

# Chapter 1

## PURPOSE AND NEED AND OBJECTIVES

This chapter of the combined Program Environmental Impact Report and Environmental Impact Statement (Program EIR/EIS) describes the need for conventional rail improvements to help relieve the growing capacity and congestion constraints on intercity travel using existing highway and passenger rail infrastructure between Los Angeles, Orange and San Diego Counties. This chapter also describes how incremental improvements would serve the purpose of augmenting the existing rail infrastructure, helping to relieve congestion and capacity constraints, while simultaneously offering reliable, safe and time-efficient travel.

References to the sources used in the preparation of this document are provided in Chapter 11. In some cases to clarify a particular source, specific references are called out in the text.

### 1.1 INTRODUCTION

The Los Angeles to San Diego travel corridor links California's three most populous counties - Los Angeles, Orange and San Diego. Travel along this corridor is served largely by Interstate 5 (I-5) and the intercity and commuter rail services that operate along the former Santa Fe Railroad corridor between Los Angeles and San Diego. This rail corridor is currently used by Amtrak, Metrolink, Coaster and the Burlington Northern and Santa Fe Railway (BNSF) freight service, and loosely parallels I-5 from Los Angeles Union Station through Orange County to San Diego's Santa Fe Depot.

For the purposes of this study, intercity rail service refers to the passenger rail service, operated by Amtrak and jointly funded by Amtrak and the California Department of Transportation (Department) and known as the Pacific Surfliner. The Pacific Surfliner provides daily passenger service along the rail corridor that connects San Diego, Los Angeles, Santa Barbara, and San Luis Obispo (and intermediate communities between these cities), and is more commonly known as the LOSSAN corridor. However, for the purpose of this study the LOSSAN corridor will refer only to the segment between Los Angeles and San Diego. Commuter rail refers to the services provided by Metrolink in Los Angeles, Orange and north San Diego Counties, and Coaster in San Diego County. Since three services regularly utilize the LOSSAN corridor, the expansion plans of each service, and those of BNSF (the freight operator), must be taken into account when considering improvements along the rail corridor.

Southern California's existing transportation network is currently operating at or near its design capacity, and building additional capacity is both expensive and increasingly problematic. This results in highway and railroad travel delays, has a negative impact on the region's economy, and can result in environmental impacts and the reduction of the quality of life for all.

Improvements to the LOSSAN rail corridor would help meet the Southern California region's transportation demands of today, as well as help to address the expected increase in intercity travel demand rising out of the growth in population over the next 20 years and beyond.

Improvements to the LOSSAN rail corridor would improve passenger rail travel between the Los Angeles, Orange and San Diego County major metropolitan areas; provide for a better interface with transit and highways; and provide added capacity within a multimodal strategy to help meet increases in intercity travel demand in Southern California in a manner sensitive to and

protective of California's unique natural resources. The overall goal is to improve mobility and reliability in this congested part of the state by decreasing trip times and improving the rail system in a cost-effective and environmentally sensitive manner.

The Department is partnering with the California High-Speed Rail Authority (Authority) in its examination of the LOSSAN corridor. The Authority is the state agency responsible for the proposed statewide high-speed train system extending from Sacramento, the Bay Area, through the Central Valley to Los Angeles and San Diego. While this electrified, grade-separated system might run only as far south as either Anaheim or Irvine within the LOSSAN corridor, LOSSAN passenger rail service is important to the Authority in its role as a feeder network to the statewide system, and the improvements proposed by the Department would strengthen the corridor's ability to serve that role.<sup>1</sup>

The Department and the Authority worked together, within the framework of an Agreement, to develop the technical data and necessary public and agency outreach for the Department's LOSSAN Rail Corridor Improvements Program EIR/EIS. LOSSAN corridor improvements were also considered as a feeder service in the Authority's 2005 High-Speed Train Program EIR/EIS, with shared corridor options as far south as Irvine. The Department and the Authority are responsible for making their own decisions, analyses, and determinations regarding the use of the shared technical data. (See Chapter 2, Alternatives, for more discussion of the relationship between the Authority and the Department in developing and evaluating options for rail improvements in the LOSSAN region.)

The Department commenced this environmental review process to comply with federal and state laws, in particular the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) (42 U.S.C. § 4321 et seq.) and the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) (Cal. P.R.C. § 21000 et seq.). NEPA requires federal agencies to prepare an environmental impact statement (EIS) for proposed actions that have the potential to cause significant environmental impacts. Because of possible future funding and regulatory action, the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) is the lead federal agency, working with the Department as the lead state agency, for the environmental review required by NEPA and related statutes. The FRA has further determined that the preparation of a program-level (tier 1) EIS for the proposed rail improvements is the appropriate NEPA document because of the comprehensive nature and scope of the corridor improvements proposed by the Department and the conceptual stage of planning and decision-making. The decisions related to advancing and ultimately constructing the proposed rail improvements would constitute major federal actions requiring environmental review under NEPA for several federal agencies in addition to the FRA. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), among others, have been active participants throughout project planning and the preparation of this Program EIS.

The rail corridor improvements being proposed are subject to environmental review under CEQA, and the Department is both the project sponsor and the lead agency for purposes of CEQA compliance. The Department has determined that a program environmental impact report (EIR) is the appropriate CEQA document for the project at this conceptual stage of planning and decision-making, which includes selecting a preferred rail alignment option in some locations and identifying options for phasing the development of the incremental rail improvements. No permits will be sought in this phase of environmental review. If the rail

<sup>1</sup> As part of its proposed statewide high-speed train system, the Authority is also continuing to examine a dedicated high-speed train corridor between Los Angeles and San Diego via the Inland Empire (Riverside and San Bernardino).



improvements alternative is selected at the conclusion of the Program EIR/EIS, separate and distinct improvement projects will be the subject of project-level environmental documentation to assess in more detail site-specific impacts. Project-level environmental documentation will also update environmental/regulatory settings as necessary in focused study areas.

This document is being prepared as a combined program EIR/EIS for compliance with both CEQA and NEPA. The Program EIR/EIS will enable public agencies to evaluate the potential impacts of the proposed rail improvements, evaluate the improvements against the No-Project Alternative, select a preferred alternative, and define mitigation strategies to address any potentially significant adverse impacts. If the Rail Improvements Alternative is selected as the preferred alternative, the Program EIR/EIS will support the approvals and initial financing decisions necessary to implement the proposed rail corridor improvements.

Preparation of a program-level document followed by more detailed project-specific documents that “tier”<sup>2</sup> off the program document offers a number of advantages. As described in Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations (40 C.F.R. §1508.28), FHWA Guidelines (23 C.F.R. Part 771; 52 F.R. § 32646 [August 1987]), and the state CEQA Guidelines (14 C.C.R. § 15168[b]), this approach offers the following advantages.

- More exhaustive consideration of impacts and alternatives than would be practical in an individual or project-specific EIR/EIS.
- Consideration of cumulative impacts that might be slighted in a case-by-case analysis.
- An opportunity for decision-makers to consider broad policy alternatives and program-level mitigation strategies at an early stage, when the flexibility to incorporate them is greater.
- Avoiding reconsideration of policy issues in subsequent documents.
- Early coordination with the USACE and EPA to identify avoidance and minimization opportunities that are likely to yield or will lead to the selection of a least environmentally damaging practicable alternative (LEDPA) under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act.
- Less paperwork by encouraging the reuse of data through incorporation by reference in subsequent tiered documents.

The required contents of a program EIR/EIS are the same as those of a project-level document. However, the level of detail provided in the two types of documents differs substantially because a program-level document analyzes a general conceptual design of the proposed program and alternatives rather than providing detailed analysis of a specific project proposal.

A program EIR/EIS is an informational document intended to analyze and to disclose to the public and to public decision-makers the environmental effects and benefits of a proposed program and its alternatives. The preparation, circulation, and review of a draft program EIR/EIS provides for the evaluation of alternatives, including a no-project/no-action alternative; the assessment of all significant environmental impacts; and the opportunity for public input and comments to help inform the decision-making process. Evaluating alternatives as required by FRA's procedures for considering environmental impacts (64 F.R. § 28545 [May 26, 1999]) and by other federal agency NEPA regulations and state CEQA guidelines helps ensure that

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<sup>2</sup> Tiering refers to a multilevel approach where a first tier environmental document analyzes general matters and subsequent tiers analyze narrower projects/actions, referencing the more general document.

avoidance and minimization of potential environmental impacts are addressed, and potential benefits, costs, and trade-offs of alternatives are considered.

This Program-level document has been prepared to allow the lead agencies to consider a future program of improvements to the LOSSAN rail corridor and to provide information to decide between the No-Project and the Rail Improvements Alternative. All site-specific location decisions will be made during project-level environmental review based upon site-specific analysis.

Project-level analysis, engineering refinement, and documentation will be necessary for major improvements that have been identified and selected through this Program environmental review prior to permitting and construction. As described in Chapter 3 of this document, these requirements would include site-specific field studies and resource surveys, as well as agency coordination, specific measures to avoid or minimize impacts, and an approved mitigation plan.

Several alternative improvements for some rail segments along the rail corridor have been selected for continued investigation, including the areas traversing coastal lagoons in northern San Diego County (between Oceanside and the I-5/805 Split). In these areas (as well as others), more detailed project-level study, additional refinement of the alignments and/or station locations, and further public and agency input are needed to make decisions among conceptual alignment options. This Program EIR/EIS has been prepared under the supervision and direction of the FRA and the Department and with input from federal, state and local agencies. It is intended that other federal, state, regional, and local agencies use the Program EIR/EIS to review the proposed program and develop expectations for the project-level environmental reviews that would follow should the Rail Improvements Alternative be selected. Section 3.17 outlines some of the issues and possible approaches to project-level decision making.

## 1.2 PURPOSE OF AND NEED FOR IMPROVED INTERCITY TRANSPORTATION IN SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

Purpose and need are closely linked but subtly different. Need may be thought of as the problem and purpose as an intention to address the problem. Purpose describes why the sponsoring agency is proposing an action that may have environmental impacts and provides the basis for selecting reasonable and practicable alternatives for consideration, comparing the alternatives, and selecting the preferred alternative (40 C.F.R. § 1502.13; [“The statement shall briefly specify the underlying purpose and need to which the agency is responding in proposing the alternatives including the proposed action”]; see also NEPA § 102.). CEQA requires that an EIR identify the project sponsor’s objectives which are similar to the purpose required by NEPA (CEQA Guidelines, C.C.R. Title 14, § 15124 [b]). The objectives provide benchmarks for selecting a reasonable range of alternatives for analysis, as required by CEQA.

### 1.2.1 Purpose of Rail Improvements

The purpose of the proposed rail improvements to the LOSSAN corridor is to develop a faster, safer and more reliable passenger rail system that provides added capacity in response to increased travel demand (through the year 2020) between Los Angeles, Orange and San Diego Counties (between Los Angeles Union Station and San Diego Santa Fe Depot).

In the current California State Rail Plan (covering the period from 2001-02 to 2010-11), the Department has described its overall objectives and policies for intercity rail improvements. These objectives and policies include the following.

- Increase the cost-effectiveness of State-supported intercity passenger rail systems.
- Increase capacity on existing routes.
- Reduce running times to attract additional riders and to provide a more attractive service.
- Improve the safety of State-supported intercity rail service.

In addition to the policies set forth in the State Rail Plan, minimizing impacts to natural resources (e.g. wetlands, wildlife habitat) and human communities are also important objectives of the Department regarding any improvement within the rail corridor.

The regional Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs), which include the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) and the San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG), state in their Regional Transportation Plans (RTPs) a desire for rail improvements within their jurisdictions as part of a balanced, multimodal transportation system, and a willingness to cooperate with the Department in the development of this Program EIR/EIS. Both SCAG and SANDAG regard rail improvements as an integral component in improving the regional transportation system.

The SCAG RTP states that Metrolink, the regional commuter rail service, has developed a \$1.1 billion long-range capital improvements plan, which will effectively double Metrolink's passenger capacity. Projects within this long-range plan include the following.

- Selective double-tracking on critical route segments.
- Switching and signaling improvements.
- Communication system improvements.
- New stations and improvements to existing stations.
- Additional rolling stock and maintenance facilities.

In addition, the SANDAG RTP identifies actions supportive of the purpose including improvements of the existing commuter and intercity rail service. Examples of the improvements cited in the SANDAG RTP include the following.

- Complete double-tracking from Oceanside to San Diego (conditional on appropriate environmental impact analyses).
- Tunnels at Del Mar and University Towne Centre.
- Grade separations (where practical).
- New stations and expansion of parking at existing stations.

These proposed corridor improvements could also help provide those who don't own or operate an automobile (including minors, seniors, and disabled persons) with improved transportation choices.

The Department's proposed rail improvements are consistent with recent expressions of federal transportation policy, most notably the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21) (105 Pub. L. 178; 112 Stat. 107 [1998]) and its predecessor, the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) (102 Pub. L. 240; 105 Stat. 1914 [1991]), which

encourage public transportation investment that increases national productivity and domestic and international competition while improving safety and social and environmental conditions. Specifically, these policies encourage investments that offer benefits such as those listed below.

- Link all major forms of transportation.
- Improve public transportation systems and services.
- Enhance efficient operation of transportation facilities and service.

Together, these statements of policy support the purpose of the improvements being studied within the LOSSAN corridor. The following sections describe the need, or problems underpinning the purpose.

## 1.2.2 Need For Rail Improvements in the LOSSAN Corridor

The capacity of Southern California's intercity transportation system is insufficient to meet existing and future demand, and the current and projected future congestion of the system will continue to result in deteriorating air quality, reduced reliability, and increased travel times. The intercity rail system has not kept pace with the tremendous increase in population and tourism in the state. The interstate highway system, commercial airports, and conventional passenger rail system serving the intercity travel market are currently operating at or near capacity and will require large public investments for maintenance and expansion in order to meet existing demand and future growth over the next 20 years and beyond. Simply stated, the need for improvements to the corridor relates to the following issues.

- Future growth in travel demand for passenger trips between Los Angeles, Orange and San Diego Counties.
- Rail capacity constraints that will result in congestion and travel delays.
- Unreliability of travel stemming from congestion and delays, weather conditions, accidents and other factors that affect the quality of life and economic well-being of residents, businesses, and tourism in Southern California.
- Increasing frequency of accidents on intercity highways and passenger rail lines in California's congested travel corridors, and the potential for accidents at at-grade crossings as highway and rail traffic volumes increase.
- Poor and deteriorating air quality and pressure on natural resources as a result of expanded highway construction, motor vehicle use and congestion

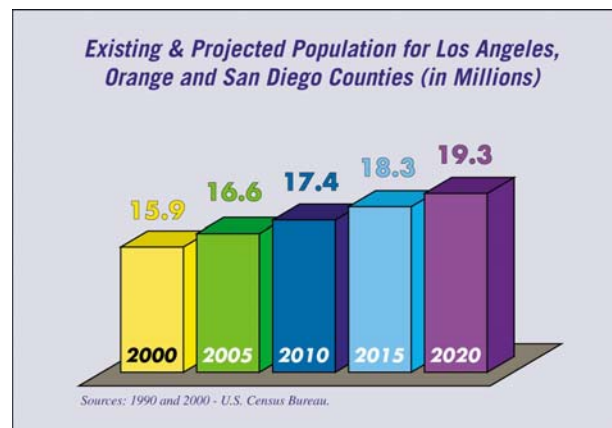
The following sections provide additional information on these factors, emphasizing the transportation constraints and capacity limitations relevant to intercity travel in Southern California.

### A. TRAVEL DEMAND

Although the primary focus of this study is the improvement of the intercity passenger rail system, the total rail travel demand along the LOSSAN corridor is the result of the combination of the intercity, commuter and freight services. The demand for each service is described in the following sections, followed by a summary of the overall existing and proposed capacity of the rail corridor.

### Intercity Trips

Intercity travel in California is projected to grow by 35 percent over the next 20 years, from 155 million trips to 209 million trips. For Southern California, defined here as the Counties of Los Angeles, Orange and San Diego, intercity travel is expected to grow by approximately 23.4 percent over a 23-year time span, from 36 million trips in 1997, to approximately 47 million in 2020.<sup>3</sup> Between the years 2000 and 2020, the state's population is expected to increase by 31 percent, from 34.7 million to 45.4 million residents. Southern California's share of the population increase over the same period is forecast to be 3.4 million (or 23 percent), as shown in Figure 1.2-1. By 2020, just under half of the total statewide population will live in Southern California.



**Figure 1.2-1 Projected Population Growth for Southern California**

Statewide, automobile trips account for over 84 percent of all intercity travel and over 58 percent of the longer trips. In Southern California, this is even more pronounced, as the automobile currently dominates intercity travel. Table 1.2-1 shows the expected growth in traffic volume on the major highway link between Los Angeles and San Diego from 2000 to 2025. Automobile travel between Los Angeles and San Diego is currently the second largest geographic travel market in the state, accounting for 34.9 million trips in 1997.

### Intercity Rail Trips

Currently, this intercity corridor is also the second busiest intercity rail corridor in the nation, carrying approximately 4,700 riders each day (1.7 million riders annually) along the entire Pacific Surfliner corridor from San Luis Obispo to San Diego (California Department of Transportation 2001). Of this service, the segment between Los Angeles and San Diego has a current daily ridership of 3,900 (1.4 million riders annually). Intercity rail travel is anticipating exponential growth within the next 20 years. In 2001, Amtrak's 20-Year Improvement Plan projected 2005 and 2020 ridership along the rail corridor from San Luis Obispo to San Diego, using the total travel demand growth and constant mode share. By 2005, ridership is forecast to increase to approximately

<sup>3</sup> Charles River Associates Incorporated, *Independent Ridership and Passenger Revenue Projections for High Speed Rail Alternatives in California*, January 2000.



5,500 riders per day (2 million riders annually) and to 15,800 daily riders (5.77 million riders annually) by 2020.

Currently, the Pacific Surfliner service provides 11 daily roundtrips between San Diego and Los Angeles (a total of 22 trains per day in both directions). To accommodate increasing travel demand, an additional 5 Surfliner roundtrips are planned by 2020, for a total of 16 daily roundtrips (32 trains per day in both directions).

**Table 1.2-1**  
**Average Daily Traffic Volumes between Los Angeles and San Diego**

Major Highway	Avg. Daily Volume 2001	Avg. Daily Volume 2025	% Change 2001 - 2025
I-5 between Downtown Los Angeles and Downtown San Diego	221,900	270,193	18%

Source: The Department, Orange County Transportation Authority, SCAG, SANDAG

Regional and urban traffic is steadily increasing. This affects intercity travel by delaying travelers at specific highway chokepoints, therefore increasing congestion along the entire corridor. The proposed rail corridor improvements would help to accommodate a portion of this projected growth in travel demand.

### **Commuter Rail Trips**

Commuter service is one of three services that currently use the rail corridor between Los Angeles and San Diego. Commuter services within the corridor are operated by two transportation agencies. The Southern California Regional Rail Authority (Metrolink) operates commuter rail services within Los Angeles and Orange County, while North County Transit District (Coaster) operates commuter service within San Diego County.

Currently, a total of 28 trains each weekday are operated by Metrolink between Los Angeles Union Station and the Fullerton Transportation Center in North Orange County, a total of between 19 and 31 trains operate between the Fullerton Transportation Center and the Orange Metrolink Station, 31 trains between the Orange Metrolink Station and the Laguna Niguel Metrolink Station, and a total of 18 Metrolink trains operate along the rail corridor between Laguna Niguel, San Juan Capistrano, and as far south as Oceanside in North San Diego County. Headways vary between one-half hour to three hours, depending on the direction of operation, time of day, and the segment of the corridor in which the train is operating.

The Coaster operates 11 trains a day in each direction (at total of 22 trains) between the Oceanside Transportation Center and Santa Fe Depot in downtown San Diego, at headways similar to those of Metrolink, with an additional 4 trains in each direction (8 total trains) are operated on Fridays. Currently, 4 trains operate in each direction (8 total trains) every Saturday with headways of approximately 2 to 3 hours in each direction.

By 2020, Metrolink service is expected to increase, to a total of 42 trains every weekday between Union Station and the Fullerton Transportation Center, 48 trains between Fullerton Transportation Center and Orange Metrolink Station, and 66 trains between Orange Metrolink Station and the Laguna Niguel Metrolink Station. Between Laguna

Niguel, San Juan Capistrano, and as far south as Oceanside, service is expected to increase to a total of 32 trains. New weekend service is also planned.

Between Oceanside and San Diego, Coaster commuter operations are expected to increase by 2020 to a total of 54 trains each weekday, with an expected increase in weekend service as well.

Figure 1.2-3 shows the existing and future train volumes along the Los Angeles to San Diego rail corridor.

### **Rail Freight Movements**

The LOSSAN corridor from Los Angeles to Fullerton is owned and operated by the Burlington Northern and Santa Fe (BNSF) Railway and is their primary intercontinental corridor from the Ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach to all of North America. Currently, there are 45 trains within a 24-hour period that travel along this segment of the corridor. That number is projected to increase to approximately 99 trains by the year 2020. The majority of these trains continue east past Fullerton towards the Inland Empire.

The BNSF is the only rail freight operator between San Diego and Los Angeles. Currently, BNSF has no active customers between Del Mar and Oceanside. In North San Diego County, the only regular customer serviced by the BNSF is the Marine Corps Base at Camp Pendleton. According to BNSF, an average of 6 to 8 freight trains currently travel between San Diego and Los Angeles within a 24-hour time period. Freight service within this corridor is focused in the following three areas:

- Auto Transload Service in San Diego
- Lumber, Fly Ash, and Cement
- Local Freight Service (Service to Escondido and Miramar)

While business conditions and customer needs ultimately drive demand for freight service, future freight train volume along the corridor segment from Fullerton to San Diego is not expected to increase beyond 12 trains within a 24-hour time period, regardless of improvements along the existing rail corridor, according to recent forecasts developed by the Los Angeles Economic Development Council.

## **B. CAPACITY OF THE INTERCITY TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM**

Figure 1.2-2 illustrates the major roads, rail routes and airports currently being utilized for intercity travel within the Southern California region. The growing population and economic activity in Southern California has placed severe demands on the already congested transportation system serving the area. Many of the highways and airports are currently operating at capacity and current plans for expansion will not keep up with projected growth over the next 20 years.

The three rail services along the LOSSAN corridor are constrained by a corridor that is significantly undersized for the volumes of traffic it accommodates. Currently, 41 percent of the 127.5-mile rail corridor consists of a single track. The extensive sections of single-track greatly constrain the movements of trains through the corridor. By necessity, only a single train at a time can be present along any one stretch of single-track, causing other

trains to stack at either end of the single-track section, resulting in delays, and reducing the attractiveness of rail as a travel mode choice.

The proposed improvements to the existing LOSSAN corridor would allow for a more reliable, safe, and competitive intercity travel option. This more balanced transportation system would relieve some of the projected near- and long-term demand on the existing transportation infrastructure, potentially slowing the need to further expand highways and airports, or reduce the scale of those expansions, reducing their associated cost, community impacts and environmental impacts. The LOSSAN corridor rail improvements would augment the highway system, creating an interconnected, multimodal solution, allowing for better mobility throughout Southern California.

### C. TRAVEL TIME

Among the most important factors that impact the public's choice of transportation modes are travel time and reliability. Travel time is the time spent on the road, in the air, or on a train from a place of origin to a place of destination. Travel time is an important economic factor for business travel, as delays can affect worker productivity and planned business activities. Table 1.2-2 shows the approximate point-to-point travel time in 2000, which includes congestion effects, and the projected total travel time in 2020 for autos, compared with the existing and projected station to station travel time for Amtrak's Pacific Surfliner, based on information collected from Amtrak and the Regional Transportation Planning Agencies (RTPAs).

**Table 1.2-2  
Present and Future Travel Times between  
Los Angeles and San Diego during Peak Period**

Route	Auto 2000	Auto 2020	Rail 2000	Proposed LOSSAN Goal
Downtown Los Angeles to Downtown San Diego	2:35	3:15	2:44	< 2:00

Source: California High Speed Rail Authority

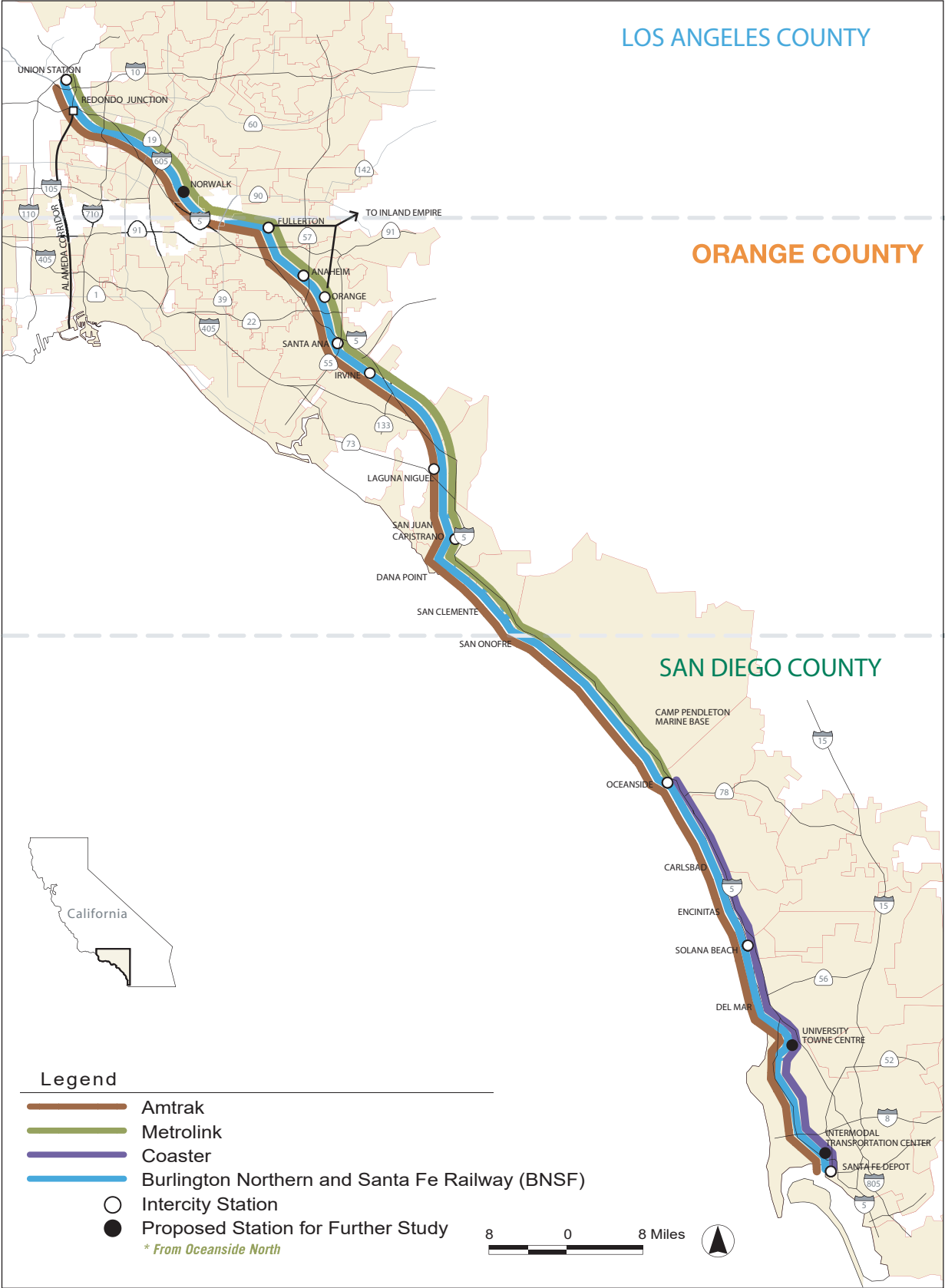
Table 1.2-2 shows that point-to-point travel times during peak period by rail and auto are comparable today, and that rail will be faster in the future because auto travel is projected to slow with increasing congestion. However, total travel time for rail includes time required to reach a station, time spent waiting for the next scheduled train, time spent getting to the boarding area, time spent checking or retrieving luggage, time spent getting a rental car or taxi, and time spent to reach the final destination. If rail is to be a viable alternative to the automobile, it must provide point-to-point times significantly better than the automobile, since rail cannot provide door-to-door service. (The lack of door-to-door service is partially offset by the advantage that rail destinations are usually located in the heart of a community, and close cooperation with local transit agencies can improve connecting travel to the final destination.)

Intercity rail trip delays are mainly related to shared-track conflicts with commuter and freight trains. The proposed LOSSAN corridor improvements will reduce travel time over the next twenty years by increasing operating speeds and efficiency, while simultaneously enhancing grade crossing safety, and lessening environmental degradation. These improvements would benefit all rail services, including freight,









	2005 ESISTING VOLUMES*	2020 FORECAST VOLUMES*
Los Angeles – Fullerton	<b>22 Amtrak</b> <b>28 Metrolink</b> 45 BNSF	<b>32 Amtrak</b> <b>42 Metrolink</b> 98 BNSF
Fullerton – Orange	<b>22 Amtrak</b> <b>19 Metrolink</b> 7 BNSF	<b>32 Amtrak</b> <b>48 Metrolink</b> 12 BNSF
Orange – Irvine	<b>22 Amtrak</b> <b>31 Metrolink</b> 7 BNSF	<b>32 Amtrak</b> <b>66 Metrolink</b> 12 BNSF
Laguna Niguel – San Clemente	<b>22 Amtrak</b> <b>18 Metrolink</b> 7 BNSF	<b>32 Amtrak</b> <b>32 Metrolink</b> 12 BNSF
San Clemente – Oceanside	<b>22 Amtrak</b> <b>18 Metrolink</b> 7 BNSF	<b>32 Amtrak</b> <b>32 Metrolink</b> 12 BNSF
Oceanside – San Diego	<b>22 Amtrak</b> 7 BNSF <b>22 Coaster</b>	<b>32 Amtrak</b> 12 BNSF <b>54 Coaster</b>

\* Train volumes as used in forecast modeling. Volumes represent total number of trains in both directions



intercity and commuter trains, passengers, automobile drivers, and the communities in which the improvements are located. The proposed rail improvements would help ensure the efficient transport of goods and freight, a critical component of the state's economic health. Consequently, the proposed improvements, and the strong cooperation between freight, commuter and intercity rail operators will provide for continued growth and efficient movement of people and goods within the LOSSAN corridor with statewide and even national benefits.

Without the proposed improvements, the corridor's capacity for greater movement will not be meaningful and reductions in travel time will not occur, rail passenger service competitiveness will not increase and reliance on highway travel will increase.

#### D. RELIABILITY

Beyond travel time, travelers are also sensitive to reliability (i.e. the degree to which they can be certain to arrive at a given time). As discussed above, roadway congestion, and a growing intercity travel market, are adversely impacting the reliability of intercity automobile travel. Based on current performance and forecasted congestion levels, the reliability of highway travel will be severely impacted in future years.

According to the Texas Transportation Institute, there were approximately 104 million annual hours delayed in traffic by those who commuted by automobile in the Los Angeles and San Diego areas in 2003 (Texas Transportation Institute, The 2005 Urban Mobility Report, May 2005 (<http://mobility.tamu.edu/ums>)). This is the highest delay experienced by any urban area in the nation. There are many causes of increased highway congestion throughout Southern California. For example, accidents, stranded roadside cars, or a routine traffic violation stop can create a "rubberneck" effect as drivers slow at the scene of the incident, delaying travelers for miles. In addition to typical congestion inducers, poor weather conditions (rain, wind, and fog) also negatively affect the reliability of highway travel times. Rain and wind can make roads dangerously slick, increasing the likelihood of accidents. Often times, fog, haze and glare impairs visibility and requires drivers to slow down.

The need to share space with freight and passenger trains, coupled with extensive sections of single-track on the rail corridor, often lead to delays along the rail corridor, since the delay of a single train often has the consequence of affecting other trains operating within the corridor. Double track, as an example, eliminates the delays currently associated with trains waiting at a passing track for others to clear a single tracked-section. Elimination of this type of delay alone would provide for more consistent operating schedule for trains, significantly increasing on-time performance and reliability. Proposed grade separations would also reduce the impacts of inclement weather (such as the coastal fog experienced during much of the year. These grade-separations would increase not only the reliability and operating performance of trains, but also provide for increased traffic flow on local streets that are presently subject to delays when trains are crossing.

On-time performance (OTP) is also an important factor in attracting travelers. OTP varies by month, but primary factors which affect OTP include delays resulting from:

- Speed restrictions (from signal or track maintenance issues, which require "slow orders" as the issues are being resolved), and
- Interference with other trains, both passenger and freight.

From 1999 to December 2006, Amtrak's on-time performance within the LOSSAN corridor has improved 5.1 percent, from 71.6 percent to 76.7 percent. This performance increase shows that Amtrak is making gains toward reaching its ultimate goal of a 90-percent on-time performance standard. The proposed rail improvements will improve the on-time performance and reliability of the passenger rail service by facilitating passenger and freight movements, accelerating Amtrak's ability to reach this goal.

## E. SAFETY

Safety is an overarching consideration in providing transportation. A key rail safety consideration focuses on reducing or eliminating interactions between people, automobiles and trains. These interactions occur most frequently at grade crossings, and where pedestrians trespass across rail lines to get to their destination.

Projected growth in the movement of people and goods by auto and rail over the next two decades underscores the need for improved safety. With more and more vehicles on the roadways and more frequent and faster trains, the potential for rail/automobile collisions increase.

Passengers must have confidence that the rail service provided is not only reliable and fast, but is also safe or safer than other modes. Nationally, passenger rail travel is one of the safest modes of transportation. Railroad safety in the United States has steadily improved over the past several decades, despite the increase in both highway and rail traffic. The California Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles publishes an annual summary of accident data for state highways. In 1998, there were a total of 3,057 fatalities and 189,007 non-fatal injuries on California highways (California Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles 1998). This corresponds to an estimated injury rate of 100 per 100 million vehicle miles of travel (VMT) or 160 million vehicle kilometers of travel (VKT) per year. These statistics are increasing; in 2000 and 2001, there were 3,753 and 3,956 vehicle deaths in California respectively, according to the National Center for Statistics and Analysis. Nationally, 42,116 persons were killed in auto accidents in 2002, compared with 41,945 in 2001, representing a 0.4% increase. The fatality rate per 100 VMT was 1.52 in 2001, with 1.09 persons injured per 100 VMT. California was one of three states in the United States with the highest number of persons killed in motor vehicle traffic accidents for the years 2000 and 2001 (the other two highest states were Texas and Florida).

In comparison, throughout the State of California in 2002, there were 132 non-passenger railroad fatalities (for combined freight and passenger rail operations). Intercity rail travel in California is provided by Amtrak, which operates along four major corridors in the state, including the Pacific Surfliner (San Luis Obispo to San Diego). Nationally, there were 126 fatalities and 1,484 non-fatal accidents associated with Amtrak operation in 2002. For all rail operations in 2002 (freight and passenger) there were about 13 train accidents per 1 million train miles (1.6 million kilometers) (Federal Railroad Administration, 2004). A variety of factors contribute to rail accidents. For instance, conventional railroad rights-of-way are typically unfenced and at-grade. Drivers and pedestrians may fail to comply with grade crossing warning devices. Approach pavement markings, such as turn arrows and other lane markings, are often worn and difficult to see. Pedestrians and drivers may not expect to encounter a train and may be forced to react quickly because they are "taken by surprise." In addition, because large

objects appear to be moving more slowly than they actually are, pedestrians and drivers may misjudge the speed of trains.

To help ensure that future increases in rail traffic occur without a corresponding increase in hazard, the State of California supports the extensive rail safety information and education program, Operation Lifesaver. Congress has also historically recognized the need to improve rail crossings and has provided funds to accomplish this in the past. The proposed Rail Improvements Alternative will address this need by reducing or eliminating the hazards of highway-rail crossings, as well as provide new or upgraded pedestrian crossings along the corridor.

In addition, the FRA has also developed its own guideline to address safety concerns at grade crossings. This guideline states that *“public and private crossings where train speeds are between 90 and 110 miles per hour (mph) should be equipped with special crossing protection devices, grade separated, or closed”* (reference).

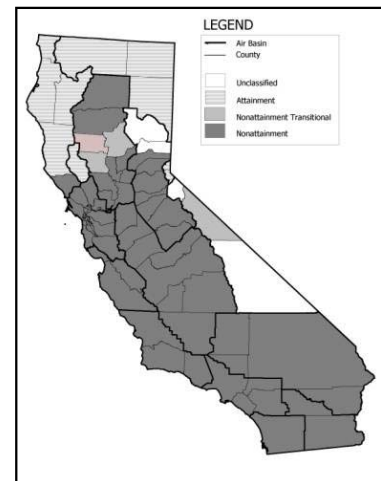
Even though overall accident rates are relatively low for railroads, the LOSSAN corridor traverses several highly traveled roadways and pedestrian areas at-grade, which when coupled with higher levels of rail traffic could lead to higher accident rates, if grade crossings are not eliminated and access issues addressed. Grade-separations for both vehicles and pedestrians will be explored through this Program EIR/EIS.

The safety improvements included in the proposed Rail Improvements Alternative will help in maintaining high overall rail passenger safety within the LOSSAN corridor when compared to other modes of transportation.

## F. AIR QUALITY AND PROTECTION OF NATURAL RESOURCES

The Clean Air Act (CAA) makes “transportation conformity” the affirmative responsibility of the U.S. Department of Transportation and regional Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs). Transportation conformity addresses air quality attainment and maintenance strategies contained in the State Implementation Plan (SIP), used to evaluate transportation alternatives, including the No-Project Alternative.

Figure 1.2-4 shows the counties in California designated as “Ozone Non-Attainment Areas” (California Air Resources Board 2001). All of Southern California is so designated. Maintaining and improving air quality is one goal of the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) and Regional Transportation Plans (RTPs). The challenges for metropolitan areas are to continue to reduce vehicle emissions to acceptable levels and maintain air quality standards by encouraging more efficient use of land resources, improving mobility, and providing alternative transportation facilities and services. Approaches aimed at reducing the demand for trips in single-occupant vehicles must be integral to all transportation plans and programs to ensure that these areas conform to federal air quality standards. Developing multipurpose corridors that combine designated lanes for high-occupancy vehicles, transit, and rail alternatives is a



**Figure 1.2-4**  
**2001 State Area**  
**Designation - Ozone**



statewide transportation strategy for meeting air quality objectives. The proposed LOSSAN rail improvements would help implement this strategy.

Meeting federal and state air quality standards over the next 20 to 40 years will also require reductions in the total distance traveled by vehicles, integration of land use and transportation planning and development, development of transportation demand strategies, implementation of operational improvements, and use of new technologies that improve transportation efficiencies and provide a transportation alternative to the single-occupant automobile.

Moving passengers by rail produces significantly less pollution per passenger mile traveled as compared to typical automobile use, and would aid in reducing emissions throughout the corridor. The extent to which the objective of improving air quality can be met by an increased use of the intercity rail system is explored in this Program EIR/EIS (see Section 3.3).

The protection of important coastal environmental resources, such as the lagoons and coastal bluffs, will also be a consideration of any improvements to the segments of the LOSSAN corridor as it traverses the coastline. The improvements considered in this Program EIR/EIS would dovetail with other efforts to restore sensitive environmental habitat, as well as provide new funding opportunities to mitigate and reduce the impacts of rail service. Where practicable, improvements to the conditions of sensitive environmental habitat would be made, such as increasing the opportunity for tidal flows in the lagoons as part of improvements to lagoon crossings. Identification of additional improvements to habitat conditions is also explored in this report.

## Chapter 10

### FINAL PROGRAM EIR/EIS DISTRIBUTION LIST

The distribution of the LOSSAN Final Program EIR/EIS emphasizes the use of electronic media to insure cost-effective, broad availability to the public and interested parties. The entire Final Program EIR/EIS, appendices and supporting reports are available on the Internet at the Department's Division of Rail website, [www.amtrakcalifornia.com](http://www.amtrakcalifornia.com). The Final Program EIR/EIS is also on display at the repositories listed below.

All persons, agencies and organizations listed in this chapter have been informed of the availability of and locations to obtain the Final Program EIR/EIS, as well as the timing of the 60-day formal comment period. Repositories were sent both electronic compact disc copies (electronic) and hard copies of the Final Program EIR/EIS and appendices. Federal, state and regional/local agencies, corridor cities and selected interested parties listed below have received summary chapters and electronic copies of the Final Program EIR/EIS. All other organizations and interested parties on the Department's project mailing list (approximately 1,000 contacts) have been mailed a notification that includes information on how to access the Final Program EIR/EIS and timing for the formal comment period, as well as notice regarding public hearing dates, times, and locations.

### 10.1 REPOSITORY LIBRARY LOCATIONS

#### **Sacramento**

Sacramento: California State Library, Government Publications Section, PO Box 942837,  
Sacramento, CA 94237-0001  
Phone: (916) 651-6813  
Contact: Janet Cole, Government Publications Librarian

#### **Los Angeles County**

Los Angeles: Richard J. Riordan Central Library, LA Public Library, Science, Technology, and  
Patents Department, 630 West Fifth Street, Los Angeles, CA 90071  
Phone: (213) 228-7000  
Contact: Robert Thornhill, Science, Technology, and Patents Department  
Norwalk: Norwalk Regional Library, 12350 Imperial Highway, Norwalk, CA 90650  
Phone: (562) 868-0775  
Contact: Lead Reference Librarian

#### **Orange County**

Anaheim: Anaheim Public Library, 500 West Broadway, Anaheim, CA 92805  
Phone: (714) 765-1880  
Contact: Ellen Fusco, Adult Services Manager  
  
Irvine: Irvine Heritage Park Regional Library, 14361 Yale Avenue, Irvine, CA 92604  
Phone: (949) 936-4040  
Contact: Patricia Noa, Branch Manager

San Clemente: San Clemente Library, 242 Avenida Del Mar, San Clemente, CA 92672  
Phone: (949) 492-3493  
Contact: Maureen Gebecocin, Branch Manager

### **San Diego County**

Oceanside: Oceanside Public Library, 330 North Coast Highway, 92054  
Phone: (760) 435-5600  
Contact: Monica Chapa Domercq, Cultural Services Librarian

Escondido: Escondido Public Library, 239 South Kalmia Street, Escondido, CA 92025  
Phone: (760) 839-4684  
Contact: Paul Crouthamel, Reference Librarian

San Diego: San Diego Public Library, Central Library, Science Industry and Government Documents, 820 E Street, San Diego, CA 92101-6478  
Phone: (619) 236-5800  
Contact: Gary Klockenga, Government Documents Librarian

## **10.2 FEDERAL AGENCIES**

U.S. Department of the Interior, Washington, D.C.  
U.S. Department of Army, Corps of Engineers, Regulatory Branch, Los Angeles  
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Carlsbad  
National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration, National Marine Fisheries Service, Assistant Regional Administrator for Habitat Conservation, Long Beach, CA  
U.S. Department of Army, Corps of Engineers, Regulatory Branch, Los Angeles, CA  
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 9, San Francisco, CA & Washington DC  
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, State Supervisor, Sacramento, CA

## **10.3 STATE AGENCIES**

California Business, Transportation and Housing Agency, Agency Secretary, Sacramento  
California Department of Transportation, Chief Deputy Director, Sacramento and District Directors from Districts 7, 11, and 12  
California Environmental Protection Agency, Secretary for Environmental Protection, Sacramento  
California Department of Fish and Game  
California State Parks  
California State Water Resources Control Board – Dept. of Water Quality  
California Coastal Commission, Long Beach  
California Coastal Commission, San Diego  
22<sup>nd</sup> District Agricultural Association, Del Mar

## **10.4 ELECTED OFFICIALS**

### **Federal Elected Officials**

U.S. SENATORS:

The Honorable Barbara Boxer, U.S. Senate, California  
The Honorable Dianne Feinstein, U.S. Senate, California

## U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

The Honorable Howard Berman, 28th Congressional District  
 The Honorable Ken Calvert, 44th Congressional District  
 The Honorable John Campbell, 48th Congressional District  
 The Honorable Brian Bilbray, 50th Congressional District  
 The Honorable Susan Davis, 53rd Congressional District  
 The Honorable John Doolittle, 4<sup>th</sup> Congressional District  
 The Honorable David Dreier, 26th Congressional District  
 The Honorable Sam Farr, 17th Congressional District  
 The Honorable Bob Filner, 51st Congressional District  
 The Honorable Jane Harman, 36th Congressional District  
 The Honorable Darrell Issa, 49th Congressional District  
 The Honorable Grace Napolitano, 38th Congressional District  
 The Honorable Loretta Sanchez, 47th Congressional District  
 The Honorable Juanita Millender-McDonald, 37th Congressional District  
 The Honorable Gary Miller, 42nd Congressional District  
 The Honorable Dana Rohrabacher, 46th Congressional District  
 The Honorable Ed Royce, 40th Congressional District  
 The Honorable Adam Schiff, 29th Congressional District  
 The Honorable Brad Sherman, 27th Congressional District  
 The Honorable Hilda Solis, 32nd Congressional District  
 The Honorable Bill Thomas, 22nd Congressional District  
 The Honorable Maxine Waters, 35th Congressional District  
 The Honorable Diane Watson, 33rd Congressional District  
 The Honorable Henry Waxman, 30th Congressional District

## State Elected Officials

### GOVERNOR:

The Honorable Arnold Schwarzenegger, California Governor

### STATE SENATE:

The Honorable Dick Ackerman, 33rd Senate District, Tustin  
 The Honorable Christine Kehoe, 39th Senate District, San Diego  
 The Honorable Alex Padilla, 20th Senate District, Van Nuys  
 The Honorable Jenny Oropeza, 28th Senate District, Redondo Beach  
 The Honorable Bob Dutton, 31<sup>st</sup> Senate District, Rancho Cucamonga  
 The Honorable Carol Migden, 3<sup>rd</sup> Senate District, San Rafael  
 The Honorable Gilbert Cedillo, 22nd Senate District, Los Angeles  
 The Honorable Pat Wiggins, 2nd Senate District, Santa Rosa  
 The Honorable Denise Moreno Ducheny, 40th Senate District, Chula Vista  
 The Honorable Lou Correa, 34th Senate District, Santa Ana  
 The Honorable Ron S. Calderon, 30th Senate District, Norwalk  
 The Honorable Ellen Corbitt, 10th Senate District, San Leandro  
 The Honorable Sheila James Kuehl, 23rd Senate District, Los Angeles  
 The Honorable Dennis Hollingsworth, 36th Senate District, Temecula

The Honorable Tom Harman, 35th Senate District, Irvine  
The Honorable Alan Lowenthal, 27th Senate District, Long Beach  
The Honorable Bob Margett, 29th Senate District, Diamond Bar  
The Honorable Mark Wyland, 38th Senate District, San Juan Capistrano  
The Honorable Mark Ridley-Thomas, 26th Senate District, Los Angeles  
The Honorable Gloria Romero, 24th Senate District, Rosemead  
The Honorable Jack Scott, 21st Senate District, Pasadena  
The Honorable Elaine Alquist, 13th Senate District, San Jose  
The Honorable Edward Vincent, 25th Congressional District, Inglewood

**STATE ASSEMBLY:**

The Honorable Hector De La Torre, 50th Assembly District, Southgate  
The Honorable Mimi Walters, 73rd Assembly District, Laguna Nigel  
The Honorable Tony Mendoza, 56th Assembly District, Norwalk  
The Honorable Charles M. Calderon, 58th Assembly District, Montebello  
The Honorable Jose Solorio, 69th Assembly District, Santa Ana  
The Honorable Van Tran, 69th Assembly District, Santa Ana  
The Honorable Lori Saldana, 76th Assembly District, San Diego  
The Honorable Todd Spitzer, 71st Assembly District, Orange

**COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS CHAIRPERSON:**

Mr. Zev Yaroslavsky, Los Angeles County, District 3  
Mr. Chris Norby, Orange County, District 4  
Mr. Ron Roberts, San Diego County, District 4

**MAYORS OF LOSSAN CORRIDOR CITIES**

The Honorable Mayor Beth Krom, Irvine  
The Honorable Mayor Robert C. Fierro, Commerce  
The Honorable Mayor Shawn Nelson, Fullerton  
The Honorable Mayor Lou Bone, Tustin  
The Honorable Mayor Phil Leubben, Cypress  
The Honorable Mayor Norma A. Lopez-Reid, Montebello  
The Honorable Mayor Leonis C. Malburg, Vernon  
The Honorable Mayor Carolyn V. Cavecche, Orange  
The Honorable Mayor Ron Beilke, Pico Rivera  
The Honorable Mayor Joseph D. Serrano, Sr., Santa Fe Springs  
The Honorable Mayor Sam Allevato, San Juan Capistrano  
The Honorable Mayor Steve Jones, La Mirada  
The Honorable Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa, Los Angeles  
The Honorable Mayor Jim Wood, Oceanside  
The Honorable Mayor Lesa Heebner, Solana Beach  
The Honorable Mayor Rick Ramirez, Norwalk  
The Honorable Mayor Jerry Sanders, San Diego  
The Honorable Mayor Curt Pringle, Anaheim  
The Honorable Mayor Miguel A. Pulido, Santa Ana  
The Honorable Mayor Melody Carruth, Laguna Hills

The Honorable Mayor Richard T. Dixon, Lake Forest  
The Honorable Mayor Gail Reavis, Mission Viejo  
The Honorable Mayor Gary Capata, Laguna Niguel  
The Honorable Mayor Diane L. Harkey, Dana Point  
The Honorable Mayor Jim Dahl, San Clemente  
The Honorable Mayor "Bud" Lewis, Carlsbad  
The Honorable Mayor James Bond, Encinitas  
The Honorable Mayor Carl Hilliard, Del Mar

Note: Other local elected officials not listed here have been notified regarding the availability of the Final Program EIR/EIS.

## **10.5 REGIONAL/LOCAL AGENCIES**

Southern California Association of Governments, Executive Director, Los Angeles  
Gateway Cities Council of Governments, Executive Director  
San Diego Association of Governments, Executive Director, San Diego  
San Diego Metropolitan Transit Development Board, Board of Directors Chairperson, San Diego  
San Joaquin Hills Toll Corridor Agency  
Metropolitan Transportation Authority, Executive Director, Los Angeles  
North San Diego County Transit District, Board of Directors Chairperson, Oceanside  
Orange County Transportation Authority, Board of Directors Chairperson, Orange  
Southern California Regional Rail Authority – Metrolink, Board of Directors Chairperson, Los Angeles

## **10.6 ORGANIZATIONS AND BUSINESSES**

Amtrak, Senior Director, Public and Governmental Affairs, Oakland  
Burlington Northern and Santa Fe Railway, Director of Public Affairs, Los Angeles  
Natural Resources Defense Council, Regional Director, San Francisco  
Planning and Conservation League, Executive Director, Sacramento  
Rail Passenger Association of California, Executive Director, San Francisco  
Train Riders Association of California, Executive Director, Sacramento  
Union Pacific Railroad, Special Representative, Sacramento



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## Chapter 12

### GLOSSARY and ACRONYMS

#### A

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**Abatement:** Reduction; used to describe mitigation of noise.

**Accessibility:** The ease with which a site or facility may be reached by passengers and others necessary to the facility's intended function. Also, the extent to which a facility is usable by persons with disabilities, including wheelchair users.

**Action Alternative:** An alternative that proposes some management action, as contrasted to the No Action (No-Project) Alternative.

**Actual Use:** The amount of use that actually occurs.

**Adverse:** Negative.

**Affected Environment:** The physical, biological, social, and economic setting within which human activity is proposed.

**Air Pollution:** A general term that refers to one or more chemical substances that degrade the quality of the atmosphere.

**Alignment:** The horizontal and vertical route of a transit corridor.

**Alluvium:** Sedimentary materials deposited by running water.

**Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Act:** California law passed in 1972 to prevent construction of buildings used for human occupancy on surface traces of active faults.

**Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA):** Federal regulation establishing legal requirements for accessibility.

**Aquifer:** Subsurface geologic unit (rock or sediment) that contains and transmits groundwater.

**At Grade:** At ground surface level; used to describe roadways, river crossings, and track alignments.

**Attainment:** An air basin is considered to be in attainment for a particular pollutant if it meets the federal or state standards set for that pollutant. See also **Maintenance, Nonattainment**.

**A-Weighted Sound Level:** A measure of sound intensity that is weighted to approximate the response of the human ear, so it describes the way sound will affect people in the vicinity of a noise source.

#### B

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**Baseline:** Foundation or basis to use for comparison purposes.

**Beneficial Visual Impact:** Impact resulting if a project alternative eliminates a dominant feature that currently detracts from scenic qualities or blocks vistas in the landscape.

**BTU:** British Thermal Unit, equal to the amount of heat required to raise 1 pound of water 1 degree Fahrenheit at 1 atmosphere of pressure.

**Buttressing:** An action that provides support or stability to a structure.

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**C**

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**California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA):** “Legislation enacted in 1970 to protect the quality of the environment for the people of California by requiring public agencies and decision-makers to document and consider the environmental consequences of their actions. CEQA is the state equivalent of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).”

**Capital Cost:** The total cost of acquiring an asset or constructing a project.

**Carbon Dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>):** A colorless, odorless gas that occurs naturally in the earth’s atmosphere; significant quantities are also emitted into the air by fossil fuel combustion.

**Carbon Monoxide (CO):** A colorless, odorless gas that is generated in the urban environment primarily by the incomplete combustion of fossil fuels in motor vehicles.

**CEQA:** See **California Environmental Quality Act**.

**CNEL:** Community Noise Equivalent Level. A 24-hour Leq that has been adjusted to add a “penalty” of 5 dBA for evening noise (between 7:00 p.m. and 10:00 p.m.) and 10 dBA for nighttime noise (between 10:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m.).

**Community Cohesion:** The degree to which residents have a sense of belonging to their neighborhood, a level of commitment to the community, or a strong attachment to neighbors, groups, and institutions, usually as a result of continued association over time.

**Congestion Management Plan:** A planning document that addresses strategies for reducing traffic congestion.

**Connectivity:** Describes the degree of “connectedness” of a system such as a transit network, or the ease with which passengers can move from one point to another on the network.

**Construction:** Any activity that directly alters the environment, excluding surveying or mapping.

**Corridor:** A geographic belt or band that follows the general route of a rail system.

**Criteria Pollutants:** Refers to pollutants for which federal and state air quality standards have been established: carbon monoxide (CO), sulfur oxides (SO<sub>x</sub>), nitrogen oxides (NO<sub>x</sub>), ozone (O<sub>3</sub>), particulate matter with a diameter of 10 microns or less (PM<sub>10</sub>), particulate matter with a diameter of 2.5 microns or less (PM<sub>2.5</sub>), and lead (Pb).

**Cultural Resources:** Resources related to the tangible and intangible aspects of cultural systems, living and dead, that are valued by a given culture or contain information about the culture. They include, but are not limited to, sites, structures, buildings, districts, and objects associated with or representative of people, cultures, and human activities and events.

**Cumulative Impact:** (1) As defined by CEQA, the result of two or more individual impacts which, when considered together, are considerable or which compound or increase other environmental impacts. (2) As defined by NEPA, and impact on the environment that results from the incremental impact of the action when added to other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions.

**Cut and Cover:** Construction technique in which a trench is excavated, infrastructure is installed, and the trench is closed.

**Cut and Fill:** Construction technique involving excavation or grading followed by placement and compaction of fill material.

**Cut Slope:** A slope that is shaped by excavation or grading. See also **Fill slope**.

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**D**

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**Decibel (dB):** A logarithmic measurement of noise intensity.

**Dewatering:** The process of removing water from an area or substance, such as fill material.

**Disturbance:** A discrete event, either natural or human induced, that causes a change in the condition of an ecological system.

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**E**

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**Easement:** An interest in land owned by another individual or organization that entitles its holder to a specific limited use.

**Ecosystem:** A system formed by the interaction of living organisms, including people, with their environment.

**Emergent:** (1) Arising naturally. (2) Of vegetation, rooted in periodically or continuously inundated substrate, but with a portion of the plant extending above the water.

**Eminent Domain:** A jurisdiction or agency's legal right to take private property for public use in exchange for fair compensation.

**Endangered Species:** Any species listed under the federal Endangered Species Act as being in danger of or threatened with extinction throughout all or most of its range.

**Environmental Impact Report (EIR):** A detailed informational document that analyzes a project's potential significant effects and identifies mitigation measures and reasonable alternatives to avoid the significant effects. This document is part of the CEQA environmental review process.

**Environmental Impact Statement (EIS):** A detailed informational document that analyzes a project's potential significant effects and identifies mitigation measures and reasonable alternatives to avoid the significant effects. This document is part of the NEPA environmental review process.

**Environmental Justice:** Identifying and addressing the potential for disproportionately high and adverse effects of programs, policies, and activities on minority populations and low-income populations.

**Erosion:** Process by which earth materials are worn down by the action of flowing water, ice, or wind.

**Ethnicity:** A grouping or category of people based on shared cultural traits such as ancestral origin, language, custom, or social attitude.

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**F**

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**Fault:** A fracture in the earth's lithosphere (brittle rocky shell) along which movement has occurred.

**Feasible:** Capable of being implemented.

**Feeder route:** Branch routes that feed into main (arterial) routes.

**Fiber Optic Cable System:** A data transmission technology that relies on light rather than electricity, conveying data through a cable consisting of a central glass core surrounded by layers of plastic.

**Fill Slope:** A slope shaped by the placement and compaction of loose “fill” materials, which may be reused from elsewhere on the construction site, or imported.

**Fiscally or Financially Constrained Plans:** Plans that are limited by the foreseen availability of project funding in a region.

**Footprint:** Area of the ground surface covered by a facility, or affected by construction activities.

## G

**General Plan:** A planning document, usually at the city or county level, that encapsulates policies for land use and development over a specified period of time. A general plan may be supplemented by specific plans that address land use and development policies for specific portions of a planning jurisdiction, such as historic districts or areas slated for redevelopment.

**Geographic Information System (GIS):** An information management system designed to store and analyze data referenced by spatial or geographic coordinates.

**GIS:** See **Geographic Information System**.

**Grade Crossing:** The intersection of a railroad and a highway at the same elevation (grade); an intersection of two or more highways; an intersection of two railroads.

**Grade-Separated:** At different elevations; on separate levels.

**Greenhouse Gases:** A class of air pollutants believed to contribute to the “greenhouse” global warming effect, including nitrogen oxides (NOx) hydrocarbons (HC), and carbon dioxide (CO2).

**Groundwater:** Water contained and transmitted through open spaces within rock and sediment below the ground surface.

**Growth Inducement:** Contribution to the rate or extent of development in an area.

## H

**Habitat:** An environment where plants or animals naturally occur; an ecological setting used by animals for a particular purpose, such as roosting habitat, breeding habitat, etc.

**Headway:** The time between buses, trains, or other transit vehicles at a given point. For example, a 15-minute headway means that one bus arrives every 15 minutes.

**Herbaceous:** Describes plants that have little or no woody tissue. Herbaceous plants typically survive for only a single growing season.

**Heritage Resources:** An alternate term for cultural resources used in some planning documents. See **Cultural Resources**.

**High-Speed Steel-Wheel-on-Steel-Rail Train:** An improvement of traditional railroad passenger technology that has been designed to operate at speeds of 100 to 150 mph (160 to 240 kph) on existing rail infrastructure.

**High-Speed Train:** Refers to a train designed to operate safely and reliably at speeds near 200 mph (350 kph).

**High Visual Impacts:** Impacts sustained if features of a project alternative are very obvious, such that they begin to dominate the landscape and detract from the existing landscape characteristics or scenic qualities.

**Hydrocarbons:** A wide variety of organic compounds, including methane (CH<sub>4</sub>), emitted principally from the storage, handling, and combustion of fossil fuels.

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## I

**Impact:** A change the condition or function or an environmental resource or environmental value as a result of human activity. Also called effect.

**In Lieu of:** Instead of or in place of.

**Indigenous Species:** A native species; any plant or animal species that occurs naturally in a wilderness area and was not introduced, deliberately or accidentally, by humans.

**Infrastructure:** The facilities required for a societal function or service; e.g., transportation infrastructure, utilities infrastructure.

**Initial Study:** An environmental study carried out in compliance with CEQA, with the goal of evaluating whether a proposed project has the potential to result in significant impacts on the environment.

**Insertion Loss:** The actual noise-level reduction at a specific receiver due to construction of a noise barrier between the noise source (e.g., traffic) and the receiver.

**In-Situ:** In the original or natural position.

**Intermodal:** Describes transportation that involves more than one type of carrier during a single journey.

**Inversion:** A region where atmospheric temperature increases rather than decreasing with height, suppressing atmospheric mixing and tending to trap pollutants near the ground surface, where their effects on health and materials are greater.

**Investment-Grade Ridership Forecast:** Ridership forecast that is sufficiently detailed and reliable to permit responsible decision-making about capital expenditures.

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## K

**Kilo:** Prefix meaning 1 thousand.

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## L

**Landscape Unit:** An area of distinct, but not necessarily homogenous, visual character.

**Landslide:** Movement of earth or rock materials downslope under the influence of gravity.

**Land Use Compatibility Assessment:** an assessment of the compatibility of a proposed project or land use with existing and projected land uses in nearby areas, based on the sensitivity of various land uses to changes and the impact of these changes on activities.

**Lead (Pb):** A stable element that persists and accumulates both in the environment and in humans and animals, and can have toxic effects.

**Lead Agency:** The public agency that has the principal responsibility for carrying out or approving a project, and is thus responsible for preparing environmental review documents in compliance with CEQA and/or NEPA.

**Leq:** A measure of the average noise level during a specified period of time.



**Leq(h), dBA:** Equivalent or average noise level for the noisiest hour, expressed in **A-weighted decibels**.

**Less than Significant:** In CEQA usage, describes an impact that is not sufficiently adverse, intense, or prolonged to require **mitigation**.

**Level of Service (LOS):** A rating using qualitative measures that characterize operational conditions within a traffic stream and their perception by motorists and passengers.

**Liquefaction:** A type of ground failure in which soils or sediments lose their internal cohesion, cease to behave as a solid, and flow like a liquid.

**Logarithmic Scale:** A measurement in which the ratio of successive intervals is not equal to 1 (which is typical for linear scales) but is some common factor larger than the previous interval (a typical ratio is 10, so that the marks on the scale read: 1, 10, 100, 1000, 10000, etc. Logarithmic scales are useful for graphing values that have a very large range.

**Low Visual Impacts:** Impacts sustained if features of a project alternative are consistent with the existing line, form, texture, and color of other elements in the landscape and do not stand out.

## M

**Magnetic Levitation (Maglev):** A high-speed train technology that relies on attractive or repulsive magnetic forces to lift and propel the train along a guideway.

**Mainline:** A principal highway, exclusive of connectors, ramps, etc.

**Maintenance:** An air basin is considered to be in maintenance for a given pollutant if it was formerly in nonattainment but is now meeting the established standards for that pollutant. See also **Attainment, Nonattainment**.

**Major Investment Study (MIS):** A study that evaluates project alternatives for their ability to solve an area's transportation problems.

**Master Plan:** A comprehensive planning document intended to guide the long-range growth and development of a community or region, or the long-term management and use of a parkland.

**Mean High-Water Mark:** The elevation reached by the water surface at the mean (average) high water level (average high tide elevation or average flood elevation), often indicated by physical characteristics such as erosion, lines of vegetation, or changes in type of vegetation.

**Medium Visual Impact:** Impacts sustained if features of a project alternative are readily discernable but do not dominate the landscape or detract from existing dominant features.

**Midden:** Refuse accumulation associated with prehistoric use of a site or area.

**Mitigation:** Action or measure undertaken to avoid, minimize, reduce, eliminate, or rectify the adverse impacts of a project, practice, or activity.

**Modal:** A transit system defined on the basis of specific rights-of-way, technologies, and operational features.

**Monitoring:** The collection of information to determine the effects of resource management and to identify changing resource conditions or needs.

**Monoculture:** The cultivation of a single product to the exclusion of other uses of land.

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## N

**National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS):** Federal standards stipulating the allowable ambient concentrations of specific criteria pollutants.

**National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA):** “Federal legislation requiring federal agencies to consider the environmental impacts of major federal projects or decisions, to share information with the public, to identify and assess reasonable alternatives, and to coordinate efforts with other planning and environmental reviews taking place.”

**Nitrogen Oxides (NOx):** A class of pollutant compounds that include nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>) and nitric oxide (NO), both of which are emitted by motor vehicles. See **Criterial Pollutants**.

**No Action:** Under NEPA, refers to an alternative under which no action would be taken (no infrastructure would be built and no new management or operational practices would be instituted). See **No-Project**.

**No-Project:** Under CEQA, refers to an alternative under which no action would be taken (no infrastructure would be built and no new management or operational practices would be instituted). See **No Action**.

**Nonattainment:** An air basin is considered to be in nonattainment for a particular pollutant if it is exceeding federal or state standards for that pollutant. See also **Attainment, Maintenance**.

**Non-Electrified Steel-Wheel-on-Steel-Rail Train:** Conventional intercity diesel locomotive train equipment (e.g., Amtrak).

**Nonpoint Source Pollution:** Pollution that cannot be traced to a single source, but collects from a wide area. Examples include pesticides or fertilizers that wash into rivers or percolate through the soil into groundwater.

**Notice of Intent (NOI):** Formal notice stating that an environmental impact statement will be prepared for a proposed project, published in the Federal Register by the federal lead agency.

**Notice of Preparation (NOP):** Formal notice stating that an environmental impact report will be prepared for a proposed project, issued by the state lead agency.

**NPL/Superfund List:** Federal list of sites that have been identified as posing an immediate public health hazard and where an immediate response is necessary.

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## O

**Ordinary High-Water Mark:** The line on the shore of a body of water established by the fluctuation of water.

**Ozone (O<sub>3</sub>):** A photochemical oxidant that is a major cause of lung and eye irritation in urban environments.

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## P

**Paleontological:** Related to the study of life in past geologic time.

**Particulate Matter:** Liquid and solid particles of a wide range of sizes and compositions; of particular concern for air quality are particles smaller than or equal to 10 microns and 2.5 microns in size (PM<sub>10</sub> and PM<sub>2.5</sub> respectively).

**Point Source Pollution:** Pollution that can be traced to a single source. An example is a smokestack at a factory.

**Poverty Level:** For a family of four, the poverty level is defined as a income of \$16,700 or less in 1999 dollars.

**Practicable:** See **Feasible**.

**Preferred Alternative:** The alternative identified as the optimal solution by the lead agency.

**Program-Level:** Refers to a CEQA or NEPA environmental review that covers the broad spectrum of a large, complex, regionally extensive effort comprising a number of smaller, regionally focused projects or phases.

**Project-Level:** Refers to more detailed environmental analysis focusing on a single project that is part of a larger program.

**Public Transportation:** Includes workers bus, trolley bus, streetcar or trolley car, subway or elevated, railroad, ferryboat, and taxicab service.

**Purpose and Need:** The reason(s) why a project is undertaken, and the need(s) it is intended to meet or fulfill.

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## R

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**Reactive Organic Gases (ROG):** Reactive **hydrocarbon** pollutants.

**Regional Transportation Improvement Plan:** A capital listing of all transportation projects proposed over a six-year period for a given region. The regional transportation improvement program (RTIP) is prepared to implement projects and programs listed in the RTP and is developed in compliance with state and federal requirements.

**Regional Transportation Plan:** A long-range (20+ year) transportation plan. The regional transportation plan (RTP) identifies major challenges as well as potential opportunities associated with growth, transportation finances, the future of airports in the region, and impending transportation system deficiencies that could result from growth anticipated in the region. There are typically two components of the RTP, a financially constrained and financially unconstrained version. The financially constrained version of the RTP includes projects and programs that fit within existing and planned funding sources.

**Richter Scale:** A logarithmic scale measuring the severity of earthquakes, based on the magnitude of ground motion.

**Ridership:** The number of people who ride public transportation system.

**Right-of-Way:** A legal right of passage over another person's ground. In transit usage, refers to the corridor along a roadway or track alignment that is controlled by a transit or transportation agency/authority.

**Riparian:** Relating to, living, or located on the bank of a natural watercourse, lake, or tidewater.

**Riprap:** Armoring consisting of randomly placed rock or concrete, used to strengthen an embankment or protect it from **erosion**.

**Rolling Stock:** Wheeled railway vehicles.

**Ruderal:** Weedy vegetation, commonly including or dominated by introduced species, characteristic of areas where native vegetation has been disturbed or removed.

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**S**

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**Scenic Corridor:** Corridor with landscapes and vistas of high scenic quality.

**Scoping:** A process used under both CEQA and NEPA to determine the coverage and content of an environmental impact report or environmental impact study.

**Screenline:** An imaginary line across parallel roadways.

**Section 4(f):** Refers to provisions originally enacted as Section 4(f) of the U.S. Department of Transportation Act of 1966 (23 C.F.R. 771.135) and subsequently codified in 49 U.S.C., Subtitle I, Section 303(c). The “Section 4(f)” provisions address the potential for conflicts between transportation needs and the protection of lands for recreational use and resource conservation by regulating the use of publicly owned parkland, recreation areas, and historic sites. Specifically, they prohibit the Secretary of Transportation from approving any program or project that would require the use of any publicly owned land from a public park, recreation area, wildlife or waterfowl refuge, or land of an historic site of national significance as determined by the officials having jurisdiction over these lands, unless there are no feasible and prudent alternatives to the use of these lands. In addition, a proposed program or project must include all possible planning to minimize harm resulting from the proposed use.

**Section 6(f):** State and local governments often obtain grants through the to acquire or make improvements to parks and recreation areas (16 U.S.C. § 460-4 through 460-11, September 3, 1964, as amended 1965, 1968, 1970, 1972–1974, 1976–1981, 1983, 1986, 1987, 1990, 1991, 1993–1996). Refers to Section 6(f) of Land and Water Conservation Fund Act of 1964, which prohibits the conversion to a non-recreational purpose of property acquired or developed with funds granted through the Act without the approval of the National Park Service. Section 6(f) directs the Department of the Interior to ensure that replacement lands of equal value (monetary), location, and usefulness are provided as conditions to such conversions. Consequently, where such conversions of Section 6(f) lands are proposed for transportation projects, replacement lands must be provided.

**Sedimentary Rock:** Rock resulting from the consolidation of sediment.

**Seiche:** Oscillation or “sloshing” of water in a lake, bay, or other enclosed body as a result of landsliding or seismic groundshaking.

**Senate Bill 45:** Bill that instituted consolidation of various funding programs into the STIP and increased accountability for programming and delivery of STIP projects to the regions around the state and the various Caltrans’ districts.

**Sensitivity Analysis:** An analysis that assesses how sensitive the outcomes predicted by modeling are to changes in different model inputs (assumptions or variables).

**Shadow impact:** shadow impact ranking would be high if a new (not existing) elevated structure were within 75 ft (23 m) of residential or open space, natural areas, or parkland.

**Significant:** In CEQA usage, describes an impact that is sufficiently adverse, intense, or prolonged to require **mitigation**.

**South Coast Air Quality Management District:** The regional regulatory agency with the primary responsibility for improving air quality in the South Coast Air Basin.

**State Implementation Plan:** Statewide plan for complying with the federal Clean Air Act. The State Implementation Plan (SIP) consists of narrative, rules, and agreements that California will use to cleanup polluted areas.

**State Transportation Improvement Program:** A multi-year capital improvement program of transportation projects on and off the state highway system, funded with revenues from the State Highway Account and other funding sources. STIP programming generally occurs every two years.

**Strike-Slip Fault:** A fault along which the dominant direction of movement is parallel to the fault trace (the expression of the fault on the ground surface).

**Stub End:** A track connection with a difficult curved configuration.

**Subsidence:** Sinking or lowering of the ground surface.

**Sulfur Oxides (SO<sub>x</sub>):** Sulfur-oxygen compounds that include the important **criteria pollutants** sulfur dioxide (SO<sub>2</sub>) and sulfur trioxide (SO<sub>3</sub>).

## T

**Take:** As defined in Section 3 of the federal Endangered Species Act, “to harass, harm, pursue, hunt, shoot, wound, kill, trap, capture, or collect, or to attempt to engage in any such conduct.”

**Tiering:** Refers to the practice of addressing general issues in broader environmental impact reports or statements such as **program-level** documents and providing more detailed analyses in subsequent (typically **project-level**) documents that “tier off” the initial broad analysis and incorporate it by reference.

**Total Organic Gases (TOG):** A pollutant classification that includes all **hydrocarbons**, both reactive and non-reactive.

**Trainset:** A complete unit of **rolling stock**.

**Transit-Dependent Population:** The population over the age of 16 (workers) who use **public transportation** as a means of traveling to and from work.

**Transit Node:** A connection or terminal on a transit network.

**Transportation Demand Management:** The operation and coordination of various transportation system policies and programs to provide the most efficient and effective use of existing transportation services and facilities.

**Transportation system management:** actions that improve the operation and coordination transportation services and facilities to realize the most efficient use of the existing transportation system.

**Travel Time:** The time spent on the road, in the air, or on a train from a place of origin to a place of destination. Total travel time includes the time required to reach a station or an airport, time spent waiting for the next scheduled train or flight, time spent getting to the boarding area, time spent checking and retrieving luggage, time spent getting a rental car or taxi, as well as time spent to reach the final destination.

**Tributary Watercourse:** A stream feeding a larger stream or a lake.

**Trinomial:** An alphanumeric abbreviation for a previously identified historic or prehistoric resource, such as CA-ORA-1352, representing the state (e.g., California or CA-), the county (e.g., Orange or -ORA-), and a unique number assigned by the State Historic Preservation Office (such as -1352).

**Tsunamis:** Waves that travel in the open ocean and are caused by an undersea earthquake, landslide or volcanic activity.

## U

**Unavoidable:** In CEQA and NEPA usage, describes an impact that cannot be entirely avoided, reduced, or compensated for.

**Units of Measure:**

Unit	Approximate U.S. Equivalent
<b>Length</b>	
kilometer	0.62 mile
meter	39.37 inches
centimeter	0.39 inch
<b>Area</b>	
square kilometer	0.3861 square miles
hectare	2.47 acres
<b>Capacity</b>	
liter	1.057 quarts
<b>Mass and Weight</b>	
metric ton	1.102 short tons (2,204.6 pounds)
kilogram	2.2046 pounds
gram	0.035 ounce
<b>Speed</b>	
kilometer per hour	0.621 mile per hour

**Uplift:** The action of a portion of the earth's surface as it rises above adjacent areas. An area of higher elevation than surrounding areas; an area that has been uplifted.

## V

**V/C Ratio:** Volume to capacity ratio; describes the relationship between the amount of traffic a roadway was designed to carry and the amount of traffic it actually carries. Related to the **level of service (LOS)** the roadway can provide.

**Viaduct:** A bridge that conveys a road or a railroad over a valley and is constructed of a series of arches supported by piers.

**Viewshed:** Total visible area from a single observer position, or the total visible area from multiple observer positions. Viewsheds are accumulated seen-areas from highways, trails, campgrounds, towns, cities, or other viewer locations. Examples are corridor, feature, or basin viewsheds.

**Visual Resources:** The natural and artificial features of a landscape that characterize its form, line, texture, and color.

**Visual Unity:** The visual coherence and compositional harmony of a landscape when considered as a whole.

## W

**Watershed:** The area that contributes water to a drainage system or stream.



**Weir:** A small dam that restricts flow in a stream in order to raise water level, or diverts flow into a desired course.

**Wetland:** An area that is regularly saturated by surface water or groundwater and is characterized by a prevalence of vegetation that is adapted for life in saturated soil conditions.

**Wildlife Corridor:** A belt of habitat that is essentially free of physical barriers such as fences, walls, and development, and connects two or more larger areas of habitat, allowing wildlife to move between physically separate areas.

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## ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

<b>A</b>		DOT	U.S. Department of Transportation
AB	Assembly Bill	DTSC	California Department of Toxic Substances Control
Ac	acre		
ADT	average daily traffic		
AFB	Air Force Base	<b>E</b>	
ANSI	American National Standards Institute	EIR	environmental impact report
APE	area of potential effect	EIS	environmental impact statement
Authority	California High Speed Rail Authority	EO	Executive Order
		EPA	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
<b>B</b>		ESA	federal Endangered Species Act
BP	years before present		
Btu	British thermal unit	<b>F</b>	
<b>C</b>		FAA	Federal Aviation Administration
CAA	Clean Air Act of 1970	FCC	Federal Communications Commission
Cal-ISO	California Independent State Operator	FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
CalOSHA	state Occupational Safety & Health Administration	FERC	Federal Energy Regulatory Commission
Caltrans	California Department of Transportation	FHWA	Federal Highway Administration
CARB	California Air Resources Board	FIRM	Flood Insurance Rate Maps
CCAA	California's Clean Air Act	FMMP	Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program
CDFG	California Department of Fish and Game	FPPA	Farmland Protection Policy Act
CEC	California Energy Commission	FRA	Federal Railroad Administration
CEPA	California Environmental Protection Agency	ft	feet
CEQ	Council on Environmental Quality	FTA	Federal Transit Administration
CEQA	California Environmental Quality Act	<b>G</b>	
CERCLA	Comprehensive Environmental Response and Liability Act	gal	gallons
CESA	California Endangered Species Act	GAP	California Gap Analysis Program
CHRIS	California Historical Resources Information System	GIS	geographic information systems
cm	centimeters	GPI	greatest potential impact
CNDDDB	California Natural Diversity Data Base	GSP	gross state product
CNEL	community noise equivalent level	GWh	gigawatt-hours
CNPS	California Native Plant Society	<b>H</b>	
CO	carbon monoxide	ha	hectare
CO2	carbon dioxide	HC	hydrocarbons
Commission	California Intercity High Speed Rail Commission	HCP	habitat conservation plan
CPUC	California Public Utilities Commission	HOV	high-occupancy-vehicle
CRHR	California Register of Historical Resources	hrs	hours
CWA	federal Clean Water Act	<b>I</b>	
<b>D</b>		I-5	Interstate 5
dB	decibel	in	inch
dBA	A-weighted decibels	ISTEA	Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991
DOF	California Department of Finance	ITS	intelligent transportation system
DOI	U.S. Department of the Interior	<b>K</b>	
		Km	kilometers
		kpg	kilometers per gallon
		kph	kilometers per hour
		kV	kilovolts

**L**

L	liters
LADWP	Los Angeles Department of Water and Power
Ldn	day-night average level
LEDPA	least environmentally damaging practicable alternative
Leq	equivalent noise level
LESA	Land Evaluation and Site Assessment
LEV	low emission vehicle
Lmax	Maximum Sound Level
LOS	level of service
LOSSAN	Los Angeles–Orange County–San Diego
LPI	least potential impacts
LUSTs	leaking underground storage tanks

**M**

m	meters
MCAS	Marine Corps Air Station
mi	miles
min	minutes
MMBtus	million Btus
MOA	memorandum of agreement
MOU	memorandum of understanding
mpg	miles per gallon
mph	miles per hour
MPOs	Metropolitan Planning Organizations
MSCP	Multiple Species Conservation Program
MSHCP	Multi-Species Habitat Conservation Plans
MTDB	Metropolitan Transit Development Board
MW	megawatt

**N**

NAAQS	National Ambient Air Quality Standards
NCCP	natural community conservation plan
NCRS	Natural Resources Conservation Service
NCTD	North County Transit District
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act of 1969
NFIP	National Flood Insurance Program
NHPA	National Historic Preservation Act
NHRP	National Register of Historic Places
NO	nitric oxide
No-Project	No-Project/No Action
NO <sub>2</sub>	nitrogen dioxide
NOI	notice of intent
NOP	notice of preparation
NO <sub>x</sub>	oxides of nitrogen
NPDES	National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System
NPL	National Priorities List

 NRHP  
 NWI

 National Register of Historic Places  
 National Wetland Inventory

**O**

O&M	operations and maintenance
O <sub>3</sub>	ozone
OSHA	federal Occupational Safety & Health Administration

**P**

P.L.	Public Law
Pb	lead
PG&E	Pacific Gas and Electric Company
PM <sub>10</sub>	particulate matter 10 microns in diameter or less
PM <sub>2.5</sub>	particulate matter 2.5 microns in diameter or less
PMT	passenger miles traveled
Program EIR/EIS	Program Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement

**R**

ROG	reactive organic gases
RTP	regional transportation plan
RTPAs	regional transportation planning agencies
RWQCB	Regional Water Quality Control Board

**S**

SANDAG	San Diego Association of Governments
SB	Senate Bill
SCAG	Southern California Association of Governments
SCE	Southern California Edison
SCG	Southern California Gas
SCR-6	Senate Concurrent Resolution 6
SDG&E	San Diego Gas and Electric Company
SFHA	special flood hazard area
SHPO	State Historic Preservation Office
SIP	state implementation plan
SO <sub>2</sub>	sulfur dioxide
SO <sub>3</sub>	sulfur trioxide
SO <sub>x</sub>	sulfur oxides
SP	Southern Pacific
sq km	square kilometers
sq mi	square miles
SR-14	State Route 14
STIP	State Transportation Improvement Program
SUVs	sport utility vehicles
SWLF	solid waste landfill
SWPPP	Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan
SWRCB	State Water Resources Control Board

**T**

TCU	transportation, communications, and utilities
TDRs	time domain reflectometers
TEA-21	Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century
TGV	Train à Grande Vitesse
TMDLs	total maximum daily loads
TOG	total organic gases
TSM	Transportation System Management

**U**

UPRR	Union Pacific Railroad
USACE	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
USDA	U.S. Department of Agriculture
USFWS	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
UTC	University Towne Centre

**V**

V/C	volume-to-capacity
VHT	vehicle hours traveled
VKT	vehicle kilometers traveled
VMT	vehicle miles traveled

**W**

WAPA	Western Area Power Administration
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## Chapter 2 ALTERNATIVES

This chapter describes the proposed rail improvements considered in this Program-level environmental document. Because this is a program-level analysis and is intended to define broad differences between alternatives, the level of detail for alternatives is conceptual or general rather than project-specific (40 C.F.R. § 1508.28; 14 C.C.R. § 15385). Subsequent project-level environmental documents and analysis would assess preliminary engineering information and provide more details on environmental impacts for individual projects should the Rail Improvements Alternative be selected.

The California Department of Transportation (Department) and the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) developed and evaluated alternatives through an iterative process that included considering work done by others, independent planning and feasibility studies, scoping process, and the LOSSAN Strategic Plan. All alternatives that have been considered by the Department and the FRA are described in this chapter, including those rejected from further consideration in this Program EIR/EIS and the basis for their rejection. The No-Project/No Action Alternative and the Rail Improvements Alternative are described in this chapter and their development is summarized.

This chapter is organized into the following seven sections.

- Section 2.1 describes the development of initial alternatives.
- Section 2.2 summarizes the initial alternatives considered.
- Section 2.3 summarizes the alternatives considered and eliminated.
- Section 2.4 describes the No-Project Alternative.
- Section 2.5 describes the Rail Improvements Alternative, including the system-performance criteria, alignment alternatives, and station alternatives considered and rejected, as well as those carried forward for further consideration in this Program EIR/EIS.
- Section 2.6 summarizes the alternatives analyzed in this Program EIR/EIS.
- Section 2.7 describes the general construction and maintenance activities associated with the Rail Improvements Alternative, and the types of impacts that these activities could have on environmental resources.

### 2.1 DEVELOPMENT OF INITIAL ALTERNATIVES

This section describes the process used to evaluate conceptual alternatives presented in previous feasibility studies and identified through the scoping and screening process for both the LOSSAN Rail Corridor Improvements project and the California High-Speed Train (HST) project<sup>1</sup>. The combination of these efforts led to the final set of conventional-rail improvement options for the LOSSAN corridor that are analyzed in this Draft Program EIR/EIS. Key criteria used to distinguish between alternatives have been described in Chapter 1, *Purpose and Need*

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<sup>1</sup> As part of the California High-Speed Rail Authority's Program-level EIR/EIS for the High-Speed Train project

*and Objectives.* Those criteria include reliability and travel time, safety, connectivity, and ridership potential. In addition to these criteria, the alternatives had to be practicable and constructible, given right-of-way constraints and sensitivity to environmental and community impacts.

## 2.1.1 Background

Since 1998, three planning and feasibility studies have been completed that are relevant to LOSSAN corridor alternatives development. The first of these was conducted by the California High-Speed Rail Authority (Authority), building on previous work from 1996 done by the past California Intercity High Speed Rail Commission (Commission), in conjunction with a statewide High-Speed Train project. The other two are statewide rail plans prepared by the Department and others, which include long-term goals and improvements needed in the LOSSAN corridor,

### A. PREVIOUS STUDY FOR THE STATEWIDE HIGH-SPEED TRAIN PROJECT

As explained in Chapter 1, the Department has worked with the Authority to develop the technical data and perform public and agency outreach for the Department's LOSSAN Rail Corridor Improvements Program EIR/EIS. (LOSSAN corridor improvements are also considered in the Authority's statewide High-Speed Train Program EIR/EIS.) This section briefly describes previous studies that provided input to the Department's development of the rail improvements evaluated in this document. Specific descriptions of corridors/alignments within the LOSSAN region that were evaluated and either eliminated or carried forward on the basis of this previous study are presented in Sections 2.2 and 2.4, respectively.

The Department adopted the findings and conclusions of this study, and built on those conclusions in its continued work with the Authority that led to the Department's LOSSAN Strategic Plan.

#### **California High-Speed Rail Authority Corridor Evaluation (1998-1999)**

In September of 1998, the Authority commissioned a Corridor Evaluation study to assess and evaluate the viability of various corridors throughout the state for implementation as part of a statewide High-Speed Train system. The study focused on identifying potential system alternatives (train technologies) and corridors for the implementation of high-speed train (HST) service and evaluating the feasibility and viability of those alternatives. Environmental constraints and potential for impact were considered in the study with the objective of avoiding or minimizing potential impacts to sensitive resources, where possible.

The Authority and its consultants evaluated potential corridors on the basis of capital, operating and maintenance costs, travel times and engineering, operational, and environmental constraints. The corridors were compared and evaluated on a regional basis and as part of a statewide system. This study is documented in the *California High-Speed Rail Corridor Evaluation Final Report*, 1999<sup>2</sup>.

Most of the corridors considered follow existing railroad rights-of-way or highways, particularly in the urban areas, to avoid and minimize environmental impacts. Many of the rail alignment options and station location options emerged from regional and local

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<sup>2</sup> California High-Speed Rail Corridor Evaluation Final Report, 1999



agency input. Potential locations for new stations and improvements to existing stations were identified for operational and forecasting purposes, and alternative sites were considered as part of the corridor evaluation; however, specific station sites were not selected.

This study provided the Authority with a basis for recommending a feasible network of HST corridors. In addition, other potential corridors and new issues were identified as regional and local agencies provided their input. To address these issues, further corridor investigations and evaluations were conducted in several areas of the State and compared in the context of updated information on previously studied routes.

At the conclusion of this study, the Authority found: that dedicated<sup>3</sup> high-speed rail service in the LOSSAN rail corridor south of central Orange County would result in extensive environmental impacts and may be infeasible. The 1999 study concluded that further evaluation of conventional rail improvements in the LOSSAN corridor should be carried forward, and that the I-15 corridor continue to be evaluated (by the Authority) for dedicated high-speed rail.

## **B. STATEWIDE RAIL PLANS**

Two statewide rail plans were prepared by the Department and others, addressing proposed capital improvements and service goals for the state rail system, including the LOSSAN corridor. In addition to the previous HST studies described above, these rail plans helped form the basis for the Department's alternatives development. These plans are briefly described below, and specific alternatives evaluated are described in Section 2.2.

### **California Passenger Rail System 20-Year Improvement Plan (2001)**

This 20-Year Improvement Plan was developed as a comprehensive blueprint for a passenger rail system in California<sup>4</sup>. This document was developed with the involvement of four task forces, one for each intercity corridor, which includes the Pacific Surfliner (LOSSAN corridor), San Joaquin, Capital Corridor and a proposed Coast Route.

This plan provided a baseline for potential rail improvements to be performed along the LOSSAN corridor and outlines an operational vision of the next 20 years for the corridor, including hourly service between Los Angeles and San Diego and specific double track, bridge, tunnel, highway crossing and station improvements along the current alignment from San Luis Obispo to San Diego.

The 20-Year Improvement Plan was the source of several of the options considered in this document.

### **California State Rail Plan (2002)**

Government Code Section 14036 requires the California Department of Transportation to complete a 10-Year State Rail Plan with both passenger and freight rail elements. This Plan must be updated every two years. In the 2002 Plan<sup>5</sup>, the passenger rail element reviews the current operation of State-supported intercity rail passenger service

<sup>3</sup> "Dedicated" service would not share tracks with existing passenger and freight rail services.

<sup>4</sup> California Passenger Rail System 20-Year Improvement Plan, March 2001. Sponsored by Amtrak California.

<sup>5</sup> Caltrans 10-Year State Rail plan; (2002).

and outlines 10-Year plans for the period 2001-02 through 2010-11 for capital improvements and service expansions.

This Plan outlines the following 8 objectives for the LOSSAN corridor to be achieved by Fiscal Year (FY) 2011:

- Increase annual ridership 52 percent, from 1,662,000 to 2,518,000 passengers.
- Increase annual revenues 68 percent, from \$20.4 million to \$34.3 million, for the State-supported 67 percent of the route operation.
- Increase revenue/cost (farebox) ratio from 53.5 percent to 57.7 percent.
- Reduce the State cost per passenger mile from 16 to 13 cents.
- Increase frequency of daily round-trip service, from 11 to 16 trains between Los Angeles and San Diego, from 4 to 6 between Los Angeles and Santa Barbara/Goleta, and from 1 to 2 trains extended beyond Goleta to San Luis Obispo.
- Reduce train running times to less than two hours between Los Angeles and San Diego, two hours between Los Angeles and Santa Barbara/Goleta and two hours between Santa Barbara and San Luis Obispo.
- Improve the reliability (on-time performance) of trains
- Provide real-time information to passengers on train status (e.g. anticipated arrival time), particularly at unstaffed stations.

The Department considered these objectives in its formulation and evaluation of a range of reasonable and practicable alternatives for the LOSSAN Rail Improvements Project.

Both the California Passenger Rail System 20-Year Improvement Plan and the California State Rail Plan are consistent for their common 10-year timeframe.

## 2.1.2 Formulation of Initial Alternatives

The Department formulated its initial alternatives for the LOSSAN corridor rail improvements based on previous analyses (described above) and information relevant to the LOSSAN corridor gained during the Authority's scoping and alternative screening processes conducted for the Authority's statewide HST project. These processes culminated in the Department's final screening of alternatives in the LOSSAN Strategic Plan, and the carrying forward of the rail improvement options for the LOSSAN corridor analyzed in this Program EIR/EIS. The statewide and Department processes are summarized below.

### A. STATEWIDE HIGH-SPEED TRAIN PROJECT

As the HST program moved to the environmental review phase, the Authority and FRA began the process of defining reasonable and feasible alternatives to be considered in the statewide HST Program EIR/EIS. This effort involved the development of an HST alternative (including design options), a No-Project/No Action Alternative, and a Modal Alternative addressing expansion of roadway and airport facilities in the state. More detail regarding the Authority's scoping process and public and agency involvement program can be found in the *California High-Speed Train Project Draft Program EIR/EIS*, (2004).

The early definition of the HST project and characterization of a feasible range of alternatives to evaluate in the statewide Program EIR/EIS involved frequent coordination with public agencies, including the Department, and the general public. Public and agency input was obtained by the Authority during a series of public meetings held between February and April 2001, at which Department staff also participated. Additional agency and public input was obtained during the scoping process (April and May, 2001) pursuant to CEQA and NEPA. The scoping process and outcomes, including comments and concerns pertaining to the LOSSAN region, are documented in the *California High-Speed Train - Statewide Scoping Report*<sup>6</sup>. The Department used the scoping process input in their subsequent development of alternatives pertaining to the LOSSAN corridor.

On the basis of the statewide scoping effort and the information developed in the earlier studies discussed above, the Authority and the FRA defined a range of promising corridors for development of the HST system.

In addition to the general corridors being defined, the Authority, in consultation with FRA, developed an initial set of potential HST alignment, station, and technology options at the beginning of the screening evaluation process. These options for the LOSSAN region are illustrated, defined and described in detail in the *Los Angeles to San Diego via Orange County Conventional Improvements Screening Report*<sup>7</sup>.

### **HST Alignment/Station Screening Evaluation (Authority, 2000)**

The Authority and the FRA initiated their alternatives screening process in February 2000 to identify the most reasonable and practicable HST alignment and station options for analysis in a Program EIR/EIS. The purpose of the High-Speed Train Alignments/Stations Screening Evaluation was to consider all reasonable and practical options within each corridor being investigated by the Authority and the FRA at a consistent level of analysis. This initial alignment and station evaluation was accomplished through the following key activities.

- Review of past alignment and station options identified in previous studies.
- Through the environmental scoping process, identification of alignment and station options not previously evaluated.
- Evaluation of alignment and station options using standardized engineering, environmental, and financial criteria and evaluation methodologies.
- Evaluation of the ability of alignment and station options to attain defined objectives.

The state was divided into five geographic regions or travel markets for the purposes of evaluating high-speed train alignment and station options: Bay Area to Merced; Sacramento to Bakersfield; Bakersfield to Los Angeles; Los Angeles to San Diego via the Inland Empire; and Los Angeles to San Diego via Orange County (LOSSAN). Previous Authority studies were reviewed and re-assessed to develop HST alignment and stations options in the five regions. The results of the High-Speed Train Alignment/Stations Screening Evaluation were documented in five regional reports. The

<sup>6</sup> California High-Speed Train - Statewide Scoping Report, April 2002

<sup>7</sup> California High-Speed Rail Authority, May 2003

technical data from these reports, combined with public and agency input, provided the Authority and FRA with the necessary information to direct further studies on those alignments and station locations that represent a reasonable range of alternatives to attain the following objectives established by the Authority and FRA.

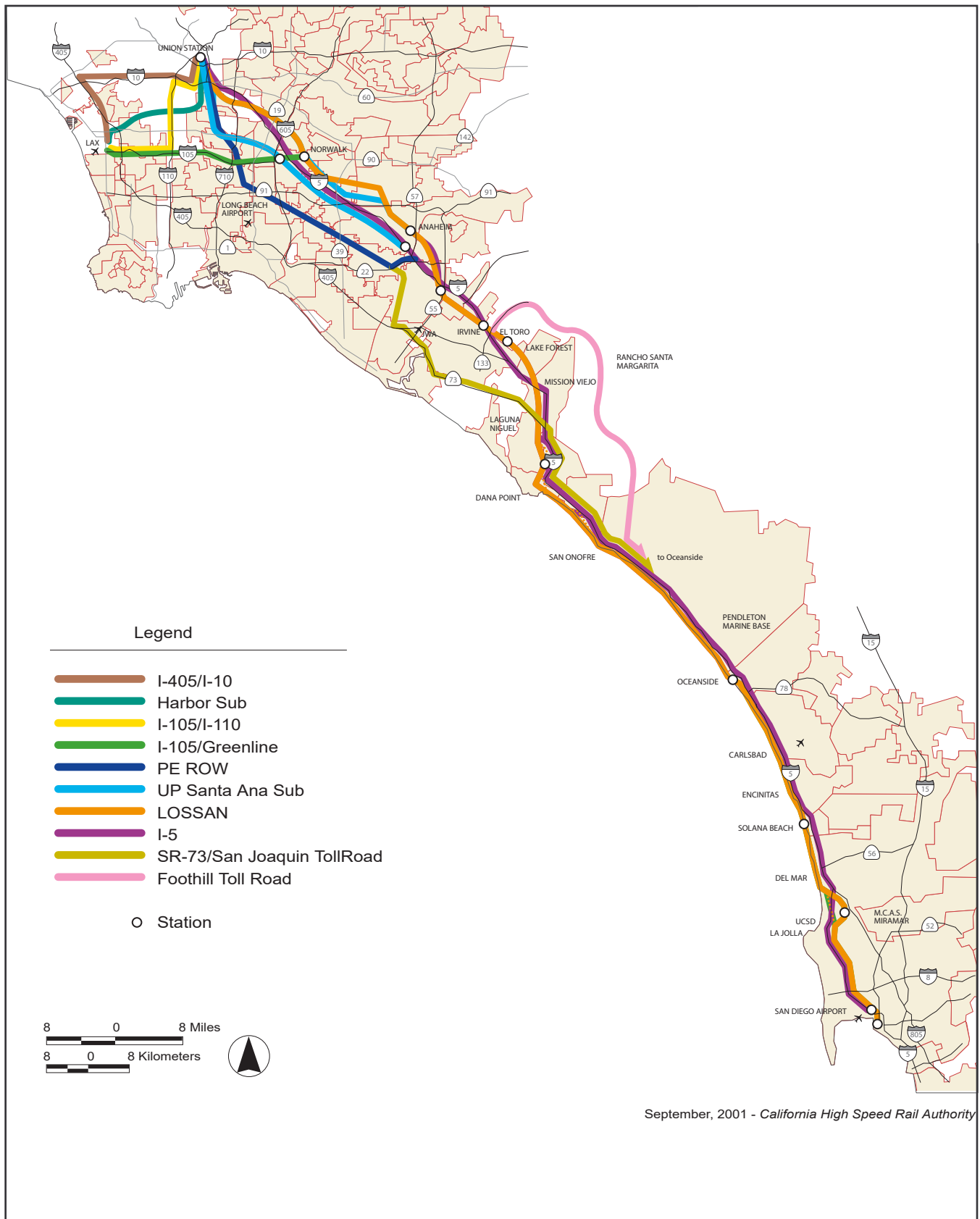
- Maximize ridership/revenue potential.
- Maximize connectivity and accessibility.
- Minimize operating and capital costs.
- Maximize compatibility with existing and planned development.
- Minimize impacts to natural resources.
- Minimize impacts to social and economic resources.
- Minimize impacts to cultural resources.
- Maximize avoidance of areas with geological and soils constraints.
- Maximize avoidance of areas with potential hazardous materials.

