CALIFORNIA High-Speed Rail Authority

Memorandum

DATE: August 31, 2026

TO: Stefan Galvez, Director of Environmental Services *Stefan Galvez*

FROM: Scott Rothenberg, Environmental Analysis Manager

CC: Frank Meraz, Environmental Compliance Manager; Brett Rushing, NEPA Assignment Manager

SUBJECT: CEQA Statutory Exemption under PRC §21080.70 (SB 131) for the High-Speed Rail Operations Control Center Building

The California High-Speed Rail Authority (Authority) has identified the need for a six-story Operations Control Center (OCC) Building as part of the Operation and Maintenance Facility (OMF) planned south of the City of Fresno. This facility will be used to support day one operations and long-term maintenance of the high-speed rail (HSR) system.

For the purposes of this memorandum, 'Project' refers solely to the OCC Building located within the OMF site. This memorandum documents the Authority's assessment that the Project does not require additional environmental review under California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to CEQA Statutory Exemption under Senate Bill (SB) 131, which adds Section 21080.70 to the Public Resources Code. The subject OCC Building is an integral part of the OMF for the purposes of maintaining, repairing and operating the High-Speed Rail equipment in a safe manner. The OMF facility's footprint and features were included in prior environmental documentation for the Authority's Fresno to Bakersfield Project section. Additionally, the property for the OMF facility, including the OCC Building, has been obtained by the Authority as part of civil construction package right-of-way acquisitions.

Description of the OCC Building

The OMF will include a six-story building that would accommodate up to 200 staff and that would include maintenance, operations, engineering, technical support and administrative activities.

CEQA Exemption under PRC §21080.70 (Senate Bill 131)

The California Legislature adopted Senate Bill (SB) 131 on June 30, 2025. This bill exempts from CEQA a project that consists of the development, construction, or operation of stations and maintenance facilities for electrically powered high-speed rail, if specified conditions are met. These conditions include:

1. The project has been evaluated in a prior project-level environmental impact report prepared pursuant to this division and that prior report evaluated one or more similar high-speed rail maintenance facility sites.
2. The project incorporates all applicable mitigation measures identified in those prior project-level environmental impact reports.
3. The project site is located within one mile of rail right-of-way approved for high-speed rail service.

4. The project avoids natural and protected lands as defined in Public Resources Code (PRC) Section 21067.5.
5. This exemption applies exclusively to [maintenance facilities described in subdivision (a)] and [does] not exempt any other facilities, structures, or uses not expressly identified.

Refer to Attachment A for the full text of relevant portions of SB 131.

Evidence of Exemption Conditions

1. *The project has been evaluated in a prior project-level environmental impact report prepared pursuant to this division and that prior report evaluated one or more similar high-speed rail maintenance facility sites*

In May 2014, the Authority Board of Directors certified the Final EIR/EIS for the Fresno to Bakersfield Section of the High-Speed Rail (HSR) Project to comply with CEQA and approved the Fresno to Bakersfield Section. Following that approval, in June 2014 the Federal Railroad Administration approved a Record of Decision for the Fresno to Bakersfield Final EIS pursuant to NEPA. The Final EIR/EIS included several types of maintenance facilities including Maintenance of Infrastructure Facilities (MOIF), Maintenance of Infrastructure Sidings (MOIS), a Heavy Maintenance Facility (HMF), and an Operations Control Center (OCC). In Section 2.2.8.2 and 2.2.8.3 of the Final EIR/EIS, the OCC was considered both as a component of the HMF, and also as a separate office building with adequate office space for up to 200 employees (Authority and FRA 2014).

In addition to the analysis of the maintenance facilities in the Final EIR/EIS, the Authority completed an environmental reexamination in November 2020 to assess the early construction of a Trainset Certification Facility (TCF) and OCC at the Fresno Works site (Authority 2020, see Attachment B). To provide the necessary maintenance infrastructure for initial project construction areas, a MOIF would be constructed near Fresno within the footprint of the previously evaluated Fresno Works HMF site as described in the Final EIR/EIS. The TCF and OCC Reexamination identified that the assembly, testing, and commissioning of trainsets, that was originally a function assigned to the HMF, is needed before the HMF is sited and constructed. The reexamination evaluated the construction and operation of the TCF and OCC in comparison to the Final EIR/EIS and determined that under CEQA, no major changes were necessary to the Final EIR/EIS nor were the changes substantial or significant under NEPA and thereby did not require a new supplemental EIS or new environmental document. The MOIF at the Fresno Works Site is now referred to as the OMF.

2. *The project incorporates all applicable mitigation measures identified in those prior project-level environmental impact reports.*

All relevant mitigation measures and project design features (avoidance and minimization measures) included in the 2014 Fresno to Bakersfield Final EIR/EIS and Mitigation Monitoring and Enforcement Program (MMEP)/Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP) would be implemented for the OCC Building, including but not limited to site screening, architectural treatment, adequate parking and circulation, lighting, and coordination with the State Historic Preservation Office for cultural resources.

3. *The project site is located within one mile of rail right-of-way approved for high-speed rail service.*

The OCC is located within the Fresno Works Site, shown in Exhibit 1, which is immediately adjacent to the HSR alignment, just south of the City of Fresno.

4. *The project avoids natural and protected lands as defined in Section 21067.5.*

The Fresno Works Site is not located on any natural or protected lands as defined in PRC §21067.5 (see Attachment A). Chapter 3 of the Final EIR/EIS describes the affected environment of the land traversed by the HSR system and maps known parks, recreation areas, hazardous waste sites, floodplains, wetlands, and conservation easements. The Project is within an agricultural/industrial area of Fresno County. According to Fresno County Zoning maps, the OMF site is designated as AE20 (Exclusive Agricultural Zone), and is not mapped as prime farmland of statewide importance pursuant to PRC §21067.5(p) (Fresno County, 2026). As shown in Exhibit 2, the Department of Conservation Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program designates the site as non-farmland and farmland of local importance. This confirms the Project avoids all categories listed under PRC §21067.5, including subsection (p) regarding prime and statewide important farmland.

5. *This exemption applies exclusively to [maintenance facilities described in subdivision (a)] and [does] not exempt any other facilities, structures, or uses not expressly identified.*

The use of SB 131 CEQA Statutory Exemption is for the advancement of design of the OCC Building, which is an integral component of the OMF required for the HSR System. The remainder of the OMF at the Fresno Works Site was adequately discussed/included in the Final EIR/EIS and 2020 reexamination.

Conclusion

The Authority Environmental Services Branch reviewed and compared the OCC Building with the information and analysis of the maintenance facilities described in the 2014 Fresno to Bakersfield Final EIR/EIS and 2020 reexamination, confirming that because the OCC Building is a maintenance facility evaluated in prior CEQA documents, incorporates applicable mitigation measures, is located adjacent to approved HSR right-of-way, and is not located on natural or protected lands as defined in PRC §21067.5, the OCC qualifies for the statutory CEQA exemption under SB 131. No additional CEQA documentation is required.

References

- Authority and FRA 2014. California High-Speed Rail Authority and Federal Railroad Administration. *California High-Speed Train Project, Fresno to Bakersfield Section Final Environmental Impact Report / Environmental Impact Statement (EIR/EIS).* Volume I: Report and Appendix 2-E.
- Authority 2020. California High-Speed Rail Authority. *Train Certification Facility and Operations Control Center CEQA/NEPA Reexamination (FB-23-0016).*

Exhibit 1: Fresno Works Site – Operation Control Center within the Operation & Maintenance Facility

