

March 22, 2021

**NOTICE OF PREPARATION
of a Draft Environmental Impact Report,
Notice of Public Scoping Meeting**

Project Title: Bohemian Highway Bridge over Russian River Replacement

Project Proponent: Sonoma County

Project Location: Unincorporated Community of Monte Rio, Sonoma County, CA (Figure 1)

Environmental Impact Report: The County of Sonoma (County) Permit and Resource Management Department (Permit Sonoma), with the Department of Transportation and Public Works, is preparing an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the replacement of the existing bridge on Bohemian Highway over the Russian River. The County will be the lead agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) for the project. This Notice of Preparation (NOP) describes the proposed project that will be analyzed in the EIR and identifies areas of probable environmental effects of the project.

Agencies and interested members of the public are invited to provide input on the scope of the environmental analysis. If you are a responsible or trustee agency, we need to know the views of your agency as to the scope and content of the environmental information which is germane to your agency's statutory responsibilities in connection with the proposed project. Due to the time limits mandated by state law, your response must be sent at the earliest possible date, but no later than 30 days after the date of this notice.

Written Comments:

You may submit written comments on the scope of the environmental issues to be addressed in the project EIR within 30 days of the date of this notice to Jackson Ford at any of the addresses below **by 5:00 p.m. on April 21, 2021**. Please note that there will be other comment periods during the preparation of Draft and Final EIR:

Email: Jackson.Ford@sonoma-county.org

Regular Mail: Permit Sonoma, Attn: Jackson Ford, 2550 Ventura Avenue, Santa Rosa, California 95403

Public Scoping Meeting:

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the County will hold a virtual scoping meeting to provide an opportunity for agency staff and interested members of the public to submit comments, either written or verbal, on the scope of the environmental issues to be addressed in the EIR. The scoping meeting will be held on **Wednesday, April 14, 2021 from 6:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.** The scoping meeting will begin with a concise presentation followed by a question and answer session, and an open public comment period. Instructions on how to join the virtual scoping meeting will be posted at least one week in advance on the project website:

<https://sonomacounty.ca.gov/PRMD/Planning/Natural-Resources/>

For questions regarding this notice, please contact Jackson Ford, at (707) 565-8356 or at the email address above.

Project Background:

The purpose of the project is to provide a safe, functional, and reliable crossing on Bohemian Highway over the Russian River, between the north and south portions of the community of Monte Rio. The project area is in a region of relatively high seismicity. The most recent (2019) Caltrans Bridge Inspection Report for the existing multi-span slab bridge notes a number of structural deficiencies and identifies the bridge as fracture critical, which means the structure was found to have seismic vulnerability, has degraded foundations, does not meet current seismic safety standards, and also does not meet current hydraulic freeboard standards (which means it is at risk from being overtopped during flood events).

The existing bridge has also been identified as functionally obsolete. The two travel lanes have substandard width, and there are no shoulders. Due to insufficient width, large vehicles such as busses or semi-trailer trucks must cross the bridge alone while other traffic waits. Additionally, the narrow sidewalk width and lack of bike lanes do not provide adequate pedestrian and bicycle safety. The existing bridge does not meet the current American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) design requirements.

Proposed Project:

The County proposes to remove the existing bridge on the Bohemian Highway over the Russian River and construct a new bridge on an alternate alignment (Figure 2). The replacement bridge structure would be approximately 846 feet long and composed of the following:

- The south approach would be a continuous cast-in-place concrete post-tensioned slab structure with three spans ranging from 60 to 65 feet long.
- The main span over the Russian River would be a 390-foot long steel tied arch structure. The peak of the arch would be approximately 65 feet high above the deck.
- The north approach would be a continuous cast-in-place concrete post-tensioned box girder structure with three spans ranging from 80 to 85 feet long.

The proposed bridge would be designed to meet the current AASHTO bridge design standards and the seismic design would be in accordance with the Caltrans Seismic Design Criteria and Seismic Design for Steel Bridges. The bridge would vary in width, from approximately 52 feet at the approaches to approximately 60 feet at the main span. The bridge would be supported on concrete piers with deep, large diameter cast-in-drilled hole piles, embedded up to approximately 120 feet below the riverbed. Rock slope protection (RSP) would be installed at both abutments for scour protection.

The proposed roadway would be designed to provide a multimodal route for vehicles, bicycles, and pedestrians. The proposed alignment for the Bohemian Highway Bridge would connect to Main Street west of the existing bridge and east of Moscow Road, and terminate at SR 116 to the north. The proposed roadway cross section (Figure 3) would accommodate two 12-foot vehicular lanes (one lane in each direction), concrete barriers, the steel arch members, and 5-foot shoulders/Class II bike lanes and 6-foot pedestrian sidewalks on both sides of the bridge.

The proposed bridge profile would be raised to meet the 100-year flood level of 47.7 feet. The proposed structure would not entirely clear the estimated 100-year flood water levels due to relatively low elevations of the bridge approach roadways and limitations on how much they can be raised; however preliminary analysis indicates that the proposed structure would be a substantial improvement from the existing structure, in which the existing

structure would be completely overtopped by flood waters, to a condition in which less than 100 feet of the proposed bridge superstructure at the approaches would undergo pressure flow or become overtopped.

