

California High-Speed Rail: San Jose to Merced Project Section
Revised Draft Environmental Impact Report /
Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement, Biological Resources
Analysis

Pursuant to:

California Environmental Quality Act (Pub. Resources Code, § 21000 et seq.)
State of California CEQA Guidelines (Cal. Code Regs., Tit. 14, § 15000 et seq.)
National Environmental Policy Act (42 U.S.C. § 4321 et seq.)
40 C.F.R. Parts 1500-1508, 64 Fed. Reg. 28545, 49 U.S.C. § 303 and 23 U.S.C. § 327

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Signed by Serge Stanich, Director of Environmental Services, on behalf of the CEO, pursuant to the CEO's delegation of signature authority dated April 1, 2021.

Brian P. Kelly
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Abstract: The *San Jose to Merced Project Section: Revised Draft Environmental Impact Report/Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement, Biological Resources Analysis* (Revised/Supplemental Draft EIR/EIS) was prepared as a joint document to meet all pertinent requirements of both the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). Following NEPA Assignment in July 2019, the California High-Speed Rail Authority (Authority) has assumed the role of federal lead agency on the project. Specifically, 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 United States Code 327 and a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) dated July 23, 2019, and executed by the Federal Railroad Administration and the State of California. Under that MOU, the Authority is the project's lead agency under NEPA. Prior to the July 23, 2019 MOU, the FRA was the federal lead agency.

The Revised/Supplemental Draft EIR/EIS presents new biological resources analysis that was not included in the San Jose to Merced Project Section Draft EIR/EIS of the California High-Speed Rail Project, published in April 2020. Following the Authority's publication of the Draft EIR/EIS, the Authority learned that the California Fish and Game Commission published a notice of findings, on May 1, 2020, to designate the Southern California/Central Coast population (evolutionarily significant unit) of mountain lion (*Puma concolor*) as a candidate species under the California Endangered Species Act. Additionally, the monarch butterfly (*Danaus plexippus*) became a candidate for listing under the federal Endangered Species Act on December 15, 2020. New information includes background information, methodology, impact analysis, and mitigation measures. Changes in the Revised/Supplemental Draft EIR/EIS are primarily related to mountain lion and monarch butterfly but also include updates to other information as informed by the new or updated analysis.