

CALIFORNIA HIGH-SPEED TRAIN

Project Environmental Impact Report /
Environmental Impact Statement

Bakersfield to Palmdale Scoping Report

December 2009



California High-Speed
Rail Authority



U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Railroad Administration



California High-Speed Train Bakersfield to Palmdale Section

Scoping Report

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Summary

The purpose of this report is to summarize the scoping process and comments received during the scoping period for the Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement (EIR/EIS) for the Bakersfield to Palmdale section of the California High-Speed Train (HST) system. The report provides a brief project background, a description of the scoping process and meetings, a list of other outreach activities, and a summary of the public and agency comments received during scoping.

In 2005, the California High-Speed Rail Authority (Authority) and the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) completed a Statewide Program EIR/EIS as the first-phase of a tiered environmental review process for the proposed HST system. In the Statewide Program EIR/EIS, the Authority and the FRA selected the State Route 58/14 corridor as the preferred alternative between Bakersfield and Palmdale (see Figures 1-1 and 1-2). The Bakersfield to Palmdale HST Project EIR/EIS will build upon all previous work prepared for and incorporated in the Statewide Program EIR/EIS.

The Authority encourages broad participation during EIR/EIS scoping and review of the draft environmental documents. Comments and suggestions are invited from all interested agencies and the public to insure the full range of issues related to the proposed action are addressed, including all reasonable alternatives. In particular, the Authority is interested in determining where there are areas of environmental sensitivity and where there could be a potential for significant impacts from the HST project.

In response to the NOP/NOI, public agencies with legal jurisdiction were requested to advise the Authority and the FRA of the applicable permit and environmental review requirements of each agency, and the scope and content of the environmental information that is germane to the agency's statutory responsibilities in connection with the proposed project. Public scoping meetings were scheduled as an important component of the scoping process for both the State and federal environmental review.

During the scoping period, three public scoping meetings were held between September 15 and 17, 2009, with a total of 189 people attending the three meetings. The Authority and FRA received a total of 50 written comments from individuals and organizations (comment cards, emails, transcriptions) and 15 comments from agencies, and 2 comments from private businesses on the proposed project. Major issues identified as a result of scoping are listed below.

- Agricultural impacts
- Air quality impacts
- Natural resources impacts
- Earthquake – seismic concerns
- Floodplain impacts
- Land use impacts
- Noise impacts
- Recreation Impacts
- Parking and transit connections at stations

Section 1.0

Introduction

1.0 Introduction

The following report summarizes the scoping process for the Bakersfield to Palmdale Section of the California High Speed Train (HST) project. This report includes a project description, explains the purpose of scoping, describes the scoping notification process, summarizes the three project scoping meetings, summarizes the comments received from the public and agencies, and describes the next steps for the project.

1.1 Description of Project

Since 1992, extensive information has been gathered and a preliminary evaluation has been completed concerning the potential environmental effects associated with numerous high-speed train (HST) corridor alternatives throughout California. From feasibility studies through conceptual design, a variety of technical studies have been undertaken to address the engineering, operational, financial, ridership, and environmental aspects of such a system. The findings of these studies resulted in a Final Business Plan prepared by the California High-Speed Rail Authority (Authority, November 2008). The Authority was established in 1996 and is authorized and directed by statute to undertake the planning and development of a proposed statewide HST network that is fully coordinated with other public transportation services. This study concluded that California would benefit substantially from HST transportation and the Authority initiated further evaluation of a HST system connecting the San Francisco Bay Area, Sacramento, Los Angeles, and San Diego. The proposed statewide HST system (Figure 1-1) consists of 800 miles of dedicated, fully grade-separated, state-of-the-art track with trains operating at speeds in excess of 200 miles per hour.

In 2005, the Authority and the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) completed a Final Program Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement (EIR/EIS) for the Proposed California High-Speed Train System (Statewide Program EIR/EIS) as the first phase of a tiered environmental review process. The Authority certified the Final Program EIR under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and approved the proposed HST system, and FRA issued a record of decision under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) on the Statewide Program EIR/EIS. The Statewide Program EIR/EIS established the purpose and need for the HST system, analyzed a HST system, and compared it with a No Project/No Action Alternative and a Modal Alternative. In approving the Statewide Program EIR/EIS, the Authority and the FRA selected the HST Alternative, selected certain corridors/general alignments and general station locations for further study, incorporated mitigation strategies and design practices, and specified further measures to guide the development of the HST system in site-specific project environmental review to avoid and minimize potential adverse environmental impacts.

The preparation of the Bakersfield to Palmdale HST Project EIR/EIS will involve the development of preliminary engineering designs and the assessment of potential environmental effects associated with the construction, operation, and maintenance of the HST system, including track and ancillary facilities along the State Route 58/14 corridor from Bakersfield to Palmdale (Figure 1-2).

The Bakersfield to Palmdale HST Project EIR/EIS will tier from the Final Statewide Program EIR/EIS in accordance with Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations (40 Code of Federal Regulations §1508.28) and CEQA guidelines (14 California Code of Regulations §15168[b]), building upon all previous work prepared for and incorporated in the Statewide Program EIR/EIS. Tiering is a staged approach to NEPA and CEQA in which broad programs and issues are evaluated in initial (Tier 1) analyses and site-specific proposals and impacts are evaluated in subsequent tier studies.

The Bakersfield to Palmdale HST Project EIR/EIS will describe site-specific environmental impacts, identify specific mitigation measures to address those impacts, and discuss design practices the Authority proposes to use to avoid and minimize potential adverse environmental impacts. The FRA and the Authority will assess the site characteristics, size, nature, and timing of proposed site-specific HST project

sections to determine whether the adverse impacts are potentially significant as defined by NEPA and CEQA, and whether adverse impacts can be avoided or mitigated. This document and other project EIR/EISs will identify and evaluate reasonable and feasible site-specific alignment alternatives, and evaluate the impacts from construction, operation, and maintenance of the HST system.

1.2 Project Alternatives

The Bakersfield to Palmdale HST Project EIR/EIS will consider a No Action or No Project Alternative and an HST Alternative for the Bakersfield to Palmdale Section. These alternatives are briefly described below.

1.2.1 No Action Alternative

The No Action Alternative (No Project or No Build) represents the conditions in the corridor as it existed in 2009, and as it would exist based on programmed and funded improvements to the intercity transportation system and other reasonably foreseeable projects through 2035, taking into account the following sources of information: the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) and Regional Transportation Plans (RTPs) for all modes of travel, airport plans, intercity passenger rail plans, city and county plans.

1.2.2 HST Alternative

The Authority proposes to construct, operate and maintain an electric-powered steel wheel-on-steel-rail HST system, about 800 miles long, capable of operating at speeds of 220 mph on mostly dedicated, fully grade-separated tracks, with state-of-the-art safety, signaling, and automated train control systems. In the Statewide Program EIR/EIS, the Authority and FRA selected the State Route 58/14 corridor for the Bakersfield to Palmdale Section of the HST. Engineering studies undertaken as part of this EIR/EIS process will examine and refine alignments in the State Route 58/14 corridor.

Options will be considered for the design of grade separated roadway crossings. These options will include: (1) Depressing the street to pass under the rail line; (2) elevating the street to pass over the rail line; and (3) leaving the street as-is and constructing rail line improvements to pass over or under the local street. In addition, alternative sites for right-of-way maintenance and train storage facilities will be evaluated in the Bakersfield to Palmdale HST project area.



Figure 1-1. Proposed California HST System

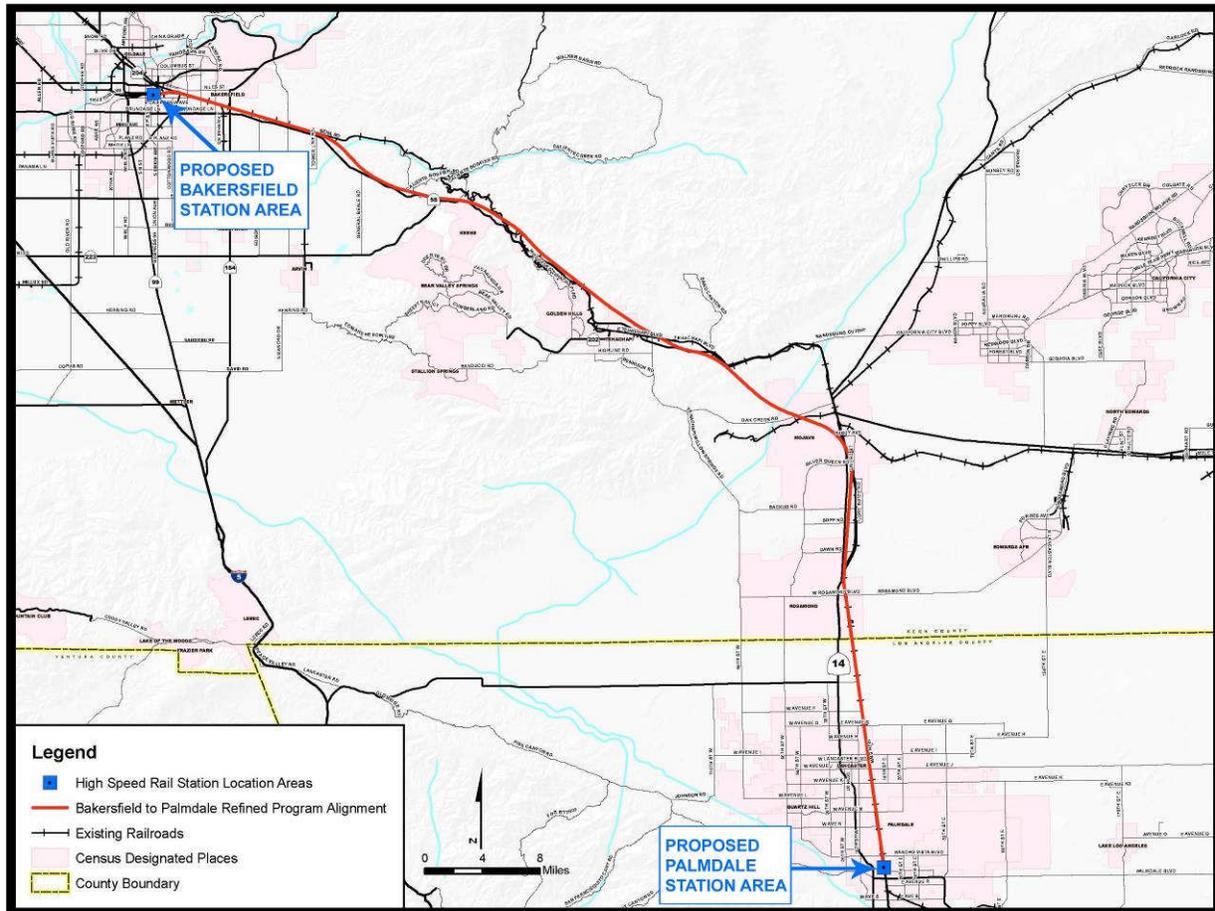


Figure 1-2. Map of Bakersfield to Palmdale Programmatic Alignment

1.3 Purpose of Scoping

Public scoping is an important element in the process of determining the focus and content of an EIR/EIS. Scoping helps to identify the range of actions, alternatives, environmental effects, and mitigation measures to be analyzed in depth, and helps eliminate from detailed study those issues that are not pertinent to the final decision on the proposed project. Scoping is also an effective way to bring together and address the concerns of the public, affected agencies, and other interested parties. Significant issues may be identified through public and agency comments. The Council on Environmental Quality Regulations Section 1501.7 and CEQA section 21083.9 describe scoping as required by NEPA and CEQA.

Scoping is not conducted to resolve differences concerning the merits of a project or to anticipate the ultimate decision on a proposal. Rather scoping helps ensure that a comprehensive and focused EIR/EIS will be prepared that informs the decision-making process.

