

16 Introduction to Volume IV

This introduction explains the organization of Volume IV of the Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement (EIR/EIS). Volume IV contains public comments received during the two circulation periods for the Draft Supplemental EIR/EIS for the Merced to Fresno Section: Central Valley Wye and responses. The California High-Speed Rail Authority (Authority) provided a 45-day California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) comment period in May and June of 2019. Following assignment of federal National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) lead agency status for the high-speed rail (HSR) system from the Federal Railroad Administration pursuant to 23 United States Code (U.S.C.) Section 327, the Authority provided a 45-day NEPA comment period in September and October of 2019.

Volume IV also contains public comments and responses on the Revised Draft Supplemental EIR/Second Draft Supplemental EIS for the Merced to Fresno Section: Central Valley Wye. The Authority released a Revised Draft Supplemental EIR/Second Draft Supplemental EIS, Biological Resources Analysis, for a 45-day comment period in March and April 2020. That document addressed a bumble bee species that was recently listed by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife as a state candidate species, which may be present in the resource study area for the Central Valley Wye Alternatives.

16.1 Standard Responses to Frequently Raised Comments

During the public review periods for the Draft Supplemental EIR/EIS and the Revised/Second Draft Supplemental EIR/EIS, Biological Resources Analysis, the Authority received a total of 82 comment submittals through a combination of letters, e-mails, comment cards at public meetings/hearings, and oral comments (court reporter) provided at the CEQA public hearing. Of the 82 submissions, 5 indicated support for the project or a specific alternative, 23 expressed opposition to the project or a specific alternative, and the remaining 54 did not state a clear preference regarding the project or a specific alternative. These 82 submissions yielded a total of 731 discrete comments on the environmental documents and on the proposed project generally.

The Authority has prepared a chapter of standard responses to address the most frequently raised issues. The standard responses provide a comprehensive response to an issue so that multiple aspects of the issue are addressed in an organized manner in one location. This reduces repetition of responses. When an individual comment raises an issue discussed in a standard response, the response to the individual comment includes a cross reference to the appropriate standard response. In Volume IV, the standard responses are provided in Chapter 17, with a Spanish translation in Chapter 18.

16.2 Individual Responses to Written and Verbal Comments

Following the standard responses, the Authority provides responses to individual written and verbal comments. The individual letters and comments included and addressed in Volume IV are organized and numbered as follows:

- Federal Agencies (Chapter 19)
- State Agencies (Chapter 20)
- Elected Officials (Chapter 21)
- Local Agencies (Chapter 22)
- Business and Organization Comments (Chapter 23)
- Individual Comments (Chapter 24)

Each written submission and oral presentation can be found under the appropriate category, by name, or, if representing an organization, the name of their organization. If a commenter gave oral or written testimony at the public hearing, that person will find the comments in the appropriate chapter (i.e., comments by individuals in Chapter 24, comments by businesses and organizations in Chapter 23, and so forth).

Each submission the Authority received was assigned a number starting with “MF2”, which corresponds to this document’s status as a supplement to the Merced to Fresno Final EIR/EIS. Individual comments within each submission were assigned a secondary number.

Each comment letter and public hearing transcript has brackets in the left-hand margin with identification numbers for each comment. Some letters or oral statements have been treated as a single comment, whereas in other submissions, multiple comments have been identified, which have been numbered and responded to individually. The responses to comment(s) are located at the end of each letter or transcript. Each response is labeled with the letter/testimony identifier and comment number that refers back to that particular bracketed comment.

Some comments from the same agency, organization, or individual were submitted more than once (e.g., letter was first faxed and then mailed). These duplicate comment letters are included only once and are not repeated multiple times in the volume. However, any comments submitted under both the CEQA and NEPA are treated as separate comments.

A number of written comment submissions in Volume IV included lengthy attachments to the comment letters or web links to supporting materials. In preparing the Final Supplemental EIR/EIS and responses to comments, every attachment provided with comment submissions or identified by a web link was reviewed and evaluated. In those cases where attachments included additional comments on the Supplemental EIR/EIS, the comments were delineated and responded to. In those cases where attachments or web links contained information or studies in support of the written comment submission, the material was considered in developing the response.

