

Fact Sheet

Project Name

California High-Speed Train Project, Merced to Fresno Section

Project Description

The California High-Speed Train Project, Merced to Fresno Section, proposes to build and operate an 80-mile portion of a larger high-speed train (HST) system which is intended to connect to sections traveling west to San Francisco, south to Los Angeles, and later north to Sacramento. The project is designed as a steel-wheel-on-steel-railway completely grade-separated from other modes. The need for this project is directly related to the population growth and increased intercity travel demand projected over the next 20 years and beyond and the increased travel delays and congestion that would result on California's highways and at airports. Additionally, Merced, Madera, and Fresno counties currently have limited connectivity with the state's larger urban metropolitan areas.

This Draft Project Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement (EIR/EIS) considers four alternatives, including the No Project Alternative and the three HST alternatives: the UPRR/SR 99, BNSF, and the Hybrid alternatives. Each contains one HST station in Merced and one in Fresno. The HST in this section would have the ability to travel up to 220 miles per hour along the alignment. Potential environmental impacts of the alternatives include displacement of commercial, residential, and agricultural properties; community and neighborhood disruption; increase in noise; increase in traffic at each of the stations; impacts on historic and archaeological sites; impacts on parks and recreational resources; visual impacts; impacts on sensitive biological resources and wetlands; and use of energy. Mitigation measures are described to address impacts identified in the Draft Project EIR/EIS.

Joint Lead Agencies

Federal Railroad Administration
1200 New Jersey Avenue SE MS-20
Washington, D.C. 20590

California High-Speed Rail Authority
770 L Street, Suite 800
Sacramento, CA 95814

National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Lead Agency

The Federal Railroad Administration is the lead agency for NEPA.

Responsible NEPA Official

David Valenstein, Chief
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Federal Railroad Administration
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE, MS-20, W38-303
Washington, DC 20590

California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Lead Agency

The California High-Speed Rail Authority is the lead agency for CEQA.

Responsible CEQA Official

Roelof van Ark, Chief Executive Officer
California High-Speed Rail Authority
770 L Street, Suite 800
Sacramento, CA 95814

Document Availability

The Draft EIR/EIS is available online at:
<http://www.cahighspeedrail.ca.gov/>

Printed copies of the Draft EIR/EIS, as well as related appendices and technical reports, are available at the California High-Speed Rail Authority, public libraries, and community centers (see List of Recipients beginning on page 8-1).

Contact Information

To obtain a copy of the environmental documents, contact:

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Permits, Approvals, and Consultations

Federal

- **U.S. Army Corps of Engineers** – Section 404 Permit for Discharge of Dredge or Fill Materials into Waters of the U.S., including wetlands. Also, Section 10 Permit for construction of any structure in or over any Navigable Water of the U.S.
- **U.S. Environmental Protection Agency** – review of Environmental Justice conclusions; General Conformity Determination.
- **National Marine Fisheries Service and US. Fish and Wildlife Service** – Section 7 Endangered Species Act (ESA) Consultation and Marine Mammal Protection Act Consultation.
- **Federal Railroad Administration, in consultation with the California Office of Historic Preservation and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation** – National Historic Preservation Act, Section 106 Consultation.
- **U.S. Department of Transportation** – Section 4(f) Evaluation.

State

- **California Department of Fish and Game – California Endangered Species Act (CESA)** permits; Section 1602 Lake and Streambed Alteration Agreement; use of Title 14 lands along the San Joaquin River (Camp Pashayan).

- **California Department of Transportation** – Encroachment permits.
- **California Public Utilities Commission** – approval for construction and operation of railroad crossing of public roads and for construction of new transmission lines and substations.
- **California State Lands Commission** – lease for crossing state sovereign lands.

Regional

- **San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District** – Permits under Rule 201, General Permit Requirements; Rule 403, Fugitive Dust; Rule 442 Architectural Coatings; Rule 902 Asbestos.
- **Regional Water Quality Control Board – Permits** under Clean Water Act Section 401 Water Quality Certification; Section 402 National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Water Discharge Permit; Dewatering Permit (Order No. 98-67); Spill Prevention, Control, and Countermeasures (SPCC) Plan (part of Section 402 process); Stormwater Construction and Operation Permit.
- **Central Valley Flood Protection Board** – Section 408 (flood protection facilities).

Authors and Principal Contributors

Please see List of Preparers in Chapter 9 of the Draft EIR/EIS.

Date Issued

August 2011

Subsequent Environmental Review

After circulation of the Draft EIR/EIS and consideration of comments received, the California High-Speed Rail Authority Board will identify a preferred alternative. Following this action, the Authority and FRA will prepare the Final EIR/EIS. The Final EIR/EIS will document and address comments received on the Draft

EIR/EIS. Following completion of the Final EIR/EIS, the Board will consider certifying the Final EIR/EIS for compliance with CEQA and making a final decision on the project. FRA's decision under NEPA is not final until it certifies the ROD on the Final EIR/EIS. Certification of the ROD is expected in spring 2012.