Input from agencies and the public was incorporated into the screening of alternatives and alignment/station options. For the LOSSAN region, the Department concurred with the analysis and the recommended screening decisions. The alignment alternatives analyzed for the LOSSAN corridor are illustrated in Figure 2.1.2-1. The results of the detailed screening evaluation are described in the *California High-Speed Train Screening Report*<sup>8</sup>, which was presented to the public at the Authority Board Meetings in August 2001 through January 2002.

At the Authority's January 2002 Board Meeting, board members reviewed the process and results and voted to identify the alternatives that would be considered in the HST Program EIR/EIS. The Board recommended a number of alignment and station options for further consideration in the program level environmental analysis. The LOSSAN corridor is recognized as an important conventional-rail feeder system to the statewide HST system, and the portion of the corridor from Los Angeles to Irvine is still under consideration as a preferred concept for direct High-Speed Train service. The FRA and federal agencies concurred with the recommendation for alternatives to be evaluated as part of the Authority's environmental review process. The Department also concurred, and initiated a separate environmental process to further evaluate the LOSSAN corridor rail improvements project.

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<sup>8</sup> California High-Speed Train Alignment/Station Screening Evaluation Report, 4-15-02



Source: IBI Group

**FIGURE 2.1.2-1**

## Alignment Alternatives Evaluated in HST Screening Report

LOSSAN Rail Corridor Improvements

Program Environmental Impact Report / Environmental Impact Statement







## B. LOSSAN RAIL CORRIDOR IMPROVEMENTS PROJECT

Following the Authority's regional screening evaluations for its HST alternative corridors, the Department and the Authority agreed to share technical data and analysis for the continued evaluation of the LOSSAN corridor as a conventional rail feeder system to the statewide HST system. The Department and FRA initiated a separate environmental process for the LOSSAN Rail Corridor Improvements Program EIR/EIS, described below.

The development of alternatives to be evaluated in the LOSSAN Rail Corridor Improvements Program EIR/EIS was based on all previous work related to the statewide High-Speed Train Project as well as the two state rail plans described previously. The formal environmental process for the LOSSAN corridor began in early 2002, and included public and agency coordination and scoping, on-going agency involvement and working groups, and development of a Strategic Plan for the LOSSAN corridor.

### **Public and Agency Coordination and Scoping**

The Department's early definition of the project and characterization of a feasible range of alternatives to be carried forward in this LOSSAN Rail Corridor Improvements Program EIR/EIS involved frequent coordination with public agencies and the general public. Prior to the Department's separate environmental process initiation, potential improvements to the LOSSAN corridor had been included in the agency and public involvement processes sponsored by the Authority.

Additional agency and public input was obtained during the Department's scoping process pursuant to CEQA and NEPA requirements. The Department's Notice of Preparation (NOP) was released March 11, 2002, and the Notice of Intent (NOI) was published in the Federal Register on March 20, 2002. Written responses were received from interested parties in response to these notifications. The scoping activities for the LOSSAN Rail Corridor Improvements Program EIR/EIS were conducted between April 2 and April 30, 2002 (scoping period). A LOSSAN regional agency and public scoping meeting was held on April 2, 2002 in Los Angeles to obtain public and agency input. A series of six additional scoping meetings followed throughout the region as well as other meetings, briefings, and involvement activities conducted jointly by the Department and the Authority.

The scoping process identified areas of potential concern related to the proposed LOSSAN corridor improvements. Throughout the corridor, comments consistently indicated the need for an improved transportation system focusing on safety and new alignments located away from environmentally sensitive areas. The concerns with respect to environmental issues typically focused on potential noise and visual impacts, and impacts on air quality and sensitive habitats. The scoping process and outcomes are documented in the *LOSSAN Proposed Rail Corridor Improvements Study – Public Scoping Report*<sup>9</sup>.

<sup>9</sup> California Department of Transportation (?) – LOSSAN Corridor Improvements Study - Public Scoping Report, June 2002

### **Agency Involvement**

Following the response to the NOP and NOI, and a series of public scoping meetings, the Department and FRA (as the lead CEQA and NEPA agencies responsible for the preparation of the Program EIR/EIS) formed a working group of representatives comprised of eight key federal and state agencies to assist in the environmental review process. The interagency group has met periodically during the EIR/EIS development to discuss major issues from the perspective of each of their agencies and to provide input to the lead agencies and consultant team to help focus the analysis and streamline the review process. The federal and state agency representatives have been included in this process to provide input and timely review for the following specific areas:

- Define the scope of the Program EIR/EIS
- Review and provide input to the Purpose and Need Statement
- Review and provide input to the technical methods of analysis and study area definition
- Identify substantive issues of particular concern
- Suggest sources of information and data relevant to their agency
- Define avoidance, minimization and mitigation strategies
- Review and provide input to the screening process and definition of alternatives to be analyzed in this EIR/EIS
- Review and provide input on preliminary findings pertinent to agency expertise
- Identify procedural requirements and permits or approvals necessary for subsequent phases of environmental review.

The Department, together with FRA and the Authority, also invited input from regional and local agencies within the project area. Regional transportation agency Board meetings and working-group meetings have provided forums for discussion of the environmental process and the development of alternatives that could meet travel needs in the LOSSAN region. These meetings have been held in San Diego, Oceanside, Orange County and Los Angeles to provide convenient on-going opportunities for regional and local participation and input.

As a result of early public involvement, the following additional routing options were developed:

- Trabuco Creek (San Juan Capistrano)
- Long Tunnel (Dana Point/San Clemente)
- South Orange County Inland Bypass
- Penasquitos Lagoon Bypass

### **LOSSAN Strategic Plan**

Based on the Authority's *System Alternatives Definition Report*, the Department and FRA defined a No-Project Alternative specific to the LOSSAN corridor, to be evaluated in the LOSSAN Rail Corridor Improvements Program EIR/EIS (see Section 2.3). Inclusion of a Modal Alternative (highway and airport expansion) was also considered. However, in discussions with resource agencies and transportation agencies, the Department and FRA determined that evaluation of a Modal Alternative for this Program EIR/EIS was not relevant, based on the Purpose and Need for the LOSSAN-specific project. As stated in Chapter 1, the Department has described its overall objectives and policies for intercity rail improvements in the current State Rail Plan (2002). These include increasing the cost-effectiveness of State-supported intercity passenger rail systems, increasing capacity and reducing running time on existing routes, and improving safety of intercity rail service. The need for these improvements to rail service between Los Angeles, Orange County and San Diego is demonstrated by growth and travel-demand projections, existing rail capacity constraints in the LOSSAN corridor, continuing air quality issues, and pressures on natural resources from highway construction, motor vehicle use, and congestion. An alternative involving highway and airport expansion would not address either the purpose of or the need for rail improvements in the LOSSAN region. While it is appropriate to evaluate a Modal Alternative for comparison for a statewide rail proposal such as the Authority's High-Speed Train Project, the Department and FRA determined that the region-specific needs addressed in this Program EIR/EIS relate to existing and future intercity rail service currently served via the LOSSAN corridor. Therefore, a Modal Alternative is not examined in this document.

The Department defined rail improvement alignment and station options based on the Authority's previous screening evaluation for the LOSSAN region, the LOSSAN scoping comments and meetings, and additional refinement studies conducted by the Department and the Authority.

After the initial definition of alignment and station alternatives, the Department determined that the creation of a Strategic Plan would be a useful step in its ongoing Program EIR/EIS process for studying conventional rail improvements for the LOSSAN corridor. This complementary planning document looked at the proposed rail improvements from a corridor-wide perspective. In supporting the EIR/EIS work, the Strategic Plan met the Department objectives listed below.

- Provide an additional opportunity for public outreach, beyond that provided as part of the EIR/EIS process.
- Foster better communication and understanding among stakeholders at all levels.
- Provide an opportunity to screen out design options at key locations, so as to focus future work on the most promising alternatives.
- Develop short- and long-term visions for the corridor, contemplating a program of projects for the next twenty years.

The Strategic Plan met these objectives through a series of five public workshops held in cities along the corridor. The workshops provided the public with an overview of the corridor and the rail improvements under study, including information on the following topics.

- The purpose and goals of the Strategic Plan.
- The need for improvements to the corridor.
- Current and projected weekday train volumes.
- Corridor facts, including rail owners and operators and details on freight services.
- Types of services provided (Intercity Rail, Commuter Rail, and Freight).
- Ranges of costs, rail performance issues, and community/environmental issues of projects throughout the corridor.
- Design options and alternatives at four key locations along the corridor where the range of options was sufficiently broad to allow the screening out of some options, the recommendations for screening, and the rationale and criteria used to reach the recommended screening decisions.
- The Planning Process, including timelines for the completion of the Strategic Plan and the Department's Draft Program EIR/EIS.

In addition to the public workshops, meetings were held with elected representatives and staff of corridor cities, working groups consisting of transportation agencies and other stakeholders, resource agencies at the state and federal level, FRA and the Authority. These meetings helped to foster a collective sense of understanding regarding the corridor, its current and future needs, and how the proposed improvements could not only meet train service and performance goals, but could offer solutions to long-standing issues of community and environmental concern.

Through the consultative process used in the development of the Strategic Plan, new alignments were presented by local working groups, leading to additional design options. The Strategic Plan process also resulted in the screening of design options at four locations (Del Mar, Encinitas, San Clemente/Dana Point, and San Juan Capistrano), and provided an evaluation of whether or not to conduct an Inland Bypass Alternative Study. Results of the process are documented in the LOSSAN Strategic Plan.<sup>10</sup>

A description of the alternatives rejected from further consideration and those carried forward for evaluation in this Program EIR/EIS are detailed in the following sections.

## 2.2 SUMMARY OF ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

During this Program-level study, numerous alternatives have been considered. Some have been eliminated based on analyses conducted during previous studies, while others were added or eliminated during the development of the Department's LOSSAN Corridor Strategic Plan.

Table 2.2-1 provides a summary of all alternatives considered, and their status (eliminated or carried forward for further study):

<sup>10</sup> Los Angeles to San Diego Proposed Rail Corridor Improvements Studies, LOSSAN Corridor Strategic Plan, June 2003

**Table 2.2-1  
Summary of All Alternatives Considered**

Alternative Considered	Eliminated Based on Previous Studies	Eliminated in Strategic Plan	Carried Forward in EIR/EIS	Further Discussion in Section
No-Project Alternative			<b>X</b>	2.4
Dedicated High-Speed Rail in the LOSSAN Right-of-Way	<b>X</b>			2.3.1 A
<b>LA Union Station to Central Orange County (Anaheim)</b>				
Interstate 5 Freeway	<b>X</b>			2.3.1 B
Pacific Electric Right-of-Way	<b>X</b>			2.3.1 B
Union Station Run-through Tracks (Los Angeles)			<b>X</b>	2.4.2
Addition of Fourth Main Track (Commerce to Fullerton)			<b>X</b>	2.5.1
<b>Station Locations</b>				
Paramount (San Pedro Branch at I-105)	<b>X</b>			2.3.1 B
Norwalk (I-5 at Imperial Highway)	<b>X</b>			2.3.1 B
Garden Grove (PE ROW at SR-22)	<b>X</b>			2.3.1 B
<b>Central Orange County (Anaheim) to Oceanside</b>				
Interstate 5 Freeway	<b>X</b>			2.3.1 B
San Joaquin Corridor (SR-73) with I-5	<b>X</b>			2.3.1 B
Foothill South Corridor (SR-241)	<b>X</b>			2.3.2 B
Double-tracking and Curve Straightening – including partial or full Grade Separation (Fullerton to Irvine)			<b>X</b>	2.5.1
Dedicated High-Speed Rail or MAGLEV South of Irvine	<b>X</b>			2.3.1 C
At-grade double-tracking in existing rail alignment (San Juan Capistrano)		<b>X</b>		2.3.2 A
<u>Downtown Cut-and-Cover Tunnel (San Juan Capistrano)</u>		<b>X</b>		2.3.2 B
I-5 Tunnel (San Juan Capistrano)			<b>X</b>	2.5.1
Trabuco Creek Cut-and-Cover Tunnel (San Juan Capistrano)			<b>X</b>	2.5.1
At-grade double-tracking in existing rail alignment (Dana Point/San Clemente)		<b>X</b>		2.3.2 A
<u>Short Trench (Dana Point/San Clemente)</u>		<b>X</b>		2.3.2 B
<u>Long Trench (Dana Point/San Clemente)</u>		<b>X</b>		2.3.2 B
Long Single Tunnel - no station in San Clemente (Dana Point/San Clemente)		<b>X</b>		2.3.2 B
South Orange County Inland Bypass		<b>X</b>		2.3.2 B
<u>Short Tunnel – I-5 (Dana Point/San Clemente)</u>			<b>X</b>	2.5.1
<u>Long Split Tunnel with station in San Clemente (Dana Point/San Clemente)</u>			<b>X</b>	2.5.1

**Table 2.2-1  
Summary of All Alternatives Considered (continued)**

<b>Alternative Considered</b>	<b>Eliminated Based on Previous Studies</b>	<b>Eliminated in Strategic Plan</b>	<b>Carried Forward in EIR/EIS</b>	<b>Further Discussion in Section</b>
<b>Station Locations</b>				
Irvine (I-5 at Jeffery Road)	<b>X</b>			2.3.1 B
Oceanside (I-5 at Oceanside Boulevard)	<b>X</b>			2.3.1 B
<b>Oceanside to San Diego</b>				
Interstate 5 Freeway	<b>X</b>			2.3.1 B
Double-tracking in existing alignment (Camp Pendleton)			<b>X</b>	2.5.1
Double-tracking in existing alignment, including partial or full Grade Separation (Oceanside to Carlsbad)			<b>X</b>	2.5.1
At-grade double-tracking in existing rail alignment (Encinitas)		<b>X</b>		2.3.2 A
At-grade double-tracking with Grade Separations (Encinitas)			<b>X</b>	2.5.1
Short Trench (Encinitas)			<b>X</b>	2.5.1
Long Trench (Encinitas)		<b>X</b>		2.3.2 B
At-grade double-tracking in existing rail alignment (Del Mar)		<b>X</b>		2.3.2 A
Trench in Bluffs (Del Mar)		<b>X</b>		2.3.2 B
Camino del Mar Tunnel #1 (Del Mar)			<b>X</b>	2.5.1
Camino del Mar Tunnel #2 (Del Mar)		<b>X</b>		2.3.2 B
Penasquitos Lagoon Bypass Tunnel			<b>X</b>	2.5.1
Tunnel under I-5 at University Towne Centre			<b>X</b>	2.5.1
Tunnel under Miramar Hill at University Towne Centre			<b>X</b>	2.5.1
Double-tracking and Curve Straightening – including partial or full Grade Separation (San Diego – State Route 52)			<b>X</b>	2.5.1 B
<b>Station Locations</b>				
Solana Beach (I-5 at Lomas Santa Fe Dr.)	<b>X</b>			2.3.1 B



## 2.3 ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED AND ELIMINATED

This section summarizes the alternative train technologies, corridors, and alignment and station options that have been evaluated for the LOSSAN region and eliminated from further consideration in this Program EIR/EIS. The reasons for the elimination of these alternatives are also briefly described. The options carried forward for further evaluation are described in Section 2.4.

The Department conducted a comprehensive screening of alternatives during the scoping period for its environmental process and during preparation of the LOSSAN Strategic Plan (2003). However, as described in the previous section, the Department also reviewed and concurred with previous decisions regarding the LOSSAN region made by the Authority in its studies related to a statewide high-speed train system. This previous work led to the elimination of some initial design options, train technologies, and several potential rail corridors within the LOSSAN region. The Department adopted these decisions and, therefore, eliminated the same options from further evaluation in this Program EIR/EIS. To provide a complete history of alternatives considered and eliminated, previous decisions from statewide high-speed train studies that applied to the LOSSAN region are first described below in Section 2.3.1. Section 2.3.2 describes the rail improvement alignments and design options within the LOSSAN rail corridor considered and eliminated during the Department's scoping and strategic planning efforts.

### 2.3.1 Alternatives Eliminated in LOSSAN Region Based on Previous Studies

#### A. LOSSAN CORRIDOR DEDICATED HIGH-SPEED TRAIN SERVICE

A dedicated HST system utilizing the LOSSAN rail corridor was investigated by the High-Speed Rail Commission and its successor the Authority. Based on the Commission's and Authority's work, the Department concluded that a dedicated HST corridor with completely separate tracks for the HST service was impracticable in the severely-constrained LOSSAN corridor.

The existing LOSSAN rail corridor is the second-most traveled rail passenger route in the United States. In addition to Amtrak's intercity service, there are also two thriving commuter rail services (Metrolink and Coaster) operating on this corridor, as well as a significant amount of freight traffic. Although the corridor provides the most direct rail route between Los Angeles and San Diego, it passes through some of the state's most populated regions and environmentally sensitive areas (wetlands, coastal lagoons, fragile coastal bluffs, and coastal communities).

The technical investigations and public input during the Commission's feasibility studies identified significant environmental obstacles to implementing a dedicated HST service along the LOSSAN corridor. Comments received during the Authority's study (as well as during the 1996 feasibility study by the Commission) raised the following issues:

- The bluffs are narrow in some areas and susceptible to failure, in particular the Del Mar Bluffs.
- The existing right-of-way is narrow. Additional service in the corridor could restrict access to and enjoyment of the beach area by visitors and residents.

- To prevent dangerous pedestrian crossings of the HST tracks, the railroad rights-of-way could be fenced. This could restrict beach access and concentrate the crossing of pedestrian and vehicle traffic at fewer locations.
- Noise and vibration from trains could be disruptive to ecologically sensitive coastal areas and lagoons. The saltwater marshes and lagoons are a winter habitat for several sensitive bird species.
- A dedicated right-of-way would require two more tracks at-grade (with fencing) or a double-deck configuration, to accommodate existing rail services and high-speed rail. In Encinitas, there may not be room in the existing right-of-way to add two more tracks at grade, so this could mean a double-deck configuration. The structures and overhead catenaries could block highly sensitive ocean and community views, creating a negative aesthetic impact on tourism-related businesses and potentially reducing property values adjacent to the corridor.

## **B. HIGH-SPEED TRAIN CORRIDORS AND STATION OPTIONS**

### **Evaluation Objectives and Criteria for High-Speed Train Project Corridors**

The range of alternative corridors and station options identified by the Authority and FRA and concurred with by the Department were evaluated against a list of objectives and criteria. These objectives and criteria built upon previous studies and incorporated performance goals and criteria described in Section 2.1. No formal thresholds were applied; instead, alignment and station options were compared based on these objectives and criteria. Table 2.3-1 presents the objectives and criteria applied by the Authority and FRA.

These objectives and criteria were also used as a base for the development of the criteria used by the Department and FRA for the screening of potential incremental improvement alternatives in its LOSSAN Corridor Strategic Plan.

The screening evaluation criteria focused on cost and travel time as primary indicators of engineering viability and ridership potential. Items such as capital costs and travel times were quantified for each of the alignment and station options considered. Other engineering criteria such as operational, construction, and right-of-way issues were evaluated qualitatively.

## **C. RAIL TECHNOLOGY**

Four primary technology groups were initially considered in the development of the statewide high-speed train system, as listed below.

- Electrified Very High-Speed Steel-Wheel-On-Steel-Rail.
- Magnetic Levitation.
- High-Speed Steel-Wheel-On-Steel Rail.
- Non-Electrified Steel-Wheel-On-Steel-Rail (Conventional).

Because of the need for early implementation, other less developed technologies (those not currently in operation or ready for implementation) were not considered.

**Table 2.3-1  
High-Speed Rail Corridor/Station Evaluation Objectives and Criteria**

Objective	Criteria
Maximize ridership/revenue potential	Travel time Length Population/employment catchment
Maximize connectivity and accessibility	Intermodal connections
Minimize operating and capital costs	Length Operational issues Construction issues Capital cost Right-of-way issues/cost
Maximize compatibility with existing and planned development	Land use compatibility and conflicts Visual quality impacts
Minimize impacts on natural resources	Water resources impacts Floodplain impacts Wetland impacts Threatened and endangered species impacts Wildlife corridor impacts
Minimize impacts on social and economic resources	Environmental justice impacts (demographics) Farmland impacts
Minimize impacts on cultural resources	Cultural resources impacts Parks and recreation impacts Wildlife refuge impacts
Maximize avoidance of areas with geologic and soils constraints	Soils/slope constraints Seismic constraints
Maximize avoidance of areas with potential hazardous materials	Hazardous materials/waste constraints

In the *Authority's High-Speed Train Screening Evaluation Report*, these technologies were evaluated against known operational and environmental constraints. As stated above, the studies by the Authority rejected the alternative of dedicated rail service in the existing LOSSAN corridor, as well as dedicated service in the I-5 corridor. The Authority subsequently determined (and the Department concurred) that the two technologies that require dedicated infrastructure would need to be eliminated from further consideration in the LOSSAN corridor south of either Anaheim or Irvine -- Electrified Very High Speed (VHS) Steel-Wheel-On-Steel-Rail, and Magnetic Levitation.

#### **D. RAIL CORRIDORS CONSIDERED AND ELIMINATED IN LOSSAN REGION**

This section describes previous work performed in the Los Angeles-Orange County-San Diego region (LOSSAN region) and considered by the Department and FRA to eliminate certain alternative corridors and station options from further consideration. Reviewing this work is essential in understanding the reasons for the Department's selection of the rail improvement alternatives that have been carried forward for consideration within the LOSSAN corridor.

As part of the initial alternatives developed, the Authority had looked at the feasibility of high-speed train service along several corridors through the LOSSAN region. A number of alignment and station options were further analyzed by the Authority in a subsequent screening evaluation for the region (Authority 2000), and this analysis was utilized by the

Department in its considerations, and its findings presented in the LOSSAN Corridor Strategic Plan. These options are summarized below.

The alignments and stations considered and eliminated for this region are shown in Figure 2.3.1-1. The reasons for elimination of each of the options are categorically summarized in Table 2.3.1-2 and further described in the subsections that follow.

**Table 2.3.1-2  
Alternative HST Corridor Alignments and Station Options Considered but  
Eliminated for the LOSSAN Region**

Alignment or Station	Reason							
	Construction	Environment	Incompatibility	Right of Way	Connectivity/ Accessibility	Revenue/ Ridership	Alignment Eliminated	Environmental Concerns
<b>LA Union Station to Central Orange County (Anaheim)</b>								
Interstate 5 Freeway	P			P				
Pacific Electric Right-of-Way	P		S					
<b>Station Locations</b>								
Paramount (San Pedro Branch at I-105)							P	
Norwalk (I-5 at Imperial Highway)							P	
Garden Grove (PE ROW at SR-22)							P	
<b>Central Orange County (Anaheim) to Oceanside</b>								
Interstate 5 Freeway	P			P				
San Joaquin Corridor (SR-73) with I-5	P				S			
Interstate 5 and Foothill Corridor (SR-241)	P	S						Natural resources
<b>Station Locations</b>								
Irvine (I-5 at Jeffery Road)							P	
Oceanside (I-5 at Oceanside Boulevard)							P	
<b>Oceanside to San Diego</b>								
Interstate 5 Freeway	P	S	S	P				Visual
<b>Station Locations</b>								
Solana Beach (I-5 at Lomas Santa Fe Dr.)							P	
San Diego Airport								

**Notes:**

Reason: Primary (P) and Secondary (S) reasons for elimination.

Construction: Includes engineering and construction complexity, cost and sub-optimal systems operations influence (i.e., slow train speeds).

Environment: Includes any factor that can be assigned to the environmental disciplines studied as part of this EIR/EIS.

Incompatibility: Incompatibility with current or planned local land use.

Right-of-Way: Includes lack of available rights-of-way, extensive right-of-way needs, and high cost.

Connectivity/Accessibility: Includes limited connectivity with other existing or future transportation modes (highway and/or transit systems).

Ridership/Revenue: The alignment or station would have a negative effect on the revenue or ridership for the system.

Alignment Eliminated: Station or connection eliminated because the connecting alignment option was eliminated.

Environmental Concerns: Notes of specific environmental areas of concern.

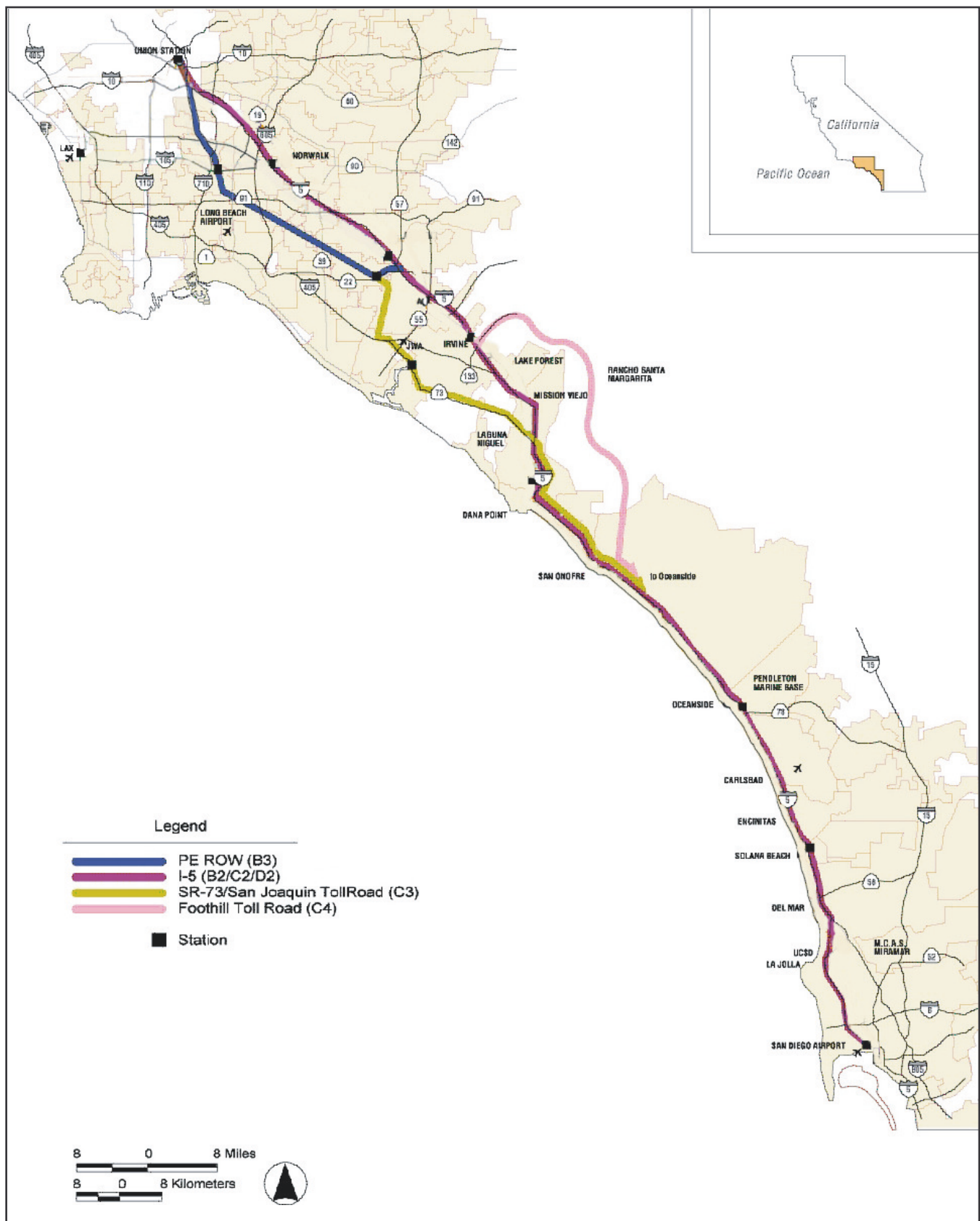


FIGURE 2.3.1-1

## Alternative HST Corridor Alignments and Station Options Considered but Eliminated for the LOSSAN Region

LOSSAN Rail Corridor Improvements

Program Environmental Impact Report / Environmental Impact Statement



U.S. Department of  
Transportation  
Federal  
Railroad  
Administration





### **Los Angeles to Central Orange County**

- **Interstate 5 Freeway** - This alignment would follow I-5 south of the US-101/I-5/I-10/SR-60 interchange (East LA interchange) and involve a dedicated bypass of the freight and commuter rail corridor, and a reasonably direct alignment to central Orange County and on to San Diego.

In this segment, the I-5 Freeway alternative would be a very slow rail route due to the number and size of curves on the I-5 alignment. It would be impracticable as a result of high costs and due to extremely constrained right-of-way in the corridor, which would require construction of high aerial structures. It would provide a Central Orange County station in Anaheim, which would have good freeway access and intermodal transit connections. Third or fourth level aerial construction would be required along I-5 due to elevated freeway sections and freeway interchanges along this right-of-way. This freeway alignment would also require relocating and maintaining freeway access and capacity during construction. Available space along this freeway alignment would be limited since available right-of-way is generally planned for use for needed expansion projects such as additional lanes, HOV lanes, and additional interchange improvements.

- **Pacific Electric (PE) Right-of-Way** – This alignment would be along a lightly-used rail line between the cities of Paramount and Stanton, and an abandoned corridor through to Santa Ana. Its long, straight (tangent) sections could support HST operation.

The PE right-of-way would provide for reasonably fast travel times, due primarily to its straightness. This alternative would not meet the Department's objectives since it would not provide sufficient accessibility and connectivity, because it would be convenient only to a single freeway and it would not directly serve major Orange County Transportation Hubs (in Anaheim and Irvine) and because of its incompatibility with local land uses.

### **Central Orange County to Oceanside**

- **Interstate 5 Freeway** – This alignment would continue from Anaheim along I-5 in Orange County through Camp Pendleton to Oceanside, providing a dedicated high-speed alignment and bypassing constrained sections of the LOSSAN corridor.

In this segment, the I-5 alternative would be a fast rail route but also very costly, since the number and size of horizontal and vertical curves on I-5 would require extensive aerial and tunnel construction to maintain speeds. Third or fourth level aerial construction would be required along much of I-5 due to elevated freeway sections and freeway interchanges along this right-of-way. This freeway alignment would also require relocating and maintaining freeway access and capacity during construction. Available space along this freeway would be limited, since virtually all available right-of-way has been used for recent expansion projects such as additional lanes, HOV lanes, viaduct structures, and additional interchange improvements. This option would avoid sensitive areas in San Juan Capistrano and San Clemente, but would result in potential land use



impacts alongside the I-5 corridor, which is abutted by commercial and industrial uses in both areas. This option is considered to be impracticable due to high construction issues and costs, and high right-of-way constraints.

- San Joaquin Corridor (SR-73) with Interstate 5 - This option would provide a dedicated alignment, continuing from the PE right-of-way in Garden Grove. This is a southern highway alternative to the I-5 Freeway option (which would follow I-5 through Santa Ana, Tustin, and Irvine), and would pass through some less developed parts of Orange County.

The SR-73 alternative would be almost as expensive as the I-5 Freeway option. Due to its rolling terrain, it would require extensive tunneling. The SR-73 alternative would not be as accessible as the LOSSAN and I-5 Freeway alternatives, since it would be convenient to only a single freeway. Moreover, this alternative would not serve either Anaheim or Irvine and it would only connect to the PE right-of-way alignment (between Union Station and Central Orange County) that has been eliminated from further evaluation. This option would not meet basic connectivity and accessibility objectives and was considered impracticable due to high right-of-way constraints and high construction impacts and costs.

### **Oceanside to San Diego**

- Interstate 5 Freeway – This alignment would continue from Oceanside along I-5 to San Diego, providing a dedicated high-speed alignment and bypassing sensitive coastal and other constrained sections of the LOSSAN corridor. This would provide the only option for a dedicated rail alignment along the coast in San Diego.

In this section, the I-5 Freeway dedicated option would provide a travel time similar to the LOSSAN options, but it would not serve the downtown Santa Fe Depot and would terminate at the San Diego Airport. I-5 would be a very costly option, since the number and size of horizontal and vertical curves on I-5 require extensive aerial structures to maintain speeds. Third or fourth level aerial construction would be required along much of I-5 due to elevated freeway sections and freeway interchanges along this right-of-way. This freeway alignment would also require relocating and maintaining freeway access and capacity during construction. Available space along this freeway alignment is limited, since available right-of-way is generally planned for use for needed expansion projects such as additional lanes, HOV lanes, and additional interchange improvements.

This option would avoid sensitive coastal areas. However, in many places, particularly at lagoon crossings, it would share many of the environmental issues and sensitivities of the coastal areas of the LOSSAN corridor. Due to the constrained right-of-way along the I-5 corridor, there would be potential property impacts on adjacent land uses, which are largely commercial and industrial but include significant residential areas. Due to the need for aerial construction, there would be significant potential for visual intrusion, including interference with ocean and lagoon views.

Suitable land for station sites on the I-5 alignment would be scarce, and the development of such new stations would be incompatible with the emerging Smart Growth principles of San Diego County, which stress the support and development of existing transportation hubs. Therefore, this alternative is not as compatible with the existing and planned development of the coastal cities as the LOSSAN corridor.

The I-5 alignment investigation assumed that the infrastructure would be exclusively used by a proposed HST system. Therefore, with the existing rail impacts for freight and commuter rail in the LOSSAN corridor and a new proposed HST system, there would be two parallel rail lines. The cumulative impacts of the two corridors would be far greater than a single alternative along the LOSSAN corridor. Combining the existing rail services and a proposed HST system in a completely new corridor with new infrastructure, which would not be fully dedicated to high-speed service, would increase costs and diminish the performance of the proposed HST system and result in extensive costs for the relocation of all existing Amtrak, freight, and commuter rail stations into the I-5 corridor. Moreover, a proposed HST system along the I-5 Freeway would cause significant disruption to abutting land uses (and increase environmental impacts), and would result in greatly increased costs of building the infrastructure because of additional commuter stations, additional track requirements, and restrictive freight gradients.

This option would not meet basic program objectives and would not avoid or substantially reduce environmental impacts. It was considered impracticable due to high right-of-way constraints and high construction impacts and costs.

#### **Stations Locations Eliminated in LOSSAN Region**

- Paramount (San Pedro Branch at I-105): This potential station site would only serve the PE Right-of-Way alternative that has been eliminated from further investigation.
- Norwalk (I-5 at Imperial Highway): This potential station site would only serve the Interstate 5 Freeway alternative that has been eliminated from further investigation.
- Garden Grove (PE right-of-way at SR-22): This potential station site would only serve the PE right-of-way alternative that has been eliminated from further investigation.
- Irvine (I-5 at Jeffrey Road): This station would only serve the I-5 Freeway and I-5 and Foothill Corridor alternatives that have been eliminated from further investigation.
- Oceanside (I-5 at Oceanside Boulevard): This station would only serve the I-5 Freeway, I-5 and Foothill, and SR-73 and I-5 alternatives that have been eliminated from further investigation.
- Solana Beach (I-5 at Lomas Santa Fe Drive): This potential station would serve only the I-5 alignment that has been eliminated from further evaluation.
- San Diego Airport: This LOSSAN station would serve San Diego and the San Diego Airport with an improved Amtrak service and could be expanded to serve new express intercity services.

## 2.3.2 LOSSAN Corridor Rail Improvements Considered and Eliminated

The Department and FRA considered a number of conventional rail improvements for the LOSSAN corridor. Improvement options that were eliminated from evaluation in this Program EIR/EIS are summarized in Table 2.3.2-1 and described below. More detail on the screening of alternatives can be found in the LOSSAN Corridor Strategic Plan.

### A. PRELIMINARY LOSSAN CONVENTIONAL IMPROVEMENTS OPTIONS ELIMINATED FROM FURTHER EVALUATION

The community and environmental sensitivities and engineering challenges in the Cities of Del Mar, Encinitas, San Clemente and San Juan Capistrano are distinctive and sometimes unique to one community. Nevertheless, the four share one common constraint: an environment of high pedestrian traffic, where the existing LOSSAN railway acts as an impediment to access between most of the community and a desirable community resource, and yet the railway is accessible enough that people are not channeled to designated crossing points featuring gates and warning devices.

In these areas, simple at-grade double-tracking was considered early in the definition of alternatives. However, introducing extensive sections of double-track in such environments, without providing a significant expansion of the ability for pedestrians to safely cross over or under the tracks, would not improve safety for rail users or those wishing to cross the corridor. Without new grade-separated crossing opportunities the implication is also that increased speeds through the segment most likely create unacceptable safety risks, negating much of the benefit of double-tracking.

While the concept of simple at-grade double-tracking was rejected in the four communities, it was used as a starting point in defining other alternatives along the existing alignment. The specific issues in each community that led to elimination of the option of simple at-grade double-tracking along the existing LOSSAN rail alignment are summarized below. Section 2.4 describes options that were carried forward for evaluation.

#### **San Juan Capistrano**

Up until the 1960s, downtown San Juan Capistrano featured a second passing track. This was removed by the Santa Fe Railroad, which saw it as an unnecessary maintenance burden in a time when intercity passenger travel was on the decline and commuter rail was decades away. While room is available to restore the second track at-grade, doing so would not provide any speed improvements in the high pedestrian-use area of Franciscan Plaza. Further, the presence of the Los Rios Historical District immediately to the west, with its sensitive adobe structures, eliminates the possibility of a grade-separation along the existing alignment, either by taking the rail below-grade, or by building a pedestrian underpass.

Due to physical constraints, visual and environmental issues, and community concerns, elevated railway viaduct structures (except at water crossings) along the beachfront and in the San Juan Capistrano historical area were not investigated.

**Table 2.3.2-1  
LOSSAN Corridor Rail Improvement Alternatives Eliminated**

Alignment or Station	Reason							
	Construction	Environment	Incompatibility	Right of Way	Connectivity/ Accessibility	Revenue/ Ridership	Train Performance	Environmental Concerns
<b>San Juan Capistrano</b>								
At-grade double-tracking in existing rail alignment		P	P	P				Historic resources
Downtown Cut-and-Cover Tunnel	P		P					
<b>Dana Point/San Clemente</b>								
At-grade double-tracking in existing rail alignment	P		P					
Short Trench	P	P	P				S	Beach aesthetics & access
Long Trench	P	P	P	S				Beach aesthetics & access
Long Single Tunnel (no station in San Clemente)	P					S		
Inland Bypass	P	P	S		P	P	P	Natural resources
<b>Encinitas</b>								
At-grade double-tracking in existing rail alignment	P		P					
Long Trench	P							
<b>Del Mar</b>								
At-grade double-tracking in existing rail alignment	P		P	P				
Trench in Bluffs	P	P	P	S				Beach aesthetics & access
Camino del Mar Tunnel #2		P	S	P				New crossing of lagoon

**Notes:**

Reason: Primary (P) and Secondary (S) reasons for elimination.

Construction: Includes engineering and construction complexity, cost and sub-optimal systems operations influence (i.e., slow train speeds).

Environment: Includes any factor that can be assigned to the environmental disciplines studied as part of this EIR/EIS.

Incompatibility: Incompatibility with current or planned local land use.

Right-of-Way: Includes lack of available rights-of-way, extensive right-of-way needs, and high cost.

Connectivity/Accessibility: Includes limited connectivity with other existing or future transportation modes (highway and/or transit systems).

Ridership/Revenue: The alignment or station would have a negative effect on the revenue or ridership for the system.

Train Performance: Includes impacts to reliability, running time improvement, and ability to accommodate freight.

Environmental Concerns: Notes of specific environmental areas of concern.

**Dana Point/San Clemente**

The track at San Clemente is on the beach. As a result, trespassing onto the rail right-of-way and crossing the rails away from designated crossing points is commonplace, with pronounced safety risks. To address these safety issues, train operating speeds are greatly reduced, leading to significant capacity and performance penalties in these

areas. An at-grade second track in the existing rail corridor was therefore eliminated from further consideration, since it would compound existing barrier and safety issues.

### **Encinitas**

In Encinitas, the existing rail corridor abuts residential, commercial and industrial land uses and forms a barrier to pedestrians and to vehicular traffic at the at-grade crossings of major intersections, as does a parallel arterial and Coast Highway 101. In Leucadia, the rail separates a residential area to the east from a major local shopping district and the coast to the west. In Cardiff-by-the-Sea, the rail corridor separates the community from the ocean. At-grade double-tracking in the existing corridor was eliminated because it would compound these barriers and create additional safety issues with pedestrian and vehicle crossings.

### **Del Mar**

An at-grade second track along the coastal bluffs in Del Mar would compound existing barrier and safety factors noted above for other locations. In addition, since the bluffs are continually eroding, it was apparent that any double-tracking alternative in this location would require significant excavation work to stabilize the bluff-top. Stabilization would also require structures that would create substantial visual impacts and likely require significant on-going maintenance efforts to address erosion and drainage concerns. Therefore, this option was eliminated due to high construction and operational impacts and costs.

## **B. OPTIONS ELIMINATED IN STRATEGIC PLAN AND SCREENING EVALUATION (2003)**

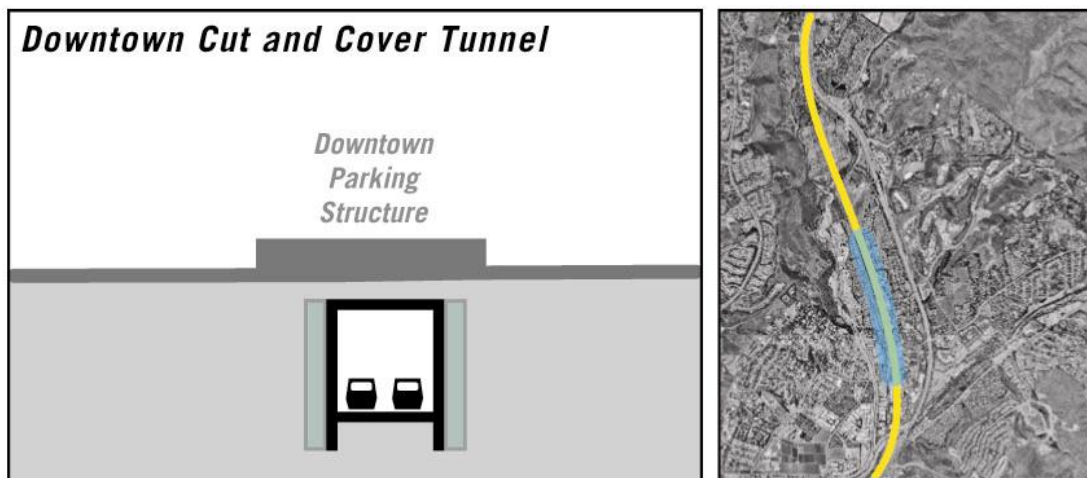
Based on further technical evaluation and public and agency input during the LOSSAN Corridor Strategic Plan process, rail improvement options were further screened in four locations along the corridor: San Juan Capistrano, Dana Point/San Clemente, Encinitas, and Del Mar. In addition, the Department considered the potential for a South Orange County Bypass option that would bypass San Juan Capistrano, Dana Point, and San Clemente. The options eliminated from evaluation in this Program EIR/EIS are described and illustrated below.

### **San Juan Capistrano**

- **Downtown Cut-and-Cover Tunnel:** This option would involve construction of a cut and cover tunnel through San Juan Capistrano's downtown (see Figure 2.3.2-1). Near Junipero Serra Road, the alignment would enter a double-tracked open concrete trench. North of the existing San Juan Capistrano Depot, the trench would become a covered trench. The covered trench would pass beneath an existing downtown parking structure, and then would become an open trench again. Near San Juan Creek, the alignment would return to grade. This option would also include curve straightening the alignment just south of the San Juan Creek crossing.

The Downtown Cut-and-Cover Tunnel would have severe construction impacts and property impacts on downtown San Juan Capistrano and the historic district, and would have negative impacts on the community, and historical resources.

**Figure 2.3.2-1**  
**Option Eliminated from Further Consideration in San Juan Capistrano**



This option would increase track capacity, reduce running times, improve safety, and increase reliability. However, it would have major constructability impacts, because of limited available right-of-way in the historic district, the close proximity of sensitive historic and cultural resources (including the historic downtown station), the need to maintain rail service during construction, and the need to demolish and replace the existing downtown parking structure and surface parking facilities (causing significant disruption to the downtown business community during construction). For these reasons, it was given a negative cost-effectiveness rating.

Historical resources could be directly impacted with this option, largely during construction. Property impacts would be very high in this option, as property for right-of-way would need to be acquired, and businesses would be impacted during construction, particularly as a result of the demolition of the parking structure (which would be rebuilt after the covered trench had been constructed). There would be noise and vibration impacts, both during construction and in areas of open trench after construction.

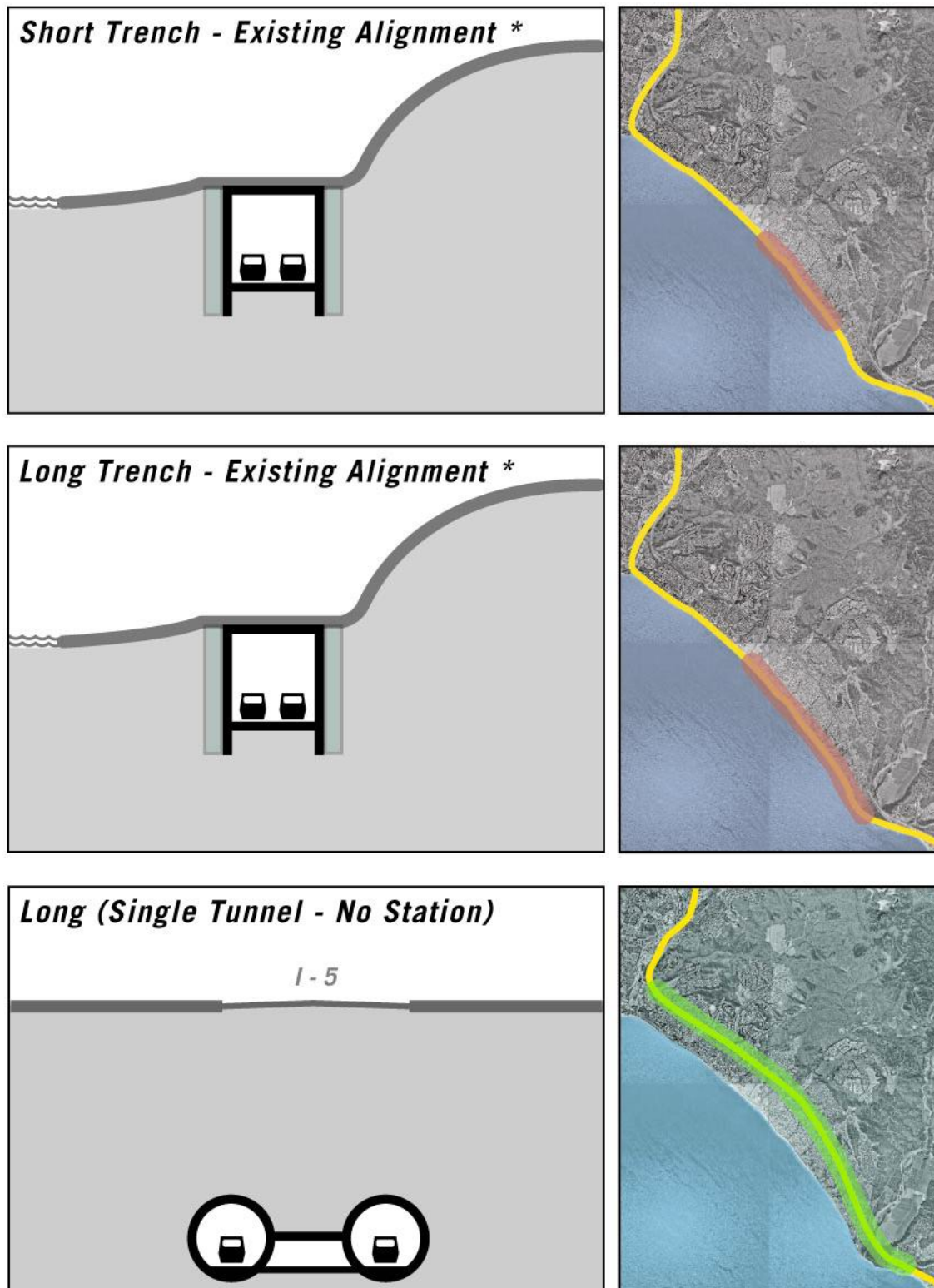
The public acceptability of this option, as determined by comments and feedback from previous public meetings, is extremely negative. The City of San Juan Capistrano is on record as being opposed to this option, and asked that it be eliminated from further consideration. They believe the construction of this option would have long-term detrimental effects on the community. For reasons of cost, constructability, cost-effectiveness, potential impacts to historical resources and property, as well as public acceptability, this option was eliminated from further consideration.

#### **Dana Point and San Clemente**

- **Short Trench:** This option provides for double-tracking while following the existing railroad right-of-way (see Figure 2.3.2-2). A short trench would be constructed through the San Clemente pier area to allow for safe pedestrian access across the tracks. Additional pedestrian under-crossings would also be constructed along the section of the corridor traveling at-grade on the beach.



**Figure 2.3.2-2**  
Options Eliminated from Further Consideration in Dana Point/San Clemente





The Short Trench option has severe construction impacts and high negative impacts to the environment and the community, yet offers only a marginal improvement to train service and performance.

Although the Short Trench option would increase track capacity (due to double tracking), it would provide no change in running times, no net improvements to safety, and no change to reliability. The Short Trench option offers significant constructability challenges, most notably the construction of the trench in the Pier Bowl and construction around Mariposa Point, while simultaneously maintaining access to the San Clemente Pier and existing rail service. The construction of the Short Trench option would also impact San Clemente businesses, which depend upon visitors to the beach. It was assessed as having a low cost-effectiveness rating (based upon the benefits it provides and the impacts it imposes, compared to its cost).

The Short Trench option poses very significant constructability challenges, primarily because of the nature of the beach itself and the coastal bluffs (particularly at Mariposa Point – see Figure 2.3.2-3). Attempting to stabilize the beach and fragile coastal bluffs would require major construction efforts, including a seawall 10-20 feet (3-6 meters) high at the base of the bluffs, retaining walls within the trench itself, and tie-backs at the top of the bluffs, resulting in drastic changes to the existing environment. The use of heavy construction equipment in this sensitive beach and coastal bluff environment would also be problematic. Moreover, the constrained space available for construction of the trench and the need to maintain rail service during construction would create significant impacts.

The Short Trench option would have the highest environmental impacts. The covered portion of the trench would improve coastal access and reduce the barrier effect of the rail corridor in the Pier Bowl area. Other areas, where the trench was open or in transition would have greatly reduced access opportunities. Coastal access during construction would be greatly constrained in the Pier Bowl area. The Short Trench option reduces the barrier effect of the existing rail corridor through the downtown area by providing a covered trench. However, this option would do little to reduce or remove the impact of the rail corridor on adjacent residential uses. Additionally, the barrier effect between residential and recreational uses would increase as a result of the trench. The Short Trench option would impact beach aesthetics by imposing new concrete structures (the trench and its transitions) on the beach. The Short Trench option would not remove the rail line from the beach, but rather would submerge it into the beach, creating new, different impacts (including the need for the stabilization methods noted above). The beach and bluff impacts of the Short Trench concept would result in the highest impacts on natural resources and have major geological and soils constraints. Construction on the beach and bluffs would have high impacts to erodible soils, unstable slopes, and aesthetics and visual quality. Property impacts with the Short Trench option would include the likely need to acquire property during the construction period in order to stage equipment and materials. There was strong public sentiment for removing this alternative from further consideration.

**Figure 2.3.2-3  
Existing Rail Corridor at Mariposa Point**



- **Long Trench:** This option is similar to the Short Trench in that it would also remain largely within the existing railroad right-of-way, and would include curve straightening at Dana Point. The option would begin a bored tunnel through Mariposa Point, just south of the existing Metrolink station (at Avenida Pico and El Camino Real), then transition north of the pier into a cut-and-cover trench, which would continue until approximately 1,600 feet north of the San Diego County line (see Figure 2.3.2-2).

Although the Long Trench option offers significant improvements to train service and performance, it has severe construction impacts and high negative impacts to the environment and the community, as well as high construction costs.

Like the Short Trench option, the trench's double track would provide increased train capacity. Unlike the Short Trench, the Long Trench option would improve running times, safety, and reliability, due to the extensive grade-separated segment from Mariposa Point to the southern city limits. The construction of the Long Trench option would also impact San Clemente businesses, which depend upon visitors to the beach. While more costly than the Short Trench option (estimated \$150 million additional cost), the Long Trench is assessed to have a positive cost-effectiveness as a result of the benefits to train performance.

The Long Trench option would reduce the "barrier effect", due to the covered trench and tunnel section. However, there would be access issues during the construction phase, especially along the beach and in the Pier Bowl areas. Coastal impacts would result from the Long Trench option, as tunneling under the bluffs at Mariposa Point would be required. Property impacts would be significant, as acquisition of property would be required for the tunnel segment beneath the residential subdivision at Mariposa Point. Noise and vibration issues would be minimized as a result of the trench (and greatly reduced in the tunnel segment of the Long Trench).

The Long Trench option poses significant constructability challenges, most notably because of the nature of the beach itself and the coastal bluffs (particularly at Mariposa Point – see Figure 2.3.2-3). The use of heavy construction equipment in this sensitive beach and coastal bluff environment would also be problematic. Moreover, the constrained space available for construction of the trench and the need to maintain rail service during construction would create significant impacts.

The Long Trench option would have high environmental impacts. The covered portion of the trench would improve coastal access and reduce the barrier effect of the rail corridor in the Pier Bowl area. Other areas, where the trench was open or in transition, would have greatly reduced access opportunities. Coastal access during construction would be greatly constrained in the Pier Bowl area. The Long Trench alternative would impact beach aesthetics by imposing new concrete structures (the trench and its transitions) on the beach. The Long Trench option would not remove the rail line from the beach, but rather would submerge it into the beach, creating new, different impacts (including the need for the stabilization methods noted above). The beach impacts of the Long Trench concept would result in high impacts on natural resources and have major geological and soils constraints. Construction on the beach and bluffs would have high impacts to erodible soils, unstable slopes, and aesthetics and visual quality. Property impacts with the Long Trench option would include the likely need to acquire property through the residential community at Mariposa Point and during the construction period in order to stage equipment and materials. There was strong public sentiment for removing this alternative from further consideration.

- Long Single Tunnel (No Station): This option is similar to the Interstate 5 Long Tunnel with station, except it would utilize a single (rather than split) tunnel, which does not allow for a station in San Clemente. Like the Long Tunnel with Station option, the new alignment bypasses both the sharp curve in Dana Point and the coastal environmental and pedestrian concerns in San Clemente. This option would leave the existing right-of-way in a trench approximately 500 feet south of Avenida Aeropuerto in San Juan Capistrano, entering into a tunnel just before coming under the right-of-way of Interstate 5. The option would continue beneath Interstate 5, leaving the right-of-way just north of Basilone Road, exiting the tunnel and returning to grade level at San Onofre Creek, then rejoining the existing railroad right-of-way (see Figure 2.3.2-2)

The Long Single Tunnel option would have many of the benefits and impacts as the Long Split Tunnel option. However, there are significant additional construction challenges incumbent in this option. A single tunnel more than 6 miles (9.6 km) in length is much more expensive and difficult to construct than the split tunnels proposed in the Long Tunnel (with station) option. The Long Single Tunnel option, that requires a single twin bore tunnel exceeding 11-miles (17.6 km), is expected to cost at least \$400 million more than the I-5 Long Split Tunnel option. Furthermore, this extremely long tunnel would require several large ventilation shafts to the surface and may require cross-overs to be constructed between the two twin bore tunnels.

Public acceptability for alignment options that would avoid the sensitive coastal areas has been positive; however this option would offer no opportunity for rail service in San Clemente. Therefore, it was eliminated from further consideration in the Program EIR/EIS.

### **South Orange County Inland Bypass Alternative**

During the scoping process held in Spring 2002, continuing concerns about improvement alternatives within the existing LOSSAN alignment in the South Orange County Cities of San Juan Capistrano, Dana Point and San Clemente led to requests by the public to study an alternative that would bypass the highly sensitive segments of these communities. In Summer 2002, the Orange County Transportation Authority and the South Orange County Rail Working Group asked the Department to study an Inland Bypass Alternative that would locate any future rail improvement projects along an inland route that would bypass the South Orange County cities of San Juan Capistrano, Dana Point, and San Clemente.

Earlier in 2001, the California High-Speed Rail Authority had studied the possibility of locating a fully-grade separated, electrified high-speed rail line in the same vicinity, but due to significant community, environmental, cost and train performance issues, opted to eliminate this corridor from further consideration (refer to Section 2.2.1).

The Authority shared the results of its findings with the Department, as a means of helping the Department to determine whether further study of an Inland Bypass Alternative was desirable to provide additional alignment alternatives for further consideration in this Program EIR/EIS.

There are a number of issues related to an Inland Bypass Alternative. A summary of these issues, which led the Department to eliminate the Inland Bypass alternative from further evaluation, is provided below. More detail is provided in the LOSSAN Corridor Strategic Plan. Appendix B of the Strategic Plan provides additional documentation of the Authority's previous evaluation of the Bypass alternative.<sup>1</sup>

### **Topography**

Trains perform best where the grades (steepness) of the tracks over which they travel are not great. For passenger trains, a maximum grade of between 1 and 2 percent is standard (with a 1.2 percent grade the ideal maximum). While conventional diesel-powered trains can negotiate steeper grades of 2-3 percent over a short distance, they will slow significantly. Adding curves to the mix slows trains even further. The shared-use nature of the LOSSAN corridor requires that grades accommodate freight trains. Freight trains offer even more challenge and are unable to efficiently negotiate grades above 1.5 percent. Even if an alignment could avoid the steepest grades in the Bypass corridor (up to 4 percent), it is likely that several sustained grades of 2 percent or more would remain.

Traveling inland from the coast in southern Orange County, the topography becomes very problematic from a rail design standpoint. The hills and canyons would require

<sup>1</sup> Appendix B of the Strategic Plan is a technical memo highlighting the Authority's findings from its July, 2001 *High-Speed Train Alignments/Stations Screening Evaluation* report, which evaluated several alignment alternatives in south Orange County, among them two alternatives that would bypass sensitive beachside and historic areas in San Juan Capistrano, Dana Point and San Clemente.

significant tunneling in order to maintain the necessary and desirable grades and to limit the number of tight curves in the new corridor as the train passes through the many canyons and over the water courses in the area.

A preliminary estimate indicates the need for up to 20 miles (32 km) of tunnel along an Inland alignment, much of it continuous. Tunnels greater than 6 miles (9.6 km) in length offer significantly greater complexity including the need for extensive ventilation shafts and the difficulties of operating non-electric, diesel-powered equipment in such a long tunnel. Tunnels of over 10 miles (16 km) raise fundamental questions of constructability given California's seismic and soil conditions. The study area for the Inland Bypass includes sections wherein the soil types are subject to liquefaction or earthquake-induced slides, complicating design and construction.

### **Environmental and Land Use Concerns**

The Inland Bypass Alternative study area includes the last large remaining parcels of undeveloped land in Orange County outside the land preserved as part of the Cleveland National Forest, largely comprised of the 25,000-acre Rancho Mission Viejo. Several concerns have been raised about development of any kind in this area, including the completion of the SR-241 Foothill-South Toll Road.

### **Environmental concerns include:**

- Impacts to Wetland and Water Resources - Water and wetlands resources within the Inland Bypass Alternative study area are extensive, with 24 known wetland and riparian areas. Between Irvine and the San Diego county line, the Inland Bypass rail corridor would involve crossing three rivers and 12 creeks.
- Floodplain Impacts - The study area includes numerous 100-year floodplain zones, and is associated with unnamed drainages, tributaries and small creeks. In South Orange County these floodplains vary in width from 100 to 5,000 feet (30 to 1500 m).
- Possible impacts to Threatened and Endangered Species, their Habitat and Wildlife Refuges - Twenty-one threatened and endangered species are known to exist within the study area, ranging from "Species of Special Concern" to those federally listed as "Threatened".
- Farmland Impacts - From the current terminus of SR-241 at Oso Parkway south to SR-74 (Ortega Highway), there are scattered parcels of farmland identified by the California Department of Conservation as either "Prime and Unique" or "Farmland of Statewide Significance".
- Parks and Recreational Resources – In addition to the General Thomas F. Riley Wilderness Park and Rancho Mission Viejo Ecological Reserve, the study area includes O'Neill Regional Park and San Onofre State Beach.
- Potential impacts to adjacent land uses could include (1) impacts to residential home values, or economic losses to the local business community, and new costs to cities along the rail corridor as a result of construction and rail operations, (2) introduction of new visual impacts, (3) property Impacts, including the need to acquire properties and businesses for right-of-way or to secure easements, (4) noise and vibration impacts to directly adjacent residences and



businesses, and (5) introduction of new pedestrian access and traffic circulation barriers.

Federal and state resource agencies, including the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, California Department of Fish and Game, and California State Parks Service, have previously expressed concerns over the introduction of a new inland bypass rail corridor in South Orange County, citing reasons and factors such as those highlighted above.

### **Transitions to/from the Existing LOSSAN Corridor**

An important consideration in the creation of a new Inland Bypass Alternative alignment is how the new corridor would diverge from and return to the existing LOSSAN rail corridor. It is likely that such a transition would take place in the north near the Irvine Transportation Center (ITC). Three options for this transition exist (detailed in the LOSSAN Corridor Strategic Plan). Any of these options would require extensive disruption of existing and planned land uses, call for significant land and right-of-way acquisition, and generate significant controversy from residents and cities along the proposed alignment.

In the south, the most likely transition would be near the border of Orange and San Diego counties, just north of the San Onofre Nuclear Generating Station and near Basilone Road. The land east of the I-5 freeway is part of San Onofre State Beach. The transition would require either a “flyover” crossing of I-5, or a short tunnel beneath the freeway. Such a crossing would require coordination with and approval by the California State Parks Department and the establishment of a use easement to permit rail to operate within the park.

### **Costs of the New Corridor**

Costs for an Inland Bypass Alternative rail corridor cannot be accurately predicted without a specific alignment and profile. However, given the costs of land acquisition, construction (including tunneling) and costs of tracks, signaling and station construction, it is likely that the costs would be in the billions of dollars.

In the Authority’s previous analysis of possible Inland Bypass Alternative routes, which would call for 62 miles (99 km) of new double track, much of it on structure, the Authority determined the costs associated with an Inland corridor would be approximately \$1 billion more than the most expensive conventional rail improvements being evaluated for the LOSSAN corridor in the same area. This conclusion was for an electrified, passenger-only system capable of negotiating sustained grades of up to 3.5 percent. The cost would increase significantly from that estimate with a profile limited to 1.5% grades to accommodate conventional passenger trains or freight along the same alignment.

### **Train Service and Performance Benefits/Impacts**

The creation of a new, double-track rail corridor on an Inland Bypass Alternative corridor would provide increased track capacity, and could provide access to a new rail market along its route. Safety and reliability of service along an Inland route would likely be higher than that in the existing LOSSAN corridor. However, it would be substantially

longer, far more expensive to build, and the grades and curves along a potential alignment (with or without tunneling) would likely increase running times.

There is also a significant question as to how Amtrak (provider of the Pacific Surfliner intercity rail service) and the Southern California Regional Rail Authority (operator of the Metrolink commuter rail service) would be affected. As stated in Chapter 1, the LOSSAN corridor is currently the second-busiest intercity rail corridor in the nation. It is unknown whether rail providers would seek to continue to serve the existing LOSSAN corridor, or opt instead to serve the Inland corridor only. Whether or not existing and future markets along both corridors would justify a high level of service to both is also unknown, but it is likely that ridership on both Amtrak and Metrolink services would suffer as a result of the relocation of the rail corridor.

Additionally, it is unknown whether the combined rail owners and operators would be able (or willing) to assume maintenance of the two corridors. In early May 2003 the Department sent a request for information to Amtrak and Metrolink, seeking their input and best assessment as to what the creation of an Inland Bypass Alternative alignment would do to their service planning and operational considerations. Their responses (see Appendix 2.3-A) raised questions about organizational responsibility for acquisition, development and maintenance of the new right-of-way, as well as a concern about operational benefits in terms of scheduling and ridership as a result of a new inland route. If service moves exclusively to the new corridor, the lower population densities of the Inland communities and the decrease in ridership (as passengers who previously traveled by rail chose other modes) could result in reduced operating revenues despite the higher costs involved in the construction of an Inland Bypass Alternative corridor.

### **Implications for the Existing LOSSAN Corridor**

Given the grades found within the Inland Bypass Alternative study area, it is highly likely that freight service would need to remain on the existing LOSSAN corridor, and that the inland bypass corridor would be exclusively for the use of passenger (intercity and commuter) rail services. This would result in a situation where two rail corridors existed in South Orange County, with environmental and community issues along each, and no opportunity for removal of the existing rail corridor along the coastline in Dana Point and San Clemente.

Elimination or relocation of stations as a result of the Inland corridor would reduce accessibility to rail service for residents of Irvine, Lake Forest, Laguna Hills, Laguna Woods, Laguna Beach, Mission Viejo, San Juan Capistrano, Dana Point, and San Clemente.

### **Summary of Reasons for Elimination of the Inland Bypass Alternative**

An Inland Bypass would not be a practicable alternative, due to the following factors:

- It represents a long and slow alternative
- It would be the most expensive alternative studied, significantly more than any of the proposed improvements along the existing LOSSAN corridor
- It raises considerable environmental issues



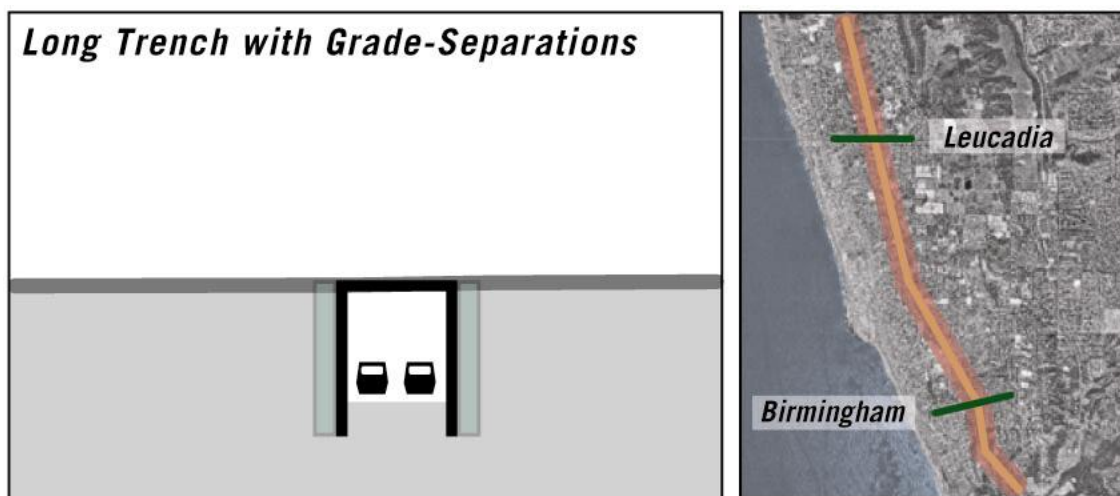
- It features grades steep enough to require extensive tunneling, all but eliminating the possibility of the new route's use as a freight corridor.
- Retention of the existing alignment to accommodate freight would result a situation in which environmental and community issues are present on two corridors, rather than the opportunity to improve conditions along the existing corridor, with no benefits either to South Orange County cities, the environment, or to rail operators.

Much of the impetus behind the Inland Bypass Alternative was a continuing concern over the further study of LOSSAN improvements through downtown San Juan Capistrano and the coastal alignment through San Clemente. As discussed in the previous sections, those alternatives have now been eliminated. Based on the evaluation done during the LOSSAN Strategic Plan process, the Inland Bypass option was also eliminated from further study in this Program EIR/EIS.

### **Encinitas**

- **Long Trench:** This option would consist of a double-track open trench that would extend the length of the City of Encinitas (see Figure 2.3.2-4). The trench would be covered through the downtown area, and new pedestrian crossings would be provided at other locations. The Long Trench option would run through the extent of Encinitas (approximately 7 miles (11 km)), rather than just the downtown area.

**Figure 2.3.2-4**  
**Options Eliminated from Further Consideration in Encinitas**



The Long Trench option would provide train performance and community benefits. This option would have high costs and construction impacts/issues associated with the construction of a 7-mile (11 km) trench. The Long Trench is expected to cost at least \$250 million more than other options evaluated in Encinitas. Moreover, the existing at-grade crossings at Leucadia Blvd and Birmingham Drive would remain until the Long Trench was fully-funded and constructed.

The Long Trench's cost-effectiveness is rated negatively because of the significant construction issues and high cost associated with construction. Although there has been considerable public support for this concept in the past, its high cost and constructability issues makes this option impracticable.

### **Del Mar**

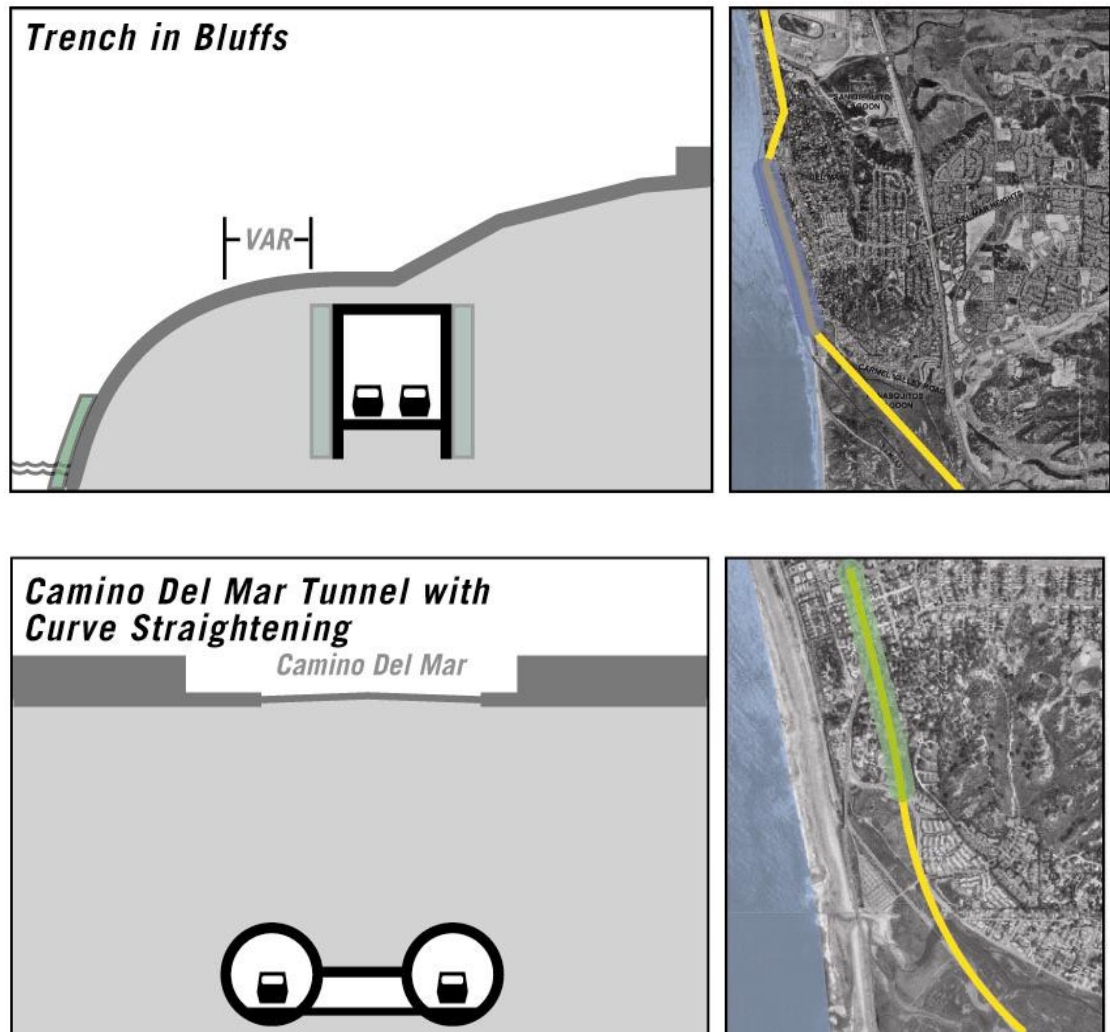
- **Trench-in-Bluffs:** The Trench-in-Bluffs (Trench) option would follow the existing rail alignment, but would provide two mainline tracks in a partially covered concrete trench along the Del Mar Bluffs (see Figure 2.3.2-5). In order to do so, significant bluff stabilization efforts would be required, including tie-backs at the top of the Bluffs, a seawall at the base of the bluffs, and retaining walls within the trench itself.

The Trench option offers very significant constructability challenges, most notably because of the nature of bluffs themselves (see Figure 2.3.2-6). Attempting to stabilize the fragile coastal bluffs would require major construction efforts, including a seawall 10 to 20 feet (3 to 6 meters) high at the base of the bluffs, retaining walls within the trench itself, and tie-backs at the top of the bluffs, resulting in drastic changes to the existing environment. The use of heavy construction equipment in this sensitive environment would also be problematic. Moreover, the constrained space available for construction of the trench and the need to maintain rail service during construction would create significant impacts.

The Trench option would have the highest environmental impacts of the alternatives evaluated in Del Mar. In areas where the trench would be covered, community impacts and barrier issues would be reduced, however, in other areas where the trench was either open or the alignment was at-grade, these impacts would be exacerbated because of the double-track width of the trench. The Trench option would not remove the rail line from the bluffs, but rather would submerge it into the bluffs, creating new, different impacts (including the need for the stabilization methods noted above). The stabilization of the bluffs would result in the highest impacts on natural resources, and the bluffs have major geological and soils constraints. Construction on the bluffs would have high impacts to erodible soils, unstable slopes, and aesthetics and visual quality. Property impacts with the Trench option would include the likely need to acquire property during the construction period in order to stage equipment and materials.

Public and agency input has been nearly unanimous in favor of removing the track from the fragile bluffs. The concept of major stabilization and trench-and-cover construction along this highly environmentally sensitive area would be strongly opposed by both the community and the state and federal resource agencies.

**Figure 2.3.2-5**  
**Options Eliminated from Further Consideration in Del Mar**



**Figure 2.3.2-6  
Train Passing Along Del Mar Bluffs**



- Camino Del Mar Tunnel #2: The Camino Del Mar Tunnel would relocate the rail line on Del Mar's sensitive bluffs into a tunnel which would run under Camino Del Mar. The Camino Del Mar Tunnel #2 Option includes curve straightening that would take the tunnel beneath a residential area at the southern end of Del Mar and the northern edge of San Diego.

This design option would be more costly and create more community and potential environmental impacts than other alternatives while providing only minimal travel time benefits due to the curve straightening.

As a result of the curve straightening at the south end of Del Mar, there would be some significant property impacts (acquisitions and easements) in the tunnel transition areas, and where the tunnel passed beneath residential property. In addition, the curve straightening would cross Penasquitos Lagoon at a new location, causing additional impacts and disruption to this environmentally sensitive area.

Community acceptability for the Camino Del Mar Tunnel #2 option is generally negative. It was eliminated due to its community and environmental impacts as well as its higher cost.

## 2.4 NO-PROJECT ALTERNATIVE

The No-Project Alternative addresses the geographic area that is served by the LOSSAN corridor intercity passenger rail service defined in Chapter 1 -- Los Angeles, Orange and San Diego Counties (LOSSAN region). Figure 2.4.-1 illustrates the existing intercity transportation infrastructure that currently serves these major travel markets.

The No-Project Alternative is the baseline for comparison of the Rail Improvements Alternative. The No-Project Alternative represents the LOSSAN region's transportation system (highway and conventional rail) as it would be after implementation of programs or projects that are currently programmed in Regional Transportation Plans (RTPs) and that are funded for implementation and expected to be in place by 2020. This financially constrained level of infrastructure improvement (which includes federal, state, regional, and local funding) is analyzed together with the significant growth in population and transportation demand that is projected to occur by 2020. Figure 2.4-2 provides a listing of all rail projects expected to be in place by 2020 under the No-Project Alternative defined for this study.

Rail Operations Modeling conducted as part of the development of this document identified that under the No-Project Alternative, the rail network expected to be in place by 2020 will be insufficient to accommodate the forecast rail demand.

Additional analysis determined the "Maximum Threshold" of rail service levels that would function at an acceptable level of performance under the No-Project Alternative. This Maximum Threshold would require a ten percent (10%) reduction in forecast No-Project train volumes for all services (intercity and commuter passenger rail, and freight rail). The Maximum Threshold analysis also identified three locations where relatively small additional work within the existing right-of-way is necessary to eliminate identified operation bottlenecks without which even the Maximum Threshold forecast train volumes could not operate at an acceptable level of performance. These needed projects include:

- Near Laguna Niguel, provision of an additional short layover / turnaround track to accommodate Metrolink train turns without blocking the main track;
- At Stuart Mesa, increasing the length of freight holding tracks so that anticipated train lengths will not block the main tracks; and
- Either north or south of the Oceanside Transportation Center, provision of a short holding track like that needed at Laguna Niguel, to temporarily hold trains without blocking either of the two main tracks.

Figure 2.4-3 shows the Maximum Threshold train volumes and their change over the forecast train volumes. The complete modeling report is provided as Appendix 2 (In Volume 2, *Response to Comments and Appendices*).

The No-Project Alternative satisfies the statutory requirements under CEQA and NEPA for an alternative that does not include any new action or project beyond what is already committed. The No-Project Alternative defines the existing and future intercity transportation system in the LOSSAN region based on programmed and funded improvements through 2020, according to the following sources of information.

- State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP)
- RTPs, financially constrained projects for all modes of travel
- Intercity passenger rail plans



The future improvements that would be part of the No-Project Alternative are also included under the Rail Improvements Alternative (discussed in Section 2.5) as part of the future 2020 baseline. The No-Project Alternative includes highway and conventional rail elements.

## 2.4.1 Highway Element

The No-Project highway system that currently serves the intercity travel market for the LOSSAN region consists primarily of Interstate 5 (refer to Figure 2.4-1). The No-Project Alternative includes this existing highway between Los Angeles and San Diego, as well as funded and programmed improvements to I-5 based on financially constrained RTPs developed by regional transportation planning agencies. I-5 improvements included as part of the No-Project Alternative include infrastructure projects as well as intelligent transportation system (ITS) and other potential system improvements programmed to be in operation by 2020. The highway improvements included as part of the No-Project Alternative are listed by county in Table 2.4.1-1.<sup>2</sup>

A particularly relevant part of the No Project Alternative, the I-5 North Coast Corridor Improvement Project is currently the subject of a separate study and environmental process. The project is located on Interstate 5 and goes north from La Jolla Village Drive in San Diego to Vandegrift Boulevard in Oceanside, as well as on Interstate 805 from Mira Mesa Blvd to the Interstate 5/Interstate 805 merge.

Caltrans proposes to add high occupancy vehicle (HOV) lanes in each direction along the corridor. One general purpose lane in each direction may also be added from Del Mar Heights Road to State Route 78. The project would also include interchange improvements and auxiliary lanes where needed and approximately five direct access ramps (DARs) to allow transit vehicles and carpoolers a transition point into the designated HOV lanes.

Five direct access ramps (DARs) are proposed in the project corridor to provide direct connections for HOV traffic and regional transit vehicles to and from the median. These DARs would enhance HOV/Transit freeway access and improve freeway operations on the general-purpose lanes. DARs are proposed at critical locations in the corridor.

Alternatives will be examined at the lagoon locations. At each lagoon, it is anticipated that an alternative to remove all or part of existing fill and the placement of a structure will be examined.

It is anticipated that the Draft Environmental Impact Report for the I-5 North Coast Corridor Project will be out for public review in 2007. (See Section 3.16, Cumulative Impacts, for more information on the North Coast Corridor Project.)

<sup>2</sup> A number of highways exist in the general region between Los Angeles and San Diego; however, I-5 and I-8 are the primary intercity highways within the area previously defined in this document as the LOSSAN region. In the broader region, intercity highways in addition to I-5 and I-8 are evaluated in the California High-Speed Rail Authority's statewide HST Program EIR/EIS (2003) as part of its No-Project, Modal, and HST Alternatives.

**Table 2.4.1-1**  
**Programmed Intercity Highway Improvements Included in the No-Project Alternative**

County	Type of Project	Description
Los Angeles	HOV	HOV Project on SR-14 (Ave P-8 to Ave-L)
Los Angeles	HOV	HOV Project on I-710 (I-10 to I-210)
Los Angeles	HOV	HOV Project on I-5 (SR-19 to I-710)
Los Angeles	Highway Widening	I-710 (I-10 to I-210) Additional Mixed Flow Lane
Los Angeles	Highway Widening	I-5 (Rosecrans to Orange Co) Additional Mixed Flow Lane
Los Angeles	Highway Widening	I-405 (US-101 to I-105) Additional Mixed Flow Lane
Los Angeles	Highway Widening	SR-57 (SR-60 to Orange Co) Additional Mixed Flow Lane
Orange	HOV	HOV Project on I-5 (SR-1 to Avenida Pico)
Orange	Highway Widening	I-5 (SR-91 to Los Angeles Co) Additional Mixed Flow Lane
Orange	Highway Widening	SR-91 (westbound auxiliary lane SR-57 to I-5) Additional Mixed Flow Lane
Orange	Highway Widening	SR-91 (auxiliary lanes SR-241 to SR-71) Additional Mixed Flow Lane
Orange	Highway Widening	SR-57 (auxiliary lanes Los Angeles Co to SR-91) Additional Mixed Flow Lane
San Diego	Highway Interchange/ Widening	I-5 at I-805 – New interchange with 10 freeway and 2 HOV lanes.
San Diego	Highway Widening	I-5 from I-8 to just south of Balboa Avenue – Addition of a northbound auxiliary lane.
San Diego	Highway Widening	I-5 at SR-78 Interchange: NB-EB Connector – Widen auxiliary lane and ramp.
San Diego	Highway Widening	I-15 from SR-163 to SR 78 – Addition of auxiliary lanes and meters. Bridge widening.
San Diego	Highway Widening	I-15 from SR-56 to Centre City Parkway – Addition of 4 HOV/Managed lanes
San Diego	Highway Widening/ HOV	I-5 from Del Mar Heights Road to Birmingham Drive – Upgrade to 8-lane freeway and 4 HOV lanes or to 10-lane freeway and 4 HOV lanes.
San Diego	Highway Interchange	I-5/SR-56 Freeway Connectors.
San Diego	Highway Widening/ HOV	I-5 from Del Mar Heights Road to Encinitas Boulevard – Upgrade to 8-lane freeway and 4 HOV lanes or to 10-lane freeway and 4 HOV lanes.
San Diego	Highway	I-5 from Encinitas Boulevard to La Costa Boulevard – Upgrade to 8-lane freeway and 4 HOV lanes or to 10-lane freeway and 4 HOV lanes.
San Diego	Highway	I-15 from SR-163 to SR-56 – Addition of 4 HOV/Managed lanes.
San Diego	TSM	ITS: Enhanced Incident/Emergency Response, Traveler/Commercial Vehicle Operations Information, and Management System Software.

## 2.4.2 Conventional Passenger Rail Element

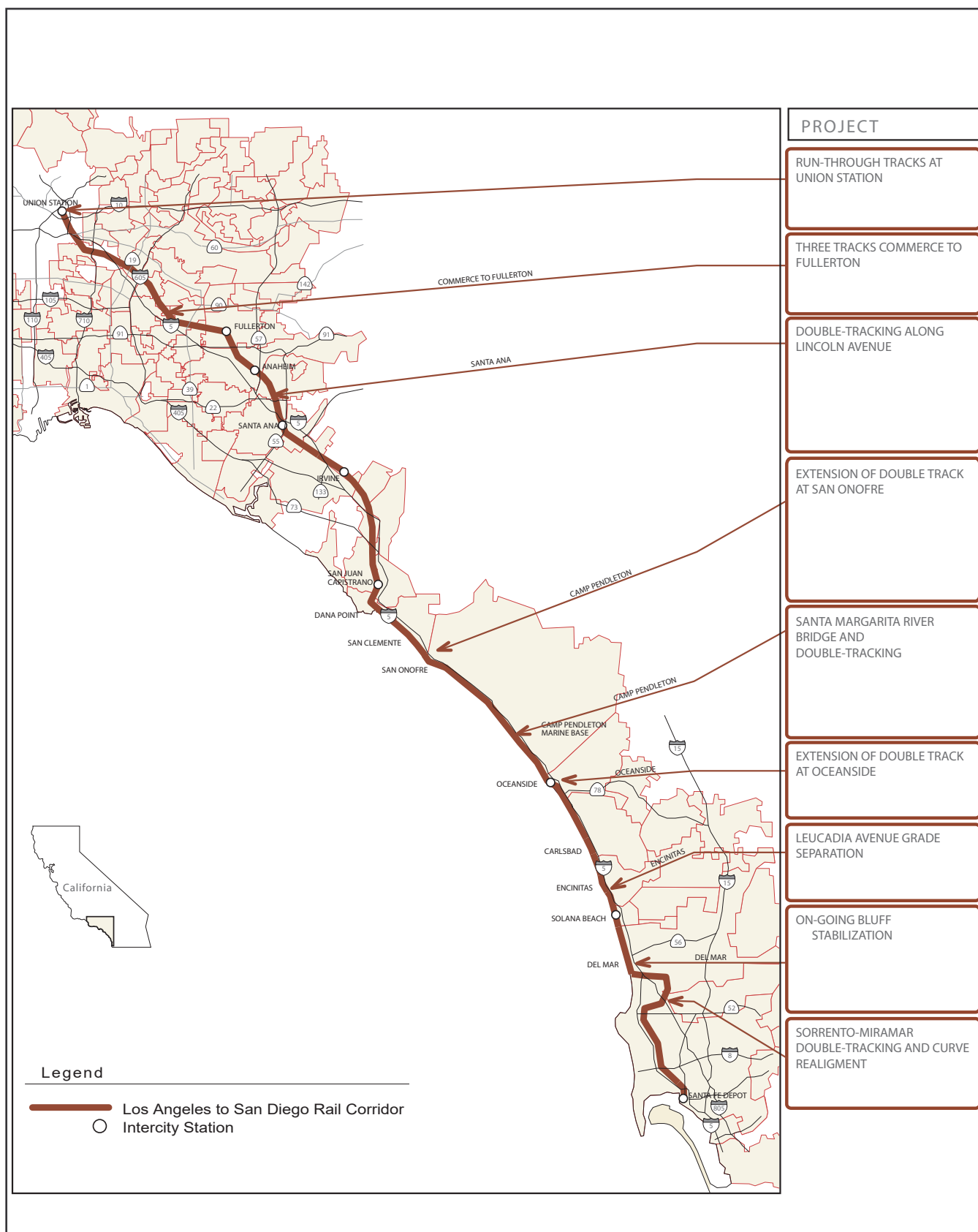
The existing intercity passenger rail service provided on the LOSSAN corridor is known as the Pacific Surfliner. This passenger service shares track with freight and commuter services. All the intercity passenger rail system improvements identified in the STIP and the Department's California Intercity Rail Capital Program for implementation in the LOSSAN corridor prior to 2020 are included in the No-Project Alternative and are identified in Table 2.4.2-1.





**FIGURE 2.4-1**  
**Existing Intercity Transportation Infrastructure**  
**in LOSSAN Corridor**  
LOSSAN Rail Corridor Improvements  
Program Environmental Impact Report / Environmental Impact Statement





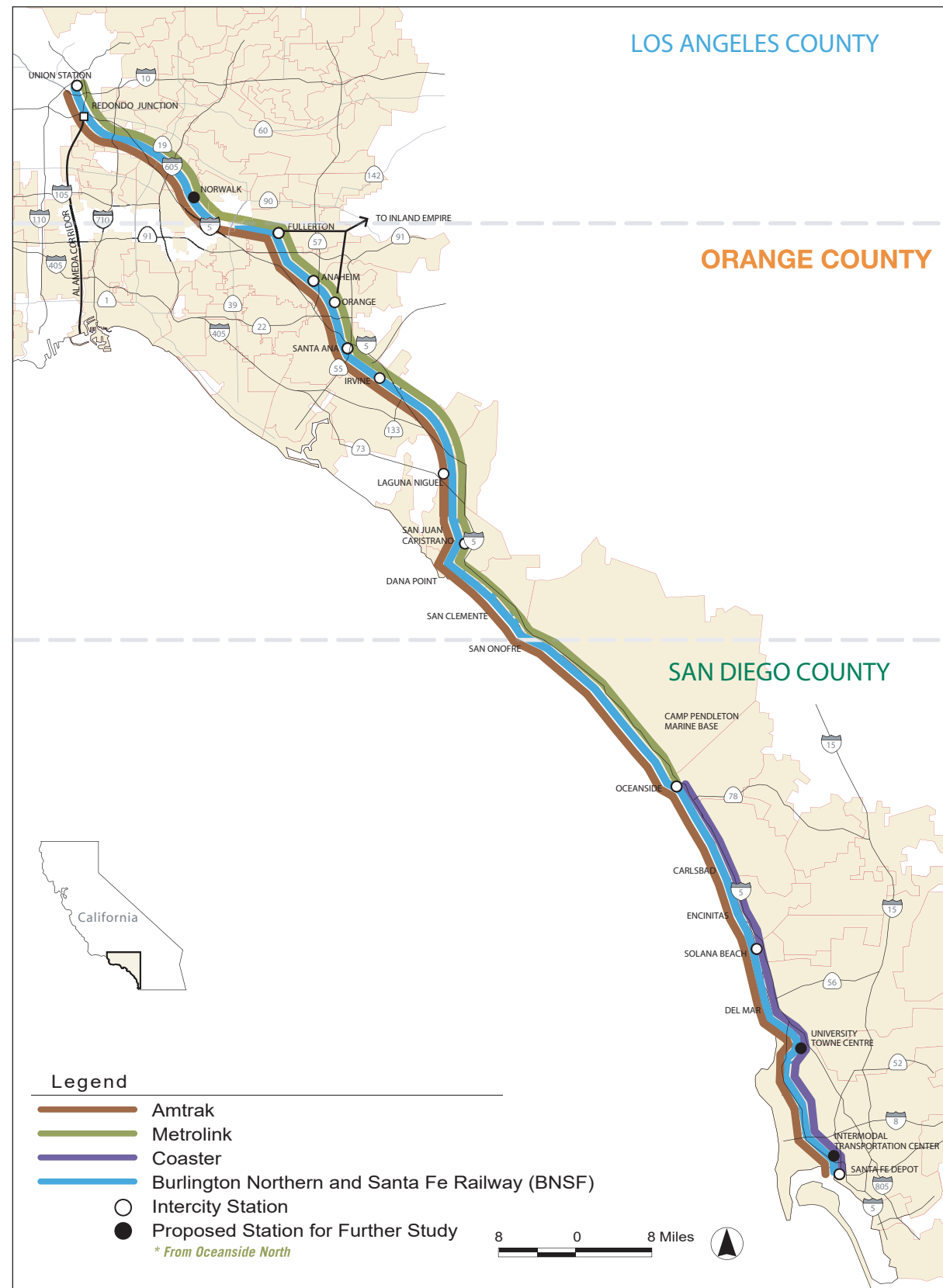
### FIGURE 2.4-2

## LOSSAN Corridor Rail Improvement Projects Included in the No-Project Alternative

## LOSSAN Rail Corridor Improvements

**Program Environmental Impact Report / Environmental Impact Statement**





	2020 FORECAST VOLUMES NO-BUILD ALTERNATIVE*	2020 MAXIMUM THRESHOLD MODELING RESULTS
Los Angeles – Fullerton	<b>32 Amtrak</b> <b>42 Metrolink</b> 98 BNSF	<b>30 Amtrak</b> <b>36 Metrolink</b> 98 BNSF
Fullerton – Orange	<b>32 Amtrak</b> <b>48 Metrolink</b> 12 BNSF	<b>30 Amtrak</b> <b>42 Metrolink</b> 6 BNSF
Orange – Irvine	<b>32 Amtrak</b> <b>66 Metrolink</b> 12 BNSF	<b>30 Amtrak</b> <b>60 Metrolink</b> 6 BNSF
Laguna Niguel – San Clemente	<b>32 Amtrak</b> <b>32 Metrolink</b> 12 BNSF	<b>30 Amtrak</b> <b>26 Metrolink</b> 6 BNSF
San Clemente – Oceanside	<b>32 Amtrak</b> <b>32 Metrolink</b> 12 BNSF	<b>30 Amtrak</b> <b>26 Metrolink</b> 6 BNSF
Oceanside – San Diego	<b>32 Amtrak</b> 12 BNSF 54 Coaster	<b>30 Amtrak</b> 6 BNSF 50 Coaster

\* Daily train traffic is based on model results showing that, without the Rail Improvements Alternative, up to 10% of the 2020 Forecast Volumes would need to be curtailed in order to maintain acceptable operational conditions on the corridor. Volumes represent the total number of trains in both directions.



**Table 2.4.2-1**  
**Programmed Conventional Rail Improvements Included In the No-Project Alternative**

County	Type of Project	Description
Los Angeles	Conventional Rail	Run through tracks at L.A. Union Station. (This project is not yet fully funded. However, it was the subject of a project-specific Environmental Impact Report/Statement, and is assumed to be built by 2020.)
Los Angeles	Conventional Rail	Continuous third main track from Union Station to Fullerton
Orange	Conventional Rail	Double tracking along Lincoln Avenue in Santa Ana
Orange	Conventional Rail	Turn-around track at Laguna Niguel Metrolink Station
San Diego	Conventional Rail	Extension of Freight Holding Tracks at Stuart Mesa
San Diego	Conventional Rail	Extension of Double-Track in Oceanside
San Diego	Conventional Rail	Pocket track at Oceanside Transit Center
San Diego	Conventional Rail	Sorrento-Miramar Double-Tracking and Curve Realignment
San Diego	Conventional Rail	Santa Margarita River Bridge Replacement and Double-Tracking
San Diego	Conventional Rail	Del Mar Bluffs Stabilization (Ongoing)

## 2.5 RAIL IMPROVEMENTS ALTERNATIVE

The Rail Improvements Alternative represents the proposed action and encompasses a number of alignment options for meeting the purpose and need for incremental improvements to the LOSSAN corridor, as outlined in Chapter 1.

A number of conventional rail improvement alternatives were evaluated against the following Department objectives for the LOSSAN corridor:

- Increase the cost-effectiveness of State-supported intercity passenger rail systems by improving running times and reliability to attract additional ridership
- Increase capacity on existing routes, through more-efficient, reliable operations
- Reduce running times to attract additional riders and to provide a more attractive service, and
- Improve the safety of State-supported intercity rail service through additional grade crossing improvements and grade separations.

The rail improvements were also developed and refined to address existing environmental impacts and minimize new ones, as well as community impacts that exist along the present-day LOSSAN corridor.

