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Governor's Office of Planning & Research

MAR 05 2020

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March 6, 2020

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Dear Central Valley Wye Project Stakeholder:

The California High-Speed Rail Authority (Authority) announces the availability of a limited revision of its previously published Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Report and Environmental Impact Statement (Draft Supplemental EIR/EIS) pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). The environmental review, consultation, and other actions required by applicable federal environmental laws for this project are being or have been carried out by the State of California pursuant to 23 U.S.C. 327 and a Memorandum of Understanding dated July 23, 2019 and executed by the Federal Railroad Administration and the State of California.

This limited revision now available is entitled *Merced to Fresno Section: Central Valley Wye Revised Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Report/Second Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement, Biological Resources Analysis* (Revised/Second Draft Supplemental EIR/EIS).

The Authority, as lead CEQA and NEPA agency for the Central Valley Wye, is issuing this Revised/Second Draft Supplemental EIR/EIS limited to the portions of the Draft Supplemental EIR/EIS that would require revision based on the new information about the Crotch bumble bee (*Bombus crotchii*), a newly listed candidate species that is assumed to be present in the resource study area for the Central Valley Wye alternatives based on historic records and the presence of suitable habitat for the species.

The Revised/Second Draft Supplemental EIR/EIS is being made available to the public for a 45-day review and comment period. The 45-day review and comment period will begin on **MARCH 13, 2020** and end on **MONDAY, APRIL 27, 2020**.

The Revised/Second Draft Supplemental EIR/EIS can be viewed on the project website at:

https://www.hsr.ca.gov/programs/environmental/eis_eir/draft_supplemental_merced_fresno.aspx and comments can be submitted by email to CentralValley.Wye@hsr.ca.gov with the subject line "Merced to Fresno Section: Central Valley Wye Revised/Second Draft Supplemental EIR/EIS Comment".

Printed and electronic copies of the Revised/Second Draft Supplemental EIR/EIS have been placed at the following locations:

- Authority's Fresno Office: 1111 H Street, Fresno, CA 93721
- Authority's Sacramento Office: 770 L Street, Suite 620, Sacramento, CA
- Chowchilla Branch Library: 300 Kings Avenue, Chowchilla, CA 93610
- Madera County Library: 121 North G Street, Madera, CA 93637
- Merced County Library: 2100 O St, Merced, CA 95340
- Madera County Clerk: 200 W 4th St, Madera, CA 93637
- Merced County Clerk: 2222 M St, Merced, CA 95340


The Authority website also contains the three volumes that comprise the Draft Supplemental EIR/EIS and associated technical reports. Printed and electronic copies of the Draft Supplemental EIR/EIS are still available at the listed locations. You can request electronic copies of the Draft Supplemental EIR/EIS or the Merced to Fresno Final EIR/EIS by calling (916) 324-1541. These documents are not currently part of the public review and comment process; however, they are available for review and reference.

The Authority is committed to working closely with local and regional stakeholders and with our federal, state, and local partners, to ensure the success of California's high-speed rail project, and we look forward to your feedback on this important environmental document and project milestone. The enclosed Notice of Availability provides detailed information regarding the Revised/Second Draft Supplemental EIR/EIS.

Sincerely,



Diana Gomez
Central Valley Regional Director
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Diana.Gomez@hsr.ca.gov



Mark McLoughlin
Director of Environmental Services
(916) 403-6934
Mark.McLoughlin@hsr.ca.gov

Attachments:

1. 1 NOA Public Notice (English)

Si necesita ayuda traduciendo o interpretando esta carta, hay personal disponible que habla español para ayudarle. Por favor llame (800) 881-5799.



PUBLIC NOTICE

NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY

California High-Speed Rail – Merced to Fresno Section: Central Valley Wye

REVISED DRAFT SUPPLEMENTAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT / SECOND DRAFT SUPPLEMENTAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT, BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES ANALYSIS

FOCUSED CONTENT CONCERNING ONE NEWLY-LISTED CANDIDATE SPECIES

The California High-Speed Rail Authority (Authority) is issuing a limited revision of its previously published Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Report and Environmental Impact Statement (Draft Supplemental EIR/EIS), pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). The environmental review, consultation, and other actions required by applicable federal environmental laws for this project are being or have been carried out by the State of California pursuant to 23 U.S.C. 327 and a Memorandum of Understanding dated July 23, 2019 and executed by the Federal Railroad Administration and the State of California.

This document is entitled Merced to Fresno Section: Central Valley Wye Revised Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Report/Second Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (Revised/Second Draft Supplemental EIR/EIS).

The Authority published the Draft Supplemental EIR/EIS for CEQA purposes in May 2019 and for NEPA purposes in September 2019. On June 18, 2019, the California Fish and Game Commission provided notice that four bumble bee species were newly listed as candidate species as defined by Section 2068 of the Fish and Game Code. One such species, the Crotch bumble bee (*Bombus crotchii*), is assumed to be present in the resource study area for the Central Valley Wye alternatives based on historic records and the presence of suitable habitat for the species.

