

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION: **RECORD OF MEETING**

MEETING TITLE: **LAST CHANCE GRADE PARTNERING MEETING**

MEETING DATE: 7/26/17	TIME: 1000 - 1200	LOCATION: SOUTHERN OPERATIONS CENTER OF REDWOOD NATIONAL AND STATE PARKS, ORICK, CA
Facilitator Jaime Matteoli	Attendees Victor Bjelajac Jeff Bomke Laura Denny Moonchay Dowd Karl Falk-Carlsen Tim Keefe Jaime Matteoli Kevin Mealue Jason Meyer David Roemer Brett Silver Crista Stewart	Titles / Affiliations District Superintendent, California State Parks RA, California State Parks Deputy Superintendent (Acting), Redwood National Park Vice Chairperson, Resighini Rancheria Project Management Support, Caltrans Archaeologist, Caltrans Project Manager, Caltrans Environmental Services, Elk Valley Rancheria Environmental Planner, Caltrans Superintendent (Acting), National Park Service Superintendent (Acting), California State Parks THPO, Elk Valley Rancheria

Notes:

I. INTRODUCTIONS:

Introductions were made and a brief overview of the agenda was given.

II. REVIEW OF PREVIOUS MEETING

- A. Jaime Matteoli briefly discussed the content of the May 31st meeting and covered the action items from that day. A short discussion followed regarding the MOU and the potential new members of the Partnership.

III. MOU

- A. Adding Partners
 - 1. All of the Partners that Jaime Matteoli has spoken with since the last Partner meeting (5/31/17) are in favor of adding Green Diamond Resource Co. and the Resighini Rancheria to the Partnership.
 - 2. The Partnership agreed to move forward with adding Green Diamond Resource Co. and the Resighini Rancheria to the Partnership and the MOU.
- B. Updated Draft and Comments
 - 1. Comments for the updated MOU draft have been received from California State Parks (Victor Bjelajac and Jeff Bomke) and National Parks (David Roemer). Jeff Bomke stated that he had spoken to Green Diamond recently, they had made comments as well and Jaime Matteoli should receive them shortly. Jaime will check his emails and keep an eye out for the comments.
 - 2. The MOU is still in need of “whereas” statements from Green Diamond Resource Co. and the Tolowa Dee-ni’ Nation.
 - 3. A brief discussion was had regarding the updated goals for the MOU.
 - 4. Frequency of Partnership meetings was discussed and left open for the Partners to decide as a group.
 - 5. David Roemer received comments from the Solicitor on our MOU. The goal of the updated language that was provided is to not financially bind any Partner to any other Partner as a result of this MOU.
 - 6. Updated MOU Org Charts have been received from CA State Parks. These are still needed from other Partners.
 - 7. Tim Keefe raised a question about MOU section E-3, regarding unresolved conflicts. He asked whose management would have final decision in unresolved conflicts at critical times in the project, such as construction, and how that process would unfold. Would there be mediation, etc...?
 - a. Dave Roemer pointed out that elevating an issue to various levels of management could prove cumbersome and difficult given the structure of many of the Partners and the varying natures of the

- partners themselves (companies, government entities and sovereign nations). The language in the current MOU was most likely kept vague regarding this issue on purpose.
- b. All Partners present agreed that while a question like this is important to think about and plan for in the future, it is beyond the scope of the MOU as currently constructed.

IV. UPDATES

A. Preliminary Geotechnical Studies: Schedule

1. Jaime Matteoli briefly refreshed the group on the partial funding (\$5 Million) that Caltrans has received to begin geotechnical studies of our proposed alternative alignments.
2. Caltrans will be looking for areas along the alternative alignments that could have stability issues or other concerns. Specifically, Caltrans will focus on the initial jump-off point for the A and C alignments and several locations further along the C alignments.
3. Caltrans will have a plan for the geotechnical studies under the \$5 Million partial funding by winter, 2017. Jason Meyer (CT Environmental) will be coordinating with Partner agencies on permits and clearances for surveys of the geotechnical study sites.
 - a. Caltrans plans to perform our geotechnical work, and corresponding environmental work under two categories to streamline the process and timeline.
 - i) The first category will be easily accessible and more easily studied sites. These will mostly be along current roadways within the project area. Caltrans anticipates a plan in place and work beginning for these sites in winter, 2017.
 - ii) The second category will be areas with more sensitive resources, such as old growth redwoods. Caltrans anticipates work for these sites to conclude in winter, 2019.
 - iii) The team discussed that Caltrans does not plan to produce a segmented final Environmental Document. Caltrans plans to incorporate the information received from both segments of the geotechnical studies under the \$5 Million partial funding into a single Environmental Document for the fully funded project.
4. Victor Bjelajac asked about the project timeline and if there are any opportunities for accelerating the timetable on the project once fully funded. Jaime Matteoli responded by saying that yes, he believes there are areas of the project schedule that may have potential for acceleration. However, Jaime reminded everyone that until the project is fully funded, the current project schedule holds little weight.

