

SANTA MONICA MOUNTAINS CONSERVANCY

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December 10, 2018

Garrett Damrath, Principal
Assistant Deputy District Director
Caltrans District 7, Division of Environmental Planning
100 South Main Street, MS-16A
Los Angeles, California 90012

Draft Initial Study/Environmental Assessment with proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration for the State Route 1 (Pacific Coast Highway) Drainage Restoration Project and Bridge Replacement at Solstice Canyon Creek (EA 31350)

Dear Mr. Damrath:

The Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy (Conservancy) offers the following comments on the Draft Initial Study / Environmental Assessment (IS/EA) for the above referenced Project.

The Conservancy recorded a 2.7-acre Conservation and Trail Easement in 2003 over the western portion of APN 4459-008-001 that encompasses the temporary access routes and permanent acquisition area proposed with the bridge replacement over Solstice Canyon Creek. That easement was required from a 1990s era coastal development permit that required the recording of an Offer to Dedicate. The Project also proposes both on-site and off-site mitigation for impacts to the riparian habitat within Solstice Canyon Creek. The Conservancy looks forward to working with Caltrans biologists on the location and design of proposed on-site and off-site habitat mitigation sites. The prospect of steelhead trout having good physical conditions to cross under Pacific Coast Highway has been a long-term objective of the Conservancy.

The IS/EA should better specify which areas comprise the Project's proposed 50,200 square feet of temporary impacts to Coastal Sage Scrub and Coastal Bluff.

The Conservancy supports the proposed Project in concept and appreciates the opportunity to provide comments to improve the Project's regionally significant benefits.

Garrett Damrath
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Thank you for your consideration. Should you have any questions, please contact Paul Edelman, Deputy Director Natural Resources and Planning, at (310) 589-3200 ext. 128, edelman@smmc.ca.gov, or at the above letterhead address.

Sincerely,

CRAIG SAP
Chairperson