

**EUREKA SLOUGH BRIDGES GEOTECHNICAL INVESTIGATION**

**Humboldt Bay Harbor, Recreation, and Conservation District  
 Development Permit Application**

**Attachment 3—Environmental Setting, Questions 33 and 34**

33. Describe the project site as it exists before the project including information on topography, soil stability, plants and animals, and any cultural, historical, or scenic aspects. Describe any existing structures on the site and the use of the structures. Attach photographs of the site. Snapshots or polaroid photos will be accepted.

Northbound and southbound U.S. Highway 101 and the two Eureka Slough Bridge structures (#04-0022 L&R) exist within the project area. The bridge structures are separated from each other by approximately 40 horizontal feet as they cross the slough channel and by vegetated median at the abutments and bridge approaches. Highway shoulders are vegetated in both directions. The project area contains a shallow tidal channel, intertidal mudflats, eelgrass beds, and salt marshes around the fringes. Upland areas of the project adjacent to U.S. 101 consist of fill placed for highway construction and urban development, ruderal vegetation, and some low areas with wetlands parallel to U.S. 101 within the project area. Temporary impacts to some wetland areas from placement of protective wetland mats are expected.

**Table 1. Temporary Impacts to Wetlands and Waters from Geotechnical Exploration**

Site ID	Aquatic Resource Type	Access Disturbance (Linear Feet)	Access Disturbance (Acres)	Boring Hole Disturbance (Acres)
B-3	Estuarine Emergent Wetland	137	0.026	0.02
B-21	Estuarine Emergent Wetland	137	0.026	0.02
B-22	Estuarine Emergent Wetland/ Palustrine Emergent Wetland	137	0.026	0.02
B-18	Estuarine Emergent Wetland	0	0	0.02
<b>Total</b>		<b>411</b>	<b>0.078</b>	<b>0.08</b>
<b>Total Area of Temporary Wetland Impacts</b>			<b>0.158 acre</b>	

Eureka Slough connects Humboldt Bay to Freshwater Creek, providing important connectivity for salmonids that use the creek for spawning and rearing habitat. Humboldt Bay mudflats provide important wintering grounds for migratory shorebirds. Eelgrass beds are located in the Eureka Slough channel within the project area. Special status botanical and wildlife species and

*“Provide a safe and reliable transportation network that serves all people and respects the environment”*

their associated habitats and other sensitive habitats are present in the vicinity of the project. Impacts to plants, animals, and habitat would be avoided using Caltrans Standard Measures and Best Management Practices (Attachment 2, Project Description, Sec. 3).

There are no cultural resources in the project area for the geotechnical investigation. The Caltrans right of way has been previously surveyed and subjected to Extended Phase I archaeological investigations. There are no historical built-environment elements in the project area. Scenic aspects include the highway and Eureka Slough Bridges, commercial areas to the east and west, the slough channel passing under the bridges, a rail bridge and Humboldt Bay to the northwest of the project area, and portions of the Humboldt Bay National Wildlife Refuge to the east.

34. *Describe the surrounding properties, including information on plants and animals and any cultural, historical, or scenic aspects. Indicate the type of land use (residential, commercial, etc.) intensity of land use (one-family, apartment houses, shops, department stores, etc.) and the scale of development (height, frontage, set-back, rear yard, etc.) Attach photographs of the vicinity. Snapshots or polaroid photos will be accepted.*

Land use zoning for properties surrounding the project site include service commercial, natural resource, and water conservation. Urban development is present adjacent to U.S. 101, including a Target store and parking lot, a number of small commercial businesses, and an RV park. The Target store parking lot can be accessed directly from southbound Highway 101 and an on- and off-ramp from northbound Highway 101 before crossing the Eureka Slough Bridge provides access to businesses and 6<sup>th</sup> Street. The Eureka Waterfront Trail passes under the Eureka Slough Bridges and continues north and south adjacent to the Target and Shoreline RV properties. The Northwestern Pacific Railroad bridge crosses Eureka Slough approximately 675 feet down-channel of Eureka Slough Bridges. The northeast portion of the project site is adjacent to the Humboldt Bay National Wildlife Refuge. Cultural, historical, and scenic aspects of the surrounding properties are the same as the project site.