The table of contents for Volume IV, provided below, includes a listing of each comment, submission number, and the page of the volume where it can be found.

16.3 Contents by Order of Appearance in Document

Chapter 17 – Standard Responses (English)	
CVY-Response-GENERAL-1	Oppose HSR Project
CVY-Response-GENERAL-2	Alternatives Analysis and Selection for CVY
CVY-Response-GENERAL-3	Funding and Project Costs
CVY-Response-GENERAL-4	Heavy Maintenance Facility
CVY-Response-GENERAL-5	Phased Implementation, Interim Operating Plans and Draft 2020 Business Plan
CVY-Response-GENERAL-6	Small Business Employment Benefits
CVY-Response-GENERAL-7	Relationship between the Merced to Fresno Final EIR/EIS and Central Valley Wye Final Supplemental EIR/EIS documents
CVY-Response-PUE-1	Electricity Supply Impacts during Operation
CVY-Response-SO-01	HSR Project Effects on Property Values Due to Nearby Alignment
CVY-Response-AGRICULTURE-1	Severance of Agricultural Infrastructure Serving Important Farmland
CVY-Response-AGRICULTURE-2	Farmland Impacts – Remnant Parcels
CVY-Response-AGRICULTURE-3	Dairies
CVY-Response-TRAN-1	Congestion Impacts and VMT

Chapter 18 – Respuestas estándares (Español)	
CVY-Respuesta-GENERALIDADES-1	Oposición al Proyecto del HSR
CVY-Respuesta-GENERALIDADES -2	Análisis y selección de alternativas para CVY
CVY-Respuesta-GENERALIDADES -3	Financiación y costos del proyecto
CVY-Respuesta-GENERALIDADES -4	Talleres de mantenimiento pesado
CVY-Respuesta-GENERALIDADES -5	Implementación por etapas, planes operativos provisionales y Proyecto del Plan de Negocios de 2020
CVY-Respuesta-GENERALIDADES -6	Oportunidades de empleo para pequeñas empresas
CVY-Respuesta-GENERALIDADES -7	Relación entre los documentos EIR/EIS Final de Merced a Fresno y EIR/EIS Suplementario de la Bifurcación en el Valle Central
CVY-Respuesta-PUE-1	Impactos del suministro eléctrico durante las operaciones
CVY-Respuesta-SO-01	Efectos del proyecto del HSR en los valores de la propiedad debido a la proximidad del trazado
CVY-Respuesta-AGRICULTURA-1	Desintegración de la infraestructura agrícola que abastece a tierras de cultivo importantes
CVY-Respuesta-AGRICULTURA-2	Impactos en las tierras de cultivo - Parcelas remanentes
CVY-Respuesta-AGRICULTURA-3	Industrias lácteas
CVY-Respuesta-TRAN-1	Impactos de la congestión y VMT

Chapter 19 – Federal Agency Comments Agency	Submission Number	Page Number
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, San Francisco District, Jimmy C. Szeto CIV CPMS	233	19-3
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, San Francisco District, Jimmy C. Szeto CIV CPMS	224	19-5
U.S. Department of Homeland Security, FEMA Region IX, Gregor Blackburn	227	19-7
U.S. Department of Homeland Security, FEMA Region IX, Gregor Blackburn	280	19-18
U.S. Department of the Interior, Janet Whitlock	285	19-21
U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Reclamation, Mid-Pacific Region, Allison Jacobson	265	19-12
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Region 9, Connell Dunning	264	19-9
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Region 9, Connell Dunning	287	19-24
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Region 9, Connell Dunning	313	19-27
U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Fisheries, West Coast Region, Erin Strange	279	19-15
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Sheri Byers	248	19-1

Chapter 20 – State Agency Comments Agency	Submission Number	Page Number
California Department of Fish and Wildlife, Janice Yoshioka	248	20-1
California Department of Fish and Wildlife, Primavera Parker	317	20-37

Chapter 20 – State Agency Comments Agency	Submission Number	Page Number
California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), District 6, Harpreet Kooner	319	20-63
Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board, Nicholas White	315	20-33
Department of Toxic Substances Control, Gavin McCreary	312	20-29

