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High-Speed Rail Authority Completes Environmental Clearance into Bakersfield

Action clears way for Authority to move toward project construction into Bakersfield

SACRAMENTO, Calif. –Today, the California High-Speed Rail Authority (Authority) issued the Record of Decision for the final 23-mile route between Shafter and Bakersfield in the Central Valley. This completes the state’s environmental review process between Fresno and Bakersfield and allows the Authority to move toward project construction into Bakersfield. This is the first major environmental action taken under the State’s newly granted federal [National Environmental Policy Act \(NEPA\)](#) and further emphasizes the Authority’s commitment to accelerate the project under new executive leadership.

“I’m proud of the collaborative and cooperative effort that went into this process. Together with our local partners, we are prepared to move forward on project implementation into Bakersfield in a manner beneficial to the project, the city and the county,” said Authority CEO Brian Kelly. “We look forward to a continued partnership as we enter this next phase of the project.”



In order to finalize this environmental document and gather comprehensive feedback, the Authority held over 100 stakeholder meetings, 17 additional public and technical working group meetings, and 15 monthly regulatory agency coordination meetings.

The section receiving clearance extends from Shafter east towards State Route 99 and the existing Union Pacific Railroad tracks, then southward into Bakersfield, ending at a station location at F Street in downtown Bakersfield. This builds upon analysis done previously in the region, narrowing down the specific alignment route that was most amenable to the local communities.

The document released today is a Final Supplemental EIS under NEPA. The document evaluates potential environmental effects of the Locally Generated Alternative, the alternative developed through city and state collaboration. The associated federal approval document also issued today is a Supplemental Record of Decision. This federal approval is similar to the action the Authority’s Board of Directors took in October 2018 under the state’s California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) for this project segment.

The Supplemental Record of Decision signed by CEO Brian Kelly and issued today is the first of several environmental documents expected to be released within the next 12

months. In 2020, the Authority will release all six remaining draft environmental documents for public comment, on a schedule to complete the process (via Records of Decision) well ahead of the federal grant completion deadline. Such actions will keep the Authority on track to complete environmental clearance on the full 520-mile project which runs from San Francisco to Los Angeles/Anaheim.

Project Segment	Draft EIR/EIS	Revised ROD Date	Months to ARRA 12/2022 Deadline from ROD Date
Locally Generated Alternative (F – B)* *Complete	July 2019	October 2019	39
Central Valley Wye (M – F)	September 2019	September 2020	27
Bakersfield to Palmdale	January 2020	February 2021	22
Burbank to Los Angeles	February 2020	January 2021	23
Palmdale to Burbank	February 2020	August 2021	16
San Jose to Merced	March 2020	April 2021	20
San Francisco to San Jose	April 2020	June 2021	18
Los Angeles to Anaheim	November 2020	December 2021	12

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