, memorability, or historical character of the existing bridge.

Measure AMM-CR-3 will be implemented, as well as the measures listed below, for aesthetic impacts.

AMM-AR-1: The potential for glare from bridge structure components would be avoided or minimized through the selection of materials and finishes used for bridge construction.

AMM-AR-2: Aesthetic treatment, such as color and pedestrian railing design, would be applied to the bridge railing to increase its visual compatibility.

AMM-AR-3: Bridge structures, such as retaining walls and wing walls, would be aesthetically treated with color, texture, and/or patterns to increase the project's visual compatibility with the surrounding environment.

AMM-AR-4: All disturbed soil areas that were previously vegetated, including temporary access roads, construction easements, and staging areas, would be restored to a natural contour. Disturbed slopes 2:1 and flatter would be planted and seeded with regionally appropriate California native species plants. Steeper disturbed slopes would be seeded with regionally appropriate California native species plants. No native plantings at their mature height may block existing views.

AMM-AR-5: Albion Campground facilities, such as but not limited to, grass, gravel, and hookups, would be restored or replaced to their original condition if disturbed by construction activities.

AMM-AR-6: Caltrans would work with community members to offset the project's effects on scenic views through the incorporation of community input into the identification and design of landscape amenities to enhance views and provide opportunities for passive recreation.

Cultural Resources

The Albion River Bridge, a historic property listed in the National Register of Historic Places and California Register of Historic Places, will be removed. Three unevaluated archaeological sites have been identified within the area of potential effect for the proposed project; due to lack of access, these resources will be evaluated prior to construction after access is obtained. The measures below will be implemented for cultural resources.

AMM-CR-1: Known cultural resources, not located in the area of direct impact (ADI) of the proposed project, will be protected by temporary high visibility fencing (THVF) and marked as an environmentally sensitive area (ESA). Protocols for the establishment of ESAs and procedures in the event of an inadvertent breach of an ESA have been documented in the Cultural Resource Management Plan (CRMP), developed in consultation with the California State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) and attached to the Phased Programmatic Agreement (PA) (see AMM-CR-2).

AMM-CR-2: Caltrans will implement the CRMP, which is an attachment to the Phased PA once access to the resources is obtained. The CRMP guides the further evaluation of CA-MEN-3652H [P-23-005516]), historic-era refuse deposits (CA-MEN-3653H), and a prehistoric site (CA-MEN-3645 [P-23-005484]) which will be completed prior to construction in these areas. The CRMP outlines a Phased Identification approach and process

through which a Finding of Effect for these sites will be determined in consultation with the SHPO and other consulting parties. The procedures for addressing an inadvertent discovery are also included in the CRMP.

AMM-CR-3: To address adverse effects to the historic bridge, Caltrans would initiate historic bridge recordation using Level I or II Historic American Engineering Record (HAER) documentation, with copies held at local historical repositories and made available to the public. The HAER documentation would follow National Park Service guidelines for formal archival documentation, which consists of measured and interpretive drawings, historical reports, and large-format photographs.

Additional treatment measures to address adverse effects include:

- An interpretive exhibit near or on the new bridge. The exhibit would include interpretive panels and one model to scale of the Albion River Bridge. The interpretive panels would focus on the history of the Albion Bridge.
- A short documentary film that would document the evolution and construction of the Albion River Bridge and the greater Albion community. The film would be available for viewing on a Caltrans supported website and be made available for educational and interpretive purposes by the public.
- A model to scale of the existing Albion River Bridge would be developed; the three-dimensional model shall be used to develop the physical model to scale of the Albion River Bridge that will be included with the interpretive panels as part of the exhibit. Additionally, the digital model shall be provided to the public on a Caltrans supported website.

  Following public input and consultation with SHPO and consulting parties, treatment measures were finalized and documented in the CRMP.

AMM-CR-4: In consultation with SHPO, Caltrans has prepared an Archaeological Monitoring Plan, which is included in the CRMP and attached to the Phased PA. The Archaeological Monitoring Plan will be implemented during any ground disturbing activities and during construction. This plan includes establishing Resource Monitoring Area (RMAs) and having an archaeologist and Tribal representative monitor job site activities within the RMAs to identify any undiscovered resources, unanticipated effects, and to inform tribal communities that cultural resources being protected by ESAs remain effective. No work can be conducted within the RMAs unless archeological and Tribal monitors are both present. The

Archaeological Monitoring Plan will be updated following further investigation and evaluation of CA-MEN-3652H [P-23-005516]), historic-era refuse deposits (CA-MEN-3653H), and prehistoric site (CA-MEN-3645 [P-23-00584]) as agreed upon in the PA if needed, guided by the CRMP.

Hydrology and Floodplain

Construction work will occur in the 100-year floodplain. The constructed bridge will not cause a significant encroachment on the floodplain. It would also not cause significant hydraulic or scour-related issues. The project will be designed to allow for the free flow of the Albion River, maintain clear passage under the bridge for typical boats that frequent the river, and meet navigational clearance requirements. The following measure will be implemented for floodplains and hydrology during construction.

