

CALIFORNIA HIGH-SPEED RAIL

Burbank to Los Angeles Section

2014 SCOPING REPORT

APPENDICES

G – I

November 2014



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Federal Agency Comments

United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA)

- Please provide a clear rationale for dropped alternatives and station alignments and demonstrated they do not contain the least environmentally damaging practicable alternative (LEDPA)
- Please support and demonstrate the basis for dropped alternatives in Checkpoint B
- Avoid waters where feasible and carry forward the mitigation measures, including avoidance and minimization, identified in the program EIS.
- Analyze a range of alternatives in the DEIS that fulfills the 404(b)(1) guidelines.
- Use existing transportation corridors to the extent feasible.
- Provide a robust analysis of impacts on waters and special status species; quantify effects on waters and characterize waters as to quality.
- Coordinate with the Los Angeles River Urban Waters Partnership to avoid impacts to Los Angeles River restoration projects. Consider how the high speed rail project will interact with Alternative 20 (the preferred alternative) for the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) Los Angeles River Ecosystem Restoration Feasibility Study.
- Please consider construction related impacts on air quality, especially ozone, carbon monoxide, and particulate matter.
- Please consider effects on environmental justice populations.
- Please consider noise impacts.
- Please consider the impact of stations on adjacent land uses, land use planning, and use multimodal design to make integration with other transit efficient.
- Please consider cumulative effects.

United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)

- Please analyze impacts to special status species.
- Please consider potential impacts to the Los Angeles River and Elysian Park
- Please avoid impacts to the LA River Ecosystem Restoration Project

State Agency Comments	
California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analyze impacts on wildlife movement corridors; consider the use of elevated rail where feasible to maintain connectivity and movement opportunities. • Please analyze impacts on special status plant species; utilize appropriately timed floristic surveys. • Please consider impacts on avian species; use appropriately timed surveys. • Please consider the interaction of the project with the LA River Ecosystem Restoration Project and minimize impacts to Alternative 20. • Please consider noise impacts; especially the interaction of noise with wildlife. • Please consider effects on aquatic features, include avoidance, onsite restoration or compensatory mitigation, and obtain authorization from the CDFW for work in the stream zone. • Please obtain authorization under the California Endangered Species Act where required. • Please use an appropriate range of alternatives and avoid or minimize impacts to biological resources and waters through the alternatives selection process. • Please provide an appropriately robust setting for special status plants and fauna in the CEQA document, supported by existing database information and field surveys where feasible. • Please provide an appropriately robust cumulative setting. • Please use avoidance as the primary mitigation for special status species and waters; where avoidance is feasible use offsite compensatory mitigation or preservation designed to ensure the perpetually protect lost values. • Use appropriate buffers for nesting birds (300 feet for passerine species/500 feet for raptors); include a Nesting Bird Management Plan. 	
California Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Please consider and minimize impacts to Rio de Los Angeles State Park; the DPR supports alternatives with tunneling that would avoid impacts to this resource and opposes surface alignments in the vicinity. 	
California Department of Transportation (Caltrans)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Please consider interactions of the project with the Arroyo Seco Parkway, a National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) listed resource. • Please consider impacts on migratory birds and bats. • Consider screening as mitigation near freeway interchanges to avoid distracting motorists. • Please consider limiting heavy truck trips during construction to off peak commute hours. 	
California State Lands Commission (CSLC)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Please ensure the project description is robust and adequate to analyze effects on waters, including volumes and fill and work seasons. • Please analyze effects on special status species. • Please analyze impacts on aquatic resources. • Please analyze greenhouse gas emissions and provide a significance threshold for emissions. • Please note that title to cultural resources on school lands and submerged lands is with the CSLC. Please indicate this in the environmental document. • Please include performance standards for mitigation to avoid deferred mitigation. 	

State Agency Comments

Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC)

- Please use a qualified archaeological monitor and Native American monitor for construction monitoring in areas sensitive for cultural resources. Follow state law with respect to discoveries and coordination with the NAHC.

