



RIVERSIDE
COUNTY
TRANSPORTATION
COMMISSION



U.S. Department
of Transportation
Federal Railroad
Administration



Coachella Valley-San Gorgonio Pass Rail Corridor Service

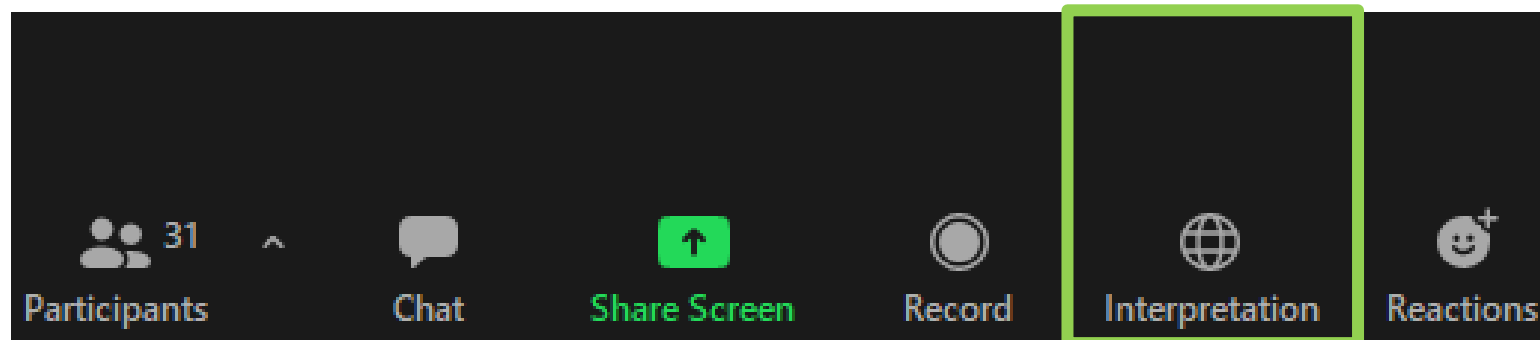
Public Hearing

June 26, 2021



Interpretation Assistance

Para oír la presentación en español, haga clic en el botón de traducción de Zoom en la parte inferior de la pantalla



Introductions

- Amanda Ciampolillo – Federal Railroad Administration
- Sheldon Peterson – Riverside County Transportation Commission
- JD Douglas – HDR

Program Video

Presentation Agenda

- Overview
- Purpose and Need
- Program History
- Prior Planning Activities
- Alternatives Considered
- Document Availability and Opportunity to Comment
- Q&A
- Public Comment Period



Overview

Today's focus is the Coachella Valley-San Gorgonio Pass Rail Corridor Service Tier 1 Program Environmental Impact Statement/Environmental Impact Report and potential environmental impacts identified. This meeting will provide you the opportunity to comment on the draft environmental document.

While commenting, participants are encouraged to:

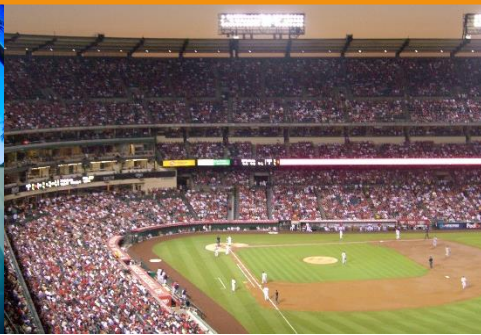
- Explain the basis for their comments,
- Submit data or references offering facts, reasonable assumptions based on facts, or expert opinion supported by facts, and
- Submit the name of a contact person who will be available for later consultation, if necessary.



Overview

What is the Coachella Valley-San Geronio Pass Rail Corridor Service Program?

- The Federal Railroad Administration, the California Department of Transportation, and the Riverside County Transportation Commission are studying a 144-mile passenger rail service corridor between Los Angeles and the Coachella Valley
- Service would extend from Los Angeles Union Station to Indio or Coachella



Program Overview – Study Area

Where is the Program Study Area?



Passenger Rail Service Studied

Two round trips per day between Los Angeles and Coachella Valley

Up to six potential stations east of Colton

Purpose & Need

Purpose: Provide safe, reliable, and convenient intercity passenger rail service with capability to meet future mobility needs of residents, businesses, and visitors

Need:

- Regional population and employment growth
- Limited and constrained travel options
- Serve disadvantaged communities
- Help conform to air quality regulations



Program Purpose – Service Objectives

What objectives would the service achieve?

