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# IMPROVEMENTS TO SINGLEY ROAD BETWEEN HIGHWAY 101 AND BEAR RIVER CASINO

INITIAL STUDY

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Lead Agency:

Humboldt County  
Department of Public Works  
1106 2nd Street  
Eureka, CA 95501



Prepared By:

Analytical Environmental Services  
1801 7th Street, Suite 100  
Sacramento, CA 95814  
Phone (916) 447-3479  
Fax (916) 447-1665  
[www.analyticalcorp.com](http://www.analyticalcorp.com)

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# INITIAL STUDY

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## IMPROVEMENTS TO SINGLEY ROAD BETWEEN HIGHWAY 101 AND BEAR RIVER CASINO

### INTRODUCTION

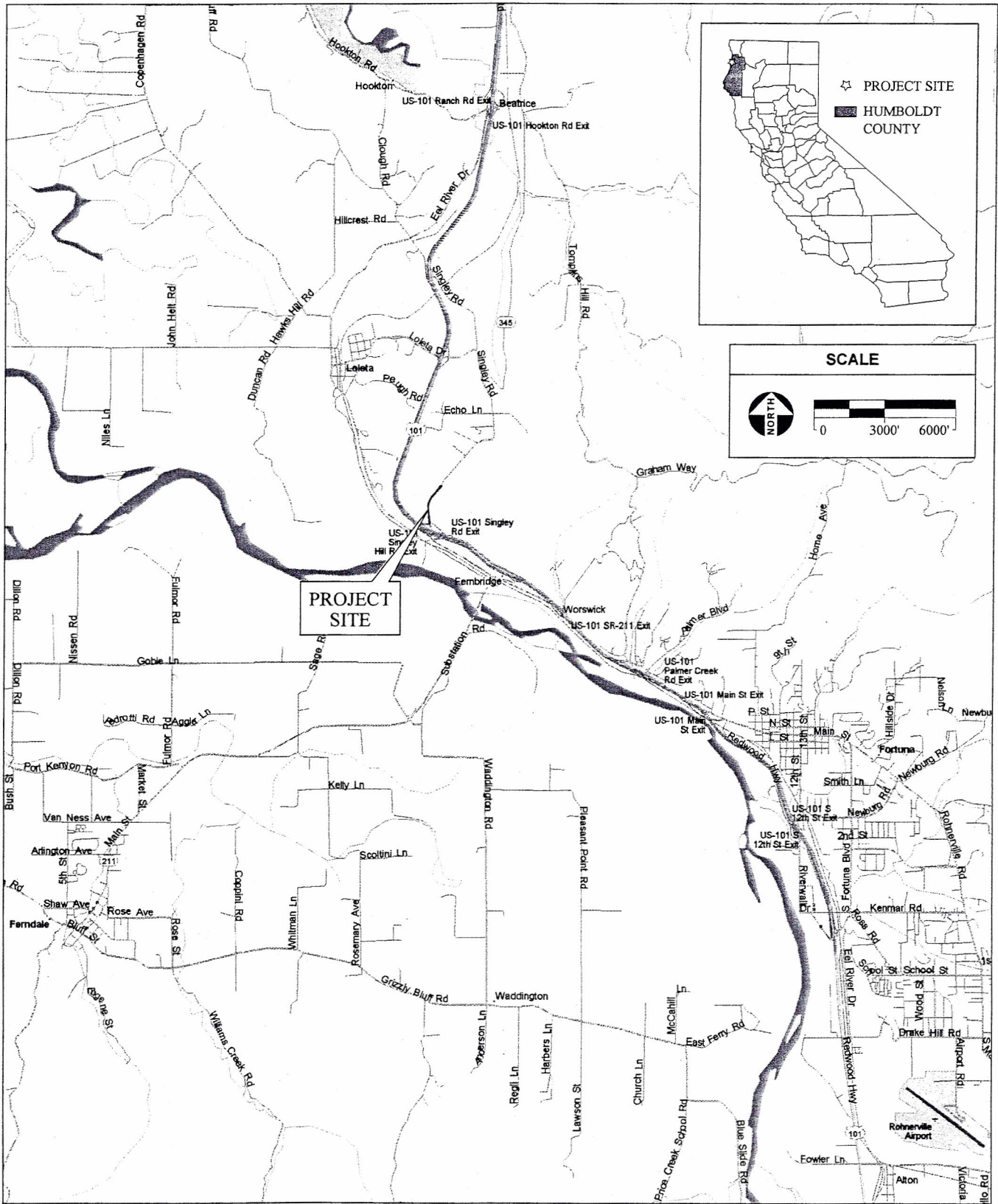
The County of Humboldt is the lead agency for the preparation of this Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration for the Proposed Project located in Humboldt County, California. This document has been prepared in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) of 1970 as amended and the State CEQA *Guidelines*, California Administrative Code, Title 14, Division 6, Chapter 3. CEQA requires the preparation of an Initial Study when a project could have significant effects on the environment. This Initial Study has identified potentially significant impacts and mitigation measures which, when incorporated into the project, will reduce impacts to less than significant levels. The County has determined that a Mitigated Negative Declaration is the appropriate environmental document for the Proposed Project under Section 15070 of the CEQA *Guidelines*.

