

Last Chance Grade

# Progress Update

## Summer 2024



## Stay Connected!

Caltrans is committed to a complete, thorough, and inclusive process. Please stay connected on the progress of the LCG Project. Sign up for notifications, get project updates, and learn about opportunities to share your input at:

[www.LastChanceGrade.com](http://www.LastChanceGrade.com)

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The Last Chance Grade (LCG) Permanent Restoration Project is a collaborative, multi-year effort to find a permanent solution to geologic and roadway instability on a 3-mile segment of U.S. Highway 101 in Del Norte County, extending from Wilson Creek to 9 miles south of Crescent City. Caltrans is committed to ensuring the safety and reliability of the highway—now and for the future.

### Alternative F Selected

As of June 2024, Caltrans has selected Alternative F, a 6,000-foot tunnel that bypasses area landslides and realigns the highway, as its preferred alternative. Close collaboration with tribes, agencies, lawmakers, community representatives, environmental groups, business interests, and other stakeholders, in addition to extensive engineering and scientific studies, resulted in a decision that maximizes long-term reliability.

The tunnel will avoid chronic landslides, coastal erosion, and climate impacts while ensuring safety during seismic events. **Look inside** for more information.

### Current Repairs

Construction on retaining walls 5B and 7 was completed and the roadway opened to two-way traffic in October 2023 (for the first time in approximately nine years). Over the winter, Caltrans cleaned up debris from a few minor slides and repaired pavement between Wilson Creek and the north end of Last Chance Grade.



## F Alternative F

**Alternative F** features a tunnel that avoids the slowly moving landslides at Last Chance Grade and minimizes environmental impacts by passing deep underground. A variety of measures will enhance safety, including evacuation routes and in-tunnel utilities. It will feature standard-width shoulders and bicycle and pedestrian facilities. In addition to the tunnel, the project will also include an Operations and Maintenance Center to be located south of the tunnel (see proposed simulations below).



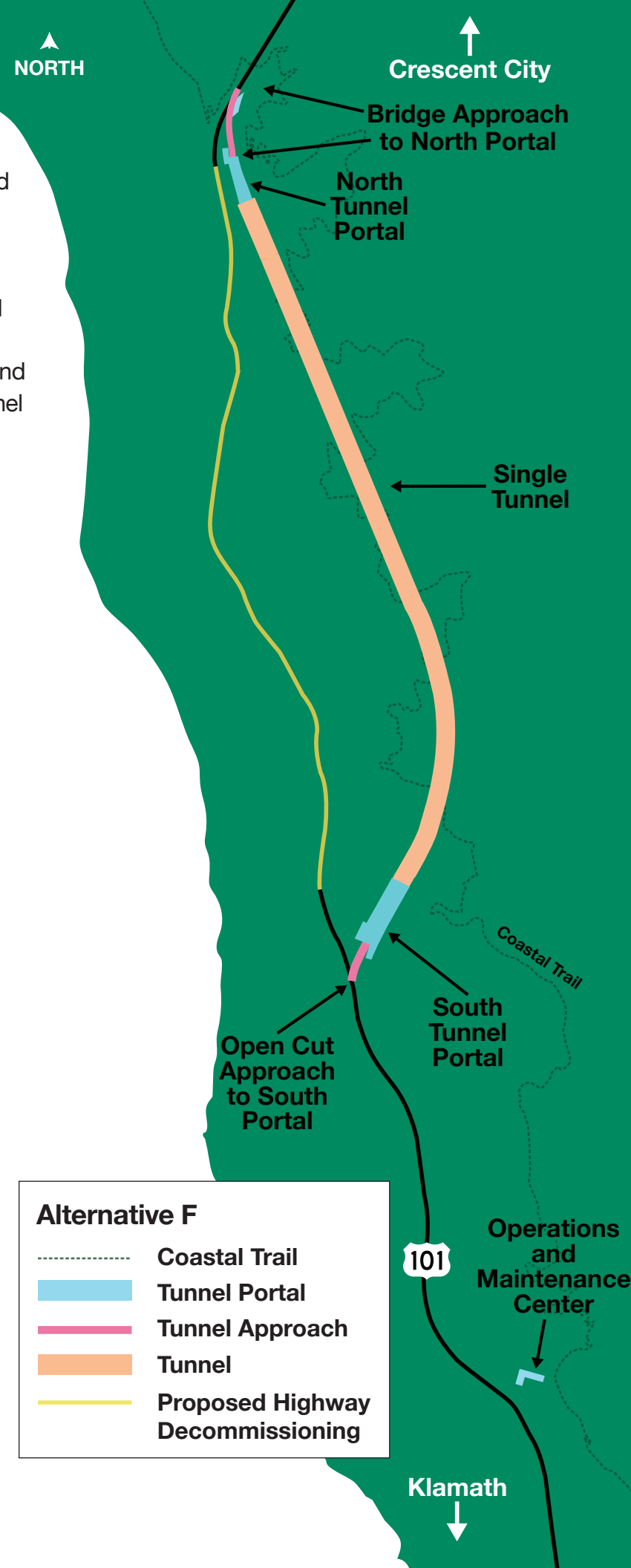
Proposed South Tunnel Portal and Approach



Proposed North Tunnel Portal and Approach



Proposed Operations and Maintenance Center (OMC)



**Alternative F**

- Coastal Trail
- █ Tunnel Portal
- █ Tunnel Approach
- █ Tunnel
- █ Proposed Highway Decommissioning

## Next Steps Toward a Long-Term Solution

The next steps toward Caltrans' goal of a long-term solution at Last Chance Grade include:

### ✔ Draft Environmental Document Completed

The Environmental Document describes the potential environmental effects of a project and ways to minimize or avoid negative effects. The Draft Environmental Document (DED) was released for public review in December 2023 with a virtual public open house and highlights posted on the project website. The review period concluded in February 2024.

### From the Draft to the Final Environmental Document

Comments received have been carefully reviewed and evaluated prior to developing the Final Environmental Document (FED), which will be released in 2025. Once the FED is fully reviewed and finalized, the Design Phase of the project will begin.

### Weighing the Alternatives

Alternative F was selected because it best meets the project's purpose of providing a long-term solution, based on conclusions from an independent panel of geotechnical experts. Alternative F costs more and will take longer to build than Alternative X, the other option considered. In addition, Alternative F has environmental impacts at the north and south tunnel

portal locations. But by departing from the current roadway to mostly avoid the landslide, it offers a much higher likelihood of keeping the road safe and open in the future.

### Minimizing Impacts

As studies continue, experts on the Caltrans team will constantly seek ways in which the proposed design of Alternative F can be refined to further minimize impacts (including cost and construction factors). Caltrans also continues to consult and collaborate with stakeholders on creative ideas for avoiding or minimizing impacts of the project.

### Procuring a Construction Manager

The Last Chance Grade Project was approved to pursue an innovative delivery method known as Construction Manager / General Contractor (CMGC), which allows Caltrans to engage a construction manager to provide input during the design process. Caltrans has begun the procurement process and anticipates a construction manager will join the project team in early 2025.

Please visit [www.lastchancegrade.com](http://www.lastchancegrade.com) and follow Caltrans District 1 on social media for updates.

## Key Steps in the Environmental Process

The project is still on schedule as shown below.

