

State Water Resources Control Board
Division of Water Quality --- Water Quality Certification Program

**Public Notice for Water Quality Certification (Dredge/Fill Projects)
California High Speed Rail Authority
California High Speed Train – Merced To Fresno Permitting Phase 1**

State Water Resources Control Board file no. SB-13-0011N
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers file no. SPK-2009-01483

Pursuant to federal law (Title 33, United States Code, Section 1341; Clean Water Act Section 401), applicants for a federal license or permit for activities which may discharge to waters of the United States must seek Water Quality Certification from the state or Indian Tribe with jurisdiction. Such Certification is based on a finding that the discharge will meet water quality standards and other applicable requirements. In California, Regional Water Quality Control Boards (Regional Water Boards) issue or deny Certification for discharges within their geographical jurisdiction. The State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board) has this responsibility for projects affecting waters within two or more Regional Water Board jurisdictions.

The following information is provided in satisfaction of the public notice requirements of Section 3858, Title 23, of the California Code of Regulations, which govern the State's Certification Program.

Applicant: California High Speed Rail Authority (Authority)

Applicant: Mr. Mark McLaughlin
Director of Environmental Services
California High Speed Rail Authority
770 L Street, Suite 800
Sacramento, CA 95814

Applicant Contact: Mr. Mark Oliver
CH2M HILL
2525 Airpark Drive
Redding, CA 96001

Project Name: California High Speed Train (HST) – Merced To Fresno
Permitting Phase 1

Date of Application: May 15, 2013

Affected Counties: Madera, Fresno

Public Notice, California High Speed Train,
Merced to Fresno, Permitting Phase 1

Project Description: The California High Speed Rail Authority (Authority, or Applicant) proposes to construct the first phase, *Permitting Phase 1* (PP1, or Project), of the Merced to Fresno segment of the California HST Project. PP1 includes portions of Madera and Fresno counties.

PP1 will construct approximately 24 miles of the HST Project along the southern end of the Merced to Fresno segment (See Project Area Map below). The overall project footprint is reported to be approximately 885 acres. The alignment begins on the south side of the Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) track at Avenue 17 in Madera, California, and ends on the south side of the Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR) track south of SR 41 at Los Angeles Street in Fresno, California.

The construction of PP1 is planned to commence in 2013 and will include the area from Avenue 17 in Madera County to just south of the Downtown Fresno Station. The first portions of PP1 are anticipated to complete construction by fall 2014.

The remaining segments of the entire HST Project will proceed in subsequent permitting phases. The schedule and number of phases for the entire project is not yet known. More detailed project information for the HST System, including schedules, may be found at the Authority's website:

<http://www.cahighspeedrail.ca.gov/>

The Authority and the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) propose to construct and operate a rail line to support an intercity HST system. The California HST Project will eventually connect San Francisco and Los Angeles and encompasses 800 miles, including extensions to Sacramento and San Diego. The HST system is envisioned as an electrically powered, high-speed, steel-wheel-on-steel-rail technology with state-of-the-art safety, signaling, and automated train-control systems. The trains will be capable of operating at speeds of up to 220 miles per hour over a fully grade-separated, dedicated track alignment. The final project will consist of nine separate project phases (including the Merced to Fresno Section) that can function independently, but which, joined together, will create a large, state wide HST system.

The application reports that the project will entail permanent and temporary impacts to streams, wetlands, vernal pools, and other waters of the state, including waters of the U.S. Final calculation of all impacts to waters is in progress. The applicant has proposed various best management practices to reduce the risk of impacts to waters, and has proposed compensatory mitigation for permanent impacts.

The HSRA and the FRA have prepared a Joint Draft Environmental Impact Report/Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIR/DEIS) in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) for consideration of an application to build and operate the Project.