- More convenient, faster, frequent service than existing transit
- An alternative to driving that offers reliable schedules
- An affordable transportation service
- Improve regional travel options for transit-dependent people
- Serve expected growth within the program corridor
- Help conform to air quality regulations



Why Amtrak Intercity Service and not Metrolink?

- Intercity service with over 3 hours travel time is preferred to have larger, reclining seats and access to the lounge car.
- Early Draft Schedules (limited stops)

LAUS to Indio	Trip 1	Trip 2
LAUS	10:20 AM	3:20 PM
Fullerton	10:55 AM	3:55 PM
Riverside	11:39 AM	4:39 PM
Palm Springs	12:59 PM	5:59 PM
Indio	1:23 PM	6:23 PM

Indio to LAUS	Trip 1	Trip 2
Indio	9:32 AM	3:32 PM
Palm Springs	9:59 AM	3:59 PM
Riverside	11:22 AM	5:22 PM
Fullerton	12:06 PM	6:06 PM
Los Angeles	12:40 PM	6:40 PM

- Congress has authorized Amtrak to operate on private railroads, with some track improvements. Metrolink does not have that authorization.
- Intercity service is funded by the state agencies not local funds.

Program History & Prior Planning Activities

1991

Initial Feasibility Studies: Evaluated one or two daily long-distance rail round-trips between Los Angeles and Indio

2010-2013

Additional Feasibility Studies

2013-2016

Market Assessment/Alternatives Analysis: Evaluated five alternatives to determine the preferred alignment

July 2016

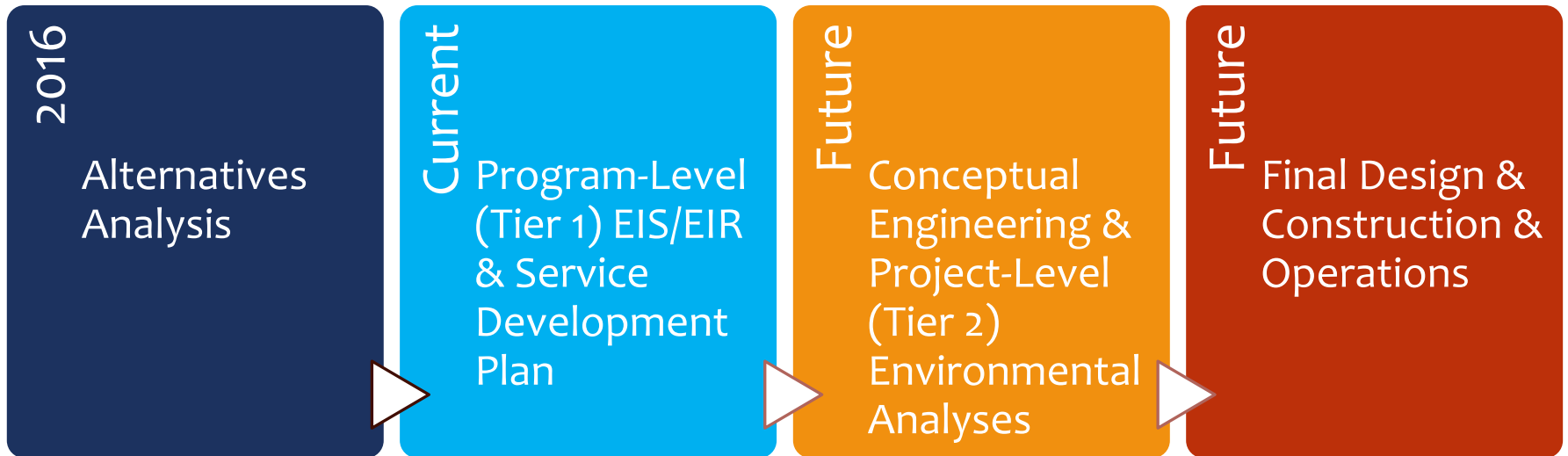
Finalized Alternatives Analysis/Preferred Route Advances for Environmental Studies

Fall 2016 –
Summer 2021

Tier 1/Program EIS/EIR: Held public scoping meetings and completed studies for Draft EIS/EIR for public review

Project Process

Where are we in the process?




Project Process

What will be prepared?

