

July 31, 2019

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Ronald L. Batory, Administrator
Federal Railroad Administration
West Building
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Mr. Batory,

As Chief Executive Officer of the California High-Speed Rail Authority (Authority), I want to thank you for your July 1, 2019, letter to California Governor Gavin Newsom notifying him of the Federal Railroad Administration's (FRA) decision to approve the State's application to participate in the Surface Transportation Project Delivery Program, otherwise known as National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Assignment.

We are proud to be the first state to be assigned FRA's federal environmental review responsibilities. The Authority is committed to successfully implementing NEPA Assignment to support efficient delivery of the nation's first high-speed rail program, while protecting the environment.

Critical to our successful implementation is ongoing, active engagement from the FRA. As described in the NEPA Assignment Memorandum of Understanding, FRA retains certain federal approvals and must coordinate with the Authority on specific elements of the NEPA Assignment program. As we work with your staff regarding administration of the MOU requirements, we look forward to coordinating in the near term on the following:

- Conducting a training needs assessment and approving the required training plan
- Finalizing the Authority's Environmental Handbook
- Establishing the parameters for the first annual audit of the NEPA Assignment program
- Performing Clean Air Act Conformity determinations and other federal environmental approvals retained by the FRA
- Facilitating the Authority's assumption of FRA's federal environmental responsibilities through coordinated outreach to federal agencies and affected project sponsors.

As you are aware, throughout the application process for NEPA Assignment, Authority staff and FRA staff worked collaboratively and effectively together, and we look forward to resuming that collaboration under NEPA Assignment. My NEPA implementation team and I are eager to work with you and your team to ensure successful execution of the MOU. Toward that end, I would propose a meeting between our teams as soon as possible. I would certainly be willing to bring my team to Washington, D.C., to detail how our agencies will work together to assure successful implantation of the NEPA Assignment MOU.

Again, I appreciate your action on this matter, and I thank you for your consideration. If you have any questions, please contact me or my Director of Environmental Services Mark McLoughlin, at mark.mcloughlin@hsr.ca.gov or at (916-403-6934).

Respectfully,

Original Signed By:
Brian P. Kelly
Chief Executive Officer