Public Notice, California High Speed Train,
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The California High-Speed Rail Authority Board certified the Final Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement (Final EIR/EIS) for the Merced to Fresno section of the project on May 3, 2012 (Resolutions # HSRA 12-19 and 12-20), and a Notice of Determination was filed on that date with the State Clearinghouse (SCH No. 2009091125).

In compliance with federal Clean Water Act, section 404 and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) regulations, all Project activity will occur under Permits issued by the Corps. The Corps posted public notice of application for Clean Water Act section 404 Permit for PP1 on April 17, 2013.

State Water Board staff are proposing to regulate this Project pursuant to section 401 of the Clean Water Act (33 USC 1341) and Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act authority. In addition, staff will consider all comments submitted in writing and received at this office during a 21-day comment period that begins on the first date of issuance of this notice and ends at 5:00 p.m. on the last day of the comment period. If you have any questions, please contact the designated State Water Board staff member.

State Water Resources Control Board Staff Contact:

Cliff Harvey, Environmental Scientist
Water Quality Certification Unit,
Division of Water Quality
State Water Resources Control Board
Telephone: 916-558-1709
Email: Clifford.Harvey@waterboards.ca.gov

Date Posted: May 17, 2013

**Note: No regulatory decision on the application
is implied or intended in this public notice.**

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Merced to Fresno, Permitting Phase 1