State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB)

- Prioritize alternatives that avoid wetland impacts. Ensure that alternatives each include all temporary and permanent facilities and associated structures.
- Analyze impacts on waters and associated beneficial uses.
- Provide narrative and quantitative thresholds of significance when analyzing impacts to waters and water quality.
- Consult with the SWRCB in developing mitigation for impacts to waters and water quality.
- Consider the beneficial uses defined in the Regional Water Quality Control Plans when analyzing impacts and developing mitigation.
- Please use impact analysis methodology consistent with guidelines developed by the California Water Quality Monitoring Council, specifically the Tenets of a State Wetland and Riparian Monitoring Program.
- Please consider avoidance the primary mitigation for waters; buffers for waters should be biologically justified. Compensatory mitigation is required for unavoidable impacts.
- Please use appropriately qualified construction monitors for monitoring impacts on waters and biological resources.
- Please analyze impacts to waters using a watershed approach.
- Low impact development (LID) techniques should be used for impervious surfaces.
- Please provide a robust analysis of cumulative effects and use design modifications to lessen cumulative effects.

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Appendix H

Federal Scoping Meeting Minutes

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CALIFORNIA High-Speed Rail Authority

Federal Family Scoping Meeting

August 8, 2014 – 9:30 to 11:30am

California High-Speed Rail Authority – Southern California Office

700 N Alameda Ave, 3rd Floor, Los Angeles, CA 90071

Attendees:

Essam Alameddine, California High-Speed Rail Authority	Mark McLoughlin, California High-Speed Rail Authority
Jennifer Blonn, Environmental Protection Agency	Kavita Mehta, URS
Michelle Boehm, California High-Speed Rail Authority	Greg Hoisington, URS
Karl Fielding, Parsons Brinckerhoff	Dave Navecky, Surface Transportation Board
Flo Gardipee, US Fish & Wildlife Service	Stephanie Perez, Federal Railroad Administration
Judy Hohman, US Fish & Wildlife Service	Brittany Struck, National Marine Fisheries Service
Kathryn Hurd, Federal Railroad Administration	Steve Vaughn, US Army Corps of Engineers
Nicole Johnson, US Bureau of Reclamation	Juan Carlos Velasquez, Parsons Brinckerhoff
Spencer MacNeil, US Army Corps of Engineers	Becky Victorine, US Bureau of Reclamation
Sarvy Mahdavi, Environmental Protection Agency	Connell Dunning, Environmental Protection Agency

Meeting Notes:

Stephanie Perez, with the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA), introduced the meeting. Representatives from each agency introduced themselves. She also briefly listed the federal agencies involved in the project.

Dave Navecky, from the Surface Transportation Board (STB), briefly discussed what the STB does and its involvement in the project. The STB is headquartered in Washington DC with 140 employees. It was ruled last year that it has jurisdiction over California High-Speed Rail (HSR) because of its connection with Amtrak it would be part of the interstate rail network. As a cooperating agency, STB will be involved with scoping and issue identification, EIS content, and review of draft documents. It will base its decision on transportation and environmental concerns.

Michelle Boehm, Southern California Regional Director with the California High-Speed Rail Authority (Authority), delivered the remainder of the presentation.

There are two phases to the project: Phase 1 is from San Francisco to Anaheim, while Phase 2 extends the system from Los Angeles to San Diego and from Merced to Sacramento. An early priority for the Authority is to close the rail gap between the Central Valley and the Los Angeles Basin.

Construction Package 1 has been awarded. It is a design build contract. Preconstruction activities have been advanced. They are using low emission Tier IV equipment. Preliminary activities (demolition, test pile work, etc.) have started.

The project is funding and cooperating with local agencies to advance southern California connectivity projects. They include: the Regional Connector which will go under downtown to connect local Metro lines so it will be possible, for example, to take a one seat ride from Long Beach to Santa Monica; work with Metrolink on a positive train control system to bring safety requirements online.

The Authority is working with local agencies on bookend projects. These are projects that make immediate improvements to passenger rail service and also prepare for high-speed rail in the future. They include double tracking projects, grade separation, etc. to support an integrated regional rail network. The biggest of these projects is the Southern California Regional Interconnector Project which will extend four tracks through Union Station, allowing Metrolink and Amtrak trains to run all the way through the station and loop back around to the mainline. This improvement is anticipated to reduce emission by 40% as trains will not have to idle in the station as long. This also helps support the arrival of HSR at Union Station.

\$250 million has been allocated from cap and trade funds for this fiscal year and HSR will receive an annual appropriation going forward. The next cap and trade auction is in January. This could advance construction on multiple sections at the same time and hopefully bring high-speed rail to Southern California sooner. It also may advance planning for the XpressWest project which would connect Victorville to Las Vegas and Palmdale to Victorville leading to interstate high-speed rail travel.

