



DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION
Gold Fields District
7806 Folsom Auburn Road
Folsom, CA 95630

Lisa Ann L. Mangat, Acting Director

November 24, 2014

Matthew Smeltzer, Deputy Director, Engineering
El Dorado County
Community Development Agency, Transportation division
2850 Fairlane Court
Placerville, CA 95667

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Dear Mr. Smeltzer,

This letter is in response to your August 7, 2014 letter and request for California State Parks position regarding whether State Parks is willing to accept ownership of the existing Mt Murphy Bridge as a pedestrian/bicycle facility or the ownership of a replacement pedestrian/bicycle bridge in the same location. Your request also included the questions as to whether or not State Parks is willing to participate in paying for all or a portion of the rehabilitation or replacement costs for a pedestrian/bicycle-only bridge.

The Mt Murphy Bridge is a County-owned bridge located on County ROW in the middle of Marshall Gold Discovery State Historic Park. El Dorado County is in the process of planning the replacement of this one-lane vehicle bridge using Federal Highway Administration bridge replacement funds. Gold Fields District and Marshall Sector staff have appreciated and enjoyed working closely with the County and their consultants on this project. I appreciate the County's desire to clearly understand State Parks position regarding the above questions in order to develop their alternatives. I will attempt to provide as clear answers to these questions as possible at this stage in the planning process.

Please note however that a number of key environmental review processes, including the Section 106 review and consultation and the 4(f) evaluation have not been completed and these processes could determine whether or not the federal funding could be used to rehabilitate or replace the existing bridge for pedestrian/bicycle use. Given that these processes have not been completed, State Parks believes it is premature to assume that the federal bridge replacement funds could not be used to rehabilitate the old bridge or construct a replacement pedestrian bridge.

State Parks has already clearly stated our preference for a location downstream of the North Beach area for the replacement of the vehicle bridge. Integral to this recommendation has been a provision for continued pedestrian/bicycle access across the river at the current bridge location either through rehabilitation of the existing bridge or development of a replacement pedestrian/bicycle bridge. State Parks reiterates here that pedestrian access across the river in the current location is critical to the public use and enjoyment of the park unit. Gold Fields District staff would like to assist the County

and consultants in developing the 4(f) evaluation which will assess project impacts on public recreation areas, and specifically Marshall Gold Discovery State Historic Park.

State Parks cannot currently envision a scenario under which State Parks would accept ownership of the existing Mt Murphy Bridge, whether or not it was rehabilitated for pedestrian/bicycle use. However, State Parks supports rehabilitation and retention of the existing bridge as one means to continue to provide pedestrian access across the river in the current location which we believe is vital for the public use and enjoyment of the park unit. It is our understanding that there could be public support for the County rehabilitating and retaining the existing Bridge. Part of the decision the Board of Supervisors made at the February 4, 2014 meeting was not only moving forward with Phase 1B of the project, but also to explore options for using the existing bridge for non-vehicular travel. State Parks would hope that exploring options for rehabilitating the existing bridge for pedestrian/bicycle use extends beyond assessing if State Parks is willing to accept ownership of the bridge.

It is possible that the Department would consider accepting ownership of a replacement pedestrian/bicycle bridge in the location of the existing bridge. In order to reach this determination the Department would need additional information regarding this replacement pedestrian/bicycle bridge including: State Parks would review and approve the design of the structure, would need information regarding the life of the structure, and would need specific information regarding the type of maintenance required for this pedestrian/bicycle bridge. State Parks assumes the type of required maintenance may vary depending on bridge type. Without this specific information the Department cannot make a unqualified statement that we would accept ownership of a replacement pedestrian/bicycle bridge at this time.

Regarding State Parks providing funding for all or a portion of the rehabilitation or replacement costs for a pedestrian/bicycle bridge, no State Park funding, either from the General Fund or the State Park and Recreation Fund (SPRF, the Department revenue account) would be committed to the rehabilitation or replacement of a pedestrian/bicycle bridge. The bridge replacement project is a County project. As State Parks has indicated previously, it is premature to assume the federal bridge replacement funds will not be able to be used for this purpose. If for some reason the federal funding cannot be used for rehabilitation or replacement of a pedestrian, and the County does not have other funding at its disposal for this purpose, State Parks is very interested in working with the County to seek grant funding for rehabilitation or replacement of a pedestrian/bicycle bridge. Potential grant funding sources may include California River Parkways Program and Environmental Enhancement and Mitigation Program (EEMP) funding, both administered by the Natural Resources Agency. The Recreational Trails Program (RTP) may be another potential grant funding source.

At the 2/4/14 Board of Supervisors meeting, there was discussion of using the existing bridge as part of the re-route for the new replacement bridge which would entail some rehabilitation of the old bridge for this purpose which might lessen the amount of funding required for rehabilitation and future use of the existing bridge for pedestrian/bicycle use. State Parks would be interested to know if this possibility has been explored further. Is the use of the funds made available to the County for qualifying public improvement projects through the MOU between the County and the Shingle Springs

Band of Miwok Indians an option for the rehabilitation or replacement of the pedestrian/bicycle bridge?

State Parks looks forward to continuing to work closely with the County, consultants and other agencies on the Mt Murphy Bridge replacement project. I hope this letter provides the necessary information regarding the potential for State Parks ownership of a rehabilitated or replacement pedestrian/bicycle bridge and State Parks involvement in funding of this element of the Mt Murphy Project. If you have questions regarding this letter, please contact Marshall Sector Superintendent Jeremy McReynolds at (530) 622-3027 or Senior Parks and Recreation Specialist Jim Micheaels at (916) 988-0513. Thank you.

Sincerely,



Richard Preston, Acting District Superintendent

CC Ron Briggs, El Dorado County Board of Supervisors, District IV
Norma Santiago, El Dorado County Board of Supervisors, Chair and District V
Leslie Bonneau, Project Manager, CH2M Hill, Inc.