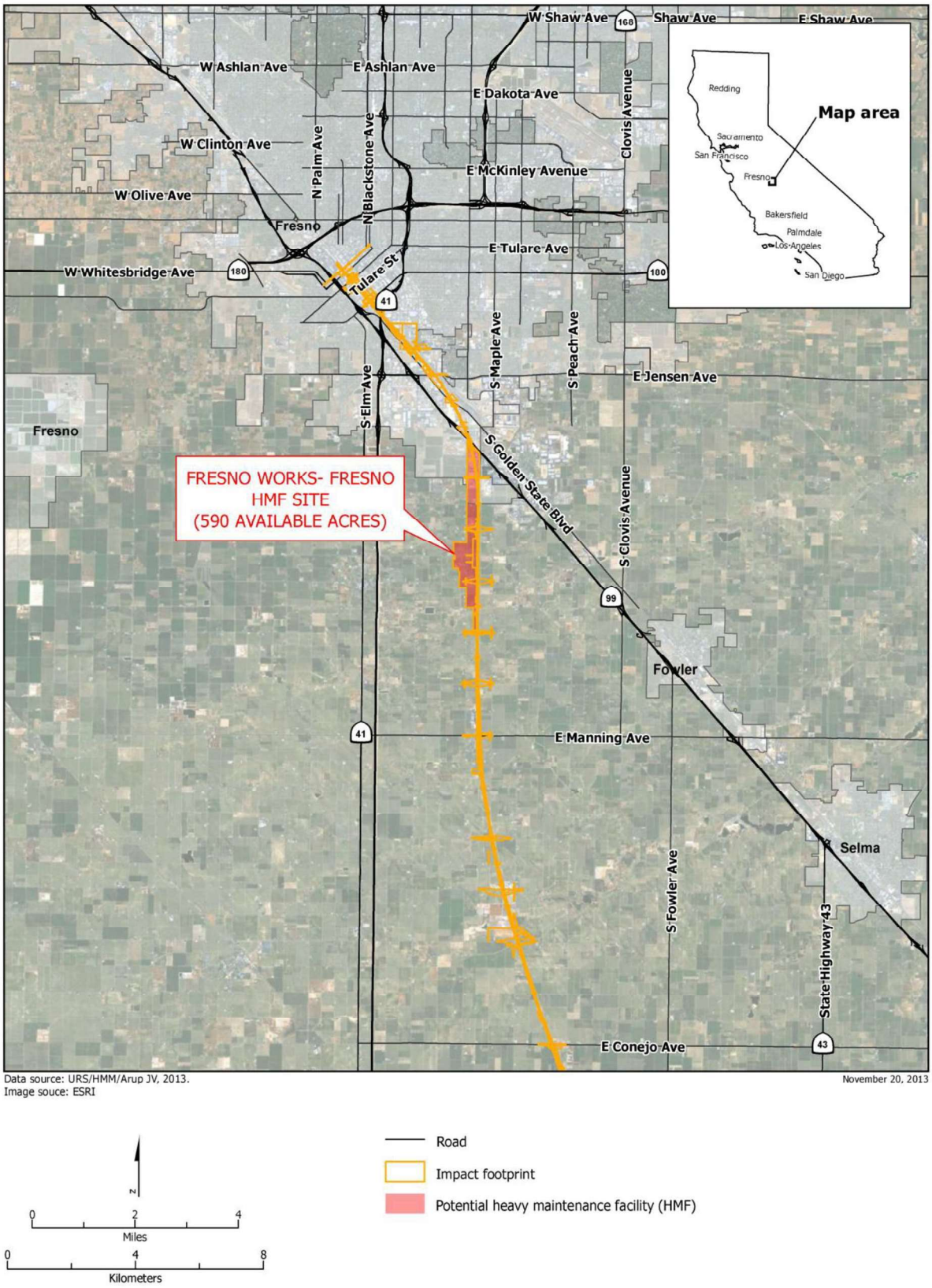
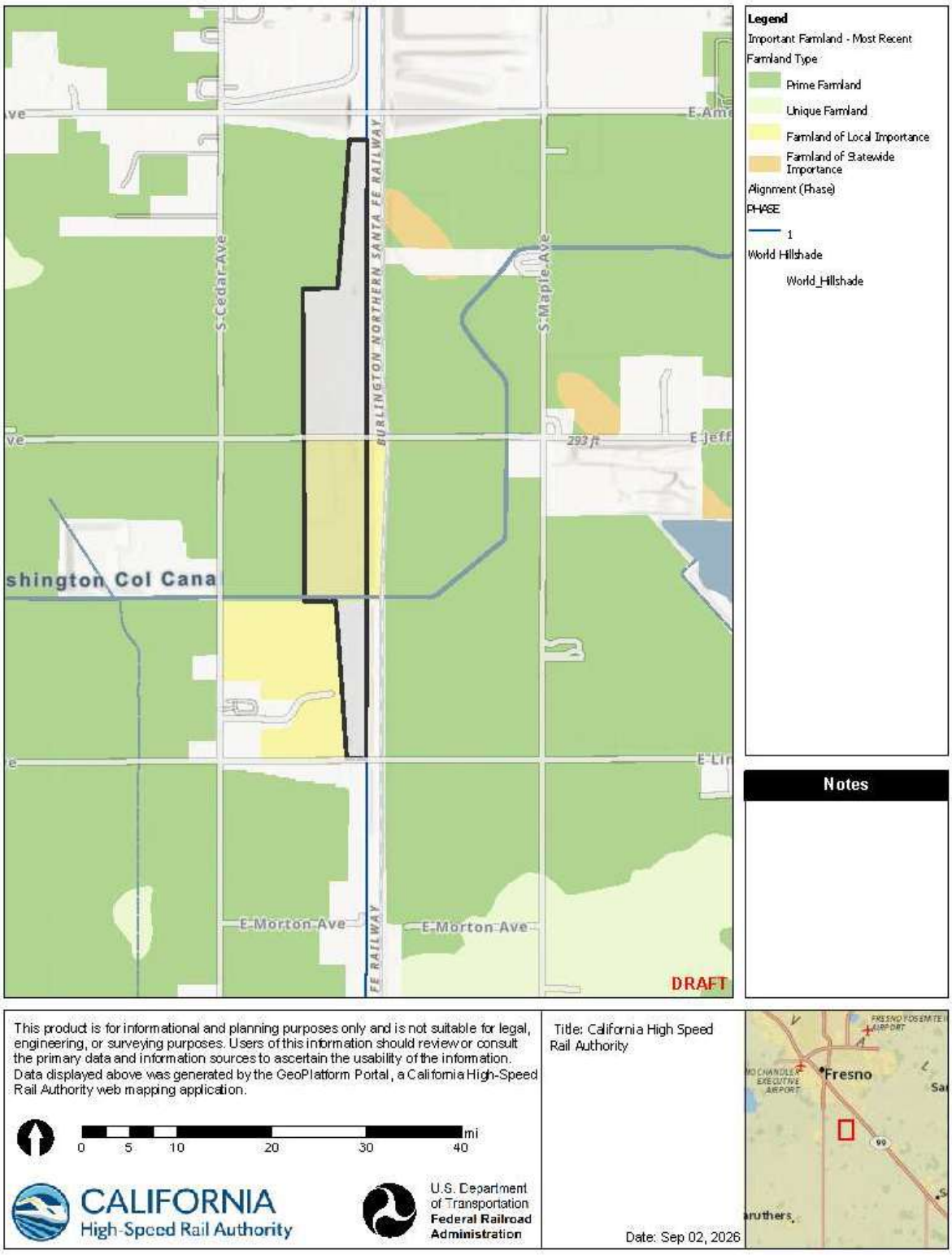


Exhibit 2: Fresno Works Site – Department of Conservation Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program



Attachment A: Full Text of Relevant Portions of SB 131

SEC. 16.

Section 21080.70 is added to the Public Resources Code, to read:

21080.70.

a) This division does not apply to a project that consists of the development, construction, or operation of a heavy maintenance facility or other maintenance facility for electrically powered high-speed rail, if all of the following conditions are met:

(1) The project has been evaluated in a prior project-level environmental impact report prepared pursuant to this division and that prior report evaluated one or more similar high-speed rail maintenance facility sites.

(2) The project incorporates all applicable mitigation measures identified in those prior project-level environmental impact reports.

(3) The project site is located within one mile of rail right-of-way approved for high-speed rail service.

b) This division does not apply to a project that consists of the development, construction, or modification of a proposed passenger rail station, or design changes to a passenger rail station, for the purpose of serving electrically powered high-speed rail, if both of the following conditions are met:

(1) The station or station design change is located within the resource study area of a previously certified environmental impact report prepared pursuant to this division for a high-speed rail or passenger rail project.

(2) The project incorporates all applicable mitigation measures identified in the previously certified environmental impact report.

c) For purposes of this section, "high-speed rail" means the California high-speed rail project and other high-speed rail projects in California that are planned to directly connect to the California high-speed rail project.

d) This section does not apply to any project on or within natural and protected lands as defined in Section 21067.5.

e) The exemptions provided in subdivisions (a) and (b) shall apply exclusively to projects described in those subdivisions and do not exempt any other facilities, structures, or uses not expressly identified. Any other project uses shall be subject to this division unless independently exempt under a separate provision of law.

SEC. 5.

Section 21067.5 is added to the Public Resources Code, to read:

21067.5.

"Natural and protected lands" means sites located within any of the following locations:

a) The state park system, as described in Article 1 (commencing with Section 5001) of Chapter 1 of Division 5.

b) A wilderness area, as defined in Section 5093.32.

c) A marine protected area, as defined in Section 2852 of the Fish and Game Code.

d) The national park system, as defined in Section 100102 of Title 54 of the United States Code.

e) A national recreation area.

f) A national monument.

g) The national wild and scenic rivers system, as defined in Section 1273 of Title 16 of the United States Code.

h) *Any ecological reserve or wildlife management area acquired and managed by the Department of Fish and Wildlife pursuant to Article 2 (commencing with Section 1525) or Article 4 (commencing with Section 1580) of Chapter 5 of Division 2 of the Fish and Game Code.*

i) *A hazardous waste site that is listed pursuant to Section 65962.5 of the Government Code or a hazardous waste site designated by the Department of Toxic Substances Control pursuant to Section 25356 of the Health and Safety Code, unless either of the following apply:*

(1) The site is an underground storage tank site that received a uniform closure letter issued pursuant to subdivision (g) of Section 25296.10 of the Health and Safety Code based on closure criteria established by the State Water Resources Control Board for the use proposed by the project. This paragraph does not alter or change the conditions to remove a site from the list of hazardous waste sites listed pursuant to Section 65962.5 of the Government Code.

