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The most recent purpose statement (2000) states the park is "...to preserve and protect a substantial area of rolling blue oak woodlands and open grasslands typical of the middle elevation of the southern Diablo Range." The park's public educational, inspirational, and recreational benefits are to be achieved by the Department of Parks and Recreation with the cooperation of other entities. A master plan for the park is currently in progress. In the draft EIR for the park, the purpose is stated as, "To preserve, expand and improve the State Park System through the development of a park and recreation area at Pacheco State Park for the preservation, protection, maintenance, restoration, interpretation, management, and fostering of natural flora and fauna and cultural resources, making them available to the public for educational, inspirational, and recreational benefits."

McConnell State Recreation Area: This day-use and overnight SRA has over 70 acres of picnic, camping, and play areas. During FY 2001/2002, the park hosted 57,000 visitors. There are twenty-one individual campsites, two group campsites, and twenty picnic sites. Located on the banks of the Merced River, McConnell SRA is a popular location for Central Valley residents. The park offers visitors a significant respite from the stress of everyday life; its brochure describes the park as, "a shady oasis, a small island of peace and quiet." Recreation opportunities include fishing, swimming, camping, river wading, hiking, nature study, and picnicking. The park also provides access points to rafting on the Merced River, allowing downriver rafting, canoeing and kayaking to take-outs along the Merced River at county parks or at George J. Hatfield SRA.

The most recent purpose statement (1976) for this park says "The purpose of McConnell State Recreation Area is to make possible the full utilization of the recreational opportunities available along this portion of the Merced River, together with consideration for the native riparian scene and all scientific, scenic, historic and natural resources of the area," for which the Department of Parks and Recreation at McConnell is to, "...design, construct, operate, and maintain public recreational facilities of such scope and in such manner as to realize the maximum recreational potential of the area; and to protect and enhance the resources of the area in accordance with its declared purpose."

SACRAMENTO TO BAKERSFIELD REGION

Sacramento Area Parks – Old Sacramento State Historic Park: This is a National Historic Landmark and thriving waterfront commercial trade center that entertains over 5 million visitors a year. Private owners hold most of its restored buildings, with individual businesses leasing shops and offices. Throughout Old Sacramento are restored and reconstructed historic structures that serve as museums and other attractions. The California State Railroad Museum is part of Old Sacramento State Historic Park. Other downtown Sacramento state park properties in close proximity include: the [California](#)

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[State Capitol Museum](#), [Governor's Mansion State Historic Park](#), [Sutter's Fort State Historic Park](#) and the [State Indian Museum](#). Together these park units hosted 1.4 million visitors in 2000/2001. The [Leland Stanford Mansion State Historic Park](#) is scheduled to open in the first half of 2005.

The most recent purpose statement (1975) for Old Sacramento State Historic Park gives the park's purpose as "...to make available to the people forever, for their enlightenment, inspiration, and enjoyment, part of the town of Sacramento in preserved, restored, and reconstructed form as a representative example of the town environment from 1849 to the latter part of the 19th century together with the scientific, historic, and recreational values inherent to the area."

Stone Lakes Property – The Department of Parks and Recreation owns 1,089 acres in the Stone Lakes area that is part of a complex of lands including an 18,000-acre National Wildlife Refuge and other interrelated wildlife and open space preserves now under development in southern Sacramento County. Public access to the Stone Lakes area is currently limited to fund-raising occasions and other events, pending completion of public use plans in future years.

The most recent general planning process policy statement (2000) for the Stone Lake property is to "...preserve and protect two rare natural Central Valley lakes and their surrounding riparian habitat and grassland areas. The property lies within the Pacific Flyway and provides wintering grounds for a variety of waterfowl and other migratory birds, as well as habitat for indigenous species such as the listed Swainsons hawk, the giant garter snake and the longhorn elderberry beetle. The property contains a number of Native American occupancy sites. Located on the southern edge of the Sacramento metropolitan area, the property serves as valuable urban open space." The property is made available to the public for educational, inspirational and recreational benefits through partnership arrangements with other public agencies and non-profit organizations.

Colonel Allensworth State Historic Park – The Allensworth townsite located in Tulare County includes twenty-one historic buildings and historic reconstructions, historic building sites, a sixteen unit overnight campground, and a day-use area with 20 picnic sites. In the 2001/2002 fiscal year this park had 12,000 visitors. Recreational activities include exhibits and programs, family camping, guided tours of the historical town, and picnicking. Several community celebrations are hosted through the year attracting thousands of people. As the park is in a remote location, in order for Amtrak to stop at the park, a minimum of twenty reservations must be made in advance.

The most recent general development plan for the park (1976) identifies the park's purpose as "...to make available to people forever the town that was a major attempt in the early 1900s of a minority ethnic group, specifically Black Americans, to establish a sound social and economic base in California. Appropriate recognition will be given in

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the Historic Park to the vision of Colonel Allen Allensworth and his associates in conceiving such an establishment," noting the Department of Parks and Recreation is "...to preserve, restore, reconstruct, and interpret significant buildings and environments in the town of Allensworth, and to maintain and manage these resources in a manner consistent with the purpose of the unit."

BAKERSFIELD TO LOS ANGELES REGION

Fort Tejon State Historic Park – This historic site offers visitors a chance to visit a museum and see restored adobes and other artifacts of frontier life of the 1850's and 1860's as well as Civil War Era re-enactments conducted in an historic setting. There are also 12 picnic sites and a group campsite. The park hosted 44,000 visitors in FY 2000/2001.

The most recent general plan (1989) for the park shows the purpose as "...to make available to the people the site of the military post, Fort Tejon, by preserving, restoring, and replicating its historical facilities and environment, and interpreting its significance to the Euro-American colonization of California."

Hungry Valley SVRA – This overnight and day-use facility provides for off-highway motor vehicle recreation as well as mountain biking, hiking, nature study and camping. There are 150 campsites at the park. In the 2001/2002 fiscal year, the park had 408,000 visitors.

The most recent general plan for the park (1981) cites the park's primary purpose as "...to make available to the public opportunities for recreation use of off-highway vehicles; to manage such use in the interest of visitor safety and long-term use of the site for off-highway-vehicle recreation users; to perpetuate important natural, scenic, and cultural values in the unit; and to minimize potential conflict between off-highway-vehicle recreation use and other land uses on this and adjacent properties. The prime resource of Hungry Valley SVRA is the recreational capacity of the valley floors and surrounding hillsides, with its varying steepness and landscapes. In addition, there are natural and cultural values in the unit that can provide other recreational and interpretive opportunities, as well as scientific study."

Castaic Lake State Recreation Area – A unit of the California State Park System, this overnight and day-use facility is operated by the County of Los Angeles. With two bodies of water, the park uses the upper lake for sailing, power boating, water and jet skiing, fishing, boat rentals and a tackle bait shop, while the lower lake is for non-power boating, canoeing and swimming. Other recreational activities at the park include hiking, biking trails, picnic areas, playgrounds, and recreational vehicle and tent camping. Rental group picnic areas are available for up to 600 persons. There are 60 campsites and 2 group campgrounds.

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The purpose statement for this park, given in the most recent general plan (1985), is "...to provide opportunities for outdoor recreation experience for the people, by assuring optimum use and enjoyment of the natural, cultural, recreational, and scenic resources of the lake, its shoreline, and surrounding lands within the SRA as identified in the General Plan Amendment." Per this Purpose Statement, under its operating agreement with the State, Los Angeles County is obligated to, "...design, develop, operate, and maintain recreation facilities, and to provide services which enable the people to enjoy high quality recreational experiences."

Taylor Yard Property – After a decade of controversy, lawsuits and community activism, the passage in 2000 of the statewide parks bond Proposition 12 provided the means to realize a green vision of Taylor Yard. In June 2000, the Governor and the State Legislature approved \$45 Million to acquire lands at Taylor Yard to create the first new State Park in Los Angeles in a generation. The state now owns 58 acres at the site. With continued community involvement, the goal is to eventually acquire the critical remaining 44 acres along the river. With over 100 acres and 2 miles of river frontage, the multi-objective State Park will become the centerpiece of the Los Angeles River Greenway.

