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**AUG 22 2008**

**& CONSERVATION  
AUTHORITY - MALIBU**

August 20, 2008

Paul Edelman  
Chief, Natural Resources Planning  
Ramirez Canyon Park  
Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority  
5810 Ramirez Canyon Road  
Malibu, CA 90265

**Subject: Section 4(f) *De Minimis* Finding for the I-5 HOV/Truck Lane Project**

Dear Mr. Edelman:

The purpose of this letter is to inform the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy (SMMC) that the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) intends to make a *de minimis* impact finding on the effects that the I-5 HOV and Truck Lane project will have on the Santa Clarita Woodlands State Park.

Pursuant to discussion at our meeting on June 23, 2008, we are submitting for your review the proposed *de minimis* impact finding and the related exhibits. The *de minimis* finding explains the scope of the project, addresses the potential effects of the project on the park in accordance with 49 USC 303(d) (Section 4(f) of the U.S. Transportation Act of 1966).

At the meeting, additional discussion of the potential effects of the proposed project on wildlife movement across the I-5 freeway and possible measures to minimize these effects was conducted. Caltrans is continuing to evaluate existing wildlife movement, the project's effect on this movement and appropriate minimization measure for consideration in the biological resources assessment in the environmental document. This evaluation includes consideration of the impacts and minimization measures discussed at the meeting.

Also included with this letter in response to your request are five exhibits showing the existing and proposed bridge column locations for both alternatives at the Gavin Canyon UC and the proposed right-of-way at the SMMC parcel.

If you have any questions regarding the proposed project, please contact Mine Struhl at (213) 897-5446, or at [mine\\_struhl@dot.ca.gov](mailto:mine_struhl@dot.ca.gov).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Aziz Elattar".

Aziz Elattar  
Office Chief- Division of Environmental Planning  
Department of Transportation – District 7  
100 Main Street, Suite 100  
Los Angeles, CA 90012-3606  
(213) 897-0686

Attachments: Section 4(f) *De minimis* Impact Finding  
Gavin Canyon UC Exhibits (5)

Agenda Item 8(b)  
SMMC  
2/23/09

## **SECTION 4(F) DE MINIMIS IMPACT FINDING**

### **I-5 HOV and Truck Lanes Project SR-14 to Parker Road Los Angeles County, California**

California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) intends to make a *de minimis* impact finding on the effects that the I-5 HOV and Truck Lane project will have on Santa Clarita Woodlands State Park. *De minimis* finding on the I-5 HOV/Truck Lane project is being carried out by Caltrans under its assumption of responsibility pursuant to 23 U.S. Code 327.

Under 49 USC 303(d), FHWA may determine, if certain conditions are met, that a project will have only a *de minimis* impact, as defined in 23 CFR 774.17, on a property protected by Section 4(f) of the U.S. Department of Transportation Act of 1966. With respect to public parks, FHWA may make a finding of *de minimis* impact only if it determines that the project will not adversely affect the activities, features and attributes of the park eligible for 4(f) protection, and the officials with jurisdiction over the park concur in the finding. The *de minimis* impact finding is based on the degree or level of impact including any avoidance, minimization, and mitigation or enhancement measures that are included in the project.

#### **Project Description**

Caltrans proposes to widen existing Interstate 5 (I-5) to include high-occupancy vehicle (HOV) lanes and truck climbing lanes from State Route 14 (SR-14) on the south to Parker Road on the north, a distance of approximately 13.6 miles (Figure 1). The proposed improvements include extending the existing HOV lanes on I-5 from SR-14 to south of Parker Road, a distance of approximately 13 miles, and adding truck climbing lanes from the SR-14 interchange at Calgrove Boulevard (northbound) and to Pico Canyon Road/Lyons Avenue (southbound), a distance of approximately 3 to 4 miles.

The proposed project includes the following components: addition of HOV, truck, auxiliary lanes; bridge widening and/or replacement; modification of on- and off-ramps; upsizing or replacement of culverts; retaining walls; utility relocation; additional and upgraded Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) Facilities, and new landscaping and irrigation. Figure 2 shows the project features at the vicinity of Santa Clarita Woodlands State Park.

#### **Impacts to Santa Clarita Woodlands State Park**

Alternatives 2 and 3 of the I-5 HOV/Truck Lane project would modify the existing I-5 freeway abutting property within Santa Clarita Woodlands State Park owned by the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy (SMMC). As shown on Figure 3, approximately 0.026 acre, and 0.049 acre of the park would be affected by the construction of Alternatives 2 and 3, respectively. Placement of support columns would be required to allow for widening of the existing overhead freeway structure within the area identified.

#### ***De minimis* Impact Finding**

- The proposed project alternatives will not adversely affect the activities, features, or attributes that qualify the resource for protection under Section 4(f). Alternatives 2 and 3 would use land that is along the extreme eastern boundary of the park. There are no

recreational activities occurring in this portion of the park. In addition, there would be no impact to access to the park.