The conventional Rail Improvements Alternative evaluated by the Department and carried forward for evaluation in this Program EIR/EIS is summarized in Table 2.5-1, and shown in Figures 2.5-1, 2.5-2, 2.5-3, and 2.5-4.



**Table 2.5-1**  
**Conventional Rail Improvements Alternative Evaluated for the LOSSAN Corridor**

<b>Alignment Segments and Station Locations Evaluated</b>
<b>Union Station To Fullerton Station</b> AT-GRADE 4 <sup>th</sup> Main Track
<b>Fullerton Station To Irvine Station--Double Tracking</b> AT-GRADE with grade separations at major intersections TRENCH
Stations Fullerton Anaheim Santa Ana Irvine
<b>San Juan Capistrano Double Tracking</b> TUNNEL along Interstate 5 AT-GRADE and Cut/Cover TRENCH along Trabuco Creek
Stations San Juan Capistrano
<b>Dana Point/San Clemente Double Tracking</b> Dana Point Curve Realignment; San Clemente - SHORT TUNNEL San Clemente - LONG TWO-SEGMENT TUNNEL;
Stations San Clemente
<b>Camp Pendleton</b> AT-GRADE double tracking
<b>Oceanside/Carlsbad Double Tracking</b> Carlsbad - AT-GRADE; double tracking Carlsbad - TRENCH; double-tracking
Stations Oceanside
<b>Encinitas/Solana Beach Double Tracking</b> Encinitas - AT-GRADE double tracking with grade-separations at major intersections Encinitas - SHORT TRENCH; Double Tracking Encinitas - LONG TRENCH; Double Tracking
Stations Solana Beach
<b>Del Mar Double Tracking</b> AT-GRADE double tracking on existing alignment COVERED TRENCH on bluffs in Del Mar TUNNEL #1 under Camino Del Mar TUNNEL under I-5
<b>I-5/805 Split To Hwy 52 Double Tracking</b> Miramar Hill Tunnel I-5 Tunnel
Stations UTC (Only applies to Miramar Hill Tunnel)
<b>Hwy 52 To Santa Fe Depot</b> Curve realignment and Double Tracking at-grade and short trench
Stations Santa Fe Depot

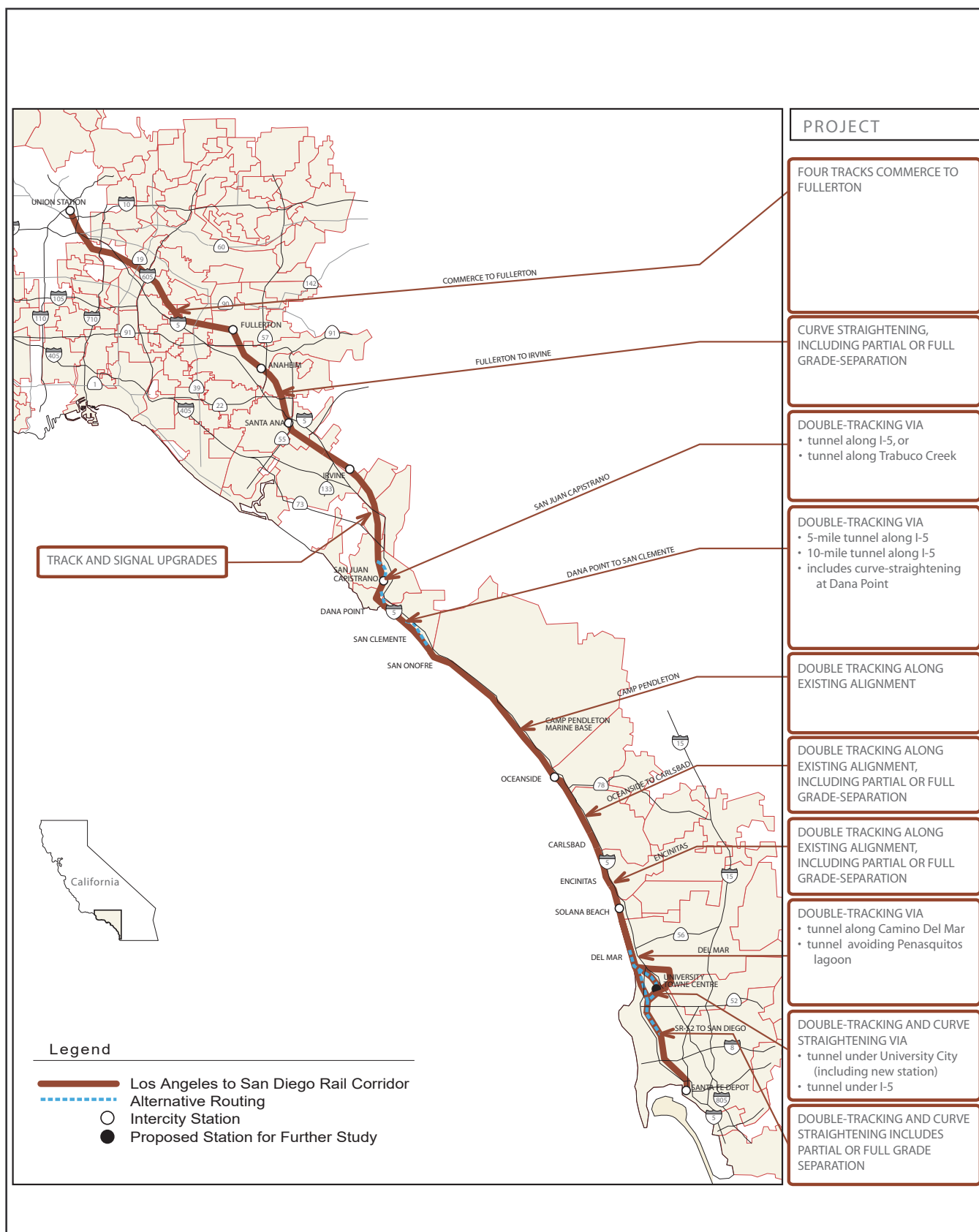


FIGURE 2.5-1

## LOSSAN Corridor Rail Improvement Projects

### Carried Forward

LOSSAN Rail Corridor Improvements

Program Environmental Impact Report / Environmental Impact Statement



U.S. Department of Transportation  
Federal Railroad Administration





Source : IBI Group



**FIGURE 2.5-2**  
**LOSSAN Rail Corridor Improvements Alternative**  
LOSSAN Rail Corridor Improvements  
Program Environmental Impact Report / Environmental Impact Statement



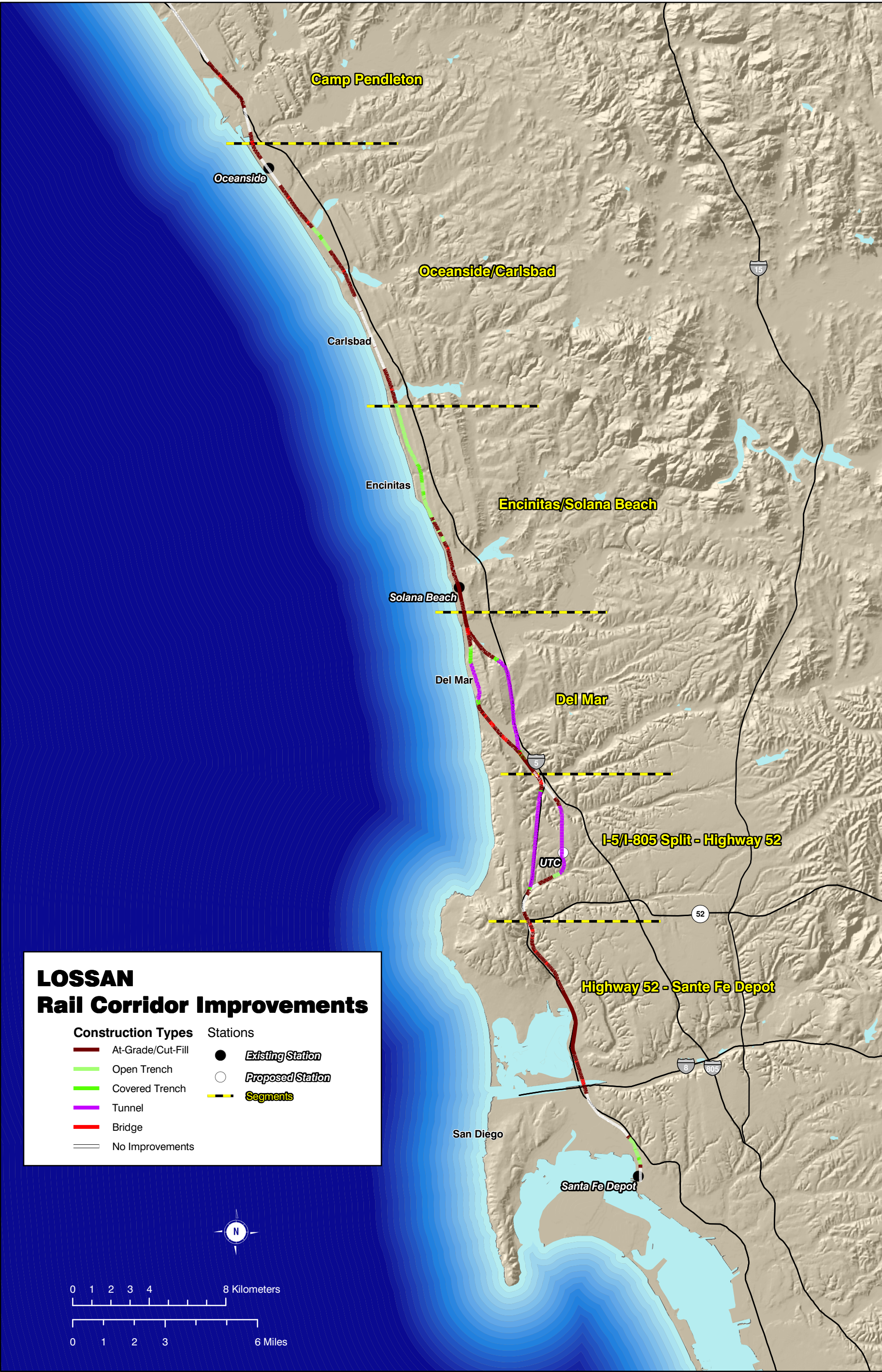




**FIGURE 2.5-3**  
**LOSSAN Rail Corridor Improvements Alternative**  
LOSSAN Rail Corridor Improvements  
Program Environmental Impact Report / Environmental Impact Statement







Source : IBI, 2003



**FIGURE 2.5-4**  
**LOSSAN Rail Corridor Improvements Alternative**  
LOSSAN Rail Corridor Improvements  
Program Environmental Impact Report / Environmental Impact Statement





Table 2.5-2 (below) provides a listing of all existing LOSSAN corridor at-grade crossings, and how they would be treated (remain at-grade or be grade separated) as part of either the No-Project or Rail Improvements Alternatives.

**Table 2.5-2  
List of Existing Grade Crossings and Proposed Grade Separations**

Location (City) – North to South	Existing Condition	No-Project Alternative	Rail Improvements Alternative	
			Low-Build Scenario	High-Build Scenario
Los Angeles				
Serapis	At-Grade			New U/C
Passons	At-Grade			New U/C
Santa Fe Springs				
Pioneer Blvd.	At-Grade			New U/C
Norwalk Blvd.	At-Grade			New U/C
Los Nietos Road	At-Grade			New U/C
Marquardt Avenue/Rosecrans Avenue	At-Grade			New U/C
Valley View Avenue	At-Grade			New U/C
San Pedro Branch Crossing	At-Grade			Hobart Flyover
UPRR Crossing	At-Grade			Rail Flyover-Crossing Track
Anaheim				
Orangethorpe	At-Grade			New U/C
La Palma	At-Grade			New U/C
Sycamore	At-Grade			New U/C
Broadway	At-Grade			New U/C
Santa Ana	At-Grade			New U/C
South	At-Grade			New U/C
Vermont	At-Grade			New U/C
Ball	At-Grade		New U/C	New U/C
Cerritos	At-Grade			New U/C
State College	At-Grade		New U/C	New U/C
Orange				
Eckhoff	At-Grade			Close crossing
Main	At-Grade			Trench
Batavia	At-Grade			Trench
Walnut	At-Grade			Trench
Palm	At-Grade			Trench
Chapman	At-Grade			O/C-Trench
Almond	At-Grade			O/C-Trench
Palmyra	At-Grade			O/C-Trench
La Vera	At-Grade			O/C-Trench
Santa Ana				
Fairhaven	At-Grade			O/C-Trench
Santa Clara	At-Grade			O/C-Trench
Seventeenth	At-Grade			New Bridge
Santa Ana Blvd.	At-Grade			New Bridge
Fourth	At-Grade			New Bridge
Grand	At-Grade			New Bridge

**Table 2.5-2**  
**List of Existing Grade Crossings and Proposed Grade Separations (continued)**

Location (City) – North to South	Existing Condition	No-Project Alternative	Rail Improvements Alternative	
			Low-Build Scenario	High-Build Scenario
Lyon	At-Grade			New U/C
McFadden	At-Grade			New U/C
Ritchey	At-Grade			New U/C
<b>Tustin</b>				
Red Hill *	At-Grade			New U/C
<b>Irvine</b>				
Harvard	At-Grade			New U/C
Jeffrey		G/S by others		
Sand Canyon		G/S by others		
<b>San Juan Capistrano</b>				
Rancho Capistrano (Private)	At-Grade		Widen	New U/C
Oso	At-Grade		Widen	None (Bypass to I-5)
La Zanja	At-Grade		None (Tunnel)	None (Bypass to I-5)
Verdugo	At-Grade		None (Tunnel)	None (Bypass to I-5)
Del Obispo	At-Grade		None (Tunnel)	None (Bypass to I-5)
Avenida Aeropuerto	At-Grade			New U/C
Cassidy Brothers (private)	At-Grade			New U/C
<b>Dana Point</b>				
Beach Road	At-Grade		New U/C	None (Location bypassed)
<b>San Clemente</b>				
Senda De La Playa	At-Grade			None (Location bypassed)
Califia – Pedestrian Crossing	At-Grade			None (Location bypassed)
<b>Camp Pendleton</b>				
Coaster Way	At-Grade			New U/C
<b>Oceanside</b>				
Surfrider Way	At-Grade			New U/C
Mission	At-Grade			New U/C
Wisconsin	At-Grade			New U/C
Oceanside	At-Grade		Widen	New U/C
Cassidy	At-Grade		Widen	New U/C
<b>Carlsbad</b>				
Grand	At-Grade		Widen	O/C – Trench
Carlsbad Village	At-Grade		Widen	O/C – Trench
Tamarack	At-Grade			O/C – Trench
Private Road	At-Grade		Widen	Close crossing
Cannon	At-Grade			O/C – Trench

\* City of Tustin is currently pursuing grade separation at Red Hill Avenue, and may complete this project prior to implementation of proposed rail improvements along the LOSSAN corridor.

**Table 2.5-2**  
**List of Existing Grade Crossings and Proposed Grade Separations (continued)**

Location (City) – North to South	Existing Condition	No-Project Alternative	Rail Improvements Alternative	
			Low-Build Scenario	High-Build Scenario
Encinitas				
Leucadia Blvd.	At-Grade	New U/C		
Encinitas Blvd.	At-Grade			Widen
D Street	At-Grade		Widen	O/C – Trench
E Street	At-Grade		Widen	O/C – Trench
Chesterfield	At-Grade		New U/C	O/C – Trench
Del Mar				
Coast Blvd./Ocean Avenue	At-Grade		At-Grade/ Ocean – New O/C	None (Tunnel)
Roselle Street	Not on Existing Corridor			New U/C
San Diego				
Edelweiss	At-Grade			
La Jolla Colony	Next to (but not crossing LOSSAN)			New U/C
Private Crossing	At-Grade			New U/C
Rosecrans/Taylor	At-Grade			New U/C
Noell	At-Grade			New U/C
Washington	At-Grade			New U/C
Vine	At-Grade			New U/C
Sassafrass	At-Grade			New U/C
Palm	At-Grade			New O/C (over Trench transition)
Laurel	At-Grade			New O/C (Trench)
Juniper	At-Grade			New O/C (Trench)
Hawthorne	At-Grade			New O/C (Trench)
Grape	At-Grade			New O/C (Trench)
Cedar	At-Grade			New O/C (over Trench transition)
Beech	At-Grade			New O/C (over Trench transition)
Ash	At-Grade			At-Grade (entering Station area)

**Legend:**

O/C – Overcrossing

U/C – Undercrossing

G/S – Grade Separation

## 2.5.1 LOSSAN Rail Improvements Alternative Carried Forward

As a result of the screening process presented in the LOSSAN Corridor Strategic Plan, the conventional rail improvements described below are evaluated in this Program EIR/EIS as the Rail Improvements Alternative, which would result in a fully double-tracked (with four tracks between LA Union Station and Fullerton) rail corridor from Los Angeles, through Orange County, to San Diego. The Alternative's individual improvements and its design options are described in three sections below:

- LA Union Station to Irvine
- Irvine to Oceanside
- Oceanside to San Diego Santa Fe Depot

### A. LA UNION STATION TO IRVINE

#### Commerce to Fullerton

Proposed corridor improvements in this section include construction of a fourth main track in the existing rail corridor between Commerce and Fullerton (see Figure 2.4-2). At build-out, two tracks would be dedicated to passenger rail and two to freight. Improvements can probably be accommodated within existing LOSSAN right-of-way (ROW) except between Rio Hondo River and San Gabriel River.

#### Fullerton to Irvine

This section would be double-tracked between Walnut Avenue in Orange and East 17th Street in Santa Ana. An existing curve would be straightened between Batavia Street and Walnut Avenue. These improvements would be accommodated within the existing LOSSAN ROW except for a portion of the curve realignment. Two options are being evaluated:

- At-grade Option – Double-track at-grade, including the curve realignment; the only grade separations would be at street intersections
- Covered Trench Option – Double-track and fully grade-separate this section, including the curve realignment, by placing the rail corridor in a covered trench along its existing alignment.
- Fullerton Station: Bypass tracks and additional parking would be added at this existing station, and the existing platform would be reconfigured.
- Anaheim, Santa Ana, and Irvine Stations: Improvements to these existing stations would include bypass tracks and additional parking.

### B. IRVINE TO OCEANSIDE

#### San Juan Capistrano

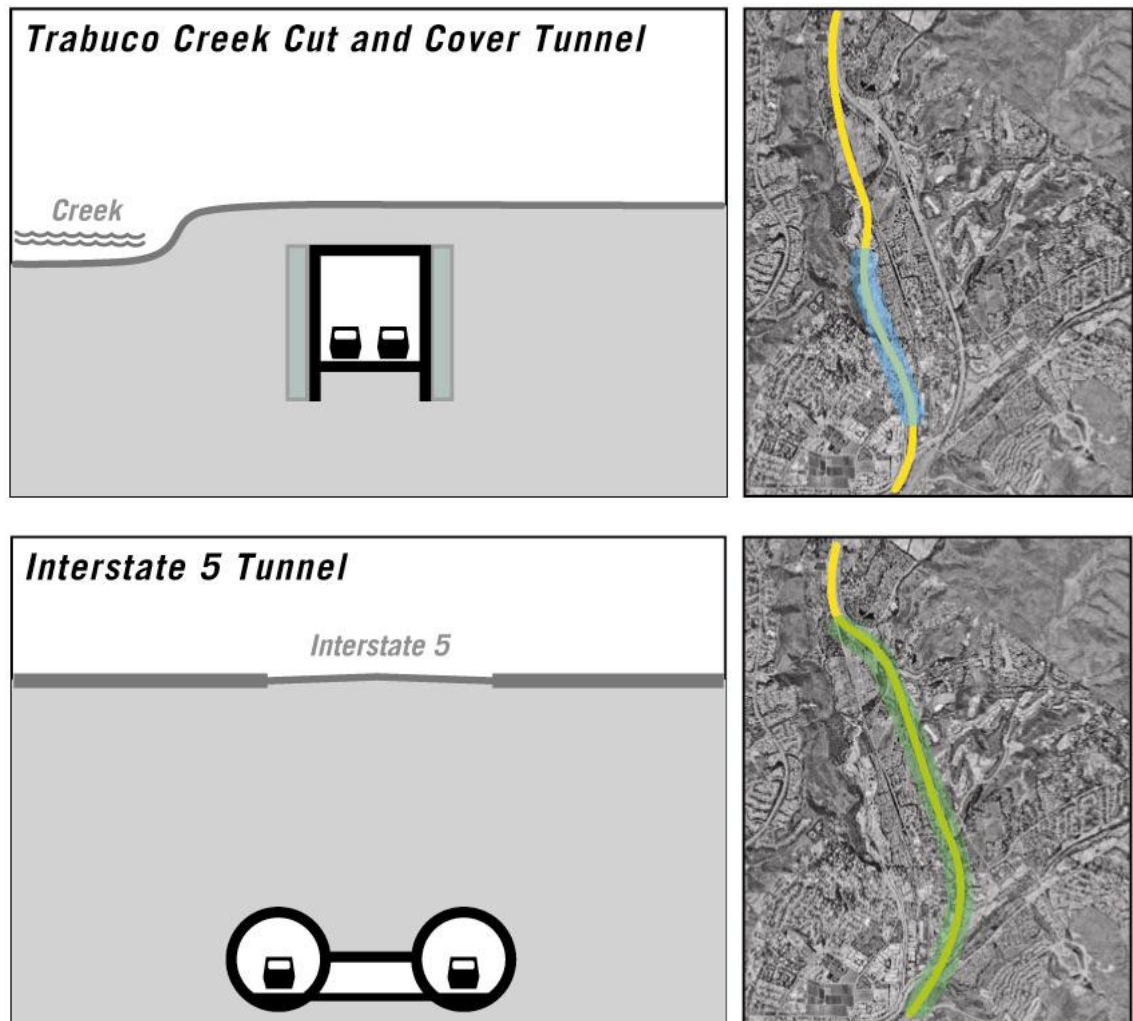
Double tracking is being evaluated through the City of San Juan Capistrano in one of two alternative alignments (see Figure 2.5.1-1):

- Interstate 5 Tunnel - Relocate the rail corridor into a tunnel under I-5 that would run the length of the city, from Highway 73 to Avenida Aeropuerto. The tunnel would run under Trabuco Creek and San Juan Creek, and would avoid the



downtown area where the existing LOSSAN corridor is located. Transition areas at either end of the tunnel would require some property or easement acquisition. Although this option would not allow for a station in San Juan Capistrano, it was retained for further evaluation as the only practicable below-grade (tunnel) option to avoid the impacts to downtown.

**Figure 2.5.1-1**  
**Options to be Retained for Further Study in San Juan Capistrano**



- **At-Grade and Open Trench along Trabuco Creek** – This alignment option runs along the east side of Trabuco Creek. It would leave the existing LOSSAN corridor south of Del Obispo and continue at-grade along the creek, then transition into an open trench. The alignment would transition back to at-grade north of Ramos Street and rejoin the existing LOSSAN corridor at the Trabuco Creek crossing. The existing bridge structure over the creek would be rebuilt to accommodate the alignment. A new station would be constructed along this alignment. This option was proposed by the City of San Juan Capistrano as an alternative to the Interstate 5 tunnel option which would preclude a station in the city.

### **Dana Point/San Clemente**

Two improvement options are being evaluated for the section of the LOSSAN corridor that passes through Dana Point and San Clemente (see Figure 2.5.1-2):

- **Curve Realignment and Short Tunnel along Interstate 5** – This option involves straightening the existing Dana Point curve at grade, and double-tracking through San Clemente in a short tunnel under I-5 between Palm Drive and San Onofre State Beach (north of the San Onofre Power Plant). The tunnel alignment leaves the I-5 corridor at Avenida Palizada, turns toward the coast, and runs underneath residential, industrial, and vacant areas. It reconnects with the existing LOSSAN rail corridor just south of Camino Capistrano. This option was carried forward as a superior option to either the short or long trench options (see Section 2.2) because the Short Tunnel option would avoid the high impacts to the beach and community in San Clemente.
- **Long, Two-Segment Tunnel along Interstate 5** – This option would preclude the need for straightening the Dana Point curve. It would involve double-tracking the rail corridor in a long tunnel under I-5 from San Onofre State Beach to Avenida Aeropuerto in San Juan Capistrano. This tunnel would be built in two segments in order to provide for a station in San Clemente. Near Avenida Pico, the tunnel would veer to the east edge of I-5 and daylight into an open trench for about 1,000 feet where a new station would be located. The existing rail corridor along the coast between southern San Clemente city limits to approximately Avenida Aeropuerto in San Juan Capistrano would be removed from service (or at least not be further improved from its existing condition). This option was determined to be superior to the long, single-segment tunnel (Section 2.2) because it would be easier to construct and operate, and would allow for a station in San Clemente.

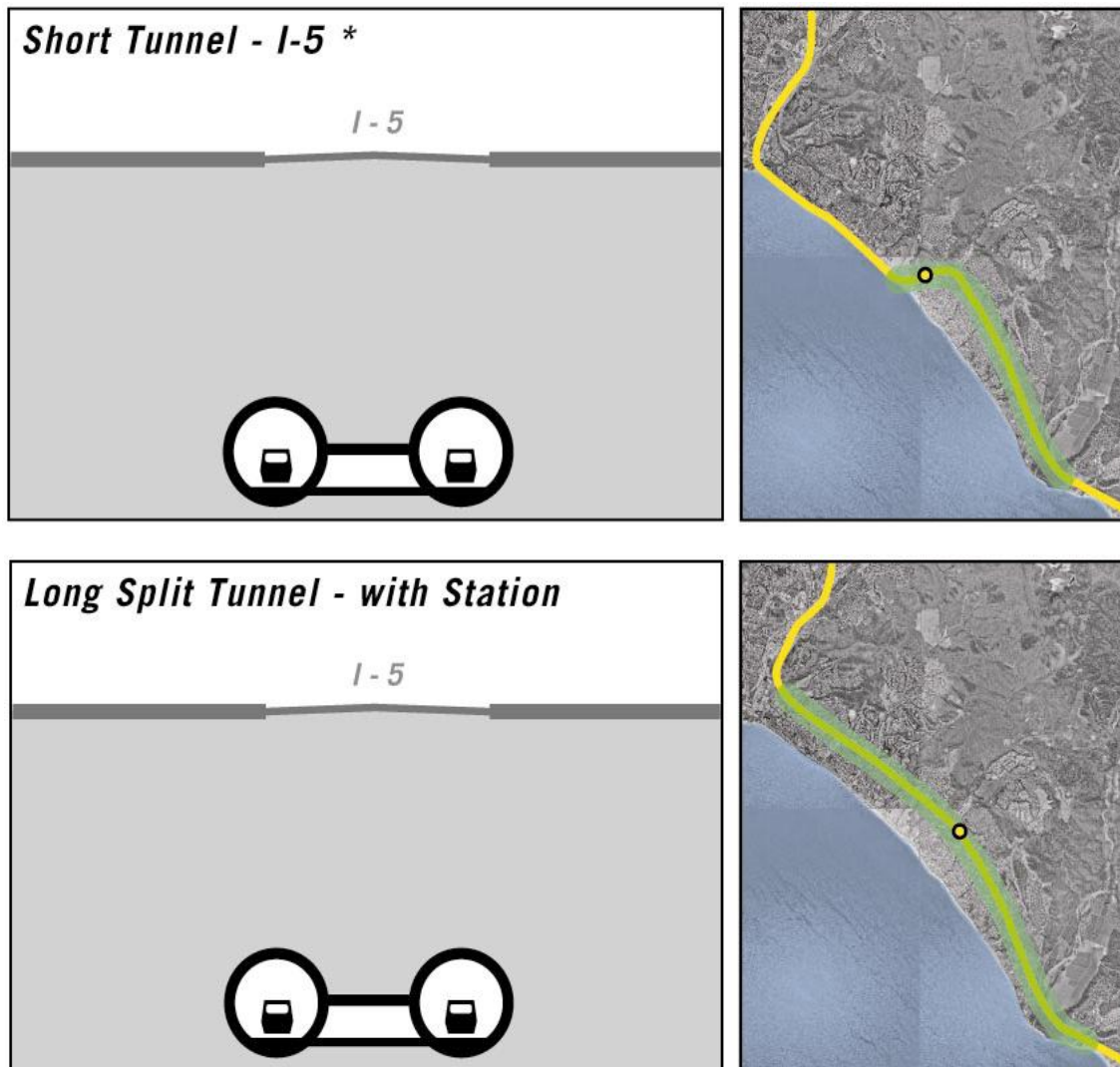
### **Camp Pendleton**

Across the US Marine Corps Camp Pendleton property, a second main track would be constructed at-grade in the portions of this segment (about 6 miles [9.6 km]) that are not already double-tracked or that will be double-tracked under the rail improvements included in the No-Project/No Action Alternative. New double tracking would cross San Mateo, San Onofre, and Santa Margarita Creeks.

### **Stations**

- **San Juan Capistrano**: A new station would be constructed with the At-Grade/Open Trench option along Trabuco Creek. This station would be below-grade in the trench south of Ramos Street. No station would be feasible in San Juan Capistrano for the I-5 tunnel option.
- **San Clemente**: The tunnel options being evaluated would eliminate the train station in downtown San Clemente. A new below-grade station would be constructed along the long, two-segment tunnel alignment where the tunnel transitions to a trench just south of Avenida Pico on the east side of I-5. Similarly, for the short tunnel option, a new station would be located at Avenida Pico near Calle De Los Molinos.

**Figure 2.5.1-2**  
**Options to be Retained for Further Study in Dana Point/San Clemente**



### C. OCEANSIDE TO SAN DIEGO SANTA FE DEPOT

#### Carlsbad

Two options are being evaluated for double-tracking through the City of Carlsbad

- At-grade Option - Double-tracking through Carlsbad in the existing LOSSAN rail alignment at grade.
- Trench Option – Double-tracking through Carlsbad in an open trench along the existing LOSSAN rail alignment. This option would have an impact on the existing Coaster station, and would necessitate improvements to the station such as new platforms, access elevators, etc., like those at the existing Solana Beach station, where the tracks are located within a trench.

## Encinitas

Two options are being evaluated for double-tracking through the City of Encinitas (see Figure 2.5.1-3):

- At-grade (with Grade Separations) Option - Double-tracking through Encinitas primarily at-grade, with a short trench segment for the rail corridor on either side of Birmingham Drive. This option would include reconfiguring the street intersection at Birmingham Drive and San Elijo Avenue, and close Chesterfield Drive at San Elijo Avenue. Another grade separation would occur at Leucadia Boulevard where the tracks would be depressed. Pedestrian undercrossings would be placed along the route to reduce existing barrier effects on the community.
- Short Trench Option - Double-tracking in the same alignment as the at-grade option above, but with an additional covered trench under Encinitas Boulevard and a transitional open trench about 1,500 feet either side of Encinitas Boulevard. This option was determined to be superior to the Long Trench option eliminated (Section 2.2) because it would provide the same benefits as the longer trench but would cost substantially less. With this option, there would need to be enhancements to the existing Coaster station, including new platforms and access facilities (like those at the Solana Beach station, where the tracks are also located in a trench).

## Del Mar

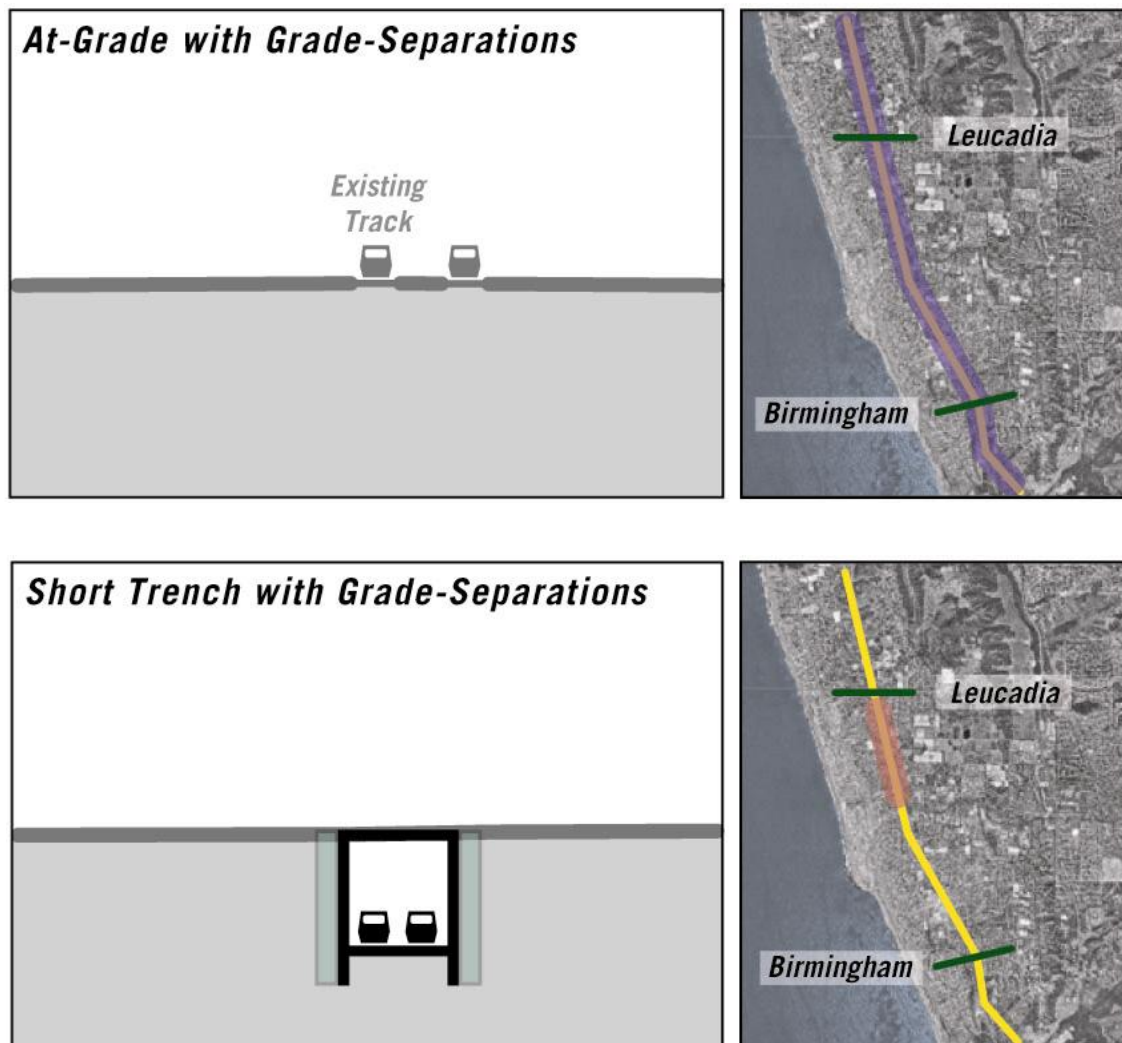
Two tunnel options are being evaluated in the area of Del Mar, both deviating from the existing LOSSAN rail corridor alignment (see Figure 2.5.1-4):

- Camino del Mar Tunnel # 1 - Double-tracking would be done via a tunnel underneath Camino Del Mar. The tunnel would begin at Jimmy Durante Boulevard, and daylight at Carmel Valley Road where tracks would then connect with the existing LOSSAN alignment across Los Peñasquitos Lagoon. The existing rail track on the Del Mar bluffs would be removed from service. This tunnel option was determined to be superior to Camino del Mar Tunnel #2 (see Section 2.2.) which would include a curve straightening running under residential property and affecting sensitive lagoon areas. Tunnel #1 would avoid those impacts by eliminating the curve straightening, but would still provide nearly the same train performance benefits without the straightening, and would cost less.
- Tunnel under Interstate 5 - Double-tracking with this option would be done via a tunnel that would run under I-5 and daylight, with double tracks, along the southern bluffs of the San Dieguito Lagoon. Tracks would reconnect with the existing LOSSAN rail corridor at-grade near the Del Mar race track. The existing rail track on the Del Mar bluffs would be removed from service. This option would be the most costly of the options considered but it would avoid the Peñasquitos Lagoon required in the Camino del Mar #1 option, and the existing lagoon crossing structure would be removed from service. This option was developed and carried forward for further evaluation at the request of resource management agencies in the LOSSAN region. The US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and the California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG) were members of the LOSSAN agency working group and requested that alternatives

be evaluated that would bypass the existing rail crossing of Los Peñasquitos Lagoon.

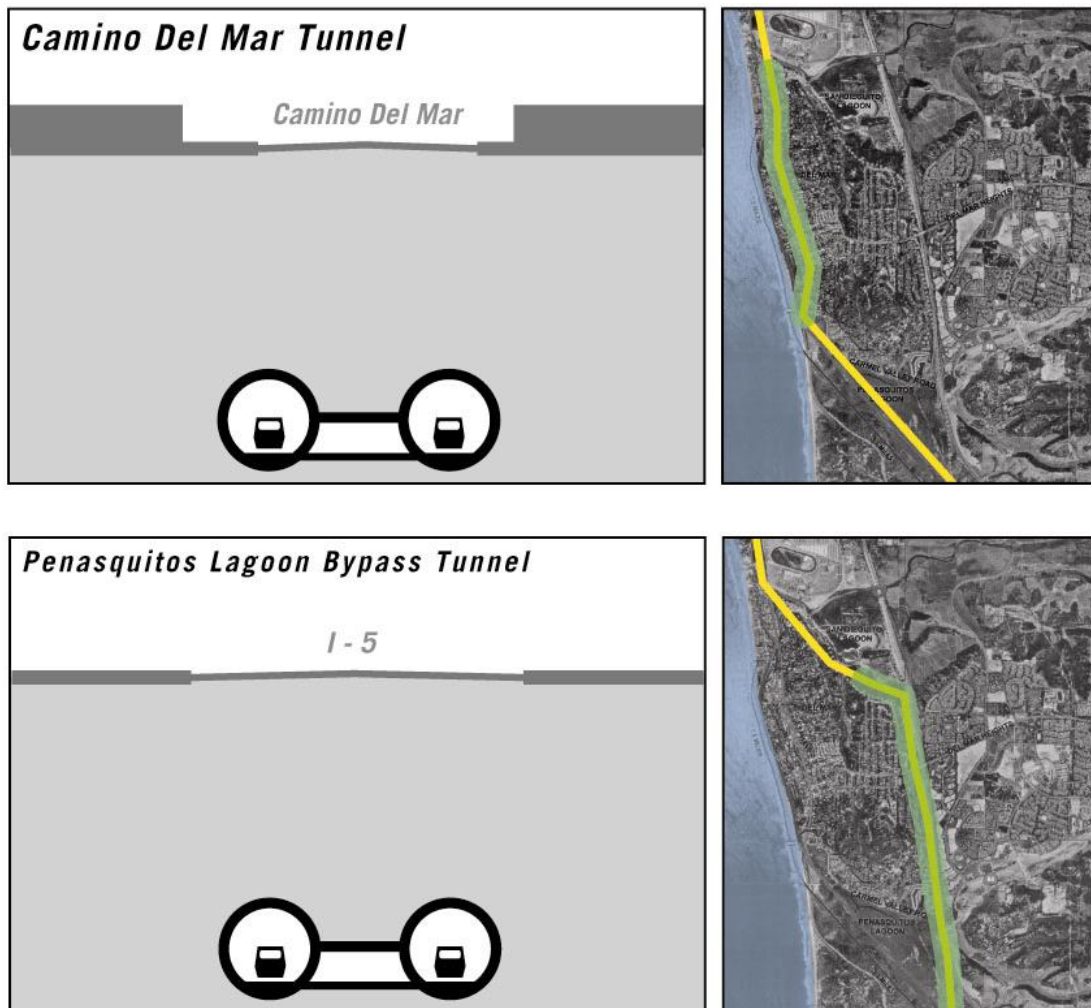
Should either of these tunnel options be selected, it could provide an opportunity to remove the tracks from the existing bluffs alignment.

**Figure 2.5.1-3**  
**Options to be Retained for Further Study in Encinitas**





**Figure 2.5.1-4**  
**Options to be Retained for Further Study in Del Mar**



### **I-5/805 Split to Highway 52**

Two tunnel options are under consideration in this section:

- Miramar Hill Tunnel – Double-tracking would be done via a tunnel that would cut through Miramar Hill. This tunnel option would include a new underground station at the University Towne Centre (UTC).
- Interstate 5 Tunnel – Double-tracking would be done in this option via a tunnel underneath I-5. No station would be included in this section with the I-5 tunnel option.

### **Highway 52 to Santa Fe Depot**

In this section of the rail corridor, the corridor would be double-tracked in its existing alignment for the full length of the section. An existing curve just south of Highway 52



would be straightened, requiring two new bridges over wetlands in San Clemente Canyon. New bridges would also be constructed over Tecolote Creek and the San Diego River. Tracks would be placed in a trench between Sassafras Street and Cedar Street. This section ends at San Diego's Santa Fe Depot. In addition to the existing rail services, this section could also potentially be the location for an extension of light-rail service, as well as for High-Speed Rail trains<sup>1</sup>.

### **Stations**

- Oceanside: Additional parking would be added at this existing LOSSAN station.
- Carlsbad: Platform modifications would be required at this existing Coaster station, should the Trench option be selected.
- Encinitas: Platform modifications would be required at this existing Coaster station, should the Short Trench option be selected.
- Solana Beach: Platform modifications and additional parking would be required at this existing LOSSAN station.
- University Towne Centre (UTC): This would be a new, underground station constructed with the Miramar Hill Tunnel option.
- Santa Fe Depot (San Diego): Bypass tracks and expanded parking would be added to this existing LOSSAN station in downtown San Diego.

## **2.6 SUMMARY OF ALTERNATIVES CARRIED FORWARD**

### **2.6.1 No-Project Alternative**

The No-Project Alternative is the baseline for comparing the potential environmental impacts and benefits of the Rail Improvements Alternative being analyzed in this EIR/EIS. It describes the highway and conventional rail facilities that existed in 1999-2000 as they will be after improvements that have been approved and funded in the fiscally constrained<sup>2</sup> and conforming regional and State Transportation Improvement Programs (RTPs, STIP) are in place. When this financially constrained level of infrastructure improvement is analyzed with the significant growth in population and transportation demand that is projected to occur by 2020, the data shows that most highways serving the intercity travel market would be at capacity, and the level of congestion would severely affect the reliability of travel and the travel time between Los Angeles and San Diego.

### **2.6.2 Rail Improvements Alternative**

Table 2.6-1 summarizes the rail improvement options being evaluated in this document for the LOSSAN conventional rail corridor. Together, these options constitute the "Build Alternative", the Rail Improvements Alternative, and are compared to one another and to the No-Project Alternative in subsequent chapters of this document.

<sup>1</sup> While direct HSR service would not be provided on the LOSSAN Corridor, the Authority's preferred HSR alignment would locate a HSR station at University City. South of University City, the HSR would run within the LOSSAN Corridor ROW on HSR-exclusive grade-separated tracks to its terminus in downtown San Diego. Additional details can be found at [www.cahighspeedrail.ca.gov](http://www.cahighspeedrail.ca.gov).

<sup>2</sup> "Fiscally or Financially Constrained" plans are limited by the foreseen available funding for a project in a region.

It is important to note that any option under consideration in each segment<sup>3</sup> of the corridor between Los Angeles and San Diego could be implemented without limiting the options in adjacent segments. In other words, the selection of one of the final options carried forward in any given segment would allow any of the options in an adjacent segment (including the No-Project/No Action option) to be implemented. Conceptual designs were developed for all of the alignment options that include horizontal alignment, profile, and general infrastructure cross sections. The relation of each of the alignment options to other existing transportation facilities is also a key aspect of the conceptual designs. This information defines the general physical characteristics of the options for consideration in the environmental technical analyses presented in this Program EIR/EIS.

### 2.6.3 Preferred Alternative

Based upon an analysis of the information provided in this document, the Department and FRA have identified the Rail Improvements Alternative (Build alternative) as the preferred alternative for the future development of the Los Angeles to San Diego portion of the LOSSAN corridor.

The lead agencies have determined that all the projects and alignment options listed in Table 2.6-1 should be carried forward for project-level analysis prior to making alignment option decisions.

**Table 2.6-1  
Summary of Final Rail Improvements Alternative**

<b>Alignment Segments and Station Locations</b>	<b>Description of Rail Alignments and Improvements</b>
<b>Union Station To Fullerton Station</b> 4 <sup>th</sup> Main Track	Construction of fourth main track at-grade in existing rail corridor between Commerce and Fullerton.
<b>Fullerton Station To Irvine Station</b> <b>Double Tracking</b>	Double track (with two alternatives, shown below)
<b>A. AT-GRADE Double Tracking</b>	Grade separations at street intersections between Walnut Ave. in Orange and E. 17 <sup>th</sup> Street in Santa Ana. At-grade curve straightening between Batavia Street and Walnut Ave. Improvements would be in existing rail corridor ROW, except for the curve realignment.
<b>B. Double tracking in TRENCH</b>	Fully grade-separate existing rail corridor in a covered trench (same alignment as above), including curve straightening.
Stations Fullerton	Existing station. Proposed improvements include bypass tracks, platform reconfiguration, and additional parking.
Anaheim	Existing station. Proposed improvements include bypass tracks and additional parking.
Santa Ana	Existing station. Proposed improvements include bypass tracks and additional parking.
Irvine	Existing station. Proposed improvements include bypass tracks and additional parking.
<b>San Juan Capistrano Double Tracking</b>	
<b>A. TUNNEL</b> along I-5 between Hwy 73 and Avenida Aeropuerto	Double-tracking in a tunnel running the length of the City of San Juan Capistrano under Interstate 5; tunnel runs under Trabuco Creek and San Juan Creek.
<b>B. AT-GRADE and Open/Cut and Cover TRENCH</b> along east side of Trabuco Creek	Double-tracking at grade and in an open/cut and cover trench along the east side of Trabuco Creek, west of the existing rail alignment.

<sup>3</sup> "Segment" here refers to the endpoints shown in Table 2.5-1 (for example, "Union Station to Fullerton Station" or "San Juan Capistrano").

**Table 2.6-1  
Summary of Final Rail Improvements Alternative (continued)**

Alignment Segments and Station Locations	Description of Rail Alignments and Improvements
Stations San Juan Capistrano	New station would be constructed with the At-Grade/Open Trench option along Trabuco Creek. New station would be below-grade in open trench. No station would be included in San Juan Capistrano for the I-5 tunnel option.
<b>Dana Point/San Clemente Double Tracking</b>	
<b>A.</b> Dana Point Curve Realignment; San Clemente - SHORT TUNNEL	Double-tracking and straightening existing curve at Dana Point in existing rail corridor; double-tracking via a short tunnel that follows Interstate 5 between Palm Drive and San Onofre State Beach, north of the power plant. The short tunnel alignment leaves the Interstate 5 corridor at Avenida Palizada, turns toward the coast and runs underneath residential, industrial and vacant areas, connecting with the existing rail corridor just south of Camino Capistrano.
<b>B.</b> San Clemente - LONG TWO-SEGMENT TUNNEL; Double Tracking (crosses San Mateo and San Onofre Creeks)	Double-tracking via a long, two- segment tunnel following Interstate 5 from San Onofre State Beach to Avenida Aeropuerto in San Juan Capistrano. This option precludes the need for curve realignment at Dana Point. This tunnel would have the same alignment as the one-segment long tunnel above except in a one-mile stretch near Avenida Pico, it would veer to the east edge of I-5 and daylight into an open trench for about 1,000 feet. The existing rail corridor along the coast between southern San Clemente city limits to approximately Avenida Aeropuerto in San Juan Capistrano would be removed from service (or at least not be further improved from its existing condition).
Stations San Clemente	The tunnel options would eliminate the need for a train station downtown; a new below-grade station would be constructed along the tunnel alignment where the tunnel transitions to a trench.
<b>Camp Pendleton Double Tracking</b>	Construction of an at-grade second main track, in portions of this segment (about six miles) that are not already double-tracked or will be under the rail improvements included in the No Build Alternative. New double tracking would cross San Mateo, San Onofre, and Santa Margarita Creeks.
<b>Oceanside/Carlsbad Double Tracking</b>	
<b>A.</b> Carlsbad - AT-GRADE; double tracking	Double-tracking through Carlsbad in existing rail alignment at grade. Alignment crosses San Luis Rey, Buena Vista, Aqua Hedionda, and Batiquitos Lagoons
<b>B.</b> Carlsbad -TRENCH; double-tracking	Double-tracking through Carlsbad in existing rail alignment in trench. Alignment crosses San Luis Rey, Buena Vista, Aqua Hedionda, and Batiquitos Lagoons
Stations Oceanside	Existing station. Proposed improvements include parking expansion.
<b>Encinitas/Solana Beach Double Tracking</b>	
<b>A.</b> Encinitas - AT-GRADE; Double Tracking	Double-tracking primarily at-grade, with a short trench segment for the rail corridor on either side of Birmingham Drive. This option would include reconfiguring the street intersection at Birmingham Drive and San Elijo Avenue, and close Chesterfield Drive at San Elijo Avenue. Another grade separation would occur at Leucadia Boulevard where the tracks would be depressed. Pedestrian undercrossings would be placed along the route. Alignment crosses San Elijo Lagoon.
<b>B.</b> Encinitas - SHORT TRENCH; Double Tracking	Double-tracking in same alignment as at-grade option above, but with an additional covered trench under Encinitas Boulevard and a transitional open trench about 1,500 feet either side of Encinitas Boulevard. Alignment crosses San Elijo Lagoon.

**Table 2.6-1**  
**Summary of Final Rail Improvements Alternative (continued)**

Alignment Segments and Station Locations	Description of Rail Alignments and Improvements
Stations Solana Beach	Existing station. Proposed improvements include platform modifications and parking expansion.
<b>Del Mar Double Tracking</b>	
<b>A. TUNNEL</b> under Camino Del Mar; crosses San Dieguito and Los Penasquitos Lagoons	Double-tracking via a tunnel underneath Camino Del Mar. Tunnel would begin at Jimmy Durante Boulevard, and daylight at Carmel Valley Road where tracks would then connect with the existing alignment across Los Penasquitos Lagoon. The existing rail track on the bluffs would be removed from service.
<b>B. TUNNEL</b> along Interstate 5	Double-tracking via a tunnel that would run under Interstate 5 and daylight along the southern boundary of San Dieguito Lagoon. Tracks would reconnect with the existing rail at-grade near the Del Mar race track. The existing rail track on the bluffs would be removed from service.
<b>I-5/805 Split To Hwy 52 Double Tracking</b>	
<b>A. Miramar Hill TUNNEL</b>	Double-tracking via a tunnel through Miramar Hill.
<b>B. Interstate 5 TUNNEL</b>	Double-tracking via a tunnel under Interstate 5.
Stations UTC (Only applies to Miramar Hill Tunnel)	New station, proposed only with the Miramar Hill tunnel option. Station would be constructed underground.
<b>Hwy 52 To Santa Fe Depot Curve realignment and Double Tracking</b>	<p><b>A.</b> Double-tracking in existing rail corridor for full length of segment. An existing curve just south of Highway 52 would be straightened, requiring two new bridges over wetlands in San Clemente Canyon. New bridges would also be constructed over Tecolote Creek and San Diego River.</p> <p><b>B.</b> As an additional option, tracks would be placed in a trench between Sassafras Street and Cedar Street.</p>
Stations Santa Fe Depot	Existing station. Proposed improvements include bypass tracks and parking expansion.

## 2.7 Construction and Maintenance Activities Associated with the Rail Improvements Alternative

This section describes the various types of potential construction activities associated with the Rail Improvements Alternative, and generally defines potential impacts that can be expected from these activities. General locations along the corridor where these activities may create impacts or conflicts are addressed in each resource section in Chapter 3.0. This section also briefly describes typical maintenance activities associated with an active rail corridor, and the potential impacts that could result from those activities.

These discussions focus on the corridor as a whole, with the understanding that more specific impacts would be evaluated at the project level.

### 2.7.1 Construction Activities

Construction activities for the proposed LOSSAN corridor rail improvements would vary depending on the particular project; however, proposed improvements may include at-grade construction, elevated structures, trenching, and tunneling activities. This section provides an overview of the types of environmental impacts that could occur from these broad categories of construction activities.

Potential construction impacts to various resources are assessed in Chapter 3 at the Program level (i.e., without site-specific field investigation and based on very conceptual design). Detailed evaluations of the construction activities involved in a particular project and the associated environmental impacts would occur during the project-level analyses. The types of construction that may be required for various elements of the Rail Improvements Alternative are described below. Typical construction impacts that would likely occur include the following:

- Short-term impacts to air quality, such as an increase in dust (PM<sub>10</sub>) and localized construction equipment emissions would occur in and around worksites.
- Some heavy civil construction activities, notably pile driving and rock excavation, would be inherently noisy. Most construction activities would use large pieces of equipment which would generate noise.
- Worksites would generate traffic on public roads leading to the site and on private haul routes running along the alignment or from the alignment to construction and staging yards. Traffic would include construction worker commute traffic, delivery of construction supplies (bulk cement, asphalt, steel, fuel, manufactured products, etc.), and movement of construction materials such as dirt from excavations and aggregate. In sensitive areas, these operations can be accomplished within the established LOSSAN right-of-way corridors, with delivery of materials via the rail line.
- Worksites would be cleared of ground cover for construction. This would increase the potential for storm-related runoff and erosion.
- Projects have the potential to generate large quantities of material from clearing and grubbing, soil and rock excavations, and structural debris in cases where existing rail structures may be removed and replaced. Projects would also generate a smaller amount of waste such as product packaging, broken equipment, and site litter. During construction, there is a potential for minor hydraulic fluid, motor oil and fuel spills that would require disposal of contaminated soil.
- Some heavy civil construction activities, notably pile driving and rock excavation, would be inherently noisy. Most construction activities would use large pieces of equipment which would generate noise.
- Construction may require night work and illumination of worksites which may have an impact on adjacent sites. Tunnel excavation would likely take place 24 hours per day, so tunnel heading access sites would be constantly occupied and illuminated at night. Roadway grade separations would connect to active roadways at both ends of the separation worksite. Especially in urban area, roadway traffic may be such that the connection work can only be performed overnight when traffic volumes are lower. If required, this overnight work would also be illuminated.

Mitigation measures for potential construction impacts are discussed generally in Section 2.7.1.F and in more detail in the appropriate resource sections in Chapter 3.

## A. AT-GRADE CONSTRUCTION

At-grade project sections would be built at the ground surface. Representative at-grade projects would include the construction of a second main track along existing single-tracked, at-grade sections of the LOSSAN rail corridor, or re-aligning an existing curve and constructing two tracks within the new alignment. In the case of adding a second,

at-grade track to the existing alignment, the existing right-of-way is sufficient to accommodate the work areas needed for these projects in most areas. In areas where the right-of-way is limited or constrained, temporary construction easements would be needed to provide a work zone for the contractor during construction. In addition, temporary access to the work site, either by road or through adjacent property, would be required for at-grade projects.

Construction staging areas would be required for the parking of worker vehicles and construction equipment, delivering and temporarily storing construction materials, and assembling project components. Materials and equipment may include track and ties, crushed rock used as ballast, switches (“turnouts”) and signaling equipment. Construction materials would be delivered to the project area either via flatbed truck or rail. Materials would be unloaded by wheeled equipment, such as small cranes or front-end loaders. Turnouts would be assembled in the project area, and installed by use of backhoe, crane or boom truck. The size of the construction staging and work areas would depend upon the size of the project and would be determined as part of the project-level evaluations.

At-grade construction typically requires clearing, grubbing, removing debris, and grading. While specific impacts would depend upon the type of resources within a particular project area, potential construction impacts may include reduction of vegetation and associated habitat, temporary fill in waters of the U.S., and degradation of water quality.

## **B. ELEVATED STRUCTURES**

Elevated structures would have a smaller permanent footprint than at-grade structures and would result in a reduction of environmental impacts compared to an at-grade structure in the same location. However, the construction of elevated structures, particularly rail bridges over rivers and lagoons, would require larger staging areas than the at-grade projects. The total amount of space required for equipment, such as cranes, pile drivers, bridge girders piling, concrete trucks, concrete pumping trucks, dewatering equipment, and other ancillary equipment and materials would vary by structure type and length. Construction staging areas for elevated structures typically include all four quadrants where the new or replacement bridge would be built.

Types of activities associated with elevated structures may include those anticipated for at-grade construction as needed for the project footprint, along with placement of foundations under piers and bridge abutments, construction of piers and abutments, construction of bridge superstructure, and installation of finish elements, such as approach slabs and metal railings.

Sensitive habitats associated with lagoons will require special consideration and constrained construction access. To reduce potential impacts to these sensitive habitats, approaches to the existing lagoon structures could function as the staging areas rather than the four quadrants surrounding the existing structure. In addition, separate staging areas, located outside the constrained areas immediately adjacent to the sensitive habitats, may also be employed to avoid and minimize potential impacts to these sensitive areas.

As described in Chapter 3 (see particularly Sections 3.12 and 3.13), one of the objectives for any improvements that cross lagoons is to reduce the amount of existing earthen fill from existing rail and roadway crossings. Reduction of fill would increase



tidal flow in the lagoons. For rail improvement options that involve crossing lagoons on elevated structures, this could be accomplished by use of dual elevated structures constructed through the lagoons to accommodate the double-tracked rail line. To minimize construction impacts, the first structure would be constructed on an off-set alignment from the existing rail line. Following completion of the first structure, rail traffic would be rerouted onto it, and the second elevated structure would be constructed in place of the existing rail line. As the second elevated structure is constructed, the existing embankment fill would be removed. Because earthen fill would be replaced with elevated structures, the tidal flow within the lagoons would be less restricted, which could result in improved water quality.

Currently, the single-tracked rail lines through lagoons experience heavy daily traffic volumes with the highest concentration of rail traffic occurring during the day. To construct elevated structures through the lagoons, it is possible that construction would occur during the evening. During project-level analyses, construction times, potential noise impacts associated with pile driving, and local noise ordinances would be considered.

Specific impacts associated with the construction of elevated structures would depend upon the type of resources within a particular project area. Potential impacts associated with in-water work include a temporary increase in turbidity and temporary, localized noise and vibration disturbance to aquatic species.

### C. TRENCHING

The construction of trenches would require larger construction work areas than the at-grade projects. This is primarily due to the work space required for the collection of the excavated soil materials, dump trucks, and the loaders to haul away the excavated soil from the project site, as well as concrete trucks used in construction of the trench's retaining walls. The total area required for construction and staging areas would depend on the size and length of the trench to be constructed and would likely include areas outside of the existing right-of-way. Determination of the areas required for a particular trenching project would be made as part of the project-level evaluations.

Types of activities associated with trenches include grading, excavation, and backfill and installation of retaining walls. For open trenches, the open cut areas would remain open when finished, and for closed trenches, the trenches would be covered to re-establish the original ground surface. Typically, where backfill material is needed, excavated material would be used. The retaining walls would be tailored to the specific site and project requirements and may include one or more of the following common construction methods: shotcrete, driven steel sheetpile walls, soldier pile and lagging walls, secant or tangent pile walls, soil mix walls, slurry placed concrete diaphragm walls, or other techniques. The support of these walls is typically accomplished by the use of internal bracing, internal earth berms, tied-back anchors, soil nails, cantilevering, other methods, or a combination of methods. For permanent walls that remain visible, wall finishing may consist of cast-in-place concrete, mechanically stabilized earth, segmental walls, concrete sculpted and colored to appear as natural rock, or other finishes.

### D. GRADE SEPARATIONS

In some areas, grade separations would be used to reduce conflicts between rail and highway traffic, thereby improving efficiency and safety conditions for both modes.

(Refer to Table 2.5-2 for grade separations proposed as part of the Rail Improvements Alternative.) Generally, the permanent footprint for grade-separated crossings would be smaller than that of an at-grade crossing in the same location but would vary depending on the size and type of roadways to be grade separated. The total area required for construction and staging areas would depend on the specific grade separation to be constructed and would likely include areas outside of the existing right-of-way. Construction staging areas would be larger than those for at-grade activities. Determination of the areas required for a particular grade separation project would be made as part of the project-level evaluations and preliminary design.

Types of activities associated with the construction of grade separations would depend on which mode of transportation would be placed above or below existing grade (e.g., rail over road or road over rail) and would involve a combination of the activities typically used for elevated structure and trenching construction.

## E. TUNNELING

Tunneling is the most complicated construction method envisioned for the LOSSAN corridor. The complexity of tunnel construction is sensitive to field conditions, such as unanticipated geologic conditions, depth of cover, and groundwater table. Tunnels are constructed using tunnel boring machines (TBM), cut-and-cover techniques (covered trench), or both. Tunnel muck (i.e., spoils; excavated debris) is typically brought out of the tunnel via conveyor belts and loaded into muck rail cars or haul trucks for removal from the site. It is expected that rail can be used for at least some of the muck removal along the LOSSAN corridor.

Other heavy equipment used at the site of tunneling may include cement mixers, slurry pipelines (for muck removal and conveyance), and possibly pumping equipment for dewatering in areas of shallow groundwater.

Staging areas would be required during tunnel construction to service the tunneling operation, stage contractor equipment, store pre-cast concrete tunnel segments, and temporarily stockpile the tunnel spoils. The TBM launching area, which is where the tunnel would begin and be serviced, would accommodate all of these activities and is anticipated to require an area of approximately four acres during construction. Approximately two acres at tunnel portals would be needed permanently for tunnel portals and access. The TBM receiving area, where the tunnel would terminate, would need to accommodate the retrieval of the TBM and would require approximately one acre.

The potential environmental impacts associated with tunneling may result from construction at shafts, portals and staging areas, and these impacts include tunnel spoils, construction phase vibration and noise, and potential ground surface settlement from tunneling and excavation. After excavation, many of the tunnel construction access sites would become permanent tunnel support sites, such as emergency access points, pump stations, ventilation plants, etc. The use of surface access roads may be limited or even avoided in some areas by using in-line construction (that is, using the new rail infrastructure as it is built to transport equipment to and from the construction site and to haul excavated materials away from the site).

## F. MITIGATION

Potential mitigation measures for construction impacts associated with the aforementioned methods include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Best Management Practices (BMPs) would be implemented in accordance with Section 401 water quality certification and in accordance with the NPDES program pursuant to Section 402 of the Clean Water Act, which requires preparation of a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) for all construction disturbing one acre or more, and coverage under a general construction storm water permit.
- The construction staging areas would be located outside of environmentally sensitive areas.
- Construction vehicles would be prohibited from driving in or crossing sensitive areas anywhere other than established temporary and permanent crossings points.
- Temporary work areas (e.g., crane pads) would be designed to pass normal flows. Any fill materials would be removed upon completion of construction activities.
- Disturbed areas in or adjacent to streams would be returned to pre-construction contours as soon as practicable and permanently stabilized (e.g., mulching, reseeding).
- Efforts would be made to mitigate for temporary air quality impacts during construction, including minimizing or eliminating unnecessary idling of construction vehicles and employing methods to minimize fugitive dust.
- Short-term construction noise would be minimized through abatement measures, such as work-hour controls and proper maintenance of muffler systems.
- Project-specific waste-reduction/recycling plans for demolition waste would be developed and would emphasize deconstruction and diversion planning, where practicable. The contractor would collect and dispose of all waste material appropriately.

Potential mitigation measures associated specifically with tunneling include the following:

- Limit construction disturbance to well defined boundaries for shafts, portals and staging areas and locate these in appropriate areas.
- Find commercial uses for the materials mined from the tunnels, portals and shafts.
- Utilize noise and vibration dampening equipment.
- Potential ground surface settlement from tunneling and excavation can be mitigated by utilizing rigorous tunnel face stabilization techniques, backfill grouting immediately behind the tunnel shield, and using appropriate lateral support methods for shaft and portal excavations.

Additional impact and mitigation measures specific to each environmental resource topic are described in Chapter 3.

## 2.7.2 Maintenance Activities

Federal and State regulations set forth and define required railroad safety standards, which dictate maintenance-of-way activities that are to occur on such railroad infrastructure. The contiguous linear track area, signal equipment areas, access roads and parking areas are typically maintained to be free and clear of vegetation. Other maintenance activities may include inspections, replacement of ballast, ties, or rails, turn-out or crossing repair, and structures and signal work. As such, infrastructure maintenance activities and inspections occurring within the railroad right-of-way almost exclusively occur within non-vegetated and disturbed areas.

Sensitive areas between the road and the track are avoided when practicable. The majority of activities are performed directly on the track, some of which implement the utilization of machines that also operate solely and exclusively on the track as well. Access from the road to the track typically is done in a non-sensitive location and material and equipment is then moved along the track to the work location. If work is performed at night, lighting is of relatively low-power and is located in close proximity to the work area, focusing directly onto the track.

Potential impacts of maintenance activities may include ground disturbance and removal of emergent vegetation as needed to maintain visibility along the track. As previously stated, maintenance activities would typically occur in previously disturbed and non-vegetated areas. To maintain visibility and safety conditions along the track, emergent vegetation would be controlled as necessary. The use of pesticides is typically employed to maintain rights-of-way. ("Pesticide" is a general term for insecticides, herbicides, and rodenticides.) According to District 11 of the Department, current practice for rail and roadway maintenance is to primarily use herbicides. These are used on an "as needed" basis, with applications occurring in spring and summer. No applications occur in waterways.

## Chapter 3

# AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT, ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES, AND MITIGATION STRATEGIES

## 3.0 INTRODUCTION

### 3.0.1 Purpose and Content of this Chapter

This purpose of this chapter is to describe existing environmental conditions in the areas that would be affected by the No-Project Alternative and the Rail Improvements Alternative; evaluate potential environmental impacts associated with the No-Project Alternative and with constructing and operating the Rail Improvements Alternative; and present potential program-level mitigation strategies to avoid or reduce those impacts. The analysis presented in this chapter addresses the general effects of a program of actions that would make up the proposed LOSSAN Rail Corridor Improvements project. This chapter describes the general differences in potential environmental consequences between the No-Project Alternative and the Rail Improvements Alternative. The analysis also identifies key differences between the potential impacts associated with the various rail alignment options and station improvements. Although none of the final rail improvement options evaluated in this Program EIR/EIS are eliminated at this time, the description of key differences among options will help to guide project-level studies and design refinements.

### 3.0.2 How this Chapter is Organized

This chapter is organized into sections by resource topic. The resource topics are grouped as follows.

- Transportation and related topics (air quality; noise and vibration; and energy).
- Human environment (land use and community impacts; parklands; aesthetics and visual resources; socioeconomics; utilities and public services; and hazardous materials/wastes).
- Cultural resources (archaeological resources, historic properties) and paleontological resources.
- Natural environment (geology and seismic hazards; hydrology and water resources; and biological resources, including wetlands).
- Section 4(f) and 6(f) resources (certain types of publicly owned parklands, recreation areas, wildlife/waterfowl refuges, and historic sites).

Each resource topic section contains the following information.

- *Methods of Evaluation*
- *Regulatory Requirements.*
- *Affected Environment*
- *Environmental Consequences*

- *Design Practices*
- *Mitigation Strategies*
- *Subsequent Analysis*

The *Methods of Evaluation and Regulatory Requirements* discussions for each resource topic describe the assumptions, approach for evaluation, and rating scheme used to identify potential impacts as significant (potentially requiring mitigation), and identify the relevant statutes and CEQA, NEPA, or regulatory agency guidelines relevant to future project approvals or decisions for that resource topic. The methods of impact evaluation were developed with input from state and federal resource agencies.

The *Affected Environment* summarizes the information that provides the basis for analysis of potential environmental impacts on each environmental resource. Existing conditions are summarized based on the program-level, GIS data obtained for the analysis. The technical studies prepared for each resource area provided key information for the preparation of the *Affected Environment* discussions.

The *Environmental Consequences* discussions describe the potential environmental impacts (both adverse and beneficial) of the Rail Improvements Alternative in comparison to the No-Project Alternative. Each discussion begins by comparing existing conditions with 2020 No-Project conditions to describe the consequences of No-Project and how environmental conditions are expected to change during the timeframe required to fully construct the proposed Rail Improvements. Existing conditions were used as a proxy for 2020 No-Project conditions where 2020 baseline information was unavailable, could not be projected, or would be overly speculative. Using 2020 No-Project conditions as a basis for comparison, the analysis then addresses direct and indirect impacts of the proposed Rail Improvements, as well as potential cumulative impacts. Measures that already have been included as part of the proposed Rail Improvements to reduce or avoid potential environmental impacts were incorporated into this analysis; examples include: locating the alignment options within existing transportation corridors, tunneling to avoid surface disruption in sensitive areas such as coastal beaches, and designing new rail bridges so that there would be no net increase in the footprint of rail infrastructure within coastal lagoons. The impact analysis summarizes specific resource data for each alignment option, and then compares options with one another within each rail segment, with a focus on any substantive differences between options.

Typical construction impacts were described in Section 2.7 and are addressed in this chapter. However, a full assessment of construction impacts cannot be made until project-level reviews when construction and sequencing details are known.

*Design Practices* describe design and construction practices that have been identified to avoid or minimize impacts and would be employed as rail improvement projects are developed further in the project level of environmental clearance, final design and construction stages. *Mitigation Strategies* discussions first state whether, at this program level of analysis, the lead agencies believe that potentially significant impacts could occur; then potential mitigation approaches are described that can be identified at a program level for use to avoid, minimize, or reduce any potentially significant environmental impacts.

Finally, each resource topic section includes a *Subsequent Analysis* discussion summarizing directions for more detailed study during project-level environmental review and documentation.



Many sources were used in the preparation of this document. References to these sources are provided in Chapter 11. In some cases to clarify a particular source, specific references are called out in the text.

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### 3.1 TRAFFIC AND CIRCULATION

This section describes the existing traffic and circulation conditions in the transportation study area and identifies the potential traffic, transit, circulation, and parking impacts of each alignment option and station option.

#### 3.1.1 Regulatory Requirements and Methods of Evaluation

##### A. REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS

NEPA and CEQA both require that potential impacts of a proposed project on the traffic, transit, and circulation of the affected area must be examined as part of the EIR/EIS process. Under CEQA, a proposed project should be analyzed for the potential effects listed below (California Department of Transportation 2003).

- An increase in traffic that is substantial in relation to the existing traffic load and capacity of the street system (i.e., result in a substantial increase in the number of vehicle trips, the volume-to-capacity [V/C]<sup>1</sup> ratio on roads, or congestion at intersections).
- Either individually or cumulatively exceeding a level of service (LOS)<sup>2</sup> standard established by the county congestion management agency for designated roads or highways.
- A substantial increase in hazards due to a design feature (e.g. sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g. farm equipment).
- Inadequate parking capacity.
- Inadequate emergency access.
- Conflict with adopted policies, plans, or programs supporting alternative transportation (e.g. bus turnouts, bicycle racks).
- Rail, waterborne, or air traffic impacts.

Volume-to-capacity ratios and level of service are defined quantitatively in Table 3.1-1.

Given the scale of the proposed rail corridor improvements, virtually all of the criteria mentioned above would be potentially affected by the No-Project and Rail Improvement Alternatives. For this analysis this program-level document focused on the criteria below.

- Traffic and level of service analysis of the following elements.
  - Intercity highway segments.
  - Primary highways/roadways accessing stations.
- Potential impacts on transit, goods movement, and parking for each of the regional corridors and proposed stations and airports.

<sup>1</sup> The volume-to-capacity (V/C) ratio is the number of vehicles that travel on a transportation facility divided by the full vehicular capacity of that facility (the number of vehicles the facility was designed to convey).

<sup>2</sup> Level of service is a qualitative measure used to describe the condition of traffic flow, ranging from excellent conditions at level of service (LOS) A to overloaded conditions at LOS F. LOS D is typically recognized as an acceptable service level in urban areas. The definition for each level of service for signalized intersections is based on the V/C ratio.

**Table 3.1-1  
Level of Service and Volume-to-Capacity Ratio Definition**

Level of Service	Volume-to-Capacity Ratio	Definition
A	0.000–0.600	EXCELLENT. No vehicle waits longer than one red light and no approach phase is fully used.
B	0.601–0.700	VERY GOOD. An occasional approach phase is fully utilized; many drivers begin to feel somewhat restricted within groups of vehicles.
C	0.701–0.800	GOOD. Occasionally drivers may have to wait through more than one red light; backups may develop behind turning vehicles.
D	0.801–0.900	FAIR. Delays may be substantial during portions of the rush hours, but enough lower volume periods occur to permit clearing of developing lines, preventing excessive backups.
E	0.901–1.000	POOR. Represents the maximum vehicles that intersection approaches can accommodate; may be long lines of waiting vehicles through several signal cycles.
F	>1.000	FAILURE. Backups from nearby locations or on cross streets may restrict or prevent movement of vehicles out of the intersection approaches. Tremendous delays with continuously increasing queue lengths.

Source: Transportation Research Board 1980

## B. METHOD OF EVALUATION OF IMPACTS

The traffic, transit, circulation, and parking analyses for this Program EIR/EIS focused on a broad comparison of potential impacts on traffic, transit, circulation, and parking around stations for the Rail Improvements Alternative. The potential impacts for this alternative were compared to the No-Project Alternative.

Highway, roadways, passenger transportation services (e.g. bus, rail, intermodal, and transit facilities), goods movements, and parking issues were evaluated in this analysis. Transportation facilities, highways, and roadways included in the analysis serve as the primary means of existing (or planned future) access to existing and proposed rail stations. In addition, these facilities are within 1 mi (1.6 km) of the proposed suburban rail stations, 0.25 mi (0.40 km) of downtown stations, or are key capacity-constraint points on major routes along intercity corridors.

Although this level of analysis is appropriate for a program-level environmental document, variations in traffic conditions on smaller transportation facilities such as arterials and roadways are not included in the study area. Many of these smaller facilities are currently congested, and their operation is projected to worsen under the No-Project Alternative. Operation of these facilities could indirectly benefit from implementation of the Rail Improvements Alternative. The capacity improvements of the Rail Improvements Alternative could reduce demand such that long-distance trips would not be forced onto local streets. The potential impact of an improved rail system on these smaller facilities would be examined as part of any subsequent and more detailed project-level environmental analyses.

For this program level document, initial analysis included identifying primary routes to be considered, with highways designated in the No-Project Alternative and all modes of access to the station areas in the Rail Improvement Alternative, respectively. The primary routes and modes of access for the stations considered assumptions for distribution of trips by direction.

Once primary routes were identified, screenlines or cordons combining segments of the primary routes that reasonably represent locations for evaluating the aggregate baseline traffic and public passenger transportation conditions (using data for 2002, 2020, or other similar years as available) in the a.m. peak hour were selected. Only a.m. peak hours were selected because they were seen as sufficient for a program level analysis. Both a.m. and p.m. will be analyzed during project specific evaluations. The use of screenlines or cordons is necessitated by the scale of this analysis with its requirement to evaluate roadway conditions throughout the region. A more detailed analytical framework must necessarily be reserved for future analyses of individual projects.

Screenlines, especially on intercity highway links, have been selected to represent typical a.m. peak-hour conditions. The data used in the evaluation of traffic volumes and capacities at the screenlines therefore are typical values based on averages over time and represented in traffic forecasting tools used by the regional transportation planning agencies. As such, the conditions indicated in the evaluation may not always reflect the experiences of travelers at any particular place at any specific time. For example, localized capacity restrictions (e.g. bottlenecks at a given interchange) are not well represented in those regional traffic models. In addition, incidents on the road such as accidents and vehicle breakdowns (non-recurring congestion) are not represented in regional traffic models. This unpredictable type of incident is responsible for the majority of congestion in urban highway networks. The result of these limitations of the methodology and data used in this analysis is that many times the level of service or average speed shown in the evaluation may be more optimistic than what would actually be experienced on the roadway under the forecasted conditions. Thus, it is important to consider the differences between the alternatives compared rather than focus on the absolute value of the indicators (i.e., volume to capacity or level of service).

Baseline conditions were defined using the methodology below.

Intercity Screenlines: Baseline conditions (2002, 2020) were established for intercity highway segments based on available counts of existing weekday a.m. peak hour traffic volumes and projected annual growth rates. This process involved a comparison of existing V/C to determine level of service at link level.

Station Cordons: Baseline (2002 and 2020 data, as available) ratios of demand to capacity across each cordon for roadways (not intersections) were established for the weekday a.m. peak hour using 2000 HCM standards for capacity. (Transportation Research Board 2000)

Transit Access: Baseline conditions were established through an inventory of available public transportation services at and adjacent to the stations.

Goods Movement: Baseline conditions (2002, 2020) for goods movement (truck freight) weekday a.m. peak hour for locations in the area were identified as critical by regional goods movement studies.

Parking at or near Stations: Descriptions of parking conditions are based on 2002 parking reserves, local plans for major parking expansion, and adequacy of local parking codes for meeting No-Project growth in demand.

In this traffic study, only the High-Build scenario of the Rail Improvements Alternative was analyzed. The options presented in this scenario demonstrated the most conservative numbers, which represented the highest benefits and impacts to the transportation system. Additionally, the station area impacts were determined to be similar to those in the Low-Build scenario. A discussion outlining the qualitative differences between these two scenarios is provided in section 3.1.4.

Trips associated with the Rail Improvements Alternative were determined (“generated”) and distributed onto the network. To be conservative in this analysis, the high-end trip generation was used based on calculations performed for the LOSSAN corridor by the California High Speed Rail Authority, which assumed that intercity (Amtrak) trains would act as a feeder service to the statewide high-speed train system between Los Angeles, Sacramento and the Bay Area. This method calculated the trip generation by adding to baseline volumes the forecasted 2020 demand for a system that served intercity trips and feeds a high-speed train system, plus local trips in 2020 generated by project-related development (as data is available) and trips due to induced growth. These additional trips were distributed to the identified screenlines or cordons (roadway and public transportation) and those trips were added to the appropriate baseline volumes for each screenline or cordon. Next, the additional trips were distributed for selected segments/links on primary regional routes and modes of access to stations and similar facilities by adding No-Project volumes obtained from 2020 forecasts (from regional and local agencies), and 2020 travel demand generated by alternatives, to the key accessing facilities (roadways, transit links). This distribution was done at a screenline level to reduce the subjectivity of assigning trips to specific facilities. Methodology for this process is detailed below.

- For each screenline or cordon, new ratios of demand-to-capacity were calculated. Demand is the baseline volumes plus additional trip generation by the Rail Improvement Alternative.
- Future No-Project link capacity conditions were established through available plans from local and regional agencies, and based on the fiscally constrained element of the relevant regional transportation plan (RTP).
- Link-level analysis of impacts was performed to roadways for weekday a.m. peak-hour conditions. Capacity levels were based on the 2000 HCM methodologies.
- Future roadway V/C on selected segments compared future volumes with/without alternatives with future capacity determined. Future V/C with/without the alternatives was analyzed. This assessment was performed at a cordon level, aggregating the V/C on all major facilities accessing the stations.
- Cordon-level analysis was also performed for public transportation services serving the stations or airports, based on weekday a.m. peak-hour service headway and capacity conditions.



- Impacts were determined by comparing future load factors or service headway requirements with existing levels, No-Project levels (as specified in relevant RTPs), and levels demanded by the Rail Improvements Alternative.
- Goods movement impacts were determined through an assessment of the net impact of project alternatives on the corridor.

Summary tables were then completed that identified impacts on highways/roadways (at screenline), public transportation services, goods movement, and parking facilities. The impacts are described and ranked as high, medium, or low in the summary tables in the appendix of this section, according to the potential extent of change to traffic, transit, circulation, and parking and described in terms of LOS A to LOS F for traffic impacts.

The final step included the identification of mitigation strategies for avoidance of potential impacts related to traffic, circulation, and parking. Most mitigation measures involve subsequent analysis of traffic, circulation, or parking in the next phase of work.

### 3.1.2 Affected Environment

#### A. STUDY AREA DEFINED

The transportation study area is defined as the primary highways and roadways that: 1) serve as the primary means of access to existing and proposed rail stations; and 2) are within 1.0 mile (mi) (1.6 kilometers [km]) of existing or proposed rail stations and includes the coastal areas of southern California between Los Angeles and San Diego, following the existing LOSSAN rail corridor.

Only three intercity highways in the region connect the metropolitan areas of Los Angeles and San Diego County, these include Interstate 15, Interstate 5, and State Route 1. Of these three routes, only Interstate 5 provides a continuous and direct connection between Los Angeles and San Diego through Orange County. Because of this, Interstate 5 has been identified as the primary route between Los Angeles Union Station (LAUS) and San Diego.

There is a proposal to extend California State Route 241 (currently a toll facility operated by the Transportation Corridor Agencies (TCA) from its current terminus at State Route 73 south to connect with Interstate 5. If completed, this route would provide an alternative north-south route essentially parallel to Interstate 5.

#### B. GENERAL DISCUSSION OF RESOURCES

In general, traffic conditions throughout the study area are poor in terms of congestion levels (e.g. travel delays), particularly during the peak periods. According to nationwide studies conducted by the Texas Transportation Institute, the Los Angeles urban area experiences the highest congestion levels in the country. Highways are heavily congested during both the morning and evening peak hours in and around the urban centers of Los Angeles, Orange County, and San Diego. This congestion is caused mostly by regional and urban commute traffic. Commute trips (to and from work) make up the majority of highway trips during the peak periods; the intercity trips considered in this analysis represent only a small proportion of highway traffic. The Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) has estimated that, during morning peak-hour traffic in some of the most congested corridors in southern California, the average

speed is less than 20 miles per hour (mph) in the congested direction. In 2002, traffic congestion costs motorists in California \$20.4 billion annually in lost time and fuel. Traffic conditions throughout Southern California are expected to worsen, and only limited improvements to transportation facilities are funded and programmed for implementation by 2020. Steadily increasing regional and urban traffic affects intercity commutes by delaying travelers where capacity is constrained. Intercity travel that competes with regional and intraregional travel for use of the same facilities is directly affected by these conditions.

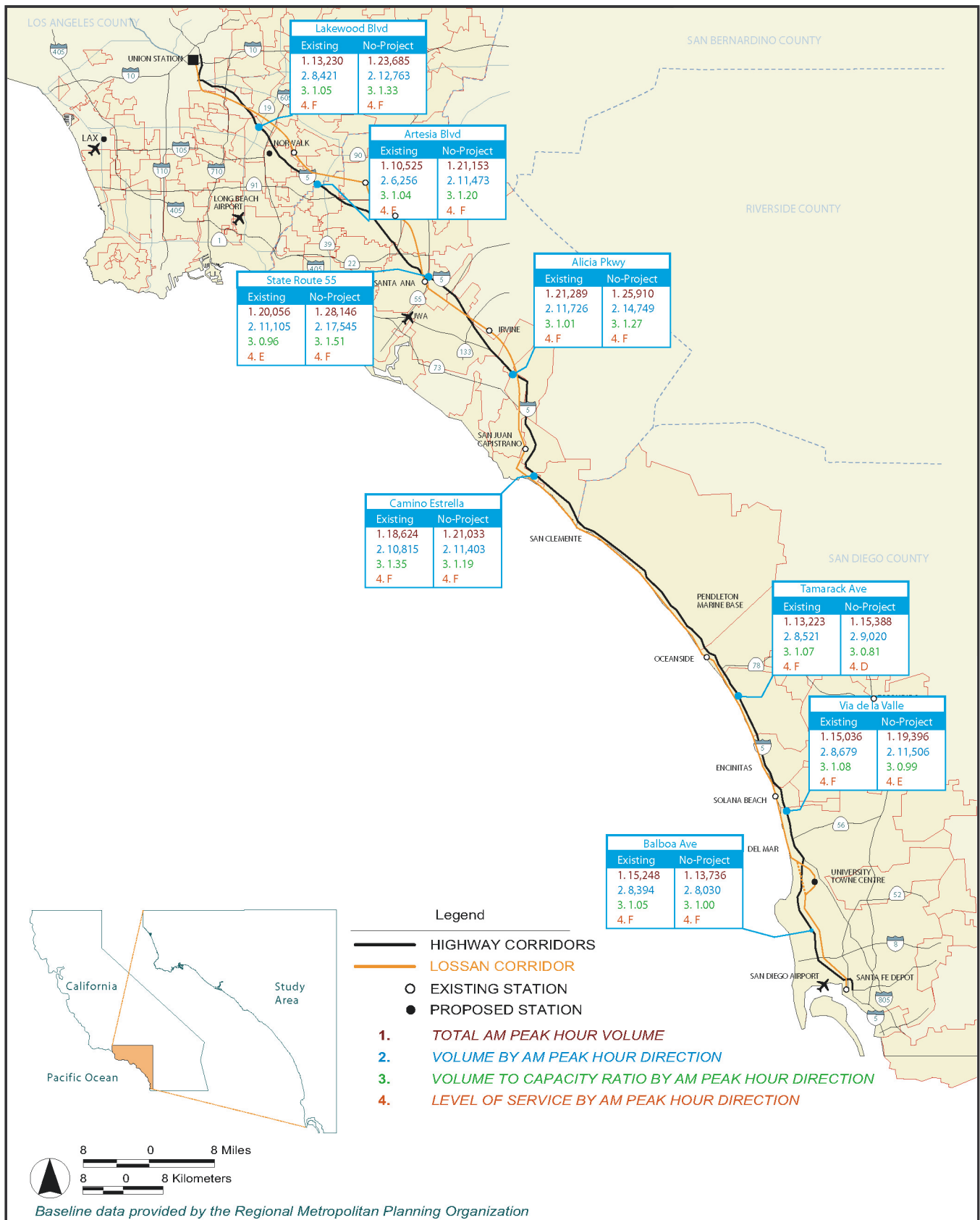
### 3.1.3 Environmental Consequences

#### A. EXISTING CONDITIONS COMPARED TO NO-PROJECT ALTERNATIVE

The existing condition is the transportation infrastructure that exists in 2003 and its associated levels of service. The No-Project Alternative includes the existing infrastructure, plus the implementation of funded and programmed transportation improvements that will be operational by 2020 and the projected level of service of that infrastructure in 2020. Impacts on intercity highways are analyzed in terms of V/C ratio and corresponding level of service. Impacts on transit, goods movement, and parking are harder to quantify but include potential impacts such as full parking lots at stations, and are assigned a low, medium, or high rating corresponding to the estimated level of potential impact.

Under the No-Project Alternative, existing traffic conditions are projected to deteriorate along most highway segments and near the stations in the study area. As shown in Figure 3.1-1, all of the 8 intercity highway segments analyzed would have a high V/C ratio under the No-Project Alternative. In general, traffic congestion is projected to increase because travel is expected to increase by 2 to 3% per year along some segments. The No-Project Alternative does not provide infrastructure improvements sufficient to address the projected growth in highway travel and the exponential increase of commute trips within the urban areas. In most cases, the potential impact would manifest itself as deteriorating levels of service on highway segments and local streets or extended peak-period congestion on highways that already operate at LOS F (i.e., the a.m. peak period would extend from 2 hours to 4 hours).

Exceptions to these projected worsening conditions are expected to occur in certain locations along the corridor, where not only does the V/C ratio not increase from the existing condition, but in fact becomes lower, providing a somewhat higher level of service. The reason for this, specifically around station areas, differs depending on the county. San Diego County's Regional Transportation Plan assumes a strong public transportation base over the next 20 to 30 years; this assumption is reflected heavily in their forecasted traffic models. In addition to this, the forecasted models assume a much higher capacity for Interstate 5 due to programmed improvements, allowing for a higher LOS, even though the volume of vehicles traveling over the highway is increasing. Table 3.1-2 summarizes the differences in V/C ratios and LOS along Interstate 5 between the existing and No-Project conditions.



Source : June, 2004 - California Department of Transportation

FIGURE 3.1-1

## Year 2020 No-Project Alternative

LOSSAN Rail Corridor Improvements

Program Environmental Impact Report / Environmental Impact Statement



**Table 3.1-2**  
**Change in Traffic Congestion or Intercity Highway Segments**  
**Existing Conditions Compared to the No-Project Alternative**

Selected Screenlines Along Interstate 5	Existing V/C, LOS	No-Project V/C, LOS	% Change from Existing
<b>Los Angeles County</b>			
Lakewood Blvd (City of Downey)	1.05 F	1.33 F	+21.1%
Artesia Blvd (City of La Mirada)	1.04 F	1.20 F	+15.8%
<b>Orange County</b>			
State Route 55 (City of Tustin)	0.96 E	1.51 F	+36.4%
Alicia Pkwy (City of Mission Viejo)	1.19 F	1.44 F	+17.3%
Camino Estrella (City of San Clemente)	1.35 F	1.19 F	- 11.9%
<b>San Diego County</b>			
Tamarack Ave (City of Carlsbad)	1.07 F	0.91 E	- 15.0%
Via De La Valle (City of San Diego)	1.08 F	0.86 D	- 21.0%
Balboa Ave (City of San Diego)	1.05 F	0.71 C	- 33.0%

Summary descriptions of the existing and No-Project traffic, transit, circulation, and parking conditions are provided below. Traffic and circulation in station areas are analyzed for both the No-Project and Rail Improvements Alternative. For a more detailed discussion of traffic data in the region under existing, No-Project, and Rail Improvements Alternative, see the LOSSAN Region technical report<sup>3</sup>.

### **Intercity Highway Segments**

Under existing conditions, during a.m. peak periods, seven of the eight locations analyzed are operating at LOS F, and the remaining location (I-5 at SR-55) is operating at LOS E with a V/C ratio of 0.96, approaching LOS F (V/C of 1.0 or more), as shown in Table 3.1-2. These conditions are not expected to improve under the No-Project Alternative; on average, V/C ratios are projected to increase by 12% at these locations, reflecting more severe congestion and longer congested peak periods. There are three exceptions to this projected condition under the No-Project Alternative: significant freeway and transit system expansions are underway along I-5 in San Diego County, resulting in a lower LOS at the screenlines of Tamarack Avenue and Via de la Valle, and should the SR-241 Toll Road in Orange County be connected to the I-5, it may assist in improving the LOS along I-5 through San Clemente, as shown by the screenline at

<sup>3</sup> California High Speed Rail Authority, *Traffic, Transit, Circulation & Parking Technical Evaluation*, 2004

Camino Estrella. These improvements could improve the existing LOS F condition to LOS D and E, respectively.

### **Intercity Rail Stations**

Traffic conditions are expected to worsen at the station sites, with the exception of four stations, where funded roadway improvements will result in improved conditions under the No-Project Alternative. The station sites where improvements are expected are Norwalk Station (V/C ratio would improve from 0.71 to 0.70, LOS C under both conditions), the Fullerton Transportation Center (0.84 to 0.77, LOS D to LOS C), the Anaheim Transportation Center (0.55 to 0.50, LOS A under both conditions), and the proposed University Towne Centre Station (0.68 to 0.65, LOS B under both conditions).

### **Transit, Goods Movement, and Parking**

Based on the existing number of transit routes, frequencies, and span of service, no significant impact on public transit services is projected if no significant improvements to existing public transit service were provided under No-Project.

Most delay impacts on goods movement would occur in Los Angeles County and north Orange County, where heavy freight received at the Ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach exits the region en route to destinations throughout the nation. Potential negative impacts on goods movement in south Orange County are projected to occur because the higher vehicular traffic on I 5, which is forecast under the No-Project Alternative, would not be met by a corresponding increase in the capacity of transportation facilities.

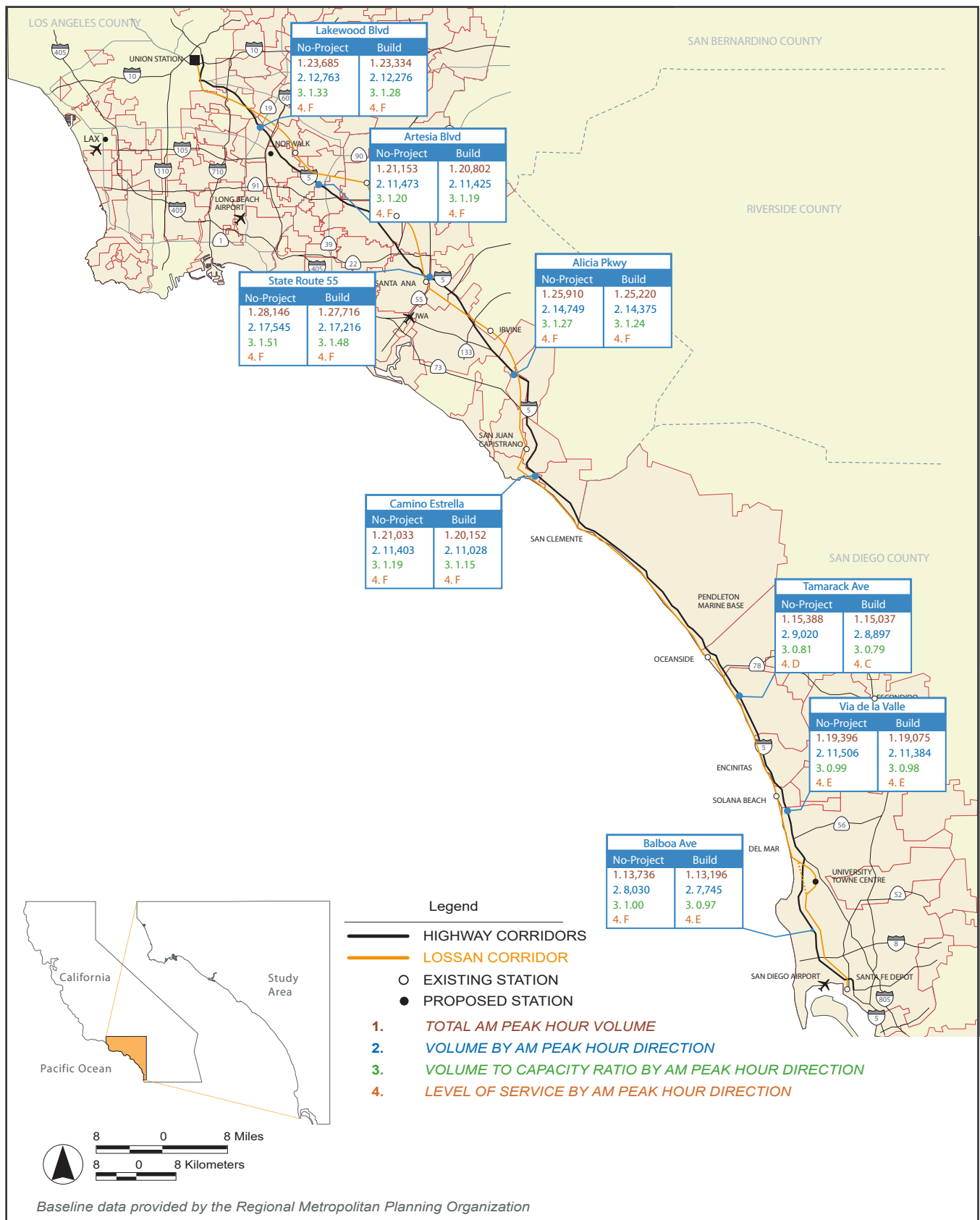
With the exception of the Norwalk and San Juan Capistrano Stations, no parking impacts are projected under the No-Project Alternative. The Norwalk Station is projected to have medium parking impacts due to land constraints potentially inhibiting the construction of additional parking spaces, and the San Juan Capistrano Station is projected to have high parking impacts, because there is little land around the existing station area that can be developed to meet the projected parking demand due to the proximity of historical resources.<sup>4</sup>

## **B. NO-PROJECT ALTERNATIVE COMPARED TO THE RAIL IMPROVEMENTS ALTERNATIVE**

The No-Project Alternative represents the future baseline condition. It is assumed that any improvements associated with the proposed Rail Improvements Alternative would be in addition to the No-Project condition. As shown in Figure 3.1-2, on the following page, the proposed Rail Improvements Alternative would improve traffic at the intercity screenlines compared to the No-Project Alternative. Long-term potential impacts related to the No-Project Alternative could potentially be alleviated by the Rail Improvements Alternative through the diversion of some automobile trips to the intercity rail system.

<sup>4</sup> California High Speed Rail Authority, *Traffic, Transit, Circulation and Parking Technical Evaluation*, May 2003





Source : June, 2004 - California Department of Transportation

FIGURE 3.1-2

## Year 2020 Rail Improvements Alternative

LOSSAN Rail Corridor Improvements  
Program Environmental Impact Report / Environmental Impact Statement



As summarized in Table 3.1-3, the average V/C ratio improvement is anticipated to be between 1% and 4% under the Rail Improvements Alternative. The differences within the region are directly related to the volume of demand. Segments with less demand will experience greater changes in levels of service with the proposed improvements compared to segments with higher demand.

