

CalTrans Highway 101 Gaviota Culvert Replacement Project

Case Nos. 19DVP-00000-00034,
19CUP-00000-00054, 19CDP-00000-00133

Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors
September 1, 2020



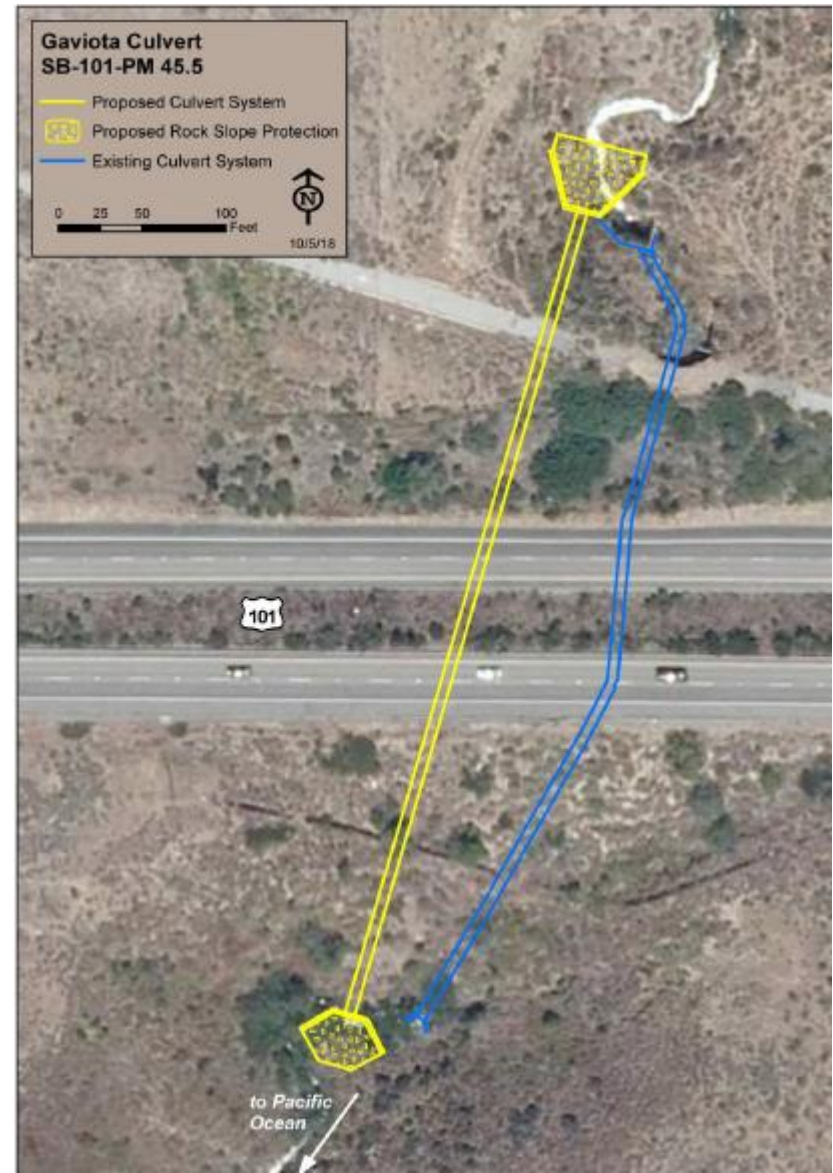
County of Santa Barbara
Planning and Development
Ciara Ristig

Vicinity Map



Project Description

- Existing culvert to be grouted/abandoned in place
- Construction of
 - new culvert
 - rock slope protection
 - outlet endwall and wingwall
 - inlet headwall



Project Analysis

- Condition of existing culvert necessitates replacement
- Impacts to USACE/RWQCB/CDFW/CCC jurisdictional areas
 - Caltrans coordinated w/agencies during preparation of MND
- Temporary access roads will be regraded and revegetated after construction is complete
- Onsite and offsite mitigation proposed

Environmental Review

Project required a MND, prepared by Caltrans:

- Impacts to biological resources were found to be less than significant with mitigation.
- MND circulated July 2018, approved February 2019
- Gaviota Coast Plan adopted November 2018

Planning Commission- May 27, 2020

- Project approved
- Two timely appeals filed

Appellant #1-

Coastal Ranches Conservancy

- Caltrans MND is inadequate
 - Wildlife Passage
 - Caltrans confirmed that Canada del Barro is not a regionally or locally important wildlife corridor
 - “New information” does not suggest existing conflict in the project area
 - CEQA is limited to mitigating impacts of the project
 - Caltrans Regulations
 - County does not enforce Caltrans’ regulations

Appellant #1-

Coastal Ranches Conservancy

- Caltrans MND is inadequate
 - State Park Property
 - 5.01 acres to be transferred to Caltrans ownership
 - Offsite Mitigation
 - Meets intent of GCP policy NS-11
 - In-kind mitigation opportunities exist only at Refugio Creek
 - Will contribute to existing project with recorded deed restriction
 - Mitigation measure has already been adopted by Caltrans- not subject to modification by the County

Appellant #2-

Gaviota Coast Conservancy

- MND Fails to Incorporate Gaviota Coast Plan
 - Coastal Trail
 - GCP plan, including trail maps, adopted after the MND was circulated
 - No impact to future or mapped trail, thus no nexus to require construction of trail
 - Wildlife Corridors
 - No evidence has been provided that the project affects a wildlife corridor
 - Replacement of culvert will not further inhibit wildlife movement

Appellant #2-

Gaviota Coast Conservancy

- Project doesn't comply with CEQA
 - Project complies with CEQA requirements
 - MND circulated prior to certification of GCP
 - Relevant GCP policies were analyzed in staff report
 - No conditions in CEQA section 15162 have occurred to require a subsequent MND or EIR

Policy Consistency

- Consistent with Gaviota Coast Plan, Coastal Land Use Plan
- Project not visible from Highway 101
- Will not impact existing or future recreational opportunities on REC zoned land
- Designed to minimize impacts to ESH
- Necessary to protect Highway 101
- Coordination with Coastal Commission, USFW, CDFW, California State Parks

Suggested Condition

Grant Deed Consent: *The Applicant (Caltrans) shall not accept any interest in the property described in Corporation Grant Deed on APN(S) 081-130-72 and 081-130-73, recorded July 6, 2009 (Document No. 2009-0039846), unless and until the California Department of Parks and Recreation obtains consent from NOAA, the County of Santa Barbara, and the Goleta Valley Land Trust, or their respective successor agencies, as required by the Corporation Grant Deed for the disposition, exchange, or encumbrance.*

Recommended Actions

- Deny the appeals, 20APL-00000-00009 and 20APL-00000-00010
- Make the required findings for approval of the project, including California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) findings.
- Determine that none of the conditions in CEQA Guidelines Section 15162 that require a subsequent MND or EIR have occurred.
- Grant *de novo* approval of the project, subject to the conditions as amended during this hearing.