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## NEWS RELEASE

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## Renewed Federal Partnership Helps Expedite Environmental Reviews for Rail Projects

**SACRAMENTO, Calif.** – Today, the California State Transportation Agency and the California High-Speed Rail Authority (Authority) renewed an agreement with the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) to continue assuming the FRA's federal environmental review responsibilities under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

The renewed agreement allows the State to continue to stand in the shoes of the FRA for certain duties under federal environmental law, thereby streamlining decision-making and providing for a more efficient environmental review process.



“We are pleased to continue our partnership with the State of California and the California High-Speed Rail Authority on the renewal of this agreement. Initiatives like this are essential to keep the project’s momentum going. California’s high-speed rail project is an important piece of an electrified, high-speed passenger rail network in the western United States that will connect millions of people, provide new economic opportunities and good-paying jobs, and make world-class passenger rail a reality in America.”

Amit Bose  
FRA Administrator

#### **WHY THIS MATTERS FOR CALIFORNIA:**

- California is the only state with “NEPA Assignment” for rail projects.
- The agreement allows for fewer layers of review for environmental projects, expediting the process and saving time.
- The Agreement aligns with Gov. Gavin Newsom’s **Executive Order N-8-23**, further complementing **recent legislation aimed at accelerating critical infrastructure projects across California to build more, faster.**
- The agreement will allow the Authority to expedite review on projects such as the Los Angeles to Anaheim high-speed rail section environmental documents, the Link US project at Los Angeles Union Station and the ACEforward project in Northern California.



"The partnership and work that California and the FRA continue to do is essential to our goal of building clean infrastructure faster. By streamlining permitting and cutting red tape, we’re working to maximize taxpayer dollars and accelerate timelines – to get passengers on California high-speed rail trains as quickly as possible."

Gavin Newsom  
Governor

Under the previous agreement with the FRA, California’s high-speed rail program was able to assume the role and responsibility of the FRA in making final determinations under NEPA for assigned projects such as the project’s environmental clearance between Los Angeles and San Francisco. The state was granted NEPA authority in 2019 for an initial five-year duration. With FRA’s approval of this renewal, the state’s authority will now be extended for 10 years.

Renewal is granted only after federal review of the Authority's performance in the past five years in assuming the role. Additionally, with approval of this renewal, the state has flexibility to serve as NEPA lead agency for additional locally sponsored eligible railroad projects. [Click here to view current local agency sponsored projects.](#) The Authority will also continue to act as lead agency for responsibilities under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). To learn more visit: <https://hsr.ca.gov/programs/environmental-planning/nepa-assignment-mou/>

The Authority has begun work to extend the 119 miles currently under construction to 171 miles of future electrified high-speed rail from Merced to Bakersfield. There are currently more than 25 active construction sites in California's Central Valley, with the Authority having also fully environmentally cleared 463 miles of the high-speed rail program from the Bay Area to downtown Los Angeles.

Since the start of high-speed rail construction, the project has created more than 13,700 good paying construction jobs, a majority going to residents of the Central Valley. Nearly 1,500 workers are dispatched to a high-speed rail construction site daily.

For the latest on high-speed rail construction including the more than 25 active job sites underway in the Central Valley, visit [www.buildhsr.com](http://www.buildhsr.com).

The following button contains recent video, animations, photography, press center resources and latest renderings. These files are all available for free use, courtesy of the California High-Speed Rail Authority.



[You can find this news release online here.](#)

[Una versión en español del comunicado de prensa está disponible en línea aquí.](#)

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