



Program Environmental Document
and Service Development Plan



Coachella Valley–San Gorgonio Pass Rail Corridor Service

Background

In 1991, Riverside County Transportation Commission (RCTC) completed the first in a series of studies to evaluate the feasibility of operating one or two daily intercity rail round trips between Los Angeles and Indio. From 1991 to 2013, RCTC completed additional feasibility studies of the Coachella Valley–San Gorgonio Pass Rail Corridor Service. In July 2016, RCTC, in coordination with Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) and Caltrans, completed the Coachella Valley–San Gorgonio Pass Rail Corridor Service Study Alternatives Analysis (AA) Final Report that evaluated several alternatives for a new intercity rail service between Los Angeles and Indio.



January 2019

Needs and Benefits

Travel on the I-10 corridor is becoming increasingly congested as the Coachella Valley will see an increase in population, employment and tourism. An effective intercity rail service between Los Angeles and the San Gorgonio Pass/Coachella Valley will provide a new travel option that will help meet future mobility needs for residents, business and visitors. In addition, it will also service disadvantaged communities and help the region conform to air quality regulations. The project study area is outlined on the map on the reverse side of this fact sheet.

Program Overview

With the completion of the AA Report, work is under way to prepare the Program Environmental Impact Statement/Program Environmental Impact Report (EIS/EIR) document, consistent with National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requirements. The EIS/EIR will analyze impacts of implementing service.

At the initiation of the Program EIS/EIR process, all interested agencies and the public were invited to participate in public scoping meetings to provide their comments. The comments that were received help refine the Purpose and Need Statement and identify important issues for consideration in the Program EIS/EIR. Currently, the program is studying an alternative (see map on reverse) as well as a no build alternative with an anticipated start of service in 2024.

This phase of work is being funded through a \$2.9 million grant awarded by the FRA to Caltrans and RCTC in April 2015 and matched by RCTC with \$1.1 million of local funds.

Along with completing the Draft EIS/EIR, a Service Development Plan will be prepared to conceptualize how the service would operate through the Corridor and what infrastructure improvements would be needed to accommodate the new intercity passenger rail service.



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Fast Facts

- **Los Angeles Basin:** 16.5 million population, 7.2 million jobs
- **Coachella Valley:** 443,000 population, 12.2 million annual visitors
- **Trips through Pass:** 130,000 daily
- **Proposed initial daily round-trips:** 2
- **Proposed Rail Travel Time Los Angeles - Indio:** 3 - 3.5 hours
- **Potential host railroads:** Union Pacific, BNSF Railway
- **Current phase:** Program Environmental Document and Service Development Plan

How to Stay Involved

RCTC has formed a Technical Advisory Committee comprised of regional stakeholders and an Ad Hoc Committee of its Commission members. These groups meet periodically to provide feedback about project development.

RCTC always invites comments and feedback from the public throughout the environmental process.

Stay Connected:

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CVRailProject



RCTC.org/cvrail

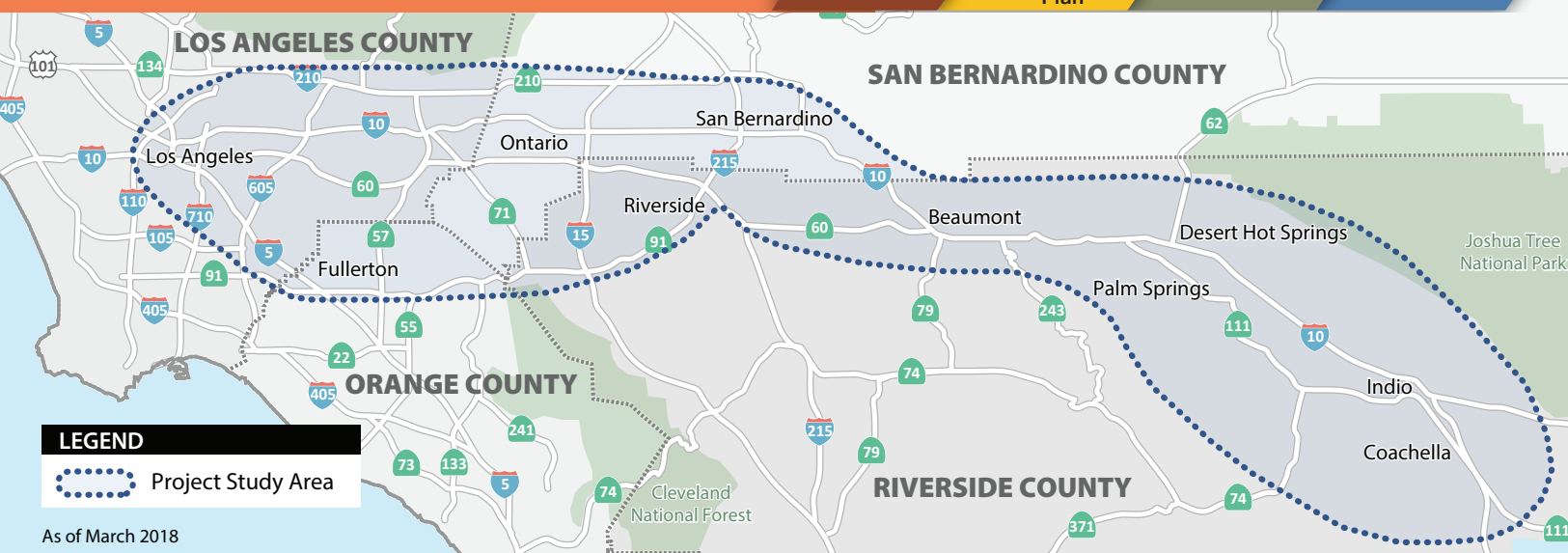


Project Process

The Coachella Valley–San Geronio Pass Rail Corridor Service is currently in the early stages of the environmental process and will utilize a tiered NEPA/CEQA approach. “Tiering” is a phased environmental review process often applied for complex transportation projects. In this way, tiering allows for programmatic decisions to be made and broad issues to be identified through an initial (Tier 1) programmatic level analysis, and project-level decisions to be informed by subsequent (Tier 2) site-specific analyses. The Build Alternative will contain a range of possible rail improvements, represented at a conceptual level, including information about the cities and towns to be served and the types of rail service to be provided.

The Build Alternative sets a framework for future investment, but does not identify specific locations for improvement projects or result in any construction. The Tier 1 decision will be followed by site specific, project-level studies (Tier 2). Each Tier 2 project study will involve engineering, design, and environmental review with appropriate involvement of affected communities and the public. Currently, work on the Service Development Plan and Program EIS/EIR is anticipated to take approximately three years to complete.

Study Area Map



We Are Here

Alternatives Analysis

Program Environmental Document & Service Development Plan

Preliminary Engineering & Project-Level Environmental Documents

Final Design & Construction

Initial Project Supporters: Riverside County Transportation Commission • Coachella Valley Association of Governments • California High Speed Rail Authority • Cathedral City • City of Calimesa • City of Coachella • City of Corona • City of Eastvale • City of Jurupa Valley • City of Indian Wells • City of Indio • City of La Quinta • City of Palm Desert • City of Palm Springs • City of Rancho Mirage • City of Temecula • Coachella Valley Economic Partnership • County of Riverside • County of Riverside Supervisors • Greater Palm Springs Convention & Visitors Bureau • LOSSAN Rail Corridor Agency • Metrolink • National Association of Rail Passengers • RailPAC • South Coast Air Quality Management District • Southern California Association of Governments • Southwest Rail Passenger Association