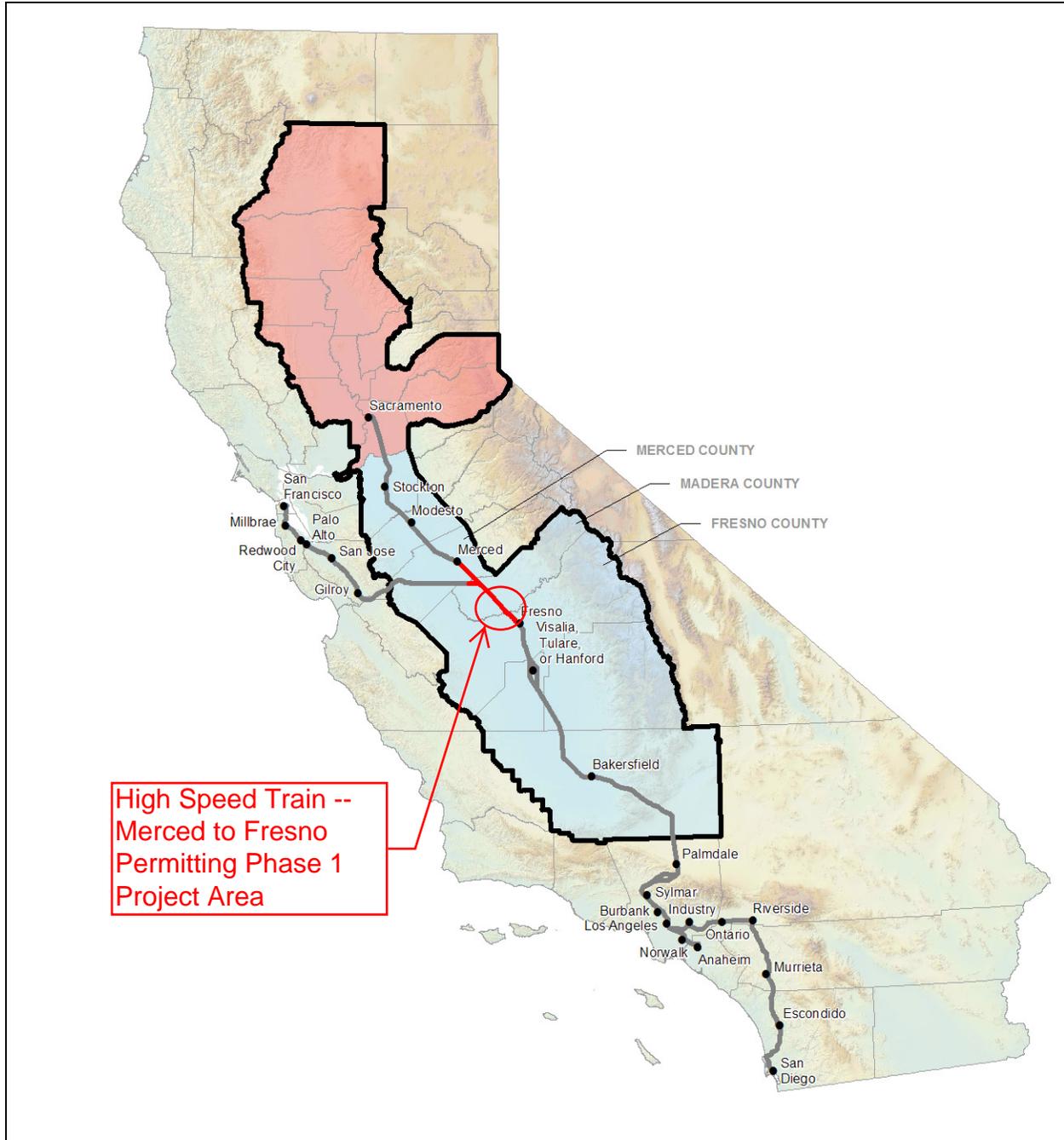
KEEP INFORMED OF PROJECT MILESTONES

To be informed of milestones in the development of this proposed Water Quality Certification, any interested persons should enroll in the State Water Board's 401 Program e-mail notification service.

Click the SUBSCRIBE button under the "Quick Links" section of the 401 Program Webpage at:

http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/cwa401/index.shtml

By enrolling in this list, you will receive notices for all current 401 project applications, including the project announced in this notice. You will need a valid e-mail address to use this service. If you do not have internet access or do not wish to participate in the Lyris list, contact the staff person named in the notice to express your interest in receiving notices by other means. You can enroll or un-enroll at any time. The State Water Board will not disclose your name or e-mail information to any outside parties, and will not use this information for any other purpose.



High Speed Train --
 Merced to Fresno
 Permitting Phase 1
 Project Area

- Merced to Fresno Route Alternative
- Statewide HST System
- Potential Station
- ▭ Counties Commonly Associated with the Central Valley
- ▭ Sacramento Valley
- ▭ San Joaquin Valley