The intent of the California High-Speed Train Project Bakersfield to Palmdale Section scoping process is to:

- Inform public agencies and interested members of the public about the proposed project, including compliance with NEPA and CEQA requirements, and the FRA's and Authority's actions in relation to it.
- Assist with identifying a range of alignments and station locations along the Bakersfield to Palmdale Section that may be considered in the EIR/EIS.
- Assist with identifying the range of concerns and project-related issues to be considered in the EIR/EIS.
- Assist with identifying mitigation measures, strategies, and approaches to mitigation that may be useful and explored further in the EIR/EIS.
- Develop an expanded mailing list of agencies and individuals interested in the future actions relative to the EIR/EIS.

The scoping process and the input gathered during the scoping period are documented herein for the Bakersfield to Palmdale Section Project EIR/EIS.

1.4 Notification of EIR/EIS Scoping

To initiate the environmental review process for the Bakersfield to Palmdale Section, the Authority issued a Notice of Preparation (NOP) (Appendix A) that was distributed to the State Clearinghouse; local, regional, and state agencies; and interested public and agencies. The federal process began with the publication of the Notice of Intent (NOI) (Appendix B) in the *Federal Register*. The NOP was distributed on August 24, 2009, and the NOI was published in the *Federal Register* on September 4, 2009.

The NOP and NOI discussed the purpose of the study, the project limits, the need for agency input, potential environmental impacts of the project, contact name for additional information regarding the project, and a description of alternatives to be considered.

In addition, an invitation letter was sent directly to representatives at the federal, state, and local agencies, elected officials, and tribes on the project mailing list inviting them to do the following:

- Provide written comments on scoping through the NOP and NOI, including advising FRA and the Authority of the applicable permit and environmental review requirements of the agency and the scope and content of the environmental information germane to the agency's statutory responsibilities in connection with the proposed project.
- Attend the scoping meetings.
- Distribute scoping meeting information or post information about the upcoming scoping meetings and post information provided on agency website or newsletter.

Public notification for the scoping meetings was made through a scoping meeting announcement (Appendix C) distributed to those on a mailing list and email list derived from past work and current project outreach and to property owners within 50 feet of each side of the proposed alignments and 500 feet of proposed station locations. Approximately 1,600 notifications were mailed. The proposed alignments and station locations are based on the Statewide Programmatic EIR/EIS. See Appendix D for the scoping notice distribution lists. Notification was also provided on the Authority's website. Table 1-1 lists the publications and dates for the display advertisements and legal notices as well as articles and editorials published prior to and during the scoping process. Appendix K includes copies of articles and editorials.

**Table 1-1
 Published Public Notifications/ Articles and Editorials**

Publication	Display Ad	Legal Notice	Articles/Editorials
Bakersfield Californian**	September 4, 13	August 29	September 10
Tehachapi News**	September 2, 9	September 9	
Antelope Valley News	September 10, 13	September 10	
Bakersfield.com (http://www.bakersfield.com/news/local)			September 10 and 16.
Environmental News Website (http://www.muirnet.net/)		September 9	

Note: All dates are 2009. ** Legal Notice also posted on newspaper website.

1.5 Scoping Process

The scoping activities for the California High-Speed Train System Bakersfield to Palmdale Section were conducted between August 24 and November 2, 2009 (scoping period). The geographical extent and complexity of the proposed project necessitated scoping meetings be held in several locations in the project corridor. Three public scoping meetings were held between September 15, 2009, and September 17, 2009, as shown in Table 1-2. All meetings were held between 3:00 and 7:00 p.m. to allow representatives from agencies and the public the opportunity to participate. Scoping meetings were held in an open house format, allowing people to arrive at any time to obtain information and provide input. Project team members were available throughout the meetings to respond to questions and record comments. The deadline for submitting scoping comments was November 2, 2009, although the Authority has considered and included comments it received up to the preparation of this report.

**Table 1-2
 Scoping Meeting Locations**

Date	City	Location/Address
September 15, 2009	Bakersfield	Red Lion Hotel, 2400 Camino Del Rio Ct., Bakersfield
September 16, 2009	Tehachapi	Stallion Springs Community Center, 27850 Stallion Springs Dr., Tehachapi, CA
September 17, 2009	Palmdale	Chimbole Cultural Center, 38350 Sierra Highway, Palmdale, CA

Materials developed for use in the scoping process included the following, which can be reviewed in Appendices A, B, C, F, and G, respectively:

- Copy of the NOP
- Copy of the NOI
- Scoping meeting announcement mailer and scoping information brochure
- Information boards displayed on easels
- Scoping period comment card

Members of the public; affected federal, state, and local agencies; interest groups; and other interested parties participated in the Bakersfield to Palmdale scoping process by attending the meetings and/or

providing written and verbal comments or recommendations concerning project alignment and station alternatives, potential environmental impacts to be analyzed in the EIR/EIS, and other project-related issues.

Although scoping is a distinct stage in the EIR/EIS process, public involvement activities will extend throughout preparation of the EIR/EIS. These activities allow for interaction and exchange of information and discussion of issues and concerns among the public, agencies, and EIR/EIS preparers throughout the study process.

Section 2.0
Public and Agency Involvement
During Scoping

2.0 Public and Agency Involvement during Scoping

Throughout the scoping period, the Authority and FRA encouraged public input through a variety of activities. As noted, the Authority issued the NOP and the FRA published the NOI in the *Federal Register*, initiating the scoping process.

Agency representatives attended the scoping meetings and numerous letters in response to the NOP and NOI were received. Members of the public and representatives from organizations also attended the meetings, some providing comments at the meetings.

2.1 Summary of Noticed Scoping Meetings

The scoping meetings were open to both the general public and agencies. Attendance lists for the scoping meetings are included in Appendix E. Copies of the materials provided at the scoping meetings are included in Appendix F, Public Scoping Meeting Display Boards, and Appendix G, Public Scoping Comment Card and Handouts.

Scoping comment cards were provided at each of the meetings for attendees to provide comments on the materials and information presented in Appendix G. Written scoping comments and questions collected at the meetings, written on flip charts and large maps at the meetings, or submitted via mail or through the Authority's internet website and verbal comments recorded at the scoping meetings through a court reporter are included in Appendix H and Appendix I, respectively, and summarized below in Section 3, Scoping Summary of Issues. Agency responses to the NOP and NOI are included in Appendix J and summarized in Section 3.4.

During the scoping period, three public scoping meetings were held between September 15 and 17, 2009, with a total of 189 people attending the three meetings. The Authority and FRA received a total of 50 written comments from individuals and organizations (comment cards, emails, transcriptions), 15 comments from agencies, and 2 comments from private businesses on the proposed project. The scoping meetings are summarized in the following sections.

2.1.1 Bakersfield, September 15, 2009

The Authority held a scoping meeting on September 15, 2009 at the Red Lion Hotel Banquet Room from 3:00 to 7:00 p.m. A total of 65 people signed in at the meeting, including representatives from the City of Bakersfield City Council, Kern County Planning, Bakersfield High School, Kern High School District, Kern Council of Governments, Golden Empire Transit District, Senator Dean Florez, Caltrans, City of Bakersfield, Senator Ray Hashbarri, North of the River Recreation and Park District, Tejon Ranch Company, and Assemblywoman Jean Fuller.

The meeting was in open house format, with information stations and staff available to answer questions through informal discussions. A welcome table provided an area to sign in, receive meeting handouts, ask questions, and receive general orientation. Attendees arrived at different times throughout the meeting.



View of scoping meeting activities showing attendees and team members. Comment stations and information boards can be seen in the background.



View of large maps showing the programmatic alignment.

Information boards on easels arranged in themes provided information for attendees. These included large posters presenting information on the California High-Speed Train Project, High-Speed Trains, Bakersfield to Palmdale section, Alternatives Analysis, and Environmental Process.

Three comment stations were available at the meeting. Two stations provided a place for people to sit down to compose their comments on the comment cards supplied. At a third station, people could provide comments verbally to a court reporter. At the back-center of the meeting space tables were set up to display large aerial maps of the project area with lines representing the programmatic HST alignment from Bakersfield to Palmdale. Marking pens were available for attendees to use to write comments on the map or indicate specific resource areas. One staff member present was a certified Spanish interpreter (Spanish/English) and available for Spanish speakers.

2.1.2 Tehachapi, September 16, 2009

On September 16, 2009, the Authority held a scoping meeting at the Stallion Springs Community Center, from 3:00 to 7:00 p.m. Sixty-eight people signed in at the meeting, including representatives from Cummings Valley Protection Association, City of Tehachapi, Kern Council of Governments, Mojave Desert News, Lamont School District, and Smart Growth Tehachapi.

The meeting was in an open house format, with information stations and staff available to answer questions through informal discussions. A welcome table provided an area to sign in, receive meeting handouts, ask questions, and receive general orientation. Attendees arrived at different times throughout the meeting.



Scoping meeting activities at the Stallion Springs Community Center.

Information boards on easels arranged in themes provided information for attendees. These included large posters presenting information on the California High-Speed Train Project, High-Speed Trains, Bakersfield to Palmdale HST section, Alternatives Analysis, and Environmental Process.



Participants view the programmatic alignment shown on the large maps displayed at the scoping meeting.



The scoping meeting format allowed for one-on-one assistance from project team members.

Four comment stations were available at the meeting. Three stations provided a place for people to sit down to compose their comments on the comment cards supplied. At a third station, people could provide comments verbally to a court reporter. At the back-center of the of the meeting space tables were set up to display large aerial maps of the project area with lines representing the EIR/EIS programmatic HST alignment from Bakersfield to Palmdale. Marking pens were available for attendees to use to write comments on the map or indicate specific resource areas. One staff member present was a certified Spanish interpreter (Spanish/English) and available for Spanish speakers.

2.1.3 Palmdale, September 17, 2009

On September 17, 2009, the Authority held a scoping meeting at the Chimbole Cultural Center, from 3:00 to 7:00 p.m. Fifty-six people signed in at the meeting, including representatives from the City of Palmdale, Sierra Club, Antelope Valley Board of Trade, City of Lancaster, Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors, Acton Tourist Committee, Desert and Mountain Conservation Authority, El Sol Magazine, and Antelope Valley Magazine.



View of the Introduction Table at the Chimbole Cultural Center



Team member discussing the HST project with Scoping meeting participants



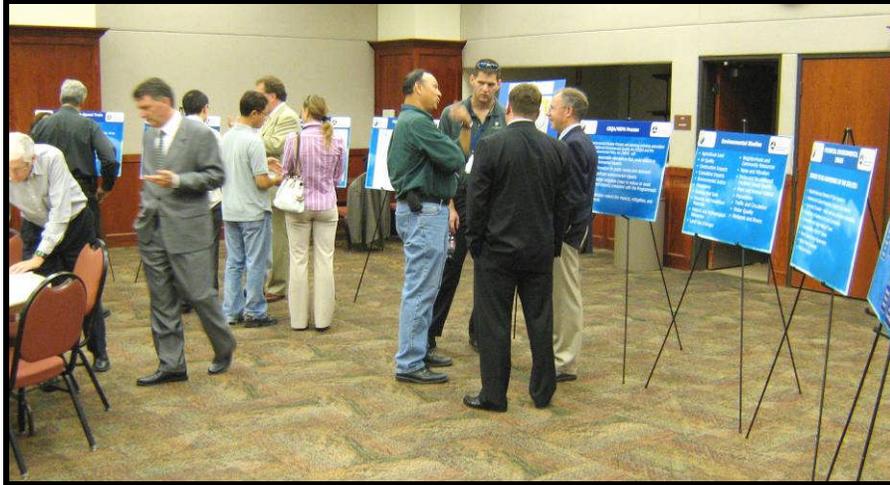
Team members spent one-on-one time with meeting attendees.