Currently an unclassified unit development, Taylor Yard is intended to serve as an urban open space and recreation resource in a part of the Los Angeles core that has long been without both. The design concept (2003) is for a "...seamless park design that fulfills the mission statements of the State and City for the benefit of all stakeholders in a sustainable manner". The consensus conceptual plan (3/2004) for the site includes "natural parkland" consisting of a forested area, a rustic nature walk, an amphitheater, and a setting conducive to enjoyment of nature and "nature play." The "natural parkland" runs along the northeastern side of the park site and is parallel to the railroad tracks.

Cornfield Property – This unclassified unit was recently acquired and is under development. It is intended to serve as an urban open space and recreation resource in a part of the Los Angeles core that has long been without both. The Cornfield property is also intended as an important component in a linear river parkway complex along the Los Angeles River. The initial concept for the park intends that the Cornfield property would serve as the "Front Porch" for the City of Los Angeles. Visually, the project site represents a large open space that fronts the majestic downtown skyline; this is especially true from the northern two-thirds of the property and from the historic North Broadway Street Bridge. There are no other park sites that capture this welcoming view of the city. In fact, the City of Los Angeles recognizes this unique vantage point and is currently implementing plans to enhance North Spring Street as a grand "entry" into the downtown area.

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The project components are designed to serve in the same way that neighborhood porches have functioned across America for decades. The front porch was where families would rest and neighbors would gather. A number of diverse community groups surround the project site and these neighbors could gather together as they picnic, stroll through the park, attend performing arts and special events, and learn about and celebrate cultural groups of today and yesterday. The layout of the park will promote opportunities to tell the many stories that relate to the Cornfield property site. Through a variety of interpretive programs and media such as living history programs, special events, brochures and educational panels, the park will be used to tell the stories of the Native Americans (Tongva) that lived nearby and the early settlement and industrialization of Los Angeles.

LOS ANGELES TO SAN DIEGO VIA ORANGE COUNTY REGION

Doheny State Beach – This is an overnight camping and day-use facility. Recreation activities it offers include: surfing, volleyball, swimming, sunbathing, beach combing, fishing, biking, roller skating, family picnics, and campfires. In addition, the park offers educational opportunities at the park's local marine life and natural history exhibits, and bird watching at the lagoon. In FY 2000/2001, nearly 1.4 million visitors enjoyed the park. It has 120 campsites, 130 individual picnic sites, and 17 group picnic sites.

The park's proposed purpose statement, found in the Preliminary General Plan and Draft Environmental Impact Report (2003) is "...to make possible the public use and enjoyment of the beach and ocean, and to maintain and improve the park's beach, picnic, camping, and public educational facilities. These activities are to be conducted in a manner that is compatible with nearby existing land uses, promotes public safety and accessibility for all park visitors, minimizes adverse effects on water quality in the ocean and creeks, and preserves the park's natural and cultural resources."

San Clemente State Beach – This day-use and overnight facility has a landscaped bluff top with picnic areas. Visitors enjoy surfing on the north end of the one-mile beach. It is reached by hiking on trails that lead down to the beach, which is also popular for body surfing, swimming, and skin diving. There are 161 campsites plus a group campground, as well as 15 picnic sites and 2 group picnic sites. In FY 2000/2001, the park hosted 542,000 visitors.

The most recent purpose statement (1975) for this park established the purpose as "...to make possible the use of the sandy beach along the California coastline within the City of San Clemente for public outdoor recreational activities. All overnight and day-use beach-oriented recreational activities which are consistent with the preservation of the scenic and natural integrity of the beach and of the related uplands may be provided...."

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San Onofre State Beach – San Onofre SB in San Diego County includes the Bluffs subunit (an overnight and day-use area), San Onofre Surf Beach subunit (a day-use area), and the Cristianitos subunit, which includes the popular San Mateo campground and day-use facility with a Nature Trail that starts at San Mateo Canyon and leads to the San Mateo State Preserve and Trestles Beach subunits. It hosted 2.8 million visitors in FY 2001/2002. There are 222 campsites and a group campsite at the Bluffs subunit. There are 160 campsites and a group campsite at the San Mateo subunit. Recreational activities at the park include surfing, swimming, surf fishing, clamming, hiking, biking, nature study, and beach recreation.

The park's most recent General Plan (amended 1984) articulates its purpose statement as "San Onofre State beach was established to make available to the people the outstanding natural beach, bluffs, and related geological, ecological, and cultural features along the northern coast of San Diego County, including important uplands inland of the Interstate 5 Freeway in the valley of San Mateo Creek; and to provide for the enjoyment and use of these areas in ways that take full advantage of the recreational opportunities thus afforded, while protecting the natural and cultural values of the region."

Carlsbad State Beach – This is a day-use facility that hosted 1.5 million visitors in FY 2001/2002. It offers swimming, surfing, scuba diving, fishing, picnicking (4 sites) and beach combing.

The park's purpose, from the most recent purpose statement (1983) is "...to make available to the people, for their benefit and enjoyment forever, the scenic, natural, cultural, and recreational resources of the ocean beach and related uplands."

South Carlsbad State Beach – This is a day-use and overnight camping facility used for swimming, surfing, skin diving, fishing and picnicking (5 sites). The large bluff-top campground (226 sites) is very popular, especially in summer. It hosted 1.4 million visitors in FY 2001/2002.

The most recent purpose statement (1983) for this park is "...to make available to the people, for their benefit and enjoyment forever, the scenic, natural, cultural, and recreational resources of the ocean beach and related uplands."

Leucadia State Beach – This is a day-use facility is operated under agreement with California State Parks by the City of Encinitas. It is popular for swimming, surfing, fishing, and picnicking.

Its purpose statement, from the most recent general plan (1983), mirrors that of its sister State Beaches, "...to make available to the people, for their benefit and enjoyment

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forever, the scenic, natural, cultural, and recreational resources of the ocean beach and related uplands.”

Moonlight State Beach – This is a day-use facility operated by the City of Encinitas. It offers swimming, surfing, fishing, picnicking (12 sites, some with fire rings), and volleyball.

The most recent purpose statement (1983) for this park seeks to preserve the natural setting for recreational activities, i.e. "...to make available to the people, for their benefit and enjoyment forever, the scenic, natural, cultural, and recreational resources of the ocean beach and related uplands.”

San Elijo State Beach – This is a day-use and overnight camping facility. It offers swimming, surfing and picnicking (12 sites). The narrow, bluff-backed stretch of sand has a nearby reef popular with snorklers and divers. The park hosted 766, 000 visitors in 2001/2002. There are 121 campsites in the recently renovated campground.

The park's most recent purpose statement (1983) states its purpose as, "...to make available to the people, for their benefit and enjoyment forever, the scenic, natural, cultural, and recreational resources of the ocean beach and related uplands.” The purpose statement also notes, "Important natural features shall not be degraded.”

Cardiff State Beach – This is a day-use area having a gently-sloping sandy beach with warm water. The site offers swimming, surfing, beach combing and picnicking (5 sites). It hosted 1.2 million visitors in FY 2001/2002.

The park's most recent purpose statement declares (1983) that its purpose is "...to make available to the people for their benefit and enjoyment forever, the scenic, natural, cultural, and recreational resources of the ocean beach and related uplands.”

Torrey Pines State Beach and State Reserve – These two units of the State Park System are located adjacent to each other in central San Diego County. The State Beach is a day-use facility while the two-unit State Reserve was established to protect stands of the rare Torrey Pine and the Los Peñasquitos lagoon and marsh. These facilities hosted 1.2 million visitors in FY 2001/2002.

The State Beach offers swimming, surfing, fishing and picnicking (2 sites). It is also popular for running and walking. The most recent purpose statement (1984) for the beach each is "...to make possible the public use and enjoyment of the Pacific Ocean and sandy coastline beach. The primary values are coastal beach, adjacent ocean waters, and associated recreational values. Recreation use of these primary values shall not be allowed to adversely impact the primary resource values of adjacent Torrey Pines State Reserve and its natural preserves, which are recognized as of greater statewide significance. Recreational facilities and uses may be allowed at the state

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beach, only if they do not impair the extent or quality of the sandy shoreline beach and adjacent prime values of the reserve and preserves.”