- Service Development Plan (SDP)
 - Analysis of service levels, infrastructure needs, route modeling, station catchment areas, and connectivity
- Program-Level (Tier 1) EIS/EIR
 - Joint National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)/California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) process
 - Addresses likely environmental effects associated with type of rail service proposed in corridor
 - Provides basis for subsequent phases or tiered environmental documents (Tier 2 Project Level)

Project Process

- **Tier 1 Program-level** process will satisfy **both federal and state environmental requirements (EIS + EIR)** 
- ✓ Evaluates effects of implementing service (regional context)
- ✓ Identifies broad areas of potential environmental effects associated with program construction and operation and the resources that could be potentially affected in the study area.
- ✓ Procedural planning document only (i.e., not associated with any project construction)
- **Tier 2 Project-level** environmental process for infrastructure improvements to follow program-level EIS/EIR
- ✓ Tier 2 would analyze site-specific impacts based on the infrastructure improvements identified in the SDP
- ✓ Once approved, next steps (e.g., construction permitting, etc.) can commence

Project Process

The Program-Level (Tier 1) Draft EIS/EIR evaluates topics, including:

- ✓ Land Use and Planning
- ✓ Transportation
- ✓ Visual Quality and Aesthetics
- ✓ Air Quality and Greenhouse Gases
- ✓ Noise and Vibration
- ✓ Jurisdictional Waters and Wetland Resources
- ✓ Biological Resources
- ✓ Floodplains, Hydrology, and Water Quality
- ✓ Geology, Soils, Seismicity, and Paleontological Resources



Project Process

Topics, continued:

- ✓ Hazards and Hazardous Materials
- ✓ Public Utilities and Energy
- ✓ Cultural Resources
- ✓ Parklands and Community Services
- ✓ Safety and Security
- ✓ Socioeconomics and Communities Affected
- ✓ Cumulative Effects
- ✓ Environmental Justice Effects
- ✓ Section 4(f)/6(f) Resources