The Bear River Band of Rohnerville Rancheria constructed the Bear River Casino along Singley Road. An Environmental Evaluation was prepared which included an evaluation of traffic impacts. The Tribe independently funded an asphalt overlay on Singley Road to better accommodate traffic. The Tribe subsequently agreed to fund the currently proposed road improvements.

The Proposed Project consists of road and associated drainage improvements to approximately 0.3 miles of Singley Road located in Humboldt County, California. The County roadway provides access to residential areas, agricultural grazing lands, and the Bear River Casino. The existing road has little or no shoulder in most areas, including a moderately sharp curve between the southern interchange with State Highway 101 and the Bear River Casino. Increased traffic along Singley Road is primarily from patrons of the Casino, and therefore improvements would be paid for by the Tribe to better accommodate traffic to the Casino. The Proposed Project is expected to improve safety and flow of traffic along Singley Road.

### PROJECT LOCATION

Singley Road is a 2-lane County road located east of Highway 101 in Humboldt County (**Figure 1**). Road improvements would be located on the southern end of Singley Road. The improvements would occur approximately 1.5 miles southeast of the town of Loleta, in Humboldt County, California. The area of improvement is located in Section 20 of the Fields Landing and Fortuna quadrangles within Township 3 North and Range 1 West (**Figure 2**).



SOURCE: Microsoft Streets & Trips, 2003; AES, 2005

Singley Road Improvements Initial Study / 206526 ■

**Figure 1**  
Regional Location

The Bear River Band of Rohnerville Rancheria to the east of Singley Road has a casino, Tribal administrative offices, and Tribal housing. To the west is a parcel leased for grazing and owned in fee by the Tribe, referred to as the Fearrien property. Two single-family residences are located to the west on the southern end of the road and one single-family residence is located to the east, immediately south of the Reservation. To the east on the southern end of Singley Road is a parcel leased for grazing referred to as the Tooby parcel.

## **PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

The Proposed Project consists of road improvements to approximately 0.3 miles of Singley Road. The improvements are located along Singley Road between the Bear River Casino and the southern interchange with State Highway 101. Improvements would include road and shoulder widening within an existing right-of-way. Singley Road would be widened to County standards and drainage would be relocated. The improved roadway would be expanded from a 20-foot roadway to a 24-foot roadway with 4 feet of paved shoulders on each side for a total width of 32 feet. Four retaining walls would be constructed along the shoulders of the roadway. The area that would require the most improvement is on the west side of the curve of the road. Slope cutback along the curve would be required on the Fearrien property. Five to six trees would be removed along the road. During improvements, emergency access and access to existing residences would be maintained. The project would occur in accordance with Humboldt County Standards and the California Department of Transportation Standard Plans and Standard Specifications for construction of local streets and roads. The location of improvements is shown on an aerial map in **Figure 3** and a conceptual alignment is shown in **Figure 4**. Photographs of the existing road are shown in **Figure 5**. Drainage features would be relocated and/or modified as described below.