**Table 3.1-3**  
**Change in Traffic Congestion or Intercity Highway Segments**  
**No-Project Conditions Compared to the Rail Improvements Alternative**

Selected Screenlines Along Interstate 5	No-Project V/C, LOS	Rail Improvements Alternative V/C, LOS	% Change from No-Project
<b>Los Angeles County</b>			
Lakewood Blvd (City of Downey)	1.33 F	1.28 F	- 3.8%
Artesia Blvd (City of La Mirada)	1.20 F	1.19 F	- 0.8%
<b>Orange County</b>			
State Route 55 (City of Tustin)	1.51 E	1.48 F	- 2.0%
Alicia Pkwy (City of Mission Viejo)	1.44 F	1.41 F	- 2.1%
Camino Estrella (City of San Clemente)	1.19 F	1.15 F	- 3.4%
<b>San Diego County</b>			
Tamarack Ave (City of Carlsbad)	0.81 D	C	- 2.5%
Via De La Valle (City of San Diego)	0.99 E	0.98 E	- 1.0%
Balboa Ave (City of San Diego)	1.00 F	0.97 E	- 3.0%

The Rail Improvements Alternative would help to reduce the long-term impacts on freeways by providing a viable alternative to the automobile, which could in turn divert some intercity automobile trips to the rail system. It is possible that the improved rail system could attract additional trips which could cause some increased station area traffic and some additional diversion from Interstate 5. It is also possible that increased transportation system capacity with the Rail Improvements Alternative could induce additional trips not accounted for in the Regional Model highway demand.

In addition to helping to improve highway capacity by potentially reducing traffic, the Rail Improvement Alternatives would eliminate traffic delays at existing at-grade crossings along the LOSSAN corridor by grade-separating the crossings. The grade separations would also improve the reliability of both the vehicle trips crossing the rail corridor and the intercity, commuter and freight trips within the corridor.

Overall, as summarized in Table 3.1-3, although highway conditions would improve under the Rail Improvements Alternative, the general conditions would remain at poor levels of service with V/C ratios of more than 1.0, on average, for the region. As discussed above, the conditions shown in the evaluation may not always reflect the experiences of travelers at any particular place at any specific time. For example, localized capacity restrictions (e.g., bottlenecks at a given interchange) are not well represented in regional traffic models. In addition, incidents on the road, such as accidents and vehicle breakdowns, are not represented in the regional traffic models. These non-recurring incidents are unpredictable and are responsible for the majority of congestion on urban highway networks.

Goods movement and transit have some minor regional or local impacts; however on average, the potential effects of the Rail Improvements Alternative would be negligible. Planning provisions were made for parking at station areas under the Rail Improvements Alternative respectively; consequently there should be little effect on the existing parking supplies.

### 3.1.4 Comparison of Alternatives

This section summarizes key findings comparing the Rail Improvements Alternative to the No-Project Alternative, based on traffic, circulation, and parking. For detailed summary tables associated with this analysis, see Appendix 3.1-A.

#### Intercity Highway Segments

Under the Rail Improvements Alternative, traffic congestion is projected to improve slightly on the intercity highway segments compared to the No-Project Alternative. The most significant changes would occur on I-5 at Balboa Avenue (in the City of San Diego) and on I-5 at Tamarack Avenue (in the City of Carlsbad), where the level of service would improve from LOS F to LOS E and from LOS D to LOS C, respectively.

#### Intercity Rail Stations

The Rail Improvements Alternative would cause no significant changes in levels of service or V/C ratios within the station areas compared to No-Project, except at the proposed San Juan Capistrano station, where the level of service would degrade from LOS E to LOS F without further improvement to local roads.

#### Transit, Goods Movement, and Parking

The Rail Improvements Alternative would cause no significant impacts on public transportation or goods movement compared to the No-Project Alternative.

Except at the San Juan Capistrano station, parking capacity at each station is projected to meet the demand of travelers under the Rail Improvements Alternative; there would be no significant change compared to No-Project. Under the Rail Improvements Alternative, potential parking impacts could occur at the new Trabuco Creek station in San Juan Capistrano. Impacts at these stations are due to the lack of available land around the station areas to provide sufficient parking capacity. However, the Trabuco Creek station in San Juan Capistrano would be located in close proximity to the downtown parking structure and surface lots and may still be able to utilize these locations to provide for additional parking. Additional parking was added at the Norwalk Station in 2005.

## A. ALIGNMENT OPTION COMPARISON

For the purposes of this analysis, one “build” alternative was assumed, as in most cases the differences between the low- and high-build alternatives are minor. However, of the improvements identified for the LOSSAN corridor, three locations present significant differences in alignment options and transportation impacts.

### **San Juan Capistrano**

Two design options exist in the city of San Juan Capistrano, in addition to the “No-Project” (maintaining the existing conditions) option:

#### **I-5 Tunnel**

This option would bypass the downtown area of the City of San Juan Capistrano completely by realigning the railroad right-of-way in a bored-tunnel beneath Interstate 5. This option accommodates the possibility of retaining the existing single-track line and service through downtown San Juan Capistrano. However, there would not be an intercity station provided along the I-5 tunnel bypass of San Juan Capistrano.

The benefits and impacts associated with this option include:

- Reduced intercity passenger service to San Juan Capistrano;
- Reduced local traffic related to station parking;
- Increased congestion on Interstate 5 as result of the use of the freeway to access the next nearest station; and
- Increased parking and traffic congestion in Irvine.

#### **Trabuco Creek Cut and Cover Tunnel**

This option would realign the existing alignment through San Juan Capistrano’s downtown to the west, loosely following the east bank of Trabuco Creek. It would provide a replacement station due west of the existing station.

The benefits and impacts associated with this option include:

- Only access to new station would be from Del Obispo; and
- Limited land for parking, however the existing parking structure and surface lots in downtown could be retained as the distance is between 1,500 and 2,000 feet away from the station along Trabuco Creek.

### **San Clemente / Dana Point**

Two design options exist in the San Clemente/Dana Point area, in addition to the “No-Project” (maintaining the existing conditions) option.

#### **Short Tunnel – I-5**

This option would straighten the Dana Point curve, and double-track the corridor along the existing right-of-way until just north of the San Clemente Metrolink station, where the alignment would begin to enter into a trench and then turn inland, tunneling just north of

Avenida Pico, where a new station would be provided in an open trench. The alignment would remain in a twin-bored tunnel beneath the Interstate 5 right-of-way, until rejoining the existing LOSSAN corridor near San Onofre Creek.

The benefits and impacts associated with this option include:

- The relocation and consolidation of the two existing San Clemente rail stations into one; and
- Beach access would become more difficult from the stations, however easier access to the freeway would be provided.

#### Long Split Tunnel - with Station

This option is comprised of two tunnels located beneath the right-of-way of Interstate 5 between Avenida Aeropuerto in San Juan Capistrano and San Onofre Creek. The split in the tunnels would occur at Avenida Pico, allowing for a new station in San Clemente.

The benefits and impacts associated with this option include:

- The relocation and consolidation of the two existing San Clemente rail stations into one;
- Beach access would become more difficult from the stations, however easier access to the freeway would be provided; and
- Pier Bowl area of San Clemente would be relieved of station traffic impacts.

#### University Towne Centre

Two design options exist in the University Towne Centre (UTC) area, in addition to the No-Project Alternative.

#### University Towne Centre Tunnel

This option would bypass the existing curves through Sorrento Valley and Miramar by tunneling under the University Towne Centre business and shopping complex, roughly following beneath the right-of-way of Genesee Avenue. As part of this option, an underground multi-modal facility is planned that would offer a new intercity passenger rail stop, as well as provide for new Coaster commuter rail station and provide increased multi-modal connectivity with transit and Bus Rapid Transit/Light Rail services planned for the University City area, which is a major employment center and consists of dense residential neighborhoods located near the campus of the University of California, San Diego (UCSD).

The benefits and impacts associated with this option include:

- A new station that would serve the businesses in and around Sorrento Valley and the University;
- Increase in traffic impacts due to the new station; and
- Relieve traffic congestion at the Solana Beach and downtown San Diego stations.



### Interstate 5 Tunnel

This option would bypass the existing curves through Sorrento Valley and Miramar by tunneling beneath the right-of-way of Interstate 5. This option would deviate from the existing right-of-way near the Sorrento Valley Coaster station and exit into a covered trench at the western edge of Rose Canyon.

The benefits and impacts associated with this option include:

- No additional station would be added, potentially increasing the traffic impacts at both the Solana Beach and downtown San Diego stations.

## **3.1.5 Mitigation Strategies**

Currently, regional planning agencies and the counties and cities in the region have considerable flexibility to deal with identified traffic, transit, and parking impacts. The Department could participate in developing potential construction and operational mitigation measures in consultation with state, federal, regional and local governments and affected transit agencies during project level reviews

Potential mitigation measures could be developed to improve the flow of intercity travel on the primary routes and access to the stations. These improvements would be based on the forecast capacity deficiencies identified for the No-Project and Rail Improvements Alternative and could possibly employ some of the following approaches.

- Transportation System Management (TSM)/Signal Optimization (including retiming, rephrasing, and signal optimization); other measures may include turn prohibitions, use of one-way streets, and traffic diversion to alternate routes.
- Local spot widening of curves that allows for geometric improvements without significant right-of-way acquisition.
- Major intersection improvements (full lane widening), which require significant right-of-way acquisition to accommodate additional left-turn and/or through lanes.

V/C ratios on the major intercity routes identified in the system screenline analysis show the desirability of more capacity on several freeway segments under all alternatives. When considering measures for traffic mitigation, the increase in automobile congestion and lowered vehicle flows that would be caused by the Rail Improvements Alternative would be studied at the project level analysis in the context of providing an improved transportation system and would consider total passenger flow versus vehicle flow in the study area if the Rail Improvements Alternative is selected.

Project level environmental review would include consultation and coordination with public transit services in order to encourage the provision of adequate bus feeder routes to serve proposed station areas which could mitigate potential transit impacts.

## **3.1.6 Subsequent Analysis**

If the Rail Improvements Alternative is selected, subsequent multimodal access and circulation studies could be appropriate at all station areas as plans for alignments, stations, and operations are refined. Additional environmental analysis would be required in conjunction with these studies to ascertain the exact locations of potential project-generated traffic impacts and potential parking demand impacts. Station area circulation studies would be expected as part of project-level environmental documentation.

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### 3.10 CULTURAL AND PALEONTOLOGICAL RESOURCES

*Cultural resources* include prehistoric archaeological sites, historic archaeological sites, traditional cultural properties, and historic structures. *Paleontological resources* refer to resources in the fossil record, such as prehistoric remains and other evidence of past life. This section discusses the applicable federal and state laws and regulations that protect cultural and paleontological resources, including Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act and California Public Resources Code Sections 5024.1 and 21084.1, and assesses the potential for the proposed Rail Improvements Alternative to have impacts on these resources.

#### 3.10.1 Regulatory Requirements and Methods of Evaluation

##### A. REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS AND GUIDANCE REGARDING SIGNIFICANCE OF IMPACTS

###### Cultural Resources

The National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) (16 U.S.C. § 470 et seq.) established a national program to preserve the country's historical and cultural resources. Section 106 of the NHPA requires federal agencies to consider the effects of their actions on historic properties and provide the President's Advisory Council on Historic Preservation an opportunity to comment on a proposed action before it is implemented. Guidelines for implementing the Section 106 process are provided in 36 C.F.R. Part 800. Under both state and federal guidelines for cultural resources, impacts are considered potentially significant if the resource being impacted has been determined historically significant or potentially significant. Under state law, projects that would cause a substantial adverse change in the historical significance of a historical resource are considered projects that may have a significant effect on the environment for CEQA purposes.

Under federal regulations implementing NHPA Section 106 (36 C.F.R. § 800.4), significant cultural resources are those that are eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). The NRHP eligibility criteria (36 C.F.R. § 60.4) state that the quality of significance in American history, architecture, archaeology, and culture is present in districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects of state and local importance that possess integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, association, and that meet the following criteria.

- The resource is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- The resource is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- The resource embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction; represents the work of a master; possesses high artistic values; or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction.
- The resource has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important to prehistory or history.
- The resource is over 50 years old, unless it is exceptionally important.

Under CEQA, significant cultural resources are called *historical resources* whether they are of historic or prehistoric age. *Historical resources* are resources that are listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR) or that are listed in the historical register of a local jurisdiction (county or city). Sites in California that are listed in the NRHP are also listed in the CRHR (P.R.C. § 5024.1). Generally, a resource should be considered by a lead agency to be historically significant if the resource has integrity and meets one of the following criteria for CRHR listing (CEQA Guidelines § 15064.5[a][3]).

- The resource is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of California's history and cultural heritage and/or with the lives of persons important in California's past.
- The resource embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region, or method of construction; represents the work of an important creative individual; or possesses high artistic values.
- The resource has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

The NRHP and CRHR criteria are almost identical. Any resource determined eligible for the NRHP is also automatically eligible for the CRHR. However, the treatment of historical resources under CEQA and in the CRHR is more inclusive in that resources listed in local historical registers may be included.

Impacts on NRHP-eligible resources are adverse when "an undertaking may alter, directly or indirectly, any of the characteristics of a historic property that qualify the property for inclusion in the NRHP in a manner that would diminish the integrity of the property's location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, or association" (36 C.F.R. § 800.5[1]). Examples of adverse effects include physical destruction or damage to all or part of the property; alteration that is not consistent with the Secretary of the Interior's standards for the treatment of historic properties; removal of the property from its historic location; change in the type of use or of the physical characteristics of the setting; introduction of visual, atmospheric, or audible elements that diminish the integrity of the property's significant historic features; and neglect resulting in deterioration (36 C.F.R. § 800.5[2]). Historic properties include prehistoric archaeological sites. Archaeological sites are usually adversely affected only by physical destruction or damage, whereas all of the examples above can apply to historic buildings and structures.

Impacts on CRHR-listed and -eligible resources and resources listed in local historical registers constitute a significant effect on the environment (significant impacts that must be disclosed in a CEQA environmental document) if the project may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource. (P.R.C. § 21084.1). *Substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource* refers to "physical demolition, destruction, relocation, or alteration of the resource or its immediate surroundings such that [its] significance ... would be materially impaired" (CEQA Guidelines § 15064.5[b][1]). *Material impairment* means demolition of the resource, or alteration of the physical characteristics that make the resource eligible for listing such that it would no longer be eligible for the CRHR or a local historical register (CEQA Guidelines § 15064.5[b][2]).

### **Paleontological Resources**

The following United States statutes incorporate provisions for the protection of paleontological resources.

- Federal Antiquities Act of 1906 (16 U.S.C. § 431 et seq.): Establishes national monuments and reservation of lands that have historic landmarks, historic and prehistoric structures, and other objects of historic or scientific interest on federal lands. Section 433 prohibits appropriation, excavation, injury, or destruction of any historic or prehistoric ruin or monument, or any object of antiquity on federal land.
- National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (P.L. 91–190, 83 Stat. 852, 42 U.S.C. §§ 4321–4327): Mandates policies to “preserve important historic, cultural and natural aspects of our national heritage” (§ 101.b4).

In California, fossil resources are considered a limited, nonrenewable, highly sensitive scientific resource. The following state statutes incorporate provisions for the protection of paleontological resources.

- California Environmental Quality Act (P.R.C. § 21000 et seq.): Requires public agencies and private interests to identify the potential adverse impacts and/or environmental consequences of their proposed project(s) to any object or site that is historically or archaeologically significant or significant in the cultural or scientific annals of California (P.R.C. § 5020.1). Under CEQA, archaeological resources are presumed nonunique unless they meet the definition of “unique archaeological resources” (P.R.C. § 21083.2[g]). Under CEQA, an impact on a nonunique archaeological resource is not considered a significant environmental impact. An EIR need not discuss nonunique archaeological resources.
- CEQA Guidelines (14 C.C.R. § 15064.5 [a][3]): Provides that a lead agency may find that “any object, building, structure, site, area, place, record, or manuscript” is historically significant or significant in the “cultural annals of California.” The section also provides that, generally, a resource may be considered historically significant if it has yielded or may be likely to yield information important in prehistory. Paleontological resources fall within this broad category and are included in the CEQA checklist under *Cultural Resources*.
- Public Resources Code Section 5097.5: Prohibits excavation or removal of any “vertebrate paleontological site ... or any other archaeological, paleontological or historical feature, situated on public lands, except with the express permission of the public agency having jurisdiction over such lands.” *Public* lands include lands owned by or under the jurisdiction of the State of California or any city, county, district, authority, or public corporation, or any agency thereof. This section provides that any unauthorized disturbance or removal of paleontologic, archaeological, and/or historic materials or sites located on public lands, which violates the section, is a misdemeanor.
- Public Resources Code Section 30244: Requires reasonable mitigation of adverse impacts on paleontological resources resulting from development on public land in the Coastal Zone, as defined in Public Resources Code Section 30103.

## B. METHOD OF EVALUATION OF IMPACTS

### Archaeological Sites and Traditional Cultural Properties

In connection with the statewide High-Speed Rail Program EIR/EIS (as described in Chapter 2, *Alternatives*), the FRA and the California High-Speed Rail Authority initiated consultation<sup>1</sup> with the Office of Historic Preservation (SHPO) under Section 106 of the NHPA in November 2002 with a letter (Appendix 3.10-A) that proposed a phased identification effort for historic properties, as provided for in 36 C.F.R. Section 800.4 (b)(2), and requested the SHPO to designate an appropriate area of potential effect (APE) for the records search and analysis for this Program EIR/EIS. The SHPO was also consulted about the method of evaluation for this Program EIR/EIS. The FRA and the Authority also initiated consultation<sup>2</sup> with the Native American Heritage Commission for a search of their Sacred Lands file and lists of Native American contacts, as required by 36 C.F.R. Section 800.4(a)(4). The contacts were sent letters providing information about the proposed project alternatives and requesting information about any traditional cultural properties that could be affected by the project (36 C.F.R. § 800.4[a][4]).

In addition, information from records searches was obtained from the appropriate California Historical Resources Information System (CHRIS) Information Centers. The records searches identified the general locations of archaeological sites in the APE. The number of archaeological sites within the APE for each alignment option was tabulated and used as an indicator of potential sensitivity for the comparison of the relative degree of potential impacts or effects for each alignment. For this program-level analysis, individual archaeological sites were not evaluated for eligibility. Instead, the archaeological sites identified as a result of the records searches were considered potentially eligible for listing in the CRHR or the NRHP, and the number of archaeological sites per linear mile identified in the APE was used as one indicator of the relative degree of potential impacts on cultural resources from construction or operation of the Rail Improvements Alternative. Impacts to NRHP-eligible archaeological resources include physical destruction or damage. The total number of archaeological sites in the APE for the corridor was divided by the total length of the corridor being evaluated to arrive at an average number of sites (or proportion of sites) per mile.

The cultural resource specialist's knowledge and background of regional prehistory supplemented the records search results. For example, if the cultural resource specialist has previous experience that numerous sites have been identified along a particular river drainage in the region, but the records search did not yield formally recorded sites in CHRIS within the APE for a particular alignment option, the cultural resource specialist documented the additional information and, based on it, increased the rating for that corridor. The proposed type of construction was also taken into account, based on relative differences in surface or near-surface disturbance. For alignment options that include tunneling, it is likely that the tunneled portions would avoid most impacts to cultural resources due to the depth of the tunneling. At-grade options would disturb the

<sup>1</sup> The initiation of consultation with the SHPO was done in the context of the statewide high-speed rail program described in Chapter 2. The designation of an APE for the project applied to the LOSSAN region as well as the other regions involved in the statewide study. A separate consultation process would be completed by the Department for the project-level assessment stage.

<sup>2</sup> The consultation with the Native American Heritage Commission was also undertaken in the context of the statewide high-speed rail program, and was utilized in development of this LOSSAN Rail Improvements Program EIR/EIS. Continued consultation would be undertaken by the Department during the project-level assessment stage.



ground surface, and trenching would be more likely than at-grade work to disturb subsurface cultural resources.

Traditional cultural properties were assessed on a presence/absence basis using record searches of CHRIS repositories for each alignment option. Because no traditional cultural properties were identified in the APE of any of the alignment options, these resources did not affect rankings of alignments in this program-level assessment.

### **Historic Structures**

Structures from the historic period consist of houses, outbuildings, stores, offices, factories, barns, corrals, mines, dams, bridges, roads, and other facilities that served residential, commercial, industrial, agricultural, transportation, and other functions during the historic period (more than 50 years ago). Specific structures from the historic period were not identified for this program-level analysis. Instead, the percentage, based on linear miles, of each alignment option that passed through areas that originally developed in specific, predefined historical time periods (before 1900, 1900 to 1929, and 1930 to 1958) was determined from historical maps, aerial photographs, and local planning documents of the history of the region. The percentages were used as indicators, along with known National Register Historic Districts and listed eligible properties, of the potential for a alignment to impact potentially eligible structures from the historical time periods

### **Paleontological Resources**

*Paleontological resources* determined to be significant are fossils or assemblages of fossils that are unique, unusual, rare, uncommon, and diagnostically or stratigraphically (layers of the earth's surface) important, and/or those that add to an existing body of knowledge in specific areas—stratigraphically, taxonomically, and/or regionally.

Literature research and institutional records searches or geologic maps and geographic data from the University of California Museum of Paleontology in Berkeley have resulted in the designation of areas within the APE as having *high*, *low*, or *undetermined* paleontologic sensitivity, as follows.

- **High**: Sedimentary units with a high potential for containing significant nonrenewable paleontological resources. In these cases the sedimentary rock unit contains a high density of recorded vertebrate fossil sites, has produced vertebrate fossil remains within the study area and/or vicinity, and is very likely to yield additional remains within the study area.
- **Low**: The rock unit contains no or very low density of recorded resource localities, has produced little or no fossil remains within the study area and/or vicinity, and is not likely to yield any remains within the study area.
- **Undetermined**: The rock unit has had limited exposure(s) in the study area and has been little studied, and there are no known recorded paleontological resource localities. However, in other areas, the same or a similar rock unit contains sufficient paleontological resource localities to suggest that exposures to disturbance of the unit within the right-of-way have potential to yield fossil remains.

The number of rock units (formations) having high paleontologic sensitivity and the number of paleontological resource localities recorded within the study area were assessed to provide an accurate interpretation of the overall ranking of high, low, or undetermined potential to impact significant nonrenewable paleontological resources. This evaluation was reached using both the numbers of formations and localities and incorporating professional assessments regarding the significance of recovered resources from exposed rock units and the likelihood of these rock units to contain additional paleontological resources.

### 3.10.2 Affected Environment

#### A. STUDY AREA DEFINED: AREA OF POTENTIAL EFFECT

The study area for cultural resources is the APE that was defined in consultation with the SHPO. At this program level of analysis, information for the APE about the locations of archaeological sites was obtained from the Information Centers of the CHRIS, administered by the California Department of Parks and Recreation. The CHRIS database includes all resources listed in the CRHR; all resources in California listed in or eligible for listing in the NRHP; and traditional cultural properties, including some Native American traditional cultural sites, identified through consultation with the California Department of Parks and Recreation (Section 106 of NHPA), the SHPO (P.R.C. § 5042 et seq.) or the Native American Heritage Commission.

Based on consultation with the SHPO, the APE for cultural resources for the proposed Rail Improvements Alternative is as follows.

- 500 ft (152 m) on each side of the centerline of proposed new rail routes where additional right-of-way could be needed.
- 100 ft (30 m) on each side of the centerline for routes along existing highways and railroads where very little additional right-of-way would be needed.
- 100 ft (30 m) feet around station locations.

The study area for paleontological resources under the Rail Improvements Alternative is 100 ft (30 m) on each side of the centerline of proposed alignment options (including station locations), in both non-urban and urban areas. The study area for paleontological resources is limited to the area that would potentially be disturbed by earthwork construction activities.

#### B. CULTURAL RESOURCE CATEGORIES

The following topics are covered in this section

- Prehistoric archaeological sites
- Historic archaeological sites
- Traditional cultural properties
- Historic structures
- Paleontological resources

The following paragraphs briefly describe each type of resource.

### **Prehistoric Archaeological Sites**

*Prehistoric archaeological sites* in California are places where Native Americans lived or carried out activities during the prehistoric period before 1769 AD. Prehistoric sites contain artifacts and subsistence remains, and they may contain human burials. Artifacts are objects made by people and include tools (projectile points, scrapers, and grinding implements, for example), waste products from making flaked stone tools (debitage), and nonutilitarian artifacts (beads, ornaments, ceremonial items, and rock art). Subsistence remains include the inedible portions of foods, such as animal bone and shell, and edible parts that were lost and not consumed, such as charred seeds.

### **Historic Archaeological Sites**

*Historic archaeological sites* in California are places where human activities were carried out during the historic period between 1769 AD and 50 years ago. Some of these sites may be the result of Native American activities during the historic period, but most are the result of Spanish, Mexican, or Anglo-American activities. Other sites may be the result of Asian and African American groups. Most historic archaeological sites are places where houses formerly existed and contain ceramic, metal, and glass refuse resulting from the transport, preparation, and consumption of food. Such sites can also contain house foundations and structural remnants, such as windowpane glass, lumber, and nails. Historical archaeological sites can also be nonresidential, resulting from ranching, farming, industrial, and other activities.

### **Traditional Cultural Properties**

*Traditional cultural properties* are places associated with the cultural practices or beliefs of a living community that are rooted in that community's history and are important in maintaining the continuing cultural identity of the community. Examples include locations "associated with the traditional beliefs of a Native American group about its origins, its cultural history, or the nature of the world" and locations "where Native American religious practitioners have historically gone, and are known or thought to go today, to perform ceremonial activities in accordance with traditional cultural rules of practice" (Parker and King 1990). Traditional cultural properties are identified by consulting with Native American groups that have a history of using an area, as well as the Native American Heritage Commission, the Sacred Lands File, and tribal representatives.

### **Historic Structures**

*Historic structures* consist of houses, outbuildings, stores, offices, factories, barns, corrals, mines, dams, bridges, roads, and other facilities that served residential, commercial, industrial, agricultural, transportation, and other functions during historic periods (more than 50 years ago). The historic periods correspond to the principal architectural styles seen in California: before 1900 (pre-Victorian and Victorian), 1900 to 1929 (Craftsman/bungalow), and 1930 to 1958 (commercial modern and residential ranch style).

### **Paleontological Resources**

*Paleontological resources* are the fossilized remains of animals and plants. They are typically found in sedimentary rock units, and they provide information about the evolution of life on earth over the past 500 million years or more.

### **Cultural Landscapes**

Cultural Landscapes include (and are not mutually exclusive of) historic sites, historic designated landscapes, historic vernacular landscapes, and ethnographic landscapes. Cultural Landscapes are not specifically evaluated in this Program-level document, but are considered a resource that could be potentially affected by the proposed Rail Improvements, and would be considered in the site-specific evaluations at the project level.

## **C. CULTURAL RESOURCES IN THE STUDY AREA**

The California Historical Resources Information System (CHRIS) information centers were a primary source of data for the identification of historic properties and archaeological resources in the cultural resources study area.

### **Archaeological Resources**

As described above, information on the numbers, kinds, and locations of archaeological sites for this Program EIR/EIS was obtained from CHRIS. For the most part, the data from the CHRIS provide archaeological site information only for areas that have been previously surveyed by archaeologists. No archaeological field surveys were conducted for this Program EIR/EIS. However, surveys would be a part of the next stage of environmental review in the project-level evaluation (see Section 3.10.5).

The LOSSAN region includes the a portion of the Los Angeles basin and the coastal areas of southern California between Orange County and San Diego, generally following the existing LOSSAN rail corridor. The Milling Stone Period along the southern California coast (about 5000 BC to 1000 BC or from 7,000 to 3,000 years ago) was characterized by smaller, more mobile groups compared to later periods. The period from 1000 BC to AD 750 (3,000 years ago to 1,350 years ago) is known archaeologically as the Intermediate Period. More specifically, in the Los Angeles Basin, perhaps the earliest evidence of human occupation was recovered from the tar pits of Rancho La Brea. In 1914, the partial skeleton of a young woman was discovered in association with a mano. In the 1970s, a collagen sample from the skeleton was dated at circa 9,000 years old. In addition, projectile points similar to those found in the desert dating from 10,000 to 7,000 years ago, as well as crescent-shaped flaked tools, called crescentics, have been recovered from bluffs near Ballona Lagoon. The presence of these point types along the coast suggests connections between what is now the Los Angeles area and the cultures of the southeastern California desert regions during this early period.

The cultural elements of Orange County reflect both unique cultural traits and a mixture of regional influences. The Paleo-Coastal Period is best seen in Orange County at a site located on the Pacific Coast where dates show evidence of habitation by 8,000 years ago. During the Milling Stone Period, coastal lagoons supported large populations; local

variations have been grouped as the La Jolla Complex<sup>3</sup> and the Encinitas Tradition. The Encinitas Tradition reflects coastal adaptations and is seen from San Diego to Santa Barbara. Environmental conditions between 2000 and 1000 BC (the Intermediate Period) forced a shift of habitation locations away from the coast with more emphasis on bays and inland areas, as is also evidenced in San Diego County. Late Period sites, from 1,350 years ago, reflect an increase in population density and a shift to more sedentary habitation. In coastal Orange County, the Irvine Complex reflects a coastally oriented adaptation; the San Luis Rey Complex reflects an inland-oriented lifeway.

The prehistory of coastal San Diego County begins with the San Dieguito Complex. The San Dieguito Complex was originally thought to represent big game hunters who moved to the San Diego County coastal area from the Great Basin during Early Holocene time (8,000 to 10,000 years before present (BP) or 10,000–5,000 BC). This movement occurred when warmer, drier conditions resulted in desiccation of the pluvial lakes in the Great Basin. Although it was thought that big game hunting continued after these people arrived on the coast during Early Holocene time, more recent investigations at Early Holocene sites closer to the coast has shown that a wide range of plant foods, along with small and medium-sized terrestrial mammals, fish, and shellfish, were being exploited in these sites. Population size was likely low, with relatively little competition for resources. Therefore, small groups probably moved throughout the coastal area and the area inland of the coastal hills and mountains to wherever the best resources were available at the time.

Archaeological sites occupied between 3,000 and 8,000 years ago on the San Diego County coast belong to the La Jolla Complex. Most La Jolla Complex sites are located around the coastal lagoons, which began filling with seawater at the beginning of this period because of a rise in the sea level, as the ice caps melted at the end of the last ice age. Most sites around lagoons on the San Diego County coast were abandoned about 3,000 years ago. However, sites around Peñasquitos Lagoon and San Diego Bay continued to be occupied because these two southern bay/estuary systems did not fill with sediment. Still, in general, there are few sites in the coastal region that date to the period between 1,300 and 3,000 BP. Little is known about settlement and subsistence during this period of San Diego County prehistory.

Prehistoric archaeological sites types commonly found along the rail improvement alignment options in the LOSSAN region include lithic scatters<sup>4</sup>, milling stations<sup>5</sup>, shell middens<sup>6</sup> and quarries<sup>7</sup>. Less common are habitation or village sites, which can include midden, rock features and in some cases human burials.

The Late Period (200 to 1,300 BP in this area) is characterized by a more sedentary settlement system and a more intensive use of available resources. The large villages,

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<sup>3</sup> *Complex* refers to a group or association of artifacts and subsistence remains that are characteristic of a specific period of time and geographic area.

<sup>4</sup> *Lithic scatter* refers to a site containing general utility implements such as projectile points, bifaces, expedient flake tools, and debitage.

<sup>5</sup> *Milling station* is a location with bedrock mortars or milling slicks, used to process floral, and perhaps faunal, resources.

<sup>6</sup> *Midden* refers to a mound or deposit containing shells, animal bones, and other refuse that indicates the site of a human settlement.

<sup>7</sup> A quarry is a source of geologic material, such as obsidian, quartzite, chert, or basalt, used by Native Americans for manufacture, as well as debitage or other debris from this manufacture.

occupied almost year-round, that were observed by the Spanish in 1769 AD developed during this period.

The LOSSAN region traverses the territories of several Native American tribes. The Los Angeles Basin was part of territory occupied by the Tongva Native American groups (renamed Gabrielinos by early explorers, missionaries, and settlers) when the Spanish arrived in AD 1769. Tongva settlement and subsistence systems may extend back in time to the beginning of the Late Prehistoric Period about AD 750. The Juaneño, usually considered a sub-tribe of the Gabrielino, occupied a territory immediately to the south of the Gabrielino proper, and shared many of the same social and religious structures. The Luiseño, like the Gabrielino, were a Shoshonean people. Luiseño tribal territory is located to the south of the Gabrielino, extending from the ocean, skirting around the Juaneño territory, north to Santiago Peak and south to Palomar Mountain. San Diego County is the traditional territory occupied by the Kumeyaay or Diegueño people. This Native American tribe is a Yuman-speaking group of the Hokan stock.

### **Historic Structures**

Originally California was a Spanish colony. Spanish settlement began in 1769 with the Portola Expedition. As a result of this expedition, 21 missions and several presidios (forts) and towns were established near the coast between San Diego and Sonoma. One of the missions, San Juan Capistrano, is located near the rail improvement alignment options through San Juan Capistrano. (See Chapter 2, *Alternatives*, for maps of the alignment options.)

During their occupation of the area, the Spanish made a few land grants to retired soldiers. In addition, after Mexico became independent from Spain in 1821, the Mexican government dissolved the mission system in 1834 and began granting the former mission lands to Mexican citizens and others for use as cattle ranches. Many of the grantees built adobe houses on their land grants, some of which survive today. The few towns and presidios founded by the Spanish, including Los Angeles (town) and San Diego (presidio), continued to grow slowly. As a result of the Treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo, California became part of the United States in 1848.

Southern California remained largely a cattle ranching area until the arrival of the Southern Pacific Railroad from San Francisco via the San Joaquin Valley in 1876, and from Yuma, Arizona, and points east in 1878. The number of immigrants to southern California dramatically increased in the late 1880s because of cheap railroad fares that resulted from a rate war between the Southern Pacific Railroad and the Atchison, Topeka, and Santa Fe (AT&SF) Railroad. The AT&SF Railroad arrived in southern California in 1886 and extended to Richmond in the Bay Area in 1900. One result of the immigration of large numbers of people to California in the 1880s was the development of new towns along the railroad routes and the construction of houses in the Victorian style in these towns and in the previously established urban centers, including Los Angeles.

Continued urban expansion in conjunction with the first widespread use of automobiles resulted in construction of numerous houses in the Craftsman bungalow style farther from the original urban cores during the 1910s and 1920s. The Spanish Colonial Revival style also became popular in the 1920s and continued into the 1930s. Use of automobiles led to linear commercial strips along arterials and shopping centers at major



intersections. These buildings, as well as office buildings, were often built in zigzag moderne (art deco) and streamline moderne styles in the 1930s and 1940s. Residences were built in ranch style with an open plan (combined living and dining rooms) beginning in the 1940s. In the 1950s, suburbs expanded with the advent of builders' tract homes, mostly in ranch style, where a limited number of plans were standardized and repeated throughout the tract.

Historic structures in the LOSSAN region are primarily 20th-century (1900 to 1929 and 1930 to 1958) residential, commercial, and industrial structures located within cities. Large tracts of residential houses are most common, with industrial and commercial structures largely confined to existing railroad rights-of-way in the Los Angeles and San Diego areas. However, many of the medium-sized cities of the region, such as Anaheim, Fullerton, and San Clemente, began as small towns in the late 19th or early 20th century. The historic core areas of cities in this region commonly preserve some buildings from this time period.

Structures dating to the period before 1900 are rare. As in other parts of southern California, structures from this time period were sparse in much of this region and were built in perishable vernacular (wood frame) styles. However, there are notable exceptions, especially the Spanish and Mexican Period development in downtown San Juan Capistrano (1769 to 1848) around Mission San Juan Capistrano (founded in 1776) and the Hispanic to American Transition Period (1848 to 1870) development along the waterfront of San Diego, and Old Town San Diego. In the largest cities of the region, Los Angeles and San Diego, large sections of houses and commercial structures built before 1900 have been replaced by subsequent development.

### **Paleontological Resources**

California's rich geologic record and complex geologic history has resulted in exposure of many rock units with high paleontologic sensitivity at the surface. The fossil record in California is exceptionally prolific; abundant fossils representing a diverse range of organisms have been recovered from rocks as old as 1 billion years to as recent as 11,000 years. These fossils have provided key data for charting the course of the evolution and extinction of various types of life on the planet, both locally and globally, as well as for determining paleoenvironmental conditions, sequences and timing of sedimentary deposition, and other details of geologic history.

Formations in the LOSSAN region with the potential to yield fossils are summarized below. More detailed information is provided in the LOSSAN technical report for paleontological resources.

- The Ardath Shale and Scripps Formation along the rail segments from Highway 52 to San Diego, with shark, ray, bony fish, marine microorganism and macroinvertebrate, rhinoceros, artiodactyl, brontothere, uintathere, crocodile, turtle, as well as wood fossils.
- The Delmar Formation in Del Mar and between the I-5/805 Split and Highway 52, with estuarine vertebrate and invertebrate, aquatic reptile, and rhinoceros fossils.
- The Torrey Sandstone from Encinitas to Solana Beach and Del Mar, with plant and marine invertebrate fossils.

- The San Mateo Formation at Camp Pendleton, with horse, camel, peccary, llama, sea cow, fur seal, walrus, sea otter, sea bird, whale, dolphin, shark, ray, bony fish, and marine invertebrate fossils.
- The Capistrano Formation from Irvine to San Juan Capistrano, Dana Point, San Clemente, Camp Pendleton, Oceanside, and Carlsbad, with whale, walrus, sea cow, fur seal, sea bird, shark, ray, bony fish, and kelp fossils.
- The Niguel Formation from Irvine to San Juan Capistrano, with marine mollusk and marine vertebrate fossils.
- The San Diego Formation along Highway 52 to San Diego, with shark, ray, bony fish, marine invertebrate, sea bird, walrus, fur seal, cow, whale, dolphin, terrestrial mammal, wood, and leaf fossils.
- The Lindavista Formation along I-5/I-805, with marine invertebrate, shark, and whale fossils.
- The Bay Point Formation along Highway 52 to San Diego, with shark, ray, bony fish, and mollusk fossils.
- Unnamed marine terrace deposits from Camp Pendleton through Encinitas and Solana Beach to the Santa Fe Depot in San Diego, with marine invertebrate, shark, ray, bony fish, and terrestrial mammal fossils.

### 3.10.3 Environmental Consequences

#### A. EXISTING CONDITIONS COMPARED TO NO-PROJECT ALTERNATIVE

The No-Project Alternative is composed of transportation projects other than the proposed Rail Improvements that are projected to be completed between the time of this EIR/EIS and 2020, including local, state, and interstate transportation system improvements designated in existing plans and programs. No additional impacts on cultural resources would occur under No-Project beyond those addressed in environmental documents for those projects.

Because it was not realistically feasible for this Program EIR/EIS to identify or quantify all the impacts on or mitigation activities for cultural resources associated with all of the projects considered as part of the No-Project Alternative, the existing condition was used to represent the No-Project conditions. It is possible that other transportation projects (not including the Rail Improvements Alternative) may impact some existing cultural resources by 2020, and that these changes to the baseline would be described and quantified in subsequent environmental analysis and reflected in future database information. This Program EIR/EIS addresses the potential effect on cultural resources as they exist at present and uses this information to compare the potential for impacts from the alignment options of the Rail Improvements Alternative.

#### B. NO-PROJECT ALTERNATIVE COMPARED TO RAIL IMPROVEMENTS ALTERNATIVE

The Rail Improvements Alternative would potentially impact archaeological resources and historic structures as a result of construction including grading, cutting, tunneling, and erecting pylons for elevated track, as well as station construction or expansion. Overall, the Rail Improvements Alternative is ranked as high in terms of the presence of

archaeological resources, historic structures, and paleontological resources that could potentially be impacted. This Alternative's potential impact on historic structures is evaluated as higher than the No-Project Alternative because the Rail Improvements Alternative would use or be adjacent to the existing LOSSAN rail corridor which was developed during historic periods and tends to be surrounded by historic structures. Cumulative impacts are possible because the combined impacts from the Rail Improvements Alternative, projects anticipated or planned for under No-Project, and other residential and commercial development projects in the study area can be expected to be greater than from the Rail Improvements Alternative alone.

Potential impacts to historic properties during operation of the Rail Improvements Alternative would be related to noise or visual impacts, discussed in Sections 3.4 and 3.7, respectively, of this EIR/EIS, although increases in these types of impacts over existing levels are limited by the long history of rail noise and visual presence in the LOSSAN corridor.

The Rail Improvements Alternative would have greater potential impacts on cultural resources than the No-Project Alternative. Although many of the potential impacts could be avoided or minimized through design refinements or alignment, it is not always feasible to avoid impacts to cultural resources, and mitigation measures need to be identified and evaluated to address these situations for specific projects.

Table 3.10-1 summarizes the comparison of potential impacts on cultural and paleontological resources for each of the alignment options. Archaeological sites are depicted on Table 3.10-1 as an average number of sites per mile, derived by dividing the number of known sites within each alignment option in a rail segment by the linear miles in that segment. This was done in order to provide a common basis of comparison among alignment options regardless of the differences in alignment or rail segment lengths.

The table depicts average numbers of archaeological sites and relative ratings for potential impacts on historic and paleontological resources from each alignment option without evaluating the potential significance of adverse effects at this programmatic level of review. This information is based on available data and CHRIS records information, not on field studies. The table does not show any traditional cultural properties because none have been identified to date within the APE by the Native American Heritage Commission or any Native American tribe.

Depending on the alignment option, the number of known archaeological sites that could be affected by the Rail Improvements Alternative ranges from 100 to 118 sites. The average number of known archaeological sites per alignment mile varies from a low of 0.22 sites per mile, along the Camino del Mar tunnel option in Del Mar, to a high of 2.62 sites per mile in the Camp Pendleton rail segment. The average number of sites per mile does not provide clear differentiation between alignment options except in the San Juan Capistrano and Del Mar rail segments. However, in both of these segments, the option with the higher number of known sites per mile is a tunnel option, so most archaeological resources would be avoided due to the depth of the tunnel. Trenching would have the highest potential for impact to subsurface sites compared to either at-grade or deep-tunnel construction.

**Table 3.10-1  
Summary of Potential Impacts to Cultural and Paleontological Resources**

Rail Improvement Alignment Option	Known Archaeological Sites Per Mile	Potential for Historic Structures (H, M, L)	Percent of Alignment Developed during Historic Periods (prior to 1958)	Paleontological Sensitivity Rating (H, M, L)
<b>Union Station To Fullerton Station – 4<sup>th</sup> Main Track</b>	0.29	High	79%	Low
<b>Fullerton Station To Irvine Station--Double Tracking</b>				
AT-GRADE between Orange and Santa Ana	0.75	High	96%	High
TRENCH between Orange and Santa Ana	0.75	High	96%	High
Stations Fullerton	0	Low		High
Anaheim	0	Low		High
Santa Ana	0	Medium		High
Irvine	0	Low		High
<b>San Juan Capistrano Double Tracking</b>				
TUNNEL along I-5 between Hwy 73 and Avenida Aeropuerto	1.6	Low	37%	High
AT-GRADE and Cut/Cover TRENCH along east side of Trabuco Creek	0.28	High	37%	High
Stations San Juan Capistrano	0	High		High
<b>Dana Point/San Clemente Double Tracking</b>				
Dana Point Curve Realignment; San Clemente - SHORT TUNNEL	0.40	Low	38%	High
San Clemente - LONG TWO-SEGMENT TUNNEL	0.49	Low	38%	High
Stations San Clemente	0	Medium		High
<b>CAMP PENDLETON At-grade Double Tracking</b>	2.62	High	6%	High

**Table 3.10-1  
Summary of Potential Impacts to Cultural and Paleontological Resources  
(continued)**

Rail Improvement Alignment Option	Known Archaeological Sites Per Mile	Potential for Historic Structures (H, M, L)	Percent of Alignment Developed during Historic Periods (prior to 1958)	Paleontological Sensitivity Rating (H, M, L)
<b>Oceanside/Carlsbad Double Tracking</b>				
Carlsbad - AT-GRADE; double tracking	0.61	Medium	71%	High
Carlsbad - TRENCH; double-tracking	0.61	Medium	71%	High
Stations Oceanside	0	Medium		High
<b>Encinitas/Solana Beach Double Tracking</b>				
Encinitas - AT-GRADE	0.57	High	65%	High
Encinitas - SHORT TRENCH	0.57	High	65%	High
Stations Solana Beach	0	Medium		High
<b>Del Mar Double Tracking</b>				
TUNNEL under Camino Del Mar	0.22	Medium	31%	High
TUNNEL along I-5	0.86	Low	31%	High
<b>I-5/805 Split To Hwy 52 Double Tracking</b>				
Miramar Hill TUNNEL	0.75	Low	27%	High
I-5 TUNNEL	0.75	Low	27%	High
Stations UTC (Only applies to Miramar Hill Tunnel)	0	Low		High
<b>Hwy 52 To Santa Fe Depot Curve realignment and Double Tracking</b>	1.17	High	38%	High
Stations Santa Fe Depot	0	High		High

The percentage of the study area that developed during historic periods is one indication of the potential for historic structures along each of the alignment options. Historic development along the alignment options varies from a high of 96 percent in the Fullerton to Irvine segment, to a low of about 6 percent in the Camp Pendleton segment where there is very little development along the rail corridor. However, nearly all at-

grade or trench alignment options have a medium to high potential for historic structures. This is due largely to the urbanized nature of the study area, and the historical development of new towns around the railroad. Tunnel segments of the proposed improvements would avoid most potential impacts to historic structures.

Paleontological sensitivity is rated as high for all rail segments south of Fullerton, and for all existing and proposed station sites south of Irvine Station. The potential for impacts to paleontological resources is approximately the same for all alignment options, although the below-grade (trench or tunnel) options have a greater potential for impacts than at-grade options. Therefore, paleontological resources do not provide a basis for differentiating between alignment options.

The following sections briefly describe potential cultural resource impacts along the alignment options, based on available information (not on field studies). At this level of analysis, the extent and types of potential impacts to actual structures and sites are not known, nor is it known whether any such impacts would meet criteria for significance under NEPA/NHPA and CEQA.

### **Union Station to Fullerton Station**

Six archaeological sites are recorded within the APE for this segment. In this urban environment, and considering the proximity of the segment to the Rio Hondo and Los Angeles River and the possibility of buried sites, there is an unknown, but possibly high, potential for prehistoric archaeological sites.

This segment passes largely through a built environment, with structures primarily dating from the 1930 to 1958 period, but a significant number of structures dating to 1900-1929 or earlier are also present. This indicates there is a high potential to encounter previously unrecorded historic-era structures along this alignment. Proposed improvements would be built within the existing rail corridor, reducing potential for impacts to structures.

### **Fullerton Station to Irvine Station**

Both the at-grade and trench alignment options would be within the LOSSAN rail corridor in this segment. Fifteen archaeological sites are recorded for this APE, all but one of which are at historic-era houses. The one prehistoric site is noted as being "buried."

This segment passes through a largely built environment, with structures primarily dating from the 1930 to 1958 period, but with a significant number of structures dating to 1900–1930 also present. This indicates there is a high potential to encounter previously unrecorded historic-era structures along this alignment. Within this built environment, considering the limitations of surface survey due to urban development and the proximity of the San Gabriel and Santa Ana rivers, as well as the record of one "buried site," the potential for unknown prehistoric and historic archaeological sites along this section is high for both the at-grade and trench option.

The trench option has a slightly higher potential than the at-grade option to encounter previously unknown prehistoric and historical archaeological sites.



### **San Juan Capistrano**

The APE for the I-5 tunnel option encompasses eight archaeological sites. This tunnel option would be deeply underground for most of its length, and would cross relatively new neighborhoods in San Juan Capistrano and avoid the older portions of the city where it would be at-grade or transitioning to/from the tunnel. Therefore, it has a low potential to encounter previously unrecorded historical structures. However, the entire APE is highly sensitive for prehistoric, proto-historic (European contact period), and historical sites, so non-tunnel sections and construction at portal areas would have a moderate to high potential to expose previously unknown archaeological sites. Tunneling would avoid most or all potential impacts to these resources.

The APE for the at-grade/trench option along the east side of Trabuco Creek encompasses two archaeological sites, both of which are prehistoric habitation locations, and one of which may have already been destroyed. This segment runs south along creek terraces on the edges of Trabuco Creek, and crosses San Juan Creek before rejoining the existing LOSSAN right-of-way. These streamside locations are sensitive for buried cultural deposits, and the potential for prehistoric sites along this segment is high. Since this alignment passes through relatively old neighborhoods in San Juan Capistrano, this option has a medium to high potential to encounter previously unrecorded historical structures. This entire area is highly sensitive for prehistoric, proto-historic (European contact period), and historical sites, so at-grade and trenched construction would have a high potential to expose previously unknown archaeological sites.

### **Dana Point/San Clemente**

The APE for the short tunnel option from Dana Point through San Clemente encompasses nine archaeological sites. Two of the sites within the APE are prehistoric village sites known to have burials. Because these sites are already known within the APE, and due to the proximity of the alignment to the Pacific Ocean and the mouths of San Onofre and San Mateo canyons, the non-tunnel sections of this alignment (including the at-grade Dana Point curve realignment) have a high potential to encompass previously unknown prehistoric sites.

Because the non-tunnel sections of this option pass across relatively new neighborhoods in Dana Point and San Clemente and avoids the older portions of San Clemente, this option has a low potential to encounter previously unrecorded historical structures.

The long two-segment tunnel option from Dana Point through San Clemente runs inland and proceeds along the I-5 corridor, surfacing at San Onofre State Beach. This option would not require the at-grade Dana Point Curve realignment. There are 11 known archaeological sites in this APE, two of which are prehistoric village sites known to have burials (the same two sites as noted for the short tunnel option above). There is a high potential to encompass previously unknown prehistoric sites within the APE but the majority of the segment would be in deep tunnels and would avoid most potential impacts.

Non-tunnel portions of this option would cross relatively new neighborhoods in Dana Point and San Clemente and, therefore, has a low potential to encounter previously unrecorded historical structures.

### **Camp Pendleton**

In the Camp Pendleton rail segment, 41 archaeological sites are recorded within the APE, for an average of 2.62 sites per mile. Of these, 17 are historical, and 24 are prehistoric. The abundance of prehistoric sites within the APE is due to its proximity to the Pacific coast, various side canyons and lagoons, and the Santa Margarita and San Luis Rey rivers. In addition, Native American burials are known to have been recovered in the area. Due to the high number of sites already recorded and the proximity of the corridor to this rich coastal zone, the potential for unknown prehistoric sites is high in the APE.

Historic-era structures are few in this segment, but there are potentially historic structures in proximity to and associated with Old Highway 101, Camp Pendleton Marine Corps Base, and the ATSF (LOSSAN) railroad. One known historic site within the APE is Las Flores Estancia, listed on the California Inventory of Historic Resources. The potential for historical structures and historical sites is high in this section of the APE.

In this rail segment, the proposed double tracking would be at-grade within the LOSSAN rail right-of-way. Confining construction to the right-of-way would reduce the potential for high impacts to cultural resources in this segment.

### **Oceanside To Carlsbad**

The at-grade and the trench options in this segment would have the same alignment within the existing LOSSAN corridor. Six prehistoric archaeological sites are recorded within the APE. The proximity of this rail segment to the coastal environment, the limitations of surface survey due to development, and the presence of known prehistoric sites all indicate that there is a high potential for unknown prehistoric sites in this APE.

Historic development began in these coastal towns before 1900, but occurred primarily in the years between 1930 and 1958. Several buildings in Oceanside are listed as historic, and the Carlsbad Santa Fe terminal is listed on the California Inventory of Historic Resources. These facts suggest that there is a moderate to high potential for previously unrecorded historical structures in the APE for this rail segment.

The trench option includes approximately one mi (1.6 km) of trenching through downtown Carlsbad. Since sub-grade trenching increases the potential to encounter unknown archaeological sites, this option would have a somewhat higher potential for impacts to prehistoric sites than the at-grade option.

### **Encinitas To Solana Beach**

The at-grade and short-trench options in this segment would be within the LOSSAN rail corridor along the Pacific coast. Four archaeological sites are recorded in the APE. Within this built environment, considering the limitations of surface survey due to urban development and the proximity of the corridor to the coast, and to coastal rivers and lagoons, the potential for unknown archaeological sites along this section is moderate to high.

In general, historic-era structures from 1900 to 1958 are common in this segment. The Encinitas Historic District extends across part of the APE in the center of town. These factors suggest a moderate to high potential for unrecorded historical structures.

The trench option includes approximately 1.5 mi (2.4 km) of trenching through downtown Encinitas. Sub-grade trenching would increase the potential to encounter unknown archaeological sites, compared with at-grade construction.

### **Del Mar**

Two archaeological sites are recorded within the APE for the tunnel option under Camino Del Mar. Within this built environment, considering the proximity of the segment to the coast and San Dieguito River and Lagoon, and to known sites in the area, there is an unknown, but possibly high, potential for prehistoric archaeological sites.

The presence of many historic-era structures from the years 1900–1929 and 1930–1958 suggests that there is a moderate to high potential for previously unrecorded historical structures along this alignment.

The I-5 tunnel option would leave the LOSSAN corridor just north of Del Mar racetrack and turn inland, passing along the southern shore of San Dieguito Lagoon. It would then proceed in a tunnel under I-5. Eight archaeological sites are recorded within APE for this option. Numerous prehistoric sites are known to exist along the shores and bluffs of San Dieguito Lagoon. Due to the proximity of this option to the lagoon and coast, there is an unknown, but possibly high, potential for prehistoric archaeological sites.

This segment of the APE was mostly developed during the years 1930 to 1958; however, there are few standing structures within the APE. Therefore, this segment has a low potential for previously unrecorded historical structures.

Both options in the Del Mar area would involve deep tunnels which would avoid most potential impacts to cultural resources. However, the I-5 tunnel option would require new at-grade and aerial rail infrastructure at the south end of the San Dieguito Lagoon, so this option would have a higher potential for impacts to unknown archaeological sites than the Camino del Mar tunnel option.

### **I-5/805 Split To Highway 52**

The APE for the Miramar Hill tunnel alignment encompasses seven recorded archaeological sites. Given the segment's proximity to Rose Canyon and the village site of Ystaagua, and because of the limitations of surface survey due to urban development in this area, the potential for unknown prehistoric sites is moderate to high.

Historic-era development in this APE is primarily recent, from the 1960s and 1970s. Therefore this option has a low potential to encompass unrecorded historical structures.

The APE for the I-5 tunnel option encompasses three archaeological sites. Due to the proximity of the segment to both Rose and Soledad canyons, and access to the coast, there is an unknown but possibly high potential for prehistoric archaeological sites. This alignment option passes through a relatively steep sided canyon with commercial, medical and educational facilities on the mesa tops, all built post-1960. This indicates that there is a low possibility to find previously unrecorded historical structures.

Both alignment options in this segment would involve deep tunneling, so most potential impacts would be avoided, and there is no discernible difference between the options relative to cultural resources.

### **Highway 52 To Santa Fe Depot**

Ten prehistoric and two historic archaeological sites are recorded in the APE for this rail segment, where proposed improvements would include at-grade double tracking and curve realignment, trenching, and a new bridge structure. At the northern end of this segment, the village site of La Rinconda de Jamo, is adjacent to the APE, but is not recorded as extending into the APE. However, this prehistoric village could have buried components situated within the APE. Nine other prehistoric sites are recorded within this segment, indicating that there is a high potential for unknown prehistoric archaeological sites in the APE.

The south end of the rail segment passes near two historic districts, the General Dynamics buildings and the U.S. Marine Corps Recruit Depot near Lindbergh Field, before terminating at the Santa Fe Depot on the waterfront in downtown San Diego. This portion of the APE is located within 0.25 mi (0.4 km) of the historic Gaslamp Quarter, Old Town San Diego Historic District, and the Presidio, and is a prime location for early historic maritime, transportation, and trade activities, as well as for prehistoric habitation. The terminal at Santa Fe depot and the Mission Brewery are listed on the California Inventory of Historic Resources. Given that a large amount of historic-era development occurred in this area in the period 1769 to 1958, the potential for historic structures or structural remains in the proximity to downtown San Diego is high.

The majority of proposed improvements in this segment would remain in the existing LOSSAN rail corridor, so the potential for impacts would be reduced. Improvements at the Santa Fe Depot would be minimal and would not substantially alter the existing conditions in or around the historic rail station.

### **3.10.4 Design Practices**

The lead agencies are committed to avoiding potential impacts to cultural resources through careful alignment design and selection. They are also committed to avoiding impacts to Native American resources to the extent feasible and practical.

During project-level evaluations, procedures will be developed for fieldwork, identification, evaluation, and determination of potential effects to cultural resources in consultation with SHPO and Native American Tribes. On-site monitoring is often incorporated in the fieldwork plan when sites are known or suspected of containing Native American human remains. The procedures will comply with federal and state statutes concerning burials.

### **3.10.5 Mitigation Strategies**

Based on the analysis above, and considering the CEQA Appendix G thresholds of significance for cultural and historic resources, the proposed Rail Improvements Alternative would have a potentially significant effect on cultural and historic resources. Although the vast majority of conceptual alignment options for rail improvements are within or along existing transportation corridors or in deep tunnels, which reduces the potential for adverse effects to many resources, there is still the potential for adverse impacts to cultural and historic resources. Additional avoidance and mitigation strategies will be applied in the project-level analyses; nonetheless, some cultural and historic resources will be adversely affected by construction of some or all of the proposed rail improvements. At the program level of analysis, it is not possible to know precisely the location, extent and particular characteristics of impacts to these resources.

Because of this uncertainty, at this level of analysis the impact is considered significant. Mitigation strategies, as well as the design practices discussed above, will be applied to reduce these impacts.

General mitigation strategies are discussed as part of this programmatic evaluation. The Department would consult with SHPO to define and describe general procedures to be applied in the future for fieldwork, methods of analysis, and potential specific mitigation measures for impacts to cultural and paleontological resources in the proposed Rail Improvements corridors. Mitigation measures would be required for significant impacts on cultural resources that are listed or determined to be eligible for listing in the NRHP or CRHR. The mitigation measures ultimately selected for this undertaking will meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Archaeology and Historic Preservation (48 FR 44716-44740), as well as standards and guidelines for historic preservation activities established by the California SHPO.

At the conclusion of the program level environmental review process, and when potential funding sources and timing for further studies can be identified<sup>8</sup>, the Department and FRA (or other lead agencies, if applicable), in consultation with the SHPO, could develop a programmatic memorandum of agreement (PMOA) to describe expectations for the next phase of fieldwork, eligibility determination, and documentation under Section 106 of NHPA and pursuant to CEQA. The PMOA may specify procedures for the identification and evaluation of impacts for future projects and the site-specific work that would be required during project-level environmental review.

The potential measures described in this section provide two levels of mitigation and are organized by resource type. One level of mitigation are those that, when implemented as conditions of project approval, would enable the project to avoid an adverse effect or impact. The other level of mitigation includes measures that would lessen the degree of adverse effect/impact. No one measure presented in this section would mitigate all adverse effects or impacts, however, some combination of these measures and others negotiated during the project phases of the program will emerge as the agreed upon mitigation for this project.

In general, there is a wide range of actions that can qualify as mitigation, depending on the type of project, the type of property, and impacts the project may have on cultural resources. The following list presents some of the principles that generally guide mitigation development in historic preservation practice.

- Mitigation measures should correspond or be related directly with the resource being affected, rather than in a compensatory fashion that does not relate to the affected resource;
- Mitigation should be consistent with the significance of the historic property and correspond to the severity of project effects on the historic property;
- Mitigation must be relevant to the goals of historic preservation, rather than as an enhancement of the project to which it is related or as enhancement to amenities unrelated to the affected properties;
- Mitigation measures that are chosen should be a worthwhile use of public funds and provide a high degree of public benefit relative to the cost;

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<sup>8</sup> See Section 3.17 for additional information on Next Steps in the project development process.

- Mitigation measures should benefit the greatest number of people, particularly those members of the interested public rather than only those of a specialized audience or particular group;
- Historic properties that will be demolished or greatly altered should be documented in permanent forms.

#### A. ELIGIBLE OR LISTED ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES

The following are potential mitigation measures for eligible or listed archaeological sites.

- Avoid impact where feasible. Where avoidance is not feasible, minimize scale of impact to the extent practical.
- Incorporate the site into parks or open space (P.R.C. § 21083.2).
- Cap or cover the site before construction.
- Provide data recovery.
- Develop procedures for fieldwork, identification, evaluation and determination of potential effects to cultural resources in consultation with SHPO and Native American tribes. On-site monitoring is often incorporated in the fieldwork when sites are known or suspected of containing Native American human remains. All procedures need to comply with federal and state statutes concerning burials.

Avoidance is preferred, but if adjustments to the alignment plan or profile are not feasible, data recovery may be provided. When impacts will destroy or affect the data potential of a property (NRHP Criterion D, CRHR Criterion 4), data recovery may consist of archaeological excavation of an adequate sample of site contents so that the research questions applicable to the site can be addressed. Recovery of important information from the site mitigates the information loss that would result from site destruction. If only part of a site were impacted by the project, data recovery would only be necessary for that portion of the site. Data recovery would not be required if the agency determines prior testing and studies had adequately recovered the scientifically consequential information from the resources (CEQA Guidelines, 14 C.C.R. § 15126.4[b]). When other NRHP or CRHR criteria are relevant (e.g., Criterion A/1; Criterion B/2; Criterion C/3) or when a Traditional Cultural Property is involved, it is often necessary to consider more diverse mitigation measures.

#### B. LISTED OR ELIGIBLE HISTORIC STRUCTURES AND BUILDINGS

Measures to avoid adverse effects would include steps taken in both the design and construction phase of the project. Avoidance would be achieved during the design phase by not including components that could possibly affect or impact historic properties/resources. Avoidance would also be achieved by conducting construction activities in a manner that actively protects and keeps clear of historic properties.

The following are potential mitigation measures for historic properties and resources.

##### **Measures to Avoid Adverse Effects**

- Stabilization and Monitoring during Construction: The lead agency(s) would prepare a treatment plan with a detailed methodology for the protection of historic



properties/resources, such as buildings, structures, objects, and sites, and cultural landscape elements that are in close proximity to construction activities. This treatment plan would describe methods for the preservation, stabilization, shoring / underpinning, and monitoring of buildings, structures, and objects. The treatment plan would also include provisions that high vibration construction techniques would be avoided in sensitive areas. Underpinning and/or other stabilization methods could be used at buildings located near project construction areas and that may be susceptible to damage or inadvertent destruction.

### **Measures to Lessen Adverse Effects**

Measures to minimize project impacts to historic properties/resources would occur in pre-construction, construction, and post-construction phases. Many of these mitigation measures would require careful agency review and may require stipulations in the construction contracts to ensure appropriate preservation of cultural resources.

- **Recordation:** The lead agency(s) would ensure that cultural resources adversely affected by the project are recorded and documented to the standards of the Historic American Building Survey (HABS) or Historic American Engineering Record (HAER). This would require coordination with the NPS HABS / HAER program to determine the appropriate level of recordation. This coordination would also address the adequacy of recordation previously conducted for historic properties/resources that may be adversely affected.
- **Design Guidelines:** The lead agency(s) would ensure that design guidelines are developed to ensure sympathetic, compatible, and appropriate designs for new construction. Aesthetic details can be considered mitigation, but there may be a limit to the amount of change possible in the design once important engineering and environmental considerations have been taken into account. It is most likely that the design guidelines mitigation would apply to the visual appearance of the project, rather than specifics of alignment, overall depth/width, or placement of supports. Design guidelines could be informed by the documentation prepared under HABS/HAER standards. It would be necessary for an architectural historian or an historical architect to advise the structural designers on appropriate architectural treatments that could serve as mitigation. SHPO and other agencies would review draft design guidelines and provide comment on the guidelines as well as on proposed design changes.
- **Interpretive/Educational Materials:** The lead agency(s) could prepare interpretive and/or educational materials and programs regarding the affected historic properties/resources. The focus of this mitigation would be the historic themes related to these resources. Such materials and/or programs could include: a popular report; documentary videos, booklets, interpretive signage, and/or additional interpretive information made available to state and local agencies. These materials could also include salvage items, historic drawings, interpretive drawings, current and historic photographs, models, and oral histories. Assistance could also be provided for archiving or digitizing the documentation of cultural resources affected, as well as for the dissemination of the material to appropriate repositories.
- **Relocation:** Historic properties/resources that would be otherwise demolished because of the project could be relocated and rehabilitated. The lead agency(s)

would ensure that these buildings or structures were recorded to HABS standards prior to their removal and in consultation with SHPO. The lead agency/project proponent would prepare a removal plan, including site plans for the new locations and placing them on new foundations and to conditions consistent with those that existed prior to the move.

- Monitoring (Architectural/Cultural Landscape): Project construction documents and new construction would be monitored to ensure they conform to the design guidelines and any other treatment procedures agreed to by the consulting parties. A professional architectural historian and a professional historical landscape architect, who meet the Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualifications Standards (48 FR 44738-9), would monitor construction to identify conditions that could conflict with the mitigation measures. The lead agency(s) would take steps to correct any such conflicts.
- Minor Repairs and Reconstruction: The lead agency(s) would ensure that inadvertent damage to historic properties/resources be repaired in accordance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Treatment of Historic Properties.
- Salvage: The lead agency(s) would ensure that selected decorative or architectural elements of any adversely affected historic properties/resources would be reviewed for feasibility of salvage in order to mitigate their loss or destruction. Where possible, these elements would be retained and incorporated into new construction. Where re-use is not possible, selected salvaged elements could be made available for use in interpretive displays either near the affected resources or at an appropriate museum, for example.

### C. PALEONTOLOGICAL RESOURCES

Mitigation measures for paleontological resources would be developed and implemented at the project level. The following measures may be included:

- Educate workers.
- Recover fossils identified during the field reconnaissance.
- Monitor construction.
- Develop protocols for handling fossils discovered during construction, likely including temporary diversion of construction equipment so that the fossils could be recovered; identified; and prepared for dating, interpreting, and preserving at an established, permanent, accredited research facility.

The above mitigation strategies, including implementation of a programmatic agreement addressing historic resources and continued consultation and coordination with tribal representatives, are expected to substantially lessen or avoid impacts to cultural and historic resources in most circumstances. During project-level reviews it is expected that, for proposed Rail Improvement alignments that would result in impacts to cultural and historic resources, most of the impacts will be mitigated to a less-than-significant level, but it is possible that for some impacts will be significant. Sufficient information is not available at the program level to conclude with certainty that the above mitigation strategies will reduce impacts to affected resources to a less than significant effect in all circumstances. Therefore, potential impacts to cultural and historic resources are

considered significant at the program level even with the application of mitigation strategies. Additional environmental assessment will allow more precise evaluation in project-level environmental analyses.

### 3.10.6 Subsequent Analysis

The following paragraphs describe the procedures that would be necessary at the next stage of environmental review to determine appropriate and feasible mitigation measures in consultation with the SHPO. These procedures would satisfy the NHPA as well as CEQA requirements.

As allowed under 36 C.F.R. § 800.4(b)(2), a phased approach to identification of historic properties can be used when the proposed undertaking involves corridors. As indicated by the results of this study, FRA and the Department have determined through background research, consultation, and abbreviated field reconnaissance that historic properties likely exist in various corridor segments. Once alignment options have been refined, full identification efforts may proceed. Under NHPA Section 106 and implementing regulations (36 C.F.R. § 800), the procedures would include identifying resources with the potential to be affected; evaluating their significance under NRHP and CEQA; and identifying any substantial adverse effects, and then evaluating potential mitigation.

In the interest of identifying archaeological sites within the APE, a field survey of the APE will be completed which will identify those sites evident on the surface. Geomorphological maps and studies will be reviewed to assess the potential for corridor segments to contain significant buried sites, and historic maps and an historic overview or context will be developed in the interest of identifying potential historical archaeology sites within the APE.

Additional efforts must also be made to consult with appropriate Tribes and individuals knowledgeable about the nature and locations of potential traditional cultural properties.

Identifying potentially affected archaeological and historical properties/resources will require identification and evaluation within a more specifically defined APE that would include the area where direct and indirect impacts from construction could occur (including locations of any construction easements and construction-related facilities, such as equipment staging areas, borrow and disposal areas, and access roads) and the area(s) where the settings of any eligible historic buildings and structures, or the buildings and structures themselves, could be materially or significantly altered.

All identified resources would then be evaluated using NRHP and CRHR eligibility criteria. Evaluating archaeological sites may require preparing test plans for archaeological resources that contain regionally relevant research questions. The lead agencies would consult with the SHPO on any test plans and determinations of eligibility for evaluated resources. The impacts of a proposed specific project on resources determined eligible would be analyzed. An impact analysis report may then be reviewed with the SHPO. Mitigation measures needed to address impacts on specific resources could then be developed and incorporated in the PMOA between the SHPO, the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, and the lead agencies during the preparation of project-specific environmental evaluations. The mitigation measures in the PMOA would then be incorporated into project-specific environmental documentation and project approvals.

A paleontological resource assessment program would also be completed as part of the subsequent analysis for project-level environmental analyses. The assessment program would include field reconnaissance to identify exposed paleontological resources and more precisely

determine potential paleontological sensitivity for the project. A paleontological resources treatment plan would be prepared by a qualified paleontologist. The plan would be included in project approval documents and would address the treatment of paleontological resources discovered prior to and during construction.

Further consultation would also occur at the project level with the Native American Heritage Commission as necessary, and with Native American groups when traditional territories may be close to project APEs. More specific information related to traditional cultural sites of concern also would be obtained as necessary.

## 3.11 GEOLOGY AND SOILS

This chapter describes existing geologic conditions in the LOSSAN region and analyzes the potential geological impacts of each alternative and proposed rail alignment option. This analysis focused on potential impacts related to seismic hazards, landslide hazards, locations of oil and gas fields and mineral resource sites; and on bedrock and other conditions that could affect excavation.

### 3.11.1 Regulatory Requirements and Methods of Evaluation

#### A. REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS

A number of state and local regulations apply to geologic hazards and engineering geologic practice. The following paragraphs summarize key regulatory provisions; more detailed discussion is deferred to project-level environmental documentation because these regulations, if applicable, relate to site-specific conditions and thus would be applied as appropriate at the project level rather than the program level.

Principal state guidance relating to geologic hazards is contained in the Alquist-Priolo Act (Public Resources Code § 2621 et seq.), and in the Seismic Hazards Mapping Act of 1990 (Public Resources Code §§ 2690–2699.6). The Alquist-Priolo Act prohibits the location of most types of structures for human occupancy across the active traces of faults in earthquake fault zones shown on maps prepared by the State Geologist, and regulates construction in the corridors along active faults (earthquake fault zones). The Seismic Hazards Mapping Act of 1990 focuses on hazards related to strong ground shaking, liquefaction, and seismically induced landslides. Under its provisions, the state is charged with identifying and mapping areas at risk of strong ground shaking, liquefaction, landslides, and other corollary hazards, and the maps are to be used by cities and counties in preparing their General Plans and adopting land use policies to reduce and mitigate potential hazards to public health and safety.

Site-specific geotechnical investigations may be prepared to provide a geologic basis for the development of appropriate construction design for proposed projects, including mitigation/remediation of geologic hazards where this is possible. Geotechnical investigations typically assess the bedrock and Quaternary geology, the geologic structure, the soils, and the previous history of excavation and fill placement on and in the vicinity of the site for a proposed project. They may also address the requirements of the Alquist-Priolo Act and the Seismic Hazards Mapping Act.

Pursuant to the Surface Mining and Reclamation Act (Public Resources Code § 2710 et seq.), the State Mining and Geology Board identifies in adopted regulations areas of regional significance that are known to contain mineral deposits judged to be important in meeting the future needs of the area. (See Public Resources Code §§ 2726 and 2790; Title 14 C.C.R. 3550, et seq.) The State Mining and Geology Board also adopts state policy for the reclamation of mined lands and certifies local ordinances for the approval of reclamation plans as being consistent with state policies (Public Resources Code §§ 2755–2764, 2774 et seq.).

## B. METHOD OF EVALUATION OF IMPACTS

To evaluate potential impacts related to geology and soils, each alternative and alignment option was ranked for potential seismic hazards (ground shaking and ground failure potential), surface rupture hazard (number of active fault crossings), slope instability, areas of difficult excavation, presence of oil and gas fields (presence of the resource and/or production facilities), and presence of economic mineral resources. The analysis was performed generally on the basis of existing data available in GIS format as opposed to detailed site investigations. The geologic data provided in this section are intended for planning purposes and are not intended to be definitive for specific sites. Alignments were evaluated as having high, medium, or low potential for geologic impacts based on the number of geologic constraints identified. Stations were evaluated as having either high or low potential for geologic impacts, based on the number of geologic constraints identified. These rankings made it possible to provide a rough comparison of the potential geologic constraints affecting each alignment option.

Table 3.11-1 summarizes the ranking criteria for potential geologic and soils impacts. The following paragraphs describe the ranking process.

**Table 3.11-1**  
**Ranking System for Comparing Impacts Related to Geology/Soils/Seismicity**

Impact Ranking	Seismic Hazards (% of length)	Active Fault Crossings (number of crossings)	Slope Instability (% of length)	Difficult Excavation (% of length)	Oil and Gas Fields (% of length)	Mineral Resources (present or not present)
<b>Alignments</b>						
High	>50	2+	>10	>25	>20	>20
Medium	10–50	1	5–10	10–25	10–20	10–20
Low	<10	0	<5	<10	<10	<10
<b>Stations</b>						
High	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present
Low	Not Present	Not Present	Not Present	Not Present	Not Present	Not Present

### Seismic Hazards

Seismic hazards that could potentially constrain the design of proposed facilities were evaluated on the basis of potential for strong ground motion and potential for liquefaction. Areas potentially subject to strong ground motion were defined for this program-level study as areas where peak horizontal ground accelerations in an earthquake may exceed 0.50g (i.e., areas where peak horizontal ground acceleration may exceed 50% of the acceleration due to gravity) as mapped by the California Geological Survey (CGS 2002). This acceleration is used to calculate the horizontal force a structure may be subjected to during an earthquake. For this analysis, liquefaction was conservatively assumed to be possible in all areas where peak ground accelerations could exceed 0.30g, except for areas mapped as underlain by bedrock. Where groundwater levels were not known from existing literature, they were conservatively assumed to be high, contributing to increased potential for liquefaction.



The ranking system for impacts related to seismic hazards used the percentage of each potential alignment within strong ground motion zones and/or potentially liquefiable zones. Station sites were evaluated by determining whether any portion of a proposed station site or an existing station where improvements are proposed would be within a strong ground motion zone or potentially liquefiable zone.

- **Alignments:** High, medium, or low, based on percentage of alignment length in strong ground motion zones plus the percentage of length in potentially liquefiable zones.
- **Stations:** High if any part of the site is within a strong ground motion zone or potentially liquefiable zone; otherwise, low.

### **Potential for Surface Rupture (Active Fault Crossings)**

Surface rupture hazard was evaluated based on whether any portion of an alignment option or station would be located within 200 ft (62 m) of the mapped trace of any fault with known or inferred movement during Quaternary time (the past 1.6 million years). If any portion of a proposed alignment or potential station site was within 200 ft (60 m) of a Quaternary fault, it was identified as crossing an active fault trace. As described below, the State of California defines active faults as those that show evidence of movement in the last 11,000 years. Because of the extreme disruption of transit facilities that can result from surface fault rupture, this analysis deliberately adopted a conservative criterion for the assessment of surface rupture hazard and included potentially active faults, those with known or inferred movement over Quaternary time.

The ranking system for impacts related to surface rupture hazard was based on the number of active fault crossings identified.

- **Alignments:** High, medium, or low, based on number of active (recent or Quaternary) fault crossings.
- **Stations:** High if any part of the site is within 200 ft (60 m) of an active (recent or Quaternary) fault; otherwise, low.

### **Slope Instability**

Slope stability was evaluated based on the geologic formations or units present along each alignment and at each station site, as shown in statewide mapping compiled by Jennings (1977, 1991). Each of the mapped geologic units was assigned a rating for inferred slope stability, based primarily on lithology (physical characteristics of the rock formation) and age. This approach allowed the identification of areas at risk for slope instability. A conservative 200 ft (60 m) buffer was included around each identified area of instability.

The ranking system for impacts related to slope instability was based on the percentage of each alignment within potentially unstable zones. Station sites were evaluated by determining whether any portion of the site is within an area of potential slope instability.

- **Alignments:** High, medium, or low, based on percentage of alignment length in potentially unstable zone.

- **Stations:** High if any part of the site is within a potentially unstable zone; otherwise, low.

### **Difficult Excavation**

Areas of potentially difficult excavation were identified based on bedrock geologic characteristics in combination with the presence of faults of any age, based on statewide mapping compiled by Jennings (1977, 1991) and information from selected 1:250,000-scale geologic map sheets for the study region published by the California Geological Survey. Each fault crossing was conservatively assumed to be approximately 600 ft (183 m) wide. Geologic cross sections were prepared to assess subsurface tunneling conditions along proposed rail tunnel segments.

The ranking system for impacts related to difficulty of excavation was based on the percentage of each alignment where excavation would be required within identified areas of difficult excavation. Stations were evaluated by determining whether any portion of the site is within an identified area of difficult excavation.

- **Alignments:** High, medium, or low, based on percentage of surface segments in hard rock plus percentage of tunnel segments within fault zones.
- **Stations:** High if any part of the site is within a hard rock zone or fault zone; otherwise, low.

### **Oil and Gas Fields**

Areas where the presence of oil and gas could constrain project construction or operation were identified on the basis of published resource maps produced by the California Department of Conservation's Division of Oil, Gas, and Geothermal Resources (California Department of Conservation 2001a, 2001b).

The ranking system for impacts related to oil and gas fields was based on the percentage of each proposed alignment within identified oil and gas field areas. Station sites were evaluated by determining whether any portion of the site is within a mapped oil and gas field area.

- **Alignment:** High, medium, or low, based on percentage of alignment length within mapped oil and gas fields.
- **Stations:** High if any part of the site is within a mapped oil and gas field; otherwise, low.

### **Mineral Resources**

Areas where the project could affect mineral resource extraction (primarily sand and gravel deposits) were identified on the basis of reports and published maps by the United States Geologic Survey (USGS), and California Geologic Survey (CGS).<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Frank, David G. 1999. An Arc/Info Point Coverage of Mineral Resource Data System (MRDS) Location in Eleven Western States. United States Geologic Survey, Open File Report 99-169.

California Department of Conservation, California Geological Survey (CGS). No Date. *Map of California, Principal Mineral-Producing Localities--1990*. 2000.

The ranking system for mineral resources impacts was based on the number of mineral resources sites intersected by each alignment option. Station sites were evaluated by determining whether any portion of the site is within a mineral resource area.

- Alignments: High, medium, or low, based on number of mapped resources within 200 ft (60 m) of a mineral resource area.
- Stations: High if any part of the site is within 200 ft (60 m) of a mineral resource area; otherwise, low.

### 3.11.2 Affected Environment

#### A. STUDY AREA DEFINED

The study area for geology and soils is defined as the corridor extending 200 ft (60 m) on each side of the alignment centerlines, and a 200-ft (60-m) radius around each station site. This distance incorporates all cross-sections with the exception of deep cuts and fills. As described in Method of Evaluation of Impacts above, alternatives were compared based on the number of sites with potential geologic or soils constraints per alignment, which depends on the length and location of the alignment; broadening the study area to include the entire width of deep cut-and-fill sections would not change the results of the comparison.

#### B. GEOLOGY AND SOILS IN THE STUDY AREA

The following sections describe the general setting and key project constraints related to geology and soils.

##### Geologic Setting and Topography

The northern, inland portion of the study area is located primarily within the Los Angeles Basin. The basin comprises a wide lowland coastal plain, which slopes gradually southward and westward toward the Pacific Ocean. The coastal plain overlies a structural trough that was filled with a thick sequence marine and non-marine sediments as the basin subsided.

The Los Angeles Basin occurs at the intersection of the north-northwest trending Peninsular Ranges Geomorphic Province and the east-west trending Transverse Ranges Geomorphic Province. The Peninsular Ranges are characterized by a series of mountain ranges and intervening valleys that extend from Orange County to Baja California. The Transverse Ranges extend eastward where they merge with the Mojave and Colorado Deserts.

The southern end of the Los Angeles to Orange County study area crosses from the Los Angeles Basin into the western foothills of the Santa Ana Mountains (part of the Peninsular Ranges) near Irvine and continues southwestward to Pacific coast near Dana Point. The southern reaches of the rail alignment options are situated in the coastal section of the Peninsular Range province, a California Geomorphic province with a long and active geologic history. This portion of the alignments traverse an elevated coastal

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Morton, P.K., and Miller, R.V. 1981. Geologic Map of Orange County Showing Mines and Mineral Deposits, California Division of Mines and Geology: Bulletin 204, Plate 1.

Weber, F.H., Jr. 1963. Geology and Mineral Resources of San Diego County, California: California Division of Mines and Geology, County Report 3.

plain capped by Quaternary terrace deposits and recent alluvial, slopewash and landslide materials deposited by erosional processes (Jennings 1977, 1991).

The inland alignments extending south from Union Station to Irvine are predominantly underlain by a thick sequence of unconsolidated Quaternary alluvium. Two short segments along the LOSSAN alignment pass over Pleistocene nonmarine terrace deposits from East Los Angeles to Norwalk. From Irvine to El Toro the rail route is underlain by alluvium and terrace deposits. South of El Toro extending to Capistrano Beach, the alignments traverse poorly consolidated stream terrace deposits and the moderately consolidated Pliocene marine Capistrano Formation. The Capistrano Formation is prone to landsliding, including a large slide under I-5 at Capistrano Beach.

Surficial geologic units within the coastal LOSSAN study area, from San Juan Capistrano to San Diego, consist of artificial fill and Quaternary alluvial, beach, marine terrace, and slopewash deposits overlying Tertiary sedimentary bedrock units (Leighton & Associates 2003). Surficial materials tend to be poorly consolidated and have a broad range in thickness. Tertiary bedrock units consist of sandstones and sandstone with interbedded cobble conglomerate, siltstones, and shales.

Both from a scenic and engineering perspective, two sensitive areas in the LOSSAN corridor are the San Clemente and Del Mar coastal bluffs. Capistrano Formation siltstone and overlying marine terrace deposits, alluvium, and colluvium occur in the Dana Point/San Clemente area. The Del Mar bluffs area is underlain by the Torrey Sandstone Formation as well as the claystone of the Del Mar Formation.

Elevations along the LOSSAN corridor from Union Station to the San Juan Capistrano city limits range from approximately 58 to 476 ft (18 to 145 m) above mean sea level. The coastal portion of the corridor consists of a generally southeast to northwest trending topographic alignment extending from San Juan Capistrano to downtown San Diego. Topographic elevations along the existing railway range from approximately 10 to 120 ft (3 to 37 m) above mean sea level. Surrounding topography generally consists of gently westward to southwestward sloping landforms, including terraces and hillsides subdued by erosional processes and human development.

Locally, steep topography is commonly the result of incision by the generally westward flowing drainages, resulting in oversteepened slopes in some areas outlying the rail corridor. Steep slopes and bluffs resulting from beach side erosion and wave action are adjacent to the rail corridor in the cities of Del Mar and San Clemente.

### **Seismic Hazards**

**Description of Seismic Hazards:** Seismic hazards can be categorized as either primary or secondary. Primary seismic hazards include surface fault rupture and ground shaking. Secondary seismic hazards include liquefaction and other types of seismically induced ground failure, along with seismically induced landslides.

*Surface fault rupture*, or ground rupture, occurs when an active fault ruptures at depth to produce an earthquake, and the rupture propagates to the ground surface. Surface rupture can also occur as a result of slow, gradual motion referred to as fault creep. An area's potential for ground rupture is assessed based on the displacement history of the area's faults. Two categories of faults have been defined by the State of California in Special Publication 42 (Hart and Bryant 1997). Active faults are those that are known or inferred to have experienced movement in the past 11,000 years and are considered to

have a high potential for future ground rupture. Potentially active<sup>2</sup> faults are those that are not known to have experienced movement in the past 11,000 years but have moved during Quaternary time (the past 1.6 million years). These faults may also pose a surface rupture hazard, but the hazard is more difficult to evaluate. For the purpose of this study, both active and potentially active faults were evaluated, and considered active faults in subsequent sections.

*Ground shaking* occurs in response to the release of energy during an earthquake. The energy released travels through subsurface rock, sediment, and soil materials as seismic waves, which result in motion experienced at the ground surface.

*Liquefaction* and other types of seismically induced ground failure reflect loss of strength and/or cohesion when earth materials are subjected to strong seismic ground shaking. Earthquakes can also trigger landslides where slopes are prone to failure because of geologic conditions or because of modifications during construction.

Surface fault rupture, ground shaking, and seismically induced ground failure all can result in substantial damage to structures. Thorough assessment of the existing hazard combined with appropriate design and construction can substantially reduce the potential for damage.

Major Active Faults in the Study Area: Three sources were used to evaluate faulting in the study area, including the Fault Activity Map of California (Jennings, 1994), Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zones of California (CGS, 2002), and fault source information used by the California Department of Transportation (Mualchin, 1996). These sources were used to compile Figure 3.11-1, Faults, and Figure 3.11-2, Quaternary and Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zones. Alquist-Priolo mapping represents those zones where the CGS considers faults to be present requiring further site-specific fault studies and recommendations for development. These zones generally include faults with known movement within the past 10,000 years (i.e., Holocene).

The seismicity of southern California is dominated by the intersection of the north-northwest trending San Andreas fault system and the east-west trending Transverse Ranges fault system. The study area is subject to ground shaking associated with earthquakes on faults of both these systems. Active faults of the San Andreas system are predominantly strike-slip faults accommodating translational movement. Active reverse or thrust faults in the Transverse Ranges include blind thrust faults responsible for the 1987 Whittier Narrows Earthquake, the 1994 Northridge Earthquake, and the range-front faults responsible for uplift of the Santa Monica and San Gabriel Mountains.

The major active faults in the LOSSAN region include the Newport-Inglewood, Rose Canyon, Raymond, Whittier, and Elysian Park faults. All of these faults are capable of generating significant groundshaking in areas along the existing LOSSAN corridor and proposed alignment options.

The Newport-Inglewood Fault Zone is a broad zone of discontinuous faults and folds striking southeastward from near Santa Monica across the Los Angeles basin to Newport Beach, where it trends offshore and merges with the Rose Canyon Fault Zone offshore of Oceanside (Ziony and Yerkes, 1985, Jennings, 1994). None of the proposed rail improvement alignment options north of Highway 52 cross this or any other active

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<sup>2</sup> The term "potentially active" is under review for alternative nomenclature by California Geologic Survey.



fault, and none of these alignments are located within a mapped Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zone (Hart, 1997). Ground rupture due to faulting is not considered a significant hazard in the area north of Highway 52 (although it is a possibility at any site along the rail corridor). However, the proximity of the Newport-Inglewood fault to the proposed northern coastal alignments such as those in San Juan Capistrano, Dana Point, San Clemente, and Camp Pendleton, and its potential for generating large earthquakes, does make the Newport-Inglewood Fault a potential seismic hazard to the existing rail corridor and proposed improvements.

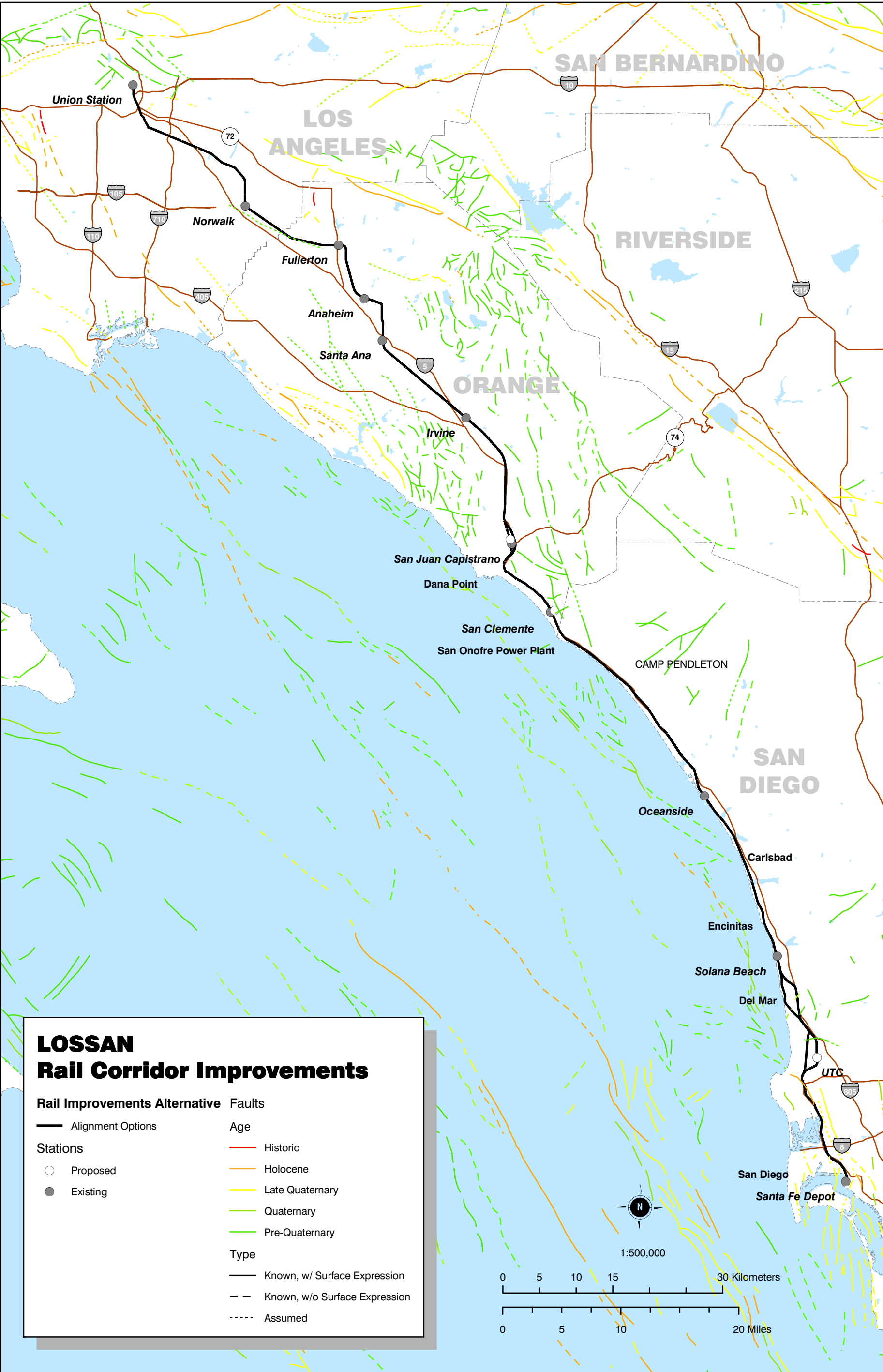
The Rose Canyon fault is a southern continuation of the Newport-Inglewood. This fault runs generally north-south through the San Diego area from approximately La Jolla through the downtown San Diego area and into San Diego Bay. The Rose Canyon fault is Alquist-Priolo zoned from where it comes onshore in La Jolla to approximately Mission Bay. The proposed rail alignment between Highway 52 and the Santa Fe Depot crosses the Rose Canyon fault in two locations (at the San Diego River bridge and within the trench alignment), and are within mapped Alquist-Priolo or City of San Diego Special Studies zones (CDMG, 1991 and 2002). Therefore, shallow ground rupture would be a consideration in project-level investigations, and during preliminary design and planning for proposed improvements in these areas.

The Raymond, Whittier, and Elysian Park active fault zones are in the northern part of the LOSSAN region. Of these, the one of most concern in the downtown Los Angeles area is the Elysian Park fault. This is a northward dipping, blind thrust fault and has no mappable surface expression. Faults of this type are classified as Special Seismic Sources by the California Department of Transportation (Mualchin, 1996). This fault is capable of producing earthquakes resulting in levels of damage equal to or greater than the 1971 San Fernando earthquake, the 1987 Whittier Narrows earthquake, and the 1994 Northridge earthquake -- all earthquakes produced by blind thrust faults previously thought to be inactive.

**Liquefaction:** Liquefaction occurs when three general conditions exist: (1) shallow groundwater, (2) low-density sandy soils, and (3) high-intensity ground motion. Effects of liquefaction on level ground include sand boils, settlement, and bearing capacity failures below structural foundations. Groundwater contours for the entire project study area were not available with reasonable accuracy that would be beneficial to this preliminary evaluation. Therefore, for this program-level evaluation, all areas were assumed to be potentially underlain by shallow groundwater. This allowed identification of potentially liquefiable zones by including areas where ground motions exceed 30 percent (i.e., 0.30g) but excluding areas mapped as underlain by rock. Areas of the project region meeting these criteria have been mapped on Figure 3.11-3, Potential Liquefaction Zones.

Based on preliminary evaluation, it is anticipated that saturated older and younger alluvium will underlie the proposed improvements within the significant drainages that cross the rail corridor. Based on qualitative analysis, these deposits are considered liquefiable from the surface to depths on the order of 50 to 60 ft (15 to 18 m). This includes alluvial deposits underlying the existing bridge structures and the embankment fills. Areas underlain by Quaternary terrace material as well as all bedrock units are not considered liquefiable due to their high density, clay content, age, and/or unsaturated conditions. As shown on Figure 3.11-3, areas believed to be potentially susceptible to liquefaction are present throughout the study area.





Source : Jennings, 1977



**FIGURE 3.11-1**  
**Faults**  
 LOSSAN Rail Corridor Improvements  
 Program Environmental Impact Report / Environmental Impact Statement





Source : Jennings, 1985, USGS, 1998



**FIGURE 3.11-2**  
**Quarternary Faults and Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zones**  
LOSSAN Rail Corridor Improvements  
Program Environmental Impact Report / Environmental Impact Statement





Source : Jennings, 1977



**FIGURE 3.11-3**  
**Potential Liquefaction Zones**  
LOSSAN Rail Corridor Improvements  
Program Environmental Impact Report / Environmental Impact Statement





### **Unstable Slopes**

Slopes are considered unstable (prone to failure or landslides) when soil or rock strength is insufficient to resist gravitational forces or other loads. Slope instability can occur naturally due to factors such as fracture patterns, soil saturation, or steep slopes. Slope failure can also be triggered by seismic activity or by improperly designed construction.

If slope instability is not adequately characterized and mitigated during design and construction, it can cause severe damage to surface and near-surface improvements as well as risks to public safety. However, slope instability can generally be addressed with planning and design.

For purposes of this analysis, the criteria for mapping potentially unstable slopes was all areas in which slope gradients exceed 33% and are not underlain by rock units having high strength characteristics. Figure 3.11-4 shows areas identified as unstable based on these criteria.

The extent of potentially unstable slopes meeting these criteria within the inland project areas is almost zero. The Los Angeles to Orange County alignments are all within established transportation corridors in areas of low relief. No substantive areas of unstable slopes were identified in this inland part of the study area.

Through the cities of Del Mar and San Clemente, as well as a limited portion of Encinitas, rail corridor improvements are proposed within the area under the influence of the coastal sea bluff. In general, coastal bluff retreat is controlled by a combination of marine erosion and subaerial erosion. Marine erosion results from the effects of the ocean and wave action along the base of the bluffs. Subaerial erosion results from those erosional influences that exist above the high-water line (or wave run-up line) and includes such items as erosion due to surface runoff, ground water seepage, wind, pedestrian traffic, rodent activity, and slope instability. As a result, the bluffs are consistently impacted by marine and subaerial erosional processes. (See also Section 3.12, Hydrology and Water Resources.) In Encinitas, the rail improvement options are set back east of Pacific Coast Highway, which provides a buffer zone between the alignment options and the coastal bluffs.

In Del Mar, the existing LOSSAN rail alignment is constructed across the top of the relatively flat mesa top, generally at or near the elevation of the bluff top, 40 to 65 ft (12 to 20 m) above sea level. In San Clemente, the existing rail alignment is generally on a shallow topographical bench between the base of the coastal bluffs and the beach. This rail alignment and its associated rip-rap protection provide a buffer from wave action, so the cliffs are dominantly subject to subaerial erosional processes.