The State Reserve offers walking and nature study recreational activities. The most recent purpose statement (1984) for the reserve identifies the purpose as "...to protect and perpetuate the area's prime resource values for the enlightenment, inspiration, and enjoyment of present and future generations. Prime resource values in the reserve in descending order of significance are: 1) the Torrey pine and its native plant community, 2) Los Peñasquitos wetlands, 3) state and federally listed rare, endangered, and threatened plants and animals, 4) evidence of Native American and possibly Early Man occupation, 5) plants and animals designated by the department as species of special interest, and 6) exposed geologic sequences. Secondary values include recreational opportunities that directly relate to, and do not detract from, the primary resource values. The long-range objectives of the department shall be to manage the prime resource values in the unit in such a manner that the ecological processes function as closely as feasible to what they would have without modern mankind's disturbance. Management exceptions to this shall be made only upon a special determination by the department, such as site protection of Native American artifacts that would normally be lost through natural erosion processes. Appropriate visitor use of the unit includes only those activities that allow for and encourage enjoyment of the prime resource values and do not detract from or degrade from these features, so that future generations shall have the same experiences and opportunities.”

Old Town San Diego State Historic Park: This is a day-use facility that hosted 6.4 million visitors in FY 2001/2002. The most recent statement of purpose (1977) for this park declares the purpose to be "...to preserve, re-create, interpret, and make available for public enlightenment and enjoyment the historic structures and environment, the activities of the people, and as much as possible of the atmosphere that characterized the community of San Diego during the period 1821 through 1872.” Recreation activities include walking, exhibit viewing, picnicking, tours, festivals, living history events, shopping, and dining.

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APPENDIX 2
Impacts to State Park System Units

PARK UNIT	PARK SUBUNIT	IMPACT (distance)	IMPACT (type)	4(f) Use	4(f) Constructive Use	6(f) Potential	MITIGATION Necessary if Impacted
BAY AREA / TO MERCED REGION							
Eastshore State Park SS	Albany SMR, Emeryville Crescent SMR	2911 ft.					
Candlestick Point SRA		2395 ft.					
San Bruno Mountain SP		1.14 mi.					
Robert Crown Memorial SB		1.89 mi.					
Marital Cattle Park project		1840 ft.	at-grade				
Henry W. Coe SP	Henry W. Coe SP	3.36 mi.	at-grade & tunnel				
Henry W. Coe SP	Henry W. Coe SW	1.93 mi.	tunnel	X			X
Henry W. Coe SP	Henry W. Coe SW	Through	at-grade / tunnel	X			X
Henry W. Coe SP	Henry W. Coe SP	1974 ft.			X		X
Pacheco SB		2814 ft.	at-grade & tunnel				
San Luis Reservoir SRA		Through	at-grade (8.3 mi)	X			X
McConnell SRA		1100 ft.	at-grade		X		X
McConnell SRA		2723 ft.	at-grade		X		X
SACRAMENTO TO BAKERSFIELD REGION							
Old Sacramento SHP	State Railroad Museum	22-273 ft.	at-grade		X		X
Stone Lakes Property		2-5 miles	at-grade				
Colonel Allensworth SHP		377 ft.	at-grade	X		X	X
BAKERSFIELD TO LOS ANGELES REGION							
Fl Tejon		2.3 miles	tunnel				
Hungry Valley SVRA		through	at-grade, aerial, tunnel	X			X
Castaic Lake SRA		2809 ft.	at-grade, aerial, tunnel				
Taylor Yard property		Through	aerial & at-grade	X			X
Taylor Yard property		Through	aerial & at-grade	X			X
Taylor Yard property		2661 ft.	aerial & at-grade	X			X
Cornfield property		Through	tunnel & aerial	X			X
Cornfield property		866 ft.	aerial & at-grade	X			X
Cornfield property		549 ft.	aerial & at-grade	X			X
Cornfield property		562 ft.	aerial & at-grade	X			X

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PARK UNIT	PARK SUBUNIT	IMPACT (distance)	IMPACT (type)	4(f) Use	4(f) Constructive Use	6(f) Potential	MITIGATION Necessary if Impacted
LOS ANGELES TO SAN DIEGO VIA ORANGE COUNTY REGION							
Doheny SB		56 ft.	at-grade		X		X
San Clemente SB		3071 ft.	tunnel				
San Clemente SB		Through	tunnel & at-grade	X			X
San Onofre SB		99 ft.	tunnel	X			X
San Onofre SB	Cristianito Subunit 1	140 ft.	tunnel	X			X
San Onofre SB	Tresiles Subunit 2	Through	tunnel	X			X
San Onofre SB	San Mateo SR	Through	aerial & at-grade	X			X
San Onofre SB	Surfer Beach Subunit 3	Through	aerial & at-grade	X		X	X
San Onofre SB	Bluffs Subunit 4	Through	at-grade	X		X	X
Carlsbad SB		206 ft.	at-grade	X			X
Cardiff SB		375 ft.	at-grade	X			X
Leucadia SB		705 ft.	at-grade	X			X
Moonlight SB		270 ft.	at-grade	X			X
San Ejilo SB		93 ft.	at-grade	X			X
South Carlsbad SB		15 ft.	at-grade	X			X
Torrey Pines SB		64 ft.	tunnel and grade	X			X
Torrey Pines SR	Peñasquitos Marsh NP	Through	grade & aerial	X			X
Torrey Pines SR	Elen Browning Scripps NP	2347 ft.	grade & aerial	X		X	X
Old Town San Diego SHP		12 ft.	at-grade or elevated	X			X

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Mitigation Summary for Impacts to State Park System Units

In the event that HST alignments through or in close proximity to units of the State Park System are selected, California State Parks recommends consideration of the following mitigations for natural, cultural, aesthetic and recreational impacts. Subsequent specific environmental documents, and/or more specific project proposals may result in additional or more specific recommendations.

Mitigation for impacts to units of the California State Park System may include but may not be limited to:

1. Provide monetary compensation to the California Department of Parks and Recreation (and concessionaire if applicable) for revenues lost during construction due to closure or disruption of California State Park System units.
2. Provide monetary compensation to the California Department of Parks and Recreation on behalf of the people of the State of California for lost park and recreation use. (People of the State of Ca., et al. v. BP America Inc. et al. U.S. Dist. Ct., Central District of CA. No. 92-0837 R)
3. If necessary, due to closure during construction, provide alternative shuttle access service to park visitors.
4. For any loss of facilities, fund the California Department of Parks and Recreation for restoration to a natural state of the existing facility sites prior to project commencement.
5. Fund siting and planning studies as well as providing design and full development costs of facility replacement prior to project commencement.
6. Fund the California Department of Parks and Recreation for inventory and recordation of affected historic structures. When it is feasible and desirable to relocate historic structures, relocation costs shall be fully funded prior to project commencement.
7. In the event that impacts to a unit of the State Park System reduce the unit to less than park value, acquire for dedication to and with the approval of the California Department of Parks and Recreation, park sites of equivalent biological productivity, recreational opportunity, both in kind and in area, within the region of loss, and which are in the opinion of the California Department of Parks and Recreation, of sufficient potential to replace the natural, cultural, aesthetic and recreational values prior to project commencement.
8. Provide funding for the California Department of Parks and Recreation's preparation of Resource Inventory, General Plan, and Management Plan documents for all replacement sites.