(2) The State Department of Public Health, State Water Resources Control Board, Department of Toxic Substances Control, or a local agency making a determination pursuant to subdivision (c) of Section 25296.10 of the Health and Safety Code has otherwise determined that the site is suitable for the use proposed by the project.

j) *Within a regulatory floodway as determined by the Federal Emergency Management Agency in any official maps published by the Federal Emergency Management Agency, unless the development has received a no-rise certification in accordance with Section 60.3(d)(3) of Title 44 of the Code of Federal Regulations.*

k) *Lands under conservation easement.*

l) *On, or within a 300-foot radius of, a wetland, as defined in the United States Fish and Wildlife Service Manual, Part 660 FW 2 (June 21, 1993).*

m) *An environmentally sensitive area within the coastal zone, as defined in Section 30107.5.*

n) *Lands protected as preserve areas or reserve lands pursuant to an adopted natural community conservation plan pursuant to the Natural Community Conservation Planning Act (Chapter 10 (commencing with Section 2800) of Division 3 of the Fish and Game Code) or habitat conservation plan pursuant to the federal Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. Sec. 1531 et seq.).*

o) *Within a very high fire hazard severity zone, as determined by the Department of Forestry and Fire Protection pursuant to Section 51178 of the Government Code, or within the state responsibility area, as defined in Section 4102. This subdivision does not apply to sites that have adopted fire hazard mitigation measures pursuant to existing building standards or state fire mitigation measures applicable to the development, including, but not limited to, standards established under all of the following provisions or their successor provisions:*

(1) Section 4291 of this code or Section 51182 of the Government Code, as applicable.

(2) Section 4290.

(3) Chapter 7A (commencing with Section 701A.1) of Part 2 of Title 24 of the California Code of Regulations.

p) *Either prime farmland or farmland of statewide importance, as defined pursuant to the United States Department of Agriculture land inventory and monitoring criteria, as modified for California, and designated on the maps prepared by the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the Department of Conservation, or land zoned or designated for agricultural protection or preservation by a local ballot measure that was approved by the voters of that jurisdiction.*

Attachment B: Train Certification Facility and Operations Control Center CEQA/NEPA Reexamination

CALIFORNIA High-Speed Rail Authority

DATE: August 7, 2020

SIGNATURE/APPROVAL ROUTING SHEET

DOCUMENT(S) INFORMATION	
To:	Mark McLoughlin, Director of Environmental Services
From:	Scott Smith, Supervising Environmental Planner
Subject:	Train Certification Facility and Operations Control Center CEQA/NEPA Re-examination (FB-23-0016)

Description of Enclosed Document(s): During HSR design it was determined that construction of a Train Certification Facility (TCF) and Operations Control Center (OCC) at the Fresno Works - Fresno Heavy Maintenance Facility (HMF) was necessary prior to the final siting and construction of the HMF.

To assess these proposed changes, an environmental re-examination was conducted to consider the potential new or changed environmental effects and permitting consequences associated with the proposed design change. From the evaluation, it was determined that under CEQA, no major changes are necessary to the Final Fresno to Bakersfield EIR nor are the changes substantial or significant under NEPA and thereby do not require a new supplemental EIS or new environmental document.

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 U.S.C. 327 and a Memorandum of Understanding dated July 23, 2019, after being executed by the Federal Railroad Administration and the State of California.

☒ Expedite Due Date: August 7, 2020

REVIEWER INFORMATION		
Reviewer #1 Name (Print): Scott Smith, Supervising Environmental Planner, CHSRA	Reviewer's Signature/Date: Scott Smith	Comments:
Reviewer #2 Name (Print): Scott Rothenberg, Supervising Environmental Planner, CHSRA	Reviewer's Signature/Date: Scott Rothenberg 8/7/20 Scott Rothenberg 8/7/20 (Aug 7, 2020 14:13 PDT)	Comments:

☐ Approval/Signoff (initials)
☒ Signature
☐ Hand Carry or Call for Pick up
☐ Information
☐ Do Not Release – Call When Signed
☐ Release When Signed

Executive Office Control No.:	**Name of Contact Person: Scott Smith**
	Phone Number:
	Office: Environmental
	Office Control No.:

Memorandum

DATE: 8/7/2020

TO: Mark A. McLoughlin, Director of Environmental Services

FROM: Scott Smith, Supervising Environmental Planner

SUBJECT: Train Certification Facility and Operations Control Center CEQA/NEPA Re-examination (FB-23-0016)

During HSR design it was determined that construction of a Train Certification Facility (TCF) and Operations Control Center (OCC) at the Fresno Works - Fresno Heavy Maintenance Facility (HMF) was necessary prior to the final siting and construction of the HMF. The Project description in the Final Environmental Impact Report/ Environmental Impact Study (EIR/EIS) identified five potential sites within the Fresno to Bakersfield Project Segment for the HMF, including the Fresno Works-Fresno HMF. The Final EIR/EIS identified that if the HMF were to be located in the Fresno to Bakersfield Project Segment, the HMF would be co-located with a Maintenance of Infrastructure Facility (MOIF); if the HMF were to be located in a different project segment, the MOIF would be constructed in the Fresno to Bakersfield Project Segment. Since certification of the Final EIR/EIS, the Authority has determined that an MOIF is needed to be constructed within the footprint of the Fresno Works-Fresno HMF site. To support inspection, testing, commissioning, and certification of trainsets, this Variation would include the construction of a TCF, and an OCC within the footprint of the Fresno Works-Fresno HMF site analyzed in the Final EIR/EIS.

Authority Environmental conducted a review of the proposed change and compared it with the information, analysis, and conclusions in the Final EIR/EIS. Based on the CEQA/NEPA reexamination process, Authority Environmental conclude that the construction of the TCF and OCC does not constitute a substantial change in the approved project or in the circumstances under which the project will be undertaken due to the involvement of new significant environmental effects nor does it provide new information of substantial importance. As such, Authority Environmental finds that a Subsequent EIR or Supplemental EIS is not required. Please review the evidence and the analysis presented in this reexamination package. I recommend that you accept these findings and sign this cover memorandum to document completion of the reexamination process for the TCF and OCC construction.

Signed: Scott Smith _____ Date: _____

Scott Smith, Supervising Environmental Planner, California High-Speed Rail Authority

Signed: Scott Rothenberg 8/7/20 _____ Date: 8/7/20

Scott Rothenberg 8/7/20 (Aug 7, 2020 14:13 PDT)

Mark A. McLoughlin, Director of Environmental Services, California High-Speed Rail Authority

MEMORANDUM

DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED VARIATION IN THE FRESNO TO BAKERSFIELD PROJECT SECTION OF THE CALIFORNIA HIGH-SPEED RAIL SYSTEM

1. **Project Section:** Fresno to Bakersfield, Construction Packages 1C and 2/3

2. **Title of Variation:** Trainset Certification Facility and Operations Control Center

3. **Recommended Approach:** Proceed with environmental clearance via a Step 1 environmental reexamination (re-exam) of the California High-Speed Rail (HSR), Fresno to Bakersfield Project Section, Final Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement (Final EIR/EIS, 2014).

4. **Description of Variation:** This re-exam addresses construction, operation, and maintenance of a Trainset Certification Facility (TCF) and an Operations Control Center (OCC) for the California High-Speed Rail Authority (Authority) in Construction Packages (CPs) 1C and 2/3 of the Fresno to Bakersfield Project Section (Project).

   The Project description in the Final EIR/EIS included three types of maintenance facilities. These included Maintenance of Infrastructure Facilities (MOIF), a Heavy Maintenance Facility (HMF) and an OCC. The Final EIR/EIS identified five potential sites within the Fresno to Bakersfield Project Section for the HMF but that it alternatively might be located within the Merced to Fresno Project Section. The Final EIR/EIS further identified that if the HMF was located in the Fresno to Bakersfield Project Section, the MOIF would be co-located with the HMF (Page 2-15, Final EIR/EIS). If the HMF was located in a different project section, a separate MOIF would be constructed in the Fresno to Bakersfield Project Section. The OCC was identified as being likely co-located with the HMF or potentially at a separate site.

   The site of the HMF has not yet been selected and the design will not be finalized until a later time as part of an Authority contract for acquiring HSR system rolling stock. To provide the necessary maintenance infrastructure for initial project construction areas consisting of CPs 1, 2/3 and 4, a MOIF would be constructed near Fresno within the footprint of the previously evaluated Fresno Works HMF site as described in the Final EIR/EIS.