Palmdale to Los Angeles has evolved over time. There were original scoping meetings in 2007. Since that time the Authority has moved forward with a series of Alternative Analyses (AAs) to develop alignments that minimize resource impacts and minimize community impacts.

Karl Fielding with Parsons Brinckerhoff summarized the history of the alignments. The alignments south of Palmdale had a range of station options with a center point in Sylmar. The I-5 and SR 14 alignments were studied. There was a lot of feedback on an SR 14 alignment vs. a Soledad Canyon alignment after which Soledad Canyon was advanced. The programmatic decision out of the 2005 Statewide EIR/EIS selected the SR 14 corridor instead of the I-5 corridor. As part of the Palmdale to Los Angeles Preliminary Alternative Analysis (PAA), a wide corridor between Palmdale and Sylmar was studied with numerous alignments considered. The initial alternatives included two station options in Palmdale and station options in San Fernando, Branford, Burbank (Buena Vista). After the 2011 Supplemental Alternatives Analysis (SAA), some lines to Union Station were removed and some station options in the San Fernando Valley were removed. There were no stations removed in the 2012 SAA.

There have been over 100 meetings since the last project update. This past spring there were five community meetings in San Fernando, Burbank, Palmdale, Santa Clarita, and at Los Union Station. The majority of attendees have been favorable of the project. Some attendees expressed opposition towards the project and raised concerns about potential impacts to communities and resources such as noise, groundwater, quality of life, and health concerns. There is strong support for the Palmdale Transit Center and Bob Hope Airport stations.

The feedback incorporated into the 2014 SAA included refinements across alignments, updated station locations. The area includes over 60 miles of different types of communities and different geographical constraints. The 2014 SAA looks at two different segments: Palmdale to Burbank and Burbank to Los Angeles. Looking at it as two different segments in separate environmental documents has made it easier to look at more specific issues including interaction with the LA River, the Santa Clara river area, etc.

The Authority is in the middle of holding a series of seven scoping meetings in the Palmdale to Los Angeles sections. We are talking about both sections at the meetings and started discussion on studying a more direct corridor from Burbank to Palmdale. This corridor would likely require a lot tunneling. Community feedback, resource agency feedback, etc. is being considered during the comment period. The corridor is being looked at to see if it makes sense to study through the EIR/EIS process. The Palmdale to Burbank section would take about 20 minutes to

travel. It will be a transformation for those communities. In Palmdale, there is a possibility for interstate high-speed rail. At Bob Hope Airport, there is air-to-rail connectivity and Metrolink-to-HSR connectivity.

The Burbank to Los Angeles section is 15 miles through a highly urban area. This section will follow the existing railroad corridor.

The station location evaluation has a set of screening criteria and considerations which include multimodal mobility, opportunities for active transportation, TOD, robust sustainable design policy, location sensitive parking, etc.

The Bob Hope Airport station will offer air-to-rail, rail-to-rail, and rail-to-transit opportunities. It opens up regional opportunities and connectivity for SoCal rail passengers to connect to the Hollywood Way Station, Regional Intermodal Transportation Center, and linkBurbank. The Pacific Surfliner train that runs from San Luis Obispo to San Diego and includes a stop in Burbank is the second most travelled Amtrak line in the country.

Union Station is going through a Master Plan process in which Metro is planning how to reconfigure the station. This brings many opportunities to high-speed rail.

The evolution of the environmental process started in 2005 with the completion of the program level EIR/EIS, scoping meetings were held in 2007, the alternative analyses were developed, and now we are here in 2014 with an amendment to the original scoping process and the consideration of two different sections.

The current scoping process includes seven different meetings to provide all the affected communities and opportunity to get information and participate in the comment process. Three meetings (Palmdale, Burbank, and Santa Clarita) have been completed with more than 250 attendees.

A brief timeline of planned activities includes the establishment of two independent sections, the study of an alternative corridor, continuation of technical meetings, engagement with stakeholders and conducting scoping meetings. In fall of 2014, there will a presentation to the Board of Directors (September 16th), an environmental analysis will be conducted, technical meetings and engagement with stakeholders will continue. Moving beyond that into 2015 and further, environmental documents will be released, connectivity and MOU projects will be completed, there will be more public meetings, etc. Throughout this entire process federal agency participation in public scoping meetings is welcomed, helpful, and highly encouraged.