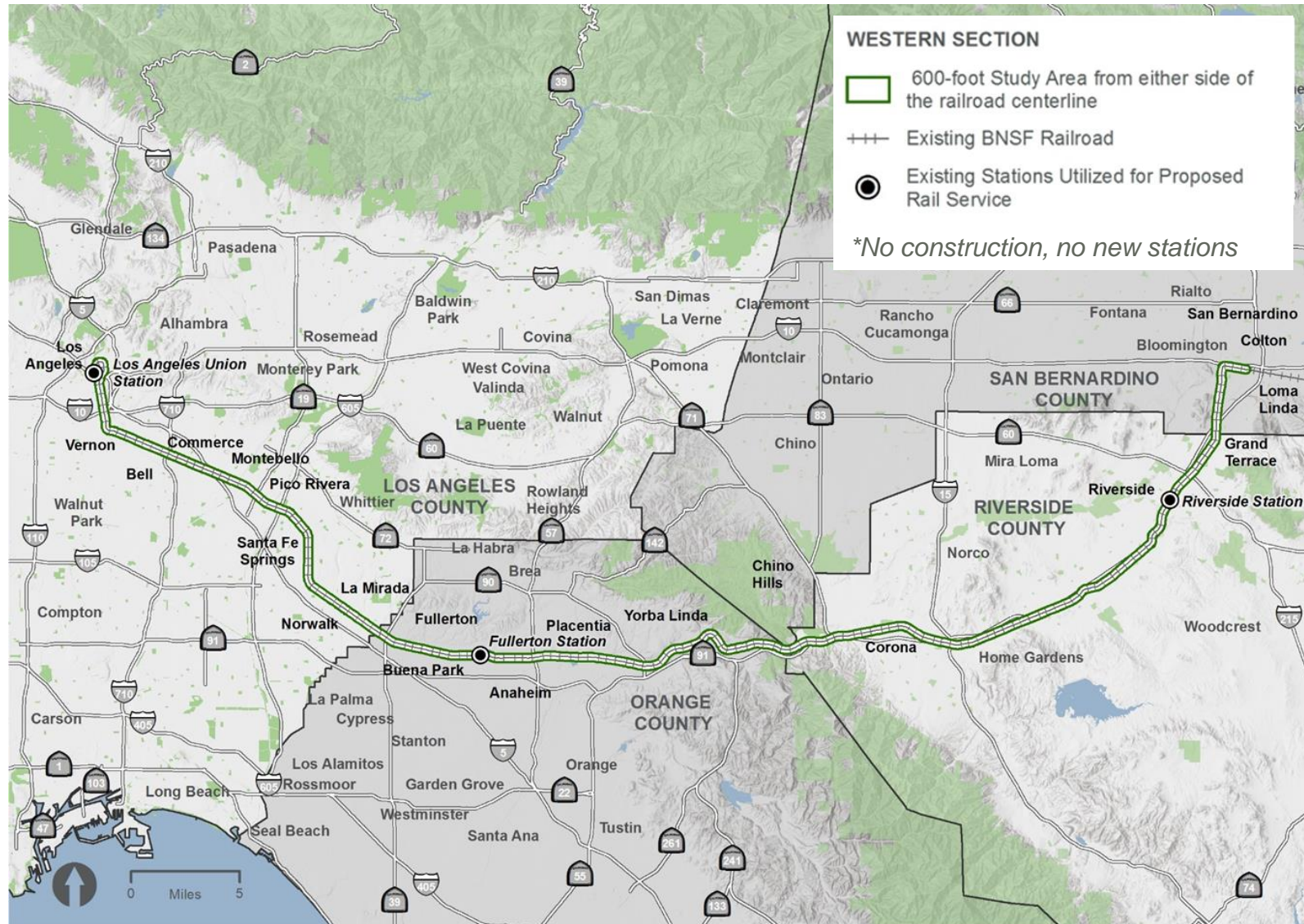
Alternatives Considered

The Program-Level (Tier 1) Draft EIS/EIR includes the analysis of:

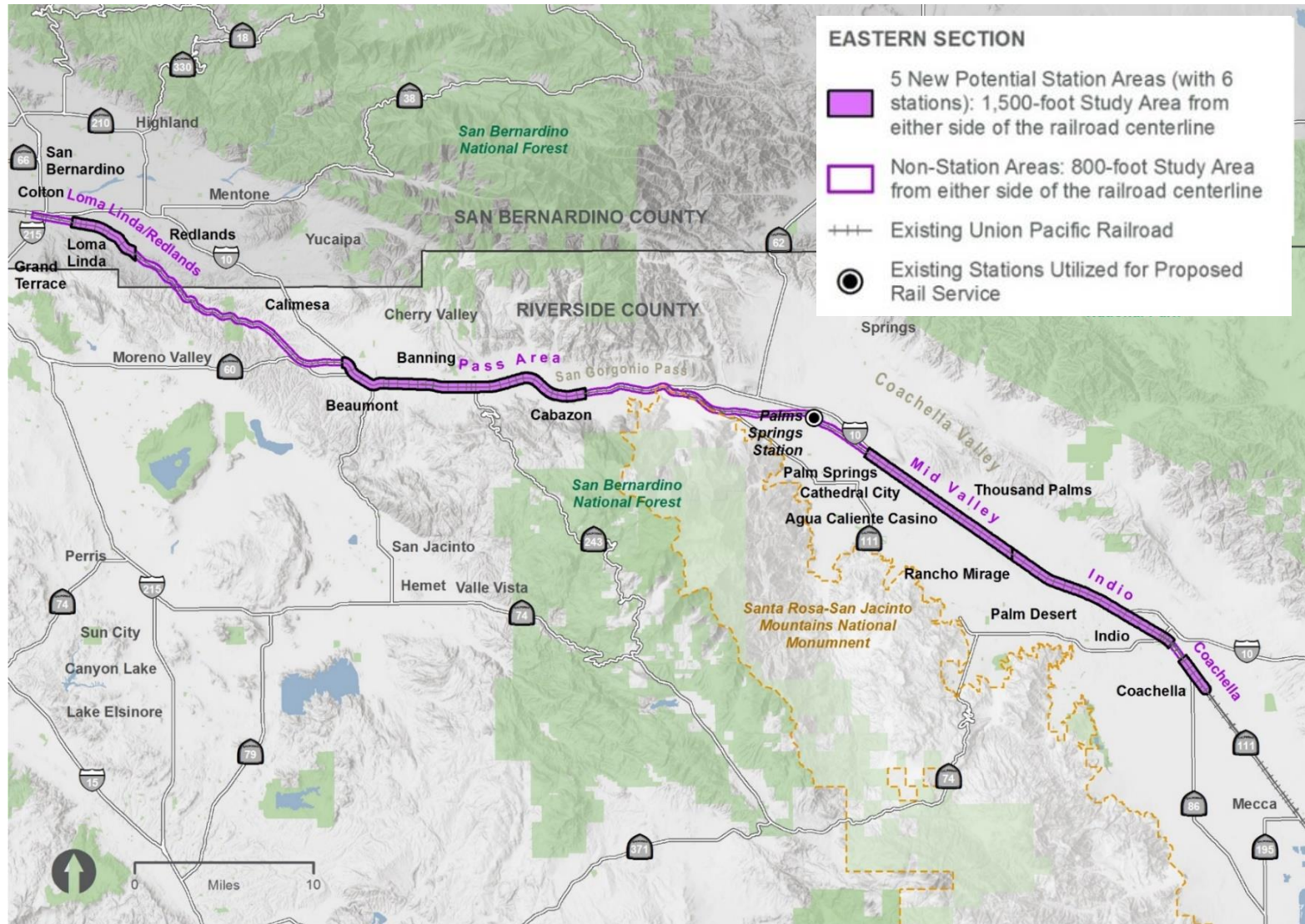
	Daily Train Trips	Eastern Terminus	# of Stations East of Colton	New Third Track in Eastern Section
No Build	None	N/A	0	N/A
Option #1	Two round trips	Coachella	6	Colton to Coachella
Option #2	Two round trips	Indio	5	Colton to Indio
Option #3	Two round trips	Indio	5	Colton to approx. Mid Valley