   One of the initial functions of the HMF described in the Final EIR/EIS was assembly, testing, and commissioning of trainsets. It has now been determined that these functions will be needed before an HMF is sited and constructed. Therefore, the Authority is now proposing to include the TCF at the Fresno MOIF site. This TCF would support inspection, testing, commissioning, and certification of trainsets prior to starting passenger rail service. In addition to the TCF, the OCC would also be located at the Fresno MOIF site.

   Like the Fresno HMF site identified in the Final EIR/EIS, the TCF would be located immediately to the west of the Project alignment and extend from just north of East American Avenue to just south of East Lincoln Avenue in Fresno (see Figure 1). The facility will be completely located within the MOIF site. A receiving track will initially split from the mainline and then further into three tracks,

each approximately 1,000 feet in length. Two of these tracks will run through a large shed building containing the majority of the inspection and testing facilities. The TCF will also include a train washing area with onsite water treatment and office and storage areas. All tracks within the TCF will have overhead catenary electrification fed from the mainline system. Personnel requirements for the TCF will be less than both the HMF and MOIF identified in the Final EIR (1,200 – 1,500 employees).

Once the HMF is sited and constructed, continuing HSR program certification and maintenance activities will be transferred from the TCF and the site converted to long-term MOIF operations.

The OCC would be consistent with the description in the Final EIR/EIS (Page 2-18, Final EIR/EIS) and located in a separate building on the MOIF site. The OCC will serve as a centralized management location for all operations and maintenance activities and house approximately 200 staff.

While the TCF was not an identified maintenance facility in the Final EIR/EIS, it does serve an identified function of the HMF and will temporarily occupy the footprint of the Fresno Works site that will permanently be utilized for the MOIF. The OCC was originally assumed to be co-located with the HMF which it may or may not be, but it will be co-located with the MOIF at one of the potential HMF sites analyzed in the Fresno to Bakersfield EIR/EIS.

5. **Reason/Need for Variation:** Construction of the TCF and OCC at the Fresno MOIF site is necessary to provide maintenance and operations functions that are required prior to the completion of a HMF that would otherwise address these needs.

6. **Alternatives:** No other alternatives were considered.

7. **Staff Involvement:** Jesse Halsted, Mike Eng, Scott Rothenberg, Andrew Bayne.

8. **Time by Which Change Needs to be Implemented:** August 2020

9. **Figures:**

   Figure 1 – Trainset Certification Facility

10. **Attachments:** See **Attachments A, B1, B2, and B3**

CEQA PRELIMINARY ENVIRONMENTAL EVALUATION FOR THE CALIFORNIA HIGH-SPEED RAIL PROJECT

Project Section
Construction Packages (CPs) 1C and 2/3 of the Fresno to Bakersfield Project Section

List current, approved environmental documents that are close geographically to the variation or are similar in nature (e.g., EIR/Notice of Determination (NOD), Negative Declaration/Mitigated Negative Declaration, Subsequent EIR/NOD, Addendum, Reexaminations). If an Addendum or Reexamination, briefly describe.
Title: California High-Speed Rail (HSR) Fresno to Bakersfield Section Final Project Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement (EIR/EIS) (Final EIR/EIS) **Date:** April 2014 **Type and Date of Last Discretionary Action:** EIR Certification/Notice of Determination: May 7, 2014
Title: Fresno Viaduct Permanent Footprint Refinement Re-examination (FB-01-0011) **Date:** March 2015 **Type and Date of Last Discretionary Action:** Authority signed on March 30, 2015
Title: Fresno Viaduct Utility Relocation Environmental Re-examination (FB-01-0001) **Date:** April 2016 **Type and Date of Last Discretionary Action:** Authority signed on April 11, 2016
Title: Utility and Civil Work Between SR-41 and American Ave. Re-examination (FB-01-0009) **Date:** August 2016 **Type and Date of Last Discretionary Action:** Authority signed on August 22, 2016
Title: Utility Re-examination #2 in CP-1C (FB-01-0006) **Date:** March 2017 **Type and Date of Last Discretionary Action:** Authority signed on April 14, 2017
Title: UPRR Fence Re-examination (FB-01-0005) **Date:** June 2017 **Type and Date of Last Discretionary Action:** Authority signed on June 26, 2017
Title: Utility Re-examination #3 in CP-1C (FB-01-0008) **Date:** October 2017 **Type and Date of Last Discretionary Action:** Authority signed on October 26, 2017
Title: Utility Re-examination #4 in CP-1C (FB-01-0012) **Date:** July 2018 **Type and Date of Last Discretionary Action:** Authority signed on July 20, 2018
Title: Utility Re-examination #5 in CP-1C (FB-01-0014) **Date:** January 2019 **Type and Date of Last Discretionary Action:** Authority signed on January 8, 2019
Title: Civil Works Re-examination #3 in CP-1C (FB-01-0016) **Date:** February 2019 **Type and Date of Last Discretionary Action:** Authority signed on February 28, 2019
Title: Utility Re-examination #6 in CP-1C (FB-01-0017) **Date:** April 2019 **Type and Date of Last Discretionary Action:** Authority signed on May 22, 2019
Title: Utility Re-examination #7 in CP-1C (FB-01-0018) **Date:** November 2019 **Type and Date of Last Discretionary Action:** Authority signed on November 7, 2019

Reason for Evaluation
The reason for this Variation is to address the potential for additional impacts from construction and operation of a Trainset Certification Facility (TCF) and an Operations Control Center (OCC), rather than a Heavy Maintenance Facility (HMF) at the location of the previously analyzed Fresno Works – Fresno HMF site.

Provide a brief description of the variation and how it would differ from what has previously been evaluated, relevant to environmental concerns bearing on the project section. Identify the environmental concerns/issues with the variation. Do not make impact conclusions in this section.
The Project description in the Final EIR/EIS identified five potential sites within the Fresno to Bakersfield Project Segment for the HMF, including the Fresno Works-Fresno HMF. The Final EIR/EIS identified that if the HMF were to be located in the Fresno to Bakersfield Project Segment, the HMF would be co-located with a Maintenance of Infrastructure Facility (MOIF); if the HMF were to be located in a different project segment, the MOIF would be constructed in the Fresno to Bakersfield Project Segment. Since certification of the Final EIR/EIS, the Authority has determined that an MOIF is needed to be constructed within the footprint of the Fresno Works-Fresno HMF site. To support inspection, testing, commissioning, and certification of trainsets, this Variation would include the construction of a TCF, and an OCC within the footprint of the Fresno Works-Fresno HMF site analyzed in the Final EIR/EIS.

Have any new or revised laws or regulations affecting the environmental impact analysis for this project section been enacted or adopted since certification of a prior EIR/EIS or approval of other pertinent environmental regulatory document? If yes, please explain.

☒ **No**
☐ **Yes**

Will the variation have the *potential to cause a change* in the determination of impacts from what was described in the original environmental document for any of the impact areas listed below?
For each impact category, please indicate whether there will be a change in impacts to that category. For the categories listed below and checked "No," please provide a brief written explanation of how the conclusion was reached and attach it to this Preliminary Environmental Evaluation. Categories checked "Yes" are to be evaluated as part of the Step 2 Environmental Reexamination process.

Transportation	☐ **Yes**	☒ **No**
Air Quality and Global Climate Change (Greenhouse Gas)	☐ **Yes**	☒ **No**
Noise and Vibration	☐ **Yes**	☒ **No**
Electromagnetic Fields and Electromagnetic Interference	☐ **Yes**	☒ **No**
Public Utilities and Energy	☐ **Yes**	☒ **No**
Biological Resources and Wetlands	☐ **Yes**	☒ **No**
Hydrology and Water Resources	☐ **Yes**	☒ **No**
Geology, Soils, Seismicity, and Paleontological Resources (i.e., Mineral Resources)	☐ **Yes**	☒ **No**

Hazardous Materials and Wastes	☐ **Yes**	☒ **No**
Safety and Security (i.e., Public Services)	☐ **Yes**	☒ **No**
Socioeconomics and Communities (i.e., Population/Housing)	☐ **Yes**	☒ **No**
Station Planning, Land Use and Development	☐ **Yes**	☒ **No**
Agricultural Lands	☐ **Yes**	☒ **No**
Parks, Recreation, and Open Space	☐ **Yes**	☒ **No**
Aesthetics and Visual Resources	☐ **Yes**	☒ **No**
Cultural Resources (Built Environment and Archaeological)	☐ **Yes**	☒ **No**
Regional Growth	☐ **Yes**	☒ **No**
Cumulative Impacts	☐ **Yes**	☒ **No**

Will the variation result in the acquisition of properties not identified in the Final EIR/EIS?	☐ **Yes**	☒ **No**
Will the variation cause a change in construction impacts?	☐ **Yes**	☒ **No**
Have the following potential construction effects changed?		
Construction timing commitments?	☐ **Yes**	☒ **No**
Temporary stream diversion?	☐ **Yes**	☒ **No**
Temporary delays and detours of traffic?	☐ **Yes**	☒ **No**
Temporary impacts on business?	☐ **Yes**	☒ **No**
Other construction impacts including noise?	☐ **Yes**	☒ **No**
Other? Please elaborate below	☐ **Yes**	☒ **No**

Does the variation have the potential to result in revised permits, government contracts (e.g., Williamson Act, etc.) or other approvals under the following state regulations?