AMM-HF-1: During construction, the site would be monitored on a regular basis as well as each time the National Weather Service issues a flood risk warning at the closest monitoring station (Fort Bragg) to assess the potential for debris loading and implement measures, as determined feasible, to remove staged materials and racked debris that poses a threat to temporary and permanent infrastructure and channel/bank stability. Measures would include the use of on-site equipment (e.g., excavators) to remove staged materials from the site in advance of a flood event, and to dislodge or remove and dispose of racked debris caught on temporary trestles in the river, when site conditions allow for the safe removal of debris.

Water Quality and Stormwater Runoff

The proposed project may result in temporary impacts to water quality during construction, which will be addressed by implementing standard Best Management Practices. Dewatering within shored areas, conducted pursuant to a Construction Site Dewatering Plan, will be performed to create a dry work zone for construction.

The project will result in an increase of net new impervious surface. Post-construction treatment controls will address potential stormwater impacts after construction is completed by reducing pollutant loads in runoff prior to reaching a downstream receiving water.

The following measure will be implemented to protect water quality.

AMM-WQ-1: All erosion control fabric would be natural fiber, not plastic.

Hazardous Waste/Materials

Construction activities will potentially disturb asbestos-containing material, lead-based paint, treated wood waste, and contaminated soils. The proposed project will include a potential staging area on a parcel with monitoring wells that require protection.

The proposed will would remove the source of the arsenic, lead, zinc and chromium (timber members) in the soil underneath the bridge, so there will no longer be wood preservatives leaching into adjacent soil.

The following measures will be implemented for hazardous waste during construction.

AMM-HW-1: All monitoring wells would be identified and protected from damage in the vicinity of the former Albion Shell Station (3300 North Highway 1). Wells would be identified as environmentally sensitive areas (ESA) in final design. The construction contractor would allow access to the wells for sampling.

AMM-HW-2: As Alternative 2 (East Alignment) is the identified Preferred Alternative, a DSI would be prepared to determine whether the proposed project would encroach on areas previously impacted from activities associated with past use of the site as a lumber mill. The results from the detailed site investigation (DSI) would inform whether elevated levels of contaminants are present and provide Caltrans information regarding special handling and disposal requirements of these materials, if needed. In addition, information gathered from the DSI would provide information in support of property acquisition and any additional Standard Special Provision (SSP) or Non-Standard Special Provision (NSSP) development.

AMM-HW-3: Asbestos abatement would be completed prior to any work on structures that could potentially contain asbestos. SSP 14-11.16, *Asbestos Containing Construction Materials in Bridges*, would be included in the specification package. In accordance with SSP 14-11.16, a certified industrial hygienist (CIH) with experience and knowledge of asbestos removal work and a certified asbestos consultant would direct the removal, storage, transportation, and disposal of asbestos containing materials and would sign and seal the Asbestos Compliance Plan. A certified asbestos consultant would sign and seal an Asbestos Work Plan, which would be submitted 15 days before starting bridge demolition activities in areas containing or suspected to contain asbestos. All personnel would be required to submit certification of completed safety training before starting work in areas containing or suspected to contain asbestos.

AMM-HW-4: SSP 14-9.02, *NESHAP Notification*, would be included in the specification package. A NESHAP notification to the Mendocino County Air Quality Management District (MCAQMD) would be required prior to bridge demolition activities.

AMM-HW-5: NSSP 14-11.17, *Disturbance of Existing Treated Wood and Paint Systems on Bridges*, would be included in the project specifications. A Health and Safety Plan would be prepared for disturbance or removal of treated wood waste (TWW). TWW can be found in the bridge's timber, utility poles, signposts, and bridge rails. TWW would be included as a disposal item in the construction contract and disposed of in accordance with SSP 14-11.14, *Treated Wood Waste*. Any personnel who handle or may come in contact with TWW would be provided training.

AMM-HW-6: A Lead Compliance Plan would be prepared prior to paint and thermoplastic disturbance/removal.

AMM-HW-7: A Health and Safety Plan would be required for soil disturbance/removal beneath the bridge structure. In addition, NSSP 14-11.11, *Department Generated Contaminated Soil*, would be included in the specification package.

AMM-HW-8: In accordance with Standard Measure HW-2, Caltrans SSP 14-11.12, *Remove Yellow Traffic Stripes and Pavement Markings with Hazardous Waste Residue*, would be included in specification package. SSP 36-4, *Containing Lead from Paint and Thermoplastic*, would also be included in the specification package. SSP 84-9.03B, *Remove Traffic Stripes and Pavement Markings Containing Lead*, would be included if this method is preferred.

AMM-HW-9: All lead-impacted excavated soil would be managed in accordance with the aerially deposited lead (ADL) Agreement between Caltrans and Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC). Surface soils from potentially contaminated areas have been tested. In accordance with Standard Measure HW-1, a Lead Compliance Plan would be prepared for lead-impacted soil as a bid item for the construction contractor. The following specifications would also be included for soil disturbance and removal activities along roadways in the specification package: SSP 7-1.02K(6)(j)(iii), *Earth Material Containing Lead*; SSP 14-11.08, *Regulated Material Containing Aerially Deposited Lead*; and SSP 14-11.09, *Minimal Disturbance of Material Containing Regulated Concentrations of Aerially Deposited Lead*.