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9. Provide full reimbursement for all necessary plans, permits, and associated the California Department of Parks and Recreation staff time on all replacement sites.
10. Provide full market value for real property loss, including lease lands, prior to project commencement.
11. All construction equipment used within a ten-mile radius of units of the California State Park System will require a vehicle cleaning station (to wash undercarriages etc.) to assure protection against exotic plants from out of the area, and tarps under heavy equipment to catch grease/oil.
12. Provide, following any soil disturbance, revegetation with local native plants and a plan for ongoing control of exotics and maintenance.
13. In order to protect wetland resources, require best management practices to reduce erosion during construction, including sedimentation basins and their annual maintenance for the life of the development.
14. Redesign and construct cuts, fills, and aerial structures to eliminate their visual impact to units of the State Park System.
15. To partially mitigate for loss of wildlife corridors and habitat fragmentation, provide, following consultation with and with the approval of the California Department of Parks and Recreation, dedicated conservation corridors between appropriate units of the State Park System and other protected public and private conservation lands prior to construction.
16. Following identification of wildlife corridors, strategically placed wildlife under- or over-crossings should be constructed of sufficient utility to provide ready use by wildlife.
17. Light control, shading, and daylight-hours only operations should be required as necessary, in prior agreement with the California Department of Parks and Recreation, to protect critical wildlife corridors, visitor use areas, and as safety requires.

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Response to Comments of Ruth Coleman, Director – California Department of Parks and Recreation, August 20, 2004 (Letter AS004)

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Acknowledged. The Authority's objectives include planning for a cost effective, prompt and reliable high-speed train service, but at the same time assuring that the project will be an asset to our State and will not have a significant negative impact on our State Parks and open spaces.

The Authority has identified a preferred HST alignment extending over 700-miles long. Of the 278 State Parks currently in the State Park system, five State Parks would be within 900 feet of the preferred high-speed train alignment, and no State Parks would be crossed or bisected by the preferred alignment for the proposed system. While the Program EIR/EIS has identified these five State Parks as being potentially impacted by the HST system, it is an objective of the Authority for the HST system to have no impacts to State Parks to the greatest extent feasible.

A high-speed rail system is needed to help meet California's future travel and commerce demands while reducing energy consumption and pollution and could positively influence community growth patterns which otherwise may increasingly reduce open space, wildlife habitat and public park opportunities. Some of the numerous steps the Authority has taken to avoid impacts to State Parks are described below.

The Authority is committed to utilizing existing transportation corridors and rail lines in the proposed high-speed rail system in order to minimize the potential impacts on California's treasured landscape. In addition, a key Authority objective continues to be avoidance and/or minimization of potential impacts to cultural, park, recreational and natural resources, and wildlife refuges.

The development of high-speed train alignment and station options for the Draft Program EIR/EIS included an extensive screening analysis in which many alignment and station options were

eliminated from further consideration due to several criteria, including high potential for impacts on park and recreational resources. Avoidance of potential impacts on park and recreational resources was a consideration throughout the preparation of the Draft Program EIR/EIS and the recent public process to identify preferred alignments for the proposed system that has been included in this Final Program EIR/EIS. Future project-level environmental review will provide further opportunities to avoid and minimize the potential effects to parks, as more specific alignments and facilities are considered.

Explicit actions the Authority has taken to date to further reduce potential impacts to State Park units include:

- The Authority is not pursuing any extension of the high-speed rail system south of Irvine in the existing coastal corridor, primarily due to the great potential for impacts to coastal environmental resources, including ten State Beaches and a State Reserve. This action was taken in 2002 and was documented in the Draft Program EIR/EIS.
- The two potential high-speed train alignments crossing through Henry Coe State Park have been dropped from further analysis.
- Three state park units identified as potentially impacted in the Draft Program EIR/EIS are located along the I-5 alignment option between Bakersfield and Sylmar, which is not the preferred alignment option through the southern mountain crossing. The alignment via the Antelope Valley was chosen as the preferred alignment in part because it avoids parklands, including Hungry Valley, Castaic, and Fort Tejon State Parks as well as Pyramid Lake and Angeles National Forest.

- The Authority has identified the MTA/Metrolink alignment, which avoids the Cornfields property, as the preferred alignment from Sylmar to Union Station¹.

Of California's 278 State Parks, the five State Parks that are within 900 feet of the over 700-mile long preferred high-speed train system of alignment are: San Luis Reservoir State Recreation Area, Old Town San Diego, Colonel Allensworth, Taylor Yard, and McConnell State Recreation Area. The San Luis Reservoir State Recreation Area is within a broad corridor between the Bay Area and the Central Valley identified for further investigation. This corridor is generally bounded by the Pacheco Pass (SR-152) to the South and the Altamont Pass (I-580) to the North. The high-speed rail alignments studied as part of the Program EIR/EIS did not go through San Luis Reservoir State Recreation Area and any further analysis in this area will focus on alignment options that avoid this, and other State Parks. For the other four State Parks, the proposed high-speed rail alignment would be within existing, heavily used rail corridors, adjacent to the State Parks. The addition of high-speed rail in these corridors is not expected to greatly alter the environmental effects of these existing rail lines and we strongly believe that their use minimizes environmental impacts.

Finally, the list of suggested mitigations included as Appendix 3 (Mitigation Summary for Impacts to State Park Systems Unit) has been fully incorporated into Section 3.16.7 of the Final Program EIR/EIS.

AS004-2

Acknowledged. Please see response to Comment AS004-1 and the responses to comments AS004-3 through AS004-76.

¹ Between Burbank and Los Angeles Union Station, the MTA/Metrolink alignment refers to a relatively wide corridor within which alignment variations will be studied at the project level.

AS004-3

Acknowledged. Page 3.7-11 of the Draft EIR/EIS stated, "Overall, the proposed HST Alternative would be highly compatible with local and regional plans that support rail systems and transit-oriented development. The HST Alternative would also provide improved inter-modal connectivity with existing and local commuter systems." Section 2.6.9, "Alternative Alignments and Station Options Considered in Screening Evaluation" of the Program EIR/EIS identifies maximizing connectivity and accessibility as an objective for station evaluation and that the evaluation criteria is "intermodal connections". Section 2.6.9 further states that, "several key factors were considered in identifying potential station stops, including speed, cost, local access times, potential connections with other transportation, ridership potential, and the distribution of population and major destinations along the route". Section 3.1, "Traffic and Circulation" characterizes potential impacts to "Transit, Goods Movement, and Parking" for the No Project, Modal, and HST alternatives. Chapter 6, "High Speed Train Alignment Options Comparison" describes the local transit (and freeway) access linkages for the various HST station options. More detailed information on "local transit access linkages in various areas served by other transportation system components" is beyond the scope of this program EIR/EIS process. Should the HST proposal move forward, more detailed project specific analysis will be required. Please also refer to standard response 2.1.12.

AS004-4

It is beyond the scope of the Program EIR/EIS to provide "greater specificity as to how the HST project fits in with the balance of the state's transportation system, including public transportation (bus and rail) and bikeway linkages suitable for access to public facilities, such as parks in the vicinity of HST stations". Should the HST proposal move forward, this information will be provided in more detail as part of future project specific studies. Please also see response to Comment AS004-3. While a statewide HST system would improve the overall accessibility to the areas of the state

being served, it is also beyond the scope of the Program EIR/EIS to assess the local access issues to state park units.

AS004-5

The Modal Alternative is a hypothetical set of infrastructure improvements to the existing state transportation system (e.g. additional highway lanes and additional airport runway construction) to accommodate the forecast intercity travel demand. The improvements that are part of the Modal Alternative are not currently programmed and are not necessarily identified in other planning documents. The infrastructure improvements identified in the Modal Alternative would have potential impacts to state park lands. As noted in Section 3.16 in Table 3.16-2, the Modal Alternative would have the potential to affect 140 total 4(f) and 6(f) resources (55-85 more 4(f) and 6(f) resources than the HST Alternative).

AS004-6

Acknowledged.

AS004-7

Please see Standard Response 3.16.1.