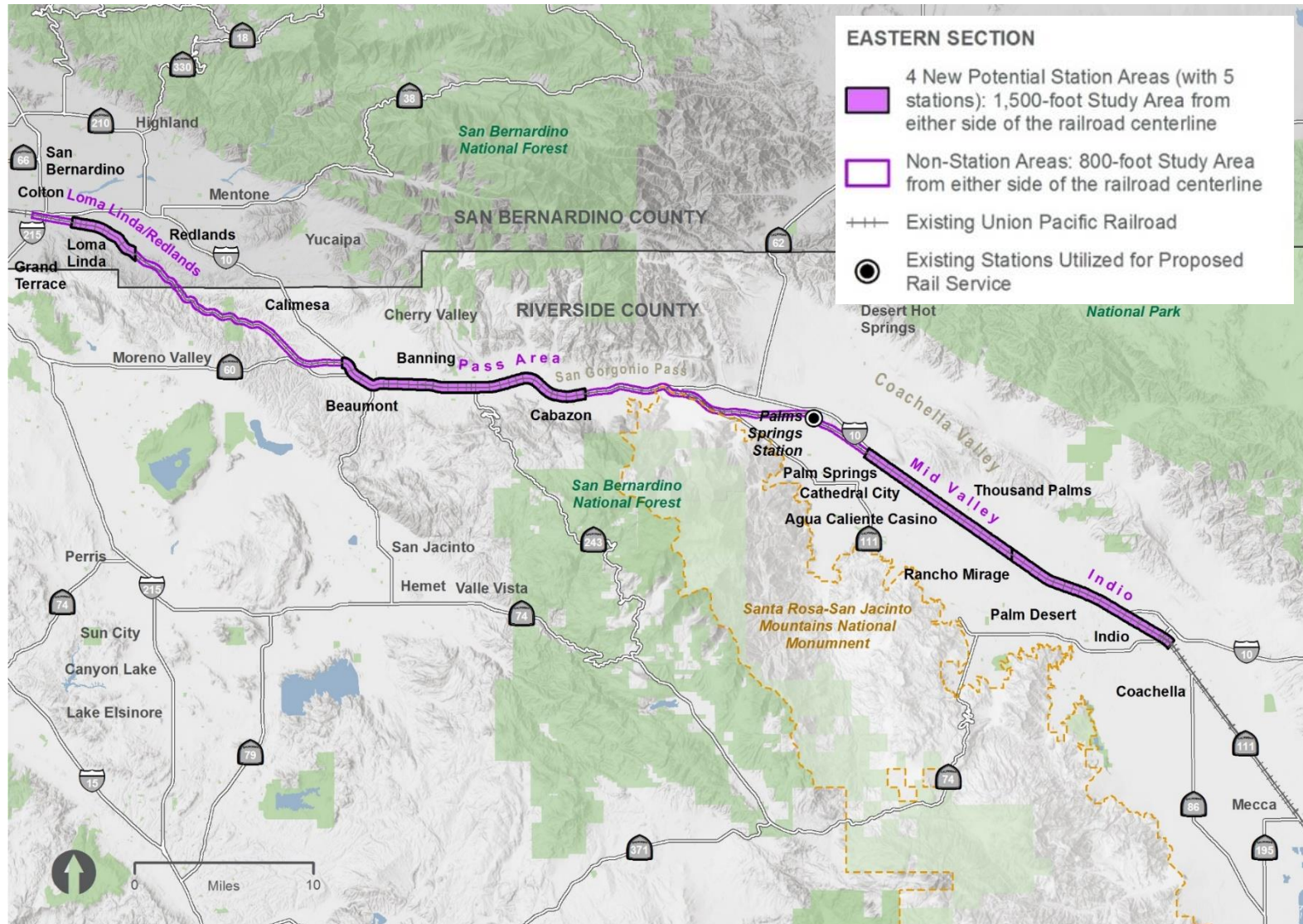
Western Section



Eastern Section: Coachella Terminus



Eastern Section: Indio Terminus



Document Availability and Opportunity to Comment

The Draft Tier 1/Program EIS/EIR was released on May 21, 2021 and will be available for public comment until July 6, 2021.

Digital copies of the full Draft Tier 1/Program EIS/EIR are available to review on the following web pages:

- RCTC website
[RCTC.org/cvtrail](https://www.rctc.org/cvtrail)
- FRA website
<https://railroads.dot.gov/environment/environmental-reviews/coachella-valley-san-gorgonio-pass-corridor-investment-plan>
- Regulations.gov
<https://www.regulations.gov/document/FRA-2021-0048-0002>



Document Availability and Opportunity to Comment

Printed copies of the Draft Tier 1/Program EIS/EIR Executive Summary are available for review at:

- Los Angeles Union Station/Metro Library and Archive
- Fullerton Public Library
- Arlington Library
- Riverside County Transportation Commission Offices (by appointment only)
- Colton Public Library
- Loma Linda Branch Library
- A.K. Smiley Public Library
- Beaumont Library
- Banning Public Library
- Palm Springs Public Library
- Riverside County Indio Branch Library
- Riverside County Coachella Branch Library

****Subject to library location hours and COVID-19 procedures***



How To Submit Comments

Public Comment Period: May 21, 2021 to July 6, 2021

Please submit comments on the Draft Tier 1/Program EIS/EIR via the following methods:

During the Public Hearings: TODAY

Via Online form: <https://www.regulations.gov/document/FRA-2021-0048-0002>

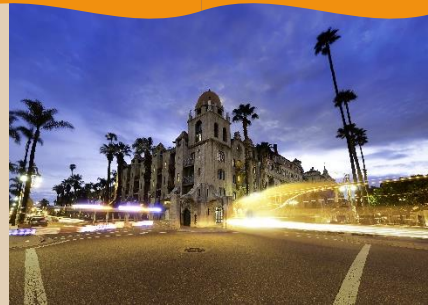
Via Mail*: Federal Railroad Administration
Amanda Ciampolillo, Environmental Protection Specialist
1200 New Jersey Avenue SE
Washington, DC 20590

****Comments that are mailed in should be postmarked July 6, 2021 or earlier.***

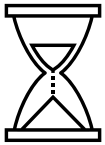


Questions?

**This portion of the agenda is for clarifying questions only.
Please save your official comments for the next agenda item.*




Comments Today



3 minutes per speaker

03:00

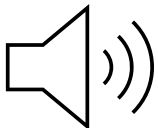
mins: secs: type:

 Breaktime for PowerPoint by Flow Simulation Ltd.



To request to speak:

- Zoom app users: Raise hand feature
- Call-in users: Dial *9 to raise your hand



When it is your turn to speak:

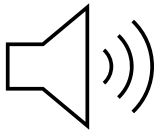
- Zoom app users: You will be unmuted
- Call-in users: Dial *6 to unmute your mic when you hear your number announced

We're Here to Take Your Comment!



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Stay Involved

Coachella Valley – San Geronio Pass Rail Corridor Study

Email: CVrail@rctc.org

RCTC Website: RCTC.org/cvrail

Facebook: facebook.com/CVRailProject

FRA Website:

<https://railroads.dot.gov/environment/environmental-reviews/coachella-valley-san-gorgonio-pass-corridor-investment-plan>