Air Quality

Construction activities will temporarily generate fugitive dust and construction equipment emissions. The proposed project will not increase capacity or impact traffic volumes or fleet mix; therefore, there will not be an increase in operational air emissions. Measures AMM-HW-2, AMM-HW-6 through AMM-HW-9, as well as the measure listed below, will be implemented for air quality during construction.

AMM-AQ-1: Implementation of the following measures, some of which may also be required for other purposes, such as storm water pollution control, would reduce air quality impacts resulting from construction activities.

1. All construction equipment would use low sulfur fuel, as required by CA Code of Regulations Title 17, Section 93114
2. A dust control plan would be developed documenting sprinkling, temporary paving, speed limits, and timely re-vegetation of disturbed slopes as needed to minimize construction impacts to existing communities.
3. Track-out reduction measures, such as gravel pads at project access points to minimize dust and mud deposits on roads affected by construction traffic, would be used.
4. Dust and mud that are deposited on paved, public roads due to construction activity and traffic would be removed promptly and regularly to reduce particulate matter (PM) emissions.
5. To the extent feasible, construction traffic would be scheduled and routed to reduce congestion and related air quality impacts caused by idling vehicles along local roads during peak travel times.
6. Disturbed areas would be stabilized as soon as practical after grading to reduce windblown PM in the area.

Noise and Vibration

Noise and vibration will be generated during construction; pile driving will be the loudest noise- and vibration-generating construction activity. Temporary vibration levels will have the potential for distinctly or strongly perceptible levels at nearby residences.

Due to the realigned bridge, the operational noise increase for Design Option 2B ranges up to 4 dB, though noise levels are not expected to approach or exceed the noise abatement criteria (NAC) level or result in a substantial increase in noise.

The following will be implemented during construction for noise and vibration.

AMM-NOI-1: *Construction Noise Minimization Measures*. To reduce the potential for noise impacts resulting from project construction, the following measures shall be implemented during project construction.

1. When feasible, noise-generating construction activities shall be restricted to between 7:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. Monday through Saturday, with no construction occurring on Sundays or federal holidays. If work is necessary outside of these hours, notifications shall be made to interested parties in advance and additional noise controls shall be implemented where practical and feasible.
2. All internal combustion engine driven equipment shall be equipped with manufacturer recommended intake and exhaust mufflers that are in good condition and appropriate for the equipment.
3. Unnecessary idling of internal combustion engines within 100 feet of residences shall be strictly prohibited.
4. "Quiet" air compressors and other "quiet" equipment shall be used where such technology exists.
5. Provide acoustic shielding around pile driving hammer.

AMM-VIB-1: *Pre-construction Surveys*. Prior to the start of construction, a pre-construction survey that documents the existing condition of the buildings shall be conducted. The pre-construction survey shall identify and document both structural and cosmetic damage on the interior and exterior of the building. The length and width of cracks shall be measured, and if deemed necessary, monitored during construction. Areas that are typically inspected during a pre-construction survey include foundations, interior/exterior walls, hardscaping, and interior floors. The survey shall include a photo log or video log, and if known, list the cause of the damage.

AMM-VIB-2: *Vibration Monitoring*. During construction, vibration monitors shall be placed outside the buildings at the point closest to the vibration source.

Energy

Energy use will temporarily increase during construction, primarily through consumption of diesel and gas for equipment, material deliveries, and debris hauling. The proposed project will not result in an increase in traffic volumes, vehicle mix, or any other factor that will cause an increase in direct energy consumption, and will not result in an inefficient, wasteful, or unnecessary consumption of energy. The following measure will be implemented for energy during construction.

AMM-GHG-1: The use of construction BMPs would minimize energy consumption from construction activities, including but not limited to:

1. Limit idling of vehicles and equipment.
2. Using solar-powered equipment, if feasible (e.g., signal boards).
3. Regular vehicle and equipment maintenance.

4. If feasible, recycle non-hazardous waste and excess materials to reduce disposal offsite.

In addition, with innovations such as longer pavement lives, improvement in traffic management, and changes in materials, energy consumption can be offset to some degree by longer intervals between maintenance activities, and other project features.

Natural Communities

The proposed project will have temporary and/or permanent impacts to natural communities of concern, including coastal silk tassel scrub, coastal brambles, wax myrtle scrub, coastal dune willow thickets, coast range stonecrop draperies, and eelgrass beds. A project-specific revegetation plan will be prepared for temporarily impacted areas. Measure AMM-HF-1, as well as the measures listed below, will be implemented for impacts to natural communities.

AMM-BR-1: Caltrans proposes to compensate for permanent impacts to sensitive natural communities by purchasing credits from the Mendocino Coast Mitigation Bank and/or participating in off-site mitigation. The appropriate credit ratios would be identified and coordinated through the California Coastal Commission (CCC), U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB), California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), and any other administering agencies during the permitting phase of the project. Caltrans anticipates mitigation credits to be available prior to project impacts; therefore, a mitigation ratio of approximately 1:1 to 2:1 is expected. Alternatively, a minimum ratio of 3:1 would be proposed for restoration and/or preservation of habitat at an off-site location.