The meeting was presented in an open house format, with information stations and staff available to answer questions through informal discussions. A welcome table provided an area to sign in, receive meeting handouts, ask questions, and receive general orientation. Attendees arrived at different times throughout the meeting.

Information boards on easels arranged in themes provided information for attendees. These included large posters presenting information on the California High-Speed Train Project, High-Speed Trains, Bakersfield to Palmdale High-Speed Train section, Alternatives Analysis, and Environmental Process.

Three comment stations were available at the meeting. Two stations provided a place for people to sit down to compose their comments on the comment cards supplied. At a third station, people could provide comments verbally to a court reporter. At the back-center of the of the meeting space tables

were set up to display large aerial maps of the project area with lines representing the EIR/EIS programmatic HST alignment from Bakersfield to Palmdale. Marking pens were available for attendees to use to write comments on the map or indicate specific resource areas. One staff member present was a certified Spanish interpreter (Spanish/English) and available for Spanish speakers.



Palmdale scoping meeting room showing the information display boards.

2.2 Summary of Outreach Activities

The scoping period officially began August 24, 2009, with the receipt of the NOP at the State Clearinghouse. However, outreach to stakeholders in the Bakersfield to Palmdale corridor began earlier. Beginning outreach early improved awareness of the project so that, as the Authority began the scoping period, the stakeholders could be better prepared to offer pertinent comments. Activities included outreach to business and community groups, early agency coordination, and elected official briefings, and are listed below in Table 2-1.

**Table 2-1
 Summary of Outreach Activities**

Date	Organization/Individual	Topic
4/22/2009	California Transportation Commission Town Hall Meeting - Bakersfield	HST in Bakersfield
5/6 -5/7/2009	Great Valley Center Conference	Booth for general outreach – HST in Central Valley
5/14/2009	Bakersfield Technical Advisory Group (TAG)	HST in Bakersfield
5/20/2009	Tulare Breakfast Rotary	California High Speed Rail Authority PowerPoint Presentation
5/21/2009	Kickoff Meeting with Caltrans Central Region - Fresno	HST in Central Valley
5/26/2009	North County Transportation Coalition - Palmdale	Presentation to update group on funding, routes and challenges for state HST system
5/26/2009	On-air interview - Time Warner for SoCal News Evening broadcast - Time Warner Studio – Palmdale	HST in Antelope Valley
5/26/2009	Antelope Valley Board of Trade Luncheon, membership update - Hellenic Center – Palmdale	California High Speed Rail Authority PowerPoint Presentation
5/26/2009	Antelope Valley News Press Interview w/ managing editor - AV Press office – Palmdale	HST in Antelope Valley
5/26/2009	AVBOT Transportation Committee meeting - AVAQMD office – Palmdale	HST in Palmdale
5/27/2009	Caltrans Environmental Planning Summit – Fresno	HST in Central Valley
6/04/2009	Lancaster Sunrise Rotary	California High Speed Rail Authority PowerPoint Presentation
6/05/2009	IDEAL Seminar on Transportation	HST in Central Valley
6/08/2009	Bakersfield –Kern County Alternatives Review	Review of alternative alignments in Bakersfield/Kern County
6/13/2009	PBS Interview with Gene Tackett	HST in Bakersfield
6/16/2009	Bakersfield TAG	Review of alternative maps, Comments on the alternatives and specific issues near the alignments and potential station locations
6/19/2009	Phone Conversation with John Lindt – Valley Voice Newspaper	HST in Central Valley
6/24/2009	Fresno Mayor and Carrie Pourvahidi	HST in Fresno

**Table 2-1
 Summary of Outreach Activities**

Date	Organization/Individual	Topic
6/26/2009	San Joaquin Valley Regional Policy Council	HST in Central Valley
7/1/2009	Fresno-Bakersfield TAG	HST Project Status and Funding Update, Project Scoping Summary, Alternatives Analysis Process (Overview and Update), Results from Visalia-Tulare-Hanford Station Study, Review of Current Alignment and Station Alternatives
7/24/2009	Tehachapi Scoping Call (email & phone call)	Discussion of scoping meeting in Tehachapi
7/16/2009	Bakersfield TAG	Discussion regarding refinement of alignment alternatives
7/28/2009	Meeting with Fresno Mayor Swearengin	HST in Fresno
7/30/2009	Office of State Senator George Runner	HST in Antelope Valley
8/04/2009	Office of Assemblyman Steve Knight	HST in Palmdale
8/10/2009	Meeting with Palmdale Mayor Jim Ledford	General Briefing on upcoming scoping meetings in Antelope Valley. Prospects also posed question of doing some minor coordination with "Desert Express" HSR system. Interest in meeting Authority Regional Director Carrie Bowen and with HSR officials in pre-scoping meeting.
8/12/2009	Meeting with The Nature Conservancy (TNC), including both outreach teams from the Bakersfield to Palmdale and LA to Palmdale sections of the HST system	Identified areas of concern: 1) protect Soledad Canyon and select alternatives that avoid I; 2) Tehachapi alignment main concern was on the west side of the Tehachapis since this was within area they are trying to protect to preserve an existing wildlife corridor being used by wildlife at the south end of the Great Central Valley with the convergence of several habitats. The Tehachapi alignment they are less concerned with due to its numerous tunnels and viaducts that provide crossings for wildlife. They have local programs where mitigation funding required for the project could be applied to.
8/18/2009	Meeting with Kern County Supervisor John McQuiston	Promoted Bakersfield scoping meeting on 9/15 for Bakersfield-Palmdale along with a public information meeting for the Bakersfield project area. Discussed the alignment through Bakersfield and potential impacts to Bakersfield High School.

**Table 2-1
 Summary of Outreach Activities**

Date	Organization/Individual	Topic
8/18/2009	Meeting with Bakersfield Mayor Harvey Hall	Promoted Bakersfield scoping meeting on 9/15 for Bakersfield-Palmdale along with a public information meeting for the Bakersfield project area. Environmental justice church and faith communities in east Bakersfield - willing to help us with this effort. There are elementary schools in the area - Bakersfield City Schools. The more informed the community is, the better off we will be in working with the community.
8/19/2009	Meeting with Kern High School District Superintendent Don Carter, and Dennis Scott	Asked if any alternative would make Bakersfield High School (BHS) unusable, and noise impacts from construction and operation. BHS currently has 2,700 students on 28 acres, typical new school is on 70 acres. There is no room for expansion on the existing campus. Opportunity to expand on private land just east of the Industrial Arts building. School district willing to work with HST.
8/19/2009	Meeting with Kern County Supervisor Mike Maggard	Promoted Bakersfield scoping meeting on 9/15 for Bakersfield-Palmdale along with a public information meeting for the Bakersfield project area. Interested in the budget process for HST.
8/19/2009	Meeting with Bakersfield City Councilman Harold Hanson	Promoted Bakersfield scoping meeting on 9/15 for Bakersfield-Palmdale along with a public information meeting for the Bakersfield project area. Discussed the Bakersfield Commons Project and potential impact to their plans, but that there is no actual application to the City at this time.
8/19/2009	Meeting with Kern County Supervisor Ray Watson	Promoted Bakersfield scoping meeting on 9/15 for Bakersfield-Palmdale along with a public information meeting for the Bakersfield project area. Worked originally on the project to get the alignment through Bakersfield to Palmdale and on the Governor's California Partnership with San Joaquin Valley. He believes HST will produce economic centers in the San Joaquin Valley with the connection to San Francisco and Los Angeles.
8/19/2009	Meeting with Bakersfield Vice Mayor and Councilman Zack Scrivner	Promoted Bakersfield scoping meeting on 9/15 for Bakersfield-Palmdale along with a public information meeting for the Bakersfield project area. Discussed how best to get jobs to Kern County, what jobs are needed for the maintenance facility.

**Table 2-1
 Summary of Outreach Activities**

Date	Organization/Individual	Topic
8/19/2009	Meeting with Bakersfield Councilmember David Couch	Promoted Bakersfield scoping meeting on 9/15 for Bakersfield-Palmdale along with a public information meeting for the Bakersfield project area. Citizens living near the Bakersfield Commons project are very vocal. Discussed the potential and process for early acquisition of property on public works projects.
8/19/2009	Meeting with Bakersfield Councilwoman Irma Carson	Promoted Bakersfield scoping meeting on 9/15 for Bakersfield-Palmdale along with a public information meeting for the Bakersfield project area. Very interested in assisting us with outreach in East Bakersfield.
8/19/2009	Meeting with Kern County Supervisor Don Maben	Promoted Bakersfield scoping meeting on 9/15 for Bakersfield-Palmdale along with a public information meeting for the Bakersfield project area.
8/20/2009	Corcoran Rotary Club	Spoke with the City Manager, Ron Hoggard, and City Engineer, Steve Kroeker on preferred alignments at Corcoran. Concern with an elevated alignment above the BNSF tracks, noise impacts and create a visual barrier to Corcoran with freight rail at-grade and HST elevated.
8/31/2009	Rey Leon of MAPA	Discussed setting up forums within our sections with environmental justice communities to discuss issues they are concerned with. Will send him a map of our sections to help identify communities we should work with.
9/3/2009	Leaders of the Hill - Monthly meeting of Tehachapi area leaders	Outreach prior to public scoping meeting scheduled for September 16th
9/3/2009	Lockheed Martin Aeronautics Corp.	Specific planning/engineering restrictions discussed.
9/3/2009	U.S. Air Force Base, Plant 42	Specific planning/engineering restrictions discussed. Command Structure reviewed. U.S. Air Force to be lead agency in federal environmental documents.
9/8/2009	City of Lancaster, CA - Mayor R. Rex Parris, City Mgr Mark Bozigian	Discussion of environmental process
9/8/2009	City of Lancaster, CA - Vice Mayor Ron Smith	Discussion of environmental process
9/8/2009	City of Lancaster, CA - Councilwoman Sherry Marquez, City Mgr Mark Bozigian	Discussion of environmental process
9/9/2009	City of Palmdale, CA - Mayor Jim Ledford	City shared its own map and alternative citing plan
9/9/2009	City of Lancaster, CA - Councilman Ken Mann	Discussion of environmental process

**Table 2-1
 Summary of Outreach Activities**

Date	Organization/Individual	Topic
9/9/2009	Time Warner Television Broadcast	5 minute broadcast – live – announcement of scoping meetings
9/10/2009	City of Rosamond, CA	HST overview presentation, financing
9/11/2009	Edwards Community Council	Announcement of scoping meetings
9/15/2009	Bakersfield to Palmdale Scoping Meeting in Bakersfield	Scoping for Palmdale to Bakersfield section
9/15/2009	AWMA Luncheon	General presentation on HST
9/15/2009	Bakersfield Public Information Meeting	Focused on Bakersfield Route through Rosedale
9/16/2009	Bakersfield to Palmdale Scoping Meeting in Tehachapi	Scoping for Palmdale to Bakersfield section
9/17/2009	Bakersfield to Palmdale Scoping Meeting in Palmdale	Scoping for Palmdale to Bakersfield section

Section 3.0

Scoping Summary of Issues

3.0 Scoping Summary of Issues

The goals of project scoping include identification of the range of alternatives and environmental effects that will require analysis in the EIR/EIS. The California High-Speed Train Bakersfield to Palmdale scoping process identified issues with proposed alignments and stations, suggestions for new or modified alignments and stations, and areas of potential concern related to the proposed high-speed train system. The following is a summary of the comments received during the scoping process. Comments were submitted in the following ways:

- Comment forms submitted at scoping meetings
- Verbally to court reporters
- Map mark-ups and flip-chart notes
- Personal comment letters
- Mailed comment forms
- E-mails
- Agency letters

The Authority and FRA received a total of 50 written comments from individuals and organizations (comment cards, emails, transcriptions). Comments are reproduced in Appendices H and I and should be referred to for the complete content.