MF_PT_PD_01 Dec 05, 2012

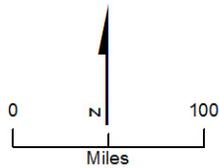
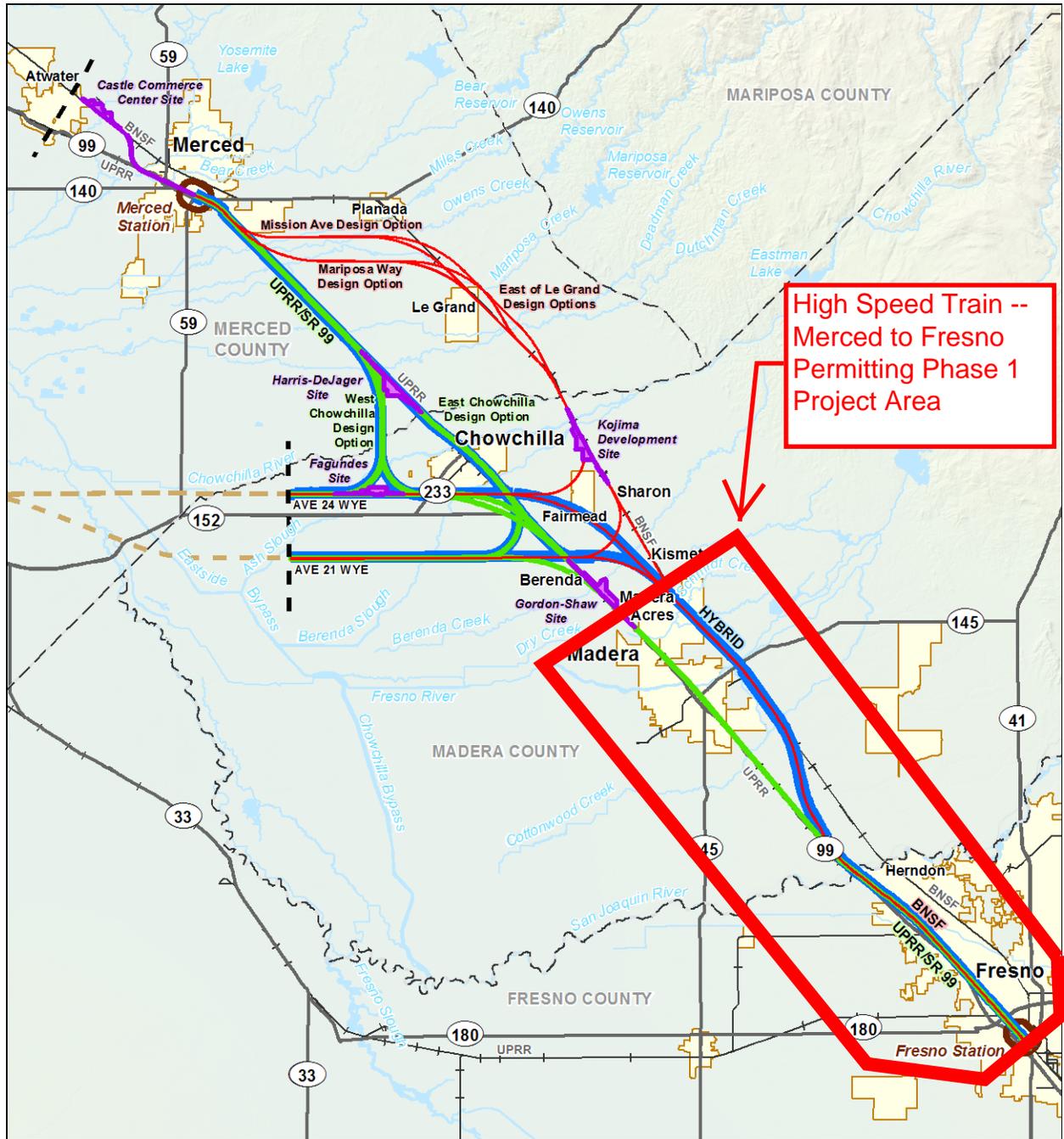
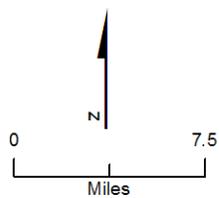