AMM-BR-2: Soil (sand) protection timber crane mats would be deployed when working adjacent to the channel or below high tide line at low tide, and temporary trestle piles and permanent bridge foundations would be placed outside of eelgrass habitat, where feasible.

AMM-BR-3: When feasible, temporary trestle piles would be installed and removed during outgoing tides to deflect turbidity away from upstream eelgrass beds.

AMM-BR-8: To ensure “no net loss” of seagrass (surfgrass and eelgrass), all necessary standards outlined in the California Eelgrass Mitigation Policy (CEMP) would be followed. This includes the development of a comprehensive mitigation and monitoring plan and associated pre- and post-construction surveys.

If temporarily impacted areas of seagrass do not restore naturally within an agreed-upon timeframe (to be determined during permitting), then adaptive mitigation measures may be implemented. Restoration efforts would likely take the form of infilling gaps within remaining eelgrass patches. If an impact is determined to have occurred as a result of project construction, any gaps that have developed between the pre- and post-construction surveys that are greater than 1 meter across would be planted. If determined necessary, Caltrans would pursue on-site mitigation with a final minimum restoration ratio of 1.2:1. If there are permanent impacts, then Caltrans would mitigate with a final restoration ratio achieving a minimum of 2:1. Restoration options to offset permanent impacts would be developed in coordination with CDFW and National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) and could include funding of in-stream efforts within the project area or upstream that increase potential habitat area by removing existing structures currently shading or occupying potential habitat areas (e.g., old wood and concrete piers and/or docks).

Wetlands and Other Waters

The proposed project will have temporary and permanent impacts to aquatic resources, including wetlands and other waters and riparian habitat. A project-specific revegetation plan will be prepared for temporarily impacted areas. Additionally, the following measures will be implemented for wetlands and other waters.

AMM-BR-4: Wetlands and other waters temporarily disturbed would be restored to their natural contours for revegetation.

AMM-BR-9: Caltrans proposes to compensate for permanent impacts to aquatic resources by purchasing credits from the Mendocino Coast Mitigation Bank and/or participating in off-site mitigation. The appropriate credit ratios would be identified and coordinated through consultation with regulatory agencies during the permitting phase of the project. Caltrans anticipates mitigation credits to be available prior to project impacts; therefore, a mitigation ratio of approximately 1:1 to 2:1 is expected. Alternatively, a minimum ratio of 3:1 would be proposed for restoration and/or preservation of aquatic resources at an off-site location.

Plant Species

The project has the potential to affect harlequin lotus (*Hosackia gracilis*), Point Reyes checkerbloom (*Sidalcea calycosa* ssp. *rhizomata),* and Mendocino pygmy cypress (*Hesperocyparis pygmaea*). The impacts to harlequin lotus and Point Reyes checkerbloom will be small, and temporary in nature. The following measure will be implemented for Mendocino cypress.

AMM-BR-12: The Mendocino cypress trees located on the eastern embankment of SR 1 would be salvaged and relocated within the project area. Relocation would be included in the revegetation plan with monitoring requirements, including adaptive management to plant locally sourced container plants if relocation is unsuccessful.

Animal Species

Various special status animal species may be affected by the proposed project, including obscure bumble bee (*Bombus caliginosus*), the North Coast clade of foothill yellow-legged frog (*Rana boylii*), northern red-legged frog (*Rana aurora*), migratory birds, gray whale (*Eschrichtius robustus*), harbor porpoise (*Phocoena phocoena*), common bottlenose dolphin (*Tursiops truncatus*), Pacific harbor seal (*Phoca vitulina richardii*), northern elephant seal (*Mirounga angustirostris*), and California sea lion (*Zalophus californianus*), pallid bat (*Antrozous pallidus*), Townsend's big-eared bat (*Corynorhinus townsendii*), and western red bat (*Lasiurus blossevillii*), and pacific lamprey (*Entosphenus tridentatus*). The following measures will be implemented for special status animal species.

AMM-BR-5: If active obscure bumble bee nests are found, a protective no-work buffer of 50 feet would be established until such time as the project biologist determines the buffer is no longer necessary.

AMM-BR-6: A Marine Animal Monitoring Plan (MAMP) would be developed and implemented for marbled murrelets, sea turtles, and marine mammals other than Pacific harbor seal. A biological monitor would be present to monitor for these species during all construction activities that have the potential to produce impulsive hammering sounds within the Albion River channel or Albion Cove, including any vibratory or percussive pile installation, hoe-ramming, or jackhammering. The MAMP would be prepared prior to construction and would include adaptive measures, such as defining a safety zone around in-river activities specific to species or hearing groups. To minimize exposure to marine animals and possible harm from construction activities, no impact pile driving would be initiated when marine animals are detected within their respective safety zone. In addition, during impact driving, when a marine mammal is detected through on-site monitoring within an identified safety zone, or is about to enter its respective safety zone, pile driving or demolition work would be halted and not resumed until the animal was seen to leave the safety zone on its own, or 30 minutes elapsed since the animal was last seen.

