

Public Notice of Availability
U.S. Department of Transportation Act Section 4(f) De Minimis Finding
Walnut Grove Road over the Mokelumne River Bridge (29C-0131) (also known as
Miller Ferry Bridge) Replacement Project

Project Proponent: San Joaquin County, Department of Public Works

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Project Title: Walnut Grove Road over the Mokelumne River Bridge (29C-0131) (also known as Millers Ferry Bridge) Replacement Project

Project Location: The proposed project is approximately four miles west of Interstate 5, at the San Joaquin County and Sacramento County line, southeast of the community of Walnut Grove.

Purpose and Need: The proposed project is needed because the existing bridge has a sufficiency rating (SR) of 56.1 and has been designated as structurally deficient (SD) per the Caltrans Structure Maintenance & Investigations, Local Agency Bridge List (July 2018). The existing bridge does not meet current design standards (previously identified as functionally obsolete).

The purpose of the proposed project is to replace the existing aging (more than 70 years old) structure with a new movable structure that is consistent with appropriate and current design standards for roadway geometry, hydraulics, marine navigational requirements, and structural integrity.

Project Description: The County of San Joaquin (County), in coordination with the County of Sacramento (Sacramento County) and the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), proposes to replace the existing Walnut Grove Road Bridge (also known as Millers Ferry Bridge), Bridge No. 29C-0131, over the north fork of the Mokelumne River (proposed project). The proposed project would receive funding from the Highway Bridge Program (HBP), which are funds from the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT), Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), as administered by Caltrans. Caltrans is responsible for federal oversight of the proposed project, which would be locally administered by the County in coordination with Sacramento County.

This proposed project would replace the existing movable bridge with a new movable bridge on the same alignment, with the same function and capacity. The vertical profile of the proposed roadway and bridge would be controlled by requirements to provide adequate drift clearance to minimize openings for marine navigational traffic, provide adequate drift clearance under the bridge during flood events, maximize sight distance, and minimize footprint. The bottom (soffit) of the new bridge cannot be any lower than the bottom (soffit) of the existing bridge per requirements from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), Reclamation District 38, and the U.S. Coast Guard.

Because the proposed project would occur on the existing alignment, Walnut Grove Road would be closed during construction for up to 14 months. River navigation would require closure for up to 24 working days, approximately 5 weeks. Construction is anticipated for 2029.

Section 4(f) Resource: Section 4(f) of the USDOT Act of 1966 requires consideration of potential project effects on public park and recreation lands, wildlife and waterfowl refuges, and historic sites during transportation project development. Responsibility for compliance with Section 4(f) has been assigned by USDOT/FHWA to Caltrans. Staten Island Preserve qualifies as a Section 4(f) property because the 9,200 acres of property is protected under a conservation easement for wildlife habitat protection, particularly for sandhill cranes, migratory waterfowl, and other shore birds. The County has prepared a draft Section 4(f) Minimal Impact Memorandum, which evaluates the use and associated potential impacts of the proposed project's proposed use of 1 to 2 acres of Staten Island Preserve.

Purposed of Public Notice: This public notice and opportunity for review and comment is being provided for the proposed project because the County has analyzed the effects of the project on Staten Island and has determined that its use would be *de minimis*. *De Minimis* impacts are defined as those that do not adversely affect the activities, features, and attributes of a Section 4(f) resource. Copies of the draft Section 4(f) Minimal Impact Memorandum are available for review at the San Joaquin County Office at the above address and online at: <https://www.sjgov.org/departments/pwk/bridge-engineering/walnut-grove-road-bridge-replacement>.

Public Review Period: A 30-day public review period for interested individuals and public agencies to submit written comments on the draft Section 4(f) Minimal Impact Memorandum will commence on July 17, 2026 and end on August 17, 2026. Written comments on the draft Section 4(f) Minimal Impact Memorandum must be received at the above address no later than 5PM on August 17, 2026. All public comments will be considered and documented in the administrative record for the proposed project.