Both CEQA and NEPA provide guidance on the supplementation of published environmental documents. Pursuant to pertinent requirements of both laws, the Authority, as lead CEQA and NEPA agency for the Merced to Fresno Section: Central Valley Wye, is issuing this Revised/Second Draft Supplemental EIR/EIS limited to the portions of the Draft Supplemental EIR/EIS that would require revision based on the new information about the Crotch bumble bee candidate species. New information includes background information, methodology, impact analysis, and mitigation measures. The section and appendix comprising the Revised/Second Draft Supplemental EIR/EIS are:

1. Section 3.7, Biological Resources and Wetlands
2. Section 3.19.6.6, Cumulative Impacts, Biological Resources and Wetlands, with text as presented in the Draft Supplemental EIR/EIS
3. Appendix 3.7-C-2, Biological Resources and Wetlands Special-Status Wildlife

The Authority reviewed other sections of the Draft Supplemental EIR/EIS and found, based on research and a review of the evidence, that no other substantive changes would be required, including Section 3.19, Cumulative Impacts. For the reader's convenience, Section 3.19.6.6 has been included without change for reference, with an introductory page explaining why it has not changed. Section 3.7 includes new mitigation measures related to the Crotch bumble bee that will be incorporated in the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program and Enforcement Plan, to be included as part of the CEQA/NEPA decision documents.

HAZARDOUS WASTE SITES

As previously noticed in the April 2019 CEQA Notice of Availability for the Merced to Fresno Section: Central Valley Wye Draft Supplemental EIR/EIS, the Central Valley Wye alternatives would cross near sites on hazardous waste lists enumerated under Section 65962.5 of the California Government Code. These sites have not changed since the April 2019

publication and include: Hugh's Flying Service (14023 South Red Top Road, El Nido); PG&E's Dairyland Substation (Avenue 21 and Railroad Avenue, Chowchilla); CertainTeed Chowchilla Plant (17775 Avenue 23 1/2, Chowchilla); Minturn Huller Cooperative (9080 S. Minturn Road, Chowchilla); Kinder Morgan High-Pressure Petroleum Pipeline (UPRR/SR 99); Tony Brasil Dairy (15373 Flanagan Road, Dos Palos); Unnamed Facility (14005 Coyote Road, El Nido); Tony Machado Dairy (13611 Avenue 23 Chowchilla); Alfred Soares Dairy (21282 Road 6, Chowchilla); Rezendes Bros (11270 Avenue 21, Chowchilla); Eagle Field Airport (11100 W Eagle Ave, Firebaugh); Highway 59 Landfill (7040 North Highway 59, Merced); and General Electric Company–Kendall Site (Highway 140 and Kibby Road, Merced).

PUBLIC REVIEW AND COMMENT PERIOD

The Authority is making this Revised/Second Draft Supplemental EIR/EIS available for a **45-day review and comment period**. During the 45-day comment period, written comments may be submitted in the following ways:

- Via mail to "Merced to Fresno Section: Central Valley Wye Revised/Second Draft Supplemental EIR/ EIS," California High-Speed Rail Authority, 770 L Street, Suite 620 MS-1, Sacramento, CA 95814
- Through the Authority's website (www.hsr.ca.gov)
- Via email to CentralValley.Wye@hsr.ca.gov with the subject line "Merced to Fresno Section: Central Valley Wye Revised/Second Draft Supplemental EIR/EIS Comment"

The comment period is from **FRIDAY, MARCH 13, 2020, to MONDAY, APRIL 27, 2020**. Comments must be received electronically, or postmarked, on or before **MONDAY, APRIL 27, 2020**.

COPIES OF THE REVISED/SECOND DRAFT SUPPLEMENTAL EIR/EIS

Visit the Authority website (www.hsr.ca.gov) to view and download the Revised/Second Draft Supplemental EIR/EIS. You may also request an electronic copy of the Revised/Second Draft Supplemental EIR/EIS by calling (916) 324-1541.

Printed and electronic copies of the Revised/Second Draft Supplemental EIR/EIS have been placed at the following public libraries and county clerk offices:

- Chowchilla Branch Library: 300 Kings Avenue, Chowchilla, CA 93610
- Madera County Library: 121 North G Street, Madera, CA 93637
- Merced County Library: 2100 O St, Merced, CA 95340
- Madera County Clerk: 200 W 4th St, Madera, CA 93637
- Merced County Clerk: 2222 M St, Merced, CA 95340

Printed and electronic copies of the Revised/Second Draft Supplemental EIR/EIS, also are available for review during business hours at the Authority's office at 770 L Street, Suite 620 MS-1, Sacramento, CA, and the Authority's office at 1111 H Street, Fresno, CA.

The Authority website also contains the three volumes that comprise the Draft Supplemental EIR/EIS and the associated technical reports. Printed and electronic copies of the Draft Supplemental EIR/EIS are still available at the listed public libraries and county clerk offices. You can request electronic copies of the Draft Supplemental EIR/EIS or the Merced to Fresno Final EIR/EIS by calling (916) 324-1541. These documents are not currently part of the public review and comment process, however, they are available for review and reference.

The Authority does not discriminate on the basis of disability and, upon request, will provide reasonable accommodation to ensure equal access to its programs, services, and activities.

NEXT STEPS

The Authority anticipates publishing the Final Supplemental EIR/EIS in summer 2020. The Final Supplemental EIR/EIS will include the Authority's responses to the CEQA and NEPA comments received on the previously circulated Draft Supplemental EIR/EIS, in addition to responses to comments received on this Revised/Second Draft Supplemental EIR/EIS. The Authority Board will consider whether to certify the Final Supplemental EIR and approve the preferred alternative pursuant to CEQA. The Authority, as NEPA lead agency, will also consider whether to issue a Record of Decision approving the preferred alternative, which best serves the purpose and need for the Central Valley Wye and minimizes economic, social, and environmental impacts.