AMM-BR-7: Cofferdams would be installed at low tide if feasible to avoid trapping aquatic species. Once placed, dewatering and relocation efforts would be performed in accordance with all measures outlined in the Aquatic

Species Relocation Plan (Standard Measure BR-2) and would adhere to Best Management Practices to Minimize Adverse Effects to Pacific Lamprey (*Entosphenus tridentatus*).

1. The orientation, siting, and type of fish screens used for dewatering operations would be selected to minimize potential entrainment of lamprey.
2. Electrofishing would be performed prior to dewatering to relocate ammocoetes within the work zone to a safe area away from the construction site.
3. Dewatering would be performed slowly over several days, or at a minimum overnight, to allow opportunity for any remaining lamprey to relocate on their own.
4. A professional fisheries biologist would be present during channel excavations to sift through removed substrate to salvage any remaining ammocoetes, returning them to the stream channel a safe distance away from the construction site.

AMM-BR-11: Pile driving would not be initiated when Pacific harbor seals are within their 33-foot (10-meter) single-strike injury isopleth. Soft start/ramp-up methods would be used if harbor seals are outside the single-strike injury isopleth but within the area, at a distance determined through coordination with NMFS during permitting under the MMPA.

Threatened and Endangered Species

Threatened and endangered species may be in the project area and affected by construction, including lotis blue butterfly (*Plebejus [Lycaeides] anna lotis*), leatherback sea turtle (*Dermochelys coriacea*), marbled murrelet (*Brachyramphus marmoratus*), humpback whale (*Megaptera novaeangliae)*, southern resident killer whale (*Orcinus orca*) and their critical habitat, California Coastal Evolutionarily Significant Unit (ESU) of Chinook salmon (*Oncorhynchus tshawytscha*), Central California Coast ESU of coho salmon (*Oncorhynchus kisutch*), southern DPS of green sturgeon (*Acipenser medirostris*), and Northern California DPS of steelhead (*Oncorhynchus mykiss*), as well as Essential Fish Habitat and associated Habitat Areas of Particular Concern.

The following measures will be implemented for impacts to threatened and endangered species. Additionally, applicable measures to these species from other resource categories include AMM-BR-2, AMM-BR-3, AMM-BR-6, and AMM-BR-8.

AMM-BR-10: Caltrans would pursue feasible mitigation opportunities to offset impacts to federally and state listed fish species at mitigation ratios to be identified in applicable permit(s). Potential options include funding of habitat complexity improvements or salmonid recovery projects within the area.

Improving habitat complexity would involve working with potential partners to improve portions of the Albion River within the project area. This could include adding large woody debris upstream to increase in-stream complexity and cover for migrating fish and/or rearing juveniles (depending on location) and potentially bioengineering the rock wall within portions of the Albion Campground. It could also include removal of the southern pier that falls within the Albion River for the current bridge, which would add available streambed area within the channel.

Alternatively, impacts could be addressed by partially funding an important salmonid recovery project within the Albion basin or the surrounding HUC 10 watershed.

Potential partners for fish mitigation projects (fish passage and/or habitat restoration/enhancements) in the Albion River or nearby systems (e.g., Navarro River) include, but may not be limited to: The Nature Conservancy, Mendocino Redwood Company, Trout Unlimited, Inc., and The Conservation Fund.

Invasive Species

No avoidance, minimization, or mitigation measures are proposed related to invasive species.

F. Monitoring or Enforcement Program

An Environmental Commitment Record (ECR) has been prepared for the project and is provided in Appendix D of the Final EIR/EIS. The ECR provides the language of each measure, identifies responsible parties for implementing the measure, and indicates the timing of the implementation of each measure. The ECR provides a process for tracking and documenting the implementation of avoidance, minimization, and mitigation measures for the project.

Caltrans will be responsible for implementing and reporting the status of measures in the ECR. Caltrans will also be responsible for construction management and oversight and ensuring mitigation measures are fully implemented by designated and qualified personnel.

G. Responses to Comments on the Final EIS

Following the Notice of Availability of the Final EIR/EIS and during the 30-day waiting period, Caltrans received questions and comments about the project in the form of emails and phone calls. Substantive comments on the Final EIR/EIS and other questions on the environmental document are addressed in the table below. Copies of the formal comment letters received from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

(U.S. EPA) and the Coastal Conservancy are included in Attachment A. Other comments are summarized for clarity and brevity, and to protect personal information.

The majority of the emails and phone calls consisted of general questions about the proposed project, including availability of documents related to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), compensation for effects to vacation rentals, inquiries on right of way acquisition, and vessel access under the bridge during construction. As these were general questions regarding the project rather than comments on the Final EIR/EIS, they were responded to directly and are not discussed further in this document.

