



NEWS RELEASE

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For immediate release

Coachella Valley-San Gorgonio Pass Rail Service Draft Environmental Document Available May 21 for Public Review, Comments

Passenger rail service between Los Angeles and the Coachella Valley is taking a step forward with the release of the draft environmental document this week for public review and comments.

The Riverside County Transportation Commission, in collaboration with the Federal Railroad Administration and Caltrans, will release the Coachella Valley-San Gorgonio Pass Rail Corridor Service Draft Tier 1 Program-Level Environmental Impact Statement/Environmental Impact Report (EIS/EIR) on Friday, May 21 for the public to review and submit comments.

The proposed service would offer twice-daily roundtrips between Los Angeles and the Coachella Valley. The 144-mile corridor would include stops in four counties – Los Angeles, Orange, San Bernardino, and Riverside – with the potential for up to six stations east of Colton and the service endpoint in either Indio or Coachella.

The agencies have completed the Draft Tier 1 Program Level EIS/EIR, a high-level conceptual plan of the service and how it may affect the environment. Completing the EIS/EIR is a significant milestone and will bring this service another step closer to reality.

“Yay – a train! While passenger rail service is still many years away, completing the draft program level environmental document is a huge milestone,” said RCTC Chair and Palm Desert Mayor Pro Tem Jan

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Harnik. “We look forward to the day that train passengers can fully experience the attractions of our beautiful Coachella Valley. I see this as a transformational project – it will truly change how people travel between Los Angeles and the Coachella Valley,” she said.

The service would offer an alternative to driving or riding the bus, serve residential and job centers along the corridor, enhance access to Coachella Valley tourism and boost economic development from the tourism industry, reduce vehicle miles traveled on I-10 and other major highways, and improve air quality, especially in disadvantaged communities that align highways.

The next phase of work is a Tier 2 Project Level EIS/EIR, which would study needed infrastructure improvements and station locations. RCTC is working with state and federal partners to secure funds for this next phase.

The estimated timeline for service to start could be up to 10 years after the Tier 2 EIS/EIR is completed. To advance the project to design, construction, and service, RCTC and project partners must finalize the Tier 2 document, secure funding for the estimated \$1 billion project, and obtain commitments from the freight railroads.

Public participation is essential. Southern California residents are encouraged to review the draft environmental document from May 21 to July 6 at [rctc.org/CVRAil](https://www.rctc.org/CVRAil) and at libraries at Los Angeles Union Station/Metro Library, Fullerton, Riverside, Colton, Loma Linda, Redlands, Beaumont, Banning, Palm Springs, Indio, and Coachella. Comments may be submitted:

- Online at <https://www.regulations.gov/docket/FRA-2021-0048>.
- By U.S. mail at
Federal Railroad Administration
Amanda Ciampolillo, Environmental Protection Specialist
1200 New Jersey Avenue SE
Washington, DC 20590
- During two virtual public hearings; the content will be the same at both meetings. Spanish interpretation will be provided.
Public Hearing #1: Thursday, June 22 at 6 p.m.
Register at <https://zoom.us/j/98860393291?pwd=VkJSUHRFaWRhUXhnM3BQRnBnb0Zqdz09>
Public Hearing #2: Saturday, June 26 at 9 a.m.
Register at <https://zoom.us/j/99115218303?pwd=MHBFSnFTWS9ORGM0Z3pvNnFTVXN2UT09>

For links to downloadable videos, b-roll footage, the project logo, and English and Spanish fact sheets and frequently asked questions, click here <https://tinyurl.com/n3y6emr6>