The project construction is estimated to be completed over three consecutive years. Traffic will continue to use the existing bridge in years one and two. For the third year, traffic would be switched to new bridge as the old structure is deconstructed. Construction would occur year round, with in channel and over water work occurring in the low flow summer months. Construction related Best Management Practices will avoid or minimize environmental impacts associated with the project.

Requested Permits and Entitlements:

Proposed improvements would likely require several Right-of-Way acquisitions in the form of both temporary construction easements and permanent acquisition. While specific information is limited due to the early stages of project development, details will emerge about specific locations as the County moves through the project design, environmental review, Right-of-Way, and federal funding processes.

Construction access to the beach area and river channel bottom (work in flowing water) would be necessary to construct the abutments for the new bridge in the northerly and southerly riverbanks, as well as the bridge piers. This work involves work within the jurisdictional areas of resources agencies requiring the County to apply for necessary permits. Application/notification materials will be required for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers for a Clean Water Act Section 404 permit, to the SFRWQCB for Clean Water Act Section 401 water quality certification, and to the California Department of Fish and Wildlife for a Section 1602 Streambed Alteration Agreement and/or Incidental Take Permit, as applicable.

Project Alternatives:

The requirement for this EIR is mandated by Section 21084.1 of the California Environmental Quality Act, which states, among other things, that substantial adverse change to a historical resource on a local register of historical resources is deemed to be "significant". The EIR will evaluate a reasonable range of project alternatives, including the required No Project Alternative.

Potential Environmental Effect Areas:

The EIR will describe the reasonably foreseeable and potentially significant adverse effects of the proposed project (both direct and indirect). The EIR also will evaluate the cumulative impacts of the project when considered in conjunction with other related past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future projects. The County anticipates that the proposed project could result in potentially significant environmental impacts in the following topic areas, which will be further evaluated in the EIR.

- Aesthetics/Visual
- Biological Resources
- Cultural Resources
- Hydrology and Water Quality
- Noise
- Recreation
- Transportation
- Tribal Cultural Resources

As environmental documentation for this project is completed, it will be available for review online at:

<https://sonomacounty.ca.gov/PRMD/Planning/Natural-Resources/>

Note that as long as Shelter in Place is in effect and the Permit Sonoma offices remain closed, documents will not be available online, or through other arrangement with the project planner.