A number of remedial or stabilization measures exist along the existing railway in the Del Mar and San Clemente areas. These include older improvements along the coastal bluff face through both cities that are in need of ongoing repair and maintenance. For example, in Del Mar, wooden and concrete seawalls along portions of the bluff are currently protecting portions of the base of the bluff against erosion due to typical wave impact. However, these walls are occasionally of insufficient height to block heavy storm surf or at least they require periodic maintenance to remain effective. In San Clemente, the existing rip-rap berms also require maintenance.

### **Areas of Difficult Excavation**

Subsurface geologic conditions will largely determine the ease or difficulty of excavation, which will in turn indicate the appropriate excavation technique for use in various areas. For instance, hard unfractured bedrock may be difficult to excavate using bulldozers and other earthmoving equipment, or too resistant to tunneling using a tunnel boring machine (TBM); in these areas, blasting may be required. On the other hand, fractured rock that contains groundwater can also be difficult to excavate using tunneling methods. Faulted material can pose an additional challenge by contributing to instability at the tunnel face.

The proposed inland alignments (north of San Juan Capistrano) are entirely located within unconsolidated sediments and poorly consolidated sedimentary rock, and are not expected to encompass any areas of difficult excavation.

Within the coastal route of the LOSSAN corridor, surficial materials are generally loose and poorly consolidated and should be rippable with conventional earthwork equipment. If deeper excavations were made in these areas (i.e., trenches and tunnels), they would occur within sedimentary rock units which are generally penetrable with conventional excavation and tunnel-boring equipment. However, due to the presence of fault zones and some hardened rock units, potentially difficult excavation areas occur between San Juan Capistrano and San Clemente, and between the I-5/805 Split and the Santa Fe Depot in San Diego.

### **Geological Resources**

Geological resources in California include oil and gas fields, geothermal fields, and a wide range of mineral resources. The principal constraint associated with oil, gas, geothermal, and mineral resources is the need for planning to ensure that construction of new facilities would not conflict with the removal of economically important resources and would avoid known problem areas to the extent feasible. In addition, the presence of even small (noneconomic) quantities of oil or gas in the subsurface can pose toxic or explosive hazards during construction, requiring specific precautions, and may also necessitate special designs and monitoring during the operation of subsurface structures such as subway tunnels. Similarly, certain mineral resources, such as serpentine (the source of natural asbestos) can result in hazardous working conditions if not properly managed.

The Union Station to Irvine segment crosses one large oil field, the Santa Fe Springs field north of the existing Norwalk Station. The abandoned La Mirada field lies just south of the proposed rail alignment southeast of Santa Fe Springs. South of Irvine, there are no oil or gas fields that coincide with any of the rail alignment options.

All of the alignment options are within previously developed transportation corridors and no existing mines or mineral resource sources are located within the 200-ft (60-m) study area of the alignments and stations (CGS 1999).





### 3.11.3 Environmental Consequences

#### A. EXISTING CONDITIONS COMPARED TO NO-PROJECT ALTERNATIVE

Existing conditions describe current transportation conditions. The No-Project Alternative includes existing transportation infrastructure plus all planned, approved, and funded projects that can reasonably be expected to be in operation by 2020. This analysis assumed that existing major infrastructure (bridges, for example) was designed, has been retrofitted, or is currently scheduled to be retrofitted to meet current design standards for seismic safety and other geologic constraints, and that future projects included in the No-Project Alternative would incorporate similar safeguards as part of the development, design, and construction process. However, it is not possible to eliminate or mitigate all geologic hazards through design and construction. Some types of geologic hazards (seismic hazards in particular) are also unpredictable. While it is difficult to evaluate the change in hazards (potential for geologic impacts) between existing conditions and No-Project conditions, it is likely that some improvements in technology and materials as well as more stringent design codes will be implemented in the next 20 years to address seismic design of new structures. Thus the No-Project Alternative would be somewhat improved from the existing conditions, but existing geologic risks were used to represent geologic risks under the No-Project Alternative.

Beyond the potential geologic impacts for programmed improvements (to be addressed in other project-level documents), the No-Project Alternative potentially would have additional impacts on the coastal bluff areas in Del Mar and San Clemente, as compared to the Rail Improvement Alternative. The existing LOSSAN rail corridor is constructed across the top of the bluffs in Del Mar and along the toe slope of the bluffs in San Clemente. Under the No-Project Alternative, the existing rail corridor would continue to operate along these coastal bluffs, requiring continued stabilization and drainage efforts to counteract ongoing aerial and subaerial erosion. The Rail Improvements Alternative would potentially result in a beneficial impact to these bluff areas by precluding further rail construction along the bluffs and removing the existing rail service from the bluff areas.

#### B. NO-PROJECT ALTERNATIVE COMPARED TO RAIL IMPROVEMENTS ALTERNATIVE

This analysis focused on comparing the difference in potential impacts anticipated with the proposed alignment options under the Rail Improvements Alternative, using 2020 No-Project conditions as a baseline. Table 3.11-2 summarizes the types of impacts during both construction and operation that may result from the various geological conditions evaluated in this report.

Table 3.11-3 shows potential impact ratings and the geologic constraints within the study area of each of the alignment options. Potential geologic impacts that are categorized as high should not be regarded as precluding construction of an alignment option, or as necessarily indicating that these would be potentially significant impacts. Rather, they identify aspects of project design where additional study would be needed and where engineering and design effort would be required to avoid or mitigate the potential impacts.

**Table 3.11-2**  
**Types of Potential Impacts from Geologic Conditions**

Geologic Condition	Potential Impacts
Seismic hazards	Potential risk to worker and public safety due to collapse or toppling of partially constructed or completed facilities during strong earthquakes. Potential risk to public safety due to interruption of service due to derailment caused by ground motion during strong earthquakes. Damage to facilities due to secondary hazards over soft or filled ground.
Active fault crossings	Potential risk to worker or public safety due to ground rupture along active faults. Potential risk to public safety due to interruption of service due to derailment by ground rupture along active faults.
Slope stability	Potential risk to worker or public safety due to failure of natural and/or construction cut slopes or retention structures.
Difficult excavation	Potential cost and duration of surface or tunnel excavations during construction.
Oil and gas fields	Potential migration of potentially explosive and/or toxic gases into subsurface facilities.
Mineral resources <sup>1</sup>	Potential project costs and delays due to potential impacts on existing mineral resource areas and facilities, including potential remediation.

<sup>1</sup>No mineral resources were identified within the study area for the Rail Improvement Alternative.

**Table 3.11-3**  
**Summary of Potential Impact Rankings and Geological Constraints**

	Seismic Hazards (% of Length)	Active Fault Crossings (# of Crossings)	Slope Stability (% of Length)	Difficult Excavation (% of Length)	Oil and Gas Fields (% of Length)
<b>Union Station To Fullerton Station -- 4<sup>th</sup> Main Track</b>	High (100)	Low (0)	Low (0)	Low (0)	Medium (12)
<b>Fullerton Station To Irvine Station--Double Tracking</b>					
AT-GRADE between Orange and Santa Ana	High (100)	Low (0)	Low (0)	Low (0)	Low (0)
TRENCH between Orange and Santa Ana	High (100)	Low (0)	Low (0)	Low (0)	Low (0)
Stations Fullerton	High (Present)	Low (Not Present)	Low (Not Present)	Low (Not Present)	Low (Not Present))
Anaheim	High (Present)	Low (Not Present)	Low (Not Present)	Low (Not Present)	Low (Not Present)
Santa Ana	High (Present)	Low (Not Present)	Low (Not Present)	Low (Not Present)	Low (Not Present)
Irvine	Low (Not Present)	Low (Not Present)	Low (Not Present)	Low (Not Present)	Low (Not Present)
<b>San Juan Capistrano Double Tracking</b>					
TUNNEL along I-5 between Hwy 73 and Avenida Aeropuerto	Medium (26)	Low (0)	Low (0)	Medium (10)	Low (0)
AT-GRADE and Cut/Cover TRENCH along east side of Trabuco Creek	Low (0)	Low (0)	High (76)	Low (0)	Low (0)
Stations San Juan Capistrano	High (Present)	Low (Not Present)	Low (Not Present)	Low (Not Present)	Low (Not Present)



**Table 3.11-3  
Summary of Potential Impact Rankings and Geological Constraints (continued)**

	<b>Seismic Hazards (% of Length)</b>	<b>Active Fault Crossings (# of Crossings)</b>	<b>Slope Stability (% of Length)</b>	<b>Difficult Excavation (% of Length)</b>	<b>Oil and Gas Fields (% of Length)</b>
<b>Dana Point/San Clemente Double Tracking</b>					
Dana Point Curve Realignment; San Clemente - SHORT TUNNEL	Low (0)	Low (0)	Low (0)	Medium (14)	Low (0)
San Clemente - LONG TWO-SEGMENT TUNNEL	Low (0)	Low (0)	Low (0)	High (50)	Low (0)
Stations San Clemente	High (Present)	Low (Not Present)	Low (Not Present)	High (Present)	Low (Not Present)
<b>Camp Pendleton At-grade Double Tracking</b>	Medium (26)	Low (0)	Low (0)	Low (0)	Low (0)
<b>Oceanside/Carlsbad Double Tracking</b>					
Carlsbad - AT-GRADE; double tracking	Medium (11)	Low (0)	Low (0)	Low (2)	Low (0)
Carlsbad - TRENCH; double-tracking	Low (9)	Low (0)	Low (0)	Low (0)	Low (0)
Stations Oceanside	High (Present)	Low (Not Present)	Low (Not Present)	Low (Not Present)	Low (Not Present)
<b>Encinitas/Solana Beach Double Tracking</b>					
Encinitas - AT-GRADE;	Medium (15)	Low (0)	Low (4)	Low (0)	Low (0)
Encinitas - SHORT TRENCH	Medium (15)	Low (0)	Low (2)	Low (0)	Low (0)
Stations Solana Beach	High (Present)	Low (Not Present)	Low (Not Present)	Low (Not Present)	Low (Not Present)
<b>Del Mar Double Tracking</b>					
TUNNEL under Camino Del Mar	High (61)	Low (0)	Low (0)	Low (3)	Low (0)
TUNNEL along I-5	Medium (25)	Low (0)	Low (0)	Low (4)	Low (0)
<b>I-5/805 Split To Hwy 52 Double Tracking</b>					
Miramar Hill TUNNEL	Low (6)	Low (0)	Low (0)	High (30)	Low (0)
I-5 TUNNEL	Medium (13)	Low (0)	Low (0)	High (30)	Low (0)
Stations UTC (Only applies to Miramar Hill Tunnel)	High (Present)	Low (Not Present)	Low (Not Present)	High (Present)	Low (Not Present)
<b>Hwy 52 To Santa Fe Depot Curve realignment and Double Tracking</b>	Medium (29)	High (2)	High (29)	Medium (18)	Low (0)
Stations Santa Fe Depot	High (Present)	Low (Not Present)	Low (Not Present)	High (Present)	Low (Not Present)

Active seismicity represents a key constraint on design and construction for the Rail Improvements Alternative. Some of the alignment options would require special design, including additional structural ductility and redundancy to withstand severe ground shaking as well as the potential for liquefaction and/or other types of seismically induced ground failure. Active fault crossings would require special designs to minimize potential damage to the tracks and other infrastructure as a result of surface fault rupture and surface disruption associated with fault creep.

The Rail Improvements Alternative ranked high for potential impacts related to seismic hazards between Union Station and Irvine, in the San Juan Capistrano and Del Mar areas, and between Highway 52 and Santa Fe Depot where the alignment would cross the Rose Canyon fault in two locations. These high-impact areas include about half of the total rail corridor length between Union Station and San Diego and would include all existing and proposed station sites except the Irvine Station site.

Seismic hazards do not substantially differentiate between alignment options except in the Del Mar area. Here, the tunnel option under Camino del Mar is rated as having a high seismic hazard because 61 percent of the alignment would cross hazard areas. The I-5 tunnel option in Del Mar is rated as having a medium seismic hazard, with 25 percent of the alignment crossing hazard areas.

Potential slope stability problems were identified in the areas of San Juan Capistrano, and between Highway 52 and Santa Fe Depot. In San Juan Capistrano, the at-grade and cut-and-cover option along the east side of Trabuco Creek would encounter unstable slopes along 76 percent of its length, due to liquefiable soils. The other option in the area, a tunnel under I-5, would avoid unstable areas.

Coastal bluff areas along the existing LOSSAN rail corridor in San Clemente, Dana Point and Del Mar rank high for potential slope instability because of the fragile nature of the bluffs. However, the Rail Improvements Alternative would potentially result in a beneficial impact to the bluff areas in San Clemente, Dana Point and Del Mar by precluding further rail construction along the bluffs and removing the existing rail service from the bluff areas. The Short Tunnel option in San Clemente/Dana Point would not remove rail service from the beach at Dana Point, but the Long Tunnel would. These potential improvements would not occur under the No-Project Alternative.

The tunnel options proposed as part of the Rail Improvements Alternative would pose design and construction issues because of difficult excavation conditions in some areas. In the Dana Point/San Clemente area, the two alignment options consist of a long, two-segment tunnel (approximately 8 mi (13 km) long), and a short tunnel (approximately 3.5 mi (5.6 km) long) in the same alignment. Both tunnels would encounter areas of difficult excavation. Due to its greater length, the long tunnel would encounter difficult excavation conditions for 50 percent of its length, compared with 14 percent of the length of the short tunnel. However, either tunnel option would result in lower impacts on coastal geology because impacts on the stability of the coastal bluffs would be reduced.

### **3.11.4 Design Practices**

The lead agencies have specifically avoided or minimized potential effects related to major geologic hazards such as major fault crossings, oil fields, and landslide areas through program-

level alignment studies completed as part of the Program EIR/EIS process. The objective is to avoid active fault crossings in tunnel or aerial sections, and this has been carried through the development of the alternative alignments to the extent feasible. Any impacts that remain at the conclusion of project-level environmental review would be mitigated through specific design and construction practices described in the following section.

### 3.11.5 Mitigation Strategies

Based on the analysis above, and considering the CEQA Appendix G thresholds of significance for geology and soils, the Rail Improvements Alternative would have potentially significant impacts. In some alignment segments there would be potential for increased soil disturbance due to slope instability. The alternative would involve some seismic hazards along alignment segments being susceptible to ground motion. Exposure to seismic risk would be reduced by avoiding the crossing any known, active faults in tunnel or aerial sections. Mitigation strategies will be applied at the project level, based on site-specific design and geologic information to reduce potential impacts.

This document contains a broad program analysis that generally identifies the locations of potential geologic impact areas for the proposed rail improvement options. These are areas that would need further study in environmental documentation at the project level.

Mitigation for potential impacts related to geologic and soils conditions must be developed on a site-specific basis, based on the results of more detailed (design-level) engineering geologic and geotechnical studies. Consequently, geologic and geotechnical mitigation measures would be identified in subsequent, project-level analysis rather than at the program level. Following is an overview of general approaches to possible geologic and geotechnical mitigation.

#### A. GROUND SHAKING

The potential for rail safety issues related to ground shaking during a large earthquake cannot be mitigated completely; this holds true for most vehicle transportation systems throughout California. However, some strategies are available to reduce hazards, including the following.

- The potential for collapse or toppling of superstructures (such as bridges or retaining structures) due to strong ground motion can be routinely mitigated by designing structures to withstand the estimated ground motions. Designs typically include additional redundancy and ductility in the structure. The design needed to withstand a certain magnitude of earthquake would be determined during subsequent stages of design and development of proposed facilities. Temporary facilities, such as shoring, would be designed considering a lower probability of seismic events.
- The potential for structural damage and resulting traffic hazard as a result of liquefaction can be mitigated through site-specific methods such as ground modification methods (soil densification) to prevent liquefaction, or structural design (e.g., deep foundations) to accommodate/resist the liquefiable zones.
- It is unlikely that the potential for train derailment during a peak event could be mitigated by designing a track-wheel system capable of withstanding the potential ground motions in most of the project area. Existing train systems throughout California, including the existing service along the LOSSAN corridor,

face the same challenge. However, a network of strong motion instruments has been installed throughout California and additional monitoring stations are proposed. These stations provide ground motion data that could be used with the rail instrumentation and controls system to temporarily shut down the LOSSAN rail operations during or after an earthquake. The system would then be inspected for damage due to ground motion and/or ground deformation and then returned to service when appropriate. This type of seismic protection is already used for many transit systems in seismically active areas and has been proven effective.

## **B. FAULT CROSSINGS**

The potential for ground rupture along active faults is one of the few geologic hazards that can rarely be fully mitigated. However, known active faults are typically monitored, and in some cases fault creep is mitigated with routine maintenance, which may include minor track re-alignment. Project design could provide for the installation of early warning systems triggered by strong ground motion associated with ground rupture. Linear monitoring systems such as time domain reflectometers (TDRs) could be installed along rail lines within the zone of potential ground rupture. These devices emit electronic information that is processed in a centralized location and could be used to temporarily control trains, thus reducing accidents. In addition, the alignment options where tunnels are proposed have avoided crossing known, active faults within the tunnel section.

## **C. SLOPE STABILITY/LANDSLIDES**

The potential for failure of natural and/or temporary construction slopes and retention structures can be mitigated through geotechnical investigation and review of proposed earthwork and foundation excavation plans and profiles. Based on investigation and review, recommendations would be provided for temporary and permanent slope reinforcement and protection, as needed. These recommendations would be incorporated into the construction plans. Additionally, during construction, geotechnical inspections would be performed to verify that no new, unanticipated conditions are encountered, and to verify the proper incorporation of recommendations. Slope monitoring may also be incorporated in final design where warranted.

## **D. AREAS OF DIFFICULT EXCAVATION**

The potential for difficult excavation in areas of hard rock and faults cannot be fully mitigated, but it can be anticipated so that safety is assured, potential environmental impacts are addressed, and project schedule problems are avoided to the extent possible. This includes focusing future geotechnical engineering and geologic investigations in these areas and incorporating the findings into project construction documents, communicating with the contractors during the bid process, and monitoring actual conditions during and after construction.

## **E. HAZARDS RELATED TO OIL AND GAS FIELDS**

Hazards related to potential migration of hazardous gases due to the presence of oil fields, gas fields, or other subsurface sources can be mitigated by following strict federal and state Occupational Safety & Health Administration (OSHA/CalOSHA) regulatory requirements for excavations, and consulting with other agencies as appropriate, such

as the California Department of Conservation (Division of Oil and Gas) and the California Department of Toxic and Substances Control regarding known areas of concern. Mitigation measures would include using safe and explosion-proof equipment during construction and testing for gases regularly. Active monitoring systems and alarms would be required in underground construction areas and facilities where subsurface gases are present. Gas barrier systems have also been used effectively for subways in the Los Angeles area. Installing gas detection systems can monitor the effectiveness of these systems.

## **F. MINERAL RESOURCES**

Although no mineral resources sites were identified in the study area, more detailed investigation would be conducted at the project level. In some cases, mineral resources sites may represent valuable sources of materials that should either be completely developed prior to use for another purpose or be avoided by proposed facilities to the extent feasible. This practice could result in realignment of proposed alignments and/or proposed relocation or modification of proposed stations or expansion areas at existing stations. To mitigate the potential for significant project redesign, important mineral sites will be identified as early as possible during project-level reviews.

## **G. SUMMARY OF MITIGATION STRATEGIES TO ADDRESS SEISMIC HAZARDS**

Mitigation strategies to address seismic hazards including liquefaction, seismically induced settlement and landslides may include, but would not be limited to:

- Design and engineer all structures for earthquake activity - Seismic design for the structures would be based on the Department's Seismic Design Criteria
- Design and install foundations resistant to soil liquefaction and settlement.
- Identify potential serpentinite bedrock disturbance areas and implement a safety plan
- Apply the requirements of Section 19 (Earthwork) of the Department's most current Standard Specifications to ensure that geotechnically stable slopes are planned and created.
- Subsurface gases: Install passive or active gas venting systems and gas collection systems in areas where subsurface gases are identified.
- Remove corrosive soil and use corrosion protected materials in infrastructure.
- Address erosive soils through soil removal and replacement, geosynthetics, vegetation, and/or rip rap, where warranted.
- Remove or moisture condition shrink-swell soils, where necessary.
- Utilize stone columns, grouting, and deep dynamic compaction in areas of potential liquefaction
- Utilize buttress berms, flattened slopes, drains, and/or tie-backs in areas of slope instability.
- Avoid settlement through preloading, use of stone columns, deep dynamic compaction, and grouting, and/or special foundation designs.

### 3.11.6 Subsequent Analysis

As described in Method of Evaluation of Impacts above, this analysis was performed generally on the basis of existing data available in GIS format. The data provided in this section are intended for planning purposes, are not meant to be definitive for specific sites, and have not been independently confirmed. More detailed geological studies would be required at the project level, and would likely include subsurface exploration, laboratory testing, and engineering analyses to support detailed alignment design and mitigation of potential impacts associated with geologic and soils conditions, including seismic hazards.



## 3.12 HYDROLOGY AND WATER RESOURCES

This section addresses three types of hydrology and water resources – floodplains, surface water, and groundwater – that have the potential to be affected by the proposed alternatives. In addition, water quality issues are briefly addressed in relation to surface and groundwater resources. The section describes the existing hydrologic resources within the LOSSAN region and generally identifies the potential for impacts on those resources from the No-Project and Rail Improvements Alternatives and from rail alignments and station options. The analysis identifies the number and general extent of areas of hydrologic resources that potentially would be affected by the various alignment options for purposes of comparison.

### 3.12.1 Regulatory Requirements and Methods of Evaluation

#### A. REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS

Several federal and state laws regulate and are designed to protect hydrologic resources, floodplains and water quality. Below is a list of these statutes. (See Appendix 3.12-A for brief descriptions of these authorities.)

##### Federal Laws and Regulations

Clean Water Act (33 U.S.C. §§ 1251 *et seq.*): The purpose of the Clean Water Act (CWA) is to provide guidance for the restoration and maintenance of the chemical, physical, and biological integrity of the nation's waters through prevention and elimination of pollution. The CWA applies to discharges of pollutants into waters of the U.S. The following CWA sections are most relevant to this analysis.

- Section 401 of the CWA requires that an applicant for a federal license or permit that allows activities resulting in a discharge to waters of the U.S. obtain a state certification that the discharge complies with other provisions of the CWA. The California Water Resources Control Board (CWRCB) administers the certification program within California through its nine Regional Water Quality Control Boards (RWQCBs).
- Section 402 of the CWA established a permitting system for the discharge of any pollutant (except dredged or fill materials) into the waters of the U.S.
- Section 404 of the CWA established a permit program, administered by the USACE, regulating discharge of dredged or fill materials into waters of the U.S., including wetlands. Implementing regulations by the USACE are found at 33 CFR Parts 320-330. Guidelines for implementation are referred to as the Section 404(b)(1) Guidelines that were developed by the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in conjunction with the USACE (40 CFR Part 230). The Guidelines allow the discharge of fill materials into the aquatic system only if there is no practicable alternative that would have less adverse impacts.

Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act (33 U.S.C. §§ 401 *et seq.*): Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act, administered by the Corps, requires permits for all structures (such as riprap) and activities (such as dredging) in navigable waters of the U.S.

Executive Order 11988 — Floodplain Management (U.S. DOT Order 5650.2; 23 C.F.R. 650, Subpart A): Executive Order 11988 directs federal agencies to avoid to the extent practicable and feasible short- and long-term adverse impacts associated with the

occupancy and modification of floodplains and to avoid direct and indirect support of floodplain development wherever there is a practicable alternative. Department of Transportation (DOT) Order 5650.2 implements the Executive Order for DOT programs. 23 C.F.R. 650 prescribes Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) policies and procedures for the location and hydraulic design of highway encroachments on floodplains.

Flood Disaster Protection Act (42 U.S.C. §§ 4001-4128; DOT Order 5650.2, 23 C.F.R. 650 Subpart A; and 23 C.F.R. Part 771): The purpose of the Flood Disaster Protection Act is to identify flood-prone areas and provide flood insurance to residents and businesses in those areas.

### **State Laws and Regulations**

California Department of Fish and Game Code (Sections 1601-1603 [Streambed Alteration]): Under Sections 1601-1603 of the Fish and Game Code, agencies are required to notify the California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG) prior to implementing any project that would divert, obstruct, or change the natural flow or bed, channel, or bank of any river, stream, or lake.

Porter-Cologne Water Quality Act (Water Code Section 13000 *et seq.*): The Porter-Cologne Act is the basic water quality control law for California, and it provides for the CWRCB to implement the CWA for California.

## **B. METHOD OF EVALUATION OF IMPACTS**

Potential impacts on hydrologic resources, floodplains and water quality were evaluated using a combination of both qualitative and quantitative assessment methods. The existing conditions as described for the No-Project Alternative provide the primary basis of comparison.

### **Qualitative Assessment**

A qualitative assessment was used to compare the alternatives and alignment options when discussing issues such as runoff, sedimentation, potential for impacts to groundwater, or other items that would ultimately require a more detailed analytic approach (i.e., at the project level, if the decision is made to proceed with the proposed Rail Improvements Alternative) than appropriate for a program-level analysis. For these items, the differences in impacts between alternatives, and among alignment options, are explained in general, qualitative terms.

### **Quantitative Assessment**

For the quantitative assessment, readily available information on wetland areas, stream locations, existing water quality problem areas, flood zones, and general soil information was used to estimate the magnitude of the potential area of impacts for the alternatives. The following steps were completed to estimate the potential areas of impacts for floodplains and water quality from the No-Project and Rail Improvements Alternatives.

- Acreage of floodplains in the study area defined as Special Flood Hazard Areas (SFHAs), as defined by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) on Flood Insurance Rate Maps, was identified and estimated to evaluate the area of floodplain potentially impacted by the alternatives.

- Acreage of surface waters (lakes or lagoons) and the linear feet of surface waters (rivers and streams) in the study area was estimated, using U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) 1:24,000 scale digital line graphs of blue-line streams, including ephemeral streams. The linear feet of surface water was calculated based on the flow-path length of rivers and streams in the study area to evaluate areas potentially affected by the alternatives. Lake/lagoon surface areas represent the impoundment at maximum capacity.
- Waters with impaired water quality in the study area, (i.e., waters identified on the Section 303(d) CWA list, distributed by the CWRCB), were identified.
- Acreage of areas of potential soil erosion in the study area was estimated to evaluate areas potentially affected by the alternatives. The calculations included those areas with a combination of erosive soils and steep slopes, evaluated as the product of  $k_{\text{fact}}$  and  $\text{slope}_h$  (listed in the State Soil Geographic-STATSGO GIS database). Those conditions where  $k_{\text{fact}} \times \text{slope}_h$  is greater than 3.0 are potentially susceptible to erosion.  $k_{\text{fact}}$  designates the soil erodibility factor (including rock fragments) and  $\text{slope}_h$  indicates the soil slope.

The quantities of each type of hydrologic resource that could fall in the study area of the Rail Improvements Alternative were estimated based on these steps.

### 3.12.2 Affected Environment

#### A. STUDY AREA DEFINED

The study area for hydrology and water quality is defined as the area within 100 ft (30 m) of the centerline of the proposed Rail Improvements Alternative alignment options, and within 100 ft (30 m) of the direct footprint of proposed new or expanded station facilities.

#### B. HYDROLOGIC RESOURCES IN THE STUDY AREA

##### Floodplains

Floodplains are land next to a river that becomes covered by water when the river overflows its banks. FEMA designates and maps floodplains. In support of the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP), FEMA has undertaken flood hazard identification and mapping to produce Flood Hazard Boundary Maps, Flood Insurance Rate Maps, and Flood Boundary and Floodway Maps. The zone of interest for the analysis of hydrologic resources in this program-level evaluation is defined as a special flood hazard area (SFHA) or Zone A, which is the flood insurance rate zone that corresponds to the 100-year flood hazard area in the hydrologic resource study area.

Floodplains are important because they provide floodwater storage and attenuate the risk of downstream flooding, typically provide important habitat for native species (discussed in Section 3.13, Biological Resources and Wetlands), improve water quality by allowing filtration of sediments and other contaminants, and may provide locations for groundwater recharge.

Floodplains encompass floodways, which are the primary areas that convey flood flows. Floodways are typically channels of a stream, including any adjacent areas such as lagoons and smaller streams. NFIP has introduced the concept of floodways and floodplains to assist local communities in floodplain management. The floodway is the

channel of a stream, including any adjacent floodplain areas that must be generally kept free of encroachment so that the 100-year flood can be carried without substantial increases to flood heights. The area between the floodway and the 100-year floodplain boundary is referred to as the floodway fringe. Any approved encroachment may take place within the floodway fringe. According to guidelines established by FEMA, increase in flood height in the floodway due to any encroachment in the floodway fringe areas may not exceed 12 in. (30.48 cm), provided that hazardous velocities are not produced in the water body. Constructing levees, rail and road embankments, buildings, etc., that encroach on floodplains may reduce the flood-carrying capacity and increase flood elevations.

Figure 3.12-1 shows SFHAs in the general vicinity of the hydrologic resources study area. As delineated by FEMA, 100-year floodplains in the study area are associated with significant drainage channels or riparian areas just south of Anaheim, or are within coastal areas just south of Camp Pendleton to San Diego.

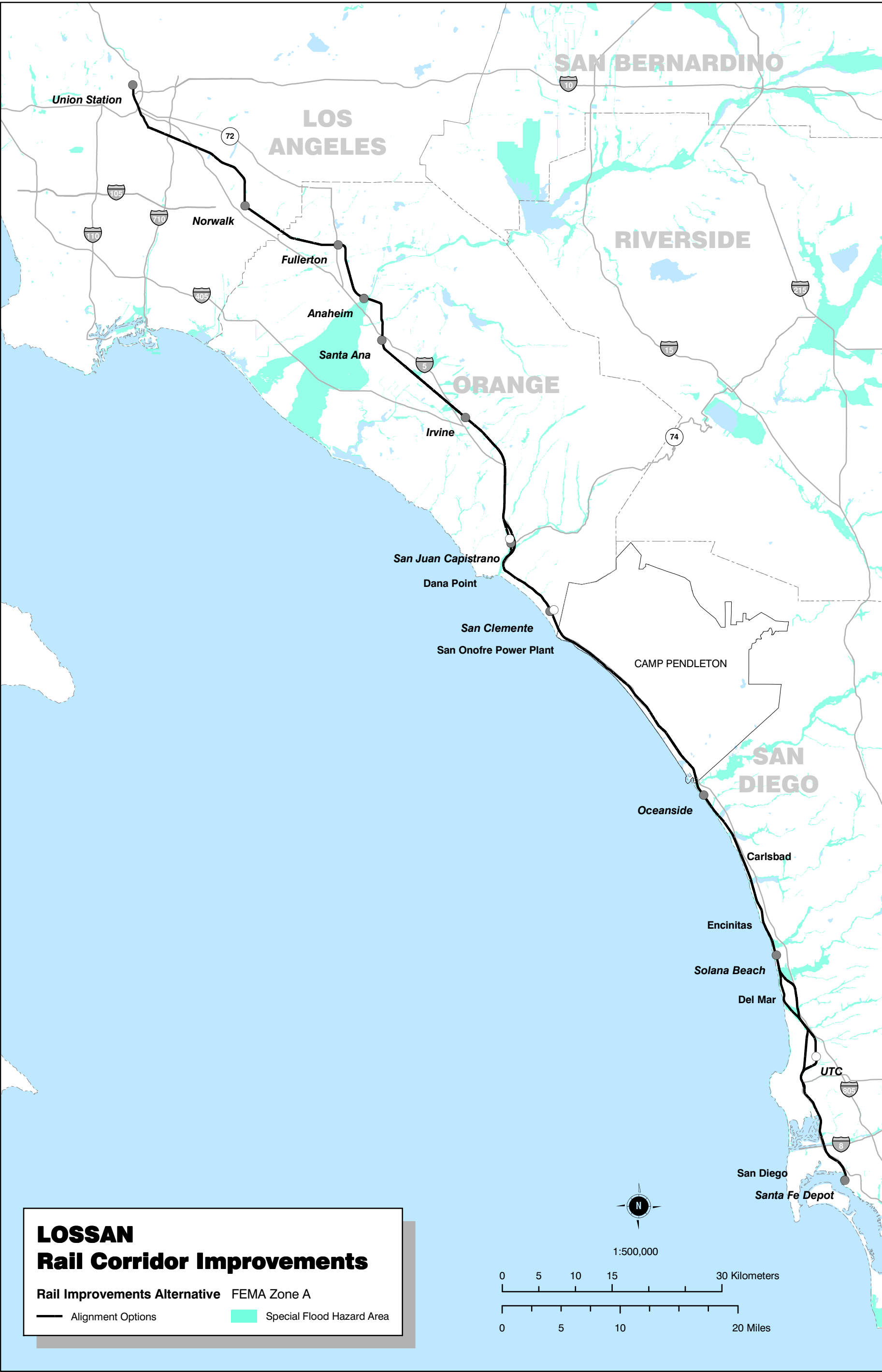
### **Surface Waters**

For this analysis, surface waters include improved flood control or drainage channels, intermittent river and stream channels, permanent river and stream channels, ponds, lakes, reservoirs, coastal estuaries and lagoons, and sloughs.

Streams and lakes are important for fish and wildlife, for water supply, and because they convey floodwaters and may contribute to or attenuate the risk of downstream flooding. They provide important habitat for native species and may support wetland and riparian habitats (discussed in Section 3.13, Biological Resources and Wetlands); provide direct pathways connecting to downstream ecological or human resources; and provide locations for groundwater recharge.

Lagoons and estuaries are sheltered, semi-enclosed, brackish bodies of water along shorelines where fresh and salt waters interface through tidal flows and currents. Pollution from storm water runoff, industrial discharges, and boats can damage these resources, especially if their tidal flow is limited, naturally or otherwise. The amount, frequency, duration, and quality of freshwater flows affect the salinity levels, which in turn dictate the types of biological resources associated with a particular water body.

Figure 3.12-2 shows surface waters in the general vicinity of the hydrologic resources study area. (See Section 3.13, Biological Resources and Wetlands, for a discussion of wetlands.) The major rivers and channels in the region include Los Angeles, Rio Hondo, San Gabriel, Santa Ana, Santa Margarita, San Luis Rey, San Dieguito, and San Diego Rivers. Other, smaller creeks include San Mateo, San Onofre, and Loma Alta creeks, all of which may provide critical habitat for the tidewater goby and other listed species. Other water resources include the San Diego and Mission Bays which border the southern end of the study area, and the coastal lagoons located in northern San Diego County. Other, smaller surface waters may exist within potential areas of direct and indirect impacts of the Rail Improvements Alternative that did not appear in existing databases used for this program-level analysis. Project-level studies will include more



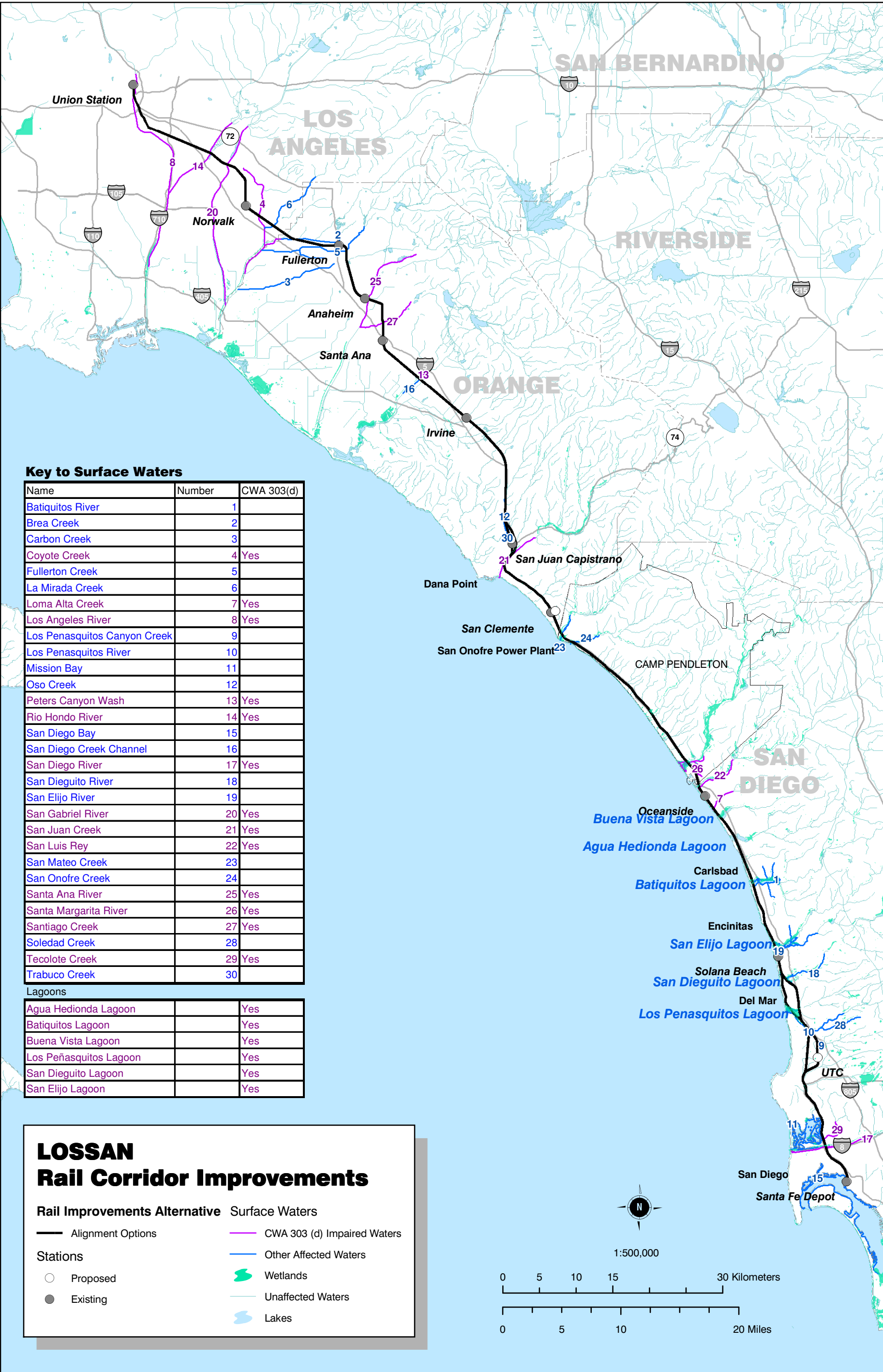
Source : USGS, 1998



**FIGURE 3.12-1**  
**Special Flood Hazard Areas**  
LOSSAN Rail Corridor Improvements  
Program Environmental Impact Report / Environmental Impact Statement







Source : USGS, 1998



**FIGURE 3.13-2**  
**Surface Waters & Wetlands**  
LOSSAN Rail Corridor Improvements  
Program Environmental Impact Report / Environmental Impact Statement



site-specific mapping, field work, and consultation with resource agencies to identify any additional surface waters within the study area.

The existing LOSSAN railroad corridor generally parallels the coastline between Capistrano Beach and San Diego. Along this stretch of coast, six lagoons have formed where streams flow into the Pacific Ocean: Buena Vista, Agua Hedionda, Batiquitos, San Elijo, San Dieguito, and Los Peñasquitos. These lagoons contain a mixture of salt and fresh water, and the water level is often influenced by tidal cycles and stormwater runoff during local and upstream precipitation events.

When the rail corridor across the lagoons was originally established, the tracks were typically built on an earth-fill embankment. A relatively short bridge allowed for water to pass under the tracks, but the embankment reduced the degree of water circulation in the lagoon. Where previously the stream channel may have meandered across the lagoon, the opening to the ocean was now fixed at the bridge location. After the railroad was constructed, the old Coast Highway was constructed nearly parallel to the railroad tracks. In most of these lagoons, the highway was also built on an earth-fill embankment, with a bridge opening in line with the railroad bridge opening.

### **Groundwater**

Groundwater is found in subsurface water-bearing formations. A groundwater basin is defined as a hydrogeologic unit containing one large aquifer or several connected and interrelated aquifers. Groundwater basins, which do not necessarily coincide with surface drainage basins, are defined by surface features and/or geological features such as faults, impermeable layers, and natural or artificial divides in the water table surface. The elevation of groundwater varies with the amount of withdrawal and the amount of recharge to the groundwater basin. Groundwater basins may be recharged naturally as precipitation infiltrates, and/or artificially with imported or reclaimed water. Shallow groundwater is subject to potential impacts from dewatering during construction.

The California Coastal Basin Aquifer is the primary aquifer identified in the LOSSAN region. Figure 3.12-3 shows the location and extent of this aquifer within the general vicinity of the hydrologic resources study area. Groundwater depth within the region varies from a few feet to more than 100 ft (30 m). Perched aquifers with a shallow water surface occur throughout Los Angeles and Orange Counties. Shallow groundwater is also likely adjacent to or in the vicinity of streams, rivers, lagoons and bays.

Two varieties of groundwater are found along the proposed coastal routes. The first is perched water, which infiltrates and percolates through the sandy terraces, then becomes perched on or within less porous bedrock units. This contributes to the instability of the Del Mar and San Clemente coastal bluffs. Efforts to control the instability have included improvements to the storm drain system, surface drainage, and sub-drains. The second variety of groundwater is subsurface water that saturates surface and formational materials in the vicinity of alluvial or estuarine environments, such as the mouths of the major drainage areas and lagoons.

## C. WATER QUALITY

Surrounding land uses affect surface water and groundwater quality. Both point-source<sup>1</sup> and nonpoint-source<sup>2</sup> discharges contribute contaminants to surface waters. Pollutant sources in the primarily urban areas of the LOSSAN region include parking lots and roadways, rooftops, exposed earth at construction sites, and landscaped areas.

The impacts of nonpoint-source pollutants on aquatic systems are many and varied. Polluted runoff waters can result in impacts on aquatic ecosystems, public use, and human health from ground and surface water contamination, damage to and destruction of wildlife habitat, decline in fisheries, and loss of recreational opportunities. Small soil particles washed into streams can smother spawning grounds and marsh habitat. Suspended small soil particulates can restrict light penetration into water and limit photosynthesis of aquatic biota. Metals and petroleum hydrocarbons washed off of roadways and parking lots, and fertilizers, pesticides, and herbicides from landscaped areas may cause toxic responses (acute or long term) in aquatic life, or may harm water supply sources such as reservoirs or aquifers.

### Erosion

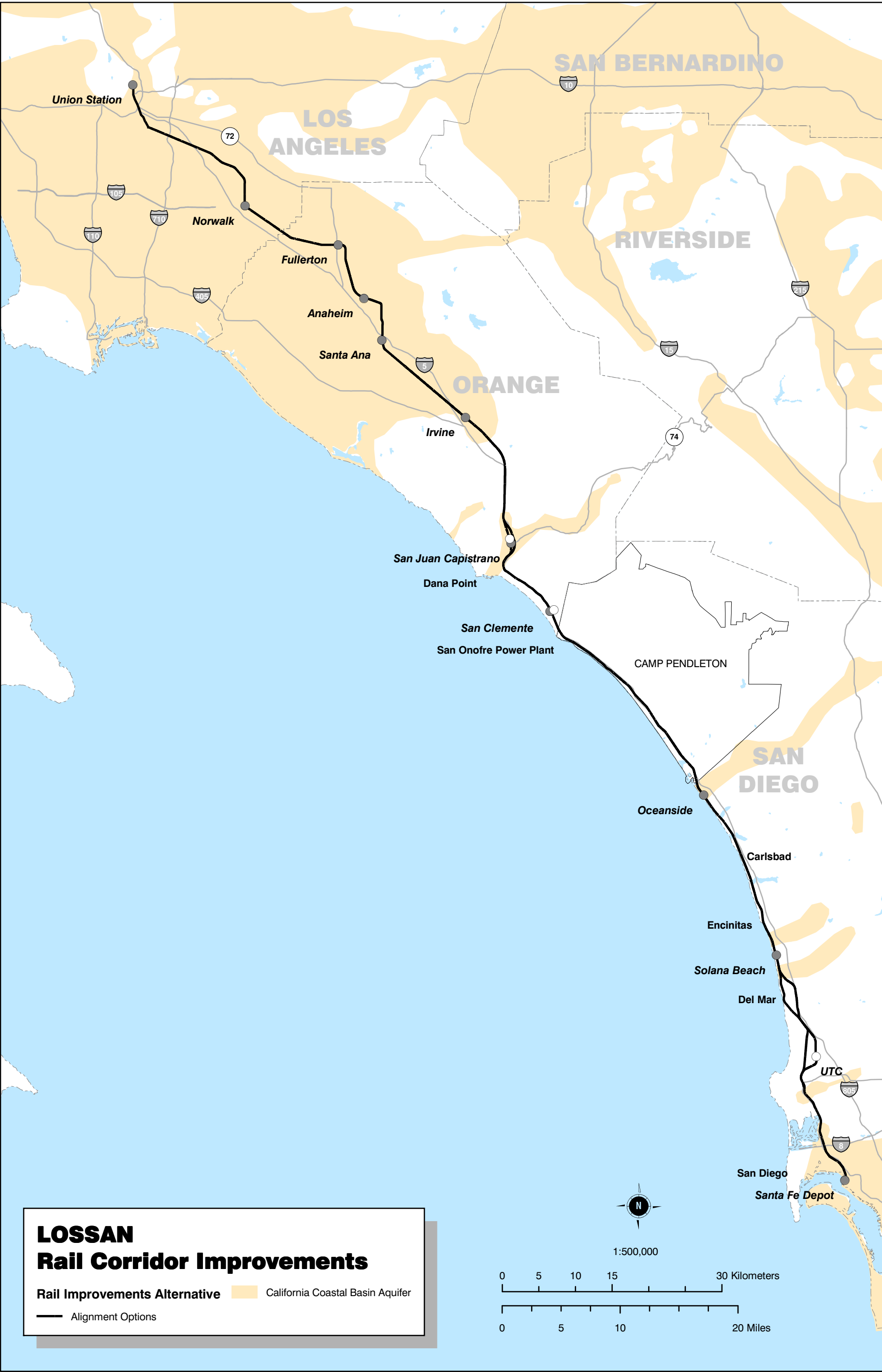
Potential impacts on water quality may result from construction activity (e.g., grading, which removes vegetation, exposing soil to wind and water erosion). A potential erosive condition occurs in areas with a combination of erosive soil types and steep slopes. Erosion can result in sedimentation that ultimately flows into surface waters. Contaminants in runoff waters may include sediment, hydrocarbons (e.g., fuels, solvents, etc.) metals, pesticides, bacteria, nutrients, and trash. Figure 3.12-4 shows areas with soils susceptible to erosion in the general vicinity of the hydrologic resources study area.

### Impaired Waters

Some water bodies have been given special status under the CWA. Section 303(d) of the CWA requires each state to identify waters that will not achieve water quality standards after application of effluent limits, and to develop plans for water quality improvement. For each water body and pollutant for which water quality is considered impaired, the state must develop load-based (as opposed to concentration-based) limits called total maximum daily loads (TMDLs). TMDL is the maximum amount of pollution (both point and non-point sources) that a water body can assimilate without violating state water quality standards. Priorities for development of TMDLs are set by the state, based on the severity of the pollution and the beneficial uses of the waters. The EPA TMDL program provides a process for determining pollution budgets for the nation's most impaired waters. Pollutant loading limits are set and implemented by the CWRCB under the Porter-Cologne Act. The program includes development of water quality standards, issuance of permits to control discharges, and enforcement action against violators.

<sup>1</sup> *Point source* is a stationary location or fixed facility, such as the end of a pipe, from which pollutants are discharged; any single identifiable source of pollution (EPA 2002).

<sup>2</sup> *Nonpoint source* pollution is caused by rainfall moving over and through the ground. As the runoff moves, it picks up and carries away natural and human-made pollutants, finally depositing them into lakes, rivers, wetlands, coastal waters, and even underground sources of drinking water (EPA 2002).



Source : USGS, 1998



**FIGURE 3.12-3**  
**Groundwater**  
LOSSAN Rail Corridor Improvements  
Program Environmental Impact Report / Environmental Impact Statement







Source : Jennings, 1977



**FIGURE 3.12-4**  
**Areas Susceptible to Erosion**  
LOSSAN Rail Corridor Improvements  
Program Environmental Impact Report / Environmental Impact Statement



Water bodies with impaired water quality in the LOSSAN region include the Los Angeles, Rio Hondo, San Gabriel, Santa Ana, Santa Margarita, and San Luis Rey Rivers. (Refer to Figure 3.12-2.) The rivers are considered impaired because they exceed standards for algae, ammonia, metals, chloroform count, pesticides, nutrients, toxicity, trash, and/or sedimentation. In San Diego County, the lagoons and the San Diego and Mission Bays are also considered impaired because of declining water quality, increased freshwater input, accumulated sediment, diminished biological productivity, and water circulation constraints.

The water bodies that are tributaries of or discharge into 303(d) impaired waters include Batiquitos River, Los Peñasquitos Canyon Creek, Los Peñasquitos River, San Diego Creek Channel, San Diego River, San Dieguito River, San Elijo River, Santiago Creek, and Soledad Creek. Since these are tributaries of or discharge into 303(d) waters, they may be considered part of the 303(d) listed water bodies.

### 3.12.3 Environmental Consequences

Potential impacts on hydrology and water resources which may result from the No-Project Alternative or the proposed Rail Improvements Alternative include potential encroachment on or location in a floodplain, potential impacts to water quality, potential increased or decreased runoff and stormwater discharge due to changes in the amount of paved surface, potentially increased or decreased contribution of nonpoint-source contamination from automobiles, potential impacts on groundwater from dewatering or reduction of groundwater recharge, or impediments to tidal flow at lagoon crossings.

#### A. EXISTING CONDITIONS COMPARED TO NO-PROJECT ALTERNATIVE

In addition to existing conditions, the No-Project Alternative includes planned and programmed transportation improvements that would be constructed and operational by 2020. The potential impacts of the No-Project Alternative on hydrologic resources and water quality are assumed to be limited because typical design and construction practices would need to meet permit conditions. However, some impacts to hydrologic resources would likely result from the implementation of the projects under the No-Project Alternative, such as increased runoff from added lanes of paved surface and new columns for expanded roadway or railway bridges over rivers, streams, and lagoons. However, attempting to estimate these potential impacts would be speculative. Project-level environmental documents and permit applications would in all likelihood be prepared by project proponents for future projects that would affect hydrologic resources and water quality. These project-level documents would identify, analyze, and avoid, minimize, or mitigate potential impacts to hydrology and water quality to the extent feasible. Therefore, it is assumed that few major changes would occur to hydrologic resources as a result of No-Project Alternative and that existing conditions can serve as the basis for assessment of the potential for impact from the Rail Improvements Alternative.

Beyond the potential impacts for programmed improvements (to be addressed in other project-level documents), the No-Project Alternative potentially would have additional, indirect impacts on hydrologic resources and water quality in the coastal bluff areas along the LOSSAN corridor. The No-Project Alternative would not provide any opportunity for long-term solutions to the continued erosion problems along the existing LOSSAN rail corridor in the San Clemente and Del Mar coastal bluff areas, caused by

wave action, groundwater infiltration, and slope stability. The No-Project Alternative would result in the need for the bluffs to be stabilized over the long-term, and drainage facilities maintained or increased, to continue reliable rail service in these areas.

## **B. NO-PROJECT ALTERNATIVE COMPARED TO RAIL IMPROVEMENTS ALTERNATIVE**

The estimated areas of potential impacts to hydrologic resources and water quality would not provide a primary means of differentiating between the alternatives or among the rail improvement alignment options because neither alternative nor any of the alignment options presents significant potential impacts that could not be substantially avoided, minimized, or mitigated through conventional design and construction processes, and compliance with permits and Best Management Practices (BMPs) that are required for project permits. For example, it is expected that streams and rivers would largely be spanned by bridges (culverts also can be used) or tunneled under to minimize potential impacts to the flow and water quality of these hydrologic resources. Further, potential impacts on water quality from surface runoff or erosion during project construction would be identified during the project-level analysis and the design phase, and standard BMPs would be used to minimize potential impacts. The primary difference among alignment options would be the cost to bridge over streams and rivers and tunnel under waters and wetland areas or construct elevated rail infrastructure to minimize potential impacts to surface flow.

Areas with identified sensitive habitat, such as the tidal lagoons in northern San Diego County, are discussed in Section 3.13, Biological Resources and Wetlands, of this Program EIR/EIS. These areas have waters and wetlands that provide potential habitat to special-status species. For example, the following surface waters provide potential critical habitat for the tidewater goby, and will be further evaluated at the project level: San Mateo Creek, San Onofre Creek, Loma Alta Creek, and Agua Hedionda Lagoon. Avoiding or minimizing impacts on hydrologic resources and riparian corridors would be a factor in selecting the least environmentally damaging practicable alternative at the project level.

Potential hydrology and water quality impacts related to construction could result from ground-disturbing activities at shafts, portals, and staging areas; generation of spoils; construction vibration and noise; and potential ground surface settlement from trenching/tunneling and excavation. These impacts would be temporary, and would abate as construction is completed and revegetation or surface stabilization measures are put in place.

Overall, it is anticipated that the design of bridge structures over water bodies could have a beneficial effect on hydrology and water quality impacts. Implementation of alignment options that would modify existing bridge structures across lagoons would allow for improved tidal flushing, improving the quality of the water. Options that would remove the existing rail corridor from coastal bluff areas in San Clemente and Del Mar would reduce long-term bluff erosion by eliminating the need for on-going rail line maintenance activities and vehicles along the bluffs, and reduce potential impacts to the rail service from increased storm surge and rising sea levels along the coastal rail route.

Table 3.12-1 summarizes the potential area of impacts on the various hydrologic resources examined as part of this evaluation. Potential impacts of the various alignment options are described below by resource. Surface waters other than those identified at this program level of analysis may exist within potential areas of direct and indirect impacts of the Rail Improvements Alternative. Some may not have been mapped in existing databases used for this analysis, or did not occur within the defined study area for various alignment options. Project-level studies will include more site-specific mapping, field work, and consultation with resource agencies to identify any additional surface waters within the study area.

The lack of identification of an impact does not necessarily mean that this portion of the proposed alternative would not result in potential impacts on hydrologic resources, only that location-specific data would be required to make a more precise determination. Likewise, the identification of a potential impact on a specific resource is intended to be conservative and in many instances may be an overstatement because the hydrologic resource may not be found in or near the footprint of the corridor or actual alignment. It is understood that hydrologic resources could still be present, and will be evaluated through field studies for project-level environmental reviews.

### **Floodplains**

Potential flood impacts may occur in areas where designated SFHAs were identified along the rail routes. Depending on the alignment option, the total extent of SFHAs crossed in the study area ranges from a low of approximately 205 ac (83 ha) to a high of 315 ac (127 ha). Floodplain impacts are expected to be low overall, because many of the proposed improvements would be done within the established LOSSAN rail corridor designed in the floodplains, or would involve deep tunnels that would avoid surface floodplains.

From Union Station to Irvine, SFHAs would be equally affected by either alignment option along the existing LOSSAN rail alignment. Proposed modifications at the existing Anaheim and Irvine Stations would affect SFHAs and potential flood impacts could occur. Because the modifications would involve parking expansion and bypass tracks at existing stations, it is expected that any potential flood hazard can be avoided or mitigated through planning and design.

The City of San Juan Capistrano rail improvement options include the I-5 tunnel option, and an at-grade and trenched option east of Trabuco Creek. Designated SFHAs would be crossed along the at-grade portions of the tunnel option, and for a short length of the Trabuco Creek option. There is a potential for flood impacts to the western bank of Trabuco Creek if the trench were designed with the eastern stream bank serving as the trench wall. This could result in hard-armoring of the eastern bank which could then cause damage to the western bank and possibly the rail corridor itself during flood events.

SFHAs have been identified in areas along the Dana Point curve realignment and within the short tunnel option south of the curve realignment. The long, two-segment tunnel alignment does not cross any known SFHAs.

**Table 3.12-1  
Summary of Hydrologic Resources Potentially Impacted**

Rail Improvement Alignment Options	100-Year Floodplains Acres (Hectares)	Streams and Rivers Linear Feet (Meters)	Lakes and Lagoons Acres (Hectares)	High Potential for Erosion Acres (Hectares)	Potential for Impact to Groundwater (H, M or L)
<b>Union Station To Fullerton Station – 4<sup>th</sup> Main Track</b>	10 (4)	675 (203)	0	220 (89)	L
<b>Fullerton Station To Irvine Station—Double Tracking</b>					
AT-GRADE between Orange and Santa Ana	65 (26)	2,590 (777)	0	20 (8)	L
TRENCH between Orange and Santa Ana	65 (26)	2,590 (777)	0	20 (8)	L (at-grade sections) M (trench sections)
Stations Fullerton	0	0	0	15 (6)	
Anaheim	15 (6)	0	0	0	
Santa Ana	0	0	0	0	
Irvine	5 (2)	0	0	0	
<b>San Juan Capistrano Double Tracking</b>					
TUNNEL along I-5 between Hwy 73 and Avenida Aeropuerto	25 (10)	1,195 (359)	0	35 (14)	L (at-grade sections) M (tunnel sections)
AT-GRADE and Cut/Cover TRENCH along east side of Trabuco Creek	5 (2)	2,340 (702)	0	5 (2)	L
Stations San Juan Capistrano	0	0	0	0	L
<b>Dana Point/San Clemente Double Tracking</b>					
Dana Point Curve Realignment; San Clemente - SHORT TUNNEL	30 (12)	740 (222)	0	235 (95)	L (at-grade sections) M (trench sections)
San Clemente - LONG TWO-SEGMENT TUNNEL	0	340 (102)	0	240 (97)	L (tunnel sections) M (trench sections)
Stations San Clemente	5 (2)	0	0	0	L
<b>Camp Pendleton At-grade Double Tracking</b>	0	940 (282)	0	0	L



**Table 3.12-1**  
**Summary of Hydrologic Resources Potentially Impacted (continued)**

<b>Rail Improvement Alignment Options</b>	<b>100-Year Floodplains Acres (Hectares)</b>	<b>Streams and Rivers Linear Feet (Meters)</b>	<b>Lakes and Lagoons Acres (Hectares)</b>	<b>High Potential for Erosion Acres (Hectares)</b>	<b>Potential for Impact to Groundwater (H, M or L)</b>
<b>Oceanside/Carlsbad Double Tracking</b>					
Carlsbad - AT-GRADE; double tracking	15 (6)	1,300 (390)	7 (3)	95 (38)	L
Carlsbad - TRENCH; double-tracking	15 (6)	1,300 (390)	7 (3)	95 (38)	L
Stations Oceanside	0	0	0	5 (2)	L
<b>Encinitas/Solana Beach Double Tracking</b>					
Encinitas - AT-GRADE;	20 (8)	1,615 (485)	3 (1)	160 (65)	L
Encinitas - SHORT TRENCH	20 (8)	1,615 (485)	3 (1)	160 (65)	M
Stations Solana Beach	0	0	0	15 (6)	L
<b>Del Mar Double Tracking</b>					
TUNNEL under Camino Del Mar	75 (30)	1,310 (393)	2	140 (57)	L (tunnel sections) M (trench sections)
TUNNEL along I-5	35 (14)	1,520 (456)	0.5	145 (59)	L
<b>I-5/805 Split To Hwy 52 Double Tracking</b>					
Miramar Hill TUNNEL	15 (6)	455 (137)	0	35 (14)	L
I-5 TUNNEL	35 (14)	320 (96)	0	30 (12)	L
Stations UTC (Only applies to Miramar Hill Tunnel)	0	0	0	25 (10)	L
<b>Hwy 52 To Santa Fe Depot Curve realignment and Double Tracking</b>					
	15 (6)	1,475 (443)	0	75 (30)	L (at-grade sections) M (trench sections)
Stations Santa Fe Depot	0	0	2* (0.8)	0	L

\*Adjacent to San Diego Bay but does not cross.

Between Oceanside and San Diego, most segments and options would encompass SFHAs, including the trench and at-grade options in Carlsbad and Encinitas, and both tunnel options in Del Mar. The tunnel alignment under Camino del Mar crosses about 75 ac (30 ha) of SFHA, while the I-5 tunnel option crosses about 35 ac (14 ha); however, most of the potential floodplain impacts along either of these alignments would be avoided by tunneling. Similarly, the two tunnel options south of the I-5/805 Split both encounter floodplains, but would not be expected to have a substantive impact due to

the depth of the tunneling. Small areas of SFHAs are also present along the alignment from Highway 52 to the Santa Fe Depot in San Diego where there is some potential for impact along the proposed at-grade and trenched alignment.

### **Surface Waters**

Between Los Angeles Union Station and San Diego Santa Fe Depot, the various rail alignment options cross approximately 25 streams and rivers, 13 of which are 303(d) waters. In addition, these rail options cross six coastal lagoons in northern San Diego County, all of which are considered impaired waters. All of these streams, rivers, and lagoons were considered in the Surface Waters analysis. Depending on the alignment options, a total of between 11,760 and 13,650 linear ft (3,528 to 4,095 m) of streams and rivers are within the study area potentially affected, and between 10.5 and 12 ac (4 to 5 ha) of lagoons are within the study area potentially affected.

During project scoping, the lead agencies stated that project design for the Rail Improvements Alternative would be such that, at a minimum, there would be no net increase in the existing footprint of the rail infrastructure or fill in the coastal lagoons. This design commitment would prevent any further reduction in water circulation attributable to the railroad infrastructure.

There is a potential for improving the existing hydrologic conditions in the lagoons, if the existing earth-fill embankments were replaced with new causeway structures, and/or existing bridge spans were widened. During winter storms, the fresh water streams entering the lagoons experience very high flows for short periods of time. The existing railroad embankment has the potential to act as a dam, slowing this flow on its way to the ocean and raising flood water levels in the lagoons. The replacement of the embankment with a series of bridge structures would reduce this backwater effect, potentially lowering the water surface elevation in the lagoons during flood events. The feasibility, costs versus benefits, and effectiveness of reducing the amount of existing fill and improving hydrologic conditions by replacing structures cannot be fully assessed at this program-level evaluation. Those issues would be examined in more detail during project-level analyses (see Section 3.12.5 below). Removal of existing fill would create temporary increases in the amount of sedimentation in lagoons.

In San Juan Capistrano, the tunnel option along I-5 would potentially affect fewer surface water resources than the at-grade and trenched alignment option on the east side of Trabuco Creek. The latter would pose potential sedimentation impacts during construction from erosion and run-off.

In the Dana Point/San Clemente area, the short-tunnel option would have somewhat higher potential for impacts on surface water than the long, two-segment tunnel option, because the short option would involve more at-grade and trenched construction.

In the Del Mar area, the Camino del Mar tunnel option would result in removal of the existing rail corridor from the coastal bluffs, placing it in a tunnel, and crossing two lagoons on elevated (bridge) structures. The existing rail bridge across the Los Peñasquitos Lagoon would likely be replaced with a new bridge or causeway structure that would eliminate the existing fill and increase water circulation and tidal flushing. The San Dieguito Lagoon crossing would remain within the footprint of the existing rail structure. The I-5 tunnel would also remove the existing rail service from the coastal bluffs, placing them in a tunnel and bypassing Los Peñasquitos Lagoon. This tunnel

would surface at the southern edge of San Dieguito Lagoon and a new bridge would cross the floodplain and river of this lagoon. This structure could cause erosion to the lagoon bluffs, and increase sedimentation in the lagoon. Either of the tunnel options in the Del Mar area would result in a temporary increase in sedimentation in the two lagoons during construction and/or removal of the existing Los Peñasquitos bridge structure. Water quality during operation of any of the design options could improve from the existing condition with the reduction in vehicle miles traveled on area highways. Fewer roadway pollutants would be present in the surface run-off from the roadways. This beneficial effect could be particularly helpful in reducing or slowing the further impairment of 303(d) waters in the project area. Another potential improvement to surface waters could occur in areas where mitigation may include new bridge designs over lagoons and other water bodies that would allow for better water circulation and tidal flushing.

### **Storm Water/Run-off**

Storm water run-off from the proposed improvements would be generated during both construction and operation. Common sources of storm water pollution during construction would include equipment and vehicle leaks of oil, grease, fuel, etc., construction materials, and waste material.

Impacts associated with operational storm water run-off are anticipated to be minimal because the Rail Improvements Alternative would not add much new impervious surface. Few of the proposed rail improvements would increase existing impervious surfaces by any substantive amount, except the additional parking areas planned for some existing rail stations, and parking areas at new stations. Most of the existing stations along the LOSSAN corridor now have or are developing vertical parking structures (garages). At these locations, additional parking requirements would likely be met through addition parking levels in the existing structures, so impervious surface at ground level would not be increased.

Any reduction in vehicle miles traveled with the implementation of the Rail Improvements Alternative would also reduce (or, at least, slow the increase of) the pollutant burden in storm water runoff from area highways. However, expected population and travel demand increases over the next 20 years in the study area would likely offset initial reductions in highway travel resulting from the rail improvements; therefore, it is not expected that pollutant burdens from highway runoff would be sustained over that same period.

### **Erosion**

Available data indicates that soils susceptible to erosion (i.e., with a factor greater than 3.0) are located in a number of areas along the rail corridors. Most erosion potential can be controlled and contained through proper design, pollutant prevention plans, and mitigation. Erosion potential is not expected to be a substantial construction or operation issue in the rail alignments, and it makes no clear differentiation between alignment options in any segment (refer to Table 3.12-1). Any of the options proposed in the San Clemente and Del Mar coastal areas would improve the existing bluff erosion problem, as described earlier under the No-Project Alternative.

### **Groundwater**

Construction methods for the various alignment options between Union Station and San Diego include at-grade, trenching, and tunneling. Groundwater impacts are anticipated to be low for at-grade construction and most tunnel segments, and medium for most trench segments.

Proposed improvements to existing stations are anticipated to have a low impact on groundwater. Potential new stations at San Juan Capistrano (Trabuco Creek design option), San Clemente, and University Town Centre would be depressed below grade. These conceptual station sites are not located in the California Coastal Basin Aquifer area and are not expected to have a substantive impact on groundwater.

### **Sea Level Rise**

The character of the coastline is the result of various natural processes, one of which is rising sea levels. This is a growing concern among coastal communities. It is projected that a rise of 19 in (48 cm), with a possible range of 5 to 37 in (13 to 94 cm) in sea level could occur by the year 2100 (Wilkinson et al. 2002). A rise in sea level would expose the coastline to increased flooding. Impacts from global warming and rising sea levels are not expected to impact the rail improvement options between Union Station and Irvine Station because of their inland location. Impacts from global warming and rising sea levels may impact rail improvements between Irvine Station and San Diego, especially where the improvements are in close proximity to the shoreline.

Rising water levels would have a direct impact on beach erosion, which, in turn, could undermine storm protection structures for the tracks. Sea-level rise and associated erosion, storm surge, and flooding could have a direct impact on at-grade sections of the rail alignments near the shoreline in Encinitas San Clemente, and Del Mar. The design options that would remove the existing rail alignment from the coastal bluffs in San Clemente and Del Mar would reduce the existing potential for impacts of sea-level rise in these areas.

Bridge structures across lagoons in northern San Diego County could be adversely affected by increased erosion around the footings due to rising water levels and storm surge. In addition, increased storm surge and flooding would present potential impacts to the lagoons themselves. The existing railroad embankment has the potential to shelter the lagoon from strong incoming surges from the ocean. The replacement of the embankment with a series of bridge structures may allow these surges to pass under the tracks, potentially raising the water surface elevation in the lagoons and area estuaries during ocean surge events.

Rising sea levels could also cause greater wave action within lagoons. Particularly if the existing fill were removed and crossing structures were replaced, the waves would be able to pass under the bridge structure and move freely across the lagoon. This could result in higher shoreline erosion within the lagoons.

### 3.12.4 Design Practices

Emphasis will be on utilizing existing rail and other transportation corridors for the proposed rail improvements to minimize potential impacts to hydrological resources bisecting sensitive areas and creating new crossings or encroachments on water resources. Nearly 90 percent of the alignments carried forward for the Rail Improvements Alternative are either within or adjacent to a major existing transportation corridor (existing railroad or highway rights-of-way). Use of these existing transportation corridors helps minimize potential impacts since they have already imposed a footprint/crossing along which the rail improvements would be implemented where not in a new corridor. Many alignment options would be in tunnel or on aerial structure, which would also avoid and/or minimize impacts to surface water resources.

The lead agencies support continued avoidance and minimization of potential impacts during subsequent project level analysis; however, it is unavoidable that lagoons and many streams and water resources would be crossed with the proposed rail improvements. Therefore, the lead agencies will work closely with the regulatory agencies to develop acceptable, specific design and construction standards for lagoon and stream crossings, including, but not limited to, maintaining open surface (bridged versus closed culvert) crossings, infrastructure setbacks, erosion control measures, sediment controlling excavation/fill practices, and other Best Management Practices (BMPs).

As stated previously, the lead agencies support retaining or reducing the in-water footprint of lagoon crossing structures. Project-level analyses and agency consultation, along with more detailed design work, will be used to evaluate the feasibility and potential impacts and benefits of replacing structures and/or removing existing fill in the lagoons. Design of new structures would include features that minimize the amount of discharge into these waters, such as longer bridge spans to minimize the number of in-water structures, designs that minimize the need for rock-slope stabilization at bridge abutments, etc.

There is also potential for impacts to groundwater in areas of the system where tunneling or substantial excavation would be necessary. For alignment options in tunnels, geologic exploration including groundwater sampling would be completed prior to construction. The geologic/soils/groundwater conditions would be evaluated prior to and monitored during construction to aid in the development of construction techniques and measures to minimize effects to ground- and surface water resources. Based on available geologic information and previous tunneling projects in the study area, the lead agencies plan to fully line tunnels with impermeable material to prevent infiltration of ground- or surface waters. Infiltration of ground and surface waters into tunnels is undesirable for operations and maintenance reasons as well as the potential for adverse impacts to ground and surface waters. All reasonable measures would be taken to avoid water infiltration. In addition, it is assumed that tunnel boring machines would be appropriately equipped with shielding to minimize the infiltration of higher pressure groundwater during the boring process.

### 3.12.5 Mitigation Strategies

Based on the analysis above, and considering the CEQA Appendix G thresholds of significance for hydrology and water quality, and considering the sophisticated design, engineering, and construction practices that would be used (and required in order to obtain permits), the proposed Rail Improvements Alternative would have a potentially less-than-significant effect on hydrology and water quality in most areas along the corridor, but would have a potentially significant effect in the lagoon environments in northern San Diego County. For areas other

than the lagoons, placing the conceptual corridors for the rail improvements within or along existing transportation corridors reduces the potential for adverse effects to water resources, and engineering and design practices further reduce potential adverse impacts to these water resources (e.g., avoiding encroachments on water resources, use of tunnels lined with impermeable surfaces, infrastructure setbacks from surface waters, using permeable surfaces and structures to reduce flow and drainage obstructions).

The hydrologic dynamics of the six lagoons crossed by the existing rail corridor are complex, and project-level decisions will require in-depth analysis of potential impacts and benefits to these water resources. Potential impacts (as described previously) include in-water work for new infrastructure, possible removal of existing structures, turbidity, and increased sedimentation during construction. There are also potentially significant cumulative impacts that may result from rail and highway construction across the lagoons (see Section 316 for more information on cumulative impacts). Additional avoidance and mitigation strategies, as well as the design practices discussed above, will be applied to reduce impacts to all water resources in the project-level analyses and in obtaining permits for facilities included in the Rail Improvements Alternative. At the program level of analysis, it is not possible to know precisely the location, extent and particular characteristics of all potential, adverse impacts to the lagoon resources. Mitigation strategies, as well as the design practices discussed above, will be applied to reduce these impacts.

Proposed general mitigation strategies would be fairly similar for all rail improvement alignment options. These strategies are described as general policies that could be adopted and developed in detail at the project-level of environmental analysis. First, measures designed to avoid or to limit impacts would be considered. If avoidance measures were not feasible, then mitigation measures directed at reconstruction, restoration, or replacement of the resource, in close coordination with state and federal resource agencies, would be considered as part of subsequent project planning, environmental review, and design. Potential mitigation strategies are listed below by resource.

## A. FLOODPLAINS

Mitigation for potential impacts on floodplains would include the following strategies.

- As part of the future project-level analysis, floodplain hydrology/hydraulics would be analyzed to evaluate the impacts of specific designs on water surface elevations and flood conveyance for low frequency floods and to evaluate potential flooding risk. Where feasible, construction of facilities within floodplains will be avoided. Where infeasible, the footprint of facilities within the floodplain will be minimized. Where feasible, floodplains impacted by construction will be restored so they can again operate as before. Where there is no practicable alternative to avoid construction in the floodplain, the footprint of facilities within the floodplain will be minimized to the extent feasible (e.g., by use of aerial structures or tunnels).
- As part of the future project-level analysis, all opportunities for facility redesign or modification to minimize flooding risk and potential harm to or within the floodplain will be assessed.



## B. SURFACE WATERS, RUNOFF AND EROSION

Mitigation strategies for potential impacts on surface waters include the following.

- As part of the future project-level analysis, conduct studies and evaluate potential alteration in coastal hydrology/hydraulics in tidal lagoons from specific construction methods or facility designs. Construction methods or facility designs to minimize potential impacts would be evaluated and utilized to the extent feasible. (See also Section 3.13, Biological Resources and Wetlands, for further mitigation strategies for lagoon areas.) Efforts to design lagoon crossings would be coordinated with resource agencies and local lagoon planning efforts. (Details about existing and long-term lagoon planning efforts can be found in Appendix 3.13-D.) The replacement of existing embankments within the lagoons with a series of bridge structures would be evaluated in consultation with responsible agencies and entities, and coordinated with other potential construction projects such as the I-5 North Coast Corridor Project (see Section 3.16). The feasibility, costs versus benefits, and effectiveness of reducing the amount of existing fill and improving hydrologic conditions by replacing structures would be examined in detail during project-level analyses.
- Project-specific studies would also be conducted to determine acceptable designs and construction techniques to minimize adverse impacts of increased sedimentation that would occur during in-water work in the lagoons and elsewhere. Potential minimization measures and timing windows would be developed in consultation with resource agencies and lagoon planning organizations.
- Permit requirements as part of project-level review would include Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plans (SWPPP) and National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permits. Under the requirements of the NPDES California Department of Transportation Statewide Storm Water Permit and the Construction General Permit, a SWPPP would be developed during construction and implemented to reduce pollutants in storm water discharges and the potential for erosion and sedimentation. The SWPPP would include BMPs to minimize potential short-term increases in sediment transport caused by construction, including erosion control requirements, stormwater management, and channel dewatering for all stream and lake/lagoon crossings. Regional NPDES permit requirements would be followed and BMPs, as required for new developments, would be implemented. These may include measures to provide permeable surfaces where feasible and to retain and treat stormwater onsite using catch basins and treatment (filtering) wetlands, especially in areas around existing stations if the areal extent of surface parking is expanded or at new stations where new parking surface is constructed. Measures to manage the overall amount and quality of stormwater runoff to regional systems would be detailed as part of the SWPPP. BMPs may include the following:
  - Practices to minimize the contact of construction materials, equipment, and maintenance supplies with storm water;
  - Practices to reduce erosion of exposed soil including soil stabilization, watering for dust control, perimeter silt fences, placement of rice straw bales, and sediment basins; and

- Practices to maintain water quality including filtration, detention, and retention systems, constructed wetland systems, biofiltration / bioretention systems, grass buffer strips, ponding areas, organic mulch layers, planting soil beds, sand beds, or vegetated systems (biofilters) such as vegetated swales and grass strips designed to convey and treat either shallow flow (swales) or sheetflow (filter strips) runoff.
- Apply for and obtain appropriate permits under Sections 404 and 401 of the Clean Water Act and comply with mitigation measures required in the permits. Mitigation measures may include habitat restoration, reconstruction onsite, or habitat replacement offsite to compensate for loss of native habitats and wetlands. The ultimate goal of the mitigation would be to ensure minimal impact on surface water quality.
- Requirements of Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act and applicable permit conditions would be followed for any work required around a water body designated as Navigable.
- Work along the banks of various surface water bodies would require an application for a Lake or Streambed Alteration Agreement.
- A spill prevention and emergency response plan would be implemented to handle potential fuel or other spills.

### C. GROUNDWATER

Mitigation to reduce potential impacts from construction and operation of project components on groundwater discharge or recharge would include the following strategies.

- As part of the future project-level analysis, minimize development of facilities in areas that may have substantial groundwater discharge or affect recharge.
- Apply for and obtain waste discharge permits where needed (e.g., for dewatering), as part of project-level review.
- As part of the future project-level analysis, develop facility designs that are elevated or, at a minimum, are permeable and would not affect recharge potential where construction is required in areas of potentially substantial groundwater discharge or recharge.
- Apply for and obtain an NPDES permit and implement permit requirements (see Surface Waters above). Implement BMPs that would control release of contaminants near areas of surface water or groundwater recharge (include constraining fueling and other sensitive activities to alternative locations, providing drip pans under some equipment, and providing daily checks of vehicle condition).
- Consider use and retention of native materials with high infiltration potential at the ground surface in areas that are critical to infiltration for groundwater recharge.

The above mitigation strategies, which include further study leading to refinement of site-specific mitigation measures and Best Management Practices, are expected to substantially lessen or

avoid impacts to hydrology and water quality. At the project-level, applications of these mitigation strategies are expected to reduce impacts to hydrology and water quality to a less-than-significant level in areas outside the lagoon environments. In lagoon areas, sufficient information is not available at the program level to conclude with certainty that mitigation will reduce impacts to affected resources to a less than significant level in all circumstances. Therefore, impacts to hydrology and water quality are considered significant at the program level even with the application of mitigation strategies. Additional environmental assessment will allow more precise evaluation in the project-level environmental analyses.

### 3.12.6 Subsequent Analysis

Subsequent analysis to further identify potential impacts on water quality and hydrological resources would be required as project development, environmental review and facility design are pursued. This subsequent analysis would include the following:

- Further analysis and assessment of potential facility impacts on floodplains, specifically on flood elevations, as specific locations and facility designs are developed, to determine if the proposed facility is in the base floodplain (that area which has a one percent or greater chance of flooding in any given year). The analysis would identify potential encroachment on study-area floodplains as defined in Executive Order 11998 for Floodplain Management (23 C.F.R. Section 650(a)) and DOT Order 5650.2, or location of facilities in a 100-year floodplain without adequate mitigation measures.
- Further analysis (hydrologic modeling of flow rates) of potential construction and facility impacts on surface hydrology in coastal areas and tidal marshes and lagoons, and on other surface waters.
- Evaluation of impacts and benefits of removal of existing earthen fill from lagoon crossing structures, and of design options for new structures that reduce the amount of fill required in lagoons. These evaluations would be done in consultation with resource agencies and lagoon organizations, and include an analysis of consistency with lagoon plans. Options would be coordinated with other infrastructure construction plans in the lagoon areas, including the I-5 North Coast Corridor project proposed by the Department.
- Refine alignment design along Trabuco Creek, including an evaluation of options for moving the alignment further from the creek.
- An analysis of potential construction and facility impacts on surface hydrology in areas that are characterized as wetlands and that were not included in this analysis because field verification and wetland delineation was not part of this program-level evaluation. (See Section 3.13, Biological Resources and Wetlands for discussion of wetlands.)
- Field surveys of potential surface water impacts to further analyze potential impacts on water quality and to seek required permits from the appropriate agencies.
- Identification of potentially substantial alteration in water-flow and drainage patterns, including increased storm water runoff, or increased groundwater discharge or reduction of groundwater recharge.
- Evaluation of potential impacts of the design options on groundwater recharge and infiltration systems.

- Identification and study of areas of shallow groundwater to determine possible dewatering impacts resulting from construction.
- Analysis of how the different alignment options would contribute to total additional impervious surface and the subsequent potential additional impacts on surface runoff. This analysis would also identify potential mitigation measures, including onsite retention facilities.
- Field geotechnical studies to evaluate the potential for erosion and associated risks.
- Field surveys of groundwater discharge or recharge conditions. Additional supplemental analysis of groundwater conditions with information from other geotechnical studies.

### 3.13 BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES AND WETLANDS

This analysis reviews the biological resources and wetlands that may in the future require a permit and Section 404(b)(1) analysis under the federal Clean Water Act for a proposed action, and includes sensitive plant communities and special-status species, marine and anadromous fish habitat, riparian corridors, wildlife habitats, wildlife movement corridors, wetlands, and waters. Appendix 3.13-A provides a general description of these biological resource topics. This section describes the existing sensitive biological resources and wetlands within the LOSSAN Region, and identifies the areas of potential impacts of the Rail Improvement Alternative alignment and station options for these resources.

#### 3.13.1 Regulatory Requirements and Methods of Evaluation

##### A. REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS

This section briefly identifies the key federal and state laws and regulations relative to biological resources. Descriptions of these laws and regulations and the agencies responsible for implementing them are provided in Appendix 3.13-B.

##### Federal Laws and Regulations

- Federal Endangered Species Act (FESA) (16 U.S.C 1531–1543)
- Clean Water Act (33 U.S.C 1251–1376)
- Migratory Bird Treaty Act (16 U.S.C. 703-712)
- Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act (33 U.S.C 401 et seq.)
- Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act (16 U.S.C 661–666)
- Coastal Zone Management Act (16 U.S.C. 1456)
- Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (16 U.S.C 1801 et seq.)
- Executive Order 11990, Protection of Wetlands (May 24, 1977), DOT Order 5660.1A
- Executive Order 13112, Invasive Species (February 3, 1999)

##### State Laws and Regulations

- California Endangered Species Act (CESA) (Fish and Game Code 2050 et seq.)
- Native Plant Protection Act (Fish and Game Code Sections 1900–1913)
- Natural Community Conservation Planning Act (Fish and Game Code Section 2800 et seq.)
- Streambed Alterations (Fish and Game Code Sections 1601–1603)
- California Coastal Act (Public Resources Code section 30000, et seq.)

## B. METHOD OF EVALUATION OF IMPACTS

### Data Collection and Geographic Information System Mapping

The proposed Rail Improvements Alternative would cross a variety of biotic communities and could potentially result in impacts on many plant and wildlife species, and many water resources. Plant taxonomy and nomenclature follows Abrams (1923, 1944, 1951), Abrams and Ferris (1960), Buckingham et al. (1995), Hickman (1993), and Hitchcock et al. (1996). Scientific nomenclature and common names for butterflies follows Miller (1992); fish, Robins et al. (1991); herpetofauna (amphibians and reptiles), Committee on Standard English and Scientific Names (2001); birds, American Ornithologists' Union (1983, 1998); and mammals, Wilson and Cole (2000).

Geospatial data based on the California Gap Analysis Program (GAP) (Davis 1998), which uses the Wildlife Habitat Relationship (WHR) classification (Ziener et al. 1988; 1990a; 1990b), was used as the primary source for delineation of sensitive vegetation communities along the Rail Improvements Alternative. However, the classification is based on Holland (1986). The most recent vegetation classification for California (Sawyer and Keeler-Wolf 1995) was not used, as this data is not available in geospatial contexts. Geospatial data for threatened and endangered species and special status species was obtained from the California Natural Diversity Data Base (CNDDB) (California Department of Fish and Game 2004). Geospatial data for Critical Habitat areas was obtained from the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS, 2002). However, it is possible that unmapped critical habitat may be present within potential impact zones. Critical habitat would be assessed through field studies and agency consultation during project-level environmental evaluations.

In addition, wildlife movement corridors data were not available for the study area, so this evaluation assumed potential corridors were present in any large open areas, lagoons and surrounding parks and reserve areas, creeks and riparian areas in undeveloped settings. It is also possible that linear areas of narrow natural or semi-natural habitats, even in urban areas, may be functioning at some level as wildlife movement corridors; however, these smaller areas are not specifically identified at the Program level of data analysis and would be evaluated at the project level.

The type and extent of jurisdictional wetlands within the study areas came from the National Wetland Inventory (NWI) maintained by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) to provide information on the characteristics, extent, and status of the nation's wetlands. NWI digital data files are records of wetlands location and classification as developed by the USFWS. The federal Geographic Data Committee adopted this classification system as a national classification standard in 1996. The locations of the wetlands are mapped on U.S. Geologic Survey (USGS) 7.5-minute topographic quadrangle maps with codes that provide information on the water body type and substrate. The maps tend to show wetlands that are readily photo-interpreted given consideration of photo and map scale. This level of information, though incomplete for some areas, provides a general overview of areas with potential sensitivity for wetland impacts that is used in the comparison of alternatives. During project-level analysis, all areas will be reconnoitered to identify needs for subsequent fieldwork and wetlands delineations to be conducted in the next phase of environmental evaluation. Wetland information is quantified below to estimate the approximate acreage potentially affected by the alternatives.



Digitized information for vernal pools was obtained from the California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG). There were no geospatial data available for riparian corridors. The presence of streams and corresponding riparian vegetation was developed using USGS quadrangle maps, and geospatial results of the California GAP and CNDDDB for specific riparian vegetation polygons.

GIS data was exported to excel spreadsheets to show acreages of attributes for each alignment option. A detailed description of the data collection methods is provided in Appendix 3.13-C. No field or onsite visits were made for this Program EIR/EIS. GIS files of proposed rail improvement alignments were digitally overlaid on top of the datasets of biological resources and wetlands to identify locations where the study areas around potential alignments for proposed rail improvements might include portions of sensitive biological areas.

The areas of overlap—wherever the study area included a sensitive vegetation community or habitat—were considered to constitute areas of potential impacts from the proposed alignment. The number of reported occurrences of a particular biological resource within the study area, the linear contact of the study area with the biological resource, and acreage of the resource within the study area were counted and compiled. Vegetation communities considered to be non-sensitive were not included in this level of environmental analysis but would be included in project-level analysis.

The study area was defined as a broad corridor along alternative alignments to characterize the types and extent of biological resources and wetlands present. As described later in this chapter, the initial study area was later reduced in areal extent for impact analysis. After discussions with regulatory agencies, the impact corridors were narrowed to more realistically represent the potential for impacts while still encompassing both direct and indirect construction-related and operational impacts.

There are inevitable inaccuracies and gaps in the statewide and federal datasets and vegetation data layers due to differences in collection methods, dates when the data was first collected, changes in habitat conditions, and a myriad of other factors. For the scale of analysis for this Program EIR/EIS, these available data sources are considered appropriate to identify key differences between potential alignment options. Given the datasets, the lack of identification of an impact does not necessarily mean that this portion of the proposed alternative would not result in potential impacts on biological resources, only that location-specific data would be required to make a more precise determination. Likewise, the identification of a potential impact on a specific resource is intended to be conservative and in many instances may be an overstatement because neither habitat that is sensitive nor species of concern may be found in or near the footprint of the corridor or actual alignment. This may be the case, for example, for improvements proposed within the existing, disturbed LOSSAN rail corridor. Verification of potential impacts would require future location-specific study and evaluation to determine the level and extent of potential impact. This level of analysis would be part of subsequent project-level environmental review.

### **C. SIGNIFICANCE CRITERIA FOR BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES**

The significance criteria for identifying potential impacts on biological resources from proposed projects/actions are based on federal and state guidelines and general indicators of significance, including guidelines or criteria in NEPA, CEQA, CWA, the

CESA, FESA, and the California Fish and Game Code. Project-specific criteria would be applied at the project level of environmental analysis when permits are being sought, if a decision is made to proceed with proposed rail improvements following this program-level analysis.

Based on the presence or absence of sensitive resources, an alternative may have a significant impact on biological resources if its implementation would result in any of the following.

- Potential modification or destruction of habitat, movement/migration corridors, or breeding areas of endangered, threatened, rare, or other species as described above.
- Potential loss of a substantial number of any species that could affect the abundance or diversity of that species beyond the level of normal variability.
- Potential impacts on or measurable degradation of protected habitats; sensitive natural vegetation communities; wetlands; or other habitat areas' plans, policies, or regulations.
- Potential conflict with the provisions of an adopted habitat conservation plan (HCP), natural community conservation plan<sup>1</sup> (NCCP), or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan.
- Potential conflict with local ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree or creek preservation policy or ordinance.

### 3.13.2 Affected Environment

#### A. STUDY AREA DEFINED

The study area used to characterize the biological resources and wetlands within the project region is defined by the following limits.

- 1,000 ft (305 m) on either side of alignment centerlines and around stations in urbanized areas.
- 0.50 mi (0.81 km) on either side of alignment centerlines and around stations in sensitive areas.

In the LOSSAN project area, all station sites (existing and proposed) are located within urbanized areas. Other than the undeveloped area of Camp Pendleton and several other small open areas, the majority of the study area is designated by census data as urbanized. Therefore, most of the area was inventoried using the 1,000-ft (305-m) on either side of centerline (2,000-ft [610-m] corridor). Because of the sensitive nature of six lagoons, the areas surrounding lagoons were inventoried using 0.50-mi (0.81-km) either side of centerline, or a 1.0-mi (1.6-km) wide corridor. All other undeveloped areas within this project area are considered sensitive and therefore also were inventoried using the 1.0-mi (1.6-km) corridor.

<sup>1</sup> The NCCP program of CDFG is an effort by the State of California and many private and public partners that takes a broad-based ecosystem approach to planning for the protection and perpetuation of biological diversity. An NCCP identifies and provides for the regional or area-wide protection of plants, animals, and their habitats, while allowing compatible and appropriate economic activity. CDFG and USFWS provide the necessary support, direction, and guidance to NCCP participants in these functions.

## B. GENERAL DISCUSSION OF BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES AND WETLANDS

Following is a brief description of the resource topics reviewed in this section. A more detailed description of these resources and the sources of information used to obtain the description are provided in Appendix 3.13-A.

### **Sensitive Vegetation Communities**

Sensitive vegetation communities are natural communities (assemblages of species, both plant and wildlife, forming communities) and wildlife habitats that are unique, of relatively limited distribution in the region, or of particularly high wildlife value. These resources have been defined by federal, state, and local government conservation programs.

### **Sensitive Plant Species**

Sensitive plant species include species that have been afforded special status and/or recognition by federal and state resource agencies, as well as private conservation organizations, because of documented or perceived decline or limitation of population size or geographical extent.

### **Sensitive Wildlife Species**

Sensitive wildlife species include species that have been afforded special status and/or recognition by federal and state resource agencies, as well as private conservation organizations, because of documented or perceived decline or limitation of population size or geographical extent. Special-status species include wildlife that are legally protected, or that are otherwise considered sensitive by federal, state, or local resource conservation agencies and organizations. Special-status species include species listed as state and/or federal threatened or endangered species under FESA or CESA, those considered as candidates for listing, and species identified by USFWS and/or CDFG as California species of special concern.

### **Wildlife Movement/Migration Corridors**

Wildlife movement/migration corridors link together areas of wildlife habitat that are otherwise separated by rugged terrain, changes in vegetation, or human disturbance. The fragmentation of open space areas by urbanization tends to create isolated islands of wildlife habitat.

### **Water Resources**

Lakes, lagoons, rivers, streams, and other water bodies are protected by federal and/or state law. Special aquatic sites, which include wetlands, are considered an important subset of these waters. Wetlands and certain other waters would be delineated as part of a subsequent environmental review process.

## C. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES AND WETLANDS IN THE STUDY AREA

Following is a discussion of resources within the study area for the topics described above. The mapped occurrences of these resources within the study area are summarized at the end of this section. In addition, this section discusses habitat

conservation plans (HCPs), critical habitat<sup>2</sup> areas, and other conservation plans or areas that could potentially be affected by one or more of the alignment options discussed in this document.

### **Regional Summary**

The LOSSAN region includes the western portion of the Los Angeles basin and the coastal areas of southern California between Los Angeles and San Diego, generally following the existing LOSSAN rail corridor. The entire study area lies within the South Coast Bioregion, an area of contrasting landscapes ranging from coastal mountains, canyons, streams and river valleys, rolling hills, coastal mesas, and beaches to densely populated cities. The region more specifically lies within the Peninsular Range Physiographic Province. This area is characterized by a Mediterranean climate with winter rainfalls and summer droughts. Average annual rainfall ranges from 9 in (23 cm) in the San Diego region to 15 in (38 cm) in the Los Angeles basin.

In San Diego County, the study area is further characterized by the presence of large coastal wetlands, including six lagoons located in the northern part of the county. These lagoons and the associated open space around them provide vital habitat for resident and migratory birds and other wildlife. Sensitive plant and animal species are found here in substantial numbers despite increasing urbanization, hydrological changes in the watershed, and limited tidal action.

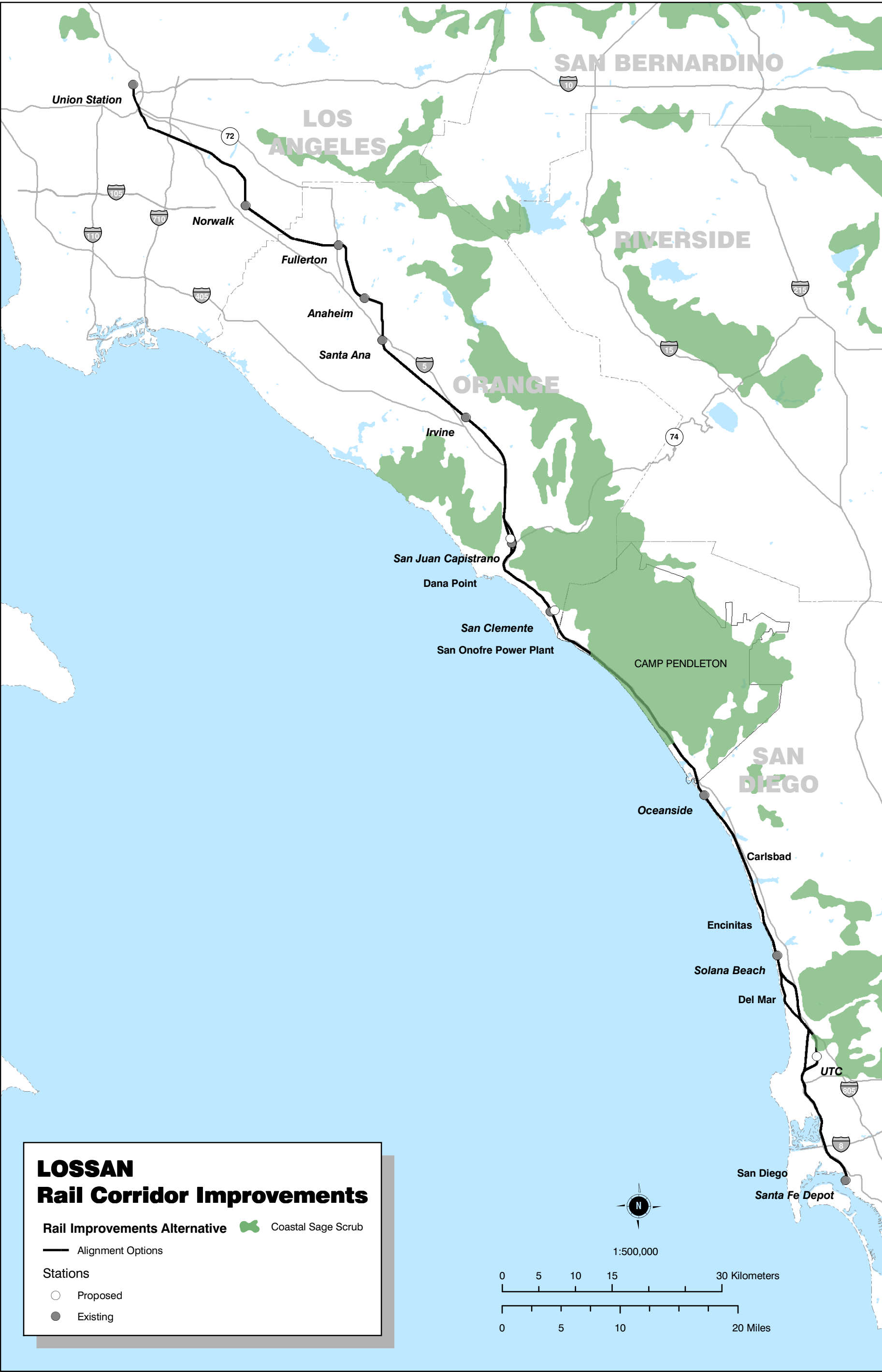
### **Sensitive Vegetation Communities**

**Upland Vegetation:** Diegan coastal sage scrub is the most commonly found sage scrub community in coastal southern California, ranging from Los Angeles to Baja. This coastal sage scrub community is dominated by low soft-leaved, drought-deciduous shrubs and is typically found on dry sites and steep slopes. Diegan coastal sage scrub is considered sensitive and provides habitat for many endangered and threatened species. Due to spreading urbanization, this vegetation community has suffered severe reductions. For the purposes of this program-level of analysis, Diegan coastal sage scrub is considered the dominant sensitive vegetation in the study area. The distribution of this vegetation type in the study area is shown on Figure 3.13-1, based on the database sources used for this analysis (see Section 3.13.1.B). Agency comments indicate that there is additional coastal sage scrub (and other sensitive vegetation communities) that occur near the rail corridor south of Los Angeles that were not indicated in the databases.