- The proposed project includes all appropriate measures to minimize harm and to preserve and enhance those features and values of the property that originally qualified the property for Section 4(f) protection. The following measures were discussed with the SMMC:
  1. The standard Caltrans 15-ft setback from the edge of the bridge to the right-of-way will be evaluated further during design, and reductions will be considered to reduce impacts to the parcel. Caltrans is willing to reduce the setback, and will need to evaluate the reduction when more detailed information is available during the design of the project.
  2. The amount of \$65,000.00 will be paid to the SMMC through an in-lieu fee program.
  3. Caltrans will work with the SMMC on possible fencing locations, if necessary.
- The public would be afforded the opportunity to review and comment on the effects of the project on the identified Section 4(f) resource as part of the CEQA/NEPA public review process.

Pursuant to 23 CFR 771.135(p), Caltrans will request written concurrence from the SMMC after the public review and comment period is provided regarding the above conditions.

Attachments: Figure 1. Project Location  
Figure 2. Project Features  
Figure 3. Impacted Area of Santa Clarita Woodlands State Park

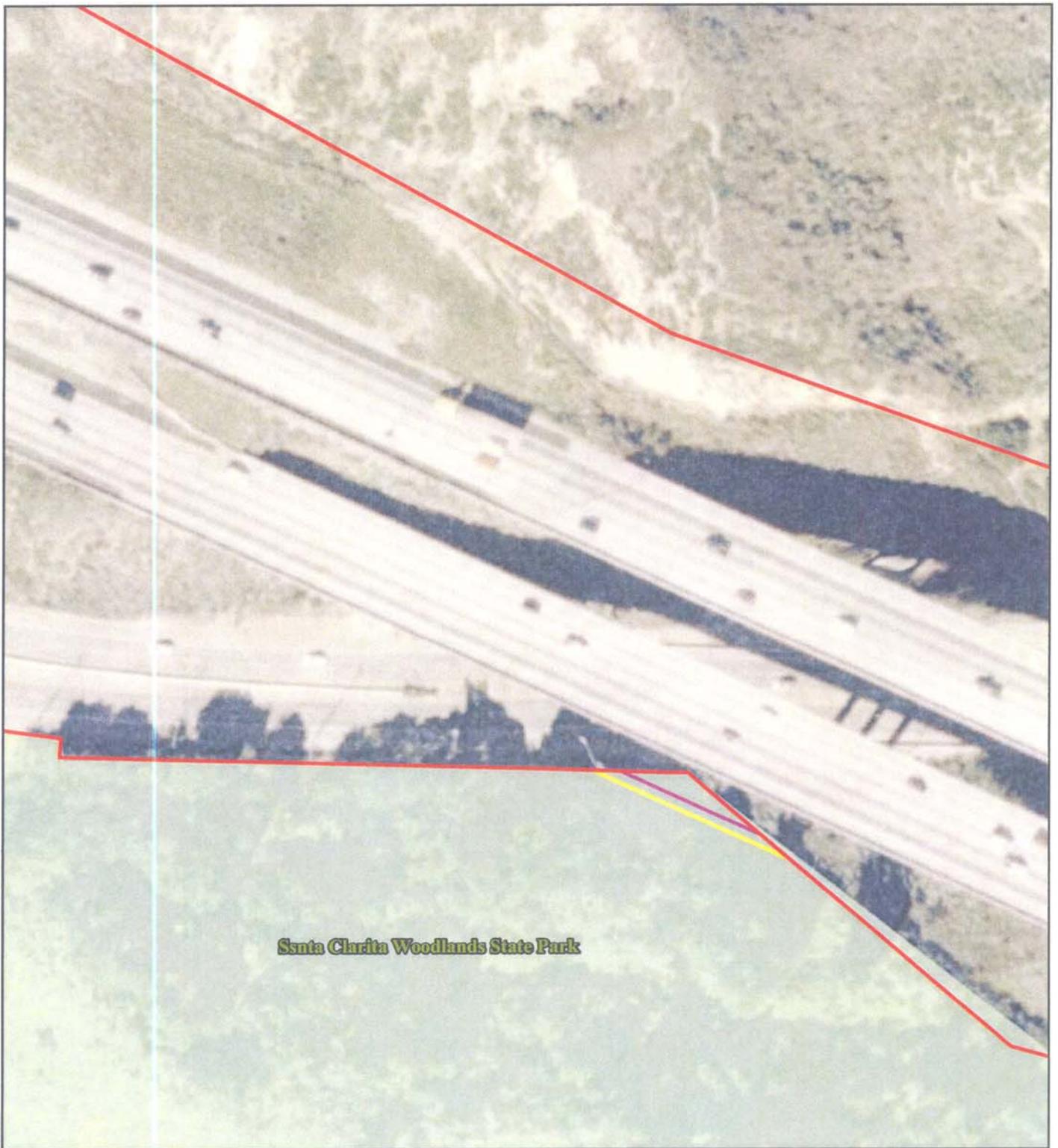
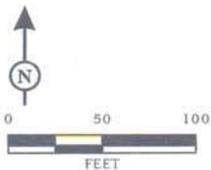


