

# Cost overruns, delays persist on Wagon Trail project

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Cost overruns continue to plague the State Route 4 “Wagon Trail” Realignment Project.

The Calaveras County Board of Supervisors voted 4-1 Tuesday to increase a professional services contract with Dokken Engineering Inc. by \$530,904 to a total amount not to exceed \$7,242,306. Board Chair Jack Garamendi cast the lone vote in opposition to the increase.

Tuesday’s vote was the second time in the past 90 days contracts for the \$14 million project have been amended with substantial cost increases.

The board in late January authorized a \$379,925 increase to continue providing required Native American monitoring services.

Tuesday’s half-million-dollar-plus contract amendment was “necessary due to unexpected construction delays that have occurred including new and previously unidentified cultural sites that require investigation and additional monitoring beyond what was contemplated in the original contract,” County Executive Officer Teresa Hitchcock told the board.

The first phase of the highway realignment project from Bonanza Mine Way to Appaloosa Road west of Angels Camp was expected to cost \$10 million. However, the California Transportation Commission last fall approved supplemental funding to cover earlier identified cost overruns bringing the total to \$14 million.

It is in doubt whether the project can be completed on budget at this time.

In addition, completion of this phase of the highway realignment has been pushed back from this year to June of next year.