AS004-8

Studies show HST ridership potential to be highly dependent on the total trip time and the number of transfers. Foreign HST experience, the experience of the Northeast Corridor (Boston to New York to Washington, D.C.), HST studies done elsewhere in the U.S., and the Authority's feasibility studies have all shown that to compete with air transportation and generate sufficient ridership and revenue for economic viability, the intercity HSR travel times between major transportation markets must be below 3 hours. The proposed HST service would provide travel times between Downtown Los Angeles and Downtown San Francisco and Downtown Los Angeles and Downtown Oakland of about 2 and ½ hours, without a transfer, while the trip could be made between Downtown Los Angeles and

San Jose in a little over 2 hours. HST service to the downtowns of major cities such as San Francisco, Oakland, San Jose and to major airports would meet purpose and need, would greatly increase the connectivity and accessibility of the HST system, and enable the system to directly serve major regional transit hubs such as the Transbay Terminal, Diridon Station, Oakland Airport, San Francisco International Airport (SFO) and either West Oakland BART or 12th Street City Center. If the proposed HST system were instead to terminate in locations such as Tracy or Livermore and Palmdale, additional feeder services and substantial development of other local transit systems would be needed in order to provide connectivity and accessibility similar to that with the proposed system. However, such services could not provide comparable trip times and would not be as competitive with air or automobile travel alternatives. Air transportation would be considerably more accessible to intercity passengers than such an HST service. Requiring a transfer at locations outside of urban areas would result in overall travel HST trip times well over 3 hours between the major transportation markets. Local services such as BART have many stops and in the case of BART express services can not be provided. BART also does not serve Livermore, and there are no expansion plans to directly link to Tracy. If BART did serve Livermore, travel times between San Francisco and Livermore would be nearly one hour. Current Metrolink travel times between the Antelope Valley (Lancaster) and Los Angeles Union Station are about 1 hour 50 minutes. With HST travel times at about 1 hour 45 minutes between Livermore and Palmdale, the total travel time for HST between San Francisco and Los Angeles would be about 4.5 hours without including the extra time and inconvenience of two transfers.

AS004-9

The LOSSAN Conventional Rail Improvements and any consideration of the LOSSAN corridor between Irvine and San Diego have been removed from this Final Program EIR/EIS. These conventional improvements are the subject of the Caltrans Program EIR/EIS (Draft PEIR/EIS SCH # 2002031067). These comments have been

forwarded to Caltrans for consideration as part of their program environmental review. Please see standard response 6.41.1.

AS004-10

The Authority and FRA respectfully disagree with the comment and believe that the criteria used in the analysis were appropriate. A large body of research on expected human annoyance from noise exposure supported US EPA in establishing noise levels to protect human health and welfare. These levels and the annoyance criteria have been repeatedly confirmed in subsequent studies and are appropriate for use in a program EIR/EIS. For noise sensitive open space and parks FRA and FTA noise impact assessment guidance call for the use of Leq to assess noise exposure. For the screening procedure of the Draft Program EIR/EIS, the peak hour equivalent sound level (Leq) from HST was applied to parks, assigning those land uses to FRA's Category 1 sensitivity, with the assumption that the most stringent of the land use criteria would include effects on wildlife. Very low ambient noise levels were assumed in each case. State parks potentially affected by noise from the HST or Modal alternative are typically subject to elevated background noise levels and intruding noise events due to their location in developed or agricultural areas and their proximity to existing transportation facilities. An analysis with metrics, involving measured acoustical spectra information and detectability parameters, is much too site-specific and detailed to undertake during programmatic environmental review, and would not be broadly applicable. A more detailed analysis of potential noise impacts would be appropriate for subsequent project level noise assessment.

AS004-11

A monitoring program consistent with FRA methodology would be part of the subsequent project level analysis.

AS004-12

The program EIR/EIS considered the potential for HST noise impacts using FRA guidance that is based upon detailed measurements of

existing HST's traveling at various speeds. Figure 3.4-7 is not misleading because wheel-rail and mechanical noise predominates up to 125 mph. The figure describes how HST equipment and track are generally quieter than conventional trains traveling at the same speed. More detailed calculations of HST noise characteristics would be part of subsequent project level noise analysis.

AS004-13

Variations in environmental noise levels due to meteorological effects typically average out over time unless a site-specific condition, such as a one-sided wind rose, is documented. Consideration of site-specific meteorological effects is beyond the scope of the program level analysis and would be addressed as appropriate in subsequent project level noise assessment.

AS004-14

The Authority followed FRA guidance when the analysis was initiated that specified a screening distance of 900 feet for new rail corridors in rural areas. The Authority and FRA believe that this screening distance of 900 feet is sufficient to estimate the number and extent of potentially noise affected parks and recreation areas at a program level of analysis. It is unlikely that potential indirect impacts would extend beyond this distance; however, subsequent project specific studies would consider potential noise related impacts related to specific sensitive receptors based on specific alignment and operating characteristics, as the proposed HST facilities and operation are further defined. The purpose of the screening analysis undertaken is to provide a measure of noise-sensitive receivers that are close enough to the proposed alignments for noise impact to be possible. Specific HST noise levels will be determined during the project level noise assessment.

FRA's noise impact criteria are not based on a single Ldn value of 65 dBA; instead, the criteria are ambient-based, which means they include effects of relative changes in ambient noise due to a project. The criteria are derived from the expected human annoyance from noise exposure established by the US EPA, with consideration of

levels “requisite to protect public health and welfare with an adequate margin of safety” as well as the minimum differences in levels required for a change in community reaction. The development of the criteria is explained in Appendix A of the FRA guidance manual. Thus, considering noise levels that result in human annoyance is appropriate for considering potential impacts to parks in a program-level analysis. More detailed analysis at project-level review will consider potential impacts to humans and wildlife.

AS004-15

Potential noise emissions from high-speed trains at speeds greater than the maximum design speed would be highly speculative. Next generation steel wheel HST systems are not anticipated to exceed 220 mph design speeds.

AS004-16

The Authority and FRA agree with the commentor’s assertion that sound walls in rural areas are typically impractical. Alternatives to noise barriers in these locations such as trenches or earth berms could be explored during project level environmental review; however, they may also be impractical due to cost and other impacts related to the extent of land required (footprint) as well as the associated construction impacts. Other noise mitigation techniques would be considered during project level studies to address site-specific noise impacts.

The TGV in France has several locations where topography facilitated the use of fairly deep trenches and earth berms for environmental mitigation. HST noise can be reduced considerably by these methods, but at a considerable cost and property impact. High-speed train systems in Europe and Japan have implemented noise mitigations for human receptors; noise mitigation for wildlife has received less attention.

AS004-17

Visual impacts are highly site-specific in nature. These issues will be addressed during subsequent project level environmental review,

based on more precise information regarding location and design of the facilities proposed (e.g., elevated, at-grade, catenary design features, fencing type and location, sound barriers, etc.). The detail of engineering associated with the project level environmental analysis will allow the Authority to further investigate ways to avoid, minimize and mitigate potential visual affects. Only after the alignment is refined and the facilities are fully defined through project level analysis, and avoidance and minimization efforts have been exhausted, will specific impacts and mitigation measures be addressed.

AS004-18

See Response AS004-17. The LOSSAN Conventional Rail Improvements and any consideration of the LOSSAN corridor between Irvine and San Diego have been removed from this Final Program EIR/EIS. These conventional improvements are the subject of the Caltrans Program EIR/EIS (Draft PEIR/EIS SCH # 2002031067). These comments have been forwarded to Caltrans for consideration as part of their program environmental review. Please see standard response 6.41.1.

AS004-19

Construction impacts are highly site-specific in nature. These issues will be addressed during subsequent project level environmental review, based on more precise information regarding location and design of the facilities proposed (e.g., specific alignment, right of way corridor width, elevated, at-grade, cuts and fills, etc.). The detail of engineering associated with the project level environmental analysis will allow the Authority to further investigate ways to avoid, minimize and mitigate potential impacts. Only after the alignment is refined and the facilities are fully defined through project level analysis, and avoidance and minimization efforts have been exhausted, will specific impacts and mitigation measures be addressed.

In the Final Program EIR/EIS each section of Chapter 3 outlines specific design features that will be applied to the implementation of the HST system to avoid, minimize, and mitigate potential impacts.

AS004-20

The PEIR/S evaluates impacts to parklands in Section 3.7 and 3.16. Consistent with the federal Executive Order 12898 – federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-income Populations – the PEIR/S also evaluates whether impacts from project alternatives and HST alignments would have disproportionate effects on minority or low-income populations. As noted in the comment, the parklands and recreational areas provide benefits to all populations. There is no indication at the program-level analysis that potential impacts to parklands from the system alternatives and alignments being considered would affect these populations disproportionately.

