



# San Bernardino County

Department of Public Works

Environmental Management  
Division

825 E. Third Street, Rm. 123 • San Bernardino, CA 92415

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## NOTICE OF PREPARATION

**FROM:** San Bernardino County Department of Public Works  
Environmental Management Division  
825 E. Third Street, Rm. 123  
San Bernardino, CA 92415-0835

**TO:** Responsible Agencies, Trustee Agencies, and Interested Parties

**DATE:** September 15, 2025

**SUBJECT:** Notice of Preparation of a Draft Environmental Impact Report for the National Trails Highway at 30 Bridges Project

The County of San Bernardino ("County") will be the Lead Agency and will prepare a Draft Environmental Impact Report ("EIR") for the proposed National Trails Highway at 30 Bridges Project ("Project") described below. We are interested in your agency's views as to the appropriate scope and content of the Draft EIR's environmental information pertaining to your agency's statutory responsibilities related to the Project. We will need the name of a contact person for your agency. For interested individuals, we would like to be informed of environmental topics of interest to you regarding the Project.

Because the County has already determined that an EIR is required for the proposed Project, and as permitted by State California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines Section 15060(d) (Preliminary Review), the County will not prepare an Initial Study for the Project. Further, the proposed Project, its location, and its potential environmental effects are described below. The County welcomes public input during the Notice of Preparation (NOP) review period.

**Project Title:** National Trails Highway 30 Bridges Project

**Project Number: H15281****Project Applicant:** San Bernardino County, Department of Public Works

**Project Location:** The Project is located on the National Trails Highway, also known as U.S. Route 66. The bridges are situated between the unincorporated community of Daggett to just east of Essex, in the County of San Bernardino. Please see the below table for more specific locational information for each bridge.

Bridge Name	County Bridge No.	State Bridge No.	Existing Bridge Span Length (Feet)	Existing Bridge Width (Feet)	Location
Signal Ditch Bridge*	4	54C0117	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	0.60 miles southeast of Daggett–Yermo Road, Daggett
Green Ditch Bridge	5	54C0118	19	28	1.00 miles southeast of Daggett–Yermo Road, Daggett
Blue Ditch Bridge	6	54C0119	19	28	1.60 miles southeast of Daggett–Yermo Road, Daggett
Crest Ditch Bridge	7	54C0120	19	28	1.90 miles southeast of Daggett–Yermo Road, Daggett
Crimp Ditch Bridge	8	54C0121	19	28	2.17 miles southeast of Daggett–Yermo Road, Daggett
Ant Ditch Bridge	9	54C0122	19	28	2.37 miles southeast of Daggett–Yermo Road, Daggett
Powerline Ditch Bridge	10	54C0123	19	28	2.60 miles southeast of Daggett–Yermo Road, Daggett
Bloom Ditch Bridge	11	54C0145	19	28	0.72 miles west of Hidden Springs Road, Daggett
Blossom Ditch Bridge*	12	54C0146	19	28	0.35 miles west of Hidden Springs Road, Daggett
Lake Ditch Bridge	13	54C0147	19	28	0.92 miles northwest of Fort Cady Road, Newbury Springs
Palm Ditch Bridge	14	54C0148	19	28	2.48 miles southeast of Fort Cady Road, Newbury Springs
Camp Ditch Bridge	15	54C0149	19	28	3.67 miles northwest of Hector Road, Hector
Lava Ditch Bridge	16	54C0138	19	28	1.08 miles west of Hector Road, Hector
Hector Wash Bridge	17	54C0139	19	28	0.20 miles west of Hector Road, Hector
East Hector Wash Bridge	18	54C0140	19	28	0.20 miles east of Hector Road, Hector
Cloud Ditch Bridge	19	54C0141	19	28	1.10 miles east of Hector Road, Hector
Mountain Wash Bridge	20	54C0142	19	28	8.47 miles southeast of Hector Road, Hector
Circle Ditch Bridge	28	54C0156	19	28	2.13 miles east of Main Street, Ludlow
Smoke Ditch Bridge	30	54C0232	19	28	3.33 miles southeast of Main Street, Ludlow

