
Financial difficulties plague SR 4 construction projects

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The discovery of Native American artifacts along the path of the State Route 4 “Wagon Trail” Realignment Project has prompted considerable cost overruns and the Calaveras County Board of Supervisors last week debated whether to cover some of those costs before being reimbursed with state and federal funding.

Work is under way on a two-mile segment of the project between Bonanza Mine Way and Appaloosa Road west of Angels Camp. Eventually, the project, with an estimated construction cost of \$50 million, will cover about six miles between Copperopolis and Angels Camp.

The board at its May 23 meeting considered whether to amend contracts with two of the engineering firms on the project to temporarily cover the unanticipated cost overruns.

The county has not received a green light as of yet from Caltrans whether state or federal funds will be used to cover those cost overruns.

County Engineer Robert Pachinger proposed using funds collected from the county’s Road Impact Mitigation Program at this time to keep the project on track.

District 2 Supervisor Jack Garamendi expressed concerns about “gambling” \$2.3 million in RIM fees.

The RIM fees are collected from new development in the county and are used to pay for road improvements.

Pachinger said his discussions with Caltrans have been favorable that the county will be reimbursed, but Garamendi countered the state is in financial trouble and there are no assurances the money will be there.

The board voted 4-1 in favor of amending the contracts to cover the additional costs for now with Garamendi the lone supervisor in opposition.