	☐ Yes	☒ No
CDFW Section 2081 Incidental Take Permit California Endangered Species Act	☐ Yes	☒ No
CDFW Section 1602 Streambed and Lake Alteration Agreement	☐ Yes	☒ No
State Water Resources Control Board Section 401 Permit	☐ Yes	☒ No
State Water Resources Control Board Section 402 Permit	☐ Yes	☒ No
State or Local Encroachment Permits (Caltrans, city/county, or Special Districts)	☐ Yes	☒ No
Use of Title 14 Lands	☐ Yes	☒ No
California Public Utilities Commission Approvals	☐ Yes	☒ No
Air District Construction Permits	☐ Yes	☒ No
Hazardous Materials	☐ Yes	☒ No
Bay Conservation and Development Commission Permits	☐ Yes	☒ No
State Water Resources Control Board Stormwater NPDES Permits	☐ Yes	☒ No
Regional Water Quality Control Board Dewatering Permits	☐ Yes	☒ No
Williamson Act	☐ Yes	☒ No
Other	☐ Yes	☒ No

Will the variation likely result in substantial public controversy? ☐ Yes ☒ No

If yes, briefly explain any issues raised by the public:

Will the variation likely affect cost, schedule, or contractual due dates? ☐ Yes ☒ No

If yes, briefly explain effect:

RECOMMENDATION FOR LEAD AGENCY CONSIDERATION

Does the variation warrant additional environmental evaluation? ☐ Yes ☒ No

LIST OF ATTACHMENTS:

- Attachment A, B1, B2, B3

Submit two paper copies of this attachment with the required appended information and a transmittal letter recommending a CEQA finding to the Authority's headquarters in Sacramento (address provided below). Alternatively, submit one electronic version to the appropriate Authority environmental planner responsible for processing the reexamination. The required information to be appended to either the two paper copies or the one electronic version of Attachment B1 includes:

1. Additional documentation (see Attachment B3).

California High-Speed Rail Authority
770 L Street, Suite 620

phone: (916) 324-1541
fax: (916) 322-0827

Sacramento, CA 95814

SUBMITTED BY:

By signing this, I certify that to the best of my knowledge this document is complete and accurate.

Name Jesse Halsted  Environmental Science Associates	Date August 7, 2020

NEPA PRELIMINARY ENVIRONMENTAL REEXAMINATION FOR THE CALIFORNIA HIGH-SPEED RAIL PROJECT

Project Section
Construction Packages (CPs) 1C and 2/3 of the Fresno to Bakersfield Project Section

List current approved environmental documents that are close geographically to the variation or are similar in nature (e.g., EIS/ROD, Supplemental EIS, etc.)

Title: California High Speed Rail (HSR) Fresno to Bakersfield Section Final Project Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement (EIR/EIS) (Final EIR/EIS)
Date: April 2014
Type and Date of Last Discretionary Action: EIR Certification/Notice of Determination: May 7, 2014

Title: Fresno Viaduct Permanent Footprint Refinement Re-examination (FB-01-0011)
Date: March 2015
Type and Date of Last Discretionary Action: Authority signed on March 30, 2015

Title: Fresno Viaduct Utility Relocation Environmental Re-examination (FB-01-0001)
Date: April 2016
Type and Date of Last Discretionary Action: Authority signed on April 11, 2016

Title: Utility and Civil Work Between SR-41 and American Ave. Re-examination (FB-01-0009)
Date: August 2016
Type and Date of Last Discretionary Action: Authority signed on August 22, 2016

Title: Utility Re-examination #2 in CP-1C (FB-01-0006)
Date: March 2017
Type and Date of Last Discretionary Action: Authority signed on April 14, 2017

Title: UPRR Fence Re-examination (FB-01-0005)
Date: June 2017
Type and Date of Last Discretionary Action: Authority signed on June 26, 2017

Title: Utility Re-examination #3 in CP-1C (FB-01-0008)
Date: October 2017
Type and Date of Last Discretionary Action: Authority signed on October 26, 2017

Title: Utility Re-examination #4 in CP-1C (FB-01-0012)
Date: July 2018
Type and Date of Last Discretionary Action: Authority signed on July 20, 2018

Title: Utility Re-examination #5 in CP-1C (FB-01-0014)
Date: January 2019
Type and Date of Last Discretionary Action: Authority signed on January 8, 2019

Title: Civil Works Re-examination #3 in CP-1C (FB-01-0016)
Date: February 2019
Type and Date of Last Discretionary Action: Authority signed on February 28, 2019

Title: Utility Re-examination #6 in CP-1C (FB-01-0017)
Date: April 2019
Type and Date of Last Discretionary Action: Authority signed on May 22, 2019

Title: Utility Re-examination #7 in CP-1C (FB-01-0018)
Date: November 2019
Type and Date of Last Discretionary Action: Authority signed on November 7, 2019

Reason for Evaluation
The reason for this Variation is to address the potential for additional impacts from construction and operation of a Trainset Certification Facility (TCF) and an Operations Control Center (OCC), rather than a

Heavy Maintenance Facility (HMF) at the location of the previously analyzed Fresno Works – Fresno HMF site.

Provide a brief description of the variation and how it would differ from what has previously been evaluated, relevant to environmental concerns bearing on the project section. Identify the environmental concerns/issues with the variation. Do not make impact conclusions in this section.

The Project description in the Final EIR/EIS identified five potential sites within the Fresno to Bakersfield Project Segment for the HMF, including the Fresno Works-Fresno HMF. The Final EIR/EIS identified that if the HMF were to be located in the Fresno to Bakersfield Project Segment, the HMF would be co-located with a Maintenance of Infrastructure Facility (MOIF); if the HMF were to be located in a different project segment, the MOIF would be constructed in the Fresno to Bakersfield Project Segment. Since certification of the Final EIR/EIS, the Authority has determined that an MOIF is needed to be constructed within the footprint of the Fresno Works-Fresno HMF site. To support inspection, testing, commissioning, and certification of trainsets, this Variation would include the construction of a TCF, and an OCC within the footprint of the Fresno Works-Fresno HMF site analyzed in the Final EIR/EIS.

Have any new or revised laws or regulations affecting the environmental impact analysis for this project section been enacted or adopted since approval of the last environmental document? If yes, please explain.

☒ **No**
☐ **Yes**

Will the variation have the *potential to cause a change* in the determination of environmental impacts from what was described in the original, or as necessary, subsequent, environmental document for any of the impact categories listed below? For each impact category, please indicate whether there will be a change in impacts to that category. For the categories listed below and checked "No," please provide a brief written explanation of how that conclusion was reached and attach it to this Preliminary Environmental Reexamination. Categories checked "Yes" are to be evaluated as part of Step 2 of the Environmental Reexamination Process.

Transportation	☐ **Yes**	☒ **No**
Air Quality and Global Climate Change	☐ **Yes**	☒ **No**
Noise and Vibration	☐ **Yes**	☒ **No**
Electromagnetic Fields and Electromagnetic Interference	☐ **Yes**	☒ **No**
Public Utilities and Energy	☐ **Yes**	☒ **No**
Biological Resources and Wetlands	☐ **Yes**	☒ **No**
Hydrology and Water Resources	☐ **Yes**	☒ **No**
Geology, Soils, Seismicity, and Paleontological Resources	☐ **Yes**	☒ **No**
Hazardous Materials and Wastes	☐ **Yes**	☒ **No**

Safety and Security	☐ Yes	☒ No
Socioeconomics and Communities	☐ Yes	☒ No
Station Planning, Land Use and Development	☐ Yes	☒ No
Agricultural Lands	☐ Yes	☒ No
Parks, Recreation, and Open Space	☐ Yes	☒ No
Aesthetics and Visual Resources	☐ Yes	☒ No
Cultural Resources (Built Environment and Archaeological)	☐ Yes	☒ No
Regional Growth	☐ Yes	☒ No
Environmental Justice	☐ Yes	☒ No
Cumulative Impacts	☐ Yes	☒ No

Will the variation result in the acquisition of properties not identified in the Final EIR/EIS?

☐ **Yes** ☒ **No**

Will the variation result in revised documentation or determination regarding authorizations under the following federal regulations?