B. Coordinating with FHWA on Pursuing Approval of a Permanent Project

1. Caltrans continues to work with the Federal Highways Administration (FHWA) in pursuit of funding approval for a permanent project. In July, Caltrans met with California FHWA, FHWA Geotechnical specialists out of Colorado and a private Geotechnical consultant to begin work on an Expert Risk Assessment (ERA). The ERA is the next step needed in the pursuit of project funding. After the ERA will come a Cost/Benefit Analysis.
2. The ERA, as described by the consultant at the July meeting, is a failure analysis. Alternatives are developed and desired outcomes defined. From there, analysis is done to determine the probability of meeting or failing to meet the desired outcomes for each alternative.
3. As part of the ERA, Caltrans will need to develop a “current alignment” alternative on top of the 6 alternative alignments already developed by Caltrans and partners in the Project Initiation Document. This new current alignment alternative would go beyond maintaining the status quo of the roadway at present. Strategies such as dewatering, retaining walls and retreats into the hillside will be considered.
 - a. David Roemer stated that the Partners, and Caltrans, will need to provide timely information to the public on the need for this new alternative. Victor Bjelajac concurred and said that we will need to get this information out to the public sooner rather than later. David also suggested that this information be presented to the Huffman Stakeholder group as well.
4. David Roemer asked how natural and cultural resources would be assessed in the ERA. Jaime said that items such as this would be covered in the cost/benefit analysis. The ERA would likely focus more on 3 main performance outcomes: safety, total cost, and traffic operations.
5. The ERA will be written by 6-7 geotechnical experts that make up a Risk Assessment Team.

C. Partner Updates

1. Caltrans:
 - a. Caltrans is planning to hold an open house for the Last Chance Grade project sometime in the fall/winter of 2017. Jaime asked that the partners help Caltrans with any presentation(s) that would be given at the open house. Any help from the partners would be greatly appreciated.
 - b. The www.lastchancegrade.com website was just updated.

- c. Caltrans is working on a turnkey contract for the project. The plan is to have a contract ready to be finalized so that a consultant could move forward soon after funding is approved.
- d. Jason Meyer (Caltrans Environmental) gave an update on the studies being performed for the geotechnical reports. He also said that the Last Chance Grade Biological Working Group has been very helpful and successful in getting things going and in agreement for these studies.
- e. Tim Keefe (Caltrans Archaeologist):
 - i) Tim would like to start a working group that will work toward setting up a programmatic agreement with regards to cultural issues. The goal of the programmatic agreement would be to set up guidelines to be followed as partners come and go. This will remove duplicative work and allow for smooth transitions in the face of staff turnover.
 - ii) A letter will be going out in the next few weeks to Partners requesting them to join the cultural partners working group.
 - iii) Tim would like to do a broad landscape look at the project area with regards to cultural issues, rather than focus on specific determined locations. The hope for this is to allow for shifts in proposed alignments as necessary to avoid geologically and environmentally problematic areas.
- 2. State Parks
 - a. Victor Bjelajac asked about Caltrans funding a liaison position at State Parks to help with permits and other activities relating to Last Chance Grade. Jaime Matteoli said that he would discuss with Caltrans' Environmental Chief.
 - b. State Parks and Green Diamond Resource Co. are very close to finalizing their agreement for the common use of existing forest roads in an emergency, should Highway 101 not be available. These roads, on Green Diamond and State Parks property, would be used by Green Diamond and State Parks only. State Parks has approved the current draft of the agreement and is ready to sign pending approval by Green Diamond.
- 3. Elk Valley Rancheria
 - a. The MOU has been reviewed and there are no comments.
 - b. Kevin Mealue said that he would like to discuss how to proceed with monitors for the geotechnical drilling activities with the Tribal Council.

V. CONCLUSIONS AND FUTURE MEETINGS

- A. The team reviewed and concurred on the attached action items.
- B. The team agreed to hold a Partnering Meeting in mid-September. Jaime Matteoli will send out a Doodle poll to determine the date.

Meeting concluded at 11:15 a.m.

ACTION ITEMS:

Responsible	Action	Due Date
Jaime Matteoli	Discuss State Parks liaison with Caltrans Environmental Chief.	9/15/17
Tim Keefe	Send letter to partners requesting participation in a cultural resource working group.	9/15/17
Jaime Matteoli	Send out doodle poll to schedule next meeting.	8/15/17