Commenter	Summarized Comment	Response
U.S. EPA	See Attachment A for the letter from the U.S. EPA.	No substantive comments were received; Caltrans will continue to work with Resource Environmental Solutions, the North Coast Water Quality Control Board, and other agencies regarding the Mendocino Coast Mitigation Bank and the associated service area.
Coastal Conservancy	See Attachment A for the letter from the California Coastal Conservancy.	In the comment letter, the Coastal Conservancy recommended design changes, including a separated pedestrian facility on both sides of the bridge, a buffer strip between motorized and bicycle facilities, and connections of pedestrian facilities off the bridge. Appropriate safety features such as access and design refinements of the separated pedestrian walkway and associated features will be assessed and may be incorporated into the final project design prior to construction. Regarding public access to the Albion River and the beach, this was addressed in the Final EIR/EIS. A Public Access Feasibility Report was prepared for the project consistent with California Streets and Highways Code Section 84.5. There is no deeded public access to the Albion River or the beach; all the access points from land are on private property. As noted in the report, public access must be constructed within the state right of way and be compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The south bank/bluff slope and north slopes are steep, and it would be impractical to provide ADA-compliant access within the Caltrans right of way. The public can access the Albion River through the privately-owned Albion Campground with a day pass or reservation of a campsite for a fee. Previously, the Albion River Campground website indicated that the general public was welcome to access the beach without charge during normal day-use hours if they do not park on private campground property and do not use the facilities. On the south side of the river, self-propelled personal watercraft can be launched from a facility owned by Pacific Union College for a fee. See Master Response 4 in Appendix O, Chapter 2, of the Final EIR/EIS for additional information.
Commenter A	The EIR does not support the rationale for identifying Design Option 2B as the preferred alternative. While there are some construction advantages to 2B, there is not an advantage to most other environmental concerns, and there is a greater impact in some categories, such as impervious surface, some biological resources, and construction noise. The fewer environmental impacts in key resource categories were cherry-picked. Was public input really considered? Design Option 1 B was the public's preferred. In addition, it seems the residential areas of Albion were given minimal consideration. Some arguments have hidden disadvantages to residences. For example, the greater proximity to residents of pile driving will have an increase of 4db (to 94 db – considered damaging to hearing), a	Identification of an environmentally preferred alternative is based on comparing and weighing alternatives. It involves difficult judgements when comparing the values of different factors, such as constructability and environmental impacts. As addressed in the environmental document, the alternatives for the project, including the two arches, had similar potential effects to environmental resources; for example, for permanent impacts, the difference in impacts to sensitive natural communities between Design Option 1B (West Arch) and Design Option 2B (East Arch) was only 0.03 acre. While Design Option 1B (West Arch) may have had slightly lower impacts in some categories, Design Option 2B (East Arch) had lower impacts in others. In regard to impervious surface, while Design Option 2B would have a greater new impervious surface area, both design options would have the same net new impervious surface area (see Table 31 of the environmental document; net new impervious surface is the amount of impervious surface added to the project, while new impervious surface includes impervious surface that is replaced and is the value used for post-construction treatment area), and Design Option 2B has less disturbed soil area. Because of similarities in impacts, and different weighting of resources, judgement had to be used in determining the CEQA environmentally superior alternative and the NEPA

Commenter	Summarized Comment	Response
	logarithmic increase of more than 5x that of 1B, making living in the area intolerable. Also, the relatively smaller amount of permanent ROW acquisitions and less shoring required for 2B would have a much greater impact on Albion as much of the impact would be west of the highway.	preferred alternative. Design Option 2B was determined to be the environmentally superior due to impacts in the categories of exposed permanent shoring, which is associated with Coastal Act goals under Section 30253 and has been a concern of the Coastal Commission, as well as energy use, greenhouse gas emissions, and permanent right of way acquisition. These factors were determined to outweigh the minor differences in other resource categories, such as biological impacts. When considering identification of the preferred alternative, other factors were considered, such as constructability and the public's input. While it is understood and was acknowledged in the Final EIR/EIS that the Albion community preferred an arch alternative to the west of the existing bridge over the eastern arch, a combination of other factors outweighed the primary preference of the western arch. The primary consideration was constructability and associated construction schedule and costs. Design Option 1B has more challenging topography and, among other factors, would require access through the piers of the existing bridge to construct the new bridge. Access through the piers required "threading" large equipment and materials through the piers, which is a safety risk and risks damage to the existing bridge. If a support is damaged during this work, it has the potential to catastrophically alter the bridge and lead to closures until fixed. The differences in constructability greatly increased the risk of schedule delays; it was much more likely to experience delays with Design Option 1B compared to Design Option 2B, which means it would be more likely to require an extra year of construction. The schedule delays would prolong the temporary impacts associated with construction, including the primary concerns of residents, such as noise, traffic control, and access below the bridge. While construction can be frustrating to nearby residents, it is necessary to preserve and maintain access along State Route 1. Construction impacts are short-term and temporary and, as mentioned above, Design Option 1B had the greatest potential to extend these disturbances. As noted in the comment, some of the pile driving for Design Option 2B would be closer to residences than Design Option 1B. As described in the environmental document in Section 3.3.7, Noise and Vibration, construction noise would primarily result from the operation of heavy construction equipment and arrival and departure of heavy-duty trucks. Construction noise levels would vary on a day-to-day basis during each phase of construction depending on the specific task being completed. Pile driving is the loudest activity for the project. It is during daytime hours, usually over short durations, with breaks between each pile. Pile driving is anticipated to be required during construction of temporary trestles and some of the bridge piers; it does not last the entirety of construction. Additionally, the estimated construction noise level does not account for potential shielding such as from topography, or from other measures such as acoustic shielding, and represents a worst-case assessment of potential noise impacts. After construction is complete, the new roadway alignment is not anticipated to result in a substantial increase in noise. The noise during construction does not outweigh the other factors, such as those discussed above, for the selection of Design Option 2B as the preferred alternative.