The summary is divided into two major topic areas. Comments regarding proposed alternatives and station locations are summarized first, followed by a summary of comments related to environmental concerns. Table 3-1 summarizes the written comments received, first presenting scoping comments and then responses to the NOP/NOI. In general, the comments received addressed the following topics:

- Agricultural impacts
- Air quality impacts
- Connections to local transit
- Desert habitat impacts
- Earthquake – seismic concerns
- Economic growth issues
- Floodplain impacts
- Location of station in Tehachapi and Palmdale
- Location of the HST alignment
- National Forest impacts
- Native American land impacts
- Noise impacts
- Parking concerns at stations
- Cost and financing of the system
- Recreation impacts
- Soil contamination – Tehachapi Mountains (mercury)
- System safety
- Transportation system impacts

3.1 Alternatives

The following discussion summarizes public comments received pertaining to route, alignment, and station preferences for the Bakersfield to Palmdale section of the proposed HST project.

3.1.1 Bakersfield

Two people requested that the HST corridor follow State Route 99 rather than going through Shafter. They felt that locating the HST through Shafter would be devastating.

One person recommended that the HST programmatic alignment through Bakersfield be retained. This would cross more open ground, reducing impacts to existing development. In addition, the homes located south of the programmatic alignment between Calloway and Jewetta represent an island of large parcel urban farms. These are where the property values and value to the equine community is significantly higher than those to the north. Therefore, the programmatic alignment would conserve a valuable asset to the community.

3.1.2 Tehachapi

The most prevalent comment regarding alternatives during this scoping meeting was a request to locate the HST station in Tehachapi. The programmatic alignment along State Route 58 at Dennison would cause severe damage, resulting in the elimination of access to a 212-acre parcel. One person felt that the Tehachapi Mountains were too rugged for the HST to cross and was concerned about the possible elimination of the scenic Tehachapi Loop.

3.1.3 Palmdale

The following concerns with the programmatic HST alignment were raised at the Palmdale scoping meeting:

- The alignment should be sited to avoid the San Andreas and Garlock faults, the Pacific Crest Trail at Cameron Canyon, Joshua trees in small valleys in the Tehachapi pass, wildlife corridors, and other hiking and equestrian trails.
- Several comments were provided about the vertical (either below or above grade) location of the alignment through the Palmdale and Lancaster areas to avoid Joshua trees on the west side of Sierra Highway in the vicinity of Plant 42 and existing roadways.
- Comments were provided against the use of Soledad Canyon to connect the HST alignment between the Los Angeles Basin and Palmdale.

3.2 Environmental Concerns

The following discussion summarizes public comments received pertaining to environmental concerns for the Palmdale-to-Bakersfield Section of the proposed HST project. The list below includes all environmental issues mentioned.

- Agricultural impacts
- Air quality impacts
- Natural resources impacts
- Earthquake – seismic concerns
- Floodplain impacts
- Native American land impacts
- Noise impacts
- Parking concerns at stations
- Recreation Impacts
- Soil contamination – Tehachapi Mountains (mercury)
- Transit concerns
- Disruption of existing transportation systems

3.2.1 Bakersfield Meeting Comments

Six comment cards were submitted at this meeting. Two participants dictated comments to the Court Reporter. The following is a summary of the environmental concerns from those cards:

- The segment between State Route 99 and Calloway in Bakersfield should be elevated or undergrounded to allow for planned retail/office/hotel development and urban infill.
- Spacing of columns supporting elevated segments of the HST needs to accommodate surface roads and some realignment at major intersections.
- Parking should be allowed under elevated segments of the HST in Bakersfield.
- Are estimates of job generation from HST still valid?
- What is the noise level of HST at full speed?
- How many parking spaces will be provided at the HST station?

3.2.2 Tehachapi Meeting Comments

Twenty comment cards were submitted at this meeting. Five participants dictated comments to the Court Reporter. The following is a summary of the environmental concerns from those cards:

- Safety of vehicles and personal safety in the parking complex
- Adequate parking spaces need to be provided at HST stations
- Transportation to final destination – (i.e. taxi-bus, etc.)
- Homeland security (train may be a target)
- Protect agricultural and Native American lands
- Protect Tehachapi's good air quality
- Avoid flood plains
- Minimize Hazmat risks
- Consider earthquake potential - plan for safety
- Avoid proximity to residential areas due to noise
- Preserve wild animal corridors

3.2.3 Palmdale Comments

Nine comment cards were submitted at this meeting. Three participants dictated comments to the Court Reporter. The following is a summary of the environmental concerns from those cards:

- Concerns about environmental impacts – both during construction and during operations.
- Desert habitat is very fragile - once disrupted it does not grow back quickly. Need to be sure that wildlife corridors are maintained.
- Care should be taken crossing the many large earthquake faults: San Andres, Garlock, etc.
- Care should be taken to save wildlife corridors
- Hiking and horse trails need to be protected
- The alignment should avoid National Forest lands.

3.3 Agency Responses to NOP/NOI

The following section summarizes the 15 comments from agencies and 2 comments from private businesses in response to the NOP/NOI. This section is subdivided into federal, state, regional, and local agencies and private businesses. Agency comments are reproduced in Appendix J and should be referred to for the complete content of the submittals.

3.3.1 Federal

A. United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) (October 30, 2009)

The EPA referred to the comments they provided on the Statewide Programmatic EIR/EIS, which included multiple recommendations and concerns to be addressed at the Tier 2 level, and on the HST Project Environmental Analyses Methodologies. The agency's detailed comments and recommendations related to continued interagency and community coordination, green design and operations, the relationship of the HST to other regional transportation projects, land use and transportation linkages, and analysis of impacts to (1) water resources, (2) biological resources and wildlife, (3) noise, (4) energy resources, (5) air quality, (6) environmental justice communities, and (7) invasive species. In addition, EPA provided recommendations for the analyses of cumulative impacts, growth inducement and impacts due to tunneling.

3.3.2 State

A. California Department of Conservation – Division of Oil, Gas and Geothermal Resources (October 30, 2009)

With the preliminary information received, The Division of Oil, Gas and Geothermal Resources noted that there are approximately 7 active wells and 4 abandoned wells within the project boundaries. The Division recommends that no structure be built over or in proximity to an abandon well. If any abandoned or unrecorded wells are uncovered or damaged during excavation or grading, remedial plugging operations may be required.

B. California Department of Education (November 2, 2009)

The Department stated that the loss of Bakersfield High School's principle classroom building, in either routing scenario, would either require its replacement at Bakersfield High School or a school board decision to reduce the student population and the courses offered. In either case, at least the main classroom building will need to be relocated on this campus or another. If it is relocated on this campus, it will be necessary to rebuild it as far as possible from the HST tracks. The school site is already elongated and undersized for its population, so any loss of property needs to be remedied by an increase in property and perhaps construction of a parking garage. Any buildings that require relocation to another campus will require identification of a campus that has remaining student capacity, a consideration of student demographics, and probably identification, approval and purchase of a new school site, given Bakersfield's pattern of growth.

Pursuant to Title 5 Standards for School Site Selection, in particular railroad and pipeline safety, sound level and vibration effects, length-to-width ratio for safe supervision and passing times between classes need to be analyzed. The proposed HST project will be powered by electricity and the electrical and magnetic field effects need to be assessed to know what electromagnetic field setback is required. The EIR/EIS should evaluate the effects of the project on human safety, land acquisition, displacements, relocations, noise, vibration, cultural and historical resources, and environmental justice. The historical and cultural value of Bakersfield's first high school is significant and needs to be addressed in the EIR/EIS. The social and economic backgrounds of the present student population served at Bakersfield High School need to be properly considered and effectively addressed.

C. California Public Utilities Commission's - Rail Crossing Engineering Section (RCES) (November 2, 2009)

The Commission has jurisdiction over the safety of highway-rail crossings in California. The Commission has exclusive power over the design, alteration, and closure of crossings, pursuant to Public Utilities Code Section 1201 et al. Application to the Commission is required for construction of railroad crossings of

public roads (Commission Rule 3.9). The HST project is subject to a number of other rules and regulations involving the Commission, including design criteria for the proposed project.

The BNSF Railway and Union Pacific Railroad (UP) alignment currently proposed for the Palmdale to Bakersfield HST project impacts approximately 50 at-grade crossings and approximately 20 grade-separated crossings. There are many crossings in the Palmdale/Lancaster area that are immediately adjacent to large intersections. One such problematic crossing is the State Route 138 / Palmdale Boulevard crossing, since the intersection is along a state route with a high traffic count and is also next to a major transit/train station. This corridor experiences a high volume of freight trains because both BNSF and UP operate over UP's track.

The Commission recommends the consolidation and grade-separation of all existing at-grade crossings along any adopted alignment for the HST project. It is strongly recommended that the HST project operate on an entirely dedicated and fully grade-separated track. Because the HST system will operate at speeds of 220 mph within the Palmdale to Bakersfield section, consideration should be given to grade separated structures that involve trenching the HST track. As construction of roadway grade separation structures is likely to involve massive changes to public infrastructure and private property in the vicinity of the railroad crossings, local entities must be allowed to amend their general plans and incorporate this HST project into existing footprints to allow for future right-of-way preservation.

The majority of cities along the proposed corridor have built their downtowns around the tracks. The high density commercial, residential, and industrial areas near the tracks lead to a high amount of pedestrians around the tracks. Leaving the tracks at the current elevation is likely to result in trespassing issues similar to those currently experienced along the rail corridor. Elevating or lowering the tracks, particularly in the downtown areas, would mitigate this concern. Vandal resistant fencing or barriers along any remaining at-grade portions of the alignment should be a requirement of the project.

Because the HST project is solely dependent on an electrified train operation system, discussions in regards to the placement of electrical lines must be held with Commission staff so that existing utilities are not impacted and minimum required clearances are met.

D. State Water Resources Control Board (November 3, 2009)

Clean Water Act Section 401 requires that anyone proposing to conduct a project that requires a federal permit, or that involves dredge or fill activities that may result in a discharge to surface waters, including wetlands, is required to obtain a Water Quality Certification (Certification) verifying that project activities will comply with state water quality standards. Since the HST system spans more than one Regional Water Quality Control Board jurisdiction, the State Board would issue the Certification.

Dischargers whose projects disturb one or more acres of soil or whose projects disturb less than one acre but are part of a larger common plan of development that in total disturbs one or more acres, are required to obtain coverage under the State Board's General Permit for Discharges of Storm Water Associated with Construction Activity. A complete Notice of Intent package (Notice of Intent, site map, and fee) and Notice of Termination (upon completion of each section), must be filed with each Regional Water Quality Control Board crossed by the project. Any storm water discharge or discharge of any pollutant, including dredge and fill material, to surface waters in Antelope Valley will be regulated under State and Regional Water Quality Control Board permits.

The DEIR/EIS for the HST project must clearly identify selected routes, and must clearly describe and locate all project infrastructure including station locations, roads, substations and all appurtenant structures. The DEIR/EIS must also clearly identify all waters of the State that may be affected by the various project alternatives. This description should distinguish those waters of the State that are also waters of the United States. Avoidance and minimization of project effects to waters of the State should be a fundamental environmental strategy for the proposed project. For all project alternatives, construction and maintenance activities should be proposed that will avoid disturbance to riparian and

wetland vegetation, drainage channels, and intermittent and perennial stream banks, or to any landforms which, if disturbed, might affect water quality or beneficial uses of waters to the greatest extent feasible. When such avoidance is infeasible, construction and maintenance activities should be specified that would minimize disturbance to the fullest extent possible.

Potential significant effects of the project to aquatic resources should be evaluated using a watershed approach. The loss of functions and services of impacted water bodies, including wetlands, should be appraised considering the availability and the condition of aquatic resources in the impacted watershed.

For any proposed change to existing flow volume, channel location/size, or rate of discharge, an evaluation should be made of the effects on current patterns, water circulation, normal water fluctuation, and salinity. Consideration should also be given to the potential diversion or obstruction of flow, alterations of bottom contours, or other significant changes in the hydrologic regime.

