

PUBLIC NOTICE

NOTICE OF INTENT TO ADOPT A U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION ACT SECTION 4(F) DE MINIMIS FINDING FOR IMPACTS OF GRAEAGLE-JOHNSVILLE ROAD REHABILITATION PROJECT (RPSTPL-5909[116])

PROJECT PROPONENT: Plumas County Department of Public Works
1834 E Main Street
Quincy, CA 95971

CONTACT PERSON: Mr. Rob Thorman, Public Works Director
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PROJECT TITLE: Graeagle-Johnsville Road Rehabilitation Project (RPSTPL-5909[116])

PROJECT LOCATION: Approximately 3.4 miles of Graeagle-Johnsville Road from Jonesville-McCrea Road and Plumas Eureka State Park (Post Mile 1.82), east to its intersection with Poplar Valley Road 4 miles northwest of the town of Graeagle, Plumas County, California (Post Mile 5.15)

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: The Plumas County Department of Public Works (County) is proposing to rehabilitate approximately 3.4 miles of Graeagle-Johnsville Road northwest of the town of Graeagle to address ongoing slide and erosion damage (project). Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act of 1996 requires consideration of potential project effects on public park and recreation lands, wildlife and waterfowl refuges, and historic sites during transportation project development. Accordingly, the County proposes to assess the potential for a *de minimis* finding (i.e., project impacts would lack significance or importance) for each of the Section 4(f) resources potentially affected by the proposed project. Section 4(f) resources in the project's 29.44-acre Area of Potential Effect (APE) include:

- U.S. Forest Service (USFS), Plumas National Forest (PNF) – Federal Public Lands;
- Plumas-Eureka State Park (State Park) – Public Park and Historic Site; and
- Echo Flat cultural site (CA-PLU-003835H; P-32-003835) – a contributing element to the State's Plumas-Eureka Mill and Jamison Mines Historic District that is listed on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) (Welts 1973).

The project would be federally funded through the Federal Statewide Transportation Improvement Program, which is administered by the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) on behalf of the Federal Highway Administration. Caltrans is responsible for federal oversight of the project, which would be locally administered by the County. Graeagle-Johnsville Road is maintained by the County.

Project *de minimis* impacts on the Section 4(f) resources include temporary construction occupancy use of all three resources and permanent incorporation of erosion controls, stormwater management infrastructure, and additional guardrail and pavement in-kind within the road right-of-way. None of these impacts would adversely affect public access or use.

Key project components to rehabilitate Graeagle-Johnsville Road include the following activities:

1. Repair the slide and bank failure at PM 4.91 above Jamison Creek inside Plumas-Eureka State Park.
2. Stabilize the slide area with soil nailing, an economical slope and wall construction method. To preserve aesthetics within Plumas-Eureka State Park, use vegetated cells if practicable. Protect the repaired area's toe from Jamison Creek with large boulders (2–4 tons). The County must secure an easement from the State of California for access, repairs, and maintenance. If funding is not available to complete the soil nailing, then work may be limited to stabilization at the base of the slip out.
3. Upgrade the culvert crossing at PM 5.12 near Plumas-Eureka State Park Museum adjacent to Johnsville. Severe erosion downstream is caused by steep slopes and lack of energy dissipaters. The project involves acquiring a drainage easement, designing and constructing a new culvert and down drain system, and placing an energy dissipater near Jamison Creek to prevent erosion during high-flow events. Plans account for local aesthetics and history, including 82 feet of new culvert (two 24-inch corrugated metal pipes) and rip rap at the southern end to limit erosion.
4. Construct an asphalt/concrete overlay of the existing pavement between PM 1.85 and PM 5.15 to increase the useful life of the roadway. After the overlay work is completed, the existing guardrail systems would be replaced and additional guardrail would be constructed primarily near the reversing curves between PM 1.85 and PM 2.85, where the roadway grades exceed 10 percent and embankment heights exceed 5 feet. The need for new guardrail locations would then be evaluated for the area between PM 2.85 and 5.15. Any new guardrails would be located at the edge of pavement within the existing road prism.

Construction is expected to start in 2026 or later once all required approvals and funding have been obtained. The overall construction period would encompass up to 160 working days and would primarily take place between April 1 and November 31. Work performed in and around Jamison Creek would be scheduled during dry months (i.e., typically June through October).

PURPOSE OF PUBLIC NOTICE: The proposed project is subject to Section 4(f) of the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) Act of 1966, which requires special consideration of publicly owned parks, recreation areas, wildlife and waterfowl refuges, and historic sites, when a project will involve the use of or potentially impact these properties. After evaluating the use(s) and associated potential impacts a project may have on a Section 4(f) property, a finding is made under the provisions of 23 Code of Federal Regulations 774.17, Section 4(f). Responsibility for compliance with Section 4(f) has been assigned by the USDOT/Federal Highway Administration to Caltrans under the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act-A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) Act of 2005. Section 6009 of SAFETEA-LU establishes the *de minimis* finding process in which determinations are made regarding 4(f) properties when no adverse effects would occur. *De minimis* impacts are defined as those that do not adversely affect the activities, features, and attributes of a 4(f) property. Section 6009 also requires that a public notice and opportunity for review and comment be provided for projects that are determined to have a *de minimis* impact. The County has analyzed the effects of project construction and operation on federal public lands, the Plumas Eureka State Park, and the Echo Flat cultural site, as described above, and has determined that its use would be *de minimis*. Copies of the draft Section 4(f) *Evaluation* are available for review at the Plumas County Office at the above address and online at:

<https://plumascounty.us/CivicAlerts.aspx?CID=10>.

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) *Evaluation* will commence on **December 3, 2025** and end on **January 2, 2026**. Written comments on the draft Section 4(f) *Evaluation* must be received at the above address within the public review period. All public comments will be considered and documented in the administrative record for the project.

Notice of Intent – Section 4(f) *de Minimis* Finding
Graeagle-Johnsville Road Rehabilitation Project
Plumas County Department of Public Works