Figure 1-1
 California HST System

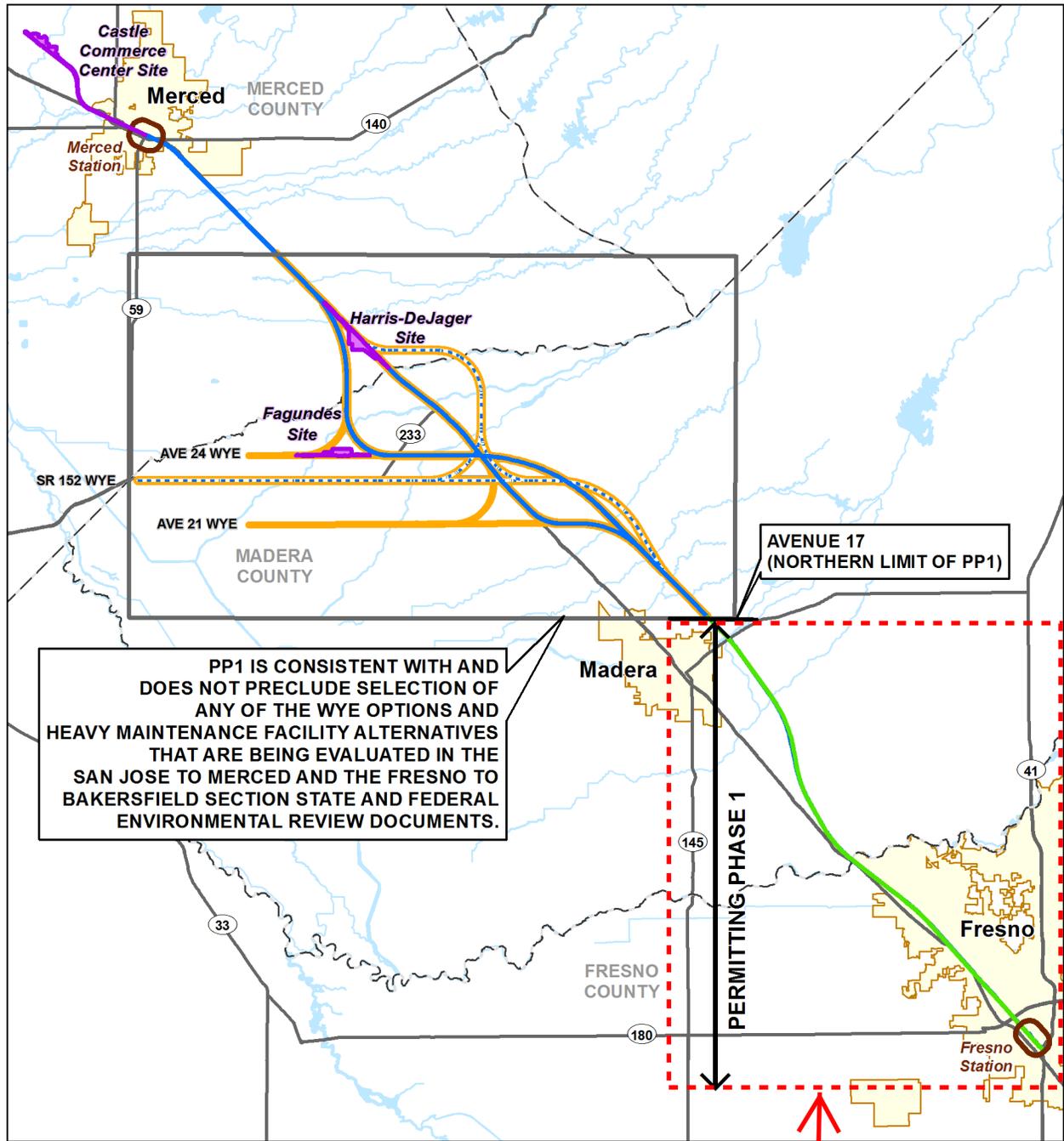


MF_PT_PD_02 Nov 28, 2012

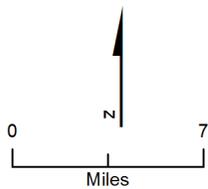


- BNSF Alternative
- UPRR/SR 99 Alternative
- Hybrid Alternative
- Project Limit
- Connection to Other Section
- Station Study Area
- Potential Heavy Maintenance Facility
- City Limit
- County Boundary
- Railroad
- State / US Highway

Figure 1-2
 Alternatives Considered in
 Merced to Fresno Section EIR/EIS



MF_PT_PD_04 Feb 27, 2013



- Hybrid Alternative
- - - SR 152 Wye Connection
- Construction Package 1
- Alignments Advanced for Further Study
- Number of Design Options and Their Centerlines are to be Determined
- Potential Heavy Maintenance Facility
- Station Study Area
- City Limit
- County Boundary
- State / US Highway

High Speed Train -- Merced to Fresno Permitting Phase 1 Project Area - - - - -

Figure 1-3
 Hybrid Alternative and Permitting Phase 1