The EIR/EIS should fully describe the potential project related impacts to animal and plant species habitat, including wetlands and riparian areas, and commit to habitat preservation measures that protect water quality, species movement, and habitat needs.

The EIR/EIS should discuss likely mitigation approaches for each alternative, including potential types, sites, timing, and financial assurances. Provisions for inspecting and monitoring the project for environmental compliance should be included in the DEIR/EIS.

3.3.3 Regional

A. San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District (October 30, 2009)

The project may be subject to the District Rule 9510 (Indirect Source Review). An application must be filed with the District no later than concurrent with the local agency application for the final discretionary approval of the project.

3.3.4 Local Agencies

A. County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works, Programs Development Division, Federal Programs Section, via email – September 2, 2009

The NOP posted on the HSR website did not include the limits to be covered in the EIR/EIS. This needs to be updated and sent to the Programs Development Division.

B. County of Los Angeles Department of Parks and Recreation, via e-mail – September 10, 2009

The Department requested alignment maps to evaluate how the project may impact Los Angeles County parks and trails.

C. City of Palmdale (September 17, 2009)

City staff believes that the HST station should be located in the general vicinity of the Palmdale Transportation Center. Future transportation facilities, including the High Desert Corridor freeway and the Desert Express high-speed rail alignment, are also planned to serve this location.

D. Kern County Fire Department (September 18, 2009)

The Department expressed concern with the HST design from the standpoint of an emergency responder. Some of the track areas will either be elevated off the ground or inside tunnels. The Department has the capabilities for "high angle" rescue incidents that may occur on the bridged sections of track. With designed access points (ladders) built into the bridge sections, rescue operations in these areas should be

manageable with resources available to most fire departments. The tunnel sections of track offer a different dynamic to rescue operations in the event of earthquake, fire, or crash. A solution would be to design the same type of accesses as the bridged sections (ladders) using vertical tunnel points for entry and ventilation points to ensure safe rescue operations. The Department provided suggestions for possible emergency response equipment dedicated to the HST. The Department requested an emergency response plan to address an incident similar to the Metro Link-Freight train collision on Sept, 12, 2008 in Chatsworth, California.

E. County of Los Angeles, Department of Parks and Recreation (November 2, 2009)

The Department stated that the project may impact the following proposed County trails:

- 110-Proposed Palmdale hills Trail
- 114-Proposed Acton Community Trail
- 116-Proposed Vasquez Loop Trail

F. County of Los Angeles, Department of Public Works (November 5, 2009)

Geotechnical reports should be included in the EIR/EIS, as necessary. All or portions of the alignment are located within potentially liquefiable areas per the State of California Seismic Hazard Zones Map-Rosamond Quadrangle.

Permits from Public Works' Construction Division will be required for all works affecting the County's road or flood control facilities.

3.3.5 Private

A. Union Pacific Railroad Company (October 27, 2009)

Union Pacific Railroad Company (Union Pacific) previously submitted comments on the Bay Area to Central Valley HST Program EIR/EIS by letter dated July 7, 2008. Union Pacific reaffirms these comments and hereby incorporates them within this letter. By letter dated May 13, 2008, to the Authority's Executive Director, Union Pacific stated that it was not in Union Pacific's best interests to permit any proposed HST alignment in their rights-of-way. Union Pacific's position on this matter remains the same.

Union Pacific owns the Mojave Subdivision right-of-way in fee simple between Bakersfield and Palmdale. For the majority of its length, the Mojave Subdivision right-of-way is 100 feet wide, with limited wider zones in towns and cities for station grounds. Between Lancaster and Palmdale, the width is narrower due to previous sales to Metrolink for commuter train service.

Major rail shippers are located along the Mojave Subdivision. In many instances, these shippers have constructed large unloading and storage facilities. These facilities are immediately adjacent to the right-of-way, generally on the side away from paralleling highways. The HSR alignment on or adjacent to the Mojave Subdivision potentially would terminate Union Pacific's ability to serve some or all of these shippers, or future shippers needing rail service, leading to serious economic loss to shippers, consumers, the state, and the railroad.

As a common carrier railroad, Union Pacific is subject to federal law governing abandonment or discontinuance of freight operation. The Interstate Commerce Commission Termination Act prohibits a railroad from abandoning or discontinuing freight services over main or branch lines without authority from the federal Surface Transportation Board (STB). Union Pacific will deem any attempt by HSR to interfere with Union Pacific's operation over the Mojave Subdivision, including service to shippers, or to appropriate any part of its right-of-way by eminent domain, as an attempt to force a de facto abandonment of freight service in violation of federal law.

Slow speed freight trains and high-speed trains are incompatible on the same tracks at any time and at any location, including at-grade crossovers. The Authority must provide grade-separated crossovers for freight trains at necessary locations. If necessary, completely separate freight trackage must be provided.

Union Pacific does not believe it is possible or practical to devise any mitigation measures which will permit shared use of any part of the Mojave Subdivision right-of-way. Regarding the Lancaster to Palmdale segment of the Mojave Subdivision right-of-way, Union Pacific previously conveyed a portion of the western half of its property to the Southern California Regional Rail Authority (Metrolink) for operation of commuter trains. With this sale, Union Pacific reserved the entire eastern half of this right-of-way, from Lancaster to Palmdale, exclusively for freight operations, potential capacity expansion, and connection to spur tracks and leads.

B. GE Energy, LLC (November 2, 2009)

GE Energy stated that there are potential conflicts with the proposed development of the GE Energy Tehachapi Photovoltaic Solar Project (GE Tehachapi Project), and requested the GE Tehachapi Project be considered in the alignment design and environmental evaluation of the Bakersfield to Palmdale section HST project. The GE Tehachapi Project is a 330-acre photovoltaic solar energy facility that is proposed east of the intersection of Jameson Street and Chontico Road in unincorporated Kern County near Tehachapi, California. The programmatic alignment of the HST project is within close proximity to the northern boundary of the proposed GE Tehachapi Project, which is located south of State Route 58 in Tehachapi.

3.4 Summary Comment Tables

**Table 3-1
 Summary of Public Scoping Comments**

Commenter	Comments from Comment Cards Submitted, Emails Received and Comments Transcribed	Relevant EIR/EIS Section(s)
Bakersfield Scoping Comments		
Dave Donohowsk, President, Premier Planning Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Segment between State Route 99 and Calloway should be elevated or undergrounded to allow for planned retail/office/hotel development and urban infill • Spacing on pylons needs to accommodate surface roads and some realignment at major intersections (like Coffee and Brimhall) • Should consider casements for parking under elevated facilities • Re Tehachapi alignment, State Route 58 at Dennison, alignment will cause severance damages; portion of 212-acre parcel will end up without any access. 	Chapter 2 Alternatives 3.1 Transportation 3.12 Local Growth, Station Planning, and Land Use

**Table 3-1
 Summary of Public Scoping Comments**

Commenter	Comments from Comment Cards Submitted, Emails Received and Comments Transcribed	Relevant EIR/EIS Section(s)
Derek C. Abbott, Project Manager, Tejon Ranch Company	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our company owns land that contains 5-10 miles of the proposed HST alignment near Highways 58 and 223. • Please contact me if we can be helpful in providing a landowner boundary file or other information that can be useful in your analysis. Please keep me informed as the process progresses 	Chapter 2 Alternatives 3.12 Local Growth, Station Planning, and Land Use
Carlene Richardson	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Please re-route around Shafter (perhaps follow Highway 99) do not split the city in half. 	Chapter 2 Alternatives
Vincent Petracchione	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Please build it already; great for California’s economy, air quality, environment, not to mention tourism. • Let’s get on par with countries like Germany and Japan. • California can be the best once again. California back on track. California at the front of good progress. • The jobs this completed project would create would be a blessing for the state. 	3.11 Socioeconomics, Communities, and Environmental Justice
Nancy Wilson	For the sake of the community of Shafter I would please ask that you consider putting the corridor for the high speed rail following State Route 99 rather than going through the middle of Shafter. The impact that it would have on the Shafter community would be devastating.	Chapter 2 Alternatives
Ray Reilly, PE, Retired	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the estimate of 160,000 construction jobs still valid? Over what time span? • Is the estimate of 90 million passengers annually still valid? • Is the estimate of 450,000 jobs due to economic growth still valid? Over what time span? • How many passengers board/unboard in Bakersfield annually? • How big is the parking lot? How many lanes added for access? • What is the noise level of train at full speed? Duration? • What is scheduled time SFO Transbay Terminal – LA Union Station? • How many parking spaces at SF Transbay Terminal? Union Station? 	3.1 Transportation 3.11 Socioeconomics, Communities, and Environmental Justice 3.12 Local Growth, Station Planning and land Use Chapter 2 Alternatives

**Table 3-1
 Summary of Public Scoping Comments**

Commenter	Comments from Comment Cards Submitted, Emails Received and Comments Transcribed	Relevant EIR/EIS Section(s)
<p>Christopher Meyers [cmeyers@csub.edu]</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The blue line option should be used through Bakersfield. This route has a much reduced impact on homes in the Brimhall area, while also avoiding a significant impact to one of Bakersfield’s true landmarks—Bakersfield High School’s Industrial Arts Building. • Whichever route is taken, reimbursement must be given to those homeowners whose property values will be significantly impacted by the route; i.e., any devaluation greater than five percent. • The transportation and economic benefits of high speed rail cannot come at the cost of homeowners who have their life savings and retirement options committed in their property. 	<p>3.1 Transportation 3.11 Socioeconomics, Communities, and Environmental Justice 3.12 Local Growth, Station Planning and land Use Chapter 2 Alternatives</p>
<p>Ed Creswell</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regarding the relocation of the Rosedale alignment, it appears that there is an inordinate concern for passing through the refinery, south of Rosedale Highway and east of Calloway. • The aerial views indicate considerably more bare ground if the high speed rail right-of-way parallels the existing right-of-way east of Calloway. • Undoubtedly there are several underground utilities and infrastructures in the refinery area already crossing the existing right-of-way. These routes should be well identified. • Spacing of supporting columns for the new rail system may easily be adjusted or even varied, to completely avoid these conflicts. Surely the concern for infrastructure and the safety due to the electrical system can be resolved by some quality engineering. • The homes located south of the present right-of-way, between Calloway and Jewetta, represent an island of large parcel urban farms. These are areas where the property values and value to the equine community are significantly higher than those north of the right-of-way. • I am hoping that the northerly, original, route will be reconsidered in order to conserve a valuable asset to our community. 	<p>Chapter 2 Alternatives</p>

**Table 3-1
Summary of Public Scoping Comments**

Commenter	Comments from Comment Cards Submitted, Emails Received and Comments Transcribed	Relevant EIR/EIS Section(s)
Tehachapi Scoping Comments		
Sheryl Bovi	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A great idea...I'm all for it! Hurry up or I won't see it in my lifetime. 	
Linda Hiniker	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Please add a station to Tehachapi! 	Chapter 2 Alternatives
Ed Gorden	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Let's get started 	
Kristin Vandenberg, Director of Real Estate, Oak Creek Energy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Please put a station in Tehachapi; you are missing a large demographic of commuters in this bedroom community. 	Chapter 2 Alternatives
Glenn Baumann	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> My initial response is "Great" – Do it ASAP. I realize however that there are many issues with local soil/rock containing mercury and when construction starts this would need to be mitigated. I only wish there was going to be a station in Tehachapi. If there was, we (wife & I) would use this train at least twice a month. 	3.9 Hazardous Materials / Wastes Chapter 2 Alternatives
Ray Williams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Based upon experience in Japan on the bullet trains, I think additional stops would provide additional income with minor time delay! 	Chapter 2 Alternatives
Valerie Bumbaca	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Very sad about no stop in Tehachapi! Burbank to Sylmar ~ 20 minutes Bakersfield to Tehachapi or Palmdale to Tehachapi ~1hr Concerned about transportation from train station to final destination (buses/taxis?) I would probably ride it anyway though. 	Chapter 2 Alternatives 3.1 Transportation 3.12 Local Growth, Station Planning, and land Use
Dirk Van Weezel III, retired	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I'm anxious to see the project finished so I can ride it. It would be fun. I'm 67 years old and have been hearing about something similar since about the 1960's/1970's. 	
Joseph Butler	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yes, I am a big supporter. For me the future of train travel- I want to be involved! As a volunteer – Get the word out! Please keep me informed! 	
Lawrence Wilson, retired	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hurry up it is a great idea; will help transportation in California. 	
Jay de Freitas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Believes Los Angeles County has too many stations within 20 miles – e.g. Orange to Norwalk. Would like to see Tehachapi added. It has historical as well as functional need. Tehachapi would be a hub for a 50 mile radius population 	Chapter 2 Alternatives 3.1 Transportation

