

**Coast Corridor Improvements**  
**Draft Program**  
**Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)/**  
**Environmental Impact Report (EIR)**

From Salinas, CA to San Luis Obispo, CA

SCH# 2012081045

Prepared by the  
U.S. Department of Transportation  
Federal Railroad Administration  
and the  
San Luis Obispo Council of Governments  
In Cooperation with the  
Transportation Agency for Monterey County  
and the  
California Department of Transportation  
Division of Rail and Mass Transportation

November 2014

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## General Information About This Document

### *What's in this document?*

The Federal Railroad Administration (FRA), the San Luis Obispo Council of Governments (SLOCOG), and the Transportation Agency for Monterey County (TAMC) have prepared this Program Environmental Impact Statement/Environmental Impact Report, which examines the potential environmental impacts of alternatives being considered for the proposed project located in Monterey and San Luis Obispo Counties, California. The document describes why the project is being proposed, the existing environment that could be affected by the project, potential impacts, and the avoidance, minimization, and/or mitigation strategies.

### *What should you do?*

- Please read this Program Environmental Impact Statement/Environmental Impact Report. Additional copies of this document as well as the technical studies are available for review at the following locations:

San Luis Obispo Council of Governments Office  
1114 Marsh Street  
San Luis Obispo CA 93401  
805-781-4219

Transportation Agency for Monterey County  
55-B Plaza Circle  
Salinas, CA 93901  
831-775-0903

Copies of the document will also be available at several public libraries along the Coast Corridor. Refer to Chapter 5.0, Comments and Coordination, for a list of locations.

- Attend public hearings, which will occur as follows:

Public Hearing #1  
Meeting of the Transportation Agency for  
Monterey County  
December 3, 2014  
Agricultural Center Conference Room  
1428 Abbott Street  
Salinas, CA 93901  
Time: 9:00 a.m. PST

Public Hearing #3  
King City Regular City Council Meeting  
December 9, 2014  
City Council Chambers, City Hall  
212 South Vanderhurst Avenue  
King City, CA 93930  
Time: 6:00 p.m. PST

Public Hearing #2  
Soledad Regular City Council Meeting  
December 3, 2014  
City Council Chambers, City Hall  
248 Main Street  
Soledad, CA 93960  
Time: 5:30 p.m. PST

Public Hearing #4  
Meeting of the San Luis Obispo Council of  
Governments  
January 7, 2015  
Atascadero City Council Chambers, City Hall  
6500 Palma Avenue  
Atascadero, CA 93422  
Time: 8:30 a.m. PST

- We welcome your comments. If you have any concerns regarding the proposed project, please attend public hearings (listed above) and provide comments, or send your written comments to SLOCOG by the deadline. Submit written comments to one of the following addresses:

Stephanie Perez  
Environmental Protection Specialist  
Office of Railroad and Policy Development  
Federal Railroad Administration  
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE  
Washington, DC 20590  
202-493-0388

Christina Watson  
Principal Transportation Planner  
Transportation Agency for Monterey County  
55-B Plaza Circle  
Salinas, CA 93901  
831-775-4406

Pete Rodgers  
Administrative Director  
San Luis Obispo Council of Governments  
1114 Marsh Street  
San Luis Obispo, CA 93401  
805-781-5712

- Written comments may also be submitted electronically to: [prodgers@slocog.org](mailto:prodgers@slocog.org)
- Submit comments by the deadline: January 7, 2015

#### ***What happens next?***

SLOCOG, TAMC, and FRA will review all substantive comments received from the public and reviewing agencies. Consistent with state and Federal law, a Final Environmental Impact Statement/Environmental Impact Report will be circulated. The final document will include responses to substantive comments received on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement/Environmental Impact Report and will identify the preferred alternative.

Following circulation of the Final Environmental Impact Statement/Environmental Impact Report, if the decision is made to approve the preferred alternative, SLOCOG will publish a Notice of Determination for compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act and FRA will publish a Record of Decision for compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act. This is a programmatic, “tier 1” environmental review that considers a comprehensive list of potential physical rail improvements in addition to increased passenger rail service. The exact physical rail improvements necessary to accommodate additional passenger rail service in this corridor will be identified after the conclusion of the environmental review process and following discussions and negotiations between SLOCOG, TAMC, FRA, other agencies, and the railroad owner (Union Pacific Railroad). FRA, SLOCOG, and TAMC anticipate conducting future project-level or “tier 2” environmental reviews under both NEPA and CEQA for any physical improvements identified for potential construction. Further design refinements will also be necessary to inform any required tier 2 environmental reviews. Only after such further design and environmental review work could construction then proceed.

For individuals with sensory disabilities, this document can be made available in Braille, large print, on audiocassette, or computer disk. To obtain a copy in one of these alternate formats, please call or write to Caltrans, Attn: Joe Valdez, Division of Rail and Mass Transportation, P.O. Box 942873, MS 74, Sacramento, CA, 94273-0001; (916) 654-7188, or use the California Relay Service TTY number, dial 711.

OCT 31 2014

SCH# 2012081045  
District 5


Coast Corridor Proposed Rail Improvements – Salinas to San Luis Obispo

DRAFT PROGRAM ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT  
/ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT

Submitted Pursuant to:  
(State) Division 13, Public Resources Code—California Environmental Quality Act  
(Federal) 42 U.S. Code 4332(2)(C) National Environmental Policy Act  
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
Federal Railroad Administration

San Luis Obispo Council of Governments and Transportation Agency for Monterey County

10/30/14  
Date of Approval

  
Joseph Szabo  
Administrator  
Federal Railroad Administration


10/22/14  
Date of Approval

  
Ronald DeCarli  
Executive Director  
San Luis Obispo Council of Governments

10/23/14  
Date of Approval

  
Debbie Hale  
Executive Director  
Transportation Agency for Monterey County

10/21/14  
Date of Approval

  
Bruce Roberts, P.E.  
Acting Chief  
California Department of Transportation,  
Division of Rail and Mass Transportation

The following persons may be contacted for additional information concerning this document:

Stephanie B. Perez  
Environmental Protection Specialist  
Federal Railroad Administration  
1200 New Jersey Avenue SE  
Washington DC 20590  
202-493-0388

**Abstract:** The purpose of the proposed rail improvements to the Coast Corridor is to enhance safety and develop a faster and more reliable passenger and freight rail system that provides added capacity in response to increased travel demand between Los Angeles and San Francisco, and the cities in between. This Draft Program Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement (EIR/EIS) describes the purpose and need for the Project, describes the project alternatives, analyzes the the potential impacts, and identifies appropriate, mitigation strategies to reduce these impacts. FRA anticipates future project-level analysis and documentation as funding becomes available and that such analysis and documentation will further refine project-level mitigation measures as appropriate.

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