Commenter	Summarized Comment	Response
		In regard to permanent right of way acquisitions, Design Option 1B and 2B would both affect the same property owners; however, Design Option 2B would require less permanent right of way overall to be acquired.
Commenter B	Are there plans for a soundwall or other efforts to reduce noise and visual changes after construction? Are there plans to claim eminent domain?	A review of noise was conducted for the project, and the project was not found to have a substantial increase in noise under CEQA or NEPA and, therefore, there is no justification for inclusion of a soundwall for this project. See Section 3.3.7, *Noise and Vibration*, and Section 4.3.13, *Noise*, for additional information on noise impacts, as well as the Noise Study Report, which is available on the project website, for additional information on noise and regulatory requirements. While a soundwall cannot be justified, as the project enters the design phase Caltrans will review the potential for refinements that may reduce noise and/or effects of visual changes on the southeast end of the proposed bridge. One anticipated project design feature that can reduce noise includes the use of "quiet pavement", which decreases noise levels. Once the right of way phase of the project begins, Caltrans' right of way agents will contact property owners according to federal and state law. See Table 4 and Figure 29 in the environmental document for anticipated right of way requirements for Design Option 2B.
Commenter C	Has the idea to incorporate some of the wood from the existing bridge into the new structure been considered? Losing them would be devastating and keeping them would be a fitting memorial.	Reuse of the existing wood has been previously considered. However, the wood from the bridge contains arsenic and chromium concentrations greater than the California hazardous waste thresholds. Because this is considered hazardous waste, uses are limited, and no reuse of the material is planned at this time. However, there is planned mitigation for the bridge, which includes a documentary film, an interpretive exhibit, and a model to scale.
Commenter A and D	The noise and lack of aesthetics would make the places unrentable/unlivable. The properties would be greatly reduced in value and unsellable. The loss of rental income represents a hardship. Impacts to vacation rentals were not discussed in the environmental document. Little consideration was given to residents, property owners, and long-term rentals in Albion and the surrounds. The impact of construction over a long time to the Albion village has not been adequately addressed. Additionally, EIR states that businesses will, for the most part, not be negatively impacted and that indeed some may benefit. This may be true for some locations but is not the case for the high-end restaurants (The Ledford House and Terra Mer Kitchen), and numerous vacation rentals in Albion. The only night there will not be construction until	The state highway system is often the main artery through many rural communities. As such, there is a benefit to businesses located on or near the state highway in terms of visibility and accessibility for customers. Additionally, the entire community benefits when there is safe and well-maintained highway infrastructure to serve the community. Inevitably, highway infrastructure requires ongoing maintenance and occasional construction which can cause temporary inconveniences to travelers, the community and local businesses. Impacts from construction were addressed in the environmental document (see Chapter 3, Affected Environment, Environmental Consequences, and Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures) with additional detail on community impacts in the Community Impact Assessment prepared for the project. The environmental document did acknowledge that the proposed project could cause short-term economic impacts, including potential reduced business activities at facilities such as restaurants, and short-term vacation rentals in the due to a potential temporary drop in tourism and recreation, which could have ripple effects in the local economy. The indirect impacts may affect businesses differently including the benefits from construction, such as purchases of

Commenter	Summarized Comment	Response
	7PM is Sunday night. The construction would impact their businesses adversely. The campground is located not only in the coastal zone, but in a designated highly scenic corridor. It has a strict policy regarding no noise between 10 PM and 8 AM and no external lights that are not downward facing and covered or shrouded. The use of the campground and the properties surrounding the construction zone, and the actual construction will heavily impact our lives and the enjoyment of our properties. Compensation is requested for anticipated impacts.	goods and services from those working on the project. The proposed project would not cause permanent changes that would alter regional economic conditions. As part of the assessment for the project, the environmental document addressed construction-related impacts of categories such as noise and air quality that are of concern to those in proximity to the project. Measures were included as appropriate to reduce potential impacts. See Chapter 3 of the environmental document for construction impacts. See also the response to construction noise above for the preferred alternative. The project is consistent with the California Coastal Act (see Section 3.2.3, Coastal Zone), and Caltrans would obtain a Coastal Development Permit. As part of the project, the contractor would comply with Caltrans' specifications that require construction noise not exceed a maximum sound level of 86 dBA at 50 feet from job site activities between the hours of 9:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m. In addition, while artificial lighting may be required, to reduce potential disturbance to sensitive resources, lighting would be temporary and directed specifically on the portion of the work area actively under construction (see Standard Measure BR-2(I) in Section 2.2.5, Common Design Features of the Build Alternatives, of the environmental document). While businesses may lose income during construction, complete loss of revenue from construction activities would be speculative. However, if a loss has been realized and can be linked to construction, a claim can be filed for compensation. The claim process can be found at the following link: https://dot.ca.gov/online-services/submit-damage-claim.