**Table 3-1
 Summary of Public Scoping Comments**

Commenter	Comments from Comment Cards Submitted, Emails Received and Comments Transcribed	Relevant EIR/EIS Section(s)
David Fumes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Please consider a stop in Tehachapi; if the ridership is currently insufficient to justify a stop in Tehachapi, include the associated infrastructure for a station in order to make the retrofit of a stop when it becomes feasible much easier to establish. 	Chapter 2 Alternatives
Alex Kosich, Architect	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Suggest you utilize our 2 cement plants to minimize shipping and transportation issues. Perhaps a local facility could be built to manufacture precast concrete components. Several tunnels will pass in the limestone hills that are currently supplying product for processing. 	3.8 Geology, Soils, and Seismicity
Glynn Sckade	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In the long term future, more than likely AFTER THE RAIL IS BUILT, you would consider a rail station at the Capital Hills area (where the future Tehachapi Hospital is going to be built) because there is plenty of land and road access (and access to Freeway 58 interchange on Mill Road) and it would be right by the proposed route of the rail line to go through the back of the Capital Hills area. It's a perfect place for a station and there is already lodging and a restaurant located in the area. I would strongly look into this. 	Chapter 2 Alternatives
Myra Fletcher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Safety of your vehicle in the parking complex Personal safety from parking complex to train Can you transport a pet? Enough parking spaces (BART didn't have enough). Provisions for bringing luggage Transportation to final destination – i.e. taxi-bus, etc. Homeland security (train may be a target) Ability to use a laptop Snack bar. 	3.1 Transportation
Doug Pickard	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Excellent Plan. Need to get moving ASAP I think max speed capability of 250 mph is a little shortsighted. They've already demonstrated over 300 mph in France. Plan long term. 	Chapter 2 Alternatives

**Table 3-1
 Summary of Public Scoping Comments**

Commenter	Comments from Comment Cards Submitted, Emails Received and Comments Transcribed	Relevant EIR/EIS Section(s)
Anne Marie Noringer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Protect agricultural and Native American Lands! Protect Tehachapi's good air quality! Avoid floodplains Minimize Hazmat risks Consider earthquake potential plan for safety Avoid proximity to residential areas due to noise Preserve wild animal corridors 	3.2 Air Quality and Global Climate Change 3.3 Noise and Vibration 3.6 Biological Resources and Wetlands 3.7 Hydrology and Water Resources 3.8 Geology, Soils, and Seismicity 3.9 Hazardous Materials / Waste 3.12 Local Growth, Station Planning, and Land Use 3.13 Agricultural Lands
George Novinger, retired education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This will be an excellent project! Route appears to be well thought out and quite feasible. 	
Warren A. Minner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The current preliminary plans look good to me. Consider all options. Please don't compromise the quality of the system--- make it the best of its kind--- money is a secondary consideration. 	
Arthur and Vivian	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We would like a train stop at Tehachapi. We believe we have the population to warrant it. At present we have at least 40,000 people and growing. This includes the City of Tehachapi and the greater Tehachapi area consisting of Golden Hills, Bear Valley, Stallion Springs, Oak Knolls, Alpine Forest, mountain Meadows and Sand Canyon. 	Chapter 2 Alternatives
Jim Staniforth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This project has zero benefit to our community. It does not improve transportation one bit. It will, of course, have negative impacts no matter how hard you try. A station in Tehachapi might mitigate those impacts 	Chapter 2 Alternatives
Rose Mary Wilson	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will there be room if you're traveling for luggage? 	Chapter 2 Alternatives
Laurie Ary [lary@bak.rr.com]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It would be wonderful if the train would stop in Tehachapi, CA. It would be great for people that work in Palmdale and Bakersfield, also for people that would like to catch the Metro in Lancaster. 	Chapter 2 Alternatives

**Table 3-1
 Summary of Public Scoping Comments**

Commenter	Comments from Comment Cards Submitted, Emails Received and Comments Transcribed	Relevant EIR/EIS Section(s)
Lisa and Vince McLaughlin [mcLaughlil@att.net]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There was mention of a station in Tehachapi; however, staff said it was “being looked at.” If it isn’t going to happen it shouldn’t be mentioned. • Tehachapi would never have enough riders getting on to rationalize a stop. • My main concern for California is gasoline use and air pollution. • Let’s get as many automobiles off the roads as possible. 	Chapter 2 Alternatives 3.2 Air Quality and Global Climate Change
Bob Stupp [rstupp@bak.rr.com]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Tehachapi Loop is the only way that trains can make the grade up and down the steep grade. How fast can your built train go in circle? • The US government that will fund this, and whatever state agency is involved should do the honorable thing and drop this horrible idea. 	
Glenn H. Mueller	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • My thoughts are that the proposed high speed rail system will serve a very small segment of the population of California. And I think that some thought should be given to serving a larger section or just a higher percentage of the population. And I think that could be done by including commuter trains within the same right-of-way, and possibly even on the same trackage. If you'd start out utilizing -- having only four to six trains a day, the tracks will be idle many hours of the day. And I would like the engineers and the people that are making decisions for this project to consider that they would have a lot better support from a larger percentage of the population if commuter trains were also included. • I feel that the cost of right-of-way for the project is the most costly aspect to face. Why would you consider serving such a small segment of the population when it would not take any additional right-of-way costs to provide services to many more people? 	Chapter 2 Alternatives
John W. Hicks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One of the big issues, particularly, given the number of tunnels and so forth, is the ambient noise level. • What kind of noise abatement measures, where do you locate them, what is the criteria for determining whether you put in noise abatement or not? 	3.3 Noise and Vibration

**Table 3-1
Summary of Public Scoping Comments**

Commenter	Comments from Comment Cards Submitted, Emails Received and Comments Transcribed	Relevant EIR/EIS Section(s)
Vivian & Art Chianello	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We're all for this train. Can't wait for it to come. Our only complaint, if there is a complaint, is that we wish it would stop at Tehachapi. They say it goes so fast that it won't be able to stop. But when looking at the map, I see Merced and Modesto are so much closer than what Bakersfield is to Tehachapi or about the same distance. And that's about it. 	Chapter 2 Alternatives
Anne Marie Novinger	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As a citizen concerned about our environment, I would like to be sure that this project protects agriculture and Native American lands. I would also like to be sure that this project protects Tehachapi's good air quality. I think it's important to avoid floodplains and critical to minimize hazmat risks or hazardous material risks. I think it's critical to consider earthquake protection and to plan for safety in case of earthquakes for people that are in the train. I think it's important to avoid proximity to residential areas as the train passes through because of noise. And I think it's important to preserve wild animal corridors. 	3.2 Air Quality and Global Climate Change 3.3 Noise and Vibration 3.6 Biological Resources and Wetlands 3.8 Geology, Soils, and Seismicity 3.9 Hazardous Materials / Waste 3.12 Local Growth, Station Planning, and Land Use 3.13 Agricultural Lands
Betty & Rick Schreiber	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Could wildlife collisions (deer, elk, and bear) cause a major accident? Will the HST stimulate population growth 	Chapter 2 Alternatives 3.12 Local Growth, Station Planning, and Land Use
Palmdale Scoping Comments		
Joseph Yore	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cost too high – Your system will not work – I will give you only the truth. 	
K.J. Allen, Chair, Sierra Club, Antelope Valley Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Concerns about environmental impacts – both during construction and during operations. Desert habitat is very fragile - once disrupted it does not grow back quickly. Need to be sure that wildlife corridors are maintained. 	3.6 Biological Resources and Wetlands
John Mlynar	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Very excited to see the high speed rail come to Palmdale and connect the Antelope Valley to the entire state via this system. 	
Joy Arcenar, Real Estate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I am in support with the high speed rail project. It will bring more jobs to the community and revenue to the City of Palmdale & Lancaster. 	
Bob McKay	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This is a great planned project! It was needed yesterday. I support 100%. 	

**Table 3-1
 Summary of Public Scoping Comments**

Commenter	Comments from Comment Cards Submitted, Emails Received and Comments Transcribed	Relevant EIR/EIS Section(s)
Ralph Veldor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We are years behind!! 	
Jason Zink	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Railroad should run in a subterrain trench through Palmdale and Lancaster. Traveling North from Acton: Bridge would be built over Sierra Hwy, Avenue S, trench under Palmdale Boulevard, Sierra Highway, Avenue P, Avenue M, Avenue L, Avenue K, Avenue J, Lancaster Boulevard, Avenue I, Avenue H. Bridge over Avenue G pass Rosamond Boulevard. Railroad spurs Avenue G-8 and Avenue P-8 Fox Field, Palmdale Airport Industrial Area. 	Chapter 2 Alternatives
Lannie Dean Webb, Antelope Valley Environmental Group	<p>I would like to have Environmental Issues addressed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not Using Soledad Canyon to connect with Palmdale Care should be taken crossing the many large earthquake faults: San Andres, Garlock, etc. Care should be taken to save wildlife corridors Hiking and horse trails need to be protected The Pacific Crest Trail (PCT) crossing at Cameron Canyon needs special care. Small valleys of Joshua trees in the Tehachapi pass should be bridged over. In Palmdale, west of Sierra Highway (and Plant 42) – the Joshua trees are very nice – a bridge or tunnel to protect the stand of trees would add some nice views and protect the Joshua trees Stay out of any National Forest lands. 	3.6 Biological Resources and Wetlands 3.8 Geology, Soils, and Seismicity 3.12 Local Growth, Station Planning, and Land Use 3.13 Agricultural Lands 3.14 Parks, Recreation, and Open Space
Walter Roger	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider placing the Palmdale station over the top of the Avenue P/railroad crossing with the train station or build the crossing under the tracks. Train stations and retail property can be built on top at a later time not slowing the Palmdale project (or disrupting either project). 	Planning and land Use Chapter 2 Alternatives

**Table 3-1
 Summary of Public Scoping Comments**

Commenter	Comments from Comment Cards Submitted, Emails Received and Comments Transcribed	Relevant EIR/EIS Section(s)
Theodore John Pagels.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • My great concern is the electrical fuel for the train and the capacity as such. If we implement fast freight -- in other words, freight plus passengers, a local and an express train, you can make money out of this. • Rather than go exactly to Bakersfield I would suggest you go to Las Vegas and then on to Utah. The reason for that is because Wal-Mart is located in Utah and we have over 60 Wal-Mart stores here in the basin. The other avenues are fruit made in the San Joaquin Valley that can be transported very easily to the rail lines to other states within a fraction of the time that it would take local trucks. 	Chapter 2 Alternatives
Lannie Webb	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I would like to not see Soledad Canyon used as the connection between the Los Angeles basin and Palmdale. I'd like to see some other route chosen, because Soledad is a very sensitive environmental canyon. • Avoid the large earthquake faults such as the San Andreas and the Garlock faults. • Care should be taken in evaluating and defining where some wildlife corridors might pass through where the train is going. Also, there are hiking and horseback trails and they need to also be evaluated. The Pacific Crest Trail called the PCT crosses at Cameron Canyon, and it needs special care where it crosses. Small valleys of Joshua trees up in the Tehachapi pass should be bridged over or tunneled under. • Bridge or tunnel under the Joshua trees west of Sierra Highway near Plant 42. • Avoid National Forest lands 	3.6 Biological Resources and Wetlands 3.8 Geology, Soils, and Seismicity 3.12 Local Growth, Station Planning, and Land Use 3.13 Agricultural Lands 3.14 Parks, Recreation, and Open Space
John McGee.	I think it's important that we keep the population informed about this. Because people can commute a lot easier if you have a fast rail. Having spent five hours on a train just from Lancaster to Burbank I'm very much in favor of fast high speed trains.	

