



*Keeping Northwest California wild since 1977*

April 23, 2015

Talitha Hodgson  
Project Manager  
California Department of Transportation  
1656 Union St. Eureka, CA 95503

Eli Rohl  
Public Information  
California Department of Transportation  
1656 Union St. Eureka, CA 95503

Dear Ms. Hodgson and Mr. Rohl,

We look forward to participating in the Last Chance Grade Stakeholder Group convened by Congressman Huffman. In anticipation of the May 6 Stakeholder Group meeting, EPIC and Friends of Del Norte conferred with other local environmental organizations, including the Sierra Club Redwood Chapter, the Northcoast Environmental Center, and the Redwood Region Audubon Society, to hear their initial thoughts and concerns about Last Chance Grade.

At this meeting, we produced the following questions regarding Last Chance Grade and the preliminary alternatives produced in the Last Chance Grade Feasibility Study. We would like these questions to be addressed at or before the May 6 meeting, if possible:

- 1. What areas within the potential project area must be avoided because they contain cultural resources?** We understand that these resources are very sensitive and exact locations likely cannot be disclosed; however, we request location information to the extent that it may be disclosed in order to understand from the beginning of the process which areas cannot be considered for alternative routes.
- 2. Please provide definitions used by Caltrans in the Last Chance Grade Feasibility Study for “Young Redwood Forest,” “Mature Redwood Forest,” and “Old Growth Redwood Forest.”**
- 3. Please explain how short-term versus long-term impacts of the project will be assessed, including what length of time will be used in assessing long-term impacts.**

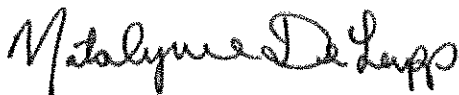
4. **Please provide mile post indicators for where the preliminary alternatives will depart from, and rejoin, the current Highway 101 route.**
5. **Please provide information regarding where the preliminary alternatives would cross major creeks and rivers and known wetlands.**
6. **What will happen to the old (current) Highway 101 at Last Chance Grade if the highway is re-routed? Will it remain open as a roadway (e.g., for bicycle use)?**

We would also like to raise the following issues that our organizations believe are critical in selecting an alternative.

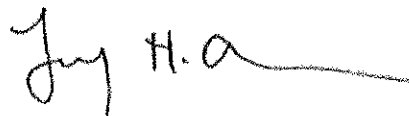
1. **Habitat connectivity features (e.g., overpasses, underpasses, and broader larger connectivity corridors) must be included to minimize the wildlife impacts of a new roadway.**
2. **Estimates of mitigation costs specific to different alternatives must be made early in the Stakeholder Group process.**
3. **Mitigation must include not only habitat restoration, but acquisition of new land that is permanently set aside for public use, to offset any loss of National or State Parks lands.**
4. **Engineering assumptions, including cut-slopes and speeds, should be reconsidered.**

We look forward to working with you in this process! Thank you very much for your attention to our questions and concerns.

Sincerely,



Natalynne DeLapp  
Executive Director  
EPIC  
145 G Street, Suite A  
Arcata, CA 95521  
(707) 822-7711  
natalynne@wildcalifornia.org



Lucy Allen  
Berkeley Law Public Interest Fellow  
EPIC  
145 G Street, Suite A  
Arcata, CA 95521  
(707) 822-7711  
lucy@wildcalifornia.org