Chapter 21 – Elected Official Comments Agency	Submission Number	Page Number
U.S. Congressman Jim Costa	267	21-1

Chapter 22 – Local Agency Comments Agency	Submission Number	Page Number
Alview-Dairyland Union School District, via Sheila Perry	263	22-133
Central California Irrigation District, Russell Landon	300	22-243
Chowchilla School District, via James Traber, Fagen, Friedman, Fulfrost, LLP	298	22-225
Chowchilla Elementary School District, Christina Wa	250	22-114
Chowchilla Union High School District, via Christina Wa	251	22-118
City of Chowchilla, Akami Yang	296	22-204
City of Chowchilla, QK, Inc., Desmond Johnston	247	22-90
City of Chowchilla, Rod Pruett	229	22-1
County of Fresno, Christina Monfette	299	22-239
Grassland Water District, Ellen Wehr	244	22-9
Madera County Board of Supervisors, David Rodgers	266	22-148
Madera County Board of Supervisors, Matthew Treber	230	22-3
Madera County Board of Supervisors, Nicholas Salinas	236	22-7
San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, Mark Montelongo	293	22-201
San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, Sharla Yang	252	22-122
Stanislaus County Environmental Review Committee, Patrick Cavanah	283	22-150
Wye Madera County Taskforce, via Matthew Treber (for Madera County)	234	22-5
Wye Madera County Taskforce, via Matthew Treber (for Madera County)	245	22-16
Wye Madera Task Force, via Kristen Kortick, Abbot & Kindermann, Inc.	290	22-153

Chapter 23 – Businesses and/or Organization Comments Agency	Submission Number	Page Number
Benchmark Resources, Bob Delp	235	23-8
Fagundes Dairies and Farms, Norman Allinder on behalf of Lloyd Fagundes	249	23-171
Fagundes Dairy, Lloyd Fagundes	288	23-198
Fairmead Community and Friends, Barbara Nelson	258	23-180

Chapter 23 – Businesses and/or Organization Comments Agency	Submission Number	Page Number
Fairmead Community and Friends, Elaine Moore	260	23-182
Fairmead Community and Friends, Elaine Moore	269	23-184
Fairmead Community and Friends, Norma Bustillos	270	23-187
H & H Farming, Inc., Cathy and Wendell Haworth	254	23-176
Cathy Haworth on behalf of H & H Farming, Inc.	222	23-3
Landmark Real Estate, Ed McIntyre	237	23-10
Leadership Counsel for Justice and Accountability, via Madeline Harris (for Fairmead Community and Friends)	273	23-190
Leadership Counsel for Justice and Accountability, via Michael Claiborne (for Fairmead Community and Friends)	241	23-13
Leadership Counsel for Justice and Accountability, via Michael Claiborne (for Fairmead Community and Friends)	242	23-128
Leadership Counsel for Justice and Accountability, via Michael Claiborne (for Fairmead Community and Friends)	274	23-193
Leadership Counsel for Justice and Accountability, via Michael Claiborne (for Fairmead Community and Friends)	291	23-201
Merced County Farm Bureau, Breanne Ramos (for Preserve Our Heritage; Chowchilla Water District; Fagundes, Fagundes, Fagundes; Madera County Farm Bureau; and Merced County Farm Bureau)	243	23-158
Merced County Farm Bureau, Breanne Ramos	246	23-167
Merced County Farm Bureau, Breanne Ramos	297	23-204
QK Inc., Annalisa Perea	210	23-1
Stanley Green Energy, Robert Stanley	278	23-196
White Mountain Ranch, Denise Stone	306	23-209

Chapter 24 – Individual Comments by Last Name			
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Francia	Sara	211	24-9
Harry	Matt	259	24-11
Harry	Matt	271	24-13
Hickey	Cynthia	255	24-16
Knapp	Sandra	214	24-19
Massaro	Steve	253	24-21

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Perkins	William	281	24-39
Perkins	William	309	24-60
Schnoor	Marcie	257	24-41
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West	Pamela	228	24-54
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