

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 Final 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. The FRA and the Authority have identified the Hybrid Alternative as the Preferred Alternative. 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 Final 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
Environmental and Systems Planning Division
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

Thomas Fellenz, Acting Chief Executive Officer
California High-Speed Rail Authority
770 L Street, Suite 800
Sacramento, CA 95814

Document Availability

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

Printed copies of the Final 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 9-1).



Contact Information

To obtain a copy of the environmental documents, contact:

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 Sacramento, CA 95814
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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** – The Board enforces standards for the construction, maintenance, and protection of adopted flood control plans that will protect public lands from floods. The jurisdiction of the Board includes the Central Valley, including all tributaries and distributaries of the Sacramento River, the San Joaquin River, and designated floodways (Title 23 California Code of Regulations, Section 2). The Board has all the responsibilities and authorities necessary to oversee future modifications as approved by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) pursuant to assurance agreements with the USACE and the USACE Operations and Maintenance Manuals under Title 33 Code of Federal Regulations, Section 208.10 and Title 33 Code of Federal Regulations, Section 208.10, and Title 33 United States Code, Section 408.



Authors and Principal Contributors

Please see List of Preparers in Chapter 10 of the Final EIR/EIS.

Date Issued

April 2012

Subsequent Steps

The California High-Speed Rail Authority Board will make a final decision on the project alternative to be implemented after the Final Project EIR/EIS is issued. 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. If the Board certifies the Final EIR/EIS and makes a project decision, it will file a notice of determination with the State Clearinghouse. 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 summer 2012.