Stephanie Perez with the FRA presented on the federal land along potential alignments. There are agencies with ownership/jurisdiction along the alignments including DOD facilities, US Forest Service Angeles National Forest, Bureau of Land Management property, etc. This meeting is being held to provide an opportunity for agencies to provide comments and ask questions about the project as related to each agency's area of expertise and jurisdiction. With the introduction of the new corridor, we need the agencies to provide specific feedback about any potential jurisdictional conflicts with the proposed study area. This could include information on critical habitat, water, species of concern, Section 408, current projects in the area, etc. It is most helpful to put these in writing.

Michelle Boehm brought up that something to look at are the advances in tunneling technology in the last few years. Long straight tunnels through the mountains, minimizing surface impacts, are being looked at.

Questions & Comments:

- Spencer Mac Neil, US Army Corps of Engineers, asked about the estimations on the length of tunnels.

- The current criteria for tunnel length, as utilized in the Program EIR/EIS, were discussed. Michelle Boehm noted that Switzerland is building much longer tunnels - as long as 35 miles.
 - Spencer responded that it is important to avoid waterways and riverine habitat.
- Spencer MacNeil mentioned the importance of including and evaluating an alignment that would avoid the Santa Clara River and other waters of the U.S., and appreciates any alternative that would avoid discharging fill into surface waters, including within the Angeles National Forest (by tunneling). Spencer MacNeil inquired whether the Forest Service has key environmental concerns about potential alternatives that could affect their land and asked for an elaboration on current discussions with the Forest Service.
 - The Authority and FRA have discussed the possibility of cooperating agency status with the Forest Service and have introduced the concept of the study corridor. The Forest Service has expressed its willingness to continue to discuss these issues as the study of alternatives moves forward.
- Flo Gardipee, US Fish & Wildlife Service, has been coordinating with a Fish & Wildlife Service biologist in their Carlsbad office. She related numerous issues with the Angeles National Forest. It's a great alternative for issues with surface species. Flo will submit a list of species of concern. She is also concerned about tunneling because of dewatering of the groundwater.
- Jennifer Blonn, Environmental Protection Agency, mentioned that the impacts of groundwater can affect surface water in the long term. Understanding groundwater will be important.
- Spencer MacNeil is also concerned about activities that could affect waters of the U.S. on the surface through groundwater changes; this potential impact should be addressed. US Army Corps of Engineers has a regulatory responsibility to avoid and minimize discharges of dredged and fill material into waters of the U.S. and will also consider whether the proposed project would be contrary to the public interest.
- Flo Gardipee will forward email messages from Fish & Wildlife Service contact. They are preparing responses to the NOP and will be sending them on to FRA and the Authority.
- Stephanie Perez mentioned that her main point of contact for the US Forest Service is Tyrone Kelly, the Region 5, Regional Engineer .
- Flo Gardipee asked why the decision to look at two different sections was made.
 - Stephanie Perez explained that the decision to break it up in to two sections with stations at each end was so that individual environmental documents could be developed for each section. If you're in both sections, you can send one letter and note that it's applicable for both.
 - Flo Gardipee mentioned that biologists are more concerned with Palmdale to Burbank.
- Stephanie Perez mentioned that the Obama Administration has issued a directive to streamline the federal permitting process, and the implementation of this for the HSR project is being directed by FRA as the lead federal agency. Feedback from federal agencies on specific needs is helpful.
- Judy Hohman, US Fish & Wildlife Service, requested information on construction and operations. How will the tunnel be constructed? How are electricity lines constructed? Where will those lines be? Where can she go to find information?
 - Michelle Boehm suggested she look at the May 2014 SAA. It includes a conceptual level of information. We are moving forward with environmental documentation that covers all of those issues. Since we have not advanced design, we are not there yet. It will be steel on steel electric rail. The Authority can send her link to technical memos if she provides which areas she wants. We are currently in early meetings with transmission providers.
- Connell Dunning, Environmental Protection Agency, mentioned it would be helpful to see a basic comparative analysis that we had with the programmatic level with the detailed alternative analysis.
- Connell Dunning asked if we would lose riders if the train does not reach San Fernando.