Bridge Name	County Bridge No.	State Bridge No.	Existing Bridge Span Length (Feet)	Existing Bridge Width (Feet)	Location
Leaf Ditch Bridge	31	54C0233	19	28	3.45 miles east of Main Street, Ludlow
Olive Ditch Bridge	33	54C0235	19	28	3.95 miles southeast of Main Street, Ludlow
Travelers Wash Bridge	36	54C0238	19	28	6.74 miles southeast of Main Street, Ludlow
Retiro Ditch Bridge	50	54C0253	19	28	9.71 miles northwest of Amboy Road, Amboy
Cereza Ditch Bridge	52	54C0255	19	28	8.81 miles northwest of Amboy Road, Amboy
Banta Ditch Bridge	53	54C0256	19	28	8.58 miles northwest of Amboy Road, Amboy
Ballona Ditch Bridge	54	54C0257	19	28	8.06 miles northwest of Amboy Road, Amboy
Emden Ditch Bridge	55	54C0258	19	28	7.52 miles northwest of Amboy Road, Amboy
Arillo Wash Ditch Bridge	130	54C0334	19	28	4.94 miles northeast of Essex Road, Essex
Falkirk Ditch Bridge	137	54C0341	19	28	2.43 miles southwest of Mountain Springs Road, Mountain Springs Summit
Exline Ditch Bridge	138	54C0342	19	28	1.61 miles southwest of Mountain Springs Road, Mountain Springs Summit
<i>*All the bridges are timber except for Signal Ditch Bridge, which is a pipe culvert, and Blossom Ditch Bridge, which is a concrete box culvert.</i>					

**Public Review Period:** September 15, 2025, to October 15, 2025

**Responses and Comments:** Please send your responses and comments by October 15, 2025, to Ayida Smith, Planner III, at [ayida.smith@dpw.sbcounty.gov](mailto:ayida.smith@dpw.sbcounty.gov) or at the following address. An email response is preferred, if available to you.

Ayida Smith  
Planner III – Capital Improvement Section  
Department of Public Works, Environmental Management Division  
825 E. Third Street, Rm. 123  
San Bernardino, CA 92415-0835

**Document Availability:** Notice of Preparation

This Notice of Preparation can be viewed on the County of San Bernardino website at: <https://dpw.sbcounty.gov/#notices> . If unavailable on the website, you may obtain the document in electronic format by telephoning the Department of Public Works at (909) 387-8109, or by emailing Ayida Smith, Planner III at [ayida.smith@dpw.sbcounty.gov](mailto:ayida.smith@dpw.sbcounty.gov). To request a PDF version of the document, please reference the Project title above.

## **Project Description:**

The San Bernardino County Department of Public Works (County), in coordination with the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), proposes to replace 28 timber trestle bridges, one concrete box culvert, and one pipe culvert with concrete bridges on the National Trails Highway (NTH), formerly known as US Route 66. The National Trails Highway at 30 Bridges Project (Project) is located between the unincorporated community of Dagget to just east of Essex, in the County of San Bernardino.

The existing timber bridges were constructed in the 1930s and span over man-made ditches or "flash flood washes". The timber bridges vary in length but share similar construction components. The typical timber trestle bridges are composed of simply-supported timber stringer spans with a laminated timber deck supported on timber struttled abutments and bents consisting of timber piles. The bridges are approximately 28-feet wide with guardrails that do not meet current safety standards.

Through the years, the bridges have been modified by various maintenance and repair work with the intent of maintaining public safety and prolonging the service life of the bridges. Two bridges have been replaced – Signal Ditch Bridge currently consists of a pipe culvert and Blossom Ditch Bridge consists of a concrete box culvert. The proposed replacements will resolve existing bridge/culvert deficiencies.

The existing, two-lane bridges/culverts will be replaced with concrete bridges designed to American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) standards for two-lane concrete bridges, guardrail, guardrail end treatments, and approaches. The existing soil is sandy and susceptible to scour, so pile extensions may be utilized at the piers and the abutment foundations. The bridge barrier would be a concrete barrier Type 85 with bicycle railing painted white which is Manual for Assessing Safety Hardware (MASH) approved and best matches the original railing. The bridge lengths would match the existing lengths, if possible, but would be lengthened as needed to convey the storm flows. Each replacement bridge would accommodate two 12-foot-wide lanes, two 3-foot-wide shoulders and two 2-foot-wide railings. The vertical profile of the bridges will remain close to the existing profile except for those locations in which it is determined that additional vertical clearance is required to provide sufficient water conveyance beneath the bridge. It is anticipated that any such necessary changes in vertical profiles would be three feet or less, with the elevation gradually conforming to the existing roadway elevations.

The National Trails Highway is posted at a speed limit of 55 miles per hour. The alignment would remain unchanged; however, up to 800 feet of pavement improvements on either side of each bridge may be needed to conform to the existing roadway vertical profile. Grading within the existing channels around the bridges may be needed to ensure sufficient storm conveyance and drainage of the area.

