

Mitigated Negative Declaration

Lead Agency: California Department of Transportation, Division of Rail

Project Title: Le Grand to Merced Double Track Project

SCH Number: SCH#2009081054

Project Location: Le Grand Double Track Project is located within the County of Merced. The USGS topographic maps that apply to the project area are the Merced, Planada, Plainsburg, and Le Grand Quadrangles, 7.5 Minute Series topographic maps. From the north the project is located in Sections 19, 20, 29, 28, 27, 26 and 25 of Township 7 South, Range 14 East, Mount Diablo Base and Meridian (MDBM); Sections 30, 29, 28, 27, 34, and 35 of Township 7 South, Range 15 East, MDBM; Sections 2, 1, and 12 of Township 8 South, Range 15 East, MDBM; and Sections 7, 18, 17, 20, 21, and 28 of Township 8 South, Range 16 East, MDBM.

Project Description: As part of its program to improve intercity passenger rail service, the California Department of Transportation, Division of Rail (Caltrans) is proposing to upgrade the capacity on a portion of the BNSF Railway Company's existing right-of-way within the Amtrak-operated San Joaquin Corridor. The proposed project under consideration consists of installing approximately 16.43 miles of second main track in the railway corridor from Milepost 1039.93 to Milepost 1056.36 located within the communities of Le Grand, Planada, Tuttle, and Kadota and the City of Merced. The proposed project extends from about 0.25 mile northwest of M Street, within the City of Merced, southeast to about 0.04 mile northeast of Deadman's Creek within the community of Le Grand.

Finding: Caltrans's decision to implement this project is a discretionary decision or "project" that requires evaluation under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). This Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) is Caltrans's proposed CEQA determination for this project.

Initial Study: Copies of the Initial Study/Environmental Assessment are available for public review at <http://www.dot.ca.gov/rail/go/dor/project-environmental-review/index.cfm> or upon request to Caltrans at the following phone number (916-654-7129). The CEQA public review and comment period for the IS/EA and proposed MND closed on September 15, 2009.

Mitigation Measures: All mitigation measures identified in the IS/EA and Final MND package will be adopted as conditions of the project and will be implemented through a Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program MMRP adopted with this Mitigated Negative Declaration.

Chief
Track & Signal Construction Branch November 2, 2009


Signature (Public Agency)

Title

Date