- Michelle Boehm explained that the further we get into San Fernando Valley, the more riders we get. There are more riders at Burbank than at a northern station. Further north they have Metrolink access to take to Burbank.
- Spencer MacNeil mentioned how the car company Tesla recognizes that there are air emissions associated with the power used to recharge their car batteries. He suggested the Authority/FRA/STB tell a more complete story with respect to air emissions, recognizing that the power used for HSR has to come from somewhere and that power generation results in emissions.
 - Michelle Boehm explained that we have people specifically focused on sustainability and we have sustainability guidelines. We have a target of zero emissions and need to dig into issues of transmission and how to get to zero emissions. There are areas in Southern California with a lot of renewable energy generation that could be a potential source of power for HSR.
- KMZ and GIS files of the alignments were requested by EPA and USFWS. These will be provided.
- Mark McLoughlin is the Authority's Director of Environmental Services in Sacramento. Michelle Boehm is the Southern California Regional Director in Los Angeles. There is a regional office now located in Los Angeles, please come visit. Stephanie Perez is the FRA Federal agency lead and the point of contact for federal agencies.
- The minutes and PowerPoint presentation will be sent out in the next week.

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Appendix I
Palmdale to Los Angeles Project Section
Scoping Report (2007) Web Location

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Los Angeles to Palmdale Project EIR/EIS Scoping Report (2007)

The Los Angeles to Palmdale Project EIR/EIS Scoping Report (2007) is available on the Authority's website (www.hsr.ca.gov).

For direct access, the report and appendices are available at:

www.hsr.ca.gov/Programs/Statewide_Rail_Modernization/Project_Sections/palmdale_losangeles.html

The screenshot shows the California High-Speed Rail Authority website. The header includes the CA.GOV logo, the Authority's name, and navigation links for HOME, ABOUT US, PROGRAMS, NEWSROOM, and BOARD OF DIRECTORS. A search bar is located in the top right. The breadcrumb trail reads: Home > Programs > Statewide Rail Modernization > Project Sections > Palmdale Losangeles.

Palmdale to Los Angeles Project Section

Palmdale to Los Angeles Project Section Map

- Community Open Houses Spring 2014: Palmdale to Los Angeles Project Section
- 2014 Supplemental Alternatives Analysis (SAA)
- Supplemental Alternative Analysis (SAA)
- Preliminary Alternatives Analysis (AA)
- Scoping**
 - Palmdale to LA: Appendix H – Presentation and Meeting Notes
 - Palmdale to LA: Appendix I – Scoping Meeting Handouts
 - Palmdale to LA: Appendix K – Sign-In Sheets for EIR Scoping Meetings
 - Palmdale to LA: Appendix L – Speaker Request Cards from April 17, 2007 meeting
 - Palmdale to LA: Appendix M – Sample Scoping Meeting Comment Cards
 - Palmdale to LA: Appendix N – Pictures Taken at the Scoping Meeting
 - Palmdale to LA: Appendix P – City Comment Letters
 - Palmdale to LA: Appendix P – Federal Agencies Letters
 - Palmdale to LA: Appendix P – Interested Parties Letters
 - Palmdale to LA: Appendix P – Regional/County Agency Letters
 - Palmdale to LA: Draft Scoping Report**
 - Palmdale to LA: Appendix A – Notice of Preparation (NOP)
 - Palmdale to LA: Appendix B – Notice of Intent (NOI)
 - Palmdale to LA: Appendix C – Newspaper Notices of the EIR Scoping Meetings
 - Palmdale to LA: Appendix D – Summary of the Public Comments Received
 - Palmdale to LA: Appendix P – State Comment Letters
 - Palmdale to LA: Appendix Q – Scoping Period Comment Forms Received
 - Palmdale to LA: Appendix R – Other Letters Received
 - Palmdale to LA: Scoping Welcome Sheet
 - Palmdale to LA: Scoping Welcome Sheet (en Espanol)
 - Palmdale to LA: Scoping Welcome Sheet (Armenian)
 - HSR Comment Form
 - HSR Comment Form (en Espanol)
 - HSR Comment Form (Armenian)
 - HSR Scoping Meeting Mailer
 - HSR Scoping Meeting Mailer (Armenian Insert)
 - Updated Fact Sheet (Armenian)
- Notice of Intent / Notice of Preparation
- Public Outreach Materials
- Technical Material and Memorandum

High-Speed Rail Project Sections

- San Francisco to San Jose
- San Jose to Merced
- Merced to Sacramento
- Merced to Fresno
- Fresno to Bakersfield
- Bakersfield to Palmdale
- Palmdale to Burbank
- Burbank to Los Angeles
- Los Angeles to Anaheim
- Los Angeles to San Diego

Archives

- Altamont Corridor
- Merced to Bakersfield

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