AS004-21

The Co-lead agencies agree with this assessment. The principal reason for the varied levels of impacts as identified in Table 3.7.1 has more to do with the amount of parkland affected.

AS004-22

This section is focused on immediate impacts to adjacent land uses, including parklands. While some impacts may occur at a greater distance (e.g., noise, and visual impacts), the 50-foot envelope is appropriate for the land use evaluation in the program-level EIR/EIS considering the proposed system as a whole. Mitigation measures (e.g., noise walls) for impacts that could occur at a greater distances would serve to reduce or mitigate these impacts for adjoining uses, including parklands.

AS004-23

Acknowledged. Site-specific potential impacts to trails and recreational areas will be addressed in the subsequent project level

analysis, as more specificity is defined for proposed alignments and facilities.

AS004-24

The potential for loss of recreation facilities will be addressed in the project level study of 4(f) and 6(f) resources, only after detailed avoidance and minimization efforts have been exhausted.

AS004-25

While some areas may have greater levels of survey data than others, for preparation of the program EIR/EIS, the Co-lead agencies have to rely upon readily accessible geo-spatial data to carry out an analyses and comparison of the geographically extensive study areas across the entire State at an equivalent level of detail. Doing additional surveys, would be well beyond the scope of this programmatic environmental review. Use of geospatial data provides an objective comparison of potential impacts. Comments correctly point out that this type of analysis does not always allow for an evaluation of relative quality or importance of habitat within the project area, and it is agreed that this additional analysis will be needed as part of the project-level, Tier 2 environmental documentation. Additionally, it should be noted that the Authority has dropped from further consideration those alignments in the PEIR/S that would have passed through or under Henry Coe State Park and the Orestimba State Wilderness. It should also be noted that a Modal Alternative with a new roadway through wilderness areas was not included, but certainly could have been for comparative purposes and has been proposed by elected officials for some wilderness areas in the state including the Diablo Range. A new roadway would not be likely to make extensive use of tunneling due to greater width of highways and their ability to negotiate steeper grades, and therefore environmental impacts would be much greater.

AS004-26

Section 3.12.2.B has been expanded to include Asian and African Americans. However, this section does not attempt to identify all ethnic groups that may be reflected in cultural resources located in the study area or areas of the HST program. Instead, this section recognizes that various historic themes, ethnic groups, and resource types will be specifically described and addressed as the next-phase identification studies are conducted as part of the project-level, Tier 2 studies.

AS004-27

Section 3.12 has been revised to include Cultural Landscapes as a resource type, but not sub-types of cultural landscapes. The APE was defined in consultation with SHPO for this PEIR/Tier 1 study. APE widths of 100 and 500 feet are deemed appropriate for this analysis, particularly given that the APE is very long (the length of all the alignment options for the alternatives under consideration added together). This long APE provides adequate information for the PEIR/Tier 1 analysis to estimate the potential for larger resources such as cultural landscapes, sites, and districts or multi-component properties to exist within the APE. The identification studies for each project level assessment will also benefit from the linear nature of the APE; and these more intensive surveys for the project-level, Tier 2 evaluations will include identification of cultural landscapes, as well as other cultural resource types.

AS004-28

The text has been revised as suggested by the comment.

AS004-29

Please see response to Comment AS004-27.

AS004-30

While the significance of fossil discoveries tends to be greater if found in sparsely fossiliferous geologic units, the probability of impacts to paleontologic resources, even if weighted for hypothetical

significance, ultimately decreases to a negligible level with decreasing average fossil concentration in the unit. Practical considerations constraining the design and implementation of mitigation programs dictate prioritization, with primary focus on those areas where impacts are most likely to occur. Awarding equal (high) sensitivity to all sedimentary formations would effectively eliminate consideration of paleontologic resources from comparison of project alternatives (in the planning phase) and would risk diversion of personnel, funding, and time to areas having low probability of impacts in the mitigation phase. The analysis presented in the PEIR/S is based on the distribution of geologic units within the project area rather than otherwise defined subareas (e.g. park boundaries), as geologic units most accurately parallel the distribution of paleontological resources. The distribution of known fossil localities in relation to those units contributed to the assessment of sensitivity of individual units, but other potential geographic biases affecting known locality distribution were also discussed and taken into account. While there has been no systematic inventory of paleontological resources along much of the routes for this PEIR/Tier I analysis, a long history of geologic and paleontologic studies, numerous reports from residents and other laypersons, and surveys associated with previous construction projects throughout the HST project area have resulted in an adequate qualitative sample of known vertebrate fossil localities in all potentially affected geologic units. (For example, the Pliocene and Pleistocene units underlying parts of the San Luis Reservoir area are assigned high sensitivity, partly because of known localities within that area.)

AS004-31

Site-specific paleontological assessment and mitigation measures appropriate to various segments of the project were beyond the scope of this PEIR/S, however the general recommendations for subsequent project level, Tier 2 measures will follow the guidelines established in the current U.S. Bureau of Land Management Handbook and parallel the recommendations of the Society of Vertebrate Paleontology (1995). The Report of the Secretary of the

Interior (2000), entitled "Fossils on Federal and Indian Lands" incorporated recommendations from eight federal agencies charged with land management and informed the framers of Senate Bill S 546 currently pending before the House. Although none of these documents carries the weight of law, they all reflect broadly accepted standards and practices employed by qualified paleontologists who would be responsible for designing and implementing paleontological assessment and mitigation plans for the pre-construction and construction phases. Reference: Society of Vertebrate Paleontology. February 1995, ASSESSMENT AND MITIGATION OF ADVERSE IMPACTS TO NONRENEWABLE PALEONTOLOGIC RESOURCES: STANDARD GUIDELINES. Society of Vertebrate Paleontology News Bulletin Number 163, pages 22-27

AS004-32

The statement regarding cumulative impacts on paleontological resources is based on the information and data that have been compiled and analyzed to date.

AS004-33

The geologic resources described in the Program EIR/EIS are not limited to economic resources, but are related to potential hazards or constraints to constructing highway, aviation, or HST infrastructure as defined in the three system alternatives. Subsequent project level analysis will address potential effects to fragile and rare geologic features, geologic features of unusual or exceptional beauty, and other specific resources mentioned in the comment, as more specificity is defined for proposed alignments and facilities.

AS004-34

Construction related geologic impacts are highly site-specific in nature. These issues will be addressed during subsequent project level environmental review, based on more precise information regarding location and design of the facilities proposed (e.g., specific alignment, right of way corridor width, elevated, at-grade, cuts and fills, etc.). The detail of engineering associated with the project level

environmental analysis will allow the Authority to further investigate ways to avoid, minimize and mitigate potential impacts. Only after the alignment is refined and the facilities are fully defined through project level analysis, and avoidance and minimization efforts have been exhausted, will specific impacts to adjacent properties be addressed.

AS004-35

Fault crossings and surface rupture are adequate indicators of seismic hazards at the program level of study for thousands of miles of highway and rail alignment options. More specific seismic hazards will be addressed at the subsequent project level of analysis, as more specificity is defined for proposed alignments and facilities.

The LOSSAN Conventional Rail Improvements and any consideration of the LOSSAN corridor between Irvine and San Diego have been removed from this Final Program EIR/EIS. These conventional improvements are the subject of the Caltrans Program EIR/EIS (Draft PEIR/EIS SCH # 2002031067). These comments have been forwarded to Caltrans for consideration as part of their program environmental review. Please see standard response 6.41.1.

AS004-36

Fault crossings were assigned a specific estimated width to allow for a quantification of crossings along the highway and HST alignment options considered. Specific design studies for the purpose of establishing engineering criteria accounted for available data regarding width of specific fault zones (see Tunneling Issues Report, January, 2004). Subsequent project level analysis will address more specific seismic and geologic information.