Other sensitive upland vegetation communities may include southern maritime chaparral, southern riparian scrub, southern riparian forest, southern cottonwood willow riparian forest, Torrey pine forest, southern dune scrub, southern foredunes, and San Diego mesa hardpan vernal pool.

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<sup>2</sup> Critical habitat refers to areas shown on maps developed by USFWS that provide habitat for threatened and endangered species.



Source : USDA Forest Service, 1997



**FIGURE 3.13-1**  
**Distribution of Diegan Coastal Sage Scrub**  
LOSSAN Rail Corridor Improvements  
Program Environmental Impact Report / Environmental Impact Statement





**Wetland Vegetation:** Lagoons and other wetlands are also considered to encompass sensitive vegetation. Sensitive vegetation communities include southern coastal salt marsh, and coastal brackish marsh.

### **Sensitive Plant Species**

The mosaic of vegetation communities that make up Diegan coastal sage scrub and the lagoon/wetlands supports a variety of sensitive plant species. Eight federally and state-listed species and 30 California Native Plant Society (CNPS) List 1B plants<sup>3</sup> have the potential to occur in the study area. These species are listed in Table 3.13-1.

### **Sensitive Wildlife Species**

Sensitive wildlife species potentially present within the study area include invertebrates, fish, reptiles and amphibians, birds and mammals. Table 3.13-2 lists the wildlife species potentially present in the study area that are federally or state-listed as threatened or endangered, or state-listed as species of concern.

Within the study area, all sensitive vegetation communities and lagoons are assumed to provide wildlife habitat. Designated critical habitat, as defined by the USFWS, may occur within the study area for coastal California gnatcatcher, least Bell's vireo, tidewater goby, San Diego fairy shrimp, and Riverside fairy shrimp.

### **Wildlife Movement/Migration Corridors**

Large open areas, lagoons and surrounding park or reserve areas, and riparian areas in undeveloped areas are considered potential wildlife movement corridors in the LOSSAN region. Additionally, smaller creeks and areas of disconnected habitat may provide connectivity by acting as stepping stones for the regional movement of some avian species, or may provide resting areas for migratory species. Potential wildlife movement/migration corridors may include San Juan Creek, Camp Pendleton Marine Corps Base (includes San Mateo Creek, San Onofre Creek, and Santa Margarita River), San Luis Rey River, Buena Vista Lagoon, Aqua Hedionda Lagoon, Batiquitos Lagoon, San Elijo Lagoon, San Dieguito River and Lagoon, Los Peñasquitos Lagoon, Peñasquitos Creek and Canyon, Sorrento Valley, Rose Canyon, San Clemente Canyon, and the San Diego River. Smaller creeks and linear areas of narrow natural or semi-natural habitat may not be comprehensively identified at this Program-level evaluation but would be evaluated for potential wildlife movement functions at the project level.

### **Jurisdictional Waters**

**Non-Wetland Waters:** The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) has the jurisdictional authority over protection of Waters of the U.S., including non-wetland waters, under the provisions of the federal Clean Water Act. The California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG) also has authority to protect fish and wildlife in non-wetland waters. The streams and rivers in the study area are a mix of natural and channelized water bodies. These are considered "non-wetland waters" (Table 3.13-3) although the natural and some of the channelized streams and rivers do support wetland or riparian habitat.

<sup>3</sup> List 1B plants have been determined by the CNPS to be rare, threatened or endangered in California or elsewhere.

**Table 3.13-1**  
**Sensitive Plant Species Potentially Occurring in Study Area**

Common Name	Scientific Name	Fed List	Cal List	CNPS
DEL MAR MANZANITA	ARCTOSTAPHYLOS GLANDULOSA SSP CRASSIFOLIA	E		1B
COASTAL DUNES MILK-VETCH	ASTRAGALUS TENER VAR TITI	E	E	1B
COULTER'S SALTBUSH	ATRIPLEX COULTERI			1B
SOUTH COAST SALTSCALE	ATRIPLEX PACIFICA			1B
DAVIDSON'S SALTSCALE	ATRIPLEX SERENANA VAR DAVIDSONII			1B
THREAD-LEAVED BRODIAEA	BRODIAEA FILIFOLIA	T	E	1B
LAKESIDE CEANOTHUS	CEANOTHUS CYANEUS			1B
SOUTHERN TARPLANT	CENTROMADIA PARRYI SSP AUSTRALIS			1B
SMOOTH TARPLANT	CENTROMADIA PUNGENS SSP LAEVIS			1B
ORCUTT'S PINCUSHION	CHAENACTIS GLABRIUSCULA VAR ORCUTTIANA			1B
ORCUTT'S SPINEFLOWER	CHORIZANTHE ORCUTTIANA	E	E	1B
SAN FERNANDO VALLEY SPINEFLOWER	CHORIZANTHE PARRYI VAR FERNANDINA		E	1B
SUMMER HOLLY	COMAROSTAPHYLIS DIVERSIFOLIA SSP DIVERSIFOLIA			1B
SALT MARSH BIRD'S-BEAK	CORDYLANTHUS MARITIMUS SSP MARITIMUS	E	E	1B
DEL MAR MESA SAND ASTER	CORETHROGYNE FILAGINIFOLIA VAR LINIFOLIA			1B
BLOCHMAN'S DUDLEYA	DUDLEYA BLOCHMANIAE SSP BLOCHMANIAE			1B
SHORT-LEAVED DUDLEYA	DUDLEYA BREVIFOLIA		E	1B
MANY-STEMMED DUDLEYA	DUDLEYA MULTICAULIS			1B
VARIEGATED DUDLEYA	DUDLEYA VARIEGATA			1B
SAN DIEGO BUTTON-CELERY	ERYNGIUM ARISTULATUM VAR PARISHII	E	E	1B
PENDLETON BUTTON-CELERY	ERYNGIUM PENDLETONENSIS			1B
DECUMBENT GOLDENBUSH	ISOCOMA MENZIESII VAR DECUMBENS			1B
COULTER'S GOLDFIELDS	LASTHENIA GLABRATA SSP COULTERI			1B
ROBINSON'S PEPPER-GRASS	LEPIDIUM VIRGINICUM VAR ROBINSONII			1B
NUTTALL'S LOTUS	LOTUS NUTTALLIANUS			1B
SAN DIEGO GOLDENSTAR	MUILLA CLEVELANDII			1B
SPREADING NAVARRETIA	NAVARRETIA FOSSALIS	T		1B
PROSTRATE NAVARRETIA	NAVARRETIA PROSTRATA			1B
COAST WOOLLY-HEADS	NEMACALIS DENUData VAR DENUData			1B
BRAND'S PHACELIA	PHACELIA STELLARIS			1B
TORREY PINE	PINUS TORREYANA SSP TORREYANA			1B
NUTTALL'S SCRUB OAK	QUERCUS DUMOSA			1B
OIL NESTSTRAW	STYLOCLINE CITROLEUM			1B

**Notes:**

E = Endangered

T = Threatened

1B = California Native Plant Society (CNPS) List 1B plant species

**Table 3.13-2**  
**Sensitive Wildlife Species Potentially Occurring in Study Area**

Common Name	Scientific Name	Fed List	Cal List	CDFG
<b>INVERTEBRATES</b>				
SAN DIEGO FAIRY SHRIMP	BRANCHINECTA SANDIEGONENSIS	E		
RIVERSIDE FAIRY SHRIMP	STREPTOCEPHALUS WOOTTONI	E		
<b>FISH</b>				
TIDEWATER GOBY	EUCYCLOGOBIUS NEWBERRYI	E		SC
ARROYO CHUB	GILA ORCUTTI			SC
SOUTHERN STEELHEAD TROUT	ONCORHYNCHUS MYKISS IRIDEUS	E		SC
<b>REPTILES-AMPHIBIANS</b>				
ARROYO TOAD	BUFO CALIFORNICUS	E		SC
ORANGE-THROATED WHIPTAIL	CNEMIDOPHORUS HYPERYTHRUS			SC
COASTAL WESTERN WHIPTAIL	CNEMIDOPHORUS TIGRIS MULTISCUTATUS			
CORONADO SKINK	EUMECES SKILTONIANUS INTERPARIETALIS			SC
SAN DIEGO HORNED LIZARD	PHRYNOSOMA CORONATUM BLAINVILLEI			SC
WESTERN SPADEFOOT	SCAPHIOPUS HAMMONDII			SC
<b>BIRDS</b>				
SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA RUFOUS-CROWNED SPARROW	AIMOPHILA RUFICEPS CANESCENS			SC
BURROWING OWL	ATHENE CUNICULARIA			SC
COASTAL CACTUS WREN	CAMPYLORHYNCHUS BRUNNEICAPILLUS COUESI			SC
WESTERN SNOWY PLOVER	CHARADRIUS ALEXANDRINUS NIVOSUS	T		SC
WHITE-TAILED KITE	ELANUS LEUCURUS			SC
SOUTHWESTERN WILLOW FLYCATCHER	EMPIDONAX TRAILLII EXTRIMUS	E		
CALIFORNIA BLACK RAIL	LATERALLUS JAMAICENSIS COTURNICULUS		T	
BELDING'S SAVANNAH SPARROW	PASSERCULUS SANDWICHENSIS BELDINGI		E	
COASTAL CALIFORNIA GNATCATCHER	POLIOPTILA CALIFORNICA	T		SC
LIGHT-FOOTED CLAPPER RAIL	RALLUS LONGIROSTRIS LEVIPES	E	E	
BANK SWALLOW	RIPARIA RIPARIA		T	
CALIFORNIA LEAST TERN	STERNA ANTILLARUM BROWNI	E	E	
LEAST BELL'S VIREO	VIREO BELLII PUSILLUS	E	E	
<b>MAMMALS</b>				
NORTHWESTERN SAN DIEGO POCKET MOUSE	CHAETODIPUS FALLAX FALLAX			SC
SAN DIEGO DESERT WOODRAT	NEOTOMA LEPIDA INTERMEDIA			SC
PACIFIC POCKET MOUSE	PEROGNATHUS LONGIMEMBRIS PACIFICUS	E		SC

**Notes:**

E = Endangered

T = Threatened

SC = Species of Concern

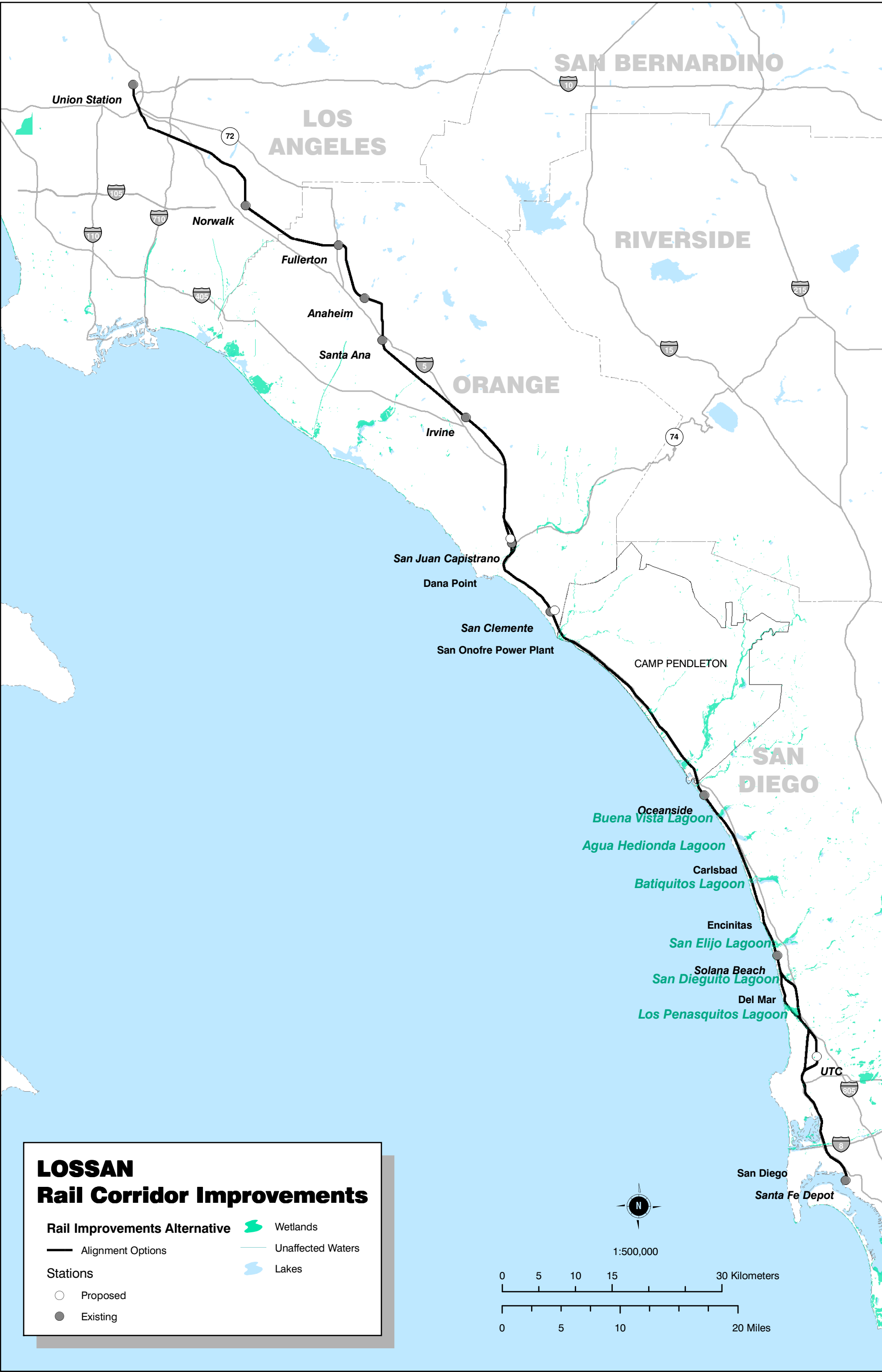
**Table 3.13-3  
Rivers, Creeks and Bays in the Study Area**

Los Angeles River	Santiago Creek	San Luis Rey River
Rio Hondo Channel	San Diego Creek	Loma Alta Creek
San Gabriel River	Peters Canyon Wash	San Dieguito River
Coyote Creek (multiple branches)	Oso Creek	Soledad Creek
La Mirada Creek	Trabuco Creek	Los Penasquitos Creek
Brea Creek	San Juan Creek	Mission Bay
Fullerton Creek	San Mateo Creek	Tecolote Creek
Carbon Creek	San Onofre Creek	San Diego River
Santa Ana River	Santa Margarita River	San Diego Bay

**Wetlands:** To classify an area as wetlands per the USACE, three jurisdictional criteria must be met: presence of wetland hydrology, predominance of hydrophytic plants, and presence of hydric soils. The CDFG currently utilizes a definition that requires that only one of these criteria be met in order to classify an area as wetlands.

Wetlands found in the "coastal zone" are also regulated under the California Coastal Act (CCA) and the federal Coastal Zone Management Act (CZMA), and are within jurisdiction of the California Coastal Commission. Under the CCA, wetlands are defined as land within the coastal zone that may be covered periodically or permanently with shallow water, and include saltwater marshes, freshwater marshes, open or closed brackish water marshes, swamps, mudflats, and fens. The wetlands in the study area are mapped on Figure 3.13-2.

The estuarine lagoons of northern San Diego County are within the coastal zone. They are a unique biological resource and are the focus of many resource agencies and other entities interested in the quality of these areas. The six lagoons in the study area are mapped on Figure 3.13-3, and include the Buena Vista, Agua Hedionda, Batiquitos, San Elijo, San Dieguito and Los Peñasquitos lagoons. Descriptions of these lagoons are provided in Appendix 3.13-D. Where restoration plans have been developed for the lagoons, these were reviewed and the primary goals of those plans are also summarized in the appendix. The six lagoons are currently all single-tracked. Vernal pools, a potential component of coastal sage scrub or chaparral landscapes on coastal mesas, are also considered another type of wetlands under California Wildlife Protection Act (Fish & Game Code §2785), and are regulated by the Regional Water Quality Control Board. Vernal pools are seasonally ponded areas that support a variety of specialized plant and animals, including federally and state-listed species. Vernal pools are likely to exist within the study area, particularly on the Camp Pendleton Marine Corps Base. The confirmation of the presence of vernal pools would be addressed in detail in project-level environmental analyses.



Source : NWI, 2000; IBI,2003



**FIGURE 3.13-2**  
**Wetlands**  
LOSSAN Rail Corridor Improvements  
Program Environmental Impact Report / Environmental Impact Statement







**FIGURE 3.13-3**  
**North San Diego County Lagoons**  
LOSSAN Rail Corridor Improvements  
Program Environmental Impact Report / Environmental Impact Statement



### **Conservation Plans and Habitat Reserves**

Within the study area are several elements of regional Natural Community Conservation Plans (NCCP) which include various City Subarea Plans under the Multiple Habitat Conservation Program (MHCP). The Conservation Plan boundaries are mapped on Figures 3.13-4, 3.13-5, and 3.13-6. The Department and FRA support working with the cities and counties that implement the NCCPs and MHCPs to ensure compatibility during project-level studies. The plans include:

- County of San Diego Multiple Species Conservation Program (MSCP) (Approved)
  - City of San Diego Subregional MSCP Subarea Plan (Approved)
  - County of San Diego MSCP Subarea Plan (Approved)
  - County of San Diego MSCP Quino Amendment (Administrative Draft)
  - North County MSCP Subarea Plan (In Production)
- San Diego Multiple Habitat Conservation Program (MHCP) (Approved)
  - City of Carlsbad MHCP Subarea Plan (Approved)
  - City of Encinitas MHCP Subarea Plan (Approved)
  - City of Oceanside MHCP Subarea Plan (In Production)
- USMC Base Camp Pendleton Integrated Natural Resources Management Plan (Subregional)
- County of Orange Central and Coastal Subregional NCCP and HCP (Approved)
- County of Orange Southern Subregional NCCP (In Preparation)

There are also a number of reserve areas identified within the study area from Program-level data sources and information from CDFG. These include:

- Agua Hedionda Lagoon Ecological Reserve
- Batiquitos Lagoon at the southern edge of Carlsbad was made a CDFG-designated State Ecological Reserve in 1983
- Buena Vista Lagoon Ecological Reserve
- San Elijo Lagoon is a CDFG-designated State Ecological Reserve
- A portion of the San Dieguito Lagoon is a CDFG-designated State Ecological Reserve
- Los Peñasquitos Lagoon State Preserve (recently designated)
- Fishing piers at Oceanside, San Clemente and Embarcadero Park

Other reserves may exist within the study area, and would be identified and evaluated during project-level assessments.

Conservation plans and habitat reserves will be closely considered in the decision-making process at the project level. All proposed improvements must be shown to be consistent and compatible with the applicable plans during project-level evaluations. Future studies will be guided in part by the specific conservation goals and priorities outlined in area conservation plans. Additionally, site-specific mitigation strategies and measures will incorporate applicable goals and requirements of these plans, and will be coordinated with resource agencies and cities and counties that administer the various plans.

CDFG has identified two mitigation/conservation properties within the study area, the Castaic Conservation Easement and the DWR Mitigation LA Property. Although there is a potential that the USFWS may designate critical habitat for some plants and animals as described in the sensitive species discussion above, there are no other known conservation easements, plans, or designated reserves in the study area. Mitigation banks and conservation easements will be evaluated further during project-level evaluations and agency contacts.

### **Summary of Sensitive Resources in the Study Area**

Table 3.13-4 summarizes the biological resources inventoried from existing databases (see Section 3.13.1.B, Method of Evaluation of Impacts) within the study area.

## **3.13.3 Environmental Consequences**

### **A. EXISTING CONDITIONS COMPARED TO NO-PROJECT ALTERNATIVE**

The biological resources and wetlands described above in the affected environment section (Section 3.13.2) characterize the existing conditions in the LOSSAN region potentially affected by the alternatives, drawing primarily from existing available data. Because this is a program-level analysis, data are representative rather than complete, and are for comparison purposes. Though some changes may occur between the existing conditions and the year 2020 due to natural changes in resources as well as urbanization and transportation projects that would be implemented by 2020 under the No-Project Alternative, attempting to estimate the extent of these changes would be speculative at this time. Further, it is assumed that each of the projects associated with the No-Project Alternative would incorporate and implement the appropriate mitigation and monitoring measures to minimize or avoid significant impacts on sensitive biological and wetland resources. It is also realistic to project that urbanization in some of the regions resulting from population growth by 2020 would change the conditions reported in this document, and that continued efforts by local communities and nonprofit organizations (e.g., The Nature Conservancy) would continue to expand protected areas (habitat conservation planning areas). Because estimating the extent of change prior to 2020 would be speculative, no substantial change to the existing conditions is assumed for purposes of this program-level evaluation and comparison of alternatives.





Source : IBI Group, Los Angeles County GIS



U.S. Department  
of Transportation  
Federal  
Railroad  
Administration

**FIGURE 3.13-4**  
**Conservation Plans along LOSSAN Corridor**  
LOSSAN Rail Corridor Improvements  
Program Environmental Impact Report / Environmental Impact Statement







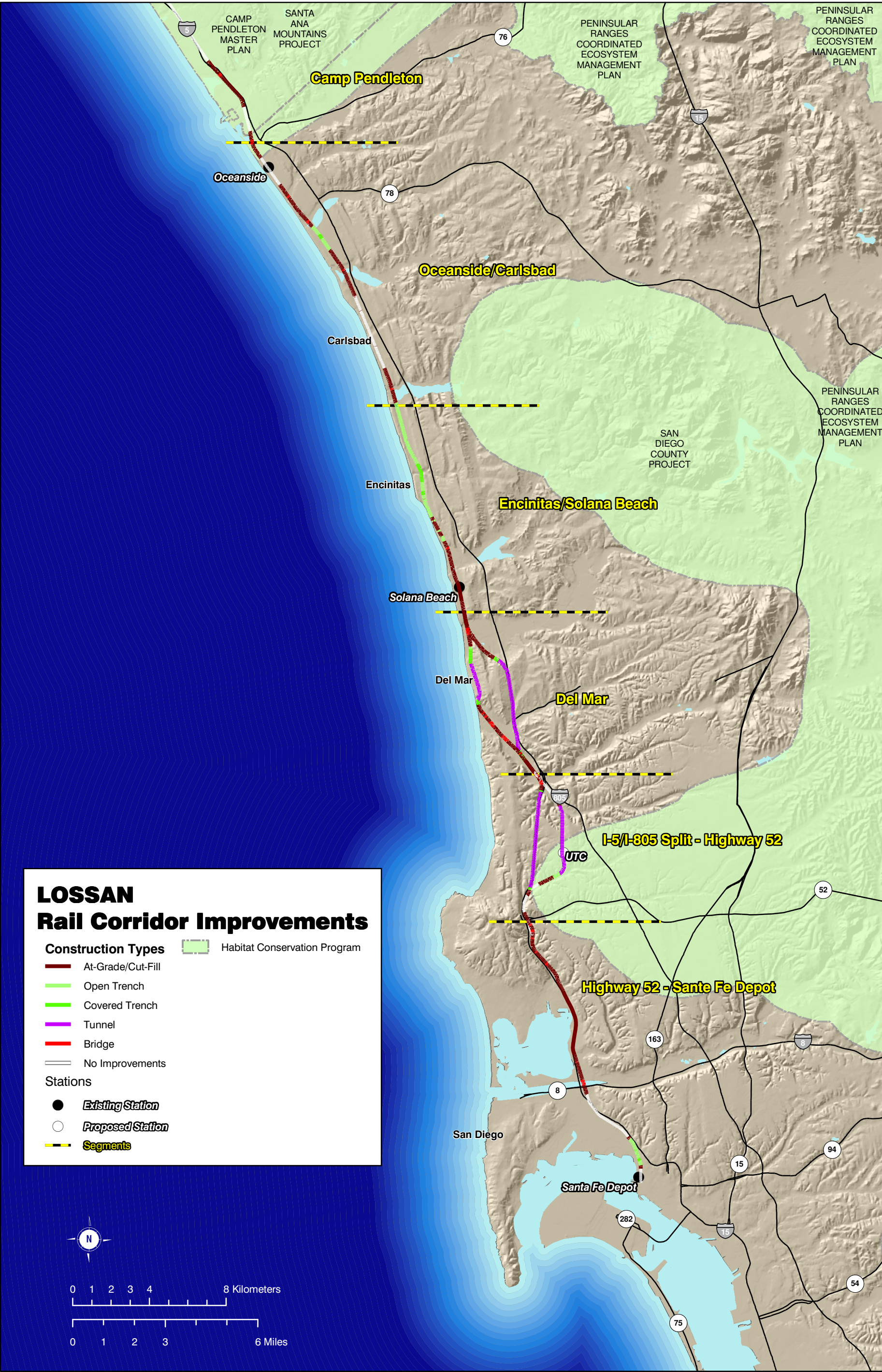
Source: IBI group, SanGIS, Orange County GIS



**FIGURE 3.13-5**  
**Conservation Plans along LOSSAN Corridor**  
LOSSAN Rail Corridor Improvements  
Program Environmental Impact Report / Environmental Impact Statement







Source : IBI, 2003, SanGIS , County of Orange



U.S. Department  
of Transportation  
Federal  
Railroad  
Administration

**FIGURE 3.13-6**  
**Conservation Plans along LOSSAN Corridor**  
LOSSAN Rail Corridor Improvements  
Program Environmental Impact Report / Environmental Impact Statement





**Table 3.13-4  
Biological Resources and Wetlands in the Study Area**

<b>Rail Improvements Alignment Options</b>	<b>Sensitive Vegetation (Diegan Coastal Sage Scrub)<sup>1</sup> acres (hectares)</b>	<b>Wildlife Movement Corridors Yes or No</b>	<b>Number of Special- Status Species</b>	<b>NWI Wetlands acres (hectares)</b>	<b>Non-Wetland Jurisdictional Waters linear feet (meters)</b>	<b>Marine / Anadromous Fish Resources Yes or No</b>
<b>Union Station to Fullerton Station – 4<sup>th</sup> Main Track</b>	0	NO	3	0	16,510 (5,032)	No
<b>Fullerton Station To Irvine Station – Double Tracking</b>						
AT-GRADE between Orange and Santa Ana	0	NO	3	0	2,193 (668)	No
TRENCH between Orange and Santa Ana	0	NO	3	0	2,193 (668)	No
Stations Fullerton	0	NO	1	0	0	No
Anaheim	0	NO	1	0	1,962 (598)	No
Santa Ana	0	NO	2	0	0	No
Irvine	0	NO	0	0	0	No
<b>San Juan Capistrano Double Tracking</b>						
TUNNEL along I-5 between HWY 73 and Avenida Aeropuerto	24 (10)	NO	3	34 (14)	21,215 (6,466)	No
AT-GRADE and OPEN TRENCH along east side of Trabuco Creek	24 (10)	NO	4*	15 (6)	30,408 (9,268)	Yes*
Stations San Juan Capistrano	0	NO	1	0	1,469 (448)	No
<b>Dana Point/San Clemente Double Tracking</b>						
Dana Point Curve Realignment; San Clemente – SHORT TUNNEL	0 <sup>3</sup>	YES	6	243 (98)	23,133 (7,051)	Yes
San Clemente – LONG TWO- SEGMENT TUNNEL; Double	0 <sup>3</sup>	YES	7	203 (82)	18,631 (5,679)	Yes
Stations San Clemente	0 <sup>3</sup>	YES	0	0	0	No
<b>Camp Pendleton At-grade</b>	<1	YES	10	332 (134)	14,584 (4,445)	No

**Table 3.13-4  
Biological Resources and Wetlands in the Study Area (continued)**

<b>Rail Improvements Alignment Options</b>	<b>Sensitive Vegetation (Diegan Coastal Sage Scrub)<sup>1</sup> acres (hectares)</b>	<b>Wildlife Movement Corridors Yes or No</b>	<b>Number of Special- Status Species</b>	<b>NWI Wetlands acres (hectares)</b>	<b>Non-Wetland Jurisdictional Waters linear feet (meters)</b>	<b>Marine / Anadromous Fish Resources Yes or No</b>
<b>Oceanside/ Carlsbad Double Tracking</b>						
Carlsbad – AT- GRADE; double tracking	0 <sup>3</sup>	YES	9	158 (64)	5,298 (1,615)	No
Carlsbad – TRENCH; double tracking	0 <sup>3</sup>	YES	9	158 (64)	5,298 (1,615)	No
Stations Oceanside	0 <sup>3</sup>	YES	5	4 (2)	550 (168)	No
<b>Encinitas/Solana Beach Double Tracking</b>						
Encinitas – AT- GRADE	0 <sup>3</sup>	YES	11	268 (108)	30836 (9,399)	No
Encinitas – SHORT- TRENCH	0 <sup>3</sup>	YES	11	268 (108)	30836 (9,399)	No
Stations Solana Beach	0	NO	4	2 (1)	600 (183)	No
<b>Del Mar Double Tracking</b>						
TUNNEL under Camino Del Mar	0 <sup>3</sup>	YES	12	337 (136)	37,088 (11,304)	No
TUNNEL along I-5	0 <sup>3</sup>	YES	17	178 (72)	32,920 (10,034)	No
<b>I-5/805 Split To Hwy 52 Double Tracking</b>						
Miramar Hill Tunnel	280 (113)	Possibly	10	19 (8)	9,690 (2,954)	No
I-5 Tunnel	0 <sup>3</sup>	Possibly	4	5 (2)	4,379 (1,335)	No
Stations UTC (Only applies to Miramar Hill Tunnel)	0 <sup>3</sup>	YES	1	8 (3)	0	No
<b>Hwy 52 To Santa Fe Depot Curve Realignment and Double Tracking</b>	0	YES	11	29 (12)	18,212 (5,551)	No
Stations Santa Fe Depot	0	NO	2	0	6,033 (1,839)	No

<sup>1</sup> Available GIS data does not allow quantification of lagoon vegetation, so no acreages are noted for potential sensitive vegetation communities associated with wetlands. These vegetation types are assumed to be included (where present) within the wetlands acreages shown in the table.

\* Recent fish surveys in Trabuco Creek may have detected Steelhead according to USFWS (Jan.7, 2004); though unconfirmed, table data assumes Steelhead is present.

<sup>3</sup> Available GIS data does not show Diegan Coastal Sage Scrub in the potential impact zones in these segments, but agency comments during the Draft PEIR/EIS review indicate that CSS may occur within the existing rail corridor from northern Orange County to the City of San Diego.

All numbers are rounded.



## B. NO-PROJECT ALTERNATIVE COMPARED TO RAIL IMPROVEMENTS ALTERNATIVE

Biological resources and wetlands were identified within a broad study area, as described above in Section 3.13.2, *Affected Environment*. However, after discussions between the lead agencies and resource agencies, it was determined that a narrower impact analysis zone would provide a more realistic indication of the potential for impacts to biological resources, and a more meaningful comparison of the alternatives. The construction disturbance zone, including the area within which indirect impacts could occur, and the permanent footprint of the proposed rail improvements would be much narrower than the inventoried study area (2,000 ft [610m] to 1.0 mi [1.6 km] in width). The maximum footprint of the proposed improvements would be less than 50 ft (15 m). Based on this footprint, it was determined that construction-related impacts and indirect impacts (such as noise) could occur within 100 ft (30 m) either side of the centerline.

Therefore, two impact analysis zones were delineated that provide for a reasonable assessment of the potential for temporary, permanent, direct and indirect impacts to biological resources. These impact analysis zones are defined as follows.

- **Impact Zone A:** 100 feet (30 m) on either side of the centerline of alignments and stations (200 feet; 61 m total) to encompass potential temporary and indirect (temporary or permanent) impacts.
- **Impact Zone B:** 25 feet (7.6 m) on either side of the centerline of alignments and stations (50 feet; 15 m total) to encompass potential direct, permanent impacts.

Temporary impacts would be those related to construction activities including, but not limited to, construction access, material storage, excavation spoils handling areas, and staging areas. Potential impacts may include disturbance to or removal of habitat or sensitive plant species or vegetation communities, and wildlife displacement and disruption. In lagoon areas and bridge work across rivers and streams, construction may involve extensive in-water work, resulting in turbidity and sedimentation impacts, disturbance or removal of underwater habitat features such as large rocks, boulders, or existing earthen fill, and vibration impacts to aquatic life from pile driving activities. Temporary indirect impacts would include those resulting from construction-related noise (including construction equipment, haul trucks, and tunnel portal excavation activities), lighting during nighttime work, and other disruptions to or physical separation of habitat areas.

Construction of the project could, in certain circumstances, encourage the spread of noxious weeds or other exotic plant species. Seeds of non-native plants can adhere to tires of construction vehicles or contaminate fill that may need to be imported into the construction area. Trains themselves may also contribute to the spread of seeds of exotic plant species.

Potential permanent impacts may also be direct or indirect. Direct impacts would include wildlife mortality, and permanent displacement and removal of vegetation and habitat within the footprint of the physical improvements. Indirect operational impacts may include noise from trains (including horns), increased shadow effects from elevated infrastructure over plant and wildlife habitat areas, mortality to state and federally listed

species from the increased speed and frequency of trains, and leaking cargo containers or accidents where toxic chemicals may be spilled into sensitive areas. These potential impacts would be assessed in detail at the project-level environmental review to better define their likelihood, extent and severity.

The potential for disturbance to high quality habitat areas would be reduced in areas where improvements would be constructed within the disturbed LOSSAN rail right-of-way, and would be avoided in areas of deep tunnels except at tunnel portals. CSS and other sensitive vegetation may occur within sections of the existing right-of-way (though it may not be mapped in the databases used for this Program-level assessment). Sensitive vegetation would be verified through field studies at the project level. Potential impacts to sensitive habitat include fragmentation that could occur at tunnel portals. Trenching options would disturb more surface and near-surface resources than at-grade options because of the need to taper trench walls and utilize lay-down areas for excavated spoils.

As part of the conceptual design at the program level, the lead agencies have proposed, at a minimum, maintaining either the same in-water footprint or a smaller footprint than the existing rail corridor where improvements would cross water bodies. The footprint of existing bridges across bodies of water, including the six lagoons in San Diego County, would not be increased under the proposed Rail Improvements Alternative. The lead agencies are committed to examining the possibilities of both replacing existing structures across the lagoons to create a smaller in-water footprint, and to evaluate the efficacy of removing some of the existing earthen fill associated with existing structures. These decisions will involve complex studies of hydrology, habitat, impacts of removing existing structures and replacing them, and other factors. Therefore, more detailed design information is needed, along with fieldwork and agency consultation before such decisions can be advanced. If a decision is made during project-level evaluations to implement an alignment option that replaces existing bridges across one or more lagoons, the new bridges would use materials and designs to minimize the number of piles/columns in the water and would therefore reduce the in-water footprint of the existing infrastructure and earthen fill. (See also Section 3.13.6, Subsequent Studies, and Section 3.16, Cumulative Impacts.)

Federal and State regulations set forth and define required railroad safety standards, which dictate maintenance-of-way activities that are to occur on such railroad infrastructure. The contiguous linear track area, signal equipment areas, access roads and parking areas are typically maintained to be free and clear of vegetation. Other maintenance activities may include inspections, replacement of ballast, ties, or rails, turn-out or crossing repair, and structures and signal work. As such, infrastructure maintenance activities and inspections occurring within the railroad right-of-way almost exclusively occur within non-vegetated and disturbed areas. Sensitive areas between the road and the track are avoided when practicable. The majority of activities are performed directly on the track, some of which implement the utilization of machines that also operate solely and exclusively on the track as well. Access from the road to the track typically is done in a non-sensitive location and material and equipment is then moved along the track to the work location. If work is performed at night, lighting is of relatively low-power and is located in close proximity to the work area, focusing directly onto the track.

This section provides a general comparison of resources potentially impacted by the various alignment options evaluated for the Rail Improvements Alternative. Table 3.13-5 summarizes the biological resources and wetlands within the impact analysis zone delineated to encompass both temporary (construction) and indirect impacts. Table 3.13-6 summarizes the resources potentially affected by the permanent footprint of the proposed improvements. Potential impacts and differences between alignment options are described below. Appendix 3.13-E provides lists of specific special-status plant and wildlife species present within the study area of each of the alignment options.

As stated earlier, all comparisons are based on information currently available from existing databases. Field surveys, which would be performed during a subsequent environmental review, would provide more detailed information and could indicate an increase or a decrease in the potential impacts on biological resources from a proposed alignment option, particularly along routes that have not previously been the focus of field surveys or mapping by any of the regulatory agencies such as CDFG or USFWS.

The number and extent of biological resources potentially affected by the Rail Improvements Alternative would vary with alignment options. A range of potential impacts was developed that represents the options with the fewest to the greatest potential impacts within the region. Based on existing data and information, the amount of sensitive vegetation present in Impact Zone A of the Rail Improvements Alternative ranges from none to approximately 28 acres (11 ha). The amount of sensitive vegetation present in Impact Zone B ranges from none to 7 acres (3 ha). Within Impact Zone A, the amount of non-wetland waters ranges from approximately 12,564 to 15,541 linear ft (3,830 to 4,737 m) of non-wetland waters, and between 41 and 75 ac (17 to 30 ha) of wetlands. Within Impact Zone B, non-wetland waters range from 4,223 to 5,216 linear ft (1,287 to 1,590 m) of non-wetland waters, and between 20 and 27 ac (8 to 11 ha) of wetlands. Between 36 and 46 different special-status plant and wildlife species were identified as potentially occurring within both the A and B impact zones and could be impacted by the Rail Improvements Alternative. (This range represents the number of species, not the number of occurrences of any given species in the study area. One species may occur within the impact zone of numerous rail segments. See Appendix 3.13-E for the species in each segment.)

Regardless of alignment options chosen, at least three-quarters of the proposed improvements would be constructed either within the existing LOSSAN rail right-of-way or within deep tunnels. These construction methods would substantially reduce the potential for impact to biological resources.

Potential impacts and key differences between alignment options are described below for each rail segment.

**Table 3.13.5**  
**Biological Resources and Wetlands in the 200-Foot (61 m) Impact Analysis Zone**  
**(Impact Zone A)**

Rail Improvements Alignment Options	Sensitive Vegetation acres A(Diegan Coastal Sage Scrub) <sup>1</sup> (hectares)	Wildlife Movement Corridors Yes or No	Number of Special-Status Species	NWI Wetlands Acres (hectares)	Non-Wetland Jurisdictional Waters Linear Feet (meters)	Marine / Anadromous Fish Resources Yes or No
Union Station to Fullerton Station – 4 <sup>th</sup> Main Track	0	NO	3	0	1,568 (478)	No
Fullerton Station To Irvine Station – Double Tracking						
AT-GRADE between Orange and Santa Ana	0	NO	3	0	201 (61)	No
TRENCH between Orange and Santa Ana	0	NO	3	0	201 (61)	No
Stations Fullerton	0	NO	1	0	0	No
Anaheim	0	NO	1	0	0	No
Santa Ana	0	NO	2	0	0	No
Irvine	0	NO	0	0	0	No
San Juan Capistrano Double Tracking						
TUNNEL along I-5 between HWY 73 and Avenida Aeropuerto	0 <sup>2</sup>	NO	3	3 (1)	3,078 (938)	No
AT-GRADE and OPEN TRENCH along east side of Trabuco Creek	0 <sup>2</sup>	NO	4*	<1 (<1)	3,525 (1,074)	Yes*
Stations San Juan Capistrano	0 <sup>2</sup>	NO	1	0	0	No
Dana Point/San Clemente Double Tracking						
Dana Point Curve Realignment; San Clemente – SHORT TUNNEL	0 <sup>2</sup>	YES	6	2 (<1)	1,934 (589)	Yes
San Clemente – LONG TWO-SEGMENT TUNNEL; Double	0 <sup>2</sup>	YES	7	2 (<1)	499 (152)	Yes
Stations San Clemente	0 <sup>2</sup>	YES	0	0	0	No
Camp Pendleton At-grade	0 <sup>2</sup>	YES	10	10 (4)	218 (66)	No

**Table 3.13.5**  
**Biological Resources and Wetlands in the 200-Foot (61 m) Impact Analysis Zone**  
**(Impact Zone A) (continued)**

<b>Rail Improvements Alignment Options</b>	<b>Sensitive Vegetation Acres (Diegan Coastal Sage Scrub)<sup>1</sup> (hectares)</b>	<b>Wildlife Movement Corridors Yes or No</b>	<b>Number of Special- Status Species</b>	<b>NWI Wetlands Acres (hectares)</b>	<b>Non-Wetland Jurisdictional Waters Linear Feet (meters)</b>	<b>Marine / Anadromous Fish Resources Yes or No</b>
<b>Oceanside/ Carlsbad Double Tracking</b>						
Carlsbad-AT- GRADE; double tracking	0 <sup>2</sup>	YES	9	8 (3)	688 (210)	No
Carlsbad-TRENCH; double tracking	0 <sup>2*</sup>	YES	9	8 (3)	688 (210)	No
Stations Oceanside	0 <sup>2</sup>	YES	5	0	0	No
<b>Encinitas/Solana Beach Double Tracking</b>						
Encinitas – AT- GRADE	0 <sup>2</sup>	YES	11	14 (6)	2,136 (651)	No
Encinitas – SHORT- TRENCH	0 <sup>2</sup>	YES	11	14 (6)	2,136 (651)	No
Stations Solana Beach	0 <sup>2</sup>	NO	2	0	0	No
<b>Del Mar Double Tracking</b>						
TUNNEL under Camino Del Mar	0 <sup>2</sup>	YES	12	30 (12)	2,740 (835)	No
TUNNEL along I-5	0 <sup>2</sup>	YES	17	2 (1)	3,410 (1,039)	No
<b>I-5/805 Split To Hwy 52 Double Tracking</b>						
Miramar Hill Tunnel	0 <sup>2</sup>	Possibly	10	3 (1)	1,032 (315)	No
I-5 Tunnel	28 (11)	Possibly	4	0	607 (185)	No
Stations UTC (Only applies to Miramar Hill Tunnel)	0	YES	1	0	0	No
<b>Hwy 52 To Santa Fe Depot Curve Realignment and Double Tracking</b>	0	YES	11	5 (2)	632 (193)	No
Stations Santa Fe Depot	0	NO	2	0	197 (60)	No

<sup>1</sup> Available GIS data does not allow quantification of lagoon vegetation, so no acreages are noted for potential sensitive vegetation communities associated with wetlands. These vegetation types are assumed to be included (where present) within the wetlands acreages shown in the table.

<sup>2</sup> Available GIS data does not show Diegan Coastal Sage Scrub in the potential impact zones in these segments, but agency comments during the Draft PEIR/EIS review indicate that CSS may occur within the existing rail corridor from northern Orange County to the City of San Diego.

\* Recent fish surveys in Trabuco Creek may have detected Steelhead according to USFWS (Jan.7, 2004); though unconfirmed, table data assumes Steelhead is present.

All numbers are rounded.

**Table 3.13-6**  
**Biological Resources and Wetlands in the 50-Foot (15 m) Impact Analysis Zone**  
**(Impact Zone B)**

Rail Improvements Alignment Options	Sensitive Vegetation Acres (Diegan Coastal Sage Scrub) <sup>1</sup> (hectares)	Wildlife Movement Corridors Yes or No	Number of Special-Status Species	NWI Wetlands acres (hectares)	Non-Wetland Jurisdictional Waters linear feet (meters)	Marine / Anadromous Fish Resources Yes or No
<b>Union Station to Fullerton Station – 4<sup>th</sup> Main Track</b>	0	NO	3	0	382 (116)	No
<b>Fullerton Station To Irvine Station – Double Tracking</b>						
AT-GRADE between Orange and Santa Ana	0	NO	3	0	50 (15)	No
TRENCH between Orange and Santa Ana	0	NO	3	0	50 (15)	No
Stations Fullerton	0	NO	1	0	0	No
Anaheim	0	NO	1	0	0	No
Santa Ana	0	NO	0	0	0	No
Irvine	0	NO	0	0	0	No
<b>San Juan Capistrano Double Tracking</b>						
TUNNEL along I-5 between HWY 73 and Avenida Aeropuerto	0 <sup>2</sup>	NO	3	<1 (<1)	1,015 (309)	No
AT-GRADE and OPEN/COVERED TRENCH along east side of Trabuco Creek	0 <sup>2</sup>	NO	4*	<1 (<1)	1,168 (356)	Yes*
Stations San Juan Capistrano	0 <sup>2</sup>	NO	0	0	0	No
<b>Dana Point/San Clemente Double Tracking</b>						
Dana Point Curve Realignment; San Clemente – SHORT TUNNEL	0 <sup>2</sup>	YES	6	<1 (<1)	473 (144)	Yes
San Clemente – LONG TWO-SEGMENT TUNNEL; Double	0 <sup>2</sup>	YES	7	<1 (<1)	118 (36)	Yes
Stations San Clemente	0 <sup>2</sup>	YES	0	0	0	No
<b>Camp Pendleton At-grade</b>	0 <sup>2</sup>	YES	10	2 (<1)	54 (16)	No



**Table 3.13-6**  
**Biological Resources and Wetlands in the 50-Foot (15 m) Impact Analysis Zone**  
**(Impact Zone B) (continued)**

Rail Improvements Alignment Options	Sensitive Vegetation Acres (Diegan Coastal Sage Scrub) <sup>1</sup> (hectares)	Wildlife Movement Corridors Yes or No	Number of Special-Status Species	NWI Wetlands Acres (hectares)	Non-Wetland Jurisdictional Waters Linear Feet (meters)	Marine / Anadromous Fish Resources Yes or No
<b>Oceanside/ Carlsbad Double Tracking</b>						
Carlsbad – AT-GRADE; double tracking	0 <sup>2</sup>	YES	9	2 (.1)	172 (52)	No
Carlsbad–TRENCH; double tracking	0 <sup>2</sup>	YES	9	2 (.1)	172 (52)	No
Stations Oceanside	0 <sup>2</sup>	YES	5	0	0	No
<b>Encinitas/Solana Beach Double Tracking</b>						
Encinitas – AT-GRADE	0 <sup>2</sup>	YES	11	4 (2)	1,403 (428)	No
Encinitas – SHORT-TRENCH	0 <sup>2</sup>	YES	11	4 (2)	1,403 (428)	No
Stations Solana Beach	0 <sup>2</sup>	NO	2	0	0	No
<b>Del Mar Double Tracking</b>						
TUNNEL under Camino Del Mar	0 <sup>2</sup>	YES	12	8 (3)	652 (199)	No
TUNNEL along I-5	0 <sup>2</sup>	YES	17	.1 (.1)	1,069 (326)	No
<b>I-5/805 Split To Hwy 52 Double Tracking</b>						
Miramar Hill Tunnel	0 <sup>2</sup>	Possibly	10	.1 (.1)	235 (72)	No
I-5 Tunnel	7 (3)	Possibly	4	0	167 (51)	No
Stations UTC (Only applies to Miramar Hill Tunnel)	0	YES	1	0	0	No
<b>Hwy 52 To Santa Fe Depot Curve Realignment and Double Tracking</b>	0	YES	11	1 (.1)	1588 (4)	No
Stations Santa Fe Depot	0	NO	2	0	52 (16)	No

<sup>1</sup> Available GIS data does not allow quantification of lagoon vegetation, so no acreages are noted for potential sensitive vegetation communities associated with wetlands. These vegetation types are assumed to be included (where present) within the wetlands acreages shown in the table.

<sup>2</sup> Available GIS data does not show Diegan Coastal Sage Scrub in the potential impact zones in these segments, but agency comments during the Draft PEIR/EIS review indicate that CSS may occur within the existing rail corridor from northern Orange County to the City of San Diego.

\* Recent fish surveys in Trabuco Creek may have detected Steelhead according to USFWS (Jan.7, 2004); though unconfirmed, table data assumes Steelhead is present.

All numbers are rounded.

### **Union Station to Irvine Station**

Between Union Station and Fullerton Station, the proposed addition of a fourth main track would be constructed at-grade within the existing rail corridor except between the Rio Hondo and San Gabriel rivers where up to 1 ac (0.40 ha) of industrial and commercial property outside the rail right-of-way may be disturbed. From Fullerton Station to the Irvine Station, the proposed alignment options include double tracking at grade or trenching within the existing rail right-of-way.

In this rail segment, no sensitive vegetation communities are present but three special-status species are recorded. Due to the dense urbanization of this area and the lack of sensitive vegetation communities, it is unlikely that these species exist in or adjacent to the highly disturbed rail corridor. However, sensitive species are sometimes found within highly disturbed locations, and all areas potentially affected by the project would be evaluated further through field surveys and more detailed data collection during project-level studies.

Waters potentially impacted include the Brea Creek, Rio Hondo, Coyote Creek, La Mirada Creek, and San Gabriel River. Potential impacts would be minimal because proposed improvements would be in the existing rail corridor through a dense urban area, and most the waters in this area are channelized.

### **San Juan Capistrano**

The 1-5 tunnel option through San Juan Capistrano would run underneath Trabuco Creek and San Juan Creek. The second option is a covered and open trench and at-grade alignment along the east side of Trabuco Creek. The trench option would leave the existing LOSSAN corridor alignment just south of Trabuco Creek, and would include a new rail bridge over San Juan Creek and a replacement of the existing bridge over Trabuco Creek. A new below-grade station is proposed as part of this option.

No Diegan coastal sage scrub is mapped in this segment; however, agency comments indicate that CSS is present along the rail corridor in this segment. Some southern cottonwood willow riparian forest is present in the potential impact area. Three special-status species are recorded in the study area for both alignment options. In addition to the species recorded in the CNDDDB, the USFWS reports that recent fish surveys in Trabuco Creek may have detected Steelhead, a federally listed endangered species (USFWS, pers. comm., January 7, 2004). If present, this species could be affected by trench construction along the eastern bank of Trabuco Creek. USFWS data indicate that designated critical habitat for one of these species, the Coastal California gnatcatcher, would potentially be affected by either option in this rail segment<sup>1</sup>.

Trabuco Creek and its associated riparian vegetation are known to serve as an existing wildlife corridor. It is likely that the equestrian facility along the south bank of the creek also functions as a wildlife corridor. Additionally, some wildlife movement may occur down the San Juan Creek and other creek drainages to and from the coast. Because the area is highly urbanized it is likely that drainages in this area are used as core movement corridors.

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<sup>1</sup> USFWS designated critical habitat for a particular sensitive species may be present even if there is no known or recorded occurrence of the species or its habitat listed in the databases utilized for this project.

There are more non-wetland waters within the study area for the trench/at-grade option than for the tunnel alignment. Waters potentially impacted by this alignment include Trabuco Creek and San Juan Creek. USFWS has voiced concerns about potentially substantial impacts to Trabuco Creek as a result of trenching directly adjacent to the eastern bank and potential flood impacts to the western bank (refer to Section 3.12, *Hydrology and Water Resources*).

The tunnel option would avoid most potential impacts except at portal areas, and would be superior to the trench option in minimizing the potential for impacts to biological resources. The trench option along Trabuco Creek has more potential for impacts on the creek and special-status species. While the trench and at-grade option could be routed to avoid direct impacts on the creek, the tunnel option would have less surface disturbance and would therefore affect fewer biological resources.

### **Dana Point/San Clemente**

Two options for rail improvements were evaluated in this section: short tunnel, and one long tunnel divided into two segments. The short tunnel would include a curve realignment at Dana Point. The long two-segment tunnel option begins north of the Dana Point curve realignment project and would therefore make the curve realignment unnecessary. The two-segment tunnel would include a new station located between the tunnel segments.

CNNDB records some areas of southern cottonwood willow riparian forest, southern coastal salt marsh, and southern dune scrub in the study area for both alignment options. Agency comments indicate that CSS is present along this rail section as well. There are six special-status species recorded along the short-tunnel alignment, and seven along the longer tunnel. Potential impacts would be reduced due to tunneling, with the longer tunnel option affecting fewer of these resources.

USFWS data indicate that designated critical habitat for the Coastal California gnatcatcher and tidewater goby present in the study areas of both improvement options<sup>1</sup>. San Mateo Creek and San Onofre Creek are within close proximity to each other on Camp Pendleton property within this rail segment, and the lands between the two creeks, as well as the creeks themselves, are known to function as wildlife corridors. The long tunnel option would result in the fewest impacts to these resources due to the length of tunneling and by precluding the need for the at-grade curve realignment required for the short-tunnel option.

The San Mateo Creek and San Onofre Creek area may experience impacts to sensitive habitats from alignments outside of the existing right-of-way or from the short tunnel alternative. Additionally, the long tunnel alternative will likely have impacts to gnatcatcher habitat and could potentially require deconstructing sections of recently constructed double track north of the tunnel portal.

Both tunnel options would run under San Mateo Creek, but the short tunnel would transition up to grade just north of San Onofre Creek and require a bridge structure over the creek. The potential for both temporary and permanent impacts to San Onofre Creek would be greater with the short tunnel option. San Juan Creek runs parallel to the Dana Point curve realignment proposed as part of the short-tunnel option, although construction would be far enough from the creek that impacts would be unlikely.

The long tunnel would affect fewer biological resources because of its greater length and because the at-grade curve alignment would not be necessary with this option.

### **Camp Pendleton**

Double tracking would occur within the existing LOSSAN rail right-of-way in this rail segment. Available data shows no Diegan coastal sage scrub in this segment, but agency comments indicate that this sensitive vegetation community is present in the Camp Pendleton segment. Ten special-status species are recorded in this segment. USFWS data indicate that designated or proposed critical habitat for the Coastal California gnatcatcher, tidewater goby, and Riverside and San Diego fairy shrimp would potentially be affected in this segment. It is possible that some vernal pool habitat is also present in the study area. Because of the large open and undeveloped areas of Camp Pendleton, this area is considered a potential wildlife movement corridor, but the addition of a second track within the right-of-way would not change the existing condition for wildlife movement.

A rail bridge replacement project over the Santa Margarita River is part of the programmed improvements included in the No-Project Alternative in this rail segment. The Rail Improvements Alternative would not have any additional impacts on this river. (San Mateo Creek and San Onofre Creek are both on Camp Pendleton property; however, these creeks fall within the Dana Point/San Clemente rail segment as delineated for this PEIR/EIS. See the discussion of that rail segment above.)

### **Oceanside/Carlsbad**

Rail alignment options evaluated in this section include an at-grade and a trenched double-tracking option within the existing LOSSAN rail right-of-way. The CNDDDB records some areas of southern coastal salt marsh and other sensitive vegetation associated with lagoons in this study area, as well as 9 special-status species. USFWS data indicate that designated critical habitat for the tidewater goby and San Diego fairy shrimp<sup>1</sup> would potentially be impacted in this segment. Waters and wildlife habitat could be impacted at the San Luis Rey River, Buena Vista Lagoon and Ecological Reserve, Agua Hedionda Lagoon and surrounding open areas, and the Batiquitos Lagoon and Ecological Reserve, particularly during construction near or in the waterways and lagoons. Wildlife may utilize this reach of the San Luis Rey River as a movement corridor because the area is highly urbanized. Agency comments also indicate that CSS occupied by gnatcatchers in this segment could also be affected. Double-tracking across Buena Vista Lagoon could also impact the light-footed clapper rail.

The potential for impacts on biological resources in most portions of this rail segment would be minimized because either the at-grade or trenched option would occur within the disturbed rail right-of-way through urbanized areas. In lagoon areas, no net increase in the footprint of existing rail bridges would occur, but temporary construction disturbance in and around the lagoons would potentially affect species and habitat associated with the lagoons. (These potentially substantial impacts are described in the introduction to this Environmental Consequences section.) There would not be a significant difference in potential impacts from the trench and at-grade options in this rail segment.

### **Encinitas/Solana Beach**

The Rail Improvement Alternative in this section includes double tracking either at-grade or with a short-trench option within the same alignment in the existing LOSSAN rail right-of-way. The CNDDDB records some areas of southern coastal salt marsh, potentially occupied by the light-footed clapper rail, and southern maritime chaparral in this rail segment, as well as 11 special-status species. Wildlife habitat, and possibly wildlife movement corridors, would be temporarily be impacted at the San Elijo Lagoon and Ecological Reserve during construction in or around the lagoon. Agency comments also indicate that CSS occupied by the gnatcatcher could be affected in this segment.

Approximately 14 acres of wetlands are mapped within Impact Zone A of both alignment options, but construction within the existing rail corridor would minimize potential impacts. Jurisdictional waters potentially affected include the San Elijo Lagoon. There would be no net increase in the footprint of the rail infrastructure within the San Elijo Lagoon, but construction disturbance would potentially impact species and habitat in this area. (There may be the opportunity to replace the existing bridge with a new structure that would increase the tidal flow and remove the embankment from the lagoon; see Section 3.13.5, *Mitigation Strategies*).

There would not be a substantial difference in potential impacts from the trench and at-grade options in this rail section. Both options are along the existing LOSSAN corridor alignment in urbanized areas, and both would have temporary impacts on the lagoon and ecological reserve.

### **Del Mar**

The Rail improvements Alternative through the Del Mar area includes two alignment options: a tunnel under Camino Del Mar, or a tunnel along I-5. These alignment options and the existing LOSSAN rail corridor are shown in Figure 3.13-7 to illustrate their location in relation to two lagoons.

No Diegan coastal sage scrub is mapped along either of the alignment options but CNDDDB records some areas of southern coastal salt marsh. Agency comments indicate that high-quality CSS supporting gnatcatchers does exist and may be fragmented where the Camino Del Mar tunnel option daylights at the south end of Del Mar, and at the northern end of the I-5 tunnel. In addition, there are some areas of southern maritime chaparral mapped along the tunnel alignment.

The CNDDDB records 12 special-status species along the Camino del Mar alignment, and 17 along the I-5 tunnel alignment. For either alignment option, wildlife habitat, and possible wildlife movement corridors, would be affected at the San Dieguito Lagoon and surrounding open areas, and Los Peñasquitos Lagoon and Preserve. These sensitive habitat areas would be subject to disturbance during construction, including indirect impacts from noise and lighting during possible nighttime construction work.

There are 30 ac (12 ha) of wetlands and nearly 2,740 linear ft (835 m) of non-wetland waters mapped within Impact Zone A for the Camino del Mar tunnel alignment. Some of this wetlands acreage includes the San Dieguito River/Lagoon and Los Peñasquitos Lagoon that may be impacted during construction. The I-5 alignment encompasses only 2 ac (less than 1 ha) of wetlands but over 3,400 linear ft (1,036 m) of non-wetland waters.

Either alignment option in the Del Mar area would involve deep tunneling that would avoid disturbance along the tunnel routes to most biological resources, except at portal areas. The Camino del Mar option would involve double-tracking across the Los Peñasquitos and San Dieguito lagoons on the existing or new rail bridges, which would be done without any net increase in the in-water footprint of the rail infrastructure within the lagoons. Construction along the lagoon perimeters would have direct and indirect impacts on habitat and wildlife during construction. (There may be the opportunity to replace the existing bridge across Los Peñasquitos with a causeway structure that would increase the tidal flow and remove the embankment from the lagoons. This would require extensive in-water work, causing higher impacts during construction, but would result in a long-term beneficial impact to the lagoon. The feasibility and potential benefits and impacts would be determined in project-level analyses, as described in Section 3.13.6, Subsequent Studies).

The I-5 tunnel would avoid crossing of the Los Peñasquitos Lagoon but the design concept would include a new, elevated structure along the south edge of San Dieguito Lagoon, following the southern edge of San Dieguito Racetrack View Drive, which may result in potential new, temporary and permanent impacts on sensitive biological resources. The I-5 tunnel option would allow for the removal of the existing rail bridge structure in the future. Bridge removal would have temporary impacts on the lagoon from extensive in-water work to remove the existing structure.

Overall, the Camino del Mar tunnel would likely have fewer potential impacts on biological resources associated with the lagoons, because it may not involve extensive in-water work during construction across the existing lagoon bridges, and would not introduce new structures to the southern edge of San Dieguito Lagoon.

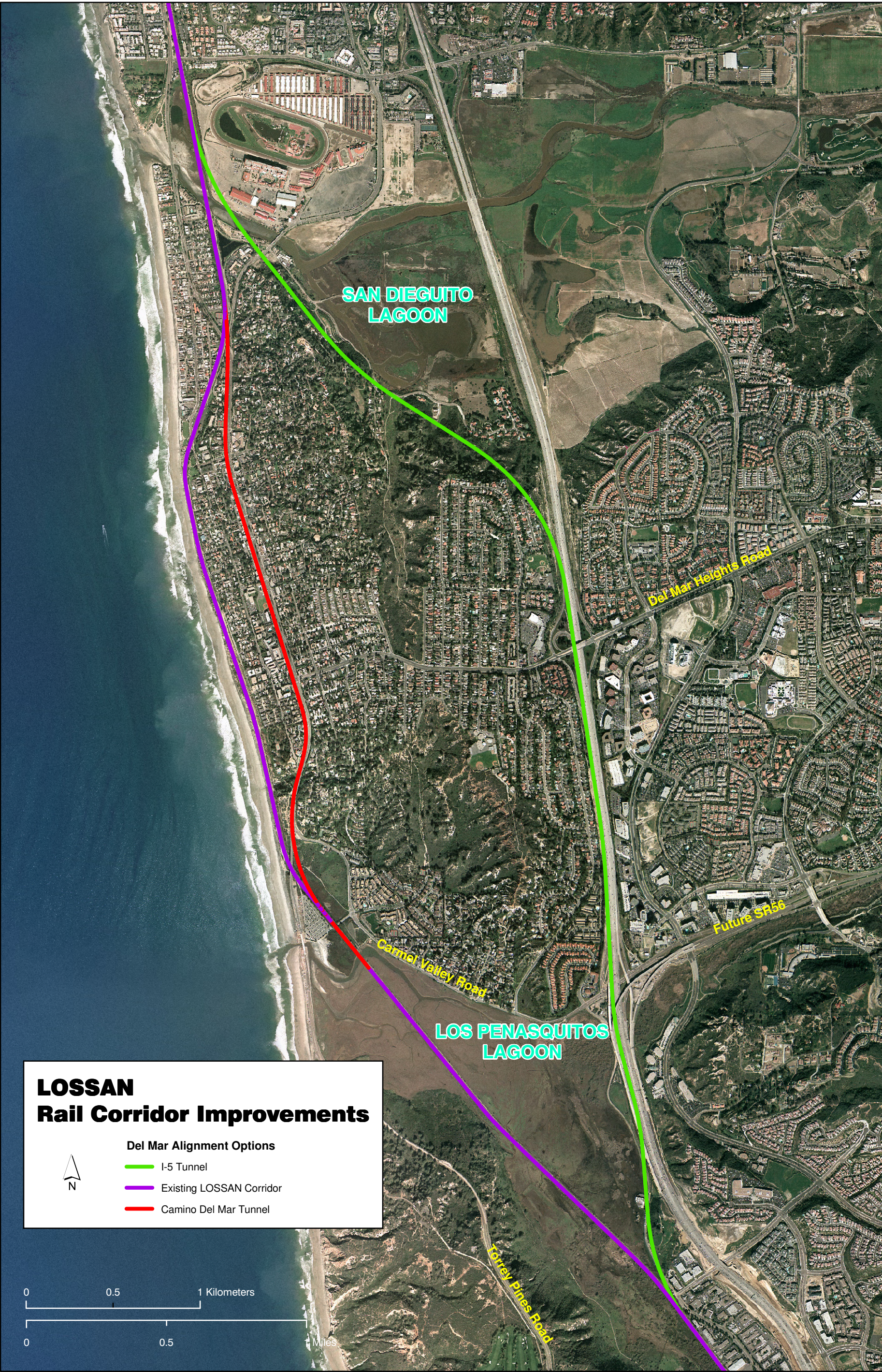
### **I-5/805 Split to Highway 52**

The Rail Improvement Alternative in this section includes two tunnel alignments: one running through Miramar Hill and one running along and under Interstate 5. A new underground station is proposed at University Towne Centre (UTC) as part of the Miramar Hill tunnel alignment option.

There are 28 ac (11 ha) of mapped Diegan coastal sage scrub in the study area for the I-5 tunnel, while the Miramar Hill alignment contains no mapped sensitive vegetation communities. Agency comments indicate that CSS and other sensitive vegetation could be fragmented at both ends of either tunnel option in this segment. The CNDDB records 10 special-status species within the study area of for the Miramar Hill and 4 special-status species for the I-5 option. Portals at the ends of either tunnel may affect the movement of wildlife along north facing slopes above Peñasquitos Creek and Sorrento Valley, and in the canyons south of UTC.

Potential impacts to wetlands and jurisdictional waters would be minimal because of the deep tunneling with either option, and would occur at the portal areas only. At the proposed UTC underground station, some construction impacts could occur on the surface; however, the area surrounding the UTC station is urbanized so impacts to wetlands and waters are unlikely.





Source : IBI; Landiscor; 2005



U.S. Department  
of Transportation  
Federal  
Railroad  
Administration

**FIGURE 3.13-7**  
**Del Mar Area Lagoons and Alignment Options**  
LOSSAN Rail Corridor Improvements  
Program Environmental Impact Report / Environmental Impact Statement





The proposed deep tunneling to be utilized for either option in this segment would minimize potential impacts to biological resources and wetlands. The current level of data does not allow any significant differentiation between the potential impacts associated with these two tunnel options.

#### **Highway 52 to San Diego Santa Fe Depot**

Proposed improvements in this rail segment include double tracking in the existing rail corridor, a curve realignment, and a trench between Sassafras Street and Cedar Street. Station improvements are proposed at Santa Fe Depot. The CNDDDB records some areas of southern cottonwood willow riparian forest and southern riparian forest in the study area, as well as 1 special-status species. Wildlife movement corridors may be present in Rose Canyon and San Clemente Canyon adjacent to the existing LOSSAN rail corridor. The San Diego River also provides a wildlife movement corridor under the existing rail alignment. In this area, there is planning for development of a system of parks along the river stretching for 50 miles.

Approximately 5 ac (2 ha) of wetlands could be temporarily impacted by the proposed rail improvements in this segment. Non-wetland waters and associated wetlands within the study corridor and around the Santa Fe Depot include the San Diego River and Mission Bay. However, the Santa Fe Depot is surrounded by heavy urbanization making impacts to jurisdictional waters unlikely in this station area. The Mission Bay parallels the study area, but is not likely to be affected due to its distance from the existing rail corridor.

### **3.13.4 Design Practices**

Emphasis will be on utilizing existing rail and other transportation corridors for the Rail Improvements alignment options to minimize potential impacts to biological resources bisecting sensitive areas. Nearly 90% of the alignment options are either within or adjacent to a major existing transportation corridor (existing railroad or highway corridors). Use of these existing transportation corridors helps minimize potential impacts since they have already imposed a footprint/barrier. Moreover, many alignment options would be on aerial structures or in deep tunnels, allowing for unhindered crossing of the alignment by wildlife. Underpasses or overpasses or other appropriate passageways would be designed during project-level for implementation at reasonable intervals during construction to avoid, minimize and/or mitigate any potential impacts to wildlife movement.

Major portions of some alignment options would be in tunnels that would largely avoid impacts to biological resources. The potential impacts associated with construction access roads would be greatly limited in these segments, and could be avoided altogether in some segments by using in-line construction (i.e., by using the existing and/or new rail infrastructure as it is built to transport equipment to and from the construction site and to transport excavated materials away from the construction area. To avoid creating access roads in sensitive areas such as the lagoon areas in northern San Diego County, required geologic exploration would be accomplished using helicopter transport for drilling equipment and site restoration to minimize surface disruption. Small pilot tunnels could be utilized where more extensive subsurface geology information is needed.

The design practices for the project include the use or reuse of excavated materials within the confines of the project and avoidance or minimization of any additional impact on sensitive

areas from placement of excess material. While the specific uses or the quantity of placement of excavation material cannot be determined at the program level of environmental study, they would be addressed during subsequent project-level environmental analysis. The vast majority of the excavated tunneling material is anticipated to be suitable for reuse in the construction of the proposed rail improvements. Potential uses include aggregate for concrete and fill material for other portions of the line. Balancing the earthwork operations will be a key objective in the subsequent project-level engineering. Uses of excavated materials would, in part, be determined by the timing of project construction. At any point in time, various construction projects (with appropriate environmental permits) will require disposal and re-use of fill material. During construction of rail improvements, the exchange of fill materials with other ongoing projects would be coordinated to the ultimate benefit of each project.

As stated previously, the lead agencies support retaining or reducing the in-water footprint of lagoon crossing structures. Project-level analyses and agency consultation, along with more detailed design work, will be used to evaluate the feasibility and potential impacts and benefits of replacing structures and/or removing existing fill in the lagoons. Design of new structures would include features that minimize the amount of discharge into these waters, such as longer bridge spans to minimize the number of in-water structures, designs that minimize the need for rock-slope stabilization at bridge abutments, etc.

### 3.13.5 Mitigation Strategies

Based on the analysis above, and considering the CEQA Appendix G thresholds of significance for biological resources and wetlands, the proposed Rail Improvements Alternative is considered to have a significant effect on biological resources and wetlands. Placing the conceptual rail improvement alignment options largely within or along existing transportation corridors reduces the potential for adverse effects to these resources, and engineering and design practices further reduce potential adverse impacts to these resources (e.g., avoiding encroachments on habitat and wetlands, use of aerial structures or tunnels lined with impermeable surfaces to avoid sensitive areas). However, some alignment options would involve new corridors, and all alignment options in northern San Diego County cross the uniquely sensitive lagoon environments. At the program level of analysis, it is not possible to know precisely the location, extent and particular characteristics of all potential, adverse impacts to these resources. Mitigation strategies, as well as the design practices discussed above, will be applied to reduce these impacts.

Potential strategies to mitigate impacts on biological resources would include: (1) field verification of sensitive resources; (2) filling of data gaps; (3) subsequent project-specific analyses of environmental impacts; (4) consultation with appropriate resource agencies to refine avoidance and mitigation measures; and (5) developing and adopting a mitigation monitoring program.

To the extent practicable, direct and indirect impacts to biological resources will be avoided by refinements to detailed alignments to be developed during the project-level design and environmental evaluation phase. Further possible mitigation measures for consideration at the project level include: (1) project design changes (for example, alignment shifts to avoid certain resources, design changes to reduce the impact footprint, longer bridge spans to avoid or reduce the amount of in-water structures and fill; (2) participation in or contribution to existing or proposed conservation banks or natural management areas, including possible acquisition, preservation, or restoration of habitats; (3) relocation of sensitive species; and (4) construction of wildlife underpasses, bridges, and/or large culverts, to facilitate known wildlife movement

corridors. Specific mitigation measures would be identified at the project level of environmental review.

Consultation with the appropriate resource agencies to develop site-specific avoidance and minimization strategies would be incorporated in the project-level environmental review. Special mitigation needs would be considered in the future with the appropriate authorities that are responsible for regional mitigation (conservation) banks, HCPs, NCCPs, or special area management plans. However, providing sufficient mitigation for compliance with CWA requirements for wetlands would likely be difficult and challenging.

Resource agencies and organizations have expressed interest in helping to develop and participate in a mitigation planning and monitoring program to determine impacts and mitigation effectiveness for sensitive species and habitats in the lagoon areas. This approach could include documenting site-specific baseline conditions, monitoring mitigation effectiveness as various proposed projects (highway and rail) are constructed, and adjusting mitigation measures as needed based on effectiveness and compatibility with lagoon restoration programs.

Removal of existing fill embankments and/or replacement of existing bridge structures over lagoons may improve the existing condition by increasing water circulation and tidal influence. Table 3.13-7 lists of the various agencies, organizations, and entities involved with the restoration and management of each lagoon. The lead agencies support working with each of these groups to design improved rail crossings of the lagoons, and to share information and optimize the ecological benefits to the lagoons from these projects.

**Table 3.13-7  
Lagoon Restoration and Management Entities**

<b>Lagoon</b>	<b>Agencies/ Organizations</b>
Buena Vista	California Coastal Conservancy, California Department of Fish and Game, Joint Powers Committee of the Cities of Oceanside, Carlsbad, and Vista, Buena Vista Lagoon Foundation, Buena Vista Audubon Society, CalTrans, Buena Vista Audubon Society, United States Fish and Wildlife Service
Agua Hedionda	City of Carlsbad, NRG Cabrillo Power, Agua Hedionda Lagoon Foundation, California Department of Fish and Game, United States Fish and Wildlife Service
San Elijo	San Diego County Parks and Recreation, California Department of Fish and Game, California State Lands Commission, City of Encinitas, San Elijo Lagoon Conservancy, City of Solana Beach, California Coastal Conservancy, United States Fish and Wildlife Service
Batiquitos	City of Carlsbad, California State Lands Commission, California Department of Fish and Game, Port of Los Angeles, Batiquitos Lagoon Foundation, United States Fish and Wildlife Service
San Dieguito	California Department of Fish and Game, San Dieguito River Park Joint Powers Authority, Southern California Edison, City of Del Mar, City of San Diego, 22nd Agricultural District, United States Fish and Wildlife Service
Los Peñasquitos	City of San Diego, California Department of Parks and Recreation, California State Coastal Conservancy, Los Peñasquitos Lagoon Foundation, County of San Diego, San Diego Gas and Electric, City of Del Mar, United States Fish and Wildlife Service

Additionally, the Department's I-5 North Coast Project team will be consulted for coordination regarding design and construction of the rail and the highway project to reduce impacts and benefit mitigation efforts. See Section 3.16, Cumulative Impacts, for additional information.

Other local and regional organizations involved in planning and management activities involving sensitive habitats, estuaries, and natural areas will be identified and consulted during project-level studies. In addition to protection and mitigation measures, there may be opportunities for enhancements such as the addition of interpretive material along river parks (e.g., the planned San Diego River Park) or estuary areas to increase public understanding of these unique environments.

Because specific biological resource impacts cannot be predicted with certainty at this program level, specific mitigation measures also cannot be developed at this time. However, mitigation strategies are described below from which specific mitigation measures can be developed once the extent of direct and indirect biological resource impacts have been determined at the project level.

Mitigation strategies that could be applied at the project level for potential impacts to biological resources include the following:

- Biological Resources Management Plans (BRMP) would be prepared to specify the design and implementation of biological resources mitigation measures, including habitat replacement and revegetation, protection during construction, performance (growth) standards, maintenance criteria, and monitoring requirements. The USFWS, CDFG, and USACE would review Draft BRMPs. The primary goal of a BRMP is to ensure the long-term perpetuation of the existing diversity of habitats in the project area and adjacent urban interface zones. BRMPs will contain the following:
  - Specific measures for the protection of sensitive amphibian, mammal, bird, and plant species during construction.
  - Identification and quantification of habitats to be removed, along with the locations where these habitats are to be restored or relocated.
  - Procedures for vegetation analyses of adjacent protected habitats to estimate their relative composition; site preparation (clearing, grading, weed eradication, soil amendment, topsoil storage); irrigation, planting (container plantings, seeding); and maintenance (weed control, irrigation system checks, replanting). This information would be used to determine the requirements for revegetation areas.
  - Sources of plant materials and methods of propagation.
  - Specific parameters for the determination of the amount of replacement habitat for temporary disturbance areas.
  - Specification of parameters for maintenance and monitoring of re-established habitats, including weed control measures, frequency of field checks, and monitoring reports for temporary disturbance areas.
  - Specification of performance standards for growth of re-established plant communities and cut-and-fill slopes.
  - Remedial measures to be taken if performance standards are not met.



- Methodologies and requirements for monitoring of the restoration/replacement efforts.
  - Measures to preserve topsoil and control erosion control.
  - Design of protective fencing around Environmentally Sensitive Areas (ESAs) and construction staging areas.
  - Specification of location and quantities of gallinaceous guzzlers (catch basin/artificial watering structures, if needed); specification of monitoring of water levels in guzzlers.
  - Location of trees to be protected as wildlife habitat (roosting sites) and locations for planting of replacement trees.
  - Specification of the purpose, type, frequency, and extent of chemical use for insect and disease control operations as part of vegetative maintenance within sensitive habitat areas.
  - Specific construction monitoring programs for sensitive species.
  - Specific measures for the protection of sensitive habitats to be preserved. These measures may include, but are not limited to, erosion and siltation control measures, protective fencing guidelines, dust control measures, grading techniques, construction area limits, and biological monitoring requirements.
  - Provisions for biological monitoring during construction activities to ensure compliance and success of protective measures. The monitoring procedures would (1) identify specific locations of wildlife habitat and sensitive species to be monitored; (2) identify the frequency of monitoring, monitoring methodology (for each habitat and sensitive species to be monitored); (3) list required qualifications of biological monitor(s); and (4) identify reporting requirements.
- Plant Communities: Impact reduction measures include construction monitoring, on-and/or off-site revegetation/restoration, and purchase of credits from existing mitigation banks. Mitigation ratios would vary depending on the quality of the plant community impacted and whether or not it provides habitat for sensitive plant or wildlife species. Regulatory agencies would be consulted to determine appropriate mitigation ratios. On-site mitigation would be preferred to off-site mitigation whenever possible. Off-site mitigation should be located within the same watershed or in close proximity to the impact area, where feasible.
  - Sensitive Plant Species: Mitigation measures may include, but not be limited to, pre-construction focused surveys, construction monitoring, relocation of plants, seed collection, plant propagation, out-planting to a suitable mitigation site, and participation in an existing HCP. Prior to construction, focused surveys should be conducted for sensitive plant species identified as occurring in the study area. Locations of sensitive plant species observed would be mapped on construction drawings. Research must be conducted on appropriate methods to use on a species-by-species basis. Some plant species may require transplantation, whereas others may germinate from seed, and still others may need to be propagated in a greenhouse prior to planting on an appropriate mitigation site. (See also BRMP information above.)

- **Weed Control:** Specific mitigation measures would be developed to minimize or avoid the spread of weeds during construction and operation. Preventive measures during construction could include identification of areas with existing weed problems and measures to control traffic moving out of those areas (e.g., cleaning of construction vehicles, limitations on movement of fill). Mitigation for operational impacts would also be developed.
- **Sensitive Wildlife Species:** Mitigation measures may include, but not be limited to, pre-construction focused surveys, construction monitoring, restoration of suitable breeding and foraging habitat, purchase of credits from an existing mitigation bank, and participation in an existing HCP. Prior to construction, focused surveys would be conducted for sensitive wildlife species identified as occurring in the study area. Locations of sensitive wildlife species observed would be mapped on construction drawings. Construction could be phased around the breeding season for sensitive wildlife species. (See also BRMP information above.)
- **Wildlife Movement/Migration Corridors:** Wildlife crossings would be of a design, shape and size to be sufficiently attractive to encourage wildlife use. Overcrossings and undercrossings for wildlife would be appropriately vegetated to afford cover and other species requirements. Functional corridors would be established to provide connectivity to protected land zoned for uses that provide wildlife permeability. The following process would be used in design of corridors:
  - Identify the habitat areas the corridor is designed to connect
  - Select several species of interest from the species present in these areas
  - Evaluate the relevant needs of each selected species
  - For each potential corridor, evaluate how the area will accommodate movement by each species of interest
  - Draw the corridors on a map
  - Design a monitoring program
- **Jurisdictional Waters and Wetlands:** The amount of mitigation required would be assessed on an acreage basis, with ratios depending upon the nature and condition of the jurisdictional areas located within the impact areas. When appropriate and feasible, on-site mitigation would be preferred. Off-site mitigation should be located within the same watershed or as close in proximity to the area of impact as possible. Mitigation options for unavoidable impacts to state and federal jurisdictional waters would include on- or off-site restoration, creation, or enhancement, mitigation banking, or in-lieu fee payments, as described below.
  - Restoration – Return degraded habitat to a pre-existing condition.
  - Creation – Conversion of a persistent non-wetland habitat into wetland (or other aquatic) habitat. The created habitat may be self-sustaining or dependent upon artificial irrigation.
  - Enhancement – Increase one or more functions through activities such as plantings or non-native vegetation eradication.

- Passive Revegetation – Allow a disturbed area to naturally revegetate without plantings.
- Mitigation Banking - Purchase of units of wetland or waters habitat that have been restored or enhanced within a larger managed conservation area. The units are typically known as “credits” and are usually sold on an acreage basis.
- In-Lieu Fee Program – A monetary payment is made to an agency-approved entity that provides habitat conservation or restoration. For instance, the Nature Conservancy may receive in-lieu fee payments for impacts in all watersheds. (An In-Lieu Fee Program is available for impacts to waters within Los Angeles County.)
- Current federal and state policy emphasizes a "no net loss" of wetlands habitats policy, which is usually achieved through restoration of areas subject to temporary impacts or creation of wetlands to offset permanent impacts. However, the January 27, 2003, Special Public Notice for Mitigation and Monitoring Guidelines states that the USACE favors the use of approved mitigation banks or in-lieu fee programs in cases where they result in more regional or watershed benefit than on-site compensatory mitigation. Approved mitigation and in-lieu fee programs would include measures that ensure the no net loss of wetlands policy is met.

The above mitigation strategies, which include further study to obtain additional data and to refine site-specific mitigation measures, are expected to substantially lessen or avoid impacts to biological resources and wetlands. During project-level reviews and as a result of consultations with resource agencies, obtaining required permits for segments of the rail improvements, and complying with permit terms and conditions, impacts to biological resources and wetlands will be reduced. Sufficient information is not available at the program level to conclude with certainty that mitigation will reduce impacts to affected resources to a less than significant level in all circumstances. Therefore, impacts to biological resources and wetlands are considered significant at the program level even with the application of mitigation strategies. Additional environmental assessment will allow more precise evaluation in the project-level environmental analyses.

### 3.13.6 Subsequent Analysis

Identification of potential impacts on various biological resources for this Program EIR/EIS has primarily relied on the available GIS database, other GIS tools, and review of available literature. These sources encompass a broad range of information that may not exactly correspond to actual field conditions. Project-level studies would be required to obtain more reliable assessments of potential impacts on biological resources in the study area. These studies would be used to examine the alternative alignment options and design information in order to identify the Least Environmentally Damaging Practicable Alternative (LEDPA).

The subsequent biological resources analyses required for project environmental documentation would focus on project-specific impacts that reflect more precise definitions of the right-of-way, the proposed improvement locations, and the operations. Areas of possible further study include the following:

- Field surveys to determine the extent and type of general and sensitive biological resources, including focused surveys following resource agency protocols for special-status species.
- Mapping of plant communities and sensitive biological resources within and adjacent to the proposed rail improvements right-of-way/impact footprint to address direct and indirect impacts on biological resources.
- Study of wildlife migration corridors. At the program level, wildlife movement and migration corridors have been assumed to be present in any large open areas, lagoons and surrounding parks and reserve areas, creeks and riparian areas in undeveloped settings. It is also possible that linear areas of narrow natural or semi-natural habitats, even in urban areas, may be functioning at some level as wildlife movement corridors; however, these smaller areas are not specifically identified at the program level of data analysis and would be evaluated at the project level. Field studies would identify additional locally significant corridors and provide data to assist in the design of bridges and wildlife crossings at crucial travel route points.
- Further identification and mapping of habitat reserves and mitigation banks and conservation easements within the study area, and assessment of the potential for impact to these areas.
- Delineation of waters and wetlands to determine the extent of USACE and CDFG jurisdiction, and consultation conducted with these agencies regarding appropriate mitigation.
- Hydraulic analyses of lagoon crossings to identify potentially feasible improvements that may help improve tidal hydraulics and remove barriers to floodwaters. For new structures crossing lagoons and other water bodies, detailed design concepts that reduce the amount of fill and minimize the in-water footprint will be examined.
- Coordination with the I-5 North Coast Corridor Project to reduce impacts and find opportunities for coordination during implementation and construction.
- Consultation with USFWS for potential impacts on federally listed plant and wildlife species, including the preparation of a biological assessment or assessments, and biological opinions for each phase of project implementation. Early consultation will help to refine appropriate mitigation strategies. Upon project level initiation of Section 7 consultation, the lead agencies would in principle accomplish the steps identified by DOI by: (1) identifying the conservation needs of each listed species with the potential to be impacted by the proposal; (2) identifying the threats to each listed species' conservation related to the proposed action; (3) identifying species conservation or management units and the threats affecting those units; (4) identifying species' conservation goals framed within the context of the Rail Improvements program; and (5) developing conservation/management unit strategies. The lead agencies would prepare Biological Assessments to address the affected conservation/management units identified.
- In some areas along the LOSSAN corridor, it may be appropriate to consider preparation of a Programmatic Biological Opinion for future projects. This may be particularly useful in the north San Diego County area where a number of Rail Improvement options could be implemented along several segments encompassing the system of coastal lagoons

and coastal marsh ecosystems. The desirability and feasibility of a Programmatic document will be explored with federal and state lead and regulatory agencies and lagoon organizations during project-level evaluations. If various rail improvements were funded within a similar timeframe, and/or if rail improvements could be timed to coincide in some areas with other transportation improvements (such as the North Coast corridor project), a Programmatic Biological Opinion may be the best vehicle for addressing the full set of issues concerning biological resources.

- Consultation with CDFG regarding potential impacts on state-listed plant and wildlife species and appropriate mitigation for such impacts. Early consultation will help to refine appropriate mitigation strategies.
- Consultation with managers of lands administered for natural values regarding the impacts and mitigation strategies for such areas.
- Preparation of an Essential Fish Habitat Assessment.
- Refinement of an alignment design along Trabuco Creek, including an evaluation of options for moving the alignment further from the creek, and an evaluation of potential improvements for Trabuco Creek habitats.
- Assessment of potential for participation in HCPs.
- Development of a mitigation monitoring plan for environmental compliance during construction.
- Identification of all areas subject to various regulations and permit actions, followed by application for necessary permits (USACE Nationwide Permit or Section 404, USFWS Biological Opinion, CDFG consistency determination with USFWS Biological Opinion, Coastal Zone Development Permit, and 1600 Streambed Alteration Agreement, RWQCB Section 401).

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### 3.14 SECTION 4(f) AND 6(f) RESOURCES (PUBLIC PARKS AND RECREATION)

Section 4(f) and 6(f) resources analyzed in this Program EIR/EIS include publicly owned parklands, recreation lands, wildlife and waterfowl refuges, and historic sites that are covered by Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation (DOT) Act of 1966 and Section 6(f) of the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act of 1965. This section describes the existing Section 4(f) and 6(f) resources within the project region and identifies the potential uses of and potential impacts on Section 4(f) and 6(f) resources for each alternative. Because this is a program-level environmental document, the uses of and impacts on Section 4(f) and 6(f) resources are analyzed at a program level.

#### 3.14.1 Regulatory Requirements and Methods of Evaluation

##### A. REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS

###### Section 4(f)

Section 4(f) of DOT Act of 1966 (49 U.S.C. § 303) states the following.

- (a) It is the policy of the United States Government that special effort is made to preserve the natural beauty of the countryside and public park and recreation lands, wildlife and waterfowl refuges, and historic sites.
- (b) The Secretary of Transportation shall cooperate and consult with the Secretaries of the Interior, Housing and Urban Development, and Agriculture, and with the States, in developing transportation plans and programs that include measures to maintain or enhance the natural beauty of lands crossed by transportation activities or facilities.
- (c) Approval of Programs and Projects - Subject to subsection (d), the Secretary may approve a transportation program or project (other than any project for a park road or roadway under section 204 of title 23) requiring the use of publicly owned land of a public park, recreation area or wildlife and waterfowl refuge of national State or local officials, or land of an historic site of national, State, or local significance (as determined by the Federal State, or local officials having jurisdiction over the park, area refuge, or site) only if,
  - (1) there is no prudent and feasible alternative to using that land; and
  - (2) the program or project includes all possible planning to minimize harm to the park, recreation area, wildlife and waterfowl refuge or historic site resulting from the use.
- (d) de Minimis Impacts
  - (1) Requirements
    - (A) Requirements For Historic Sites -The requirements of this section shall be considered to be satisfied with respect to an area described in paragraph (2) if the Secretary determines, in accordance with this subsection, that a transportation program or project will have a de minimis impact on the area.

- (B) Requirements For Parks, Recreation Areas, And Wildlife Or Waterfowl Refuges - The requirements of subsection (c)(1) shall be considered to be satisfied with respect to an area described in paragraph (3) if the Secretary determines, in accordance with this subsection, that a transportation program or project will have a de minimis impact on the area. The requirements of subsection (c)(2) with respect to an area described in paragraph (3) shall not include an alternatives analysis.
  - (C) Criteria - In making any determination under this subsection, the Secretary shall consider to be part of a transportation program or project any avoidance, minimization, mitigation, or enhancement measures that are required to be implemented as a condition of approval of the transportation program or project.
- (2) Historic Sites - With respect to historic sites, the Secretary may make a finding of de minimis impact only if:
- (A) the Secretary has determined, in accordance with the consultation process required under section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (16 U.S.C. 470f), that
    - (i) the transportation program or project will have no adverse effect on the historic site; or
    - (ii) there will be no historic properties affected by the transportation program or project;
  - (B) the finding of the Secretary has received written concurrence from the applicable State historic preservation officer or tribal historic preservation officer (and from the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation if the Council is participating in the consultation process); and
  - (C) the finding of the Secretary has been developed in consultation with parties consulting as part of the process referred to in subparagraph (A).
- (3) Parks, Recreation Areas, And Wildlife Or Waterfowl Refuges - With respect to parks, recreation areas, or wildlife or waterfowl refuges, the Secretary may make a finding of de minimis impact only if:
- (A) the Secretary has determined, after public notice and opportunity for public review and comment, that the transportation program or project will not adversely affect the activities, features, and attributes of the park, recreation area, or wildlife or waterfowl refuge eligible for protection under this section; and
  - (B) the finding of the Secretary has received concurrence from the officials with jurisdiction over the park, recreation area, or wildlife or waterfowl refuge.

Similarly, California law requires a state agency that proposes a project which may result in adverse effects on historical resources listed or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NHRP) or the California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR) to consult with the State Historic Preservation Office and to identify feasible and prudent measures that will eliminate or mitigate the adverse effects (California Public Resources Code §§ 5024 and 5024.5; CEQA Guidelines § 15064.5).

### **Section 6(f)**

State and local governments often obtain grants through the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act to acquire or make improvements to parks and recreation areas (16 U.S.C. §§ 460-4 through 460-11, September 3, 1964, as amended 1965, 1968, 1970, 1972–1974, 1976–1981, 1983, 1986, 1987, 1990, 1991, 1993–1996). Section 6(f) of the act prohibits the conversion to a non-recreational purpose of property acquired or developed with these grants without the approval of the Department of the Interior's (DOI's) National Park Service. Section 6(f) directs DOI to ensure that replacement lands of equal value (monetary), location, and usefulness are provided as conditions to such conversions. Consequently, where such conversions of Section 6(f) lands are proposed for transportation projects, replacement lands must be provided.

California statutes similarly require replacement lands. The California Public Park Preservation Act of 1971 (California Public Resources Code § 5400 et seq.) provides that a public agency that acquires public parkland for non-park use must either pay compensation that is sufficient to acquire substantially equivalent substitute parkland or provide substitute parkland of comparable characteristics.

## **B. METHOD OF EVALUATION OF IMPACTS**

This evaluation of potential impacts on Section 4(f) and 6(f) resources focuses on identifying uses of historical, cultural, parkland, and wildlife resources under existing conditions, and potential uses of and impacts on these resources under the No-Project and Rail Improvements Alternatives. For this program document, the primary goal of the analysis was the identification of Section 4(f) and 6(f) resources on or very close to the proposed Rail Improvements alignment options and the relative potential impacts of the alignments on these resources. At this stage, it is not practical to study and measure the severity of each potential impact identified. No fieldwork was conducted as part of this analysis. In subsequent project-level analysis, should a decision be made to proceed with the Rail Improvements Alternative, Section 4(f) and 6(f) resources, potential uses and impacts, and appropriate mitigation measures would be identified in detail.

Various sources were consulted to identify potential resources in the LOSSAN region, including available databases, studies, and other documents. These documents are listed in the references chapter of this document. To identify and quantify the potential impacts by resource type, the improvements included under each alignment option were overlaid on available databases and maps.

Two types of potential impacts on Section 4(f) and 6(f) resources were identified: direct and proximity. During project-level studies, potential applicability of the de minimis impact finding will be analyzed.

- **Direct Impact:** A physical feature of a proposed improvement would directly intersect with a portion or all of the resource and require the use of property from that resource.
- **Proximity Impact:** A physical feature of a proposed improvement has the potential to impact the resource as a result of its proximity to the resource.

Potential impacts were assigned a qualitative ranking of high, medium, or low based on the proximity of the resource to the centerline of the proposed improvement. The rankings are summarized in Table 3.14-1.

**Table 3.14-1**  
**Rankings for Potential Direct and Proximity Impacts**  
**on Section 4(f) and 6(f) Resources**

Ranking	Distance of Resource from Centerline	Potential Impact
High	0 to 150 ft (0 to 46 m)	Direct
Medium	150 to 450 ft (46 to 137 m)	Proximity
Low	450 to 900 ft (137 to 274 m)	Proximity

### 3.14.2 Affected Environment

#### A. STUDY AREA DEFINED

The study area for the analysis of Section 4(f) and 6(f) resources encompasses the area within 900 ft (274 m) on either side of the centerline of each alignment and within a 900-ft (274-m) radius of existing and proposed stations.

Because the proposed Rail Improvements Alternative would cross urbanized and developed areas, a variety of Section 4(f) and 6(f) resources could be affected. The proposed alignment options were developed with the intent of avoiding these resources to the extent feasible. There are potential locations within the proposed Rail Improvements Alternatives, however, where Section 4(f) and 6(f) resources would not be avoided. These are discussed in the environmental consequences section below.

#### B. GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF SECTION 4(f) AND 6(f) RESOURCES

Section 4(f) and 6(f) resources refer to publicly owned lands of a park, recreation area, or wildlife and waterfowl refuge; or land of a historic site of national, state, or local significance (as determined by the federal, state, regional, or local officials having jurisdiction over the park, recreation area, refuge, or site).

Historically, urban and suburban development follows the establishment of transportation corridors and facilities. In California in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, most cities formed around ports and rail lines, the primary modes for transporting people and goods. After World War II, in the early 1950s, highways and the automobile became the dominant mode of transportation, bringing urban and suburban development to areas along highways that were formerly farm-to-market roads connecting rural areas to cities.

The location and identification of Section 4(f) and 6(f) resources reflect this historic transportation corridor and urban development pattern. Today, in the urban areas that developed around the railroads at the turn of the century, there is a high concentration of historical resources. In many southern California cities the railroad station is one of the oldest historical resources in the city. In the suburban and rural areas where development followed highways, some open space and natural areas have been preserved as public parks. In addition to these passive park<sup>1</sup> areas, new public parks and playgrounds have been built as part of residential developments. All of these historical resources and public parks are considered potential Section 4(f) and 6(f) resources. Therefore, in urban areas an alternative would be more likely to affect historical and archeological resources, while in suburban, wilderness, or open space or natural areas (e.g., lagoons) an alternative would be more likely to affect public parks and recreation lands, and wildlife and waterfowl refuges.

### C. SECTION 4(f) AND 6(f) RESOURCES IN THE STUDY AREA

The most significant Section 4(f) and 6(f) resources in the LOSSAN region (except historical and archaeological resources) are identified below. (See Section 3.12, Cultural and Paleontological Resources, for an analysis of historical and archeological resources.) The project area includes the western portion of the Los Angeles basin and the coastal areas of southern California between Los Angeles and San Diego, generally following the existing LOSSAN rail corridor. The Section 4(f) and 6(f) resources in the project area are predominantly local and regional parks. However, this region includes older coastal cities, and several areas have a high number of historic properties listed on the NRHP and the CRHR.

In addition to local and regional parks, the study area encompasses ten state beaches that are Section 4(f) or 6(f) resources (San Onofre, San Clemente, Doheny, Leucadia, Carlsbad, South Carlsbad, Moonlight, Cardiff, San Elijo, and Torrey Pines). Several areas associated with lagoons are also 4(f) resources in the study area, including Batiquitos Lagoon Ecological Reserve, San Elijo Lagoon Ecological Reserve, and San Dieguito Lagoon Ecological Preserve.