H. Record of Decision Approval

Based on careful consideration of the technical studies, evaluations, and other data contained in the environmental document and input received from agencies, organizations, and the public, Caltrans, as the federal lead agency for this project, has selected Design Option 2B, as described in the Final EIR/EIS, for the Albion River Bridge Project. All practicable measures to minimize environmental impacts and harm have been adopted and will be incorporated into this decision.

Matthew Brady

Matthew Brady
District 1 Director
California Department of Transportation

10/8/2025

Date

Attachment A

REGION 9
SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94105

September 5, 2025

Rachelle Estrada
California Department of Transportation, District 1
1656 Union Street
Eureka, California 95501

Subject: EPA Comments for the Albion River Bridge Project Final Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement, Mendocino County, California

Dear Rachelle Estrada:

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has reviewed the above-referenced document pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act. Our review and comments are pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act, and our NEPA review authority under Section 309 of the Clean Air Act. The EPA provided comments on September 9, 2024 following review of the Draft Environmental Impact Report/Draft Environmental Statement.

The combined Final Environmental Impact Report and Environmental Impact Statement prepared by Caltrans proposes to replace the existing Albion River Bridge located on State Route 1 in Mendocino County. The Final EIS/EIR states that the replacement bridge will meet seismic safety standards, provide multimodal access, and minimize ongoing maintenance costs. We appreciate that Caltrans has addressed the feedback the EPA previously provided related to potential impacts, and we continue to recommend that Caltrans work with Resource Environmental Solutions, the North Coast Water Quality Control Board, and other agencies regarding the Mendocino Coast Mitigation Bank and the associated service area. We also appreciate that the Final EIS/EIR indicates that ratios for mitigation would be identified and in coordination with regulatory agencies in the permitting phase of the project.

We thank Caltrans for the opportunity to review this Final EIR/EIS and request an electronic copy of the Record of Decision when it is available. If you have any questions, please contact me at (415) 947-4167, or Connell Dunning, the lead reviewer for this project, at (415) 947-4161 or dunning.connell@epa.gov.

Sincerely,
JEAN PRIJATEL
Digitally signed by JEAN PRIJATEL
Date: 2025.09.05 15:59:18 -07'00'
Jean Prijatel
Branch Manager
Environmental Review

Coastal Conservancy

Katie Everett, Project Manager
California Department of Transportation, District 1
1656 Union Street
Eureka, CA 95501

August 25, 2025

RE: Albion River Bridge Project, Project ID 0100000154, Final EIR/EIS/Section 4(f) evaluation, July 2025

Dear Ms. Everett,

Thank you for your excellent, thoughtful, and thorough staff work managing the Final EIR/EIS and Final Section 4(f) evaluation for the Albion River Bridge project. We are impressed by this document's clear presentation of project alternatives and its comprehensive analysis of environmental impacts. We would like to request some minor design changes that would help this project better serve non-motorized users of the California Coastal Trail (CCT).

In consideration of the CCT and to ensure the new bridge provides safe non-motorized transportation, there need to be separated pedestrian facilities (6 feet wide) on ***both*** sides of the bridge (east and west sides), not just the western side as currently designed. There are pedestrians traveling in both directions (north and south), and it would be unsafe for them to cross the highway twice to access the pedestrian pathway. This is a busy area, with downtown Albion and the popular Albion River nearby. Therefore, providing safe non-motorized facilities on both sides of the new bridge is essential.

With respect to bicyclists, the new bridge should have 6-foot paved shoulders on east and west sides for bicyclists; these should be designed as Class 2 bicycle facilities, with a buffer strip between motorized and bicycle users on both sides.

In addition, as part of the project, pedestrian walkways on both sides of the bridge will need to connect safely off the bridge to pedestrian and bicycle facilities (trails, pathways) to the north and south.

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Finally, there is a lack of public coastal access in the project area. Working in partnership with Caltrans and the Coastal Commission, the Coastal Conservancy seeks to address this shortage through enhancing and expanding free public access to the Albion River and Beach. We look forward to working with you and the Coastal Commission to achieve that outcome.

Thank you again for your excellent work on this project and let me know if you have any questions about our comments. We look forward to working with you on projects throughout District 1.

Sincerely,

Evyan Sloane

Evyan Sloane, Deputy Executive Officer

cc: Timothy Nelson, Caltrans
Rachelle Estrada, Caltrans
Kellie Eldridge, Caltrans
Jessica Barger, Caltrans
Peter Allen, California Coastal Commission
Kate Anderson, California Coastal Commission

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California State Coastal Conservancy