AS004-37

The LOSSAN Conventional Rail Improvements and any consideration of the LOSSAN corridor between Irvine and San Diego have been removed from this Final Program EIR/EIS. These conventional improvements are the subject of the Caltrans Program EIR/EIS (Draft PEIR/EIS SCH # 2002031067). These comments have been

forwarded to Caltrans for consideration as part of their program environmental review. Please see standard response 6.41.1.

AS004-38

Construction related geologic impacts are highly site-specific in nature. These issues will be addressed during subsequent project level environmental review, based on more precise information regarding location and design of the facilities proposed (e.g., specific alignment, right of way corridor width, elevated, at-grade, cuts and fills, etc.). The detail of engineering associated with the project level environmental analysis will allow the Authority to further investigate ways to avoid, minimize and mitigate potential impacts. Only after the alignment is refined and the facilities are fully defined through project level analysis, and avoidance and minimization efforts have been exhausted, will specific geologic impacts and mitigations be addressed.

AS004-39

Acknowledged. Specific tunneling methods and related construction impacts will be addressed in subsequent project level analysis, as more specificity is defined for proposed alignments and facilities and more information is obtained regarding geologic setting and conditions.

In the Final Program EIR/EIS each section of Chapter 3 outlines specific design features for tunneling that will be applied to the implementation of the HST system to avoid, minimize, and mitigate potential impacts. Section 3.18.5 also outlines tunneling methods and potential impacts. Also see response to Comment AF008-25.

AS004-40

Impervious surfaces from new HST stations are included as part of this comparison.

AS004-41

Please refer to standard response 3.15.8 regarding 303(d) listed streams and methods to minimize impacts to surface waters,

including design practices and additional mitigation measures. The site-specific effects on any given watershed cannot be known in detail for this programmatic evaluation of alternatives or HST alignments. However, with the assumed design practices and mitigation measures, it is not likely that an entire watershed or major portion thereof would be adversely affected by the HST alternative. A detailed analysis of watershed impacts will be conducted as part of the project-level, Tier 2 environmental documentation and was outlined on pages 3.14-19 and 3.14-20 of the Draft PEIR/S.

AS004-42

Please see standard response 3.15.2, standard response 3.15.7, and response to Comment AS004 – 41. As recommended, habitat quality in the State Park System can and will be addressed in project-level, Tier 2 analyses. Please also note that the Authority has dropped from further consideration alignments passing through or under Henry Coe State Park and the Orestimaba State Wilderness.

AS004-43

The Co-lead agencies agree that impacts from building a HST system through a wilderness area would be different than constructing a HST system next to or within an existing transportation corridor. In an effort to reduce overall impacts, most of the HST alignments were developed adjacent to or within existing transportation corridors, and/or placed in a tunnel alignment – Please see standard response 3.15.5. Section 2.7 of the PEIR/S provides maps of the HST system across the state, showing the portions of the system that would be in tunnel and/or adjacent to or within an existing transportation corridor. Only the expansion of existing roadways was included in the Modal Alternative. Even without any new highways, impacts from the Modal Alternative on biological and wetland resources were found to be more severe, principally due to the larger footprint for the multiple roadway lanes. The Co-lead agencies acknowledge that the quality of the affected resources may be compromised by the proximity of the assumed Modal Alternative roadway widenings to the existing roadway, but note that seventy-six percent of the HST

alignments are also adjacent to or within existing rail or highway transportation corridors or are in tunnel. Please note that the Co-lead agencies did not presume that a new roadway would be built through a wilderness area as part of the Modal Alternative, although such an assumption could clearly have been made.

AS004-44

Please refer to standard response 3.15.2 and standard response 3.15.13 for a discussion of future project-level, Tier 2 studies. The information in the PEIR/S and associated technical studies have been used to make overall decisions about the alternatives and alignments to be carried forward. It is agreed that the project-level, Tier 2 environmental evaluation will need to rely on field studies and will include an evaluation of resources in parks. Data from previous work will only serve as a starting point for project-level, Tier 2 analyses. Please refer to the Section 3.15.6 on Subsequent Analysis of the PEIR/S.

AS004-45

Please refer to standard response 3.15.2. Construction scenarios have been added to Section 3.18 of the Final PEIR/S. The Co-lead agencies agree that the project could in certain circumstances result in introduction of exotic species. The following text is added to Section 3.15 of the Final PEIR/S. Construction of the project could in certain circumstances encourage the spread of noxious weeds or other exotic plant species. Seeds of non-native plants can adhere to tires of construction vehicles or contaminate fill that may need to be imported into the construction area. Trains themselves may also contribute to the spread of seeds of exotic plant species. The following text is added to the Mitigation Strategies for Section 3.15.5 for Biological Resources and Wetlands: Mitigation would be developed to minimize or avoid the spread of weeds during construction and operation. Preventive measures during construction could include identification of areas with existing weed problems and measures to control traffic moving out of those areas (e.g. cleaning of construction vehicles, limitations on movement of fill). Mitigation for operational impacts will also be developed.

AS004-46

Please see standard response 3.15.9 regarding impacts and mitigation to wildlife corridors and habitat fragmentation. Please see standard response 3.15.5 regarding the portion of the HST alignments within or adjacent to existing transportation rights-of-ways and/or within a tunnel. The HST alternatives through Henry Coe State Park and the Orestimaba State Wilderness will not be considered further considered by the Authority. Moreover, the Co-lead agencies would continue and supplement their evaluation of HST alignment options between the Central Valley and the San Francisco Bay area (please see standard response 3.15.7. As noted, further investigation is proposed to select a preferred alignment from within a broad corridor, considering alignment options between (and including) the Pacheco Pass Corridor (SR-152) to the south and the Altamont Pass Corridor (I-580) to the north, excluding alignment options through Henry Coe State Park and the Orestimaba State Wilderness. A construction scenario has been added to the Final PEIR/S in Section 3.18.5. A description of support facilities has been added to the Final PEIR/S in Section 2.6.10.

AS004-47

A review of references, including the reference mentioned in the comment, reveals the following relevant findings:

- The primary factor in determining use of wildlife passages is their location with respect to habitat; corridors must be designed to connect target habitat areas at either end of the corridor. Known migration routes need to be accommodated.
- Passages need to be evaluated with regard to wildlife functions which include wildlife travel, migration and reproduction, plant propagation, genetic interchange, ability for populations to move in response to changing environmental conditions, and habitat recolonization.
- Carnivores, small mammals and reptiles will use almost any passage if it is in a favorable location with respect to habitat, but ungulates (e.g. deer) need specifically designed passages.

However, specific design measures will improve use of culverts by target species. Passages should be designed with knowledge of the species that will use them, should accommodate multiple species, and should be wide enough to accommodate a large number of species.

- Overpasses are the most effective passage when feasible, but a large number of well-designed culverts may be more cost-effective than a few large overpasses.
- Where possible, design features should include natural lighting, low noise levels, and a clear view to the other side of the passage.
- Fencing and vegetation should be used to funnel animals towards crossings.

It is agreed that these issues should be evaluated and considered in the project-level design and evaluation of facilities. References: Baier, Paul and Steve Loe. 1992. A Checklist for Evaluating Impacts to Wildlife Movement Corridors. *Wildlife Society Bulletin*, 20:434-440. Hartmann, Maureen, "Evaluation of Wildlife Crossing Structures, Their Use and Effectiveness", *Wildlands Center for Preventing Roads*, 2002. Jackson, Scott D. 2000. Overview of Transportation Impacts on Wildlife Movement and Populations. Pp 7-20 in Messmer, T.A. and B. West, (eds) *Wildlife and Highways: Seeking Solutions to an Ecological and Socio-economic Dilemma*. The Wildlife Society, Rodriguez, Alejandro, Giulia Crema, and Miguel Delibes. 1996. Use of Non-Wildlife Passages Across a High Speed Railway by Terrestrial Vertebrates. *The Journal of Applied Ecology*, Vol. 33, No. 6, 1527-1540. Yanes, Miguel, Jose M. Velasco, and Francisco Suarez. 1995. Permeability of Roads and Railways to Vertebrates: the Importance of Culverts. *Biological Conservation*, 71:217-222

AS004-48

Please see response to Comment AF008-30.