Specific Section 4(f) and 6(f) resources within the study area are listed by rail segment in Appendix 3.14-A.

The Coastal Rail Trail (CRT), an approved project within San Diego County, will be located along an alignment parallel to and either within or adjacent to the existing LOSSAN rail right-of-way. The CRT is currently in various stages of implementation, with some segments already completed and in use. The CRT is mainly used for transportation purposes, with incidental use for public recreational activities including, but not limited to, landscaping, cycling, jogging, and walking. Because transportation is the primary use definition and recreational activities are incidental, Section 4(f) resource protections would not apply to the CRT.

<sup>1</sup> *Passive park* refers to a park that is used for picnicking or passive water sports; it also describes zoos and arboretums. An *active park* is a park that includes facilities such as children's play equipment, playing fields, tennis or basketball courts, etc.

### 3.14.3 Environmental Consequences

The identification of Section 4(f) and 6(f) resources could result in significant differences among the alignment options, because of the potential disruptions and costs associated with the avoidance, minimization, and possible need to mitigate impacts on such resources. These impacts could range from temporary construction impacts to the acquisition of Section 4(f) and 6(f) resources.

#### A. EXISTING CONDITIONS COMPARED TO NO PROJECT ALTERNATIVE

The existing conditions are based on transportation infrastructure that was identified as part of the alternatives definition process. The No Project Alternative is based on existing conditions and the funded and programmed transportation improvements that are projected to be developed and in operation by 2020. It is not possible as part of this study to identify or quantify the potential uses and impacts expected to occur by 2020 with implementation of the No Project Alternative. Rather, it is assumed that the improvements to be developed and implemented under the No Project Alternative would undergo typical design and construction practices that would avoid or greatly limit potential impacts. Additionally, each improvement associated with the No Project Alternative will be subject to a project-level environmental document that will identify potential uses and impacts, as well as measures to avoid, minimize, or mitigate the impacts. Thus, no impacts are quantified under the No Project Alternative.

#### B. NO PROJECT ALTERNATIVE COMPARED TO RAIL IMPROVEMENTS ALTERNATIVE

The No Project Alternative is the assumed 2020 condition, as described above. Any potential impacts associated with the Rail Improvements Alternative would occur in addition to the impacts associated with the No Project Alternative. For this analysis, the difference in impacts between the Rail Improvements Alternative relative to No Project (existing conditions in this case) are compared.

A majority of the proposed Rail Improvements alignment options would be within the existing LOSSAN rail right-of-way. However, the potential for impacts to known and potential historical and archeological resources is high in a number of these areas, primarily because these resources are generally located in urban centers where the range of possible alignment options is limited. (A detailed analysis of historical and archeological resources is found in Section 3.12, *Cultural and Paleontological Resources*.)

The Section 4(f) and 6(f) resources identified in the LOSSAN region are primarily local and regional parks, state beaches, and several ecological preserves. Although construction of the Rail Improvements Alternative is expected to occur within 150 ft (46 m) of some parks and refuge lands, the majority of the activities would be within the existing LOSSAN rail corridor. The railroad was originally constructed in the 1800s, before most parks and conservation lands were established around it. Because most alignment options would be within existing rail or roadway corridors, the potential for impacts would be temporary or could be reduced by mitigation strategies.



Tunneling options in several rail segments could reduce or avoid impacts on some of the Section 4(f) and 6(f) resources. Because tunneling could result in the removal of existing aboveground track, new parklands could potentially be created for public use, which would result in beneficial impacts on Section 4(f) and 6(f) properties. Specific areas where this could occur include the Del Mar Bluffs area, the San Clemente coastal area, and the San Juan Capistrano area. This would need to be evaluated in detail during project-level studies.

Table 3.14.2 summarizes the number of potential high impacts (that is, direct impacts within 150 ft [46m] of the centerline of an alignment option) for the Rail Improvements alignment options. Specific Section 4(f) and 6(f) resources are listed in Appendix 3.14-A.

In comparing alignment options in the same rail segments, there is little or no difference in the number of Section 4(f) and 6(f) resources that are within 150 ft (46 m) of the proposed improvements. Where a tunnel option exists, that option would avoid most if not all potential impacts.

### **3.14.4 Impact Avoidance Strategies, Including Alternatives Screened from Further Consideration**

Throughout the environmental review process, the Department has emphasized minimizing harm to the environment. One of the Department's policies, as stated in Chapter 1, is "to maximize the use of existing transportation corridors and right-of-way, to the extent feasible." This policy is one of the primary impact avoidance strategies for the proposed Rail Improvements Alternative. This policy and the other goals implicit in the project purpose and need were used in the scoping process and successive screening stages of the program environmental process (see Chapter 2, *Alternatives*). The screening evaluation considered the potential impacts of the various alignments and all the environmental parameters, including impacts on Section 4(f) and 6(f) resources. The Department and the FRA developed the screening recommendations, with input from federal cooperating agencies; state, regional, and local agencies; and members of the public.

### **3.14.5 Avoidance Alternatives or Reasons for No Prudent or Feasible Alternative for Use of Section 4(f) or 6(f) Resource**

Direct impacts on many Section 4(f) and 6(f) resources could be avoided by remaining within existing railroad right-of-way, or moving horizontally within the right-of-way, where feasible. Avoidance of Section 4(f) and 6(f) resources would be explored during project-specific design and environmental evaluation. Project-level evaluations of Section 4(f) and 6(f) resource use would include documentation of the avoidance alternatives and/or reasons for no prudent or feasible alternative for impacts on Section 4(f) and 6(f) resources for the segments being studied.

**Table 3.14-2**  
**Summary of 4(f)/6(f) Resources Potentially Affected in Study Area**

Rail Improvements Alignment Options	Potential High <sup>1</sup> Impacts on Section 4(f) Resources)	Potential High <sup>1</sup> Impacts on Section 6(f) Resources	Total Potential High <sup>1</sup> Impacts
<b>Union Station To Fullerton Station – 4<sup>th</sup> Main Track</b>	4	0	4
<b>Fullerton Station To Irvine Station--Double Tracking</b>			
AT-GRADE between Orange and Santa Ana	3	0	3
TRENCH between Orange and Santa Ana	3	0	3
Stations Fullerton	0	0	0
Anaheim	0	0	0
Santa Ana	0	0	0
Irvine	1	0	1
<b>San Juan Capistrano Double Tracking</b>			
TUNNEL along I-5 between Hwy 73 and Avenida Aeropuerto	1	0	1
AT-GRADE and Cut/Cover TRENCH along east side of Trabuco Creek	1	0	1
Stations San Juan Capistrano	0	0	0
<b>Dana Point/San Clemente Double Tracking</b>			
Dana Point Curve Realignment; San Clemente - SHORT TUNNEL	5	1	6
San Clemente - LONG TWO-SEGMENT TUNNEL	4	1	5
Stations San Clemente	0	0	0
<b>Camp Pendleton At-grade Double Tracking</b>	2	0	2
<b>Oceanside/Carlsbad Double Tracking</b>			
Carlsbad - AT-GRADE; double tracking	3	0	3
Carlsbad - TRENCH; double-tracking	3	0	3
Stations Oceanside	0	0	0
<b>Encinitas/Solana Beach Double Tracking</b>			
Encinitas - AT-GRADE;	2	1	3
Encinitas - SHORT TRENCH	2	1	3
Stations Solana Beach	0	0	0
<b>Del Mar Double Tracking</b>			
TUNNEL under Camino Del Mar	3	0	3
TUNNEL along I-5	2	0	2
<b>I-5/805 Split To Hwy 52 Double Tracking</b>			
Miramar Hill TUNNEL	2	0	2

**Table 3.14-2**  
**Summary of 4(f)/6(f) Resources Potentially Affected in Study Area (continued)**

Rail Improvements Alignment Options	Potential High <sup>1</sup> Impacts on Section 4(f) Resources)	Potential High <sup>1</sup> Impacts on Section 6(f) Resources	Total Potential High <sup>1</sup> Impacts
I-5 TUNNEL	3	0	3
Stations UTC (Only applies to Miramar Hill Tunnel)	1	0	1
Hwy 52 To Santa Fe Depot Curve realignment and Double Tracking	3	0	3
Stations Santa Fe Depot	0	0	0

<sup>1</sup>:High impacts assume resource is located within 150 ft (46m) of improvement centerline. Potential impacts on historical and archaeological resources are not included here because they are discussed in detail in Section 3.10.

There are several potential Section 4(f) and 6(f) recreation resources and cultural resources within or immediately adjacent to the proposed alignments. Avoidance of these resources would be possible in many cases by redesigning or narrowing the disturbance limits, in combination with noise walls and/or visual screening. However, there may be locations where avoidance could not be achieved, possibly for one of more of the following reasons:

- Shifting the centerline (and the whole facility) to avoid one or more resources could result in greater potential impacts on other resources.
- The alignment options cannot be shifted easily because of the large turning radii required for rail operations and other design considerations. A minor shift in one location on the rail alignment could result in a substantial shift elsewhere on the alignment, potentially resulting in impacts on other Section 4(f) and 6(f) resources.
- Measures to reduce potential proximity impacts, such as noise walls, could result in potential adverse visual impacts on Section 4(f) and 6(f) resources. Potential measures to minimize harm at each resource need to be analyzed in consultation with the owners of the resources to ensure that measures to minimize harm do not adversely affect the values of the Section 4(f) and 6(f) resources.

### 3.14.6 Design Practices

Utilizing existing rail and other transportation corridors for the proposed Rail Improvements Alternative will be emphasized in order to minimize potential impacts to adjacent properties, particularly parks and recreational lands. Nearly 90% percent of the alignment options carried forward are either within or adjacent to a major existing transportation corridor (existing railroad or highway right-of-way), thus minimizing potential for impacts to these important resources.

Should USDOT participate in project-level reviews, compliance with Sections 4(f) of the DOT Act of 1966 as amended, and 6(f) of the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act of 1965 as amended, will be completed. Many potential 4(f) and 6(f) uses have been avoided through evaluation incorporated in this program EIR/EIS and additional steps will be taken at the project level to ensure that there is no prudent or feasible alternative to the use of 4(f) and 6(f) resources, in addition to the potential applicability of a de minimis impact finding.

Potential impacts to Section 4(f) and 6(f) resources will be evaluated during project-level studies to identify possible design refinements that would avoid or minimize these impacts. The majority of alignment options are within the existing rail corridor or in deep tunnels, which greatly reduces the potential for impacts. Alignment shifts and other design refinements during project-level reviews are expected to further reduce potential impacts.

### 3.14.7 Mitigation Strategies

Possible mitigation measures for impacts on Section 4(f) and 6(f) resources include sound walls, visual buffers/landscaping, and modification of transportation access to/egress from the resource. Some of these measures could include design modifications or controls on construction schedules, phasing, and activities. Planning efforts would be undertaken as a part of the project-level documentation phase to minimize harm to the Section 4(f) and 6(f) protected resources. This is anticipated to include measures that may be taken to mitigate potential adverse environmental impacts, such as beautification measures, replacement of land or structures or their equivalents on or near their existing site(s), tunneling, cut and cover, cut and fill, treatment of embankments, planting, screening, creating wildlife corridors, acquisition of land for preservation, installation of noise barriers, and establishment of pedestrian or bicycle paths. Other potential mitigation strategies could be discovered with public input.

Based on the analysis above, and considering the CEQA Appendix G thresholds of significance for recreation resources, the proposed Rail Improvements Alternative would have a potentially significant effect on public parks and recreation resources. Although public parks and other recreational resources have largely been avoided by the placement of conceptual corridors, most of which are within the existing rail corridor or in tunnels, and additional avoidance and mitigation strategies will be applied in the project-level analyses, some parks and recreational resources may ultimately be affected. At the programmatic level of analysis, it is not possible to know precisely the location, extent and particular characteristics of impacts to park resources. Because of this uncertainty, at the programmatic level of analysis the impact is considered significant. Mitigation strategies, as well as the design practices discussed above, will be applied to reduce these impacts.

In the event that rail improvement alignments or facilities are located within or in proximity to public parks, mitigation measures for natural, cultural, aesthetic and recreational impacts would be evaluated for feasibility and efficacy, including but not limited to:

- Compensation for temporary and loss of park and recreation use.
- If necessary, provide alternative shuttle access service to park visitors.
- Restore directly impacted park lands to a natural state.
- If any facilities must be relocated, provide planning studies as well as design and appropriate replacement with minimal impact on park use.
- Inventory and record affected historic structures. Provide appropriate mitigation for adverse effects to historic structures.
- Require appropriate vehicle cleaning for all construction equipment used near units of the California State Park System to protect against spreading exotic plants or disease.
- Use local native plants for revegetation.

- Use best management practices during construction and maintenance to protect wetland resources.
- Design and construct cuts, fills, and aerial structures to avoid and minimize visual impact to units of the State Park System.
- In addressing impacts to wildlife movement corridors and habitat directly related to California State Park System units, consult with the California Department of Parks and recreation.
- Incorporate wildlife under- or over-crossings as necessary.
- Adopt construction practices to protect critical wildlife corridors and visitor use areas within public parks.

The above mitigation strategies are expected to substantially lessen or avoid impacts to public park resources in most circumstances. At the project-level it is expected that, for proposed rail alignments which would result in impacts to park resources, most of the impacts to individual park resources will be avoided or mitigated to a less-than-significant level, but it is possible that for some parks impacts will be significant. Sufficient information is not available at the program level to conclude with certainty that the above mitigation strategies will reduce impacts to all affected Section 4(f) and 6(f) resources to a less than significant effect in all circumstances. Therefore, potential impacts to these resources are considered significant at the program level even with the application of mitigation strategies. Additional environmental assessment will allow more precise evaluation in the project-level environmental analyses, as well as any needed 4(f) and 6(f) findings.

### 3.14.8 Subsequent Analysis

The Section 4(f) and 6(f) evaluation process would continue at the project-specific level to the extent that US DOT or one of its operating administrations has a role in the specific, subsequent project. Given the broad focus of analysis for this Program EIR/EIS, the primary goal for project-level analysis would be to identify Section 4(f) and 6(f) resources and potential impacts in greater detail, to identify the existence of potential prudent and feasible alternatives, and to identify and analyze potential mitigation measures.

The following items would be included in the Section 4(f) and 6(f) evaluations at the project level.

- Detailed physical descriptions of a specific portion of the proposed Rail Improvements alignments (including plans and profiles).
- Updated list of all Section 4(f) and 6(f) recreation resources in proximity to the proposed alignment centerlines and project components, using the most recent mapping available such as annually updated Thomas Bros. maps, general plans, state Web sites, local jurisdiction Web sites, etc.
- Updated list of NRHP-listed and NRHP-eligible cultural resources. As part of detailed cultural resources studies required for project-level environmental review (see Section 3.10.7), all previously identified potentially eligible resources would be further evaluated to determine NRHP eligibility. NRHP-eligible resources would be carried forward to the project-level Section 4(f) and 6(f) evaluation. Field reconnaissance would be needed to complete the required Section 4(f) inventory sheets.

- List of the CRHR-listed and eligible resources and field reconnaissance to provide a complete inventory and description of these resources.
- Descriptions of uses and functions of each Section 4(f) and 6(f) resource, including location map; size; services and facilities; annual patronage; unique qualities; relationship to other lands in the project vicinity; owner/operator; other relevant information regarding the resource; and explanation of the significance of the properties as determined by federal, state, regional, or local officials with jurisdiction over the resource.
- Detailed descriptions of the proposed uses of and potential impacts on Section 4(f) and 6(f) resources and of the methods used to identify them. Specific potential impacts on each resource would be identified, including proximity impacts as a result of impacts on ambient noise, air quality, transportation, and visual resources.
- Applicability of the de minimis finding would be evaluated for proposed uses and potential impacts on Section 4(f) and 6(f) resources.
- Identification and refinement of strategies to avoid or minimize use of and impacts on Section 4(f) and 6(f) resources by narrowing rights-of-way/disturbance limits, realigning/relocating project features, and developing other alignment adjustments. These strategies would analyze, as appropriate, the technical feasibility, including cost estimates with figures showing percentage differences in total project costs, possibility of community or ecosystem disruption, and other potential significant adverse environmental impacts of each alternative; and show the financial, social, or ecological costs or potential adverse environmental impacts of each alternative, as well as unique problems and extraordinary magnitudes of impacts.
- Documentation of consultation with the affected local jurisdictions and owners/operators of the identified Section 4(f) and 6(f) resources. This would include documentation of concurrence or efforts to obtain concurrence from the public official or officials having jurisdiction over the Section 4(f) and 6(f) resources and documentation of the planning to minimize harm to the affected resources. Documentation would include input from the public or efforts to obtain input from the public on effects to recreational or wildlife refuge resources as well as documentation that consulting parties were involved in the findings of effect for historic resources. (Refer to Chapter 8, *Persons and Organizations Contacted*, for additional discussion of these consultations.) In addition to the mitigation proposed, the Section 4(f) and 6(f) evaluation should document the National Park Service's tentative position relative to any proposed Section 6(f) conversion and should address the need for replacement lands under federal and California law (Federal Highway Administration 1987).



### 3.15 GROWTH INDUCEMENT

Transportation investments can lead to reduced travel time or cost, improved accessibility within or among regions, or reduced accidents or air pollution. These effects contribute to economic growth by allowing time and money previously spent on travel to be used for other purposes, attracting businesses and residents to places with increased accessibility or improved quality of life, and reducing overall costs to society. The population and employment growth that result comprise the *growth-inducing effects* of transportation investments. This growth can contribute to additional impacts beyond those directly attributable to the changes in the transportation system. These effects are known as *indirect effects*.

CEQA requires that the growth-inducing impact of a proposed project be discussed in the EIR. CEQA Guidelines (§15126) state that the EIR shall "...discuss the ways in which the proposed project could foster economic or population growth, or the construction of additional housing, either directly or indirectly, in the surrounding environment."

This section addresses the potential for growth inducement and related impacts from the No-Project Alternative and from the construction and operation of the proposed Rail Improvements Alternative.

#### 3.15.1 No-Project Alternative

The No-Project Alternative would not have any growth-inducing impacts on the LOSSAN region. The highway and rail improvement projects that are programmed to be completed by 2020 under the No-Project Alternative would help to accommodate existing and projected travel demands rising out of the population growth over the next 20 years.

#### 3.15.2 Rail Improvements Alternative

##### A. OPERATIONAL IMPACTS

The proposed Rail Improvements Alternative would not introduce a new rail corridor into the region. Based on population and employment forecasts for the LOSSAN region<sup>1</sup>, the number of passenger trains in the LOSSAN corridor is projected to nearly double between 2005 and 2020, increasing from an average of about 70 trains per weekday in 2005 to about 125 trains per weekday in 2020 without the proposed Rail Improvements. During this same time period, freight trains in the corridor are projected to increase from approximately 45 to 98 per day between Union Station and Fullerton (then traveling east out of the LOSSAN region), with approximately 6 per day between Fullerton and San Diego<sup>2</sup>. Under the Rail Improvements Alternative, passenger trains would increase approximately 10% over the No-Project levels, and freight trains south of Fullerton would double.

The increases in passenger and freight trains on the LOSSAN corridor are projected to occur as a result of increased population and employment in the region. The population in the LOSSAN region (defined as Los Angeles, Orange, and San Diego counties) is

<sup>1</sup> Amtrak 2020 projections based on Amtrak "California Passenger Rail Plan System 20 Year Improvement Plan" (2007); Metrolink 2020 projections based on SCRRA 30 year Strategic Plan (2000); NCTD 2020 projections based on SANDAG Regional Transportation Plan (2003).

<sup>2</sup> BNSF 2020 projections based on LAEDC Growth Rate Projections, July 2002 for the LA to Fullerton Segment; SANDAG 2020 population and employment forecasts for the Oceanside to San Diego Segment.

projected to increase 23 percent between 2000 and 2020, from 13.8 million to 18.6 million (SCAG 2001; SANDAG 2002). The growth of the region, and the resultant increased demand for passenger and freight service, would occur with or without the proposed rail improvements. Therefore, the Rail Improvements Alternative would not create growth, and would not have any discernible effect on projected growth in the LOSSAN region. The project would help to accommodate the existing and projected intercity travel demand between Los Angeles and San Diego by increasing the capacity and reliability of the existing rail service.

Implementation of the Rail Improvements Alternative could have some localized effects on the type of development that may occur around station areas. The majority of stations along the LOSSAN corridor would remain in their existing location, with only parking expansion proposed as part of the Rail Improvements Alternative. At those stations, there would not be any change in the type of surrounding development, and a change in the density of development is not likely because the station areas are already developed or would be developed according to local land use plans.

There are several stations that could be added to the system as part of certain rail improvement alignment options. These include potential new stations in San Juan Capistrano (Trabuco Creek option only), San Clemente, and University Towne Centre (Miramar Tunnel option only). These potential station sites are in developed, mixed-use commercial/residential areas. The presence of a new rail station could increase the rate of development, or change the types of establishments that develop. Overall, the impacts of such changes would be small, given the existing and planned land uses in these suburban areas.

There would be incremental growth in the number of railroad employees for operations and maintenance between now and 2020. This growth would be caused by the projected increase in train traffic along the LOSSAN corridor, and would not be substantively attributable to the proposed rail improvements. It is reasonable to expect that the additional employees would be drawn from regional employment pool, and would not cause an influx of workers that would require additional housing or public services.

## B. CONSTRUCTION IMPACTS

The Rail Improvements Alternative would be implemented incrementally over the next 20 years. The construction period for any particular improvement project could vary from approximately one year or less (for short distances of at-grade double tracking) to multiple years (for long tunnels). Because individual projects within the corridor would be phased, it is expected that each construction effort would be of a size allowing workers to be readily drawn from the available regional work force. It is unlikely that any phase would require an influx of workers from outside the region, so no increase in housing or public services would be required to accommodate the work force. No significant growth in employment is expected to result from construction of the proposed project.

### 3.15.3 Mitigation

Based on the above analysis, the Rail Improvements Alternative is not anticipated to have a significant growth-inducing impact on the LOSSAN region or in localized areas. Some growth-

related impacts may occur on a local level around expanded or new stations. Mitigation is expected to reduce these impacts.

For potential impacts around stations, particularly new stations associated with some alignment options as described above, new station development will be coordinated early in project-level reviews with local jurisdictions. This will ensure that land use plans and controls can be revised and implemented in conjunction with any new station development.

### **3.15.4 Subsequent Analysis**

During project-level reviews, localized studies will be conducted around proposed new station sites and local jurisdictions will be consulted. Context-sensitive station designs will be developed and public and agency input will help to refine those designs and provide consistency with applicable land use plans. Stations will be designed to maximize inter-modal traffic and transfers, and reduce congestion in and around the station areas.

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### 3.16 CUMULATIVE IMPACTS EVALUATION

This section describes the potential cumulative impacts of the No-Project and Rail Improvements Alternatives in the study area analyzed in this Program EIR/EIS. As provided for in CEQA and NEPA for program documents, this Program EIR/EIS generally analyzes broad environmental effects of the alternatives. Project-level environmental review will be required for implementation of the various elements of the program. The level of analysis in this PEIR/EIS is consistent with the level of detail of the program; for subsequent approvals, where more detailed environmental studies and advanced design of the rail alignment options are completed, more detail regarding the impacts and mitigation measures will be identified in subsequent CEQA and NEPA reviews. The cumulative impact analysis for this Program EIR/EIS, therefore, follows this basic tenet – cumulative impacts are analyzed at a broad, landscape-level of detail because of the general nature of the program description. Consideration of local area cumulative effects, including specific urban development, or those relevant to a specific project will be undertaken as part of future project level environmental reviews.

#### 3.16.1 Regulatory Requirements and Methods of Evaluation

Cumulative impacts can result from individually minor but collectively significant impacts of all projects/actions in the study area taking place over a period of time. Cumulative impacts include direct and indirect effects of proposed projects/actions that result from incremental impacts of the proposed project/action added to the impacts of other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable projects/actions, regardless of what agency or person undertakes such projects or actions (40 C.F.R. § 1508.8; 14 C.C.R. § 15130).

The term *cumulative impact* refers to “two or more individual effects which, when considered together, are considerable or which compound or increase other environmental impacts” (CEQA Guidelines § 15355). As defined by the State of California, cumulative impacts reflect “...the change in the environment which results from the incremental impact of the project when added to other closely related past, present, and reasonably foreseeable probable future projects. Cumulative impacts can result from individually minor but collectively significant projects taking place over a period of time” (CEQA Guidelines, Sec. 15355[b]). This is consistent with NEPA’s use of the term (see CEQ NEPA regulations, 40 CFR 1508.7). The President’s Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) guidance on cumulative impacts further recognizes two categories of cumulative impacts: those that represent the additive effect of repeated activities taking place as part of a single proposed undertaking, and those that represent the combined effect of activities taking place under more than one proposed undertaking (Council on Environmental Quality Guidance Regarding Cumulative Effects, January 1997). CEQA requires the lead agency to identify projects and programs related to the undertaking being analyzed and evaluate the combined (cumulative) effects of those related projects on the environment. If any cumulative impacts are identified as significant, the lead agency must then assess the degree to which the proposed undertaking would contribute to those impacts, and identify ways of avoiding or reducing any contribution evaluated as “cumulatively considerable” (CEQA Guidelines Sec. 15130[b]). CEQ’s cumulative impact guidance similarly directs lead agencies to restrict analysis of cumulative impacts to those that are meaningful (Council on Environmental Quality 1997).

Although both CEQA and NEPA include the requirement to consider “past projects” when addressing cumulative impacts, recent CEQ guidance discounts the value of this assessment of

past projects, directing that relevance of addressing past projects relates to the “concise description of the identifiable present effects” (CEQ June 24, 2005 Memorandum).

Under CEQA, lead agencies may use a “list” approach to identify related projects for analysis, or may base the identification of cumulative impacts on a summary of “projections” in an adopted general plan or related planning document. CEQ’s guidance is consistent with CEQA’s approach and offers additional strategies to identify cumulative impacts requiring analysis, such as: input from questionnaires, interviews, and panels; use of analytical tools such as checklists, matrices, and system diagrams; modeling and trends analysis; and for resources where spatial relationships are important, GIS analysis. In this Program EIS/EIR, both the list and projections approaches have been adapted and used. This analysis focuses on the resources potentially affected by the proposed action and the No Action Alternative and identifies where there may be impacts to these resources, when considering past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions.

The impact analysis focuses on other broad, regional past, present and probable future projects, primarily other highway improvements and transit projects within the study area and within the same areas of potential effect evaluated for the Rail Improvements conceptual alignment options. Information was used from existing environmental documents completed for regional transportation plans that include the highway and rail improvement projects approved for future implementation under the No-Project Alternative and projections made in the state implementation plan for air quality. The list of these projects is included in Chapter 2, *Alternatives*, in Table 2.4.2-1.

This cumulative impacts section also addresses other projects within the study area and within the same areas of potential effect evaluated for the specific corridors included as part of the No-Project and Rail Improvement Alternative alignments. The major projects within the study area are described in the following sections; a list of other highway and transit projects is provided in Appendix 3.16-A. Additionally, because of the sensitivity of the coastal lagoons in northern San Diego County, this analysis considers current and planned lagoon restoration and enhancement plans and programs. There also are a number of Natural Community Conservation Plans (NCCPs) and Habitat Conservation Plans (HCPs) in place and pending in the study area (refer to Biological Resources and Wetlands, Section 3.13.2.C). While a detailed analysis of these numerous plans is not part of this program-level evaluation, the general goals and objectives of these plans are addressed in this section, and also help to frame future, project-level studies (see Section 3.17, Next Steps in the Project Development Process).

While other project actions may be likely to occur in the study area by 2020, this PEIR/EIS analyzes the broad environmental issues based on the program definition and the regional cumulative impacts and, therefore, does not consider the more localized cumulative issues related to subsequent approvals.

The cumulative impact analysis for each resource identifies whether there is a significant cumulative impact under the No-Project Alternative, if the Rail Improvements Alternative would have a considerable contribution to cumulative impacts, and the availability of mitigation measures at the program level to avoid, minimize, or compensate for the cumulative impact. However, specific analysis of localized impacts and related cumulative impacts, as well as mitigation related to these cumulative impacts that could occur for subsequent project approvals, will need to be addressed through project-level CEQA and NEPA compliance.



A summary of past, present, and reasonably foreseeable projects is provided below, followed by a discussion of potential cumulative impacts for each environmental resource.

### 3.16.2 Summary of Past, Present, and Foreseeable Actions

#### A. Past and Present Actions

The primary past and present projects evaluated in the cumulative impacts analysis include those along the Interstate 5 (I-5) corridor, the existing LOSSAN rail corridor, and habitat restoration projects in the northern San Diego County lagoon area. (In addition to projects described in this section, see Tables 2.4.2-1 and 2.4.2-2 in Chapter 2, *Alternatives*, for a list of programmed projects considered under the No-Project Alternative.)

I-5 parallels the LOSSAN rail corridor for the majority of the corridor from Union Station to Santa Fe Depot. The Interstate has six general-purpose lanes between LA Union Station to the vicinity of Anaheim Transportation Center. It is ten lanes from Anaheim to near the Irvine Transportation Center, and then decreases to eight or six general-purpose lanes going south to near Santa Fe Depot in San Diego.

The existing number of rail tracks in the LOSSAN corridor is shown in Table 3.16-1 by segment.

**Table 3.16-1  
Rail Corridor Segments**

<b>LOSSAN Corridor Segment</b>	<b>Existing Number of Tracks</b>
Union Station to Commerce	3
Commerce to Fullerton	3
Fullerton to Irvine	1
Irvine to San Juan Capistrano	2
San Juan Capistrano	1
Dana Point to San Clemente	1
Camp Pendleton	2 except 6 miles of 1 track
Oceanside to Santa Fe Depot	1

Both I-5 and the LOSSAN rail corridor currently cross six coastal lagoons in northern San Diego County. The embankments for both the rail and highway infrastructure across these lagoons have had detrimental effects on the hydrology in the lagoons. When the rail corridor across the lagoons was originally established, the tracks were typically built on an earth-fill embankment. A relatively short bridge allowed for water to pass under the tracks, but the embankment reduced the degree of water circulation in the lagoon, affecting tidal flushing. After the railroad was constructed, the highway was constructed nearly parallel to the railroad tracks. In most of these lagoons, the highway was also built on an earth-fill embankment, with a bridge opening in line with the railroad bridge opening. The combination of these embankments have the potential to act as a dam, slowing lagoon flow on its way to the ocean and raising flood water levels in the lagoons.

The lagoons and their associated wetlands and habitats are increasingly under duress in most cases, due to development pressure, impaired water quality, and reduced tidal flow. These conditions are being addressed through a number of restoration and enhancement plans and projects, which may slow or reverse declines and increase the health of these areas and the diversity of species and habitat available.

Table 3.16-2 and Figure 3.16-1 show the proximity of the rail corridor and the I-5 corridor across the six lagoons. This information is relevant to the discussion in Section 3.16.3 regarding potential cumulative impacts and coordination opportunities presented by the possible coincidence of I-5 and LOSSAN corridor construction.

**Table 3.16-2**  
**Proximity of Interstate 5 and the LOSSAN Rail Corridor Across Lagoons**

Lagoon	Largest Distance Between Corridors Feet (Meters)	Smallest Distance Between Corridors Feet (Meters)	Average Distance Between Corridors Feet (Meters)
Buena Vista	3,630 ft (1,106 m)	3,369 ft (1,027m)	3,451 ft (1,052 m)
Agua Hedionda	1,223 ft (373 m)	653 ft 199 m	779 ft (237 m)
Batiquitos	2,484 feet (757 m)	2,396 ft (730 m)	2,430 ft (741 m)
San Elijo	4,977ft (1,517 m)	2,713ft (827 m)	3,552 ft (1,083 m)
San Dieguito	6,024 ft (1,836 m)	4,190 ft (1,277 m)	4,706 ft (1,434 m)
Los Peñasquitos	5,416 ft (1,651m)	108 ft (333 m)	2,116 ft (645 m)

Three of the lagoons have undertaken habitat restoration projects that have recently been completed and are in the monitoring phase. These are briefly described below, to better characterize existing conditions.

**Agua Hedionda Lagoon:** The Agua Hedionda Lagoon is unique among San Diego County lagoons because both recreational and commercial uses are permitted. This lagoon is a healthy tidal body, with a large wetland area supporting several endangered species. The entire 400-acre lagoon, created in 1954, was completely re-dredged in 1998/1999 to an average depth of 8 to 11 feet, significantly increasing tidal flushing. An extensive eelgrass planting program was initiated after the dredging, resulting in additional marine nursery areas. In 2000, CDFG acquired 186 acres of wetlands located at the eastern end of the lagoon for an Ecological Reserve.

The watershed is drained by the Agua Hedionda and Macario Creeks and is a component of the Carlsbad Hydrologic Unit. The creeks are normally a trickle in the summer, but become sources of storm water runoff from continuing residential and commercial development. The lagoon and wetlands form a major element of Carlsbad's Habitat Management Program and are connected by corridors to other elements of the program. The wetlands and surrounding slopes of coastal sage scrub provide habitat for sensitive species including the California gnatcatcher, least Bell's vireo, light-footed Clapper rail, and others.



Source : Caltrans, District 11



**FIGURE 3.16-1 Existing Conditions of Interstate 5 and LOSSAN Rail Corridor**

LOSSAN Rail Corridor Improvements  
Program Environmental Impact Report / Environmental Impact Statement



Batiquitos Lagoon Restoration Project: The purpose of the Batiquitos Lagoon Enhancement Project was to permanently restore tidal influence to the lagoon while protecting important habitat. The subtidal and intertidal areas of the lagoon were used to mitigate the loss of habitat in the Outer Los Angeles Harbor, for the Port of Los Angeles. As part of a 1987 interagency agreement, the CFDG was identified as the long-term manager of the lagoon as an ecological reserve. A number of studies, including hydrological studies, pre-restoration surveys of plant, fish and wildlife species, and historic resources, were done to establish baseline data against which to measure long-term development and success of restoration efforts. After the approvals of the 1990 EIR/EIS, final design and permitting were completed and construction began in 1994. The project, completed in 1996, included a rock tidal inlet structure to allow uninterrupted tidal flushing; dredging to create habitats and maintain an open inlet; replacement of two highway bridges (Old Coast Highway); and scour protection for the I-5 and LOSSAN rail corridor that cross the lagoon.

A 10-year monitoring program was developed for the lagoon, with several goals ranging from verification of mitigation acreage to documenting resource changes for application in future restoration programs.

Los Peñasquitos Lagoon: Los Peñasquitos Lagoon is a relatively small estuary (380.54 acres; 154 hectares) in northern San Diego County. Historic evidence indicates it may have once remained open to the sea year-round. However, increased erosion and the resultant sediment loads due to past agriculture and grazing, combined with railroad line construction across the lagoon in 1925, reduced the lagoon's tidal prism and cut off many tidal channels. A pattern of seasonal mouth closure emerged that was exacerbated by coastal highway construction in 1932-3. In the 1960s, dumping of treated effluent containing nitrates and phosphates from upstream sewage treatment facilities increased, and contributed to algal growth in lagoon waters, leading to the depletion of dissolved oxygen and hypoxic conditions.

The Los Peñasquitos Lagoon Enhancement Plan was developed in 1985 by the California Coastal Conservancy to deal with these problems, with partial funding provided by local developers and homeowners associations. A management program was formulated for the lagoon which called for the monitoring of channel water quality and the mechanical opening of the mouth before water quality became low enough to kill channel organisms. As part of the Lagoon management program, the Pacific Estuarine Research Laboratory (PERL), based at San Diego State University, was contracted to monitor lagoon resources and use the data in its studies of regional wetland ecosystems. PERL has monitored the physical and chemical characteristics of Los Peñasquitos Lagoon channel water since 1987, and sampled benthic invertebrates, fish, and salt marsh vegetation since 1988. These studies have led to the timely opening of the mouth and an increase in knowledge concerning the biology of southern California's estuaries.

The planned restoration program has proceeded so that tidal action approaches the stated goals, with more extensive work projected into the future. Wetland acquisition has been achieved through state purchase of the more than 200 acres (80.94 hectares) of former San Diego Gas & Electric utility land which encompasses major lagoon channels into Torrey Pines State Reserve. Other additions to the south include approximately 20 acres (8.09 hectares) of wetlands in Sorrento Valley. Stewardship has been accepted for the 22 acre (8.90 hectare) open space easement that extends

from the Torrey Pines Extension to the lagoon below, south of Carmel Valley Road. The Los Peñasquitos Lagoon Foundation continues in its main function which is to keep the lagoon mouth open, monitor physical changes, restore habitat, and improve channel circulation.

## B. Foreseeable Future Actions

The major, relevant projects considered herein are both habitat restoration and transportation related (i.e., highway and rail transit improvements). The transportation related projects are based on planned improvements that are included as part of the fiscally unconstrained (not programmed at present) portion of the regional transportation plans for each region in the study area. Table 3.16-3 lists the major projects identified for consideration in this analysis. These projects are briefly described below to provide additional information relevant to the assessment of existing conditions and potential cumulative impacts in the study area.

**Table 3.16-3  
Major Projects Identified for Consideration in Cumulative Impact Analysis**

Project Name	Project Description	Project Status
I-5/805 Merge Widening	Widen Freeway and Bridges	In construction, estimated completion 2007.
North Coast I-5 Corridor	North Coast I-5 Corridor Widening	Environmental documentation stage, estimated completion 2016.
I-5/SR 78 Freeway Connectors	Freeway Connectors	Planning stage, completion date to be determined.
CA High Speed Train	High Speed Train Corridors in San Diego along I-15 corridor, and in Los Angeles to Anaheim or Irvine along LOSSAN corridor.	Project-level environmental documentation and preliminary engineering beginning in early 2007; estimated system completion 2020.
Three Double-Track Rail Projects on LOSSAN Corridor	San Mateo Creek Bridge and Double-Track Project; Pulgas to San Onofre Double-Track Project; San Luis Rey River Bridge Replacement and Double-Track Project	Programmatic Biological Opinion issued 2005; re-initiation required for final effects and incidental take determinations.
Foothills South Corridor	Extend the existing Foothills Transportation Corridor from Oso Parkway to I-5 near the Orange County/San Diego County boundary or at an intermediate point at an intersecting arterial road.	Final Subsequent EIR certified February 2006
San Dieguito Lagoon	San Dieguito Lagoon Wetland Restoration Project – San Dieguito Joint Powers Authority and Southern California Edison	Final engineering design prepared for submittal to regulatory agencies for permits. Construction to begin late 2006; coastal permit pending.
San Elijo Lagoon	San Elijo Lagoon Restoration Feasibility Study – San Elijo Lagoon Conservancy	Draft EIR ready for public review in mid 2007.
Buena Vista Lagoon	Buena Vista Lagoon Restoration Project – Buena Vista Lagoon Foundation	Restoration Feasibility Analysis completed. Permits in progress



I-5/805 Merge Widening: The Interstate 5/Interstate 805 widening project, currently in progress, involves constructing a separate freeway bypass system from the junction of Interstates 5 and 805 to the Del Mar Heights Road Interchange. The project also includes construction of a diamond interchange at Carmel Mountain Road. The average daily traffic volume within the project limits has more than doubled during the past 15 years, increasing dramatically from 75,000 vehicles per day to 261,000 vehicles per day. Also during this time frame, this section of freeway has reached its capacity of 2,100 vehicles per lane per hour during peak periods. Traffic projections for the year 2015 indicate volumes will be close to doubling today's figure. Project goals include: (1) reducing traffic congestion through the corridor; (2) improving safety by separating truck traffic; and (3) improving access to SR-56 and local roadway systems.

The involved partners are California Department of Transportation, District 11, the San Diego Association of Governments, and the City of San Diego. Construction started March 2002, and is anticipated to be completed in late 2007.

North Coast I-5 Corridor Project: The Department and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) are preparing a draft Environmental Impact Report/Statement (EIR/EIS) for the North Coast I-5 Corridor Project located in northern coastal San Diego County. The project proposes construction of carpool/managed lanes in each direction from north of Mira Mesa Blvd on I-805 to I-5 in the City of San Diego, and on I-5 from north of La Jolla Village Drive in San Diego to Harbor Drive in the City of Oceanside. The project also proposes additional general purpose lanes on I-5 from south of Via de la Valle in San Diego to SR 78 in Oceanside, and construction of Direct Access Ramps (DARs) and auxiliary lanes at various locations. The project goals include: (1) reduction of current and future traffic congestion on I-5 in the North San Diego area; (2) increased traffic capacity and long range improvements for the enhancement of I-5; (3) provision of High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) / Managed Lanes to enhance mobility for carpools and buses; (4) enhanced goods movement between Mexico, San Diego, and the Los Angeles area; and (5) minimization of environmental impacts while enhancing corridor scenic values and community character. (See also Section 2.4 for additional detail on this proposed project.)

Preliminary engineering and environmental studies are underway. Environmental studies are expected to be completed in 2007, with a Draft EIR/EIS anticipated in late 2007. Construction could begin in 2009. This project coincides with the Rail Improvements Alternative alignments through the lagoon environments in northern San Diego County, presenting a potential for significant, cumulative impacts of concurrent infrastructure construction, but also opportunities for coordination and collaboration that may reduce impacts and result in beneficial long-term enhancement of the lagoons (see further discussion later in this section). The project description in the Notice of Preparation for the project states that, "Alternatives will be examined at the lagoon locations. At each lagoon, it is anticipated that an alternative to remove all or part of existing fill and the placement of a structure will be examined."

I-5/SR 78 Freeway Connectors: This project will add two freeway connectors at the interchange of I-5 and State Route 78. These connectors will reduce traffic congestion, improve the transitions from southbound I-5 to eastbound SR 78 and from westbound SR 78 to southbound I-5, and reduce peak period travel times through the interchange. It is designed to complement the planned managed-lane improvements on I-5 and SR 78. In addition, the project will add auxiliary lanes on I-5, north and south of the

interchange, as well as on SR 78 east of I-5 to provide a weave area for entering and exiting traffic. Currently, during the peak commute periods, the traffic volumes approaching the interchange exceed the capacity of the existing connectors, causing congestion on both freeways.

The preliminary engineering and environmental work is set to begin as soon as funds are available. The proposed project crosses Buena Vista Lagoon, where special design and construction considerations will be required. Early identification of biological issues associated with the project will occur as part of the overall I-5 North Coast project.

California High Speed Train: The California High Speed Rail Authority (Authority) proposes a high-speed train system for inter-city travel in California between the major metropolitan centers of Sacramento and the San Francisco Bay Area in the north, through the Central Valley, to Los Angeles and San Diego in the south, for a distance of about 700 miles. The electrically powered system would be capable of speeds in excess of 200 mph (320 kph) on dedicated, fully grade-separated tracks. The high-speed train system is projected to carry a million passengers annually by the year 2020. The Authority certified the Program EIR in November, 2005 and the FRA issued its Record of Decision. An additional program-level environmental review related to a section in Northern California was initiated in 2005. Project-level environmental studies and preliminary engineering work was initiated on several segments in 2007.

The segments of the proposed high-speed train system relevant to this cumulative impacts analysis are those from Los Angeles south to San Diego. In southern California, the proposed high-speed train corridor runs from LA Union Station to San Diego via the Inland Empire (through Riverside) along the I-15 corridor. The California High-Speed Rail Authority's preferred alignment option for the Los Angeles to San Diego portion of the proposed High Speed Train system would use the LOSSAN right-of-way between station stops at University City (University Towne Centre) and downtown San Diego. In addition, a high speed train corridor is proposed between L.A. Union Station and Orange County (to either Anaheim or Irvine) possibly sharing tracks (at reduced speeds) with other passenger rail service in the LOSSAN Corridor.

Double-Track Rail Projects on LOSSAN Corridor: Six double-track projects within the LOSSAN Corridor, between the Orange County border and just north of the Buena Vista Lagoon in south Oceanside, were proposed between 2002 and 2004 (separate from this LOSSAN Corridor Rail Improvements Program), and were addressed in a Programmatic Biological Opinion issued by the USFWS in September, 2005. The purpose of these projects is to perform needed repairs and complete double-tracking across Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton (MCBCP) and through the City of Oceanside.

Three of the projects are completed or underway (O'Neil to Flores, Santa Margarita Bridge, and Oceanside Passing Track Extension). The other three were addressed programmatically in the Biological Opinion, and are under final development. These include the San Mateo Creek Bridge and Double-Track, the Pulgas to San Onofre Double-Track, and the San Luis Rey River Bridge Replacement and Double-Track projects. The Biological Opinion provides information on habitat, species, and conservation and mitigation measures that will help to inform the future project-level studies for the additional proposed Rail Improvements between Orange/San Diego County line and Oceanside.

Foothills South - South Orange County Transportation Infrastructure Improvement Project (SOCTIIP): The SOCTIIP proposes to extend the existing Foothills Transportation Corridor (FTC or SR 241; also referred to as FTC-North) from Oso Parkway to I-5 near the Orange County/San Diego County. The Preferred Alternative would consist four lanes initially and six lanes ultimately (after 2025). The Subsequent EIR was certified by the Foothill/Eastern Transportation Corridor Agency (TCA) in February 2006. TCA anticipates seeking permits only for the initial phase of construction. Construction is expected to take from 30 to 42 months; no expected construction-start date has been proposed to date.

Buena Vista Lagoon Restoration Project: In 1996, the Buena Vista Lagoon Strategic Plan was created by members of the Joint Powers Committee, representatives from Carlsbad, Oceanside and Vista, officials from the California State Coastal Conservancy, Coastal Commission, California Fish and Game, U.S. Fish and Wildlife, and the Army Corps of Engineers, all of whom play an active role in the preservation, protection, and enhancement of the lagoon's resources. This Strategic Plan helps guide the planning and implementation actions for the lagoon. The Buena Vista Lagoon Foundation cooperated with the Southern California Wetlands Recovery Network to propose a Restoration Feasibility Analysis, which would outline alternatives for the future of the Buena Vista Lagoon. In February 2001, the Buena Vista Lagoon Foundation received a grant from the California State Coastal Conservancy to conduct this study. The primary objective of the Study was to provide the information for decision makers to select which hydraulic regime to pursue in the development of subsequent restoration plans and the associated lagoon Land Management Plan.

A range of alternatives was developed to present potential restoration alternatives, including a no action alternative identifying the habitat value and impacts that might occur if no restoration action is taken within the near future. The action alternatives examine three different hydraulic regimes – saltwater, freshwater, or mixed water, examining biological and sociological factors. The findings of the report were presented at a public meeting on April 8, 2004. Restoration alternatives are now under discussion. The Foundation will seek other grant funds and/or agency contributions or in-kind services to begin implementation of the plan once a specific project is proposed.

San Elijo Lagoon – Restoration Feasibility Study: The purpose of the San Elijo Lagoon Restoration Feasibility Study is to provide a basis for deciding among different land management alternatives within the San Elijo Lagoon Ecological Reserve and to evaluate alternative actions to restore the habitat functions and values of the lagoon. The types of actions envisioned to help meet the goals and objectives of the Restoration Feasibility Study include dredging of channels; increasing tidal circulation; reducing sediment inputs to the lagoon; improving water and habitat quality; and removing invasive/exotic plant species.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Los Angeles District is the federal lead agency for the Encinitas and Solana Beach Shoreline Feasibility Study that was authorized in 1993 by a resolution of the House Public Works and Transportation Committee. In September 1999, funds were provided to conduct the reconnaissance phase of the coastal bluff erosion problem at the Cities of Encinitas and Solana Beach including investigating opportunities for the ecosystem restoration of San Elijo Lagoon, potentially using sediments from the lagoon to provide toe protection for the coastal bluffs. The lagoon restoration and shoreline protection investigations were joined in one feasibility study to

facilitate this potential beneficial re-use of lagoon sediment for beach nourishment. The San Elijo Lagoon Ecological Reserve, which is approximately 1,000 acres (404.69 hectares), is collectively owned and managed by the State of California (managed by the CDFG), County of San Diego, and the San Elijo Lagoon Conservancy (SELC). SELC plays an active role in evaluating and designing the alternatives for the project.

The objective of the project is to formulate and evaluate an array of feasible alternatives and recommend the one that most effectively improves environmental conditions in the lagoon while complying with local, state, and Federal environmental laws and regulations. A Draft Environmental Impact Report concerning the feasibility study is expected for release in early 2007.

San Dieguito Lagoon – Wetland Restoration Project: This wetland restoration project will implement tidal wetland restoration at the San Dieguito Lagoon and serve to (1) restore the aquatic functions of the lagoon through permanent inlet maintenance and expansion of the tidal basin; and (2) create subtidal and intertidal habitats on both the east and west sides of I-5.

The project is part of a Park Master Plan that has been adopted for the coastal area that would also provide for non-tidal wetland and upland habitat restoration, and public access. Tidal restoration work would be accomplished primarily by Southern California Edison and partners (SCE), provided the restoration satisfies the conditions of the California Coastal Commission (CCC) permit for the construction and operation of the San Onofre Nuclear Generating Station (SONGS). The San Dieguito River Park Joint Powers Authority (JPA), USFWS, and a variety of state and local agencies would be involved in the implementation of the remainder of the Park Master Plan for the overall project area.

On September 15, 2000, the San Dieguito River Park Board of Directors certified the Final Environmental Impact Report/Statement (FEIR/S) for the San Dieguito Park Master Plan and Wetland Restoration Project, approving the "Mixed Habitat" Alternative. The project includes, but is not limited to, the following elements:

- Tidal inlet maintenance to promote regular tidal exchange through excavation of the river channel and periodic maintenance dredging;
- Excavation of tidal and upland areas to create subtidal and intertidal habitat;
- Creation of seasonal salt marsh and nesting habitat, and restoration of native habitat to non-tidal areas surrounding the wetland project;
- Construction of berms within the river's effective flow area in order to maintain the existing sediment flows within the river and to the beach;
- Dredge disposal sites within the project boundary;

Implementation of the wetland restoration project will require excavation and disposal of approximately 2.3 million cubic yards of dredge material. Some of the excavated material will be used on-site, for construction of the berms and the nesting sites. All beach quality sand that is not used to create the nesting sites will be deposited on the beach. The remaining excavated material will be deposited at various sites within the project area.

Engineering designs were submitted to the Cities of San Diego and Del Mar for review in summer 2004. Before construction on the wetland project can begin, a Coastal Development Permit must be obtained. Construction is expected to begin in late 2007, and take approximately three years to complete.

### 3.16.3 Cumulative Impacts Analysis

The following analysis describes the potential for the Rail Improvements Alternative to contribute to cumulative impacts under each environmental topic. The environmental topics are discussed herein in the same order as they appear in Chapter 3. The No-Project Alternative is mentioned only when there are potential cumulative impacts that would result from not proceeding with the Rail Improvements Alternative (examples: geology and soils, noise). Where the No-Project Alternative would not result in impacts by 2020, or where the existing conditions would not change (or conditions were considered too speculative to feasibly predict for future years), the No-Project Alternative is not addressed. The No-Project Alternative is not addressed in Land Use and Planning, Communities and Neighborhoods, Property, and Environmental Justice; Public Utilities; Hazardous Materials and Wastes; Cultural and Paleontological Resources; Hydrology and Water Resources; Biological Resources and Wetlands, and Section 4(f) and 6(f) Resources (Public Parks and Recreational Resources). Typical construction impacts are described in Section 2.7, and operational impacts were described by resource in previous sections of Chapter 3.

#### A. MULTIPLE PROJECT DEVELOPMENT COORDINATION

Depending on construction and implementation schedules developed for transportation and other projects in the study area, the potential for cumulative impacts to many resources could increase substantially in areas of multiple project development. In particular, there is potential for overlapping development schedules (depending on funding, permitting, and other contingencies) for the Rail Improvements Alternative and (1) the California High Speed Train project from Union Station to Anaheim (or Irvine), and in downtown San Diego; (2) the I-5 North Coast Corridor project in northern San Diego County, including areas of lagoon crossings, coastal cities, and Camp Pendleton; (3) various lagoon and habitat restoration and enhancement projects; and (4) potential extension of the San Diego Trolley service along the existing LOSSAN right-of-way to the University City area (the "Mid-Coast light rail project). The proposed Foothills South project would also overlap with the I-5 widening and interchanges as well as the proposed double-tracking in the area of San Onofre State Beach.

To reduce potential cumulative impacts, efforts should be made to coordinate planning and implementation in overlapping project areas where feasible. If development schedules coincide, or can feasibly be made to coincide, the responsible and affected agencies and entities will have an opportunity to conduct joint development and construction logistics planning. This could include streamlining and coordinating construction activities such that the number and duration of disturbances along the corridor will be minimized. Regardless of actual construction timing (which may not coincide due to funding constraints), there are a number of activities that can be planned jointly among project proponents and resource agencies to reduce impacts and to increase communication regarding the implementation of various projects. It may also be possible to coordinate maintenance activities in some areas where project overlap, and



potentially reduce the amount of equipment traffic in sensitive areas or prevent overlapping applications of herbicides.

Entities involved with the Rail Improvements and the I-5 North Coast Corridor project need to coordinate planning, construction and implementation efforts to the extent feasible, to reduce potential cumulative impacts in the northern San Diego County area. The Department is involved in both projects, and other involved parties may include FHWA, FRA, rail owners and operators, the local cities and the county, and SANDAG. Resource agencies and entities will include USFWS, CDFG, lagoon foundations, EPA, the Coastal Commission, and USCOE, among others. During future, project-specific design and impact assessment efforts, all involved entities should engage in joint planning sessions to (1) evaluate the feasibility of combining at least some construction schedules and activities to minimize disturbance and duration of construction impacts to the public and the natural resources in the coinciding project areas; (2) joint planning and use of construction access roads, staging areas, equipment yards, and other construction-related disturbance zones; (3) evaluate and plan potential joint mitigation measures that all responsible entities can participate in; and (4) develop performance-based (i.e., outcome based) mitigation monitoring plans that all affected entities participate in, to evaluate the effectiveness of mitigation actions and provide a process by which adjustments can be made if needed, based on scientific data collection and evaluation during and after construction.

In the case of lagoon restoration and enhancement projects, these on-going and future efforts can be coordinated with the I-5 and Rail Improvements planning efforts as described above. It may be feasible to develop joint agreements for financial participation in some restoration or enhancement activities in a manner that benefits all affected entities. Goals and objectives of lagoon plans, as well as other habitat conservation plans along the corridor, may serve as the basis of specific mitigation actions, design refinements, and/or construction sequencing and logistics.

In the case of the California High Speed Train, it will be important for the Authority, the Department, affected cities, rail owners and operators, resource agencies and regional transportation authorities to conduct joint planning and reviews of station and rail infrastructure design at points where the projects will co-exist in the future. This coordination should include access, ingress/egress, and circulation patterns. There may also be opportunities to cooperate in any additional, major intersection improvements or street widening in station areas. This coordination will also need to involve the San Diego Trolley extension. It is expected that there is sufficient room within the LOSSAN corridor to accommodate both the trolley line (two tracks) and the rail line, and the High Speed Train would run on its own elevated tracks above the LOSSAN tracks. All involved and affected entities will need to work together to develop specific operational and physical design parameters to avoid conflicts within this complex portion of the rail corridor.

These potential coordination efforts among those involved in future projects could reduce impacts and increase mitigation success for a number of different environmental and public resources. These efforts are referenced below in applicable topic areas where they may be most effective. Joint planning and coordination efforts are also referenced in Section 3.17, *Next Steps in Project Development*.



## B. TRAFFIC AND CIRCULATION AND TRAVEL CONDITIONS

As stated in Chapter 1, *Purpose and Need*, intercity travel in southern California is expected to grow from 36 million trips, in 1997, to more than 47 million trips by 2020, with an estimated 98% of these intercity trips made by automobile within the study area. All but one of the 8 highway segments discussed in Chapter 1 would operate at unacceptable conditions (level of service F) under the No-Project Alternative. The expected increase in the number of autos on the highways by 2020 would also result in significant travel delays and congestion under No-Project, which would have significant potential impacts on the regional and statewide economy and quality of life.

Implementation of the proposed Rail Improvements Alternative would result in a more reliable and safe travel mode option and could help to reduce passenger trips by automobile. This outcome would benefit intercity highways and would potentially reduce travel delays on the affected highways and on surface streets leading to and from intercity highways. Localized traffic conditions around some rail stations would experience a decrease in level of service and some added delays, and transit lines serving the stations areas could experience increases in passengers during peak hours. Although these potential effects could contribute to localized cumulative impacts, they could be mitigated, and any potential contribution to cumulative impacts could be minimized. Site-specific traffic analysis would be part of subsequent project-level evaluation of local impacts around station locations.

Depending on construction and implementation schedules, the potential for cumulative traffic impacts could increase substantially in areas of multiple project development. As described in Section 3.16.3.A above, the California High Speed Rail Authority, the Department, and other involved entities could conduct coordinated reviews of construction and implementation activities and schedules. These could include streamlining and coordinating construction activities such that the number and duration of traffic delays will be minimized, as well as other coordination described previously.

Entities involved with the Rail Improvements and the I-5 North Coast Corridor project also could coordinate planning, construction and implementation efforts to reduce traffic impacts in the northern San Diego County area.

Other mitigation for traffic and travel patterns is outlined in Sections 3.1 and 3.2, and includes Transportation System Management (TSM) / Signal Optimization (including retiming, rephrasing, and signal optimization); possible turn prohibitions, use of one-way streets, and traffic diversion to alternate routes. Major intersection improvements (full lane widening) may also be required to accommodate additional left-turn or through lanes. Traffic management plans would be prepared prior to construction, in coordination with local jurisdictions, to reduce the traffic impacts during construction. In addition, station and access planning would be done in consultation with all responsible local and regional jurisdictions and agencies. Transit-oriented development around existing stations may provide opportunities for coordinated planning of travel ways, parking, and ingress/egress to new or expanded station locations.

## C. AIR QUALITY

The analysis of air quality considers emissions projected by the California Air Resources Board (CARB) for eight criteria pollutants (CO, SO<sub>x</sub>, HC (TOG), NO<sub>x</sub>, O<sub>3</sub>, PM<sub>10</sub>, PM<sub>2.5</sub>, and Pb) in the two air basins potentially affected, and therefore, includes all reasonably

foreseeable project/actions and population growth as part of the No-Project Alternative. The analysis is structured to estimate the potential impacts on the air quality on the local and regional levels in the two air basins directly affected by the project alternatives, South Coast and San Diego County. Overall, the potential impacts of either the No-Project or Rail Improvement Alternative, in combination with the air quality impacts of other highway and rail projects identified for this cumulative impact analysis and those projects considered in the state implementation plan for air quality could contribute to cumulative air quality impacts within the two-basin study area.

As described in Section 3.3, in both air basins  $\text{NO}_x$ , TOG, and CO emissions are decreasing (in some cases dramatically), largely due to cleaner vehicle technology. These trends are expected to continue. Particulate matter, however, is increasing due largely to fugitive dust and re-entrained dust from paved and unpaved roads.

Under the No-Project Alternative, air emissions from locomotive travel in the LOSSAN corridor would increase substantially between now and 2020, due to projected train traffic and based on the maximum threshold of train traffic that could operate in the corridor without the proposed improvements (see Chapter 2 and Section 3.3). Under the No-Project Alternative, locomotive miles in the corridor are projected to increase a total of 62 percent by 2020, with passenger locomotive miles increasing 56 percent and freight by 66 percent. Locomotive emission standards have and will continue to result in lower emissions for all pollutants. However, based on current standards, the No-Project locomotive travel in the corridor would result in significant increases by 2020 for TOG (24%), CO (64%),  $\text{NO}_x$  (15%), PM (21%),  $\text{SO}_x$  (64%), and  $\text{CO}_2$  (64%).

Under the Rail Improvements Alternative, locomotive miles in the corridor would increase 17 percent over No-Project levels. This additional mileage also would increase emissions of all pollutants by 17% over the No-Project Alternative. These additional emissions would potentially cause or contribute to violations of the NAAQS. Calculations for this study estimate that daily significance thresholds in the South Coast air basin for  $\text{NO}_x$  would be exceeded under the Rail Improvements Alternative (see Appendix 3.3-A).

The Rail Improvements Alternative would reduce train congestion and delays along the corridor, and the amount of locomotive idling time associated with delays and bottlenecks. Proposed grade separations would reduce vehicular delays and idling at grade crossings throughout the corridor. These benefits would decrease the cumulative contribution of locomotive and vehicular emissions somewhat along this travel corridor.

Construction of rail improvements would contribute to short-term cumulative PM emissions from construction equipment and fugitive dust. Both air basins are nonattainment for  $\text{PM}_{10}$  so this contribution could be potentially significant. Due to increased concern about diesel particulates, the increase in locomotive travel in the corridor also poses potentially significant increases in these pollutants.

Mitigation measures and cleaner locomotive technologies will combine to reduce the potential increases in pollutants from the Rail Improvement Alternative. These will be especially important for reducing PM in the affected air basins. Cumulative contributions to air pollution from operations can be reduced by installation of diesel particulate filters, fleet turnover to newer technologies, and reduction of idling through infrastructure improvements and automatic anti-idling devices installed on locomotives.

Construction emissions of PM and other pollutants can be managed through timely revegetation of disturbed areas, watering of construction sites, street sweeping, soil stabilization, and restrictions on equipment idling times. In addition, joint construction planning with the I-5 North Coast Corridor Project and the High Speed Train (Section 3.16.3.A) may allow for streamlining construction in a manner that reduces construction durations and associated air quality impacts to local communities.

#### D. NOISE AND VIBRATION

Noise, particularly in growing urban areas and along highway and rail corridors, will continue to increase as population grows and use of highways, rail, and airports increases. Increased train traffic in the corridor under the No-Project Alternative would increase associated noise along the corridor between now and 2020. Nighttime noise may increase substantially, especially between Union Station and Fullerton, because the projected doubling of freight traffic in this segment would likely require increasing numbers of trains to run at night. The No-Project Alternative would also have higher noise impacts at grade crossings than the Rail Improvement Alternative, because of the high noise levels of warning bells and train horns. The No-Project Alternative would not provide grade separations at these crossings, and warning alarms would increase with the increase in train traffic.

The Rail Improvements Alternative has the potential to cause high noise impacts along approximately 20 mi (32 km) of the corridor, between Fullerton and Irvine. These potential impacts, when combined with the potential noise impacts of other highway, roadway, and transit expansion projects in the region, would contribute to localized cumulative noise impacts during operation. This alternative would reduce noise levels at grade crossings by providing grade separation. The elimination of horn and warning bell noise would provide a significant but very localized noise reduction to nearby residential and recreational areas.

Noise mitigation will be examined at the project level to determine efficacy and other impacts (e.g., aesthetic) that may result from infrastructure such as noise walls. Other methods, including earth berms, may also be effective in localized areas to reduce the cumulative contribution to noise from additional, faster train traffic along the corridor.

Construction noise will be localized as construction moves along the corridor, and can be reduced by measures including restricting construction schedules during nighttime and weekends, and limiting haul-truck hours and routes to avoid neighborhoods and recreational or open space uses. Joint planning with the I-5 North Coast Corridor Project may present opportunities for reducing construction-related noise impacts in the north San Diego County area (Section 3.16.3.A). Construction noise impacts associated with in-water work in the lagoons should also be coordinated with restoration projects, to minimize the number of disturbances to the lagoons and the noise impacts of pile driving and dredging activities.

#### E. ENERGY

Energy consumption from the number of locomotives traveling in the LOSSAN corridor would increase approximately 17% over No-Project levels for the Rail Improvements Alternative. This increase would result in consumption of approximately 54,960 more barrels of oil annually than the No-Project Alternative.

The Rail Improvements Alternative would reduce train congestion and delays along the corridor, and the amount of locomotive idling time associated with delays and bottlenecks. Proposed grade separations would reduce vehicular delays and idling at grade crossings throughout the corridor. These benefits would increase fuel efficiency and somewhat reduce the cumulative energy consumption of locomotives and on-road vehicles along this travel corridor. Operational energy consumption would be reduced by reducing grades where possible during final design, and maximizing intermodal transit connections to reduce automobile VMT related to the passenger rail service.

Construction of rail improvements would consume on the order of 14,066 billion Btus. This, along with energy consumed by other transportation and development construction in the region, would potentially represent a significant cumulative use of nonrenewable resources. Construction energy consumption would be reduced through mitigation measures developing and implementing a construction energy conservation plan, using new, more energy-efficient construction equipment, and implementing worker programs for carpooling or using public transportation. Joint construction planning, where feasible, with other area projects (Section 3.16.3.A) may also help streamline construction activities, worker commuting, and construction energy consumption.

#### **F. LAND USE AND PLANNING, COMMUNITIES AND NEIGHBORHOODS, PROPERTY, AND ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE**

The proposed Rail Improvements Alternative would contribute to potential cumulative impacts associated with community and neighborhood cohesion and property loss. Some alignment options would exacerbate existing barrier effects of the LOSSAN rail corridor by double tracking at grade. Combined with other transit (light rail and commuter rail) and roadway projects considered for this cumulative impact analysis, these localized impacts would contribute to cumulative community/neighborhood impacts. Other alignment options would improve existing conditions by removing the barrier with grade separated crossings, below-grade double tracking or tunneling. Under the Rail Improvements Alternative, between about 5 and 7 mi (8 and 11 km) of rail alignment and station improvements (4% to 6% of total alignment distance) has a high potential to impact land uses (new corridor in residential areas), and between 5 and 10 mi (8 and 16 km) of track alignment (4% to 8% of alignment distance) has a medium potential to impact land uses (widening existing corridors in residential and commercial business areas). These impacts, in combination with other transit extension and roadway projects, would contribute to potential cumulative impacts on various property types, neighborhoods, and communities.

In addition to mitigation measures noted in Section 3.6, joint implementation planning with other potential projects (Section 3.16.3.A) may provide opportunities for design refinements around stations or other populated areas that would reduce or avoid barrier effects or neighborhood impacts. Construction activities in the northern San Diego County area, including rail and highway work, could be coordinated to the extent feasible to reduce construction duration and disturbances in and around coastal cities.

#### **G. AESTHETICS AND VISUAL RESOURCES**

The No-Project Alternative would contribute to potential cumulative impacts on aesthetics and visual quality in coastal beach communities and state beaches. The existing rail corridor would remain in beach/coastal bluff areas in the Dana Point/San

Clemente and Del Mar areas, contributing to the cumulative visual impacts to coastal views from residences, beaches, and commercial establishments.

The aesthetic and visual quality analysis focused on potential impacts on visual resources (particularly scenic resources, areas of historic interest, natural open space areas, and significant ecological areas) along the proposed alignments for the Rail Improvements Alternative and around expanded or potential rail station sites. The Rail Improvements Alternative would impact existing visual quality and would contribute to potential cumulative impacts on aesthetics and visual quality throughout the study area for visual resources (0.25 mi [0.40 km] from the centerline of proposed alignment options and around stations).

The proposed Rail Improvements Alternative would contribute to both short- and long-term potential cumulative impacts on visual resources. Construction of the proposed improvements would have short-term potential impacts on visual resources. Construction equipment, staging areas with construction materials, signage, and night lighting would be visible from adjacent properties and roadways during the construction period. The number of years such disruptions would continue could be about 10 to 15 years corridor-wide; however, potentially a few months to two years for most local areas. Thus the Rail Improvement Alternative could contribute to construction-related cumulative impacts on visual resources.

Long-term visual changes would result from: The track, fencing along open trenches, sound walls (if included), elevated structures (where included), and trains themselves that would introduce a linear element into the landscape that would contribute to potential cumulative visual impacts when considered with the strong linear element of the existing highway and transmission lines that the rail corridor parallels. The significance of the visual change would vary by location, depending on the sensitivity of the landscape and the compatibility with existing landscape features.

In a number of locations the Rail Improvements Alternative would present opportunities to improve the existing visual environment with alignment and/or construction options that would either place existing and new rail infrastructure in a tunnel or covered trench, or remove existing rail infrastructure from areas of high scenic value and relocate it in tunnels. Thus, the improvements would contribute to a beneficial cumulative effect when combined with other planned improvements along the coastal landscape.

In addition to mitigation measures described in Section 3.7, joint construction planning with other potential projects (Section 3.16.3.A) could reduce visual impacts and durations of activities such as night lighting, staging and equipment areas, and signage.

## H. PUBLIC UTILITIES

Construction of multiple linear facilities (e.g., highway expansions, rail extensions, pipelines, transmission lines) in the region would potentially contribute to cumulative impacts on public utilities and future land use opportunities because of right-of-way needs and property restrictions associated with these types of improvements. These multiple facilities would place constraints on future development, including future development of public utilities. If the proposed Rail Improvements Alternative is advanced, the next stage of environmental review would emphasize detailed alignment design to avoid potential contribution to cumulative impacts from linear facilities on land use opportunities and to minimize conflicts with existing major fixed public utilities and



supporting infrastructure facilities. The potential for cumulative impacts to public utilities would be minimized because the proposed rail improvements would be within the existing LOSSAN corridor or in deep tunnels for most alignment options. Joint construction planning with other projects along the corridor (Section 3.16.3.A) would also help reduce potential conflicts with utilities, as well as potentially providing opportunities for one-time relocation and/or protection of major utilities.

## **I. HAZARDOUS MATERIALS AND WASTES**

Implementation of the proposed Rail Improvements Alternative would not directly or indirectly generate hazardous materials or wastes. Any hazardous wastes encountered through ground-disturbing activities during construction would be handled and disposed of in accordance with regulatory requirements. Therefore, no cumulative hazardous material impacts would result from the Rail Improvement Alternative in combination with other projects.

## **J. CULTURAL AND PALEONTOLOGICAL RESOURCES**

The proposed Rail Improvement Alternative would contribute to potential cumulative impacts on archaeological resources, historical structures, and paleontological resources in the study region. Potential impacts would likely occur in areas that cross formations with paleontological sensitivity and in areas where the alignment options are within the existing rail corridor through urban areas because the corridor tends to be surrounded by historical structures. Urban transportation corridors also tend to have high sensitivity for prehistoric sites that could be impacted by both at-grade and below-grade (trenched) construction. Subsequent field studies to verify the location of cultural resources would provide opportunities to avoid or minimize direct impacts on resources.

Joint implementation planning with other major projects along the corridor (Section 3.16.3.A) would help to confirm presence of any sensitive areas and resources, and also allow for coordinated protection of those resources during construction. There may also be opportunities to jointly participate in data recovery and curation efforts if required by SHPO prior to construction.

## **K. GEOLOGY AND SOILS**

The No-Project Alternative would contribute to the cumulative slope instability and drainage issues in coastal bluff areas. Continued stabilization measures would need to be taken to ensure reliable rail service along the bluffs.

The Rail Improvements Alternative could impact slope stability in locations of cut and fill. Some construction activities, such as placing fill material on top of a slope or performing additional cuts at the toe of a slope, can decrease the stability of the slope. These activities, when combined with similar activities from other projects in the region, could potentially result in cumulative impacts on slope stability in areas susceptible to slope failure.

Pumping or construction dewatering associated with the Rail Improvements Alternative in segments where tunneling or extensive earthwork would be undertaken would potentially impact the ground surface and could result in subsidence at some locations. This could contribute to cumulative impacts if other projects under construction in the area also needed to dewater from the same drainage basin.



The Rail Improvements Alternative would contribute to a cumulative beneficial impact on the coastal bluffs in San Clemente and Del Mar, where proposed alignment options would remove the existing rail line from the bluffs and place them in a tunnel. This would improve the stability problems with the bluffs, and reduce the need for drainage and slope stabilization structures in these areas.

Joint implementation planning with other projects along the corridor (Section 3.16.3.A) may provide opportunities for streamlined efforts regarding slope and soil stabilization, revegetation, site-specific seismic studies and design refinements, and dewatering during construction.

## **L. HYDROLOGY AND WATER RESOURCES**

The proposed Rail Improvements Alternative would contribute to potential cumulative impacts on hydrologic resources. Depending on the alignment options, between 205 and 315 ac (83 and 127 ha) of floodplains, 11,760 and 13,650 linear ft (3,528 and 4,095 linear m) of streams, and up to 12 ac (5 ha) of lagoons would be within the vicinity of the improvements, and some of these resources would be directly impacted. Groundwater in the California Coastal Basin Aquifer could also be affected in the northern portion of the study area. The amount of impervious surface associated with the rail improvements would be small because the at-grade alignments would consist of permeable track-fill. Improvements within the existing rail corridor or in tunnels would reduce potential hydrologic impacts. Potential cumulative hydrologic impacts could occur in the lagoon areas because of the potential for I-5 widening and rail improvement work to be done, potentially within the same time frame. These waters also have impaired water quality, and additional construction and operational impacts could increase the amount of contamination in these waters.

The existing hydrologic conditions at lagoons in northern San Diego County may be improved by removal of existing embankments or fill with the construction of replacement causeway or open-cell bridge structures. These actions would increase tidal flow and contribute to a cumulative, beneficial effect on these waters. Joint planning with the I-5 North Coast Corridor Project, as well as the lagoon restoration projects, may allow for coordinated bridge design, removal of fill, and demolition activities. It may also allow for all major construction to occur during one time frame, reducing the number of disturbances within and around lagoon environments. This would limit the impacts of sedimentation and turbidity in the lagoons. Even if all construction could not be accomplished in one time frame (due to funding constraints or other issues), there would be opportunities for joint mitigation planning and monitoring, water sampling studies before and after construction, and other such technical studies that may contribute to the overall health of lagoon hydrology. There may also be opportunities for improving the water quality and reducing the future potential for contamination of the lagoon waters. Coordinated planning and design of drainage facilities, catch basins, swales, or other features associated with the infrastructure projects may be possible and could increase the water quality despite additional vehicular and rail traffic in the future.

## **M. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES AND WETLANDS**

The analysis of potential impacts on biological resources and wetlands includes sensitive plant communities, sensitive habitats of concern, special-status species, marine and anadromous fish habitat, riparian corridors, wildlife habitats, wildlife

movement corridors, jurisdictional wetlands, and waters of the U.S. that would require a permit and Section 404b(1) analysis. The additional land required and the linear features added under the Rail Improvements Alternative would contribute to the potential for cumulative impacts on biological resources and wetlands throughout the project area.

The Rail Improvement Alternative would potentially have temporary and permanent, direct and indirect impacts on sensitive biological resources and wetlands and would contribute to potential cumulative impacts on these resources when combined with other foreseeable projects in the study area. Many of the alignment options would use the existing LOSSAN rail corridor or would be in deep tunnels and would therefore not result in direct disturbance of sensitive habitats. Although there is a potential for cumulative impacts on biological resources from increased noise from the collective projects in the area, the information for assessing this potential additive effect is not considered at this program level of analysis and would be addressed when site-specific analysis is completed in a subsequent phase of evaluation.

The additional right-of-way, and surface and sub-surface disturbance associated with the proposed Rail Improvements Alternative would potentially affect up to 28 ac (11 ha) of sensitive vegetation, 12,564 linear ft (3,830 linear m) to 15,541 linear ft (4,737 linear m) of non-wetland jurisdictional waters, 20 to 27 ac (8 to 11 ha) of wetlands, and 36 to 46 special-status species throughout the study area, depending on the alignment options selected.

The Rail Improvements Alternative would generally be located within or adjacent to existing transportation corridors or would be in tunnels or on elevated causeways or bridges through sensitive habitat areas. During project-level environmental review, field studies would be conducted to verify the location, in relation to the proposed rail alignments, of sensitive habitat, wildlife movement corridors, and wetlands. These studies would provide further opportunities to minimize and avoid potential impacts on biological resources through changes to the alignment plan and profile in sensitive areas. For example, the inclusion of design features such as elevated track structures over drainages and wetland areas would minimize potential impacts to wildlife and sensitive species. However, when combined with the potential impacts of other highway, water, and transit projects in the region, the Rail Improvements Alternative would contribute to potentially significant cumulative impacts on biological resources. The potential for cumulative direct and indirect (noise, light, and shadow effects) impacts on biological resources would be of particular concern in the areas of the tidal lagoons in northern San Diego County, where the widening of Interstate 5 would potentially occur in the same time frame and in the same lagoon areas as the proposed Rail Improvement Alternative. There is also potential across Camp Pendleton to affect critical habitat and sensitive species by both the rail improvements and the I-5 project.

Due to continued growth and development throughout the study area, biological resources overall, including wetlands, critical habitat, and surface waters, have been decreasing in abundance and quality over the years. A number of mitigation and restoration projects have increased resources in some areas, and habitat conservation plans are in place or being developed (see Section 3.13) that will help to prevent or slow further degradation.

Joint planning and implementation efforts (as described in Section 3.16.3.A) would reduce the potential for significant cumulative impacts to the lagoons and other areas of important habitat and wildlife movement corridors. In addition to the objectives of joint planning outlined in Section 3.16.3.A, there may be opportunities for streamlining permitting and regulatory requirements. Examples could include programmatic Biological Opinions, joint Section 404 permitting under the Clean Water Act, etc. Joint planning may also help in determining the logical limits of future projects under the Rail Improvements Alternative (see Section 3.17), including whether all lagoon crossings should be combined into one future project (which may be difficult due to funding constraints), or whether that rail segment can be divided into several projects on the basis of some programmatic permitting vehicles to ensure adequate analysis of cumulative impacts.

Lagoon foundations and resource agencies can also be instrumental in helping to develop, implement and streamline mitigation monitoring programs. A performance-based program can be developed that allows flexibility and cooperation from all involved parties to design, fund, implement, and adjust mitigation actions to increase the health of habitat and lagoons, and decrease the potential for cumulative adverse effects now and in the future.

It may be possible to coordinate or combine certain maintenance activities after construction in sensitive areas such as the lagoons. Responsible entities should explore potential for shared maintenance of proximate rights-of-way, potential reductions in the amount of separate maintenance equipment in the same areas, or coordinated schedules. These efforts could reduce equipment disturbance or the potential for overlapping or excess application of herbicides or other chemical agents in sensitive environments.

#### **N. SECTION 4(f) AND 6(f) RESOURCES (PUBLIC PARKS AND RECREATIONAL RESOURCES)**

The proposed Rail Improvements Alternative would contribute to the cumulative impact on parkland resources. The potential impacts on many parkland resources would be minimized because most of the proposed rail improvements would be within the existing rail corridor or in tunnels. Depending on the combination of alignment options selected, the Rail Improvements Alternative could result in potential impacts to parkland resources in 29 to 33 locations along the corridor. During project-level environmental review, field studies would offer the opportunity to avoid or minimize direct or indirect impacts on parklands by making adjustments in the alignment plan or profile. There may also be opportunities to create new parkland resources in areas where the existing LOSSAN rail line would be removed from coastal beach areas and placed in tunnels. This could contribute to a cumulative beneficial increase in the number of parkland resources in the study area.

Joint project planning with other project proponents (Section 3.16.3.A) and state and local parks and recreation agencies and foundations may allow for reduction of construction-related impacts and durations, as well as developing measures to minimize harm if required. In the area of San Onofre State Beach, there is potential for overlapping implementation and construction activities from proposed rail improvements, I-5 widening and interchanges, and the Foothills South project. These proposals should be coordinated to the extent feasible, to identify and reduce potential cumulative impacts

to this recreational and open space area. There may also be opportunities to coordinate enhancement efforts such as funding, interpretive materials along trails, or other public benefits as part of joint project planning.

### 3.17 NEXT STEPS IN PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

This Program EIR/EIS considers the No-Project Alternative and the Rail Improvements Alternative which includes a number of alignment and design options for various segments of the LOSSAN corridor. In this document, the Department and FRA identify the Rail Improvements Alternative as the preferred alternative. At the completion of this Program level environmental process, the Department expects to be able to certify the Program EIR/EIS and make findings for compliance with CEQA, and the FRA expects to be able to issue a Record of Decision for compliance with NEPA. Both agencies then expect to be able to make additional decisions, including whether to advance the Rail Improvements Alternative to the next phase of project development and environmental analysis and, if so, how to structure and organize the processes needed.

After completion of the Program environmental process, should the lead agencies decide to proceed with development of the proposed rail improvements along the LOSSAN corridor, preliminary engineering and project-level environmental review would commence as needed to assess site-specific issues and potential environmental impacts not already addressed in this Program EIR/EIS. Project-level environmental reviews would focus on a portion or portions of the proposed rail improvements to provide further analysis of potential impacts and issues at an appropriate site-specific level of detail to select a preferred alignment option in segments where more than one option was carried forward from the Program level, and ultimately to obtain necessary permits and implement the rail improvements.

The LOSSAN corridor extends over 125 miles between Los Angeles and San Diego, and the Rail Improvements Alternative includes a number of alignment and design options in most parts of the corridor. Table 3.17-1 summarizes the options carried forward from this Program EIR/EIS for evaluation at the project level (see Chapter 2 for additional detail on alignment/design options). These options have been assessed at a programmatic level, and substantive differences among the options are described for each resource topic in previous sections of this chapter.

There are a number of issues that would need to be evaluated and prioritized before commencing project-level reviews of the various proposed rail improvements. These are outlined below in Section 3.17.1, and the major entities that would have responsibility and input to the evaluations are identified. Section 3.17.2 summarizes the approach and general elements to be incorporated into project-level environmental reviews, should the Rail Improvements Alternative be carried forward to the next phase of development.

#### 3.17.1 Project Definition

As shown in this Program EIR/EIS, the proposed rail improvements along the LOSSAN corridor vary widely in their extent, complexity, environmental effects, operational benefits, and cost. The first step in the next phase of project development would be the definition of “projects” – that is, the set(s) of proposed improvements within certain geographic areas along the corridor that can be grouped together into projects that are logical from an operational, environmental, schedule, and financial standpoint. Decisions regarding project definition would be influenced by a combination of three major factors:

1. Logical Operational Project Limits
2. Logical Environmental Project Limits
3. Cost/Benefit Evaluation and Project Prioritization

**Table 3.17-1**  
**Summary of Alignment and Design Options Carried Forward**  
**for Project-Level Review**

<b>LOSSAN Corridor Rail Segment and Proposed Improvements</b>	<b>Alignment/Design Options Under Consideration</b>
<b>Union Station To Fullerton Station</b> Add Fourth Main Track	1. AT-GRADE 4 <sup>th</sup> Main Track – existing corridor
<b>Fullerton Station to Irvine Station</b> Double Tracking Stations: Fullerton Anaheim Santa Ana Irvine	1. AT-GRADE double tracking between Orange and Santa Ana 2. TRENCH double tracking between Orange and Santa Ana
<b>San Juan Capistrano</b> Double Tracking Stations: San Juan Capistrano	1. TUNNEL along I-5 between Hwy 73 and Avenida Aeropuerto 2. AT-GRADE and Cut/Cover TRENCH along east side of Trabuco Creek
<b>Dana Point/San Clemente</b> Double Tracking Stations: San Clemente	1. Dana Point AT-GRADE Curve Realignment; San Clemente SHORT TUNNEL 2. No Curve Realignment; San Clemente LONG TWO-SEGMENT TUNNEL
<b>Camp Pendleton</b> Double Tracking Remaining Single-Tracked Segments	1. AT-GRADE double tracking
<b>Oceanside/Carlsbad</b> Double Tracking Stations: Oceanside	1. Carlsbad AT-GRADE double tracking 2. Carlsbad TRENCH double tracking
<b>Encinitas/Solana Beach</b> Double Tracking Stations: Solana Beach	1. Encinitas AT-GRADE double tracking 2. Encinitas SHORT TRENCH double tracking
<b>Del Mar</b> Double Tracking	1. TUNNEL under Camino del Mar 2. TUNNEL along Interstate 5
<b>I 5/I 805 Split to Hwy 52</b> Double Tracking Stations: University Towne Centre (Miramar Hill Option Only)	1. Miramar Hill TUNNEL 2. Interstate 5 TUNNEL
<b>Hwy 52 to Santa Fe Depot</b> Curve Realignment and Double Tracking Stations: Santa Fe Depot	1. AT-GRADE curve realignment and double tracking



The first task in advancing the Rail Improvements Alternative to the next phase would be an evaluation of these decision factors by the project proponent(s) in concert with affected and involved rail owners and operators, resource agencies and permitting authorities, local and regional jurisdictions and transportation authorities, and public foundations and joint power authorities in the study area and region. This evaluation would be an iterative process, because the three decision factors are highly interrelated and none can be adequately evaluated without taking into account the other two. The three decision factors are further described below.

#### **A. Independent Utility and Logical Operational Project Limits**

Strictly speaking, from an operational and a regulatory standpoint, the proposed rail improvements described in this document all have independent utility from one another. This means that if proposed improvements were made in one part of the corridor, they would provide operational benefits to the LOSSAN corridor even if no further improvements were made in the other segments. In other words, for example, each segment of additional track, or each grade separation where train traffic is separated from automobile traffic, would increase the capacity and/or ease existing congestion at points along the LOSSAN corridor. These benefits would help to accommodate the projected train traffic in the corridor between now and 2020, and would not depend on other proposed improvements being completed.

However, there are limits to the benefits of isolated improvements that need to be considered, even if the improvements have operational and regulatory independence from other improvements. (This is the reason that the Rail Improvements program is being assessed as a whole, along the entire 125-mile length, in this Program EIR/EIS.) For example, if the corridor was double-tracked north of and south of a particular area, but remained single-tracked in between double-track segments, the single-tracked portion would result in a choke-point that may offset or at least reduce benefits gained by double-tracking. The extent of such reductions in benefits will vary along the corridor, depending on a number of operational factors, and would need to be evaluated during project definition.

Another operational aspect of independent utility has to do with the effect of actions in one corridor segment on potential future actions in other segments. From an operational standpoint, improvements in one segment need to be compatible with potential improvements in another segment. (For example, if a new rail bridge was built in Segment A, and a future trench was proposed in adjacent Segment B, the design and location of the bridge would need to take into account the distance needed for the gradual transition of the rail line from elevated to below-grade. Otherwise, the bridge in Segment A would preclude the possibility of building the trench in Segment B without re-designing and replacing infrastructure in the area where Segments A and B come together.)

For the reasons described above, independent utility is not the same thing as logical, operational project definition. An important part of establishing the approach to the next phase of the Rail Improvements Alternative would be to define those logical combinations of improvements that have strong stand-alone operational benefits and could be implemented without constraining or adversely affecting sequential improvements elsewhere along the corridor.

The primary responsibility for evaluating these operational parameters would lie with the project proponent(s) and other affected existing and potential rail operators and owners (including the Department, Metrolink, BNSF, Amtrak, NCTD, and the California High Speed Rail Authority). FRA would be involved from both an operational and regulatory viewpoint. Local and regional transportation agencies and authorities (such as MTA, OCTA, and SANDAG, as well as municipal transportation and public works representatives) would also be involved in these decisions. Operational modeling conducted at the Program level would provide much of the required data, but additional refinements or updates may be required.

## B. Logical Environmental Project Limits

Defining the logical project limits (endpoints) within the Rail Improvement Alternative program also must take into account a number of environmental and resource considerations. Relevant factors to consider include the following:

- Plans and programs related to the management of ecosystems seldom correspond to geo-political boundaries or what might otherwise be logical, operational project limits. For example, habitat conservation plans or wetland mitigation/restoration programs may extend across numerous jurisdictional boundaries, based on the nature of the resources. These types of resource management frameworks should be evaluated as part of the definition of logical project limits in the next phase of Rail Improvements development. This would be particularly important for highly sensitive areas, such as lagoon environments, critical habitat that is at risk from existing fragmentation, or wildlife movement corridors that extend beyond (and may be affected by) any particular infrastructure footprint.
- Natural systems may present connectivity issues that go beyond physical or jurisdictional project boundaries, and have the potential for effects beyond logical operational project definitions. For example, there may be hydrologic connectivity between lagoons that are close together geographically, such as the Peñasquitos and the San Dieguito Lagoon. If so, it may be logical to group certain infrastructure improvements together so that project-level studies provide a comprehensive understanding of both direct and indirect effects.
- As described in Section 3.16, there are numerous projects proposed in the study area that could affect the same resources as the Rail Improvements Alternative. Project definition and planning should include an evaluation of opportunities to coordinate and streamline environmental studies and data collection, construction planning, logistics, and mitigation activities where practical and beneficial to both natural resources and the traveling public.
- Innovative or streamlined regulatory reviews may provide benefits to both the environmental resources in an area and to project implementation schedules. Such opportunities should be explored with regulatory agencies, and might include various programmatic actions. For example, a Programmatic Agreement (PA) addressing the approach to cultural resources surveys, testing, mitigation, and monitoring for the LOSSAN corridor as a whole would provide the framework for all project-level activities, even if project timeframes are widely separated due to fiscal constraints or other issues. There may also be advantages to programmatic approaches to other consultation and permitting processes, such

as Section 7 (biological resources), and Section 404/401 permitting (water resources).

These factors and potential opportunities should be evaluated with appropriate agencies as part of project definition, because they may affect (adversely or beneficially) project schedules, costs, logistics, feasibility, and other factors. The project proponent(s) should involve local, state and federal regulatory and natural resource agencies (including but not limited to USFWS, CDFG, EPA, USCOE, Regional Water Resources Control Boards, California Coastal Commission, Department of Parks and Recreation, SHPO, NAHC, and others as appropriate). They should also involve proponents of other pending projects in the study area, including transportation and transit agencies and lagoon foundations, as well as other entities and organizations with jurisdiction and/or involvement with environmental and public resource management.

### C. Cost/Benefit Evaluation and Project Prioritization

Based on an iterative evaluation of operational and environmental issues and opportunities described above, the project proponent(s) would define the limits (endpoints and components) of the future rail improvement projects along the LOSSAN corridor. Because funding is constrained, and is expected to be available incrementally over several or many years, the projects will need to be prioritized for the next phase of engineering design and environmental review. Priorities would be based on anticipated funding availability, balanced with operational priorities and permitting complexity and difficulty.

It is anticipated that there will be projects identified that can be designed, permitted and implemented within the short-term, mid-term, and long-term timeframes. It is likely that some projects will be identified where environmental clearance, permitting, design and construction can be accomplished within a relatively short timeframe (for example, perhaps grade separations within one city). There would be other projects where clearances could take substantially longer (for example, perhaps a series of segments with tunnel options and new stations would be combined into a project). If funding is available, it would be prudent to begin the project-level design and environmental reviews on a number of projects simultaneously, so that the improvements with shorter lead-times can move toward construction expeditiously, while longer lead-time project reviews are started as early as possible.

## 3.17.2 Project-Level Analysis

Specific environmental studies that will need to be completed during the next phase of project development were described previously, under the Subsequent Analysis sections at the end of each resource discussion. Once projects are identified and prioritized, specific work plans would be developed to guide the project-level design and environmental assessment efforts for each. It is expected that most, if not all, projects within the corridor will have many commonalities in approach, methods, and impact criteria, but each project may have unique elements due to site-specific issues. In general, the following elements would be incorporated into work plans as applicable for individual projects:

1. Early consultation with regulatory and resource agencies will be conducted to define project-level issues, approaches, survey requirements and seasonal constraints, and procedures. This information, as well as that obtained earlier

during project definition, will be incorporated into project work plans. Over-arching regulatory requirements and guidelines will frame the approach and objectives of the work plans, including (but not limited to) project-level requirements such as identification of the Least Environmentally Damaging Practicable Alternative (LEDPA), avoidance alternatives for Section 4(f) and 6(f) resources, Biological Opinions, Section 106 compliance for cultural resources, costal consistency reviews, air quality conformity determinations, and NEPA/Section 404 coordination.

2. Rail improvements will be designed considering consistency with local land use plans, lagoon plans and restoration programs, area and regional habitat conservation plans, the Coastal Rail Trail (between Oceanside and Santa Fe Depot), and regional transportation plans and policies. Project-level work plans will be framed by the goals and objectives of these plans, and any conflicts will be identified early and rectified either through design changes or revisions to plans where appropriate.
3. Based on project definition and design data, detailed construction plans and methods will be developed that define disturbance areas for staging, access roads, truck haul routes, equipment yards, and construction rights-of-way. These plans will be used to provide accurate and specific quantifications of potential footprint impacts of proposed projects. Additional information including, but not limited to, duration of in-water work, quantities of cut and fill, quantities of tunnel material to be removed and disposed of, and (potentially) the amount of fill that may be removed from lagoons based on alternative crossing designs (see number 4 below)
4. Work plans for projects in San Diego County will include working with agencies, local jurisdictions, lagoon foundations, and others to evaluate the potential impacts and benefits to lagoon hydrology and habitat through design of new crossing structures and/or reducing the amount of existing fill. This evaluation will also be coordinated with the Department regarding the proposed I-5 bridges crossing the lagoons.
5. Cumulative impacts assessments will be re-evaluated at the project-level to ensure that reasonably foreseeable projects in the project vicinity (at the time of project-level assessment) are accounted for in the identification of impacts. At the project level, a more accurate estimate can be made of where the Rail Improvement projects can be coordinated with other projects (such as the I-5 North Coast Corridor project or lagoon restoration work). Based on funding timeframes, environmental review status, planned construction schedules, and required in-service dates of various projects, the feasibility of combining or coordinating data collection, construction timeframes, and mitigation design and monitoring programs can be more accurately assessed, and opportunities for reducing potential cumulative impacts may be identified.
6. Work plans would include community involvement programs that will serve to (1) keep the public and local jurisdictions informed on project plans and schedules; (2) provide opportunities for input on issues, concerns, potential design refinements of conceptual alignments, and environmental processes and products; and (3) involve communities in station planning through workshops and meetings.

## 3.2 TRAVEL CONDITIONS

This section describes existing conditions and describes the potential of the No-Project Alternative (No-Project) and Rail Improvements Alternative to affect travel conditions. Automobiles currently carry more than 98%<sup>1</sup> of intercity trips within the study area, and together with the rail mode, are therefore the focus of this section. For this analysis travel conditions are defined as the experience, quality, sustainability, safety, reliability, and cost of intercity travel within the study area. Travel factors were developed based on the purpose and need (Chapter 1) for the proposed incremental improvements, and are used to evaluate the relative impact of proposed changes to the transportation system for each of the alternatives.

### 3.2.1 METHODS OF EVALUATION

#### A. METHOD OF EVALUATION OF IMPACTS

The overall method used to evaluate travel conditions is described below. To evaluate the relative differences in travel conditions that would result from implementation of the alternatives, six travel factors were considered that relate directly to the purpose and need and the goals and objectives defined in Chapter 1. These factors are listed below.

- Travel time
- Reliability
- Safety
- Connectivity (modal)
- Sustainable capacity
- Passenger Cost

#### Travel Time

Travel time is the total time required to complete a journey. With the exception of the automobile, intercity transportation options require multiple modes to complete a trip. Most people acknowledge that a train trip is not just the time spent on the train (the line-haul portion of the trip), but also includes the time required to travel to the station, check in, board the train, and travel to their final destination. The total travel time of a mode is also dependent on its reliability. If a mode is unreliable, a traveler must allow more time to complete a trip, effectively lengthening the total travel time.

#### Reliability

Reliability is the delivery of predictable and consistent travel times and is a key factor in attracting passengers to use a particular mode of travel. Travel time and reliability directly affect productivity, as they determine the ease and speed with which workers and products arrive at their destinations. Greater travel demand on capacity-constrained facilities results in further congestion and is one of the primary reasons for longer travel times. Reliability is primarily a function of unexpected delays due to many factors including traffic congestion, accidents, mechanical breakdowns, roadwork, and inclement weather.

<sup>1</sup> California High Speed Rail Authority, *Los Angeles to San Diego via Orange County Program EIR/EIS*, February 2004

### **Safety**

Projected growth in the movement of people and goods in Southern California by road underscores the need for improved travel safety. National and statewide statistics indicate that the rate of fatality or serious injury by private motor vehicle is increasing, primarily because more people are traveling by this mode.

### **Connectivity**

Connections between modes of transportation are a significant element in the development and operation of a successful total transportation system. It is important to consider the passengers' final destination in order to be competitive with the automobile. The ability to transfer easily between modes and the frequency of service are additional key factors that can determine a traveler's modal choice. Under existing conditions and No-Project, alternative intercity modal connections are limited and the connections and services available are fragmented and not provided as an integrated system with coordinated fares, schedules, and amenities. In addition to travel time improvements and improved reliability, it is also important to enhance local bus connections, implementing infrastructure improvements to support this, develop marketing strategies and incentives that will encourage alternative transportation use.