**Table 3-2
 Summary of Responses to the NOP/NOI**

Commenter	Response to the NOP/NOI Palmdale to Bakersfield Section	Relevant EIR/EIS Section(s)
Federal Agencies		
<p>Tom Plenys, Environmental Review Office, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Previous comments on the Statewide Program EIR/EIS provided multiple recommendations and concerns to be addressed at the Tier 2 level. • EPA provided detailed comments on the HST Project Environmental Analyses Methodologies on May 14, 2008. • EPA’s comments and recommendations relate to continued interagency and community coordination, green design and operations, relationship of this project to other regional transportation projects, land use and transportation linkages, and analysis of impacts to water resources, biological resources, noise, energy resources, air quality, environmental justice communities, and invasive species. • EPA provided recommendations for the analyses of cumulative impacts, growth inducement and impacts due to tunneling. 	<p>3.,1 Transportation 3.2 Air Quality and Global Climate Change 3.3 Noise and Vibration 3.5 Public Utilities and Energy 3.6 Biological Resources and Wetlands 3.7 Hydrology and Water Resources 3.11 Socioeconomics, Station Planning, and Environmental Justice Chapter 7 Public and Agency Involvement 3.17 Cumulative Impacts</p>
State Agencies		
<p>Darrin Polhemus, Deputy Director, Division of Water Quality, State Water Resources Control Board (November 3, 2009)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clean Water Act Section 401 requires that anyone proposing to conduct a project that requires a federal permit, or that involves dredge or fill activities that may result in a discharge to surface waters, including wetlands, is required to obtain a Water Quality Certification (Certification) verifying that the project activities will comply with state water quality standards. Since this project spans more than one Regional Water Quality Control Board jurisdiction, the State Board will issue the certification. • Project construction will require coverage under the State Board’s General Permit for Discharges of Storm Water Associated with Construction Activity. Because the project traverses more than one Regional Water Quality Control Board jurisdiction, a complete Notice of Intent package (Notice of Intent, site map, and fee) and Notice of Termination (upon completion of each section), must be filed with each Regional Board. • Any storm water discharge or discharge of any pollutant, including dredge and fill material, to surface waters in Antelope Valley shall be regulated under 	<p>Chapter 2 Alternatives 3.6 Biological Resources and Wetlands 3.7 Hydrology and Water Resources 3.17 Cumulative Impacts</p>

**Table 3-2
 Summary of Responses to the NOP/NOI**

Commenter	Response to the NOP/NOI Palmdale to Bakersfield Section	Relevant EIR/EIS Section(s)
	<p>State and Regional Water Board permits.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State Board staff will work with Regional Board staff in development of all certification and storm water permit conditions, including mitigation and monitoring requirements. • Minimize impacts to all waters of the State to the maximum extent practicable, and ensure no net loss of any type of wetlands and their beneficial uses. The Water Boards expect full consideration and analysis of all project alternatives, including the no project alternative, be included in the EIR/EIS. • The EIR/EIS must clearly identify selected routes, and must clearly describe and locate all project infrastructure including station locations, roads, substations and all appurtenant structures. The DEIR/EIS must also clearly identify all waters of the State that may be affected by the various project alternatives. This description should distinguish those waters of the State that are also waters of the United States. • Avoidance and minimization of project effects to waters of the State should be a fundamental environmental strategy for the proposed project. • When impact avoidance is infeasible, construction and maintenance activities should be specified that would minimize disturbance to the fullest extent possible. • Potential significant effects to the aquatic resources should be evaluated using a watershed approach. The loss of functions and services of impacted water bodies, including wetlands, should be appraised considering the availability and the condition of aquatic resources in the impacted watershed. • To protect existing hydrology, every effort should be made to incorporate "low impact development" design techniques such as limiting impervious surfaces and controlling runoff through ground infiltration methods. For any proposed change to existing flow volume, channel location/size, or rate of discharge, an evaluation should be made of the effects on current patterns, water circulation, normal water fluctuation, and salinity. • Consideration should also be given to the potential diversion or obstruction of flow, alterations of bottom contours, or other significant changes in the hydrologic regime. • The EIR/EIS should fully describe the potential project 	

**Table 3-2
 Summary of Responses to the NOP/NOI**

Commenter	Response to the NOP/NOI Palmdale to Bakersfield Section	Relevant EIR/EIS Section(s)
	<p>related impacts to animal and plant species habitat, including wetlands and riparian areas and commit to habitat preservation measures that protect water quality, species movement, and habitat needs. The EIR/EIS should discuss likely mitigation approaches for each alternative, including potential types, sites, timing and financial assurances.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provisions for inspecting and monitoring the project for environmental compliance should be included in the EIR/EIS. • Special efforts should be made to avoid impacts to wetlands and waters of the State in areas of ecological integrity, such as California State Parks, designated Wilderness, Wilderness Study Areas, and Areas of Critical Environmental Concern. • There are existing and proposed new rail lines and other linear projects in the project area. A full discussion of the cumulative effects of the proposed project in the context of these existing and proposed new projects should be included in the EIR/EIS. • The HST project should incorporate design modifications that reestablish or improve on current environmental conditions and ecological processes and functions. Water quality considerations should be included when plans are made to repair or modify existing railway infrastructure, as well as when plans are made to build new infrastructure. 	
<p>George M. Shaw, School Facilities Planning Division, California Department of Education</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Department stated that the loss of Bakersfield High School's principle classroom building will either require its replacement at Bakersfield High School or a reduction in the student population and the courses offered. • The school site is elongated and undersized for its student population, so any loss of property needs to be remedied by an increase in property and perhaps construction of a parking garage. • Pursuant to Title 5 Standards for School Site Selection, in particular railroad and pipeline safety, sound level and vibration effects, length to width ratio for safe student supervision and passing times between classes need to be analyzed. • The proposed HST will be powered by electricity and the electrical and magnetic field effects need to be assessed to know what EMF setback is required. • Any buildings that require relocation to another campus will require identification of a campus that has 	<p>Chapter 2 Alternatives 3.3 Noise and Vibration 3.4 Electromagnetic Fields and Electromagnetic Interference 3.10 Safety and Security 3.11 Socioeconomics, Communities, and Environmental Justice 3.12 Local Growth, Station Planning, and Land Use</p>

**Table 3-2
 Summary of Responses to the NOP/NOI**

Commenter	Response to the NOP/NOI Palmdale to Bakersfield Section	Relevant EIR/EIS Section(s)
	<p>remaining student capacity, a consideration of student demographics, and probably identification, approval and purchase of a new school site, given Bakersfield's pattern of growth.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore the effects of the project on human safety, land acquisition, displacements, relocations, noise, vibration, cultural and historical resources, and environmental justice. • The historical and cultural value of Bakersfield's first high school is significant and this value cannot be readily discounted. • The social and economic backgrounds of the present student population served at Bakersfield High School need to be properly considered and effectively addressed. 	
<p>Rosa Munoz, PE, Utilities Engineer, California Public Utilities Commission's - Rail Crossing Engineering Section (RCES)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Commission has jurisdiction over the safety of highway-rail crossings (crossings) in California. The Commission is a responsible agency under CEQA section 15381 with regard to this project. • Application to the Commission is required for construction of railroad across a public road (Commission Rule 3.9). The HST project is subject to a number of other rules and regulations involving the Commission. The design criteria of the proposed project will need to comply with Commission General Orders. • The BNSF Railway and Union Pacific Railroad (UP) alignment currently proposed for the Palmdale to Bakersfield HST project impacts approximately 50 at-grade crossings and approximately 20 grade-separated crossings. • There are many crossings in the Palmdale/Lancaster area that are immediately adjacent to large intersections. One such problematic crossing is the State Route 138 / Palmdale Boulevard crossing, since the intersection is along a state route with a high traffic count and is also next to a major transit/train station. This corridor experiences a high volume of freight trains because both BNSF and UP operate over UP's track. • The Commission's RCES recommends the consolidation and grade-separation of all existing at-grade crossings along any adopted alignment in the HST project. Building a new grade separation structure adjacent to an at-grade railroad crossing can negatively impact the safety of the existing crossing due to limiting the 	<p>Chapter 2 Alternatives 3.5 Public Utilities and Energy</p>

**Table 3-2
 Summary of Responses to the NOP/NOI**

Commenter	Response to the NOP/NOI Palmdale to Bakersfield Section	Relevant EIR/EIS Section(s)
	<p>configuration of warning devices, limiting the geometry of the roadway and sidewalk, and obstructing visibility of the warning devices or an approaching train.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is strongly recommended that the HST project operate on an entirely dedicated and fully grade-separated track. • Because the HST system will operate at speeds of 220 mph within the Bakersfield to Palmdale section, consideration should be given to grade separated structures that involve trenching the HST track. • As construction of roadway grade separation structures is likely to involve massive changes to public infrastructure and private property in the vicinity of the railroad crossings, local entities must be allowed to amend their general plans and incorporate this HST project into existing footprints to allow for future right-of-way preservation. • The majority of cities along the proposed corridor have built their downtowns around the tracks. The high density commercial, residential and industrial areas near the tracks lead to a high amount of pedestrians around the tracks. Leaving the tracks at the current elevation is likely to result in trespassing issues similar to those currently experienced along the rail corridor. Elevating or lowering the tracks, particularly in the downtown areas, would mitigate this concern. Vandal resistant fencing or barriers along any remaining at-grade portions of the alignment should be a requirement of the project. • Because the HST project is solely dependent on an electrified train operation system, discussions in regards to the placement of electrical lines must be held with Commission staff so that existing utilities are not impacted and minimum required clearances are met. • We request that RCES be kept informed of all developments associated with the HST project. Lastly, we request that an administrative draft of the EIR/EIS be sent to the Commission’s RCES so that all parties are able to address any issues before they are made public in the final EIR. 	
<p>David Mitchell, Senior Oil and Gas Engineer, California Department of Conservation – Division of Oil, Gas and</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With the preliminary information received, it appears that there are approximately 7 active wells and 4 abandoned wells within the project boundaries. • The Division recommends that no structure be built over or in proximity to an abandon well location. 	<p>3.8 Geology, Soils, and Seismicity</p>