AS004-49

Overall, it can be expected that the HST Alternative would introduce additional EMF exposures or EMI at levels for which there are no established adverse impacts on humans or wildlife. EMF emissions from HST vehicle passbys are very low, and impacts are therefore not expected to be significant.

AS004-50

To the extent that they can be readily identified, managers of lands administered for natural values will be contacted during the project-level, Tier 2 analyses. The Co-lead agencies note that such managers have had the opportunity to comment on the Draft PEIR/S and will have the opportunity to comment again on the future project-level, Tier 2 environmental analyses.

AS004-51

The Co-lead agencies concur with the recommendations made in the comment regarding mitigation for wildlife movement corridors and they have been added to the Final PEIR/S. These include: Overcrossings, if dedicated to wildlife uses, should be appropriately vegetated to afford cover and other species requirements. Undercrossing, if dedicated to wildlife uses, should be appropriately vegetated to afford cover. Functional corridors should be established to provide connectivity to protected lands or land zoned for uses that provide wildlife permeability. These measures would be appropriate for incorporation in project-level, Tier 2 environmental analyses. It is agreed that the impacts of structures developed to maintain wildlife corridors would also need to be evaluated as part of the project-level environmental review. The following text, which summarizes the process identified in A Checklist for Evaluating Impact to Wildlife Movement Corridors, has been added to the Mitigation Strategies on Section 3.15.5: Provisions for maintaining wildlife corridors would provide connectivity between wildlife habitat areas. Wildlife crossings would be of a design, shape and size to be sufficiently attractive to encourage wildlife use. Overcrossings and undercrossings for wildlife would be appropriately vegetated to

afford cover and other species requirements. The following process would be used in design of corridors:

1. Identify the habitat areas the corridor is designed to connect.
2. Select several species of interest from the species present in these areas
3. Evaluate the relevant needs of each selected species
4. For each potential corridor, evaluate how the area will accommodate movement by each species of interest
5. Draw the corridors on a map
6. Design a monitoring program

AS004-52

It is acknowledged that sections 4(f) and 6(f) are from separate laws, however given their complimentary nature and the relatively few number of 6(f) resources potentially affected by this project, they were placed in one section.

AS004-53

The potentially affected 4(f) and 6(f) resources are identified in the regional technical reports that provided the basis for Section 3.16. The analysis of Section 4(f) and 6(f) in Section 3.16 of the Final Program EIR/EIS meets the stated primary goal through identifying each potentially impacted resource and the nature of potential impact in terms of its relative proximity to the proposed facilities. A table identifying the potential affects to parks for both the alternatives is provided in the Final Program EIR/EIS (Appendix 3.16-A). The Authority disagrees with your assessment and believes that there is sufficient information in the document to select a preferred alignment and station locations (see Chapter 6A). Please also see standard response 3.15.13 and response to Comment AS004-1.

AS004-54

The Park names have been revised as noted in the comment. A table identifying the potentially impacted parks for all Alternatives and Options considered is provided in the Final Program EIR/EIS (Appendix 3.16-A).

AS004-55

Acknowledged.

AS004-56

Acknowledged.

AS004-57

Acknowledged.

AS004-58

Acknowledged.

AS004-59

Acknowledged.

AS004-60

It was beyond the scope of the ridership estimates prepared to date to forecast the difference in visitation to the State Park system that may occur if an statewide HST system is implemented. Subsequent ridership analysis, prior to project implementation will provide additional information on increased travel to and from park units, based on the more specifically defined HST system.

AS004-61

The two HST alignments crossing Henry Coe State Park have been removed from further analysis. See Standard Response 6.3.1.

AS004-62

See comment ASO04-61.

AS004-63

See comment ASO04-61. The San Luis Reservoir State Recreation Area is within a broad corridor between the Bay Area and Central Valley identified for further investigation. This corridor is generally bounded by the Pacheco Pass (SR-152) to the South and the Altamont Pass (I-580) to the North. The high-speed rail alignments studied as part of the Program EIR/EIS did not go through the San Luis Reservoir Recreation Area and any further analysis in this area will focus on alignment options that avoid this, and other State Parks.

AS004-64

Acknowledged.

AS004-65

The proposed HST station option at the downtown Sacramento area does not directly impact the historic sites and attractions listed in the comment. It is beyond the scope of this programmatic analysis to estimate additional visitation to these sites.

AS004-66

Acknowledged. Please see standard response 6.12.1.

AS004-67

Acknowledged. Please see standard response 6.15.4.

AS004-68

Acknowledged.

AS004-69

Acknowledged. The HST Interstate 5 Grapevine alignment from Bakersfield to Sylmar has not been selected as part of the preferred system of alignment options. Please see standard response 6.23.1.

AS004-70

Acknowledged. Please see standard response 6.23.1.

AS004-71

The MTA/MetroLink corridor is an existing rail corridor used by MetroLink commuter services and Amtrak intercity services. Use of the MTA/MetroLink corridor offers opportunities to mitigate potential HST impacts (e.g. by putting the alignment underground, on aerial structure, or by aligning it away from sensitive resources). The HST design option assumes that the alignment would be along San Fernando Road adjacent to Taylor Yards (primarily to avoid curves). The MTA/MetroLink design option along the existing MetroLink right-of-way around the Taylor Yards area should also be considered in future studies. In contrast the I-5/METROLINK alignment option would bisect the Cornfield property with a new, at-grade alignment. Constructing the I-5/METROLINK alignment underground through the Cornfield property would not be practicable because of the need to transition to an aerial structure to serve the LAUS HST station site.

The MTA/MetroLink and Combined I-5/METROLINK options are expected to have similar construction costs. However, the Combined I-5/METROLINK could require approximately 2 miles (3.2 km) of tunneling (including segments under Silver Lake and Elysian Park), and therefore is considered to have more constructability issues than the MTA/MetroLink option. The combined I-5/METROLINK alignment is opposed by the City of Burbank because they believe it would have high impacts to established residential neighborhoods from the use of high-elevated structures over existing freeway overpasses through Burbank.

During the project-level review, in the Sylmar – Los Angeles segment, as well as other highly urbanized areas throughout the system, the Authority will work closely with the potentially affected communities on mitigation measures to avoid, reduce, and/or include feasible measures to mitigate potential impacts to local communities. Please also see standard response 6.24.2.

AS004-72

The Cornfield and Taylor Yard Properties are included and addressed in the Final Program EIR/EIS and if affected will be subject to a full 4(f) analysis during project level environmental review. The greater site-specific focus of the subsequent project level analysis will allow for further avoidance and minimization efforts, as well as identification of specific mitigation, if impacts cannot be avoided. The Authority has identified the MTA/Metrolink alignment, which avoids the Cornfield property, as the preferred alignment. Between Burbank and Los Angeles Union Station, the MTA/Metrolink alignment refers to a relatively wide corridor within which alignment variations will be studied at the project level. This preference is due in part, because it would have fewer potential effects on both the Cornfield Property and the Taylor Yards. Please also see standard response 6.24.2.

AS004-73

Acknowledged.

AS004-74

Acknowledged. The LOSSAN Conventional Rail Improvements have been removed from the Final Program EIR/EIS. Conventional rail improvements are within the purview of Caltrans and the proposed conventional improvements to LOSSAN are the subject of the Caltrans and FRA LOSSAN Rail Improvements Program EIR/EIS (Draft PEIR/EIS SCH # 2002031067). These comments have been forwarded to Caltrans for consideration. Please see standard response 6.41.1. Please also see standard response 6.34.1.

AS004-75

Land development projects are not individually accounted for or named in the cumulative analysis. The developments are generally included in the economic growth analysis, which addresses the

cumulative impacts of growth in conjunction with the system alternatives (No-Project, Modal, and HST) considered in the Final Program EIR/EIS. The South Sacramento Loop Road, the Foothill-south (SR 241) tollway, and LOSSAN corridor improvements are included in the projects considered in the Final PEIR/S cumulative impacts analysis (Section 3.17).

AS004-76

Acknowledged.