Endangered Species Act	☐ Yes	☒ No
Magnuson-Stevens Act	☐ Yes	☒ No
Farmland Preservation Act	☐ Yes	☒ No
Section 404, Clean Water Act	☐ Yes	☒ No
Section 401, Clean Water Act	☐ Yes	☒ No
Section 408, Rivers and Harbors Act	☐ Yes	☒ No
Floodplain Management Act	☐ Yes	☒ No
Hazardous Materials	☐ Yes	☒ No
Section 106, National Historic Preservation Act	☐ Yes	☒ No
Uniform Relocation Act	☐ Yes	☒ No
Section 4(f) Resources	☐ Yes	☒ No
Section 6(f) Lands	☐ Yes	☒ No
Wild and Scenic Rivers	☐ Yes	☒ No
Coastal Barriers	☐ Yes	☒ No
Coastal Zone	☐ Yes	☒ No
Sole Source Aquifer	☐ Yes	☒ No
National Scenic Byways	☐ Yes	☒ No
Other	☐ Yes	☒ No

Will the variation likely result in substantial public controversy? ☐ **Yes** ☒ **No**

If yes, briefly explain any issues raised by the public:

Will the variation likely affect cost, schedule, or contractual due dates? ☐ **Yes** ☒ **No**

If yes, briefly explain effect:

CONCLUSIONS FOR PRELIMINARY ASSESSMENT AND INITIAL RECOMMENDATION

Does the variation warrant additional environmental evaluation? ☐ **Yes** ☒ **No**

LIST OF ATTACHMENTS:

- Attachment A, B1, B2, B3

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1. Additional documentation (see Attachment B3).

California High-Speed Rail Authority
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SUBMITTED BY:

By signing this, I certify that to the best of my knowledge this document is complete and accurate.

Name Jesse Halsted  Environmental Science Associates	Date August 7, 2020

ANALYSIS OF ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES WITH NO CHANGE IN THE DETERMINATION OF IMPACTS

This attachment provides a brief written explanation of impacts for the topical areas listed and checked "No" on Attachment B1: CEQA/Permitting Preliminary Environmental Assessment.

Overview

This Trainset Certification Facility and Operations Control Center Variation (Variation) addresses construction and operational activities associated with the trainset certification facility (TCF) and operations control center (OCC) of the California High-Speed Rail Authority (Authority) in Construction Packages (CPs) 1C and 2/3 of the Fresno to Bakersfield Project Section (Project).

The Project description in the Fresno to Bakersfield Project Section, Final Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement (Final EIR/EIS, 2014) identified five potential sites within the Fresno to Bakersfield Project Segment for the HMF, including the Fresno Works-Fresno HMF. The Final EIR/EIS identified that if the HMF were to be located in the Fresno to Bakersfield Project Segment, the HMF would be co-located with a Maintenance of Infrastructure Facility (MOIF); if the HMF were to be located in a different project segment, the MOIF would be constructed in the Fresno to Bakersfield Project Segment. Since certification of the Final EIR/EIS, the Authority has determined that an MOIF is needed to be constructed within the footprint of the Fresno Works-Fresno HMF site. To support inspection, testing, commissioning, and certification of trainsets, this Variation would include the construction of a TCF, and an OCC within the footprint of the Fresno Works-Fresno HMF site analyzed in the Final EIR/EIS.

The current Variation is being analyzed solely based on the potential for additional impacts to environmental resources resulting from construction and operations of the TCF and OCC.

As detailed below, it has been determined that the Variation would have no potential to cause new significant environmental impacts, or result in a substantial increase in the severity of previously identified environmental impacts to the following resource areas, and, therefore, the conclusions reached in the Final EIR/EIS would not change.

Transportation

Similar to the impacts described in the Final EIR/EIS, the Variation may require the temporary closure of parking areas, roadway travel lanes, pedestrian facilities, bicycle lanes, and paths during construction. All closures would be temporary and these access points would become accessible upon completion of construction. As discussed in section 3.2 of the Final EIR/EIS, Transportation, construction of the project would result in temporary, short-term impacts on traffic flow, circulation, and access. Several project design features to reduce impacts on traffic and circulation would be implemented, including those listed in Section 3.2.6 of the Final EIR/EIS. The Variation would be constructed entirely within the footprint of the Fresno Works-Fresno HMF site analyzed in the Final EIR/EIS (Page 2-92) and would result in temporary, short-term impacts to traffic flow, circulation and access consistent with those described in the Final EIR/EIS. The Variation would implement the same project design features as those listed in Section 3.2.6 of the Final EIR/EIS to reduce impacts to transportation. Therefore, construction of the Variation

would not result in a change to the impact determinations described in the transportation section of the Final EIR/EIS.

Operation of the Variation would generate vehicle trips from employees commuting to and from the temporary TCF and OCC. The Final EIR/EIS determined that operation of the project would have a less than significant impact to transportation resources after implementation of mitigation measures. Operation of the Variation would not alter roadways, nor generate additional traffic beyond what was identified in the Final EIR/EIS for the Fresno Works-Fresno HMF. Furthermore, the Variation would implement applicable mitigation measures identified to reduce operational transportation impacts. Therefore, the Variation would not result in a change to the impact determinations described in the transportation section of the Final EIR/EIS.

Air Quality and Global Climate Change (Greenhouse Gases)

Emissions during the construction period for the Variation are expected from engine exhaust and fugitive dust from on- and off-road construction equipment, delivery trucks, and vehicles used by construction workers to travel to and from work. Air quality, climate change, and greenhouse gas (GHG) impacts from emissions were evaluated in the Final EIR/EIS and demonstrated that after implementation of mitigation measures, direct emissions from the construction phase of the Project would exceed the general conformity (GC) applicability thresholds for VOC, NOx and CO in all calendar years, while PM_{10} emissions would exceed the GC thresholds in certain construction years, and $PM_{2.5}$ emissions would be reduced to negligible levels. To mitigate impacts associated with VOC and NOx emissions, the Authority has entered into a Voluntary Emission Reduction Agreement (VERA) with the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District (SJVAPCD) to purchase offset emissions credits for these pollutants.

As discussed in Section 3.3, Air Quality and Global Climate Change, construction-related emissions from the Fresno Works-Fresno HMF would be far fewer when compared to emissions associated with construction of the alignment. Additionally, the Final EIR/EIS determined that TAC emissions from construction of the HMF would not cause substantial health risks to sensitive receptors during project construction. Construction activities associated with the Variation would not markedly differ from those evaluated in the Final EIR/EIS and would not materially alter the air quality and health risk impacts discussed in the Final EIR/EIS. Exhaust emissions associated with construction of the Variation would also be reduced and offset consistent with the mitigation measures described in the Final EIR/EIS. Therefore, air pollutant and GHG emissions associated with construction of the Variation would not result in a change to the impact determinations described in the air quality and global climate change section of the Final EIR/EIS.

Operation of the Variation would result in emissions of NOx, PM_{10}, $PM_{2.5}$, and GHGs from diesel locomotive use, diesel engine use, heavy-duty equipment use, and onsite and offsite vehicle use. As discussed in Section 3.3, Air Quality and Global Climate Change, of the Final EIR/EIS, operation of the project would result in a beneficial reduction in MSAT, GHG, VOC, NOx, CO, SO2, PM_{10} and $PM_{2.5}$ emissions that would be lower than those associated with the No Project Alternative. In addition, the Final EIR/EIS determined that the operation of the Fresno Works-Fresno HMF would not result in emissions of substantial health risk impacts to sensitive receptors after implementation of mitigation measures. Operation of the Variation would require fewer employees than those associated with both the HMF and MOIF analyzed in the Final EIR; and emissions associated with operation of the Variation would be less than those associated with operation of the HMF. Therefore, air pollutant and GHG emissions associated

with operation of the Variation would not result in a change to the impact determinations described in the air quality and global climate change section of the Final EIR.

Operation of the TCF will include a train washing area with an onsite water treatment plant that would be a source of potentially odorous emissions. The Final EIR/EIS analyzed potential odorous emissions from a water treatment facility located at the Fresno Works-Fresno HMF site and determined that HMF operations would be permitted and controlled by the SJVAPC (Page 3.3.-83). With SJVAPCD oversight, odorous emissions associated with operation of the Fresno-Works HMF were determined to be negligible and less than significant. Like the HMF, operations of the TCF would be permitted through the SJVAPCD which would impose controls on operation of the wastewater treatment plant to meet public-nuisance requirements. Therefore, odors associated with operation of the Variation would not result in a change to the impact determinations described in the air quality and global climate change section of the Final EIR/EIS.

Noise and Vibration

Local noise in the project area is primarily generated by freeway and local road traffic, railroad operations on the UPRR and BNSF tracks, and work conducted at industrial businesses. As discussed in Section 3.4, Noise and Vibration, of the Final EIR/EIS, there would be no significant noise impacts that would result from construction at any of the HMF sites. During construction of the Variation, there were would be temporary, short-term noise due to vehicle and equipment operations similar to the typical construction impacts analyzed in the Final EIR/EIS, however, construction activities associated with the Variation would not markedly differ from those evaluated in the Final EIR/EIS would not generate noise levels that would not exceed those previously identified in the Final EIR/EIS. Therefore, construction of the Variation would not result in additional noise impacts. In regards to vibration impacts, the Final EIR/EIS determined that none of the potential HMF sites were within the Federal Railroad Association (FRA) screening distance and therefore, HMF sites would not result in vibration impacts that would exceed residential standards. Construction of the Variation would occur entirely within the footprint of the Fresno Works-Fresno HMF site analyzed in the Final EIR/EIS, therefore, the Variation would not be located within the FRA screening distance to sensitive receptors and would not result in vibration levels above residential standards. Therefore, construction of the Variation would not result in a change to the impact determinations described in the noise and vibration section of the Final EIR/EIS.