FIGURE 3

LSA

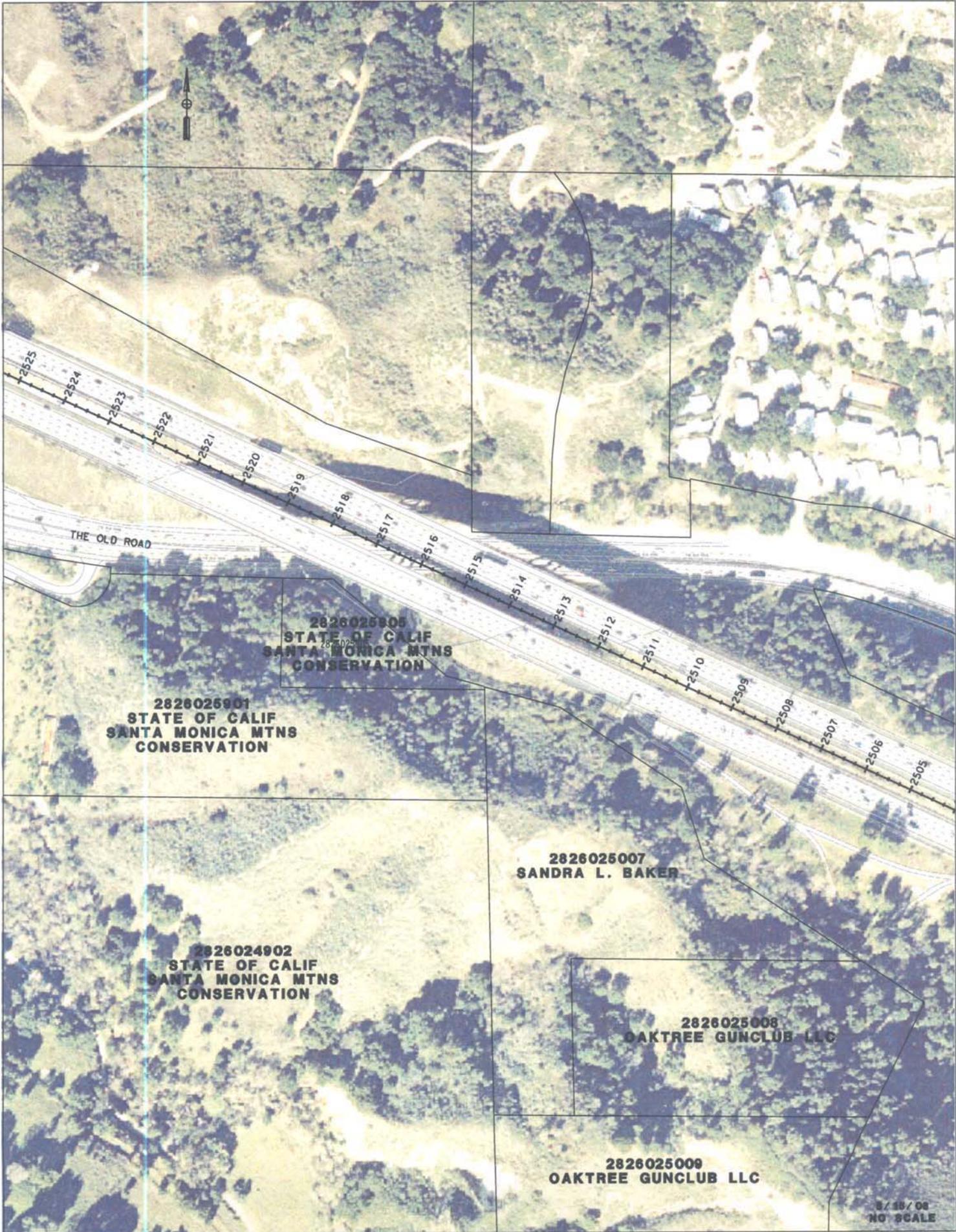


- Existing Right-of-Way
- Alternative 2 Proposed Right-of-Way
- Alternative 3 Proposed Right-of-Way
- Parks, Open Space, and Recreation Areas

*I-5 HOV/Truck Lanes*  
 Impacted Area of  
 Santa Clarita Woodlands State Park

SOURCE: Psomas (01/07), Thomas Bros. (2007), City of Santa Clarita (2007).

I:\SIB0601\GIS\4F\_FIG3.mxd ( 6/19/2008 )



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