California High-Speed Train: Fresno to Bakersfield Section

Final Environmental Impact Report / Environmental Impact Statement

and

Section 4(f) Evaluation

and

Draft General Conformity Determination

Pursuant to:
California Environmental Quality Act, P.R.C. 21000 et seq.; State of California CEQA Guidelines, California Administrative Code, 15000 et seq.; and National Environmental Policy Act (42 U.S.C. 4332 et seq.), 40 CFR Part 1500, and 64 Fed. Reg. 28545

Prepared by the
California High-Speed Rail Authority
and the
Federal Railroad Administration

With Cooperating Agencies:
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Surface Transportation Board

Jeff Morales, Chief Executive Officer
California High-Speed Rail Authority

Date: April 8, 2014

Joseph C. Szabo, Administrator
Federal Railroad Administration
U.S. Department of Transportation

Date: April 14, 2014

The following individuals may be contacted for additional information concerning this document:

Mr. Mark McLoughlin
California High-Speed Rail Authority
770 L Street, Suite 800
Sacramento, CA 95814

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

Abstract: This document considers, describes, and summarizes the environmental impacts of the Fresno to Bakersfield Section High-Speed Train (HST) Project, an approximately 114-mile portion of a larger HST System that 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 over the next 20 years, and beyond, and the increased travel delays and congestion that would result on California's highways and airports. Additionally, Fresno, Kings, Tulare, and Kern counties have limited connectivity with the state's larger urban metropolitan areas. Twelve alternatives are considered in this Final EIR / EIS, the No Project Alternative and the 11 HST alternatives: the BNSF, Hanford West Bypass 1, Hanford West Bypass 2, Hanford West Bypass 1 Modified, Hanford West Bypass 2

Modified, Corcoran Elevated, Corcoran Bypass, Allensworth Bypass, Wasco-Shafter Bypass, Bakersfield South, and Bakersfield Hybrid. The Fresno to Bakersfield Section contains one station in Fresno, one station in Bakersfield, and a Kings/Tulare Regional Station either east or west of Hanford. The HST in this section has the ability to travel up to 220 mph along the alignment. Portions of the BNSF Alternative in combination with the Corcoran Bypass, Allensworth Bypass, and Bakersfield Hybrid alternatives have been identified by the FRA and the Authority 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.

This California High-Speed Train (HST) Project EIR/EIS is being made available to the public in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act and the National Environmental Policy Act.

Visit the California High-Speed Rail Authority website (www.hsr.ca.gov), where you can:

- View and download the Final EIR/EIS.
- Request a CD-ROM of the Final EIR/EIS.
- Locate a library near you to review a hardcopy of the Final EIR/EIS.

Printed copies have been provided at a number of repositories throughout the project area including at main libraries in the following cities and communities: Fresno, Hanford, Visalia, Tulare, Corcoran, Wasco, Shafter, and Bakersfield.