As discussed in Section 3.4, Noise and Vibration, operation of the Fresno Works-Fresno HMF would generate noise that would impact receptors within 900 feet of the Fresno Works-Fresno HMF footprint, however, the project would implement various project design features and mitigation measures to reduce impacts. Operation of the Variation would occur within the Fresno Works-Fresno HMF site footprint and would not generate noise levels that would exceed those analyzed in the Final EIR/EIS. Furthermore, the Variation would implement applicable mitigation measures as described in the Final EIR/EIS. Operation of the Variation would occur within the footprint of the Fresno Works-Fresno HMF site and would not be within the FRA screening distance to sensitive receptors. Therefore, operation of the Variation would not result in vibration impacts that would exceed residential standards; and operation of the Variation would not result in a change to the noise-and-vibration-related impact determinations described in the Final EIR/EIS.

Electromagnetic Fields and Electromagnetic Interference

The Variation would not add or change electrical sources or transmission lines beyond what was analyzed in the Final EIR/EIS and would have no impact on electromagnetic fields and electromagnetic interference. Therefore, the Variation would not result in a change to the impact determinations described in the electromagnetic fields and electromagnetic interference section of the Final EIR/EIS.

Public Utilities and Energy

The Variation would not modify any public utilities or energy facilities not previously evaluated in the Final EIR/EIS. As discussed in Section 3.6, Public Utilities and Energy, construction of the project "could result in planned temporary interruption of utility service, accidental disruption of services, increased water use, and an increase in waste generation," however, with implementation of mitigation measures, all construction impacts to public utilities and energy would be considered negligible. All project design features identified in the final EIR/EIS and applicable to the Variation would be implemented. Furthermore, operation of the Variation would occur entirely within the footprint of previously analyzed Fresno Works-Fresno HMF site and would not require additional energy or utility services beyond those evaluated in the Final EIR/EIS. Therefore, the Variation would not result in a change to the impact determinations described in the public utilities and energy section of the Final EIR/EIS.

Biological Resources and Wetlands

As discussed in section 3.7, Biological Resources and Wetlands, of the Final EIR/EIS, construction and operations at the Fresno Works-Fresno HMF site could impact special-status wildlife species, jurisdictional waters, and protected trees; however, these impacts would be reduced with implementation of mitigation measures described in the Final EIR/EIS. Construction and operation of the Variation would occur entirely within the footprint of the Fresno Works-Fresno HMF site and would not result in additional impacts to biological resources and wetlands beyond those identified in the Final EIR/EIS. Furthermore, the Variation would implement applicable mitigation measures identified in the Final EIR/EIS during both construction and operational phases. Therefore, the Variation would not result in a change to the impact determinations described in the biological resources and wetlands section of the Final EIR/EIS.

Hydrology and Water Resources

As discussed in Section 3.8, Hydrology and Water Resources, of the Final EIR/EIS, "construction and/or operation of the HST alternatives, the stations, and the HMF could result in impacts on existing drainage, irrigation distribution systems, and water quality; however, the project design would incorporate avoidance and minimization measures to reduce impacts on water resources." Construction and operation of the Variation would occur entirely within the existing footprint of the Fresno Works-Fresno HMF site and would not modify any regional hydrology or water resources such as floodplains or drainage systems not previously discussed in the Final EIR/EIS. The Variation would implement the applicable avoidance and minimization measures described in the Final EIR/EIS to reduce impacts to water resources. In addition, Best Management Practices (BMPs) would be used for any necessary erosion and sediment control. Furthermore, all guidelines, procedures, and conditions in the updated Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) prepared for the project would be followed to minimize any potential risk of polluted runoff and effects on water quality. Therefore, the Variation would not result in a change to the impact determinations described in the hydrology and water resources section the Final EIR/EIS.

Geology, Soils, and Seismicity

Construction and operation of the Variation would occur entirely within the footprint of the Fresno Works-Fresno HMF site and would not have impacts to geology, soils, and seismicity different than those evaluated in the Final EIR/EIS. As discussed in the hydrology and water resources analysis above, BMPs would be used for erosion and sediment control for affected areas during project construction. Therefore, the Variation would not result in a change to the impact determinations described in the geology, soils, and seismicity section of the Final EIR/EIS.

Hazardous Materials and Wastes

The Final EIR/EIS identified Potential Environmental Concerns (PECs) where there is the known or possible presence of hazardous materials or waste under conditions that indicate the possibility of an existing release, a past release, or a threat of release of the hazardous material or waste. Potential hazardous substances present at industrial areas in the vicinity of the Project are listed in Section 3.10.4.1, General Areas of Concern, of the Final EIR/EIS. The Variation would be located within the footprint of the Fresno Works-Fresno HMF site and would be no closer to PEC sites than project elements previously analyzed in the Final EIR/EIS. Therefore, the Variation would not result in a change to the impact determinations described in the hazardous materials and wastes section of the Final EIR/EIS.

Safety and Security (i.e., Public Services)

The primary construction-related safety and security concern identified in the Final EIR/EIS is accident risks at construction sites and around construction detours. These impacts were reduced to a less than significant level and would not result in adverse effects with the implementation of project plans, protocols, and design features identified in the Final EIR/EIS, including notification and coordination with City, County, and State emergency services. Construction activities associated with the Variation would not markedly differ from those evaluated in the Final EIR/EIS and would therefore not materially alter or increase these risks. Furthermore, construction of the Variation would implement the applicable mitigation measures described in the Final EIR/EIS. Operation of the Variation would not alter roadways, nor generate additional traffic beyond what was identified in the Final EIR/EIS for the Fresno Works-Fresno HMF; and would not alter the safety and security risks evaluated in the Final EIR/EIS. Therefore, the Variation would not result in a change to the impact determinations described in the safety and security section of the Final EIR/EIS.

Socioeconomics, Communities, and Environmental Justice

While the Project runs through communities with minority and/or low-income populations, the Variation would not alter the alignment or the footprint of the alignment, and would not generate additional impacts to these populations not already identified in the Final EIR/EIS. Furthermore, the Variation would not alter the Final EIR/EIS conclusions regarding potential social effects including disruption to community cohesion, effects to children's health and safety, tax revenues, employment, agriculture, schools, and residential business displacements. Mitigation measures identified in the Final EIR/EIS would be implemented during construction of the Variation to minimize construction effects such as increased noise and safety concerns. Therefore, the Variation would not result in a change to the impact determinations described in the socioeconomics, communities, and environmental justice section of the Final EIR/EIS.

Station Planning, Land Use, and Development

The Variation would be located entirely within the footprint of the Fresno Works-Fresno HMF site analyzed in the Final EIR and would not alter land use, conflict with adjacent land use, or increase or impede area development beyond what was identified in the Final EIR/EIS. The siting and construction of the TCF and OCC at this location does not alter or impact the site selection of the permanent HMF and MOIF facilities. Therefore, the Variation would not result in a change to the impact determinations described in the station planning, land use, and development section of the Final EIR/EIS.

Agricultural Lands

The Final EIR/EIS concluded that the temporary use of agricultural land, temporary utility and infrastructure interruption, and temporary noise and vibration effects on adjacent farm animals from construction of the Project would be less than significant. Construction and operation of the Variation would occur entirely within the footprint of the Fresno Works-Fresno HMF site described in the Final EIR/EIS, and would not result in alteration to any agricultural lands beyond what was previously analyzed in the Final EIR/EIS. Therefore, the Variation would not result in a change to the impact determinations described in the agricultural lands section of the Final EIR/EIS.

Parks, Recreation, and Open Space

As discussed in Section 3.15, Parks, Recreation, and Open Space, of the Final EIR/EIS, the study area for parks, recreation, and open space is defined as 0.5 miles around the HMFs. Figure 3.15-2 of the Final EIR/EIS illustrates that there are no parks, recreational opportunities, or open space areas located in the vicinity of the Fresno Works-Fresno HMF site; and the Final EIR/EIS determined that none of the HMF sites would have impacts to park resources, or school district play areas or recreation facilities during construction or operation. Construction and operation of the Variation would occur entirely within the footprint of the Fresno Works-Fresno HMF site described in the Final EIR/EIS and thus would not be located in close proximity to any parks or other recreational areas identified in the Final EIR/EIS. Therefore, the Variation would not alter the Project's impact to parks, recreation, or open space areas; and would not result in a change to the impact determinations described in the parks, recreation, and open space section of the Final EIR/EIS.