### **Sustainable Capacity**

Sustainable capacity is a measure of the transportation system's capability to meet projected demand without the need to develop additional infrastructure. The current Southern California transportation system is stressed beyond capacity in many places and for considerable periods of the day. As demand increases without sufficient capacity, the severity of the congestion will increase and result in more frequent delays and longer peak travel periods throughout the day. This demand-capacity imbalance will worsen over time as system use increases. As a result, the transportation system will lose the ability to absorb short-term or long-term demand increases and become increasingly inflexible because of the lack of capacity.

The six travel factors are summarized in Table 3.2-1. These travel factors are used to evaluate the relative difference between the No-Project and Rail Improvements Alternatives both qualitatively and quantitatively. The method by which the travel factors have been applied to the alternatives is summarized in Table 3.2-2. Each of the travel factors is described in greater detail as they are applied in the potential environmental consequences of travel conditions discussion.

In general, the No-Project Alternative would include the same intercity travel modes that are available under existing conditions, which are the automobile, intercity bus, and conventional rail as it exists today. The intent of the environmental analysis performed in this Program EIR/EIS is to broadly assess the highest potential level of impact. Therefore, the high-end improvements for the LOSSAN Corridor are used to describe the operations and required facilities for the proposed improvements. However, in a few areas where the high-end forecast produced the lowest impacts or highest benefit, analysis of conditions based on the low-end improvements is also included.



**Table 3.2-1  
Relation of Travel Factors and Purpose and Need/Objectives**

	Travel Factors					
	Connectivity	Travel Time	Reliability	Safety	Sustainable Capacity	Passenger Cost
<b>Project Purpose</b>						
Increase the cost-effectiveness of the rail service	X	X	X			X
Increase capacity on existing routes					X	
Reduce running times		X	X		X	
Improve the safety of the rail service			X	X		
<b>Project Need</b>						
Future growth in travel demand		X	X		X	X
Capacity constraints		X			X	
Reliability	X	X	X		X	
Safety			X	X		
Air Quality	X				X	
Environmental Concerns					X	

X = Directly applies

**Table 3.2-2  
Transportation Factors**

Typology	Description	Measurement
Travel Time	Total door-to-door travel time	Total travel time including access and in-vehicle times
Reliability	Ability and perception to arrive at the destination on-time	Accidents Inclement weather Transportation-related construction Volume variation Special events Traffic control devices and procedures Base capacity Vehicle availability
Safety	Loss of life or injury	Comparison of safety performance characteristics by mode (operator, vehicle and environment)
Connectivity	Transportation options that connect to other systems and destinations	<i>Modal</i> Number of intermodal connections and options, and frequency of service provided by each alternative
Sustainable capacity	Ability to accommodate additional demand beyond the design demand	Amount of additional infrastructure required to meet a threshold demand above and beyond the design demand
Passenger cost	One-way travel costs	Total costs including fares and other costs for intercity travel by mode

Source: Parsons Brinckerhoff 2003

### 3.2.2 AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

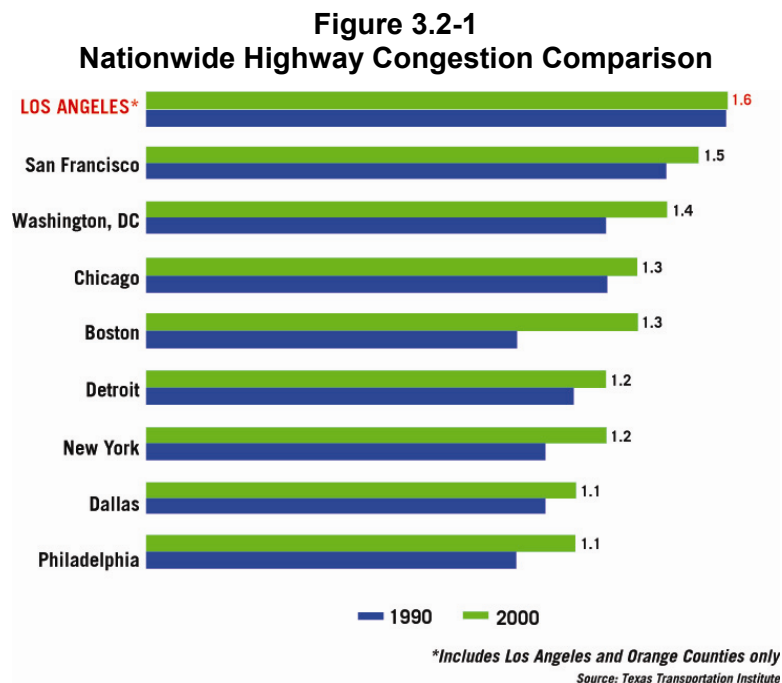
#### A. STUDY AREA DEFINED

This program-level analysis of travel conditions and potential impacts does not measure the specific potential impact to individual transportation facilities (e.g., a transit line or highway). Rather, travel conditions have been evaluated for the total project area and regional level. Specific examples of representative travel conditions in the corridor for a specific highway or rail facility are identified where possible. The study area for this analysis of travel conditions encompasses the cities within Los Angeles, Orange and San Diego Counties along the existing rail corridor between downtown Los Angeles and downtown San Diego.

#### B. GENERAL DISCUSSION OF TRAVEL CONDITIONS

For travel conditions, the affected environment is Southern California's intercity travel network, which consists of two main components: highways and rail. Of these two, automobiles currently carry over 98% of intercity trips, and are therefore the focus of this section.

The highway system is congested near and around urban centers (e.g., Los Angeles, Central Orange County and San Diego) and in suburban communities (e.g., South Orange County and North San Diego County) during both the morning and evening peak hours. As shown in Figure 3.2-1 the Los Angeles and Orange County metropolitan area experiences the worst congestion and travel delay (the extra time spent traveling because of congestion) in the country. According to the San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG) all four major interstate routes in the region are faced with ever growing recurrent traffic congestion, with forecasted volumes in the year 2020 nearing 400,000 vehicles a day on Interstate 5 (I-5) and 15. Of these two freeways, I-5 is the only highway that directly connects San Diego with Los Angeles and Orange County.



Although the main contributors to this congestion are local and commuter highway trips, intercity trips compete for the limited capacity on these overburdened facilities.

In Section 3.1, *Traffic and Circulation*, of this Program EIR/EIS it notes that several of the routes within the study area are currently operating at or near congested levels of operation during the peak periods. In fact, I-5 (the key intercity route assessed in this analysis) is designated by the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) as a “high emphasis focus route” of critical importance to the movement of goods in Southern California.

### 3.2.3 ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

#### A. EXISTING CONDITIONS VS. NO-PROJECT ALTERNATIVE

The No-Project Alternative includes programmed and funded transportation improvements to the existing transportation system that will be implemented and operational by 2020. The primary differences between existing conditions and the No-Project Alternative are the increased level of intercity travel demand and the implementation of new infrastructure. Improvements (programmed and funded) focus on existing modes; therefore, the same modes of intercity transport will continue to be available. The programmed or funded transportation improvements assumed to be in operation by 2020 are not major system-wide capacity improvements (e.g., major new highway construction or widening) and will not result in a general improvement or stabilization of existing highway conditions across the study area. Connectivity is not expected to improve with the No-Project Alternative because no new major intermodal terminals are expected to be built over the next 20 years.

As described in Section 3.1, *Traffic and Circulation*, existing facilities are currently operating at congested levels of service at numerous locations, and traffic conditions are projected to deteriorate further under the No-Project Alternative. Of the 8 intercity highway segments analyzed in Section 3.1, more than half are operating during the peak period at LOS F or a volume-to-capacity (V/C) ratio over 1.0 under existing conditions. On average V/C ratios could deteriorate by as much as 36% in some areas of the region. Capacity in the No-Project Alternative is insufficient to accommodate the projected growth in highway travel in the region. Consequently, there would be no sustainable improvement to the transportation system’s capacity.

Although intercity travel is only a small percentage of all highway trips, it must compete for limited capacity on already congested infrastructure for which insufficient capacity improvement projects are planned to be operational by 2020. The region could be faced with further attempts to control demand through congestion pricing and construction of additional toll roads like SR-91 in Orange and Riverside Counties. In many instances, the a.m. peak period could extend from 2 hours to 4 hours. Figure 3.2-2 shows the primary highway corridors in Southern California for the Year 2025, areas where increasing demand will lead to greater congestion, as well as the total travel delay (as expressed as a percentage of the peak period during which delays will be expected).

Given these travel trends, overall travel safety is also expected to worsen. As VMT continues to rise over the next 20 years under No-Project, the accident rate will not change appreciably, but the net number of accidents, injuries, and fatalities could increase, particularly for highway-based trips. As evidence of this trend, the National

Highway Traffic Safety Administration reported that between 1998 and 2001 fatalities on California's roadways have increased by an average 4% annually (National Highway Traffic Safety Administration 2001).

Travel costs are also expected to rise because of the capacity constraints. The region could be faced with further attempting to control demand through congestion pricing for the auto mode. This approach could result in more congestion-priced toll roads like SR-91 in Orange and Riverside Counties.

As summarized in Table 3.2-3, the No-Project Alternative could result in either a deteriorated level of service or no change compared to existing conditions.

**Table 3.2-3  
Comparison of Existing Conditions to No-Project Alternative**

Travel Factor	No-Project Alternative (2020)	
	Change from Existing Conditions	Comment
Travel Time	Deteriorate	Increased congestion could result in further delays.
Reliability	Deteriorate	Increased congestion and no change in modal options or characteristics could result in greater unreliability.
Safety	Deteriorate	No change in modal options would maintain existing fatality and injury rates; however, increased demand could result in greater number of fatalities.
Connectivity	None	No additional intercity intermodal connections or options, or increased frequencies will be available.
Sustainable Capacity	Deteriorate	No significant mainline capacity improvements will be operational.
Passenger cost	Deteriorate	Airfares are anticipated to increase beyond their current fare structures relative to other modal options.*

\* Based on high-end forecasts from *Final Business Plan*, California High Speed Rail Authority 2000.  
Source: Parsons Brinckerhoff 2003

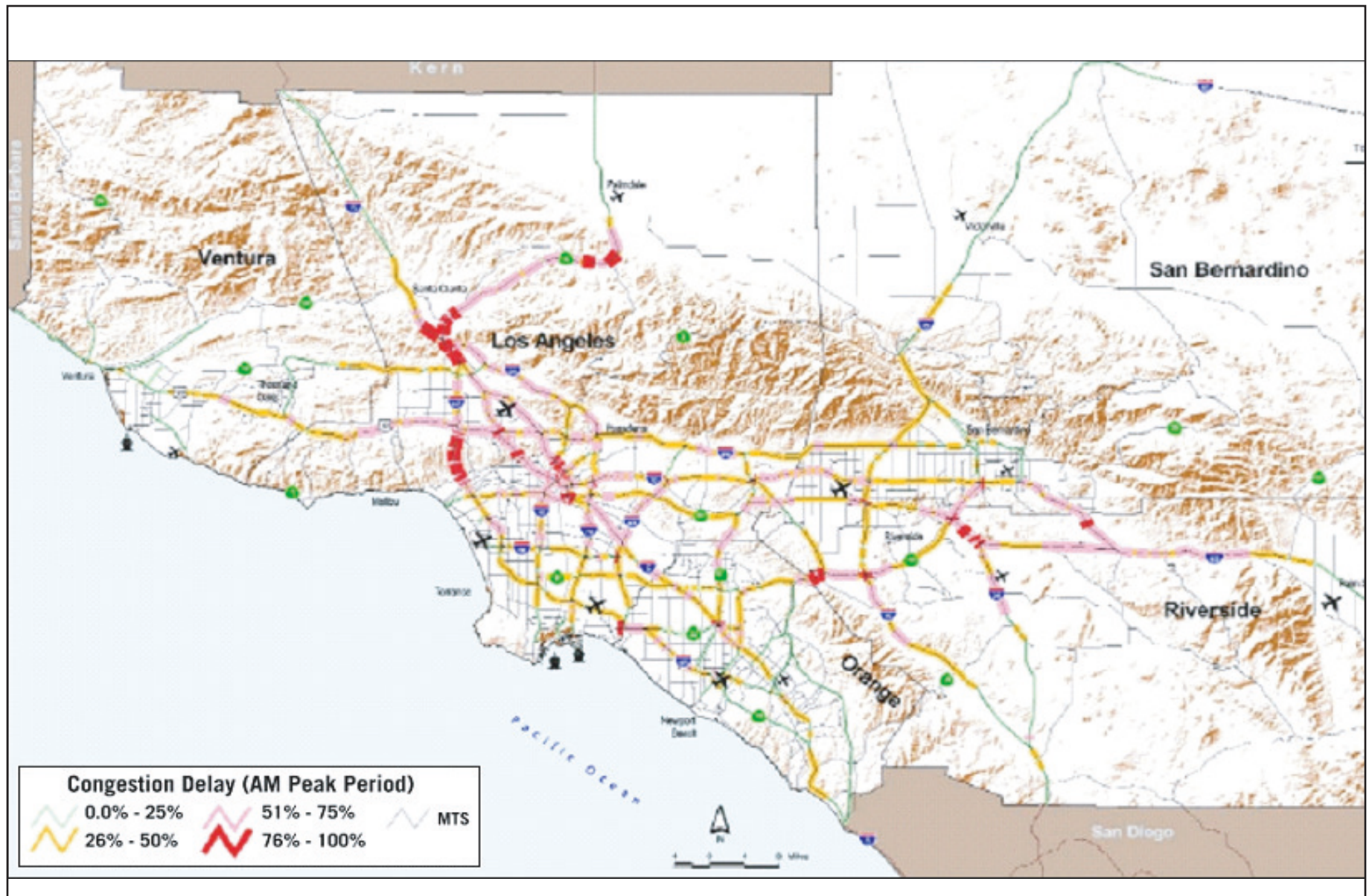
## B. NO-PROJECT ALTERNATIVE VS. RAIL IMPROVEMENTS ALTERNATIVE

This section presents expected travel conditions for the Rail Improvements Alternative and compares relative differences between the No-Project and the Rail Improvements Alternative. This section is organized by the six travel factors identified earlier. Each travel factor begins with a summary of the specific methods used to define and evaluate the Rail Improvements Alternative and the characteristics of the mode followed by an evaluation of the impacts of the alternatives.

### Travel Time

Travel time is a key travel factor that determines the attractiveness of the mode of travel to passengers. Travel time is also an important economic factor that directly affects productivity (travel time for workers and products to get to their destination). For the purpose of this analysis, improved travel time is a benefit to the traveler because it can improve the intercity travel experience. Travel time for this analysis was measured as the total (door-to-door) travel time.





Source : Southern California Association of Governments 2001 Regional Transportation Plan

**FIGURE 3.2-2**

### **Southern California Area Highway Congestion (Year 2025)**

LOSSAN Rail Corridor Improvements

Program Environmental Impact Report / Environmental Impact Statement



U.S. Department  
of Transportation  
Federal  
Railroad  
Administration





**Automobile Mode Characteristics:** Travel time in an automobile largely depends on three factors: distance traveled, roadway design speed (and associated speed limit), and congestion levels. The design of a roadway dictates the time that will be required to travel between two destinations. The time of day and associated congestion also plays a role in how long a trip will take. For this analysis it is assumed that the top speed of the automobile is 70 mph (113 kph).

Automobile travel times are based on driving times between the representative city pair origins and destinations, as summarized in Table 3.2-4. The travel time for highways is the same as the times used in the California High Speed Rail Authority's Final Business Plan and is based on weighted averages of peak and off-peak travel times.

**Intercity Rail Mode Characteristics:** With a maximum operating speed of 79-90 mph, Intercity Passenger Rail service provides a convenient way to travel between metropolitan areas (for example, between San Diego and Los Angeles via Amtrak's Pacific Surfliner service), and is an alternative to the automobile.

Intercity Rail travel in the United States has enjoyed a resurgence in ridership on many routes. While transcontinental service has seen reductions in riders, regional services such as the Pacific Surfliner, Capitol, and San Joaquin in California, Cascades in Oregon and Washington, and the Regional in the Northeast serve very active markets and are seeing increased ridership. The Pacific Surfliner service in Southern California is Amtrak's second-busiest (behind the Regional Northeastern service), carrying more than 2.1 million passengers during its 2003 Fiscal Year.

**Table 3.2-4**  
**Total Point-to-Point Travel Times (Hours:Minutes)**

Union Station to San Diego	Baseline Condition		No-Project Alternative		Rail Improvements Alternative	
	Auto	Rail	Auto	Rail	Low	High
	2:35	2:44	3:15	2:36	1:58	1:48

### **Alternatives Comparison for Travel Time**

**No-Project Alternative:** There are minimal travel-time benefits associated with the No-Project because the programmed improvements for 2020 do little to improve the capacity of the highway or rail system. The No-Project results in longer travel times for the highway mode compared to existing conditions, increasing by 40 minutes. Travel time for intercity rail service decreases slightly as a result of the projects incorporated into the No-Project Alternative. However, this small improvement in travel time could easily be eliminated due to potential delays caused by the remaining segments of single-track along the corridor.

**Rail Improvements Alternative:** Travel time savings of the Rail Improvements Alternative would vary depending on the number and location of the improvements implemented. The greatest times savings would be achieved using express service between Los Angeles and San Diego. Because of its faster line haul speed, an improved intercity passenger rail system would compete more with the automobile for intercity trips, even when door to door times are taken into account.

## **Reliability**

In its simplest form, reliability can be defined as variation in travel time, hour-to-hour and day-to-day for the same trip. Reliability is important for almost any travel need and on any travel mode. Business travelers want to be able to predict how long it will take them to arrive at a meeting, either across town or across the region. Express shippers need to know where packages are at all times and when they will be available for delivery. Vacationers who want to spend as little of their time off as possible traveling to and from their destinations often find themselves making their trips during the most congested days of the year. Reliable travel means fewer late arrivals, improved efficiency, saved time, and reduced frustration.

Travel on most transportation modes is consistent and repetitive, yet at the same time highly variable and unpredictable. This apparent contradiction accrues because travel is consistent and repetitive since peak usage periods occur regularly and can be predicted. The relative size and timing of rush hour is well known in most communities. Simultaneously, travel is variable and unpredictable because on any given day unusual circumstances such as a rainstorm or an auto accident can cause serious delays at any time.

The traveling public's experience with variations in travel reliability affects their decisions of how and when to travel, so that they have a reasonable expectation that they will arrive at their destination at a particular time. For example, if a highway is known to have highly variable traffic conditions, a traveler using that route routinely leaves extra time to reach their destination or may also seek an alternate route.

Travel time reliability is the direct result of the variable and often unpredictable events that can occur on different travel modes and at any time of day. The traditional way of measuring and reporting travel times experienced by highway users is to consider only average or typical conditions. However, the travel times experienced by users are seldom constant, even for travel on the same facility in the same peak or off-peak time period. Reliability is influenced by several underlying factors that vary over time and that influence the environment within which transportation operates. These factors are listed below.

- **Incidents:** Incidents are events that disrupt normal travel flow, such as obstructions in the travel lanes of highways. Events such as vehicular crashes, mechanical breakdowns, and debris in travel lanes are the most common form of incidents for any mode. On highways, events that occur on the shoulder or roadside can also influence traffic flow by distracting drivers, leading to changes in driver behavior and ultimately to the quality of traffic flow.
- **Inclement Weather:** Inclement weather and related environmental conditions (rain, fog, snow, ice, sun glare, etc.) can lead to changes in operator behavior, vehicle performance, and operational control requirements that affect traffic flow. Motorists respond to inclement weather by reducing their speeds and increasing their headways. In cases of severe weather, authorities respond by closing roadways and creating vehicle caravans.
- **Construction:** Construction can often reduce the number, width, or availability of travel lanes and rail tracks. Nearby construction activities can also reduce reliability if operating rules or conditions are changed (e.g., slow orders on rail

tracks). Delays caused by work zones have been cited by highway travelers as one of the most frustrating conditions they encounter on trips.

- **Volume Variation:** Volume variation is day-to-day variability in demand that leads to some days with higher travel volumes than others. Different demand volumes superimposed on a system with fixed capacity results in variable, less reliable travel times.

**Special Events:** Special events such as concerts, fairs, and sports events cause localized congestion and disruption in the vicinity of the event that is radically different from typical travel patterns in the area.

- **Traffic Control Devices and Procedures:** These can lead to intermittent disruption of travel flow through means such as, railroad signals and switches, railroad grade crossings, drawbridges, and poorly timed signals.
- **Base Capacity:** Base capacity refers to the physical capacity of a transportation system, such as the number the highway lanes or runways. The interaction of base capacity with the other influences on reliability has an effect on transportation system performance. This is due to the nonlinear relationship between volume and capacity on any mode. When congested conditions are approached, small changes in volume lead to diminished throughput of the transportation system and consequent large changes in delay. Further, facilities with greater base capacity are less vulnerable to disruptions; for example, an incident that blocks a single lane has a greater impact on a highway with two travel lanes than a highway with three travel lanes.
- **Vehicle Availability and Routing:** These can directly affect a traveler's ability to make an on-time trip, particularly on a common carrier such as a train, or by rental car. End-to-end routing and other strategies to maximize vehicle operation time can affect reliability when a vehicle that is needed in one location first has to complete a trip from a different location. Short layovers or "pads" that are scheduled between trips for a given vehicle also affect vehicle availability.

The extent to which these eight factors affect each of the major intercity travel modes and, by extension, the Rail Improvements Alternative is analyzed and compared on a qualitative basis by describing and ranking the extent to which each mode is potentially susceptible to each of the eight factors and is presented in Table 3.2-5 and further detailed below. Because the alternatives are composed of combinations of elements (including different modes for trip segments like station or terminal access), rankings have been combined, providing a qualitative understanding of the reliability of each alternative.

**Table 3.2-5  
Modal Reliability**

Factor	Relative Susceptibility to Reliability Factors*	
	Automobile	Improved Intercity Rail
Incidents	<b>High</b> Automobile travel can be influenced by minor and major incidents at any location along the roadway and is frequently affected by incidents outside of the right-of-way.	<b>Low</b> Rail has very few major incidents and is generally not influenced by incidents on other modes since the number of grade crossings is minimal in the high-build alternative.
Weather	<b>High</b> A variety of weather conditions can degrade operator ability, make roadways impassible, or damage roadways.	<b>Low</b> Trains can operate under virtually any conditions. Track is constructed to minimize weather impact.
Construction	<b>Moderate</b> Construction activities (major and minor) are common, but generally occur during warm weather months. Lane closures are often of long-term duration.	<b>Low</b> Most activities are scheduled for hours when passenger trains are not operating. High-quality construction minimizes routine maintenance needs.
Special events	<b>Moderate</b> Special events are common and can create volume fluctuations or short-term lane closures.	<b>Low</b> Most special events can be easily accommodated on trains without effect on travel time.
Traffic control devices or procedures	<b>Moderate</b> Auto travel influenced by traffic signals, railroad crossings, and other devices. Influence depends on level to which devices are optimized.	<b>Moderate</b> Trains operate in largely, grade-separated right-of-way, minimizing external influences. Passenger trains share tracks with freight trains. Double-track minimizes switching needs.
Inadequate base capacity	<b>High</b> This is one of the strongest influences on highway reliability, particularly for facilities with three or fewer lanes per direction. Travel time degrades quickly as capacity is approached.	<b>Low</b> Operations are not allowed to exceed design capacity.
Volume variation	<b>High</b> Peak-period travel in medium to large urban areas highly influenced by day-to-day or seasonal volume variations. Strong interaction with inadequate base capacity.	<b>Low</b> Day-to-day variation in train volumes tends to be low. Passenger volume variation generally does not influence travel times.
Vehicle availability or routing	<b>Low</b> Private automobiles are ubiquitous and are widely available for rental in emergency situations. The road and highway network provides alternative routes for most trips.	<b>Moderate</b> Vehicles complete multiple end-to-end trips in a day, potentially affecting availability at specific times and locations; simple routing schemes generally followed.

**Automobile Mode Characteristics:** On a day-by-day basis, automobiles tend to be the least reliable of the two modes. Highway travel is highly or moderately susceptible to seven of the eight factors described above. It is only when considering the influence of vehicle availability and routing that automobiles would potentially have a lower susceptibility than would other modes.

Recent research provides further evidence on the unreliability of highway travel (Texas Transportation Institute and Cambridge Systematics, Inc. 2003). This research, which used actual travel time data covering 579 miles of freeways in the Los Angeles area, shows that reliability problems exist on highways at all times of the day, all days of the week, and all weeks of the year. This research expressed unreliability in terms of a buffer index, the amount of extra time motorists would need to budget to be certain of arriving on time at their destination 95% of the time. Results showed that a motorist in Los Angeles would need to allow an additional 45 minutes for a typical 1-hour highway trip—fully 75% of normal driving time. Even in mid-day periods, a traveler would need to budget an additional 30 minutes for the same 1-hour trip, or 50% of the normal time. It is important to note that a buffer does not represent certainty and on any given day this buffer may or may not be needed.

**Intercity Rail Mode Characteristics:** An improved intercity rail system has been shown to have a low susceptibility to nearly all of the major factors that affect reliability. It is only on the issues of vehicle availability that rail, like all common carrier modes, has a higher level of susceptibility than highways.

Also, an improved intercity rail system has the same or lower level of susceptibility on all eight factors compared with the existing conventional rail system. The need to share space with freight and passenger trains, coupled with extensive sections of single-track on the existing rail corridor, often lead to delays, since the delay of a single train often has the consequence of affecting other trains operating within the corridor. Double track, as an example, eliminates the delays currently associated with trains waiting at a passing track for others to clear a single tracked-section. Elimination of this type of delay alone would provide for more consistent operating schedule for trains, significantly increasing on-time performance and reliability. Proposed grade separations would also reduce the impacts of inclement weather (such as the coastal fog experienced during much of the year. These grade-separations would increase not only the reliability and operating performance of trains, but also provide for increased traffic flow on local streets that are presently subject to delays when trains are crossing.

### **Alternatives Comparison for Reliability**

A qualitative comparison of the alternatives was conducted by considering the relative reliability of the modes that are present in each alternative, the relative modal usage in each alternative, and any major changes such as highway lane additions or modal diversion that are present in an alternative. As described more fully below, an improved intercity rail system (Rail Improvements Alternative) is projected to have the highest reliability, while No-Project is projected to have the lowest reliability.

**No-Project Alternative:** Reliability under No-Project is likely to be lower than under the other alternatives for the following reasons.

- No-Project depends heavily on the automobile, which has been shown to have the worst reliability of the two modes.
- Existing congestion and reliability problems continue because No-Project provides no new highway base capacity
- Greater highway congestion and more reliability problems accrue because No-Project absorbs an increasing demand for travel with little increase in base capacity.

**Rail Improvements Alternative:** The Rail Improvements Alternative is likely to provide the greatest degree of travel reliability for the following reasons.

- An improved intercity rail system would divert some intercity demand from less reliable highways.
- An improved intercity rail system provides a greatly improved transportation system that would have less susceptibility to many factors influencing reliability.

The various rail alignment options are not likely to exhibit appreciable differences in system reliability since system capacity and demand would be roughly equivalent. Major design differences (e.g. extent of tunneling) would not make a meaningful difference in reliability, and differences in base travel times on trains would not influence reliability.

**Sensitivity to Travel Demand Forecasts:** As with travel time, reliability is also influenced by the level of travel demand. Other things being equal, reliability is expected to be better on facilities that have lower travel demand (or experience lower volume-to-capacity ratios) due to the non-linear relationship between volume and capacity, as mentioned above. Therefore, lower levels of highway or air travel demand, would be expected to improve reliability for all modes. The reliability improvement would likely be greatest for No-Project since its base capacity is most constrained and would experience the largest relative improvement in volume-to-capacity ratios and delay. For the same reasons, the Rail Improvements Alternative would likely also experience a large improvement in reliability. Given the large reliability advantage enjoyed by an improved intercity rail system, the Rail Improvements Alternative would still be expected to provide the greatest degree of travel reliability across the range of travel demand scenarios.

### **Safety**

In transportation, four basic characteristics interact to influence the safety of a mode.

- The Operator – His or her training, regulation, and experience.
- The Vehicle – Its condition, regulation, control systems, and crashworthiness.
- The Environment – The weather, guideway type, guideway condition, and terrain.
- National Security Level – Since September 11, 2001 the security threat level indicator which was adopted related to the threat level imposed by terrorists serves to greatly influence overall rail safety.

Each of these characteristics plays a role in the overall safety of the modes, which for this analysis is quantified as the probability of passenger fatality. Injuries are more difficult to compare between modes because they are categorized differently by mode and different injury ratings are used. For instance, automobile injuries are generally related to automobile crashes, while for rail they can include injuries that occur as part of a crash, while boarding/alighting, or in the terminal. The severity of these injuries can vary from scrapes and bruises to life-threatening ones. For the purposes of this analysis, injuries by mode will be discussed but are not measured as a key indicator of safety. This analysis also only considers injuries and fatalities of passengers and does not include employees or other staff.

**Automobile Mode Characteristics:** The automobile is unquestionably the most used and the most dangerous mode of transportation being considered in this Program EIR/EIS.



The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration estimates that the national motor vehicle fatality rate is 0.80 fatalities per 100 million passenger miles traveled. Nationally in 2000, there were about 6.4 million reported motor vehicle crashes that resulted in 42,000 fatalities and 3.2 million injuries. About 4.2 million crashes involved property damage only (National Highway Traffic Safety Administration 2001). The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration estimates that deaths and injuries resulting from motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death for persons between the ages of 4 and 33, while traffic-related fatalities account for over 90% of all transportation-related fatalities. According to the California Highway Patrol, in 2000, there were 3,331 fatal crashes in California alone (California Highway Patrol 2000). The risk to an individual depends most strongly on the time spent behind the wheel or in the passenger's seat. The longer the journey or the more frequently the journey is made, the greater the risk of a crash. Some of the factors that influence auto and highway safety are listed below.

- Operator
  - Drivers vary in age, experience, ability, and numerous other factors.
  - Non-professional drivers typically operate automobiles.
  - Limited regulatory requirements govern who can operate an automobile and the type of training that is needed, and these requirements vary between states.
- Vehicle
  - Privately owned vehicles are mechanically not as reliable as the public transportation modes.
  - Maintenance and inspections are not regulated, and are performed by mechanics of varying skill levels.
  - Crashworthiness and roadworthiness varies depending on make and model.
  - Minimum requirements rather than optimum standards dictate safe operating conditions.
- Environment
  - Highways provide no latitudinal or longitudinal control to individual automobiles.
  - Fixed objects (e.g. trees, light poles, sign posts, etc.) are frequently placed within the highway right-of-way.
  - Weather and lighting conditions (wind, rain, fog, snow, ice, darkness, and sun glare) can adversely impact vehicle and driver performance.
  - Traffic control systems that regulate the speed and safe operation of an automobile are limited in influence.
  - Roadway conditions and designs are varied and can include systems based on different design speeds, vehicles, and operating conditions.
  - Drivers are subject to a multitude of potential distractions and interferences.

- Security
  - Traffic and passengers are dispersed presentation a low system risk
  - Highways are very difficult to secure and operators and passengers can not be screened.

Intercity Rail Mode Characteristics: Statistics show that when compared with the automobile, rail travel is by far the safest mode. In 1999 there were a total of 110 railroad fatalities in the State of California, this can be compared to 3,539 automobile fatalities within the same year. Since its formation in 1971, Amtrak has had only 100 fatalities nationwide, while moving more than 600 million passengers. For the purposes of this analysis the likelihood of injury is associated with boarding and alighting, and during operation, with injuries ranging from minor to severe. The distinguishing reasons for the safety of rail travel relative to highway travel are summarized below.

- Operator
  - Operators would be rigorously trained and tested and are required to update their qualifications regularly.
  - Operators would be required to submit to drug tests and are subject to regulation by the FRA and operating railroads.
- Vehicle
  - FRA passenger equipment safety standards (49 C.F.R. Part 238) dictate the buff strength or amount of force a train can withstand in a collision, for all passenger equipment. The buff strength is adjusted to the operating and rail traffic conditions and is designed to minimize injuries of fatalities due to rail crashes.
  - The infrastructure they operate on (tracks and control systems) would be maintained on a regular schedule. Maintenance records are subject to inspection by the FRA.
  - Passenger train equipment is built for a long service life. If maintained properly, a modern train car can have a useful life of at least 30 years.
  - Traffic control and communications systems would be state-of-the-art, regulated and managed during all hours of operation. These systems control the train's schedule, routing, and headway (following distance behind another train). These systems combined with the operator have integral redundancy and ensure safety.
- Environment
  - The improved rail system would include numerous additional grade separations, reducing pedestrian and motor vehicle conflicts.
  - Inclement weather has only a minimal impact on operations. Modern locomotives can use a cab signaling system that transmits commands directly to the driver. This technology makes higher-speed operation possible in darkness, rain, and fog.

- Although the system does operate in a highly seismic area, no injuries or fatalities have ever occurred as a result of a seismic event.
- The rail system, like other public intercity modes, is inspected on a regular schedule as required in federal regulations. This regular inspection of both rolling stock and track would ensure the safety of the system.
- Security
  - Rail systems are moderately difficult to secure and passenger trains carry many people presenting a moderate system risk.
  - Passengers can be subject to limited forms of screening to reduce security risks.

The safety characteristics of each mode are summarized in Table 3.2-6. This table shows that for all four safety characteristics, the rail mode has the best safety performance. The automobile mode fares poorest in terms of safety.

**Table 3.2-6  
Safety Performance by Mode**

Mode	Safety Performance Characteristics			
	<u>Operator Training Regulation Experience</u>	<u>Vehicle Condition Regulation Control Systems Crashworthiness</u>	<u>Environment Weather Guideway Condition Terrain</u>	<u>Security System Risk Screening Capacity</u>
Automobile	Poor	Good	Poor	Good
Intercity Rail	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent	Good

### **Alternatives Comparison for Safety**

The safety performance for each alternative is shown in Table 3.2-7. The rigorous requirements of rail operators, regular vehicle inspection, maintenance, control systems, crashworthiness, and ability to operate in virtually all weather conditions, makes the Rail Improvements Alternative superior to No-Project.

**Table 3.2-7  
Safety Performance by Alternatives**

Mode	Safety Performance Characteristics			
	<u>Operator Training Regulation Experience</u>	<u>Vehicle Condition Regulation Control systems Crashworthiness</u>	<u>Environment Weather Guideway condition Terrain</u>	<u>Security System Risk Screening Capacity</u>
No-Project	Poor	Good	Poor	Good
Rail Improvement Alternative	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent	Good

**No-Project Alternative:** While the rate of injury or fatality is not expected to increase under No-Project, the increase in highway travel would be expected to cause the number of injuries and fatalities to increase as compared to existing conditions.

**Rail Improvement Alternatives:** The Rail Improvements Alternative provides a superior safety benefit compared to the No-Project Alternative. The safety improvements included in the alternative will help in improving rail passenger safety within the LOSSAN corridor.

### **Connectivity**

Connectivity in the study area can be measured qualitatively and quantitatively using the number of modal options that offer competitive transportation services, the availability of intermodal connections, and the frequency of service (number of departures). A greater number of competitive modal options is considered a benefit because it increases the diversity, redundancy, and flexibility of the overall transportation system and provides travelers with greater choices.

- Modal options are a measure of the intercity modal diversity of each alternative.
- An intermodal connection or facility allows passengers to transfer from one mode to another to complete a trip. A connection can be as simple as a timed connection between a train and a bus or as elaborate as the connections present at the Los Angeles Union Passenger Terminal (LA Union Station) where heavy rail, light rail, subway, local and long-distance buses all converge to give multiple transportation options.
- Frequency is measured as the number of departures available to travelers in the study area. High service frequency benefits travelers because it increases the number of possible connections to different modes and the number of options available for travel to a destination.

**Modal Options:** The No-Project Alternative provides three modal options: automobile, bus and existing intercity rail. However, intercity travel in Southern California is dominated by automobile. The automobile accounts for over 97% of all intercity trips in Southern California, with conventional rail carrying roughly 3% of the trips. Table 3.2-8 shows intercity trips by mode between the major metropolitan regions in the study area.

**Table 3.2-8  
1997 Intercity Trip Table Summary**

Market	1997 Base Trip Tables	
	Auto	Intercity Rail
Los Angeles to San Diego	34,870,032	934,322

*Source: Parsons Brinckerhoff 2003*

The Rail Improvements Alternative would provide a vastly improved intercity and regional passenger mode that could provide opportunities for increased connectivity with other existing transit modes. The improved rail system would bring competitive travel times and frequent and reliable service to the traditional urban centers of the

Los Angeles and San Diego Metropolitan Areas. It would significantly improve the modal options available throughout Southern California.

Tables 3.2-9 shows intercity trips by mode within the study area projected for 2020. Under these assumptions intercity rail is projected to capture roughly 12% of the travel market.

**Table 3.2-9  
2020 Intercity Trip Table Summary**

Market	Auto	Intercity Rail
Los Angeles to San Diego	42,023,218	5,770,000

Source: Parsons Brinckerhoff 2003 and Amtrak California

Intermodal Connections: The automobile can be used to go virtually anywhere in Southern California. Unlike common carrier transportation modes (bus or rail), the automobile does not require or depend upon intermodal connections to get from the trip origin to the trip destination. The automobile mode would have the same flexibility in No-Project and the Rail Improvements Alternative.

It is assumed that there would be limited new intermodal connections under the No-Project Alternative because a limited number of these improvements are currently planned and programmed.

Passenger rail stations are generally located where they can serve a wider area through public transit and can enhance intermodal connections in the region. Stations in the traditional urban cores of Los Angeles and San Diego currently connect to the heart of the established public transit networks. For example, LA Union Station is the transit hub of Los Angeles County and is the primary destination for the Metrolink Commuter rail services, the LA Metro Red Line, the Pasadena Gold Line, the Amtrak Surfliner service, and the regional bus transit services.

Frequency: The automobile, by offering unlimited potential frequency and because it can be driven at virtually any time and to virtually any destination, has the highest connectivity of any mode.

An improved rail system would enhance the service to the regional intercity transportation network that offers a variety of services with different stopping patterns (express, skip-stop, and local services) to serve intermediate, and shorter-distance intercity trips.

The improved intercity rail system would serve the existing stations along the LOSSAN corridor, adding two additional stations in Norwalk and University Towne Centre, with 16 intercity passenger trains a day forecasted for 2020, providing hourly service in each direction.

### **Alternatives Comparison for Connectivity**

No-Project Alternative: Under No-Project, there would be no net improvement to the connectivity options in the Southern California over the existing conditions. There would no new modes introduced and no new intermodal terminals or connections.

**Rail Improvements Alternative:** The Rail Improvements Alternative would vastly improve the rail mode in Southern California's intercity transportation system. The improved rail system would improve intermodal connections at rail stations in urban centers. The system would add frequencies to the region's intercity travel network, allowing greater flexibility in travel time and location. Of the two alternatives, the Rail Improvement Alternative provide the highest level of connectivity in the study area.

### **Sustainable Capacity**

Sustainable capacity is a measure of the transportation capacity of an alternative to meet not only the projected demand, but to provide a sustainable capacity over time without the need to develop additional infrastructure. Sustainable capacity is quantitatively measured by the amount of additional transportation infrastructure required to accommodate potential future demand beyond the demand forecast for this system.

**Highway Mode Characteristics:** The sustainable capacity of a highway facility depends largely on the availability of travel lanes and the speed that autos are able to travel. This relationship is expressed as level of service (LOS), which is defined in Section 3.1, Traffic and Circulation. While all modes are subject to capacity constraints that affect the vehicle's speed, given the small capacity of most automobiles (5 passengers), more vehicles are required to accommodate a large passenger demand. To meet a higher travel demand, automobiles have two basic options for increasing capacity.

- Vehicle size may be increased (buses): the higher the capacity of the vehicle, the more passengers can be carried at a high rate of speed and this assumes or requires a change in typical driver behavior.
- Capacity of the roadway may be increased (highway expansion): the addition of lanes allows more autos to travel safely with sufficient stopping distance.

**Intercity Rail Mode Characteristics:** Sustainable capacity of a rail system is determined by the attributes listed below.

- The capacity of rail-line (e.g., single track or double track).
- The capacity of the train (number of trainsets, or locomotives and coaches).
- The capacity of stations and passenger facilities, and the lengths of platforms.
- The speed at which the train can travel.
- The train control system.
- The degree that shared-use track is utilized by other services, thereby reducing available capacity of the passenger rail system.

The capacity constraints affecting the existing Los Angeles to San Diego intercity passenger system are in large part due to the extensive single-tracked segments along the corridor. The proposed improvements would alleviate this capacity constraint, allowing for a more balanced transportation system that would relieve some of the projected near and long-term demand on the regional transportation system.



### **Alternatives Comparison for Sustainable Capacity**

No-Project Alternative: There is little to no sustainable capacity in No-Project. The future transportation infrastructure is severely constrained by the limited number of capacity improvements funded or programmed for 2020. Improvements associated with No-Project are generally to existing interchanges versus line capacity expansion or improvement projects. The highway system's sustainable capacity would require additional infrastructure to accommodate any growth in demand. Therefore, No-Project would not accommodate the theoretical demand and would require extensive highway infrastructure expansion to have sustainable capacity.

Rail Improvements Alternative: The Rail Improvements Alternative would provide a train system with sufficient infrastructure to meet the projected demand and to allow for capacity expansion beyond the design year requirements. It would provide an improved mode for the region's intercity transportation system, effectively creating a capacity release valve for the other intercity modes. The ultimate capacity of the system could exceed the forecasted 20- to 40-year demand by increasing frequency of service or adding cars to trainsets on the dual-track system. The Rail Improvements Alternative would have the highest sustainable capacity.

### **Passenger Cost**

Passenger cost is a measure of the relative differences in travel costs between the No-Project and Rail Improvements Alternative. Passenger cost for this analysis means the total cost of the trip, including the cost of traveling to the station, the train fare, and other associated expenses. Cost is one of the key factors that can influence a passengers' choice of modes. Passenger cost is quantitatively measured by actual costs to the passenger associated with a typical door-to-door trip.

Automobile Mode Characteristics: For highway travel, it is assumed that the entire door-to-door trip is made with a private automobile and that there are no ancillary access costs. Automobile travel costs are shown as the total costs per passenger and per automobile. The total costs of owning and operating a vehicle include depreciation, maintenance, repairs, taxes, insurance, etc. and are shown on a per mile basis in Table 3.2-10. Perceived auto trip costs are considered to be lower than the total cost of auto trips based upon the assumption that fixed costs of auto ownership would be incurred regardless of trip mode choice.

Table 3.2-11 summarizes the costs for making a one-way trip for between Los Angeles and San Diego. Parking is not included even though this could be an additional expense. (All-day parking in downtown Los Angeles can be as high as \$25.) As shown in the table, the door-to-door average perceived one-way cost per person for traveling between representative city pairs by highway range from \$15 to \$48 per passenger, and \$25 to \$81 for total cost.

**Table 3.2-10**  
**Auto Ownership and Operating Costs by Category (2003\$)\***

Cost Category	Percent of Cost	Cents (per mile)
Financing	15	7.7
Depreciation	35	18.0
Fuel Tax	4	2.0
Fuel	9	4.6
Repairs	2	1.0
Maintenance	5	2.6
State Fees	3	1.5
Insurance	27	13.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>51.2</b>

<sup>a</sup> All costs escalated by 3% for 3 years to calculate 2003 dollars.

Source: FHWA, *Our Nation's Highways, 2000*

**Table 3.2-11**  
**One-Way Door-to-Door Trip Automobile Costs - (2003\$)<sup>a</sup>**

City Pair	Average Total Cost per Passenger <sup>c</sup>	Total Costs per Auto
Los Angeles downtown to San Diego downtown	\$25	\$61

<sup>a</sup> All costs escalated by 3% for 3 years to calculate 2003 dollars.

<sup>b</sup> Total cost based on average cost of owning and operating a vehicle of 51 cents per mile divided by the assumed average auto occupancy rate of 2.4 persons (for intercity travel). Source: Federal Highway Administration, *Our Nation's Highways, 2000*.

<sup>c</sup> Full cost of driving a single-occupant auto based on average cost of owning and operating a vehicle of 51 cents per mile.

Source: Federal Highway Administration, *Our Nation's Highways, 2000*; Parsons Brinckerhoff 2003

**Intercity Rail Mode Characteristics:** The primary cost associated with intercity rail travel is the cost of the train ticket. For this analysis, the fare schedule currently used by Amtrak was used for comparison purposes (Table 3.2-12). This cost represents a standard one-way fare charged to passengers along the corridor from Los Angeles to San Diego.

Since train travel involves use of another mode at the beginning and end of the trip, an access and egress fee of about \$5 or \$6 (\$10 to \$12 total) are part of the average total costs<sup>1</sup>. Intercity rail travel requires at least one mode change to access the nearest station.

<sup>1</sup> This cost is used as an estimate for planning purposes, and could include a variety of costs, including automobile costs to get to or from the station, transit or taxi fares.

**Table 3.2-12**  
**Intercity Rail One-Way Trip Passenger Costs (2003\$)<sup>a</sup>**

City Pairs	Average Total Cost <sup>a</sup>
Los Angeles downtown to San Diego downtown	\$37
<sup>a</sup> Sample costs include fares as well as parking, taxi fares, and other costs involved with traveling to and from the train station.	

For single occupant vehicles, the Rail Improvements Alternative would provide an overall per trip cost savings. On average the improved intercity rail system could save around 39% of the per trip costs associated with the No-Project Alternative. The intercity rail mode is cost-competitive with the highway mode for single occupant trips.

### 3.2.4 ALIGNMENT OPTION COMPARISON

Travel time and connectivity for the intercity rail system can all be affected by the alignment option. The improvements proposed for the LOSSAN corridor would provide a higher level of connectivity to Metrolink and the regional transit systems along the corridor, in addition to providing a higher level of reliability and safety. However, the decision on which alternative alignments to take through selected segments of the travel corridor would have implications as to the level of connectivity, reliability and safety provided. The segments, which provide the greatest difference in alternative alignments are:

- San Juan Capistrano
- Dana Point / San Clemente
- Del Mar
- University Towne Centre

Each alignment option developed for these segments has both benefits and impacts to the operations and travel conditions of the intercity rail service. Table 3.2-13 below outlines the differences between the major alignment alternatives by the established transportation factors.

**Table 3.2-13  
Alignment Option Comparisons**

Alternative	Connectivity	Travel Time	Reliability	Safety	Capacity	Passenger Cost
<b>San Juan Capistrano</b>						
Trabuco Creek (Low-Build)	Provides a full replacement station	Slower travel time due to station	Same as High-Build	Same as High-Build	Same as High-Build	Same as High-Build
Interstate 5 (High-Build)	Reduces connectivity by reducing service to existing station	Faster travel time as it bypasses station	Same as Low-Build	Same as Low-Build	Same as Low-Build	Same as Low-Build
<b>Dana Point / San Clemente</b>						
Short Tunnel (Low-Build)	Same as High-Build	Slower travel time due to greater number of curves	Preserves part of old alignment with speed restrictions along beach	Preserves part of old alignment along beach with a high frequency of trespassing	Same as High-Build	Same as High-Build
Long Split Tunnel (High-Build)	Same as Low-Build	Faster travel because of fewer curves	Fully grade separated on new alignment	Fully grade separated on new alignment	Same as Low-Build	Same as Low-Build
<b>Del Mar</b>						
Camino Del Mar Tunnel (Low-Build)	Same as High-Build	Slower travel time due to greater number of curves	Same as High-Build	Same as High-Build	Same as High-Build	Same as High-Build
Interstate 5 (High-Build)	Same as Low-Build	Faster travel because of fewer curves	Same as Low-Build	Same as Low-Build	Same as Low-Build	Same as Low-Build
<b>University Towne Centre</b>						
Interstate 5 (Low-Build)	No additional station provided	Faster travel time as it has no station	Same as High-Build	Same as High-Build	Same as High-Build	Same as High-Build
UTC Tunnel (High-Build)	Higher connectivity with a new intermodal station	Slower travel time due to station	Same as Low-Build	Same as Low-Build	Same as Low-Build	Same as Low-Build

### 3.3 AIR QUALITY

This section provides an overview of the two air basins studied for this Program EIR/EIS and describes the composition of air pollutants in and the status of these air basins. In addition, this section describes the potential impacts that may directly and indirectly affect regional air quality under the No Project and proposed Rail Improvements Alternative, using the existing and No Project conditions for comparison.

*Air pollution* is a general term that refers to one or more chemical substances that degrade the quality of the atmosphere. Eight air pollutants have been identified by EPA as being of concern nationwide: carbon monoxide (CO), sulfur oxides (SO<sub>x</sub>), hydrocarbons (HC), nitrogen oxides (NO<sub>x</sub>), ozone (O<sub>3</sub>), particulate matter sized 10 microns or less (PM<sub>10</sub>), particulate matter sized 2.5 microns or less (PM<sub>2.5</sub>) and lead (Pb). Except for HC, all of these pollutants (NO<sub>x</sub> in the form of NO<sub>2</sub> and SO<sub>x</sub> in the form of SO<sub>2</sub>) are collectively referred to as criteria pollutants. Pollutants that are considered *greenhouse gases* also affect air quality. Greenhouse gases include, NO<sub>x</sub>, HC, and carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>). The sources of these pollutants, their effects on human health and general welfare, and their final deposition in the atmosphere vary considerably. This section also describes diesel particulate matter (DPM).

#### 3.3.1 Regulatory Requirements and Methods of Evaluation

##### A. REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS

###### Federal Regulations

Air quality is regulated at the federal level under the Clean Air Act (CAA) of 1970 and the Final Conformity Rule (40 C.F.R. Parts 51 and 93). The Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990 (Public Law [P.L.] 101-549, November 15, 1990) direct the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to implement strong environmental policies and regulations that will ensure cleaner air quality. According to Title I, Section 101, Paragraph F of the Clean Air Act Amendments (42 U.S.C. § 7401 et seq.): “No federal agency may approve, accept or fund any transportation plan, program or project unless such plan, program or project has been found to conform to any applicable state implementation plan (SIP) in effect under this act.” Title 1, Section 101, Paragraph F of the amendments, amends Section 176(c) of the CAA to define conformity as follows: conformity to an implementation plan’s purpose of eliminating or reducing the severity and number of violations of the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) and achieving expeditious attainment of such standards; and that such activities will not cause any of the following occurrences.

- Cause or contribute to any new violation of any NAAQS in any area.
- Increase the frequency or severity of any existing violation of any NAAQS in any area.
- Delay timely attainment of any NAAQS or any required interim emissions reductions or other milestones in any area. (42 U.S.C. § 7506[c][1].)

###### State Regulations

Air quality is regulated at the state level by the California Air Resources Board (CARB), the agency designated to prepare the SIP required by the federal CAA, under the California Clean Air Act of 1988 (Assembly Bill [AB] 2595) and other provisions of the

California Health and Safety Code (Health and Safety Code § 39000 et seq.). California's Clean Air Act (CCAA) requires all districts designated as nonattainment for any pollutant to "adopt and enforce rules and regulations to achieve and maintain the state and federal ambient air quality standards in all areas affected by emission sources under their jurisdiction."

The responsibility for controlling air pollution in California is shared by 35 local or regional air pollution control and air quality management districts, CARB, and EPA. The districts issue permits for industrial pollutant sources and adopt air quality management plans and rules. CARB establishes the state ambient air quality standards, adopts and enforces emission standards for mobile sources, adopts standards and suggested control measures for toxic air contaminants, provides technical support to the districts, oversees district compliance, approves local air quality plans, and prepares and submits the SIP to EPA. EPA establishes NAAQS, sets emission standards for certain mobile sources (airplanes and locomotives), oversees the state air programs, and reviews and approves the SIP. CARB inventories sources of air pollution in California's air basins and is required to update the inventory triennially, starting in 1998 (Health and Safety Code §§ 39607 and 30607.3). CARB also identifies air basins that are affected by transported air pollution (Health and Safety Code § 39610; 17 C.C.R. Part 70500).

### **National and State Ambient Air Quality Standards**

As required by the Clean Air Act Amendments of 1970 (P.L. 91-064, December 31, 1970) and the Clean Air Act Amendment of 1977 (P.L. 95-95, August 7, 1977), EPA has established NAAQS for the following air pollutants: CO, O<sub>3</sub>, NO<sub>2</sub>, PM<sub>10</sub>, SO<sub>x</sub>, and Pb. CARB has also established standards for these pollutants. Recent legislation requires CARB to develop and adopt regulations to reduce greenhouse gases (AB 1493, 2002). The federal and state governments have both adopted health-based standards for pollutants. For some pollutants, the national and state standards are very similar; for other pollutants, the state standards are more stringent. The differences in the standards are generally due to the different health effect studies considered during the standard-setting process and how these studies were interpreted.

Table 3.3-1 lists the federal and state standards. The federal primary standards are intended to protect the public health with an adequate margin of safety. The federal secondary standards are intended to protect the nation's welfare and account for air-pollutant impacts on soil, water, visibility, vegetation, and other aspects of the general welfare. Areas that violate these standards are designated nonattainment areas. Areas that once violated the standards but now meet the standards are classified as maintenance areas. Classification of each area under the federal standards is done by EPA based on state recommendations and after an extensive review of monitored data. Classification under the state standards is done by CARB.



**Table 3.3-1  
State and National Ambient Air Quality Standards**

Pollutant	Averaging Time	California Standards <sup>a</sup>		Federal Standards <sup>b</sup>		
		Concentration <sup>c</sup>	Method <sup>d</sup>	Primary <sup>c,e</sup>	Secondary <sup>c,f,g</sup>	Method <sup>g</sup>
O <sub>3</sub>	1 hour	0.09 ppm (180 ug/m <sup>3</sup> )	Ultraviolet photometry	0.12 ppm (235 ug/m <sup>3</sup> ) <sup>h</sup>	Same as primary standard	Ultraviolet photometry
	8 hour	N/A		0.08 ppm (157 ug/m <sup>3</sup> ) <sup>h</sup>		
PM <sub>10</sub>	24 hour	50 ug/m <sup>3</sup>	Gravimetric or beta attenuation	150 ug/m <sup>3</sup>	Same as primary standard	Inertial separation and gravimetric analysis
	Annual arithmetic mean	20 ug/m <sup>3</sup>		50 ug/m <sup>3</sup>		
PM <sub>2.5</sub>	24 hour	No separate state standard	Gravimetric or beta attenuation	65 ug/m <sup>3</sup>	Same as primary standard	Inertial separation and gravimetric analysis
	Annual arithmetic mean	12 ug/m <sup>3</sup>		15 ug/m <sup>3</sup>		
CO	8 hour	9.0 ppm (10 mg/m <sup>3</sup> )	Non-dispersive infrared photometry (NDIR)	9 ppm (10 mg/m <sup>3</sup> )	None	Non-dispersive infrared photometry (NDIR)
	1 hour	20 ppm (23 mg/m <sup>3</sup> )		35 ppm (40 mg/m <sup>3</sup> )		
	8 hour (Lake Tahoe)	6 ppm (7 mg/m <sup>3</sup> )		N/A		
NO <sub>2</sub>	Annual arithmetic mean	N/A	Gas phase chemiluminescence	0.053 ppm (100 ug/m <sup>3</sup> )	Same as primary standard	Gas phase chemiluminescence
	1 hour	0.25 ppm (470 ug/m <sup>3</sup> )		N/A		
Pb <sup>i</sup>	30 days average	1.5 ug/m <sup>3</sup>	Atomic absorption	N/A	N/A	High volume sampler and atomic absorption
	Calendar quarter	N/A		1.5 ug/m <sup>3</sup>	Same as primary standard	
SO <sub>2</sub>	Annual arithmetic mean	N/A	Ultraviolet Fluorescence	0.030 ppm (80 ug/m <sup>3</sup> )	N/A	Spectrophotometry (Pararosaniline method)
	24 hour	0.04 ppm (105 ug/m <sup>3</sup> )		0.14 ppm (365 ug/m <sup>3</sup> )	N/A	
	3 hour	N/A		N/A	0.5 ppm (1300 ug/m <sup>3</sup> )	
	1 hour	0.25 ppm (655 ug/m <sup>3</sup> )		N/A	N/A	

**Table 3.3-1  
State and National Ambient Air Quality Standards (continued)**

Pollutant	Averaging Time	California Standards <sup>a</sup>		Federal Standards <sup>b</sup>		
		Concentration <sup>c</sup>	Method <sup>d</sup>	Primary <sup>c,e</sup>	Secondary <sup>c,f,g</sup>	Method <sup>g</sup>
Visibility reducing particles	8 hour (10 a.m. to 6 p.m., Pacific Standard Time)	In sufficient amount to produce an extinction coefficient of 0.23 per km-visibility of 10 mi (16 km) or more (0.07–30 mi [0.11–48 km] or more for Lake Tahoe) due to particles when the relative humidity is less than 70%. Method: Beta attenuation and transmittance through filter tape.		No federal standards		
Sulfates	24 hour	25 ug/m <sup>3</sup>				
Hydrogen sulfide	1 hour	0.03 ppm (42 ug/m <sup>3</sup> )	Ultraviolet fluorescence			
Vinyl Chloride <sup>h</sup>	24 hour	0.01 ppm (26 ug/m <sup>3</sup> )	Gas chroma-tography			

<sup>a</sup> California standards for O<sub>3</sub>, CO (except Lake Tahoe), SO<sub>2</sub> (1 and 24 hour), NO<sub>2</sub>, suspended particulate matter-PM<sub>10</sub>, PM<sub>2.5</sub>, and visibility reducing particles, are values that are not to be exceeded. All others are not to be equaled or exceeded. California ambient air quality standards are listed in the Table of Standards in Section 70200 of Title 17 of the California Code of Regulations.

<sup>b</sup> National standards (other than O<sub>3</sub>, particulate matter, and those based on annual averages or annual arithmetic mean) are not to be exceeded more than once a year. The ozone standard is attained when the fourth highest 8-hour concentration in a year, averaged over 3 years, is equal to or less than the standard. For PM<sub>10</sub>, the 24-hour standard is attained when the expected number of days per calendar year with a 24-hour average concentration above 150 ug/m<sup>3</sup> is equal to or less than one. For PM<sub>2.5</sub>, the 24 hour standard is attained when 98% of the daily concentrations, averaged over 3 years, are equal to or less than the standards.

<sup>c</sup> Concentration expressed first in units in which it was promulgated. Equivalent units given in parentheses are based upon a reference temperature of 25° C (77 ° F) and a reference pressure of 760 mm (30 in) of mercury. Most measurements of air quality are to be corrected to a reference temperature of 25° C (77 ° F) and reference pressure measurements of air quality are to be corrected to a reference temperature of 25° C (77 ° F) and a reference pressure of 760 mm (30 in) of mercury (1,013.2 millibar [1 atmosphere]); ppm in this table refers to ppm volume, or micromoles of pollutant per mole of gas.

<sup>d</sup> Any equivalent procedure that can be shown to the satisfaction of CARB to give equivalent results at or near the level of the air quality standard may be used.

<sup>e</sup> National Primary Standards: The levels of air quality necessary, with an adequate margin of safety to protect the public health.

National Secondary Standards: The levels of air quality necessary to protect the public welfare from any known or anticipated adverse effects of a pollutant.

<sup>f</sup> Reference method as described by EPA. An "equivalent method" of measurement may be used but must have a "consistent relationship to the reference method" and must be approved by EPA.

<sup>g</sup> New federal 8-hour O<sub>3</sub> and PM<sub>2.5</sub> standards were promulgated by EPA on July 18, 1997.

<sup>h</sup> ARB has identified lead and vinyl chloride as "toxic air contaminants" with no threshold level of exposure for adverse health effects determined. These actions allow for the implementation of control measures at levels below the ambient concentrations specified for these pollutants.

Source: California Air Resources Board 2003

## B. METHOD OF EVALUATION OF IMPACTS

### Pollutants

Pollutants that can be traced principally to transportation sources and are thus relevant to the evaluation of the project alternatives include CO, O<sub>3</sub> precursors (NO<sub>x</sub> and total organic gases or TOG), PM<sub>10</sub>, and CO<sub>2</sub>. Since high CO levels are mostly the result of congested traffic conditions combined with adverse meteorological conditions, high CO concentrations generally occur within 300 ft (91 m) to 600 ft (183 m) of heavily traveled roadways. Concentrations of CO on a regional and localized or microscale basis can consequently be predicted appropriately. TOG and NO<sub>x</sub> emissions from mobile sources are of concern primarily because of their role as precursors in the formation of O<sub>3</sub> and particulate matter. O<sub>3</sub> is formed through a series of reactions that occur in the atmosphere in the presence of sunlight over a period of hours. Since the reactions are slow and occur as the pollutants are diffusing downwind, elevated O<sub>3</sub> levels are often found many miles from sources of the precursor pollutants. The impacts of TOG and NO<sub>x</sub> emissions are therefore generally examined on a regional level. CO<sub>2</sub> emission burdens, because of their global impact, are currently expressed only on the statewide level by CARB and EPA. In this analysis, however, CO<sub>2</sub> impacts are discussed on the regional level. It is appropriate to predict concentrations of PM<sub>10</sub> on a regional and localized basis. (EPA is currently developing standardized methodologies to evaluate PM<sub>10</sub> and PM<sub>2.5</sub> on a quantitative, local level [EPA420-B-06-902; March 2006]). Diesel particulate matter (DPM) is addressed qualitatively in this section, and would be addressed further in project-level studies where potential sensitive receptor sites can be specifically identified.

### Pollutant Burdens

The air quality analysis for this Program EIR/EIS focuses on the potential regional impacts on air quality. The estimated regional pollutant burdens were quantified for the No Project and Rail Improvements Alternatives, based on the changes that would occur in the number of locomotives traveling along the LOSSAN corridor. Regional changes in vehicular traffic are not addressed in this analysis. Although the Rail Improvements Alternative is expected to accommodate part of the demand for increased passenger rail service, the projected population and employment increase between now and 2020 would result in increased vehicular traffic as well. Therefore, the Rail Improvements Alternative would not have a substantive effect on regional VMT.

Estimated emissions for 2005 and for year 2020 with and without the proposed Rail Improvements Alternative were calculated using emission-factor equations in EPA Publication 420, Emission Factors for Locomotives (EPA420-F-97-051, December 1997). Fleet average emission factors were used (Table 9, Publication 420) after being adjusted for only line-haul locomotive emission factors (Table 3, Publication 420). Appendix 3.3-A of this PEIR/EIS provides additional details and all calculations used in this analysis.

Operational characteristics were assumed for this Program-level analysis based on available information regarding locomotive traffic in the LOSSAN corridor. All passenger trains were assumed to have one locomotive, while all freight trains were assumed to have four due to the grades and loads being carried. Calculation of fuel usage assumed that the region-wide average speed of passenger trains would be 70 miles per hour, and

freight trains would be 50 miles per hour. (Top speeds are expected to be higher than this, as described in Chapter 2; however, a conservative, average corridor speed was used for the air quality assessment, based on an increase of over 80% in locomotive travel in the corridor between 2005 and 2020 with the proposed improvements in place.) The increase in the number of trains assumed under the Rail Improvements Alternative varies by day of the week and by corridor section. Appendix 3.3-A provides a detailed chart showing numbers of trains (for both the No-Project and the Rail Improvements alternatives), as well as additional details on air quality calculations and estimates.

Potential changes in localized vehicular traffic and in emissions caused by construction are addressed qualitatively in this analysis. These potential changes cannot be quantified without project-level design and construction planning information, which would not be available until a later analysis stage.

### 3.3.2 Affected Environment

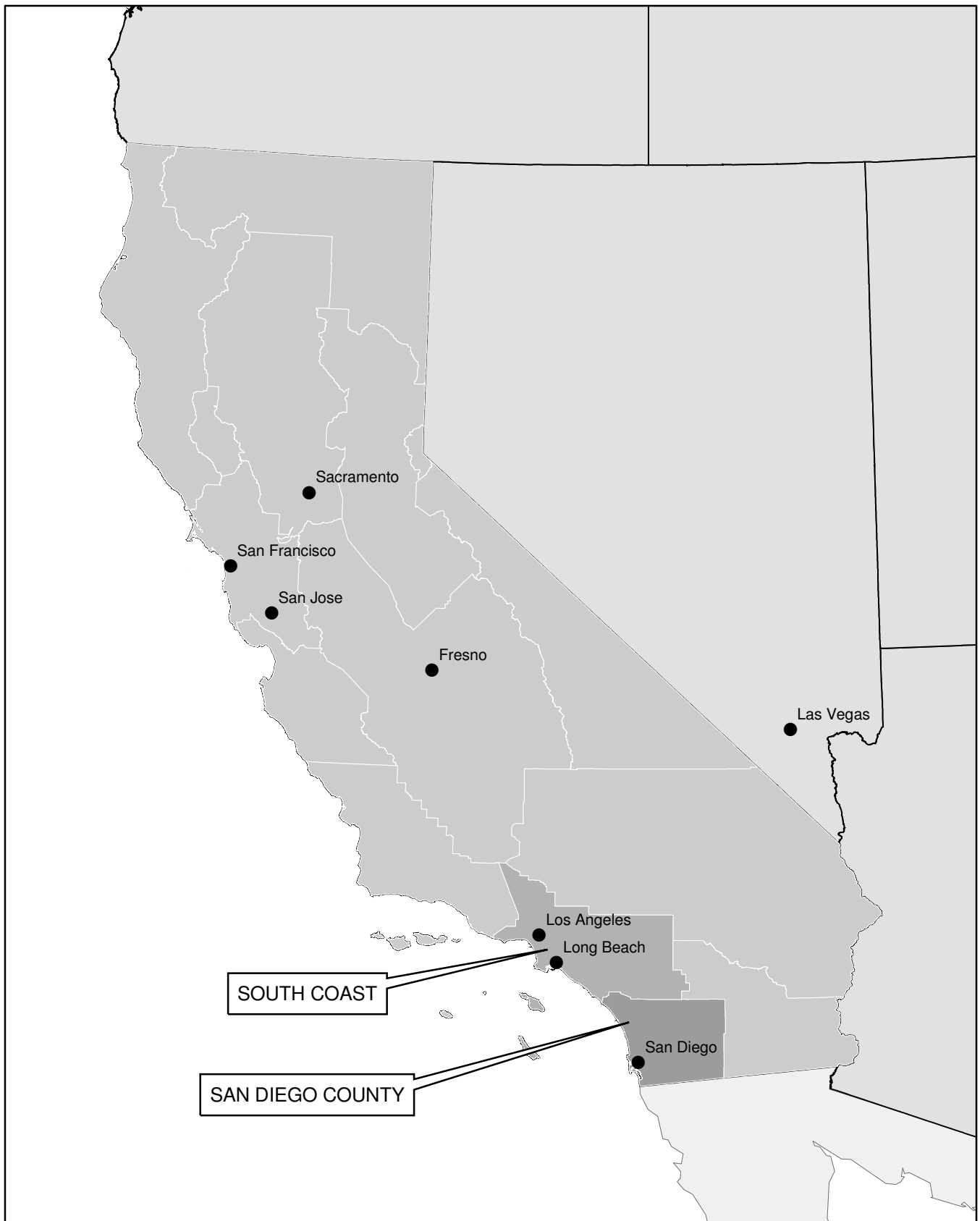
#### A. STUDY AREA DEFINED

California is divided into 15 air basins (17 C.C.R. § 60100 et seq.). Each has unique terrain, meteorology, and emission sources. The two air basins directly affected by the proposed alternatives are the South Coast and San Diego air basins (see Figure 3.3-1). Air quality in nearby air basins could also be affected by the proposed alternatives. These effects are expected to be less than those experienced by the basins that physically contain the project. For this program-level analysis, potential impacts on air quality are described only for the air basins that physically contain the LOSSAN rail corridor. Nearby air basins are not discussed in this program-level analysis. Once the alternatives are refined and more detailed analyses are conducted, nearby basins should be studied.

#### B. GENERAL DISCUSSION OF AIR QUALITY RESOURCES

Each pollutant is briefly described below.

- Carbon monoxide (CO) is a colorless, odorless gas that is generated in the urban environment primarily by the incomplete combustion of fossil fuels in motor vehicles. Relatively high concentrations of CO can be found near crowded intersections and along heavily used roadways carrying slow-moving traffic. CO chemically combines with the hemoglobin in red blood cells to decrease the oxygen-carrying capacity of the blood. Prolonged exposure can cause headaches, drowsiness, or loss of equilibrium.
- Sulfur oxides (SO<sub>x</sub>) constitute a class of compounds of which sulfur dioxide (SO<sub>2</sub>) and sulfur trioxide (SO<sub>3</sub>) are of great importance in air quality. SO<sub>x</sub> is also generated by the incomplete combustion of fossil fuels in motor vehicles. However, relatively little SO<sub>x</sub> is emitted from motor vehicles, particularly now because of the low-sulfur fuel standards in place (see also Section 3.3.A). The health effects of SO<sub>x</sub> include respiratory illness, damage to the respiratory tract, and bronchio-constriction.



**FIGURE 3.3-1**  
**Air Basins Potentially Affected by Project Alternatives**  
 LOSSAN Rail Corridor Improvements  
 Program Environmental Impact Report / Environmental Impact Statement







- Hydrocarbons (HC) comprise a wide variety of organic compounds, including methane ( $\text{CH}_4$ ), emitted principally from the storage, handling, and combustion of fossil fuels. Hydrocarbons are classified according to their level of photochemical reactivity: relatively reactive or relatively non-reactive. Non-reactive hydrocarbons consist mostly of methane. Emissions of total organic gases (TOG) and reactive organic gases (ROG) are two classes of hydrocarbons measured for California's emission inventory. TOG includes all hydrocarbons, both reactive and non-reactive. In contrast, ROG includes only the reactive HC. TOG is measured because non-reactive HC have enough reactivity to play an important role in photochemistry. Though HC can cause eye irritation and breathing difficulty, their principal health effects are related to their role in the formation of ozone. HC is also considered a greenhouse gas.
- Nitrogen oxides ( $\text{NO}_x$ ) constitute a class of compounds that include nitrogen dioxide ( $\text{NO}_2$ ) and nitric oxide (NO), both of which are emitted by motor vehicles. Although  $\text{NO}_2$  and NO can irritate the eyes and nose and impair the respiratory system,  $\text{NO}_x$ , like HC, is of concern primarily because of its role in the formation of ozone. Nitrogen oxide is also considered a greenhouse gas.
- Ozone ( $\text{O}_3$ ) is a photochemical oxidant that is a major cause of lung and eye irritation in urban environments. It is formed through a series of reactions involving HC and  $\text{NO}_x$  that take place in the atmosphere in the presence of sunlight. Relatively high concentrations of  $\text{O}_3$  are normally found only in the summer because low wind speeds or stagnant air coupled with warm temperatures and cloudless skies provide the optimum conditions for  $\text{O}_3$  formation. Because of the long reaction time involved, peak ozone concentrations often occur far downwind of the precursor emissions. Thus, ozone is considered a regional pollutant rather than a localized pollutant.
- Particulate matter includes both airborne and deposited particles of a wide range of size and composition. Of particular concern for air quality are particles smaller than or equal to 10 microns and 2.5 microns in size,  $\text{PM}_{10}$  and  $\text{PM}_{2.5}$ , respectively. The data collected through many nationwide studies indicate that most  $\text{PM}_{10}$  is the product of fugitive dust, wind erosion, and agricultural and forestry sources, while a small portion is produced by fuel combustion processes. However, combustion of fossil fuels account for a significant portion of  $\text{PM}_{2.5}$ . Airborne particulate matter mainly affects the respiratory system.
- Lead (Pb) is a stable chemical element that persists and accumulates both in the environment and in humans and animals. There are many sources of lead pollution, including mobile sources such as motor vehicles and other gasoline-powered engines, and non-mobile sources such as petroleum refineries. Lead levels in the urban environment from mobile sources have significantly decreased due to the federally mandated switch to lead-free gasoline. The principal effects of lead on humans are on the blood-forming, nervous, and renal systems.
- Carbon dioxide ( $\text{CO}_2$ ) is a colorless, odorless gas that occurs naturally in the earth's atmosphere. Significant quantities are also emitted into the air by fossil fuel combustion.  $\text{CO}_2$  is considered a greenhouse gas. The natural greenhouse effect allows the earth to remain warm and sustain life. Greenhouse gases trap the sun's heat in the atmosphere and help determine our climate. As atmospheric

concentrations of greenhouse gases rise, so may temperatures. Higher temperatures may result in more emissions, increased smog, and respiratory disease.

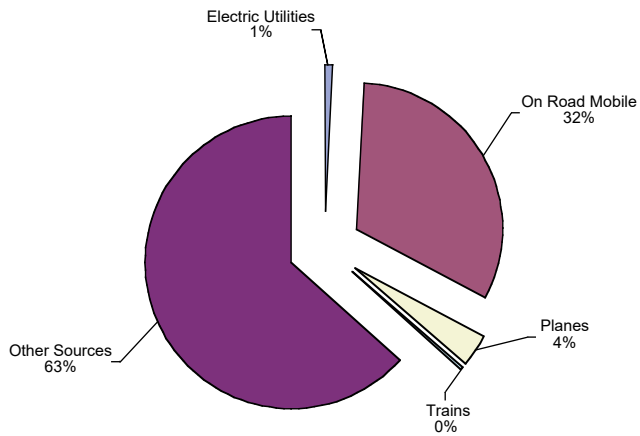
- Diesel particulate matter (DPM) is part of a complex mixture that makes up diesel exhaust. Diesel exhaust is composed of two phases, either gas or particle. The gas phase is composed of many of the urban hazardous air pollutants, such as acetaldehyde, acrolein, benzene, 1,3-butadiene, formaldehyde and polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons. The particle phase also has many different types of particles that can be classified by size or composition. The size of diesel particulates that are of greatest health concern are those that are in the categories of fine and ultra fine particles. Diesel exhaust is emitted from a broad range of diesel engines, including the on-road diesel engines of trucks, buses and cars, and the off-road diesel engines that include locomotives and heavy-duty equipment. Diesel exhaust can cause health effects from both short-term exposures and from long-term exposures, such as repeated occupational exposures. Acute exposure to diesel exhaust may cause irritation to the eyes, nose, throat and lungs, and some neurological effects such as lightheadedness. Acute exposure may also elicit a cough or nausea as well as exacerbate asthma. CARB has designated diesel particulates as a toxic air contaminant since 1998.

DPM is addressed qualitatively in this document. Additional, localized risk analyses would be conducted during project-level reviews (see Section 3.3.6). Populations most vulnerable to locomotive DPM in the study area may include railroad employees in rail yards and large depots where locomotives idle for long periods of time in close proximity to workers. Other sensitive areas may include outdoor school yards and recreational fields or parks near operational rail corridors, especially in areas where locomotives may idle due to traffic congestion along the rail line.

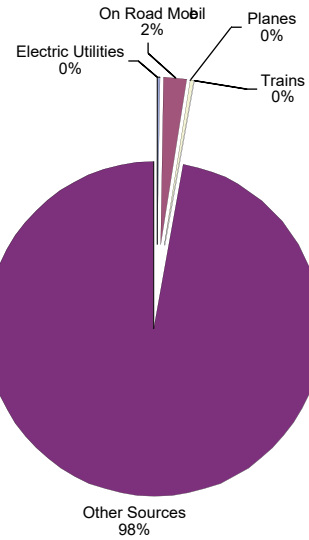
Figure 3.3-2 shows the percentage contribution of four transportation and utility sources statewide for the year 2020. Of the four sources of concern shown in the figure, on-road mobile sources are the largest single contributor for all the pollutants.

The existing baseline pollutant burden for each of the air basins is described in the following section. The existing baseline represents the current air quality conditions in each of the air basins in the study area.

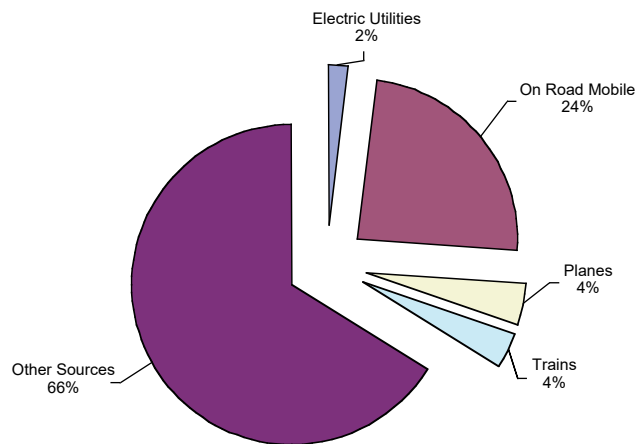
**2020 CO Source Distribution Statewide**



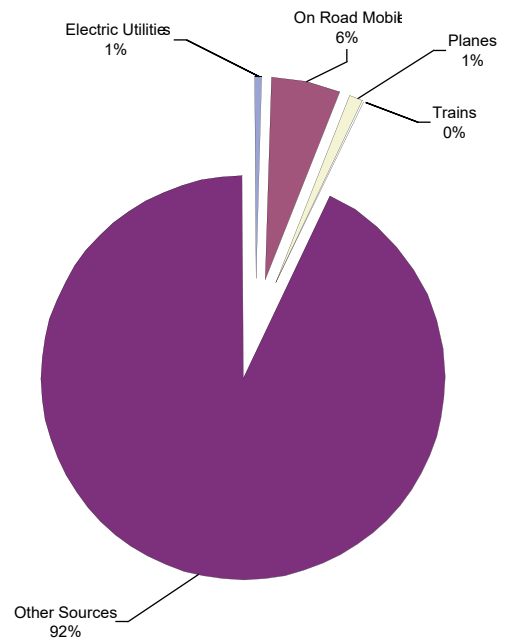
**2020 PM10 Source Distribution Statewide**



**2020 NOx Source Distribution Statewide**



**2020 TOG Source Distribution Statewide**



**FIGURE 3.3-2**

**CO, PM, NOx, TOG Source Distribution - Year 2020**  
LOSSAN Rail Corridor Improvements  
Program Environmental Impact Report / Environmental Impact Statement





### C. AIR RESOURCES BY AIR BASIN

The air quality attainment status based on state and federal standards for CO, particulate matter, and O<sub>3</sub> for each of the air basins in the study area is shown in Table 3.3-2. All air basins are assigned an attainment status for air pollutants based on meeting state and federal pollutant standards. There are some differences between state and federal standards, so a pollutant might not have the same status under each standard. A basin is considered in attainment for a particular pollutant if it meets the standards set for that pollutant. A basin is considered in maintenance for a pollutant if the standards were once violated but are now met. A basin is considered nonattainment for a particular pollutant if its air quality exceeds standards for that pollutant. A basin is considered unclassified if the area cannot be classified on the basis of available information as meeting or not meeting the applicable standard. The standards and status designations are discussed in more detail above in Section 3.3.1, Regulatory Requirements and Methods of Evaluation.

**Table 3.3-2  
Attainment Status of Affected Air Basins**

Air Basin	Pollutant					
	CO		PM <sub>10</sub>		O <sub>3</sub>	
	National Standard	State Standard	National Standard	State Standard	National Standard	State Standard
South Coast	Nonattainment	Nonattainment/transitional	Nonattainment	Nonattainment	Nonattainment	Nonattainment
San Diego County	Maintenance	Attainment	Unclassified	Nonattainment	Nonattainment	Nonattainment

Source: California Air Resources Board 2002

#### South Coast Air Basin

The South Coast Air Basin encompasses 6,729 sq mi (17,428 sq km). It includes California's largest metropolitan region: all of Orange County, the western highly urbanized portions of San Bernardino and Riverside Counties, and the southern two-thirds of Los Angeles County. It accommodates a population of 14.9 million, or more than 40% of California's population, and is the most populous air basin in the state. About 30% of the state's total criteria pollutant emissions are generated in the basin. The basin is generally a lowland plain bounded by the Pacific Ocean on the west and by mountains on the other three sides.

The population in the South Coast Air Basin grew at high rates from 1981 to 2000, increasing 34% from 11.1 million in 1981 to 14.9 in 2000. Daily VMT increased about 84% during that same period. While high growth rates are generally associated with increased emissions, the implemented control programs in the basin have resulted in emission decreases.

The warm weather associated with predominantly high-pressure systems in the basin is conducive to the formation of O<sub>3</sub>. The surrounding mountains help cause frequent low inversion heights and stagnant air conditions. These factors combine to trap pollutants in the air basin, and resulting concentrations are among the highest in the state.

Aggressive emission controls have resulted in a downward trend in O<sub>3</sub> levels. The basin is classified as both a state and national nonattainment area for O<sub>3</sub> (1-hour standard).

NO<sub>x</sub> emissions in the basin fell by about 38% from 1985 to 2000 and are forecasted to continue that trend to 2010. ROG emissions remained relatively flat from 1975 to 1985. Between 1985 and 2000 they decreased by approximately 60%. ROG emissions are predicted to decrease another 40% by 2010.

Emissions of CO in the South Coast Air Basin have been trending downward since 1975, even though VMT has increased and industry activity has grown. Los Angeles County is designated as nonattainment for the state ambient air quality standards, while the remainder of the air basin is designated as attainment. The basin is designated as nonattainment for CO for the national ambient air quality standards.

Direct emissions of PM<sub>10</sub> have increased in the South Coast Air Basin since 1975. The increase is attributed to emissions from area-wide sources such as fugitive dust from paved and unpaved roads. Growth in activity of the area-wide sources reflects the increased population growth and VMT in the basin. PM<sub>10</sub> continues to be a problem in the South Coast Air Basin, which is designated as nonattainment for both the state and national ambient air quality standards. More controls specific to PM<sub>10</sub> will be needed to reach attainment.

### **San Diego Air Basin**

The San Diego Air Basin is located in the southwestern corner of California and comprises all of San Diego County. It is bounded on the south by Mexico, on the west by the Pacific Ocean, on the north by Orange and Riverside Counties, and on the east by Imperial County. Its 4,260 sq mi (11,033-sq km) area accommodates a population of 2.9 million or 8% of the state's population and produces about 7% of the state's criteria pollutant emissions.

In the last 20 years, the San Diego Air Basin has experienced one of the highest population growth rates of the state's urban areas. Population grew from over 1.9 million in 1981 to 2.9 million in 2000. VMT more than doubled during that same period from 35 million to approximately 74 million mi (56 million to 119 million km). Despite this growth trend, the overall air quality of the basin has improved, reflecting the benefits of cleaner technology.

Much of the San Diego Air Basin has a relatively mild climate due to its southern location and proximity to the ocean. The majority of the population is concentrated in the western portion of the basin, and the emissions are concentrated there. The basin is impacted by locally produced emissions as well as pollutants transported from other areas. O<sub>3</sub> and O<sub>3</sub> precursor emissions are transported from the South Coast Air Basin and Mexico. Implemented controls have resulted in a downward trend in O<sub>3</sub> levels and reductions in emissions from its precursors NO<sub>x</sub> and ROG in the basin. However, O<sub>3</sub> levels continue to pose problems because exceedances of the state and national ambient air quality standards persist.

CO concentrations in the San Diego Air Basin decreased approximately 56% from 1981 to 2000. As a result, the national CO standards have not been exceeded since 1989, and the state standard has not been exceeded since 1990. The basin will likely maintain



its attainment status for both national and state standards by continuing the enforcement of the stringent motor vehicle regulations currently in place.

Direct emissions of PM<sub>10</sub> in the San Diego Air Basin increased 69% from 1975 to 2000, and the forecast is for a continued increase at a rate of approximately 7% to 2010. Growth in area-wide source emissions, mainly fugitive dust from vehicles on paved and unpaved roads, dust from construction and demolition operations, and particulates from residential fuel combustion are mainly responsible for this increase. The growth in these area-wide sources primarily derives from the increase in population and VMT in the basin. The San Diego Air Basin is designated as nonattainment for the state ambient air quality standard and is unclassified for the national standard.

### 3.3.3 Environmental Consequences

#### A. EXISTING CONDITIONS COMPARED TO NO-PROJECT ALTERNATIVE

As described in Chapter 1, Purpose and Need, the volume of train traffic on the LOSSAN corridor is projected to increase by over 60% by the year 2020, based on maximum threshold modeling that assumed acceptable operational conditions in the corridor. (Refer to Section 1.2.2-A, Travel Demand, and Section 2.4, No-Project Alternative, for numbers of existing and projected trains in the corridor.) The number of locomotive miles (kilometers) traveled in the corridor will increase an estimated 62% by 2020, with passenger rail miles increasing 56% and freight rail miles increasing 66% above 2005 levels<sup>1</sup>.

This change from existing to future No-Project conditions will increase the air pollutant emissions from locomotives in the project region. The estimated emissions and percent change between 2005 and 2020 are shown in Table 3.3-3. An approximate division of those emissions between the South Coast and the San Diego air basins is shown in Table 3.3-4. Appendix 3.3-A provides detail on the assumptions and emission factors used for these estimates.

**Table 3.3-3**  
**Estimated Locomotive Emissions in the LOSSAN Rail Corridor**  
**Year 2005 and 2020 No-Project Alternative**

Pollutant	Total Emissions 2005 <sup>1</sup> tons/year	Total Emissions 2020 <sup>1</sup> tons/year	Difference tons/year	Percent Change 2005-2020
TOG	86.83	107.87	21.05	24%
CO	237.62	388.65	151.03	64%
NO <sub>x</sub>	1741.63	2000.27	258.64	15%
PM	58.09	70.54	12.45	21%
SO <sub>x</sub>	0.86	1.41	0.55	64%
CO <sub>2</sub>	90,359	147,790	57,430	64%

<sup>1</sup> Combined passenger and freight rail. Each freight train is assumed to have 4 locomotives.

<sup>1</sup> Passenger trains typically include just one locomotive, while most freight trains in the corridor include four locomotives; therefore, the number of locomotive miles is higher for freight even if the increase in the number of freight trains is lower. See Appendix 3.3-A for more detail.

**Table 3.3-4**  
**Estimated Total Locomotive Emissions in the LOSSAN Corridor by Air Basin**  
**Year 2005 and 2020 No-Project Alternative**

Pollutant	Total Emissions 2005 tons/year	Total Emissions 2020 tons/year	Change from 2005 to 2020 tons/year	Percent Change 2005-2020
<b>South Coast Air Basin</b>				
TOG	57.56	81.64	24.08	42%
CO	157.51	294.13	136.61	87%
NO <sub>x</sub>	1154.48	1513.78	359.30	31%
PM	38.51	53.38	14.88	39%
SO <sub>x</sub>	0.57	1.07	0.50	87%
CO <sub>2</sub>	59,897.01	111,845.64	51,948.64	87%
<b>San Diego Air Basin</b>				
TOG	29.27	26.24	-3.04	-10%
CO	80.11	94.52	14.41	18%
NO <sub>x</sub>	587.15	486.49	-100.66	-17%
PM	19.58	17.16	-2.43	-12%
SO <sub>x</sub>	0.29	0.34	0.05	18%
CO <sub>2</sub>	30,462.49	35,943.97	5481.48	18%

<sup>1</sup> Combined passenger and freight rail. Each freight train is assumed to have 4 locomotives.

Emissions shown in the tables above are likely overstated for several reasons. First, because the rate of growth in freight rail is higher in the western US than the rest of the country, the BNSF (and other west coast rail operators) is likely to have a more rapid locomotive turnover rate (older units replaced with new or overhauled units), increasing the ratio of newer, lower emission units to older units in its fleet. Additionally, the South Coast Locomotive NO<sub>x</sub> Fleet Average Agreement was signed in 1998 by CARB, BNSF and the Union Pacific Railroad. This agreement requires the locomotive fleets that operate in the SCAQMD to meet, on average, U.S. EPA's Tier 2 locomotive emissions standards by 2010. Tier 2 locomotives became commercially available in 2005 and provide a 65 percent reduction in NO<sub>x</sub> and 50 percent reduction in diesel particulate matter (DPM) emissions. This agreement will provide locomotive fleet benefits in southern California 20 years earlier than the rest of the country.

EPA is also in the process of developing the Tier 3 locomotive emission standards. Draft rules have been released and final regulations are expected to be approved by early 2008. CARB supports the introduction of locomotives built with diesel particulate filters and selective catalytic reduction; combined, these features are expected to provide up to a 90 percent reduction in NO<sub>x</sub> and PM (including DPM) emissions.

The on-road vehicle travel in the LOSSAN region is expected to increase substantially by 2020. As described in Chapter 1, automobile traffic between Los Angeles and San Diego is expected to increase 18% by 2025. The increased highway travel will also add to pollutant burdens in the project region. However, emissions per vehicle are dropping significantly in California as a result of CARB's clean vehicle and clean fuel programs. Pollutant burden levels of CO, NO<sub>x</sub>, and TOG are predicted to decrease statewide through 2020 compared to current levels due to the implementation of stringent

standards, control measures, and state-of-the-art emission control technologies. The low emission vehicle (LEV) and LEVII regulations adopted in 1990 and 1998, respectively, require a declining average fleet emission rate for new cars, pickup trucks, and medium-duty vehicles (including sport utility vehicles). These regulations, which are being implemented between 1994 and 2010, are expected to result in about a 90% decline in new vehicle emissions. Similar emission reductions are occurring in the heavy-duty diesel truck fleet as progressively lower emission standards for new trucks are introduced. The next phase of tighter diesel truck standards, scheduled to be implemented between 2007 and 2010, is expected to produce an overall reduction of 98% from uncontrolled engine emissions.

Emissions of  $PM_{10}$  are expected to increase in both air basins for the No Project Alternative compared to existing conditions. The upward trend in  $PM_{10}$  emissions is primarily due to increased emissions from area-wide sources, including dust from increased VMT on unpaved and paved roads.  $PM_{10}$  emissions from stationary sources are also expected to increase slightly in the future because of industrial growth.

## **B. NO-PROJECT ALTERNATIVE COMPARED TO RAIL IMPROVEMENTS ALTERNATIVE**

By 2020, under the Rail Improvements Alternative, the number of locomotive miles traveled in the LOSSAN corridor would increase approximately 16% over No Project miles, with passenger rail miles increasing 10% and freight rail miles increasing 20% over No-Project miles. (As stated previously, freight trains typically include four locomotives per train).

Table 3.3-5 shows the comparison of estimated emissions in the study area for the 2005 (existing) condition, the 2020 No-Project Alternative, and the 2020 Rail Improvements Alternative. All pollutants would increase over the No-Project levels within the corridor study area by approximately 17%, due to the increase in locomotive miles that are projected for the Rail Improvements Alternative. DPM would also be expected to increase by approximately 17% over No-Project conditions by 2020.

It is likely that emissions estimated in Table 3.3-5 are overstated (i.e., conservative) for future conditions, for the reasons previously outlined in Section 3.3.3-A above.

Table 3.3-6 shows the same data as Table 3.3-5, broken down by air basin. Some air quality management districts, including SCAQMD, have established air quality significance thresholds for criteria pollutants. Using the SCAQMD thresholds, without applying mitigation and not assuming the use of Tier 3 locomotives, the Rail Improvements Alternative would exceed the threshold for  $NO_x$  in the South Coast Air Basin by 2020. (See Table 27 in Appendix 3.3-A.)

**Table 3.3-5**  
**Estimated Locomotive Emissions – Year 2005, 2020 No-Project Alternative,**  
**and 2020 Rail Improvements Alternative**

Pollutant	Emissions 2005 (tons/year)	Emissions 2020 No-Project (tons/year)	Emissions 2020 RI Alternative (tons/year)	Difference (tons/year) No-Project vs. RI Alternative	% Change No-Project vs. RI Alternative
TOG	86.83	107.87	126.58	18.70	17%
CO	237.62	388.65	456.04	67.39	17%
NO <sub>x</sub>	1,741.63	2,000.27	2,347.10	346.83	17%
PM	58.09	70.54	82.77	12.23	17%
SO <sub>2</sub>	0.86	1.41	1.65	0.24	17%
CO <sub>2</sub>	90,359	147,790	173,415	25,625.46	17%

RI = Rail Improvements Alternative

See Appendix 3.3-A for emission calculation details

As described in text, air quality emission comparisons shown here include only those from diesel locomotives along the LOSSAN corridor and do not include automobile travel (induced or otherwise) within the study area.

**Table 3.3-6**  
**Estimated Locomotive Emissions by Air Basin**  
**Year 2005, 2020 No-Project Alternative, and 2020 Rail Improvements Alternative**

Pollutant	Emissions 2005 (tons/year)	Emissions 2020 No-Project (tons/year)	Emissions 2020 RI Alternative (tons/year)	Difference (tons/year) No-Project vs. RI Alternative	% Change No-Project vs. RI Alternative
<b>South Coast Air Basin</b>					
TOG	57.56	81.64	87.97	6.33	8%
CO	157.51	294.13	316.93	22.8	8%
NO <sub>x</sub>	1154.48	1513.78	1,631.16	117.38	8%
PM	38.51	53.38	57.52	4.14	8%
SO <sub>2</sub>	0.57	1.07	1.15	0.08	7%
CO <sub>2</sub>	59,897.01	111,845.64	120,517.85	8,672.21	8%
<b>San Diego Air Basin</b>					
TOG	29.27	26.24	38.61	12.37	47%
CO	80.11	94.52	139.11	44.59	47%
NO <sub>x</sub>	587.15	486.49	715.94	229.45	47%
PM	19.58	17.16	25.25	8.09	47%
SO <sub>2</sub>	0.29	0.34	0.50	0.16	47%
CO <sub>2</sub>	30,462.49	35,943.97	52,897.23	16,953.26	47%

RI = Rail Improvements Alternative

See Appendix 3.3-A for emission calculation details

Traffic around existing LOSSAN stations would increase somewhat over 2020 No-Project levels as a result of the proposed project, because the increased efficiency and reliability of passenger rail service would attract additional riders. This could increase vehicular emissions in localized air quality hotspots around stations, as compared with the No-Project Alternative. Hotspots are areas where the potential for elevated pollutant levels exist.

The projected increase in rail traffic between now and 2020 would result in higher levels of congestion and delays in train traffic without the proposed improvements to the corridor. The existing rail service is subject to delays and congestion, particularly in segments where the corridor is single tracked. These bottlenecks would increase in severity as rail service increases over the next 20 years and beyond. The Rail Improvements Alternative would decrease the likelihood of delays along the corridor, which would decrease the emissions from idling locomotives. The proposed double tracking would also decrease locomotive idling time at existing LOSSAN stations as rail service increases. At this program level of analysis, it is not possible to quantify the potential air quality benefits of decreased congestion and locomotive idle time along the corridor. Site-specific modeling would be done during project-level studies to identify idling locations and durations, and to estimate emissions attributable to that idling. This information would help to refine design plans for the corridor, to eliminate or reduce idling and to assess whether idling would occur in specific locations where potentially sensitive receptors (e.g., school yards, parks, etc.) could expose the public to increased levels of DPM and other emissions in concentrated amounts or longer durations.

The grade separations that would occur with many of the proposed improvement options would also contribute to a reduction in potential emissions from idling automobiles and trucks at grade crossings. Reductions in emissions from reduced waiting time at crossings would be greatest in the congested urban roadways in the metropolitan areas of Los Angeles, Orange County, and San Diego. The proposed double tracking through the study area could also reduce vehicular delays at crossings by allowing two trains to pass through a given area at the same time.

If the Miramar Hill tunnel option were constructed in the rail segment between the I-5/805 split and Highway 52, a new underground station would be constructed at University Towne Centre (UTC). This station could increase local traffic congestion and create hotspots at intersections in the vicinity.

Construction of the proposed improvements would cause temporary increases in pollution burdens in the project area. Emissions sources would include diesel-powered construction equipment, work-force travel to and from the project site, and fugitive dust from construction activities. Implementation of the Rail Improvements Alternative would be done incrementally over a period of many years. Impacts to air quality would be spread out both geographically and over time in the study area, reducing the potential for high cumulative impacts in the air basins. PM emissions from fugitive dust and construction equipment would be short-term but could be potentially significant due to the nonattainment status of the South Coast and San Diego air basins and the likelihood of continued increases in PM from development in the region.

Overall, the Rail Improvements Alternative would result in some beneficial reductions in emissions in localized areas by decreasing rail congestion and associated locomotive idling along the corridor and at existing stations, and by reducing the number of grade crossings where vehicular traffic delays now occur. However, without mitigation and/or changes in the locomotive fleet, the project could have potentially significant air quality impacts in the study area. Construction of the improvements would also have short-term, potentially high impacts on air quality.

### 3.3.4 Design Practices

Expansion at existing stations of parking and efficient design of ingress and egress to new or expanded parking areas will minimize increases in air emissions in and around station areas. For new stations, efficient design that minimizes