A temporary, parallel road (also known as a "shoo-fly") would be constructed at each bridge location to accommodate through-traffic during construction. Construction of each bridge replacement is expected to be completed in one season, limiting the time the detour would be in place to one season as well. Based on weather conditions and construction activities, it is possible that there could be intermittent closures of the temporary parallel road.

Permanent acquisition of right-of-way is not anticipated; however, temporary construction easements may be needed to accommodate construction of the temporary detour routes. There are existing utilities which may require relocation as part of this project. Existing utilities may include an underground fiber optics line, overhead electrical line, telecommunications lines, water lines, and gas lines. All utility relocations would be included within the defined limits of the Project area.

Typical equipment for roadway construction would include heavy construction earthmoving equipment, dump trucks and pavers. Typical bridge construction equipment would include cranes, pile drivers, drill rigs, excavators, concrete trucks, and concrete pumps.

This Project is funded with a combination of local and federal funds. Caltrans is the lead agency responsible for completing National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) compliance while the County is the lead agency responsible for completing California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) compliance.

#### Purpose

The purpose of the Project is to replace structurally deficient bridges in order to:

- Enhance safety on National Trails Highway by providing new vehicular crossings for thirty bridges;
- Provide a transportation facility consistent with County and Caltrans Standards, as well as local and regional plans.

#### Need

Full replacement of the bridges/culverts is needed because the current structures do not meet structural design standards.

### **Environmental Factors Potentially Affected**

The County has determined that the proposed Project will require preparation of an EIR pursuant to CEQA. The following environmental topics will be addressed in the EIR.

**Aesthetics:** The EIR will describe the aesthetic and urban design implications of the proposed Project, including its visual relationships to the surrounding vicinity and the potential visual impacts perceived by vehicular users.

**Agriculture and Forestry Resources:** The EIR will evaluate potential impacts related to land used or zoned for agriculture or forestry resources or designated as farmland by the state.

**Air Quality:** The EIR will describe the potential short- and long-term impacts of replacing thirty bridges on local and regional air quality based on methodologies defined by the MDAQMD.

**Biological Resources:** The EIR will evaluate potential impacts on biological resources, including the Desert Tortoise (*Gopherus agassizii*), resulting from replacement of thirty bridges. Mitigation measures will be defined as necessary to avoid or reduce the potential impacts.

**Cultural Resources:** The EIR will describe any potential impacts and mitigation needs associated with cultural (archaeological and non-archaeological) resources, including the National Trails Highway Historic District, which is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. Twenty-two of the thirty bridges are contributing elements of the National Trails Highway Historic District.

**Energy:** The EIR will evaluate whether there are any inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources.

**Geology and Soils:** The EIR will describe the potential geological and paleontological implications of replacing the thirty bridges.

**Greenhouse Gas Emissions:** The EIR will describe the potential impacts on local greenhouse

gas emissions and global climate change, following the latest approach and methodologies recommended by State and regional agencies that could result from the proposed thirty bridge replacements.

**Hazards and Hazardous Materials:** The EIR will describe the potential for hazardous material use or hazardous waste investigation anticipated from the Project and will describe any associated potential impacts and mitigation needs. Potential construction period hazards, hazardous material impacts, and mitigation needs will also be described.

**Hydrology and Water Quality:** The EIR will evaluate potential impacts on hydrology and water quality resulting from replacing the thirty bridges, including possible effects related to drainage and flooding.

**Land Use and Planning:** The EIR will describe the potential effects of replacing thirty bridges on existing and planned land use characteristics in the Project vicinity.

**Mineral Resources:** The EIR will evaluate whether the Project will result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource or a local mineral resource recovery area.

**Noise:** The EIR will describe potential construction and long-term noise (traffic, mechanical systems, etc.) impacts and related mitigation needs.

**Population and Housing:** The EIR will describe the anticipated effects of replacing thirty bridges on existing and projected population and housing characteristics for the nearby communities.

**Public Services:** The EIR will describe potential impacts, including temporary construction impacts, on public services and any mitigation needs.

**Transportation:** The EIR will describe the transportation and circulation implications of the proposed Project, including its resulting vehicle miles travelled.

**Tribal Cultural Resources:** The EIR will describe potential impacts to tribal cultural resources and describe the results of tribal consultation.

**Utilities and Service Systems:** The EIR will describe potential impacts on local utility and service systems.

**Wildfires:** The EIR will describe potential increases in exposure/risk to wildfires to the Project site and surrounding areas.