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Commenter	Response to the NOP/NOI Palmdale to Bakersfield Section	Relevant EIR/EIS Section(s)
Geothermal Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If the above noted or any other abandoned or unrecorded wells are uncovered or damaged during excavation or grading, remedial plugging operations may be required. 	
Regional Agencies		
Arnud Marjollet, Permits Service Manager, Air Pollution Control Officer, San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The project may be subject to the District Rule 9510 (Indirect Source Review). An application must be filed with the District no later than concurrent with application with local agency for the final discretionary approval. 	3.2 Air Quality
Seyed Sadredian, Executive Director/ Air Pollution Control Officer, San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The SJVAPCD supports the HST project. Implementation of the HST project is one of the measures that the District included in its plan to accelerate attainment in the San Joaquin Valley for ozone. District recommendations for the environmental review in the EIR/EIS of potential impacts to air quality related to the project are provided. 	3.2 Air Quality
Local Agencies		
Hank Fung, PE, County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works, Programs Development Division, Federal Programs Section	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The NOP posted on the HSR website did not include the limits to be covered in the EIR/EIS. It is not possible for this Department to comment on the EIR/EIS, if the map is not provided. Please update the file online, and send me notification when that is done. 	
Los Angeles County Parks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The commentator asked whether there are detailed maps for Bakersfield to Palmdale section. The commentator asked for the maps in order to check how the alignments would impact Los Angeles County parks and the proposed County Trails. 	3.14 Parks, Recreation, and Open Space
James C. Ledford, Jr., Major, City of Palmdale	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The station should be located in the general vicinity of the Palmdale Transportation Center, the "sweet spot" of transportation modes in the Antelope Valley. In this general area, statewide surface transportation, regional transit services, Metrolink's rail system and Palmdale Regional Airport converge. Future facilities, including the High Desert Corridor freeway (of which eleven miles of the alignment have been acquired through property owned by Los Angeles World Airports), and the Desert Express high-speed rail alignment are also planned to serve this location. We believe there is no other location within the entire California High Speed Rail system where this number and variety of important transportation modes converge. 	Chapter 2 Alternatives 3.1 Transportation

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 Summary of Responses to the NOP/NOI**

Commenter	Response to the NOP/NOI Palmdale to Bakersfield Section	Relevant EIR/EIS Section(s)
Randy McCarver, Capt, Kern County Fire Department	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Department expressed concern with the design of the HST from the standpoint of an emergency responder. Some of the track areas will either be elevated off the ground (bridges) or inside of mountains (tunnels). The Department has the capabilities for "high angle" rescue incidents that may occur on the bridged sections of track. With designed access points (ladders) built into the bridge sections, rescue operations in these areas should be manageable with resources available to most fire departments. The tunnel sections of track offer a different dynamic to rescue operations in the event of earthquake, fire or crash. A solution would be to design the same type of accesses as the bridged sections (ladders) using vertical tunnel points for entry and ventilation points to ensure safe rescue operations. A specially designed vehicle could be placed on existing track and respond to an incident between the designated train stops. A vehicle equipped with a water tank, pump and hose as well as lighting equipment. Other specialized equipment (hand and rescue tools) could be transferred from responding engines. A second "module" (engine with drive train) could be designed for medical treatment and transport. This unit could detach from the firefighting module and transport patients to awaiting ambulances and helicopters for transport to medical facilities as well as be a mode of transportation when released. Develop a plan to address an incident similar to the Metro Link-Freight train collision on Sept, 12, 2008 in Chatsworth Ca. and doing all of this inside of a tunnel is the perspective of my request. 	3.10 Safety and Security
Jui Lng Chen, Park Planner, Environmental, County of Los Angeles, Department of Parks and Recreation	<p>The Department stated that the project may impact the following proposed County trails:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 110-Proposed Palmdale hills Trail 114-Proposed Acton Community Trail 116-Proposed Vasquez Loop Trail. 	3.14 Parks, Recreation, and Open Space
Dennis hunter, PLS, PE, Assistant Deputy Director, Land Development Division, County of Los Angeles, Department of Public Works	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All or a portion of the site is located within potentially liquefiable areas per the State of California Seismic Hazard Zones Map-Rosamond Quadrangle. Geotechnical reports should be included in the EIR/EIS, as necessary. The information provided through the website for Services-Road/Flood Maintenance was not adequate for the County to determine if the proposed rail system will have any impacts to the County road system, flood 	Chapter 2 Alternatives 3.1 Transportation 3.7 Hydrology and Water Resources 3.8 Geology, Soils, and Seismicity

**Table 3-2
 Summary of Responses to the NOP/NOI**

Commenter	Response to the NOP/NOI Palmdale to Bakersfield Section	Relevant EIR/EIS Section(s)
	<p>control facilities, or their maintenance.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It appears that the proposed alignment parallels the existing Union Pacific tracks. If so, there are numerous at grade crossings that will need to be addressed by the County, City of Palmdale, and City of Lancaster. • Permits from Public Works' Construction Division will be required for all work affecting County's Road or Flood Control District. • Construction plans and/or documents for any proposed construction affecting County's road or flood control facilities must be submitted to Public Works for review and approval prior to construction. 	
Private Organizations/Companies		
<p>Jerry Wilmoth, Union Pacific Railroad Company</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Union Pacific Railroad Company (Union Pacific) previously submitted comments on the Bay Area to Central Valley HST Program EIR/EIS by letter dated July 7, 2008. Union Pacific reaffirms these comments and hereby incorporates them within this letter. By letter dated May 13, 2008, to the Authority's Executive Director Union Pacific stated that it was not in Union Pacific's best interests to permit any proposed high-speed rail alignment on our rights of way. Union Pacific's position on this matter remains the same. • Union Pacific owns the Mojave Subdivision right of way in fee simple between Bakersfield and Palmdale. Confirming Union Pacific's prior statements, both written and oral, we will not make any segments or any part of the Mojave Subdivision right of way available for the high-speed rail alignment under any circumstances. Preparation of the Project Level EIR/EIS should recognize this limitation on available right of way. • For the majority of its length between Bakersfield and Palmdale, the Mojave Subdivision right of way is 100 feet in width, with limited wider zones in towns and cities for station grounds. Between Lancaster and Palmdale, the width is narrower due to previous sales to Metrolink for commuter train service. • Major rail shippers are located along the Mojave Subdivision. In many instances, these shippers have constructed large unloading and storage facilities. These facilities are immediately adjacent to the right of way, generally on the side away from paralleling highways. HST alignment on or adjacent to the Mojave Subdivision potentially would terminate Union Pacific's 	<p>Chapter 2 Alternatives</p>

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 Summary of Responses to the NOP/NOI**

Commenter	Response to the NOP/NOI Palmdale to Bakersfield Section	Relevant EIR/EIS Section(s)
	<p>ability to serve some or all of these shippers, or future shippers needing rail service, leading to serious economic loss to shippers, consumers, the state and the railroad.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As a common carrier railroad, Union Pacific is subject to federal law governing abandonment or discontinuance of freight operations. Specifically, the Interstate Commerce Commission Termination Act prohibits a railroad from abandoning or discontinuing freight services over main or branch lines of railroad without authority from the federal Surface Transportation Board (STB). Union Pacific will deem any attempt by HST to interfere with Union Pacific’s operation over the Mojave Subdivision, including service to shippers, or to appropriate any part of its right of way by eminent domain, as an attempt to force a de facto abandonment of freight service in violation of federal law. • Slow speed freight trains and high-speed trains are incompatible on the same tracks at any time and at any location, including at-grade crossovers. The Authority must provide grade-separated crossovers for freight trains at necessary locations. The Authority must not contemplate operation of freight trains on any HSR trackage at any time (and vice-versa). If necessary, completely separate freight trackage must be provided. HST must comply with all applicable FRA regulations with regard to freight trackage. • Union Pacific does not believe it is possible or practical to devise any mitigation measures which will permit shared use of any part of the Mojave Subdivision right of way. As previously stated, Union Pacific will not voluntarily make this right of way available to HST under any circumstances. • Union Pacific is of the legal opinion that all of its operating right of way, including the entire Mojave Subdivision, is exempt from the state’s eminent domain powers. • Regarding the Lancaster to Palmdale segment of the Mojave Subdivision right of way, Union Pacific previously conveyed a portion of the western half of its property to the Southern California Regional Rail Authority (Metrolink) for operation of commuter trains. • Upon sale of the above-described right of way to Metrolink, Union Pacific reserved the entire eastern half of this right of way, from Lancaster to Palmdale, 	

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Commenter	Response to the NOP/NOI Palmdale to Bakersfield Section	Relevant EIR/EIS Section(s)
	exclusively for freight operations, potential capacity expansion, and connection to spur tracks and leads.	
Niko Meisser, Project Development manager, GE Energy, LLC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are potential conflicts with the proposed development of the GE Energy Tehachapi Photovoltaic Solar Project ("GE Tehachapi Project") and HST. GE Energy, LLC requests that the GE Tehachapi Project be considered in the alignment design and environmental evaluation of the HST project. GE Energy also requests that it be included on the distribution list for the Palmdale to Bakersfield section of the HST Project. • The GE Tehachapi Project is a 330-acre photovoltaic solar energy facility that is proposed east of the intersection of Jameson Street and Chontico Road in unincorporated Kern County near Tehachapi, California. The preferred route of the HST project is within close proximity to the northern boundary of the proposed GE Tehachapi Project, which is located south of State Route 58 in Tehachapi. • Renewable energy produced from the GE Tehachapi Project will be beneficial to California's environment and economy. Alternative energy development is also important to Kern County; the County's General Plan Energy Element emphasizes the County's role as a major electricity producer given its geographic position in California and location on the boundaries of the State's largest gas and electric utilities. Energy will also be important to the development of the HST project. For these reasons the HST Project should avoid impacts to the GE Tehachapi Project. 	Chapter 2 Alternatives 3.5 Public Utilities and Energy

Section 4.0

Next Steps

4.0 Next Steps

Following the scoping process, the project team will continue to conduct an alternatives analysis (AA) to provide the California High-Speed Rail Authority Board of Directors with information necessary to determine which alternatives should be fully evaluated through the EIR/EIS process. This analysis will be partially based on the comments received during scoping, including alternatives proposed in scoping comments. Throughout the AA process, the project team will coordinate with federal, state, and local agencies.

Once the Authority has determined which alternatives will be evaluated in the Draft EIR/EIS, the project team will begin in-depth analysis of existing conditions in the project area and potential impacts of the project alternatives. Throughout the evaluation process, the project team will coordinate with federal, state, and local agencies. The Authority will also continue to conduct public outreach to ensure that the public is apprised of the project's progress and has the opportunity to provide input.

The analysis of existing conditions and potential impacts of project alternatives will then be synthesized into the Draft EIR/EIS, and the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) and the Authority will publish the Draft EIR/EIS. Publication is anticipated in spring 2011. A 60-day comment period will begin following publication of the Notice of Availability in the *Federal Register* and after filing a Notice of Completion with the California State Clearinghouse. The Authority will distribute notices of availability to those on the project mailing list and to potentially affected property owners. In addition, the EIR/EIS will be posted on the Authority's web site. Public hearings will be held in the project area to provide the public the opportunity to discuss the project based on information in the EIR/EIS with the project team and provide comments. These public hearings will be advertised in local newspapers, included in the Notice of Availability and Notice of Completion, and posted on the Authority's web site.

After close of the public comment period and review of agency and public comments on the EIR/EIS, the Authority's Board of Directors, in conjunction with the FRA, will select a preferred alternative based on the analysis in the EIR/EIS and comments received. Identification of the preferred alternative is anticipated at the end of 2011. Additional analysis of the preferred alternative will be conducted and a Final EIR/EIS published. The Final EIR/EIS will respond to comments received on the Draft EIR/EIS and specify mitigation measures for project impacts. As with the Draft EIR/EIS, a Notice of Availability will be published in the *Federal Register*. The Authority will select the project to be built and prepare a Notice of Determination for the California State Clearinghouse pursuant to CEQA. With appropriate completion of the Final EIR/EIS, the FRA will issue a Record of Decision for the project, which will present the basis for the decision and summarize the mitigation measures that will be incorporated into the project. After the Record of Decision, project final design and construction can commence contingent on funding availability.

APPENDIX A
Notice of Preparation

APPENDIX B
Notice of Intent

APPENDIX C
Scoping Meeting Announcements

APPENDIX D
Public Scoping Notice Distribution List

APPENDIX E
Formal Public Scoping Meeting
Attendance List

APPENDIX F
Public Scoping Meeting Display Boards

APPENDIX G
Public Scoping Comment Card and Handouts

APPENDIX H
Written Public Scoping Comments

APPENDIX I
Record of Verbal Public Scoping Comments

APPENDIX J
**Written Public Agency Responses to Notices
of Preparation/Intent**

APPENDIX K
Media Coverage