In addition to the road improvements included in the Proposed Project, the Tribe has committed to intersection controls to limit right hand turns from the Bear River Casino onto Singley Road. The Tribe is currently in discussion with the County and emergency service providers regarding the intersection. Intersection improvements could include partial or full closure of Singley Road just north of the Proposed Project at the intersection of Bear River Drive and Singley Road. The intersection controls are considered a separate project under CEQA, and will be evaluated in accordance with CEQA after the plans are finalized.

## **DRAINAGE**

The proposed drainage improvements consist of asphalt concrete dikes and drop inlets connected to buried storm drain pipes as shown in **Figure 4**. Existing drainage ditches on the sides of the road would be filled and new asphalt concrete dikes would be placed on the sides of the widened road. On the east side of the road, drainage would outlet at a new energy dissipation swale and continue southeast onto the Tooby parcel, following the current drainage path onto the Tooby parcel. As these flows would follow the current drainage path, there would be no changes to the location of drainage on the Tooby parcel.

The property owner of the Tooby parcel has not agreed to an increase in drainage and the project has been designed accordingly to route additional increases in flow south to Caltrans drainage features. The proposed improvements will eliminate an existing cross-drain that currently conveys 4 acres of drainage

from the upslope side of Singley Road to the Tooby Parcel. While the overall runoff from the area would increase, the drainage to the Tooby parcel will not experience an increased flow rate due to the upslope 4-acre diversion. This 4-acre area will drain south to a Caltrans storm drain at the southern end of Singley Road through a series of drop inlets and drain pipes. As additional flows will be diverted, there would be no increase in drainage on the Tooby parcel.

The existing Caltrans storm drain at the southern end of Singley Road consists of an 18-inch diameter corrugated metal pipe (CMP), which will be replaced with a new 18-inch smooth bore high-density polyethylene (HDPE) culvert. From here, drainage flows to an existing 48-inch diameter reinforced concrete pipe (RCP), which crosses Highway 101.

## **PERMITS AND APPROVALS**

The County of Humboldt will be the approval authority for the Proposed Project. The information contained in this Initial Study will be utilized by the County during the decision-making process. The following permits and approvals would be required for the project:

- Humboldt County - Adoption by the County of a Mitigated Negative Declaration for the Proposed Project under the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), as amended.
- Humboldt County – Encroachment permit.
- Caltrans – Encroachment permit.
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers – Section 404 Permit for activities in waters of the U.S, pursuant to the Clean Water Act.
- If over 1 acre is affected, a National Pollution Discharge Elimination System general permit for stormwater discharges associated with construction activity. The construction general permit requires the development and implementation of a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan.
- Regional Water Quality Control Board, Section 401 Certification pursuant to the Clean Water Act.
- California Department of Fish and Game – Streambed Alteration Agreement.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING**

### **I. AESTHETICS**

The location of the Proposed Project is associated with visual resources typical of rural areas of Humboldt County. The southern end of Singley Road is dominated by agricultural grazing land, rolling hills, and scattered single-family residences. The Bear River Casino and Tribal housing are visible from Singley Road at the northern end of the proposed improvements. Scattered trees are located along the southern portion of Singley Road. There are no designated scenic view corridors or scenic highways within the vicinity of the proposed improvements.

### **II. AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES**

Agricultural resources are located in the area, and lands to the east and west of Singley Road are leased for grazing sheep and cattle. No agricultural crops are cultivated near the area of proposed improvements.