Figure 1 Project Location

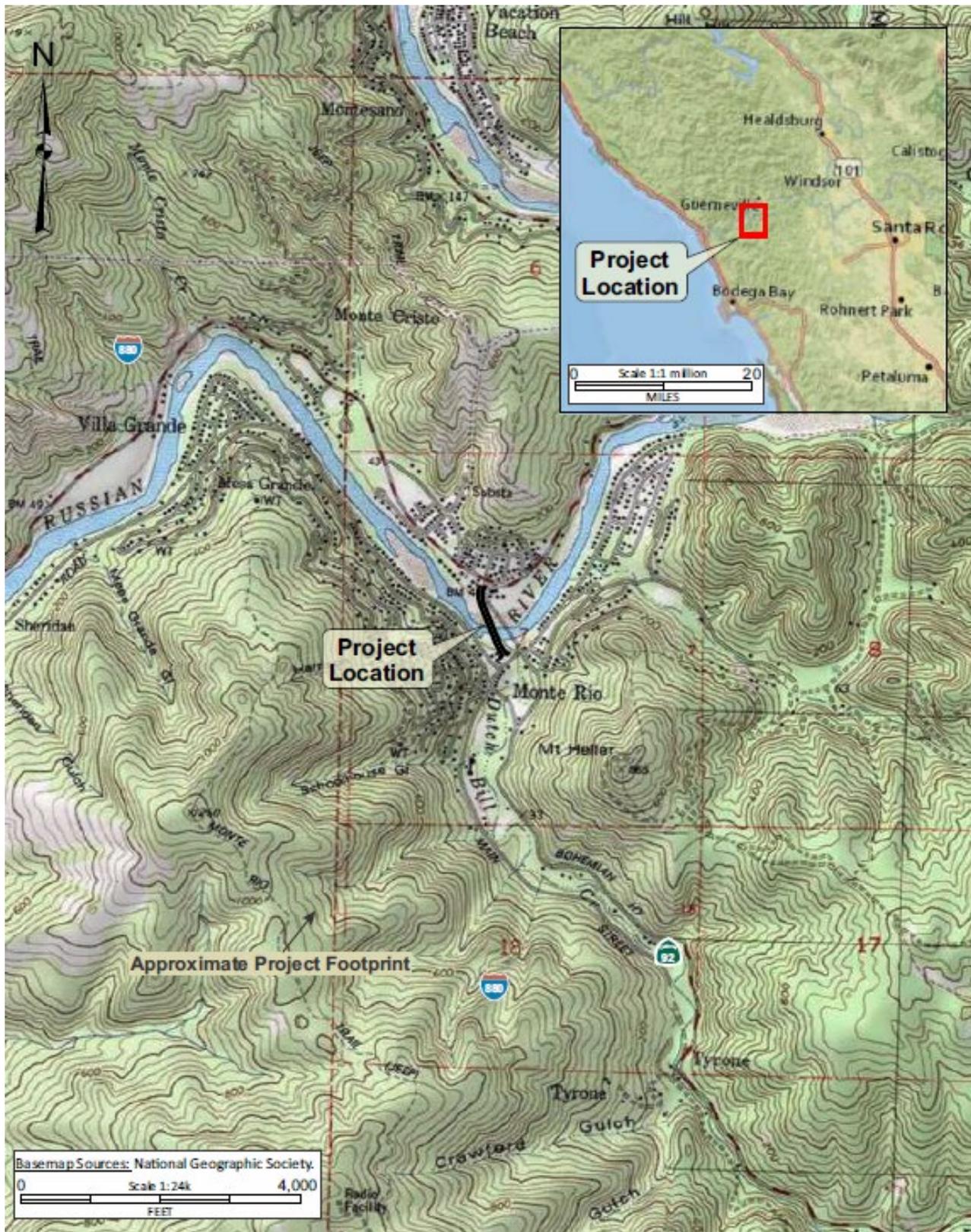


Figure 2 Project Footprint

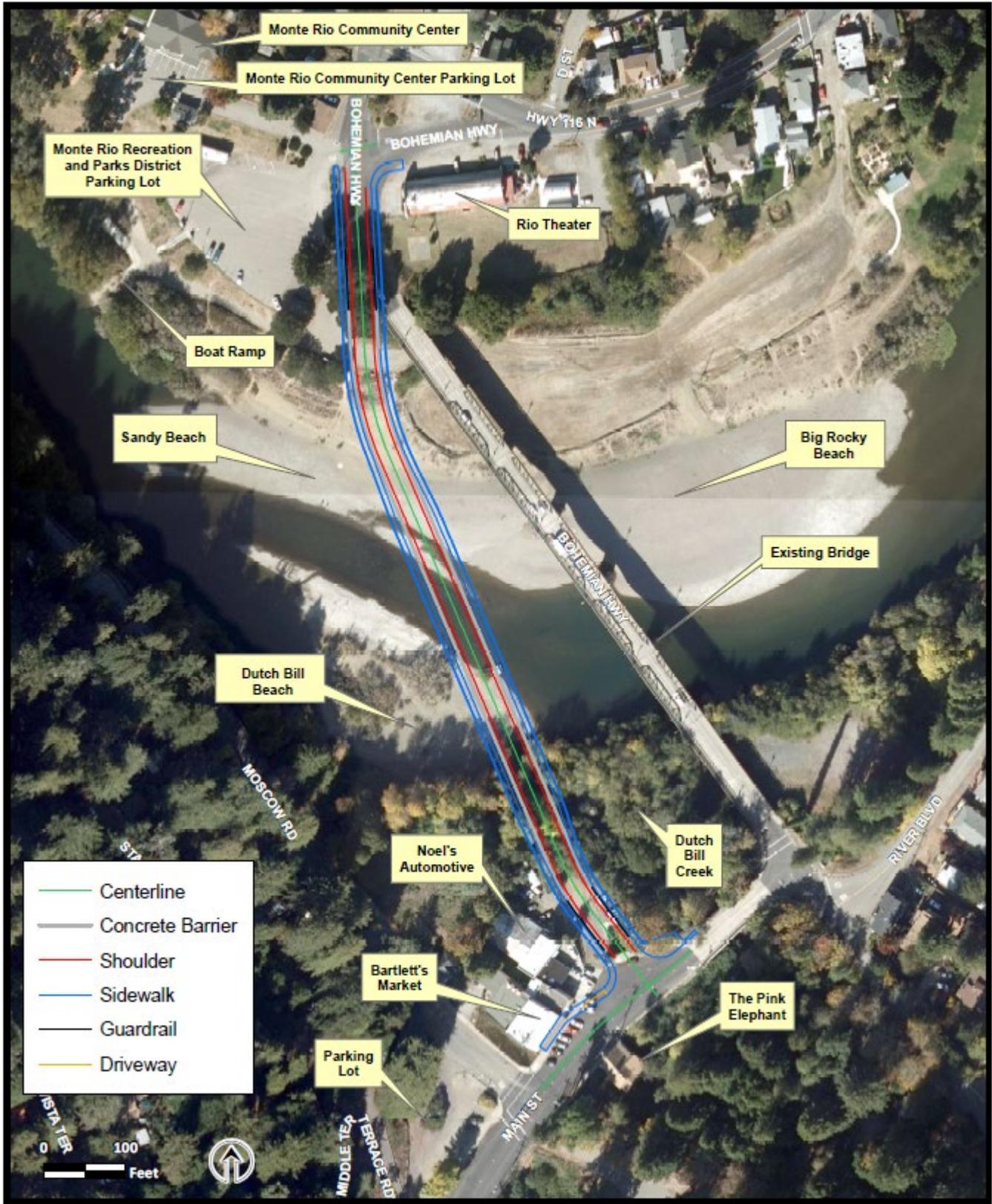


Figure 3 Proposed Roadway Profile and Rendering