Aesthetics and Visual Resources

As discussed in section 3.16, Aesthetics and Visual Resources, of the Final EIR/EIS, the Fresno Works-Fresno HMF site is located within the San Joaquin Valley Rural/Agricultural Landscape Unit, which is dominated by level agricultural land. The Final EIR/EIS states "Row crops, orchards, and pasture are interspersed with a variety of scattered rural residential and agro-industrial structures visible from nearby roadways. Though generally of moderate intactness and unity, this landscape often lacks variety and vividness."

As discussed in the Final EIR/EIS, the Project would have temporary construction-related impacts related to sources of light and glare, as well as visual nuisances, which would be avoided and minimized by construction specifications and practices. Construction of the Variation would occur entirely within the footprint of the Fresno Works-Fresno HMF site and would implement the applicable construction specifications and practices described in the Final EIR/EIS. Construction-related aesthetics and visual impacts would be temporary and would cease at the conclusion of the construction phase. Therefore,

construction of the Variation would not result in a change to the impact determinations described in the aesthetics and visual resources section of the Final EIR/EIS.

The Final EIR/EIS states that "the principal viewers of the HMF from any of the alternative sites would be rural residents. While few in number, they are considered to have a high sensitivity to the quality of the landscape. Given the sensitivity of this viewer group and the decrease in visual quality caused by the HMF, the effect would have substantial intensity under NEPA and the visual impact would be significant under CEQA for all of the alternative HMF sites." To mitigate impacts to visual quality of the landscape, the Final EIR/EIS identified visual/aesthetic treatments including implementation of fencing or screening, and vegetation around project components. The Variation would be located entirely within the footprint of the Fresno Works-Fresno HMF site and would have visual characteristics that would not markedly differ from the Fresno Works-Fresno HMF site, as evaluated in the Final EIR/EIS. Therefore, operation of the Variation would not result in a change to the impact determinations described in the aesthetics and visual resources section of the Final EIR/EIS.

Cultural and Paleontological Resources (Built Environment and Archaeological)

As discussed in the Section 3.17, Cultural and Paleontological Resources, of the Final EIR/EIS, none of the potential HMF sites are within the Area of Potential Effects (APE) of previously recorded archaeological resources, however, the Fresno Works-Fresno HMF site contains historic architectural resources including the Washington Canal and the North Branch of the Oleander Canal, Property Nos. 33 and 34. The Final EIR/EIS determined that construction of the HMF would not result in the physical destruction, damage, or alteration of the canals; and the Final EIR/EIS identified Hist-MM#3 to ensure that these historic architectural resources would be avoided during project construction. Construction of the Variation would occur entirely within the footprint of the Fresno Works-Fresno HMF site described in the Final EIR/EIS, thus the Variation would not be within the APE of previously recorded architectural resources but has potential to impact historic architectural resources. Construction of the Variation would adhere to the requirements of Hist-MM#3 identified in the Final EIR/EIS and the site would be sited north of BNSF milepost 991.6. Therefore, construction of the Variation would not have potential to cause direct and indirect adverse effects on the historic canals; and the Variation would not result in a change to the impact determinations described in the cultural and paleontological resources section of the Final EIR/EIS.

Regional Growth

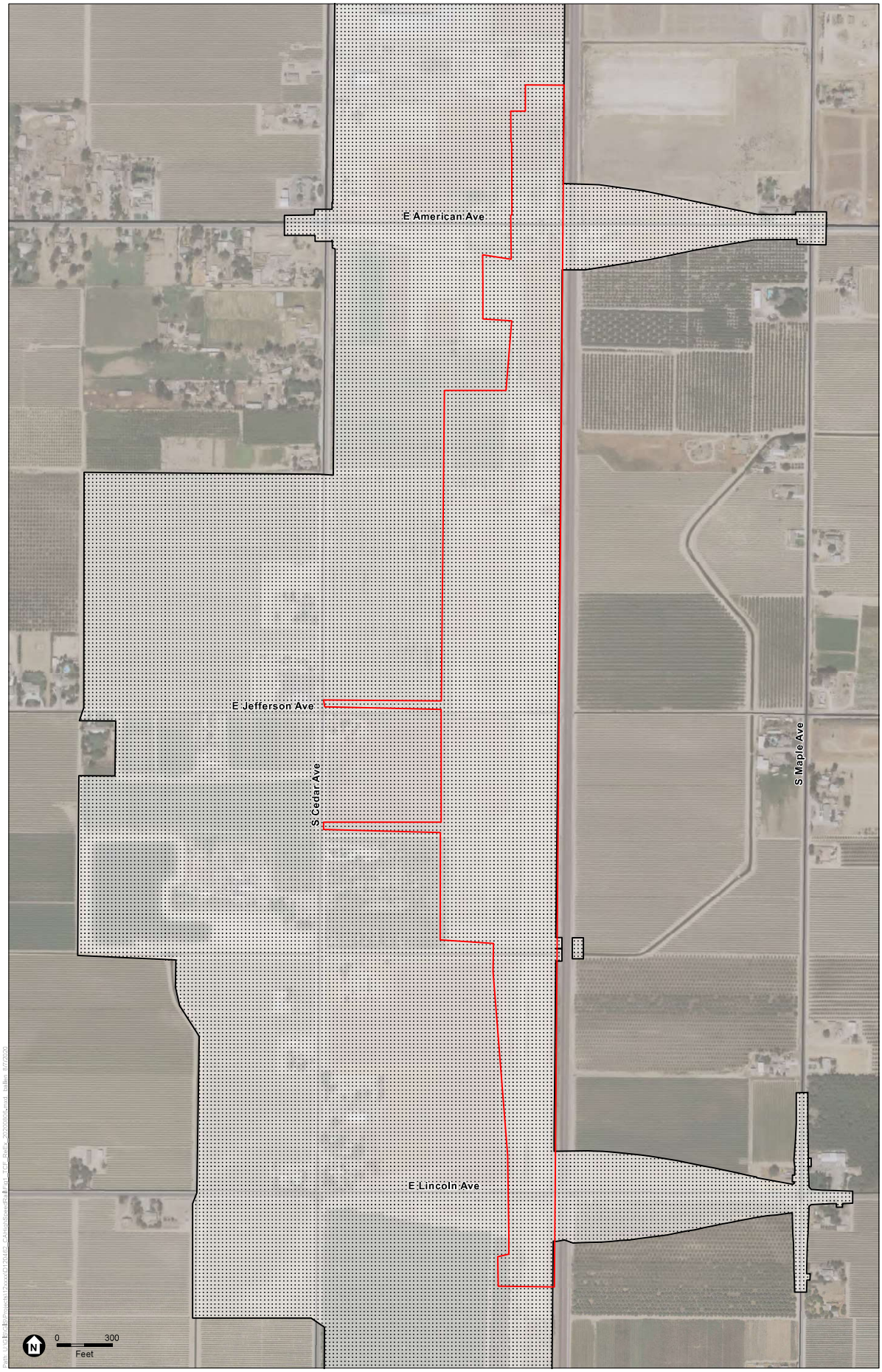
The Final EIR/EIS determined that the total employment associated with construction of the HMF sites would be 1,925 total annual jobs per year, and that this would comprise less than 1% of the total projected 2016 construction jobs in the region. As discussed in the Final EIR/EIS, "the employment created by the construction of the alternative alignments overshadows the estimated employment created by the construction of the stations and HMF." Construction activities associated with the Variation would not markedly differ from those evaluated in the Final EIR/EIS and would require a similar workforce as required by the HMF sites analyzed in the Final EIR/EIS. Therefore, the growth impacts generated from construction of the Variation would be minimal compared to that of the entire alignment; and the Variation would not result in a change to the impact determinations described in the regional growth section of the Final EIR/EIS.

As discussed in Section 3.18, Regional Growth, of the Final EIR/EIS, employment opportunities generated from operation of the Project would benefit the region and the project would not generate

growth that would exceed what is projected in applicable planning documents. The Variation would provide employment opportunities, however, staffing needs of the Variation would not exceed those evaluated for the HMF sites; and thus would not generate excessive growth within the region. Therefore, operation of the Variation would not result in a change to the impact determinations described in the regional growth section of the Final EIR/EIS.

Cumulative Impacts

The Final EIR/EIS identified cumulatively considerable impacts for noise and vibration, division/and/or disruption of community, environmental justice, aesthetics and visual quality, and cultural and paleontological resources during the construction phase of the Project. Mitigation measures were identified for each issue area to address cumulatively considerable impacts; these measures are outlined in the relevant environmental topic section of the Final EIR/EIS. The Variation would subject to the applicable mitigation measures discussed in the Final EIR/EIS during both construction and operation. Furthermore, impacts associated with the Variation would not be different from those identified in the Final EIR/EIS and would not materially alter the cumulative condition. As such, the Variation would not result in a change to the cumulative impact determinations described in the Final EIR/EIS.



SOURCE: USDA, 2016; CHSRA, 2018; TPZP, 2018; ESA, 2018

Train Certification Facility
Environmental Footprint

California High-Speed Rail Project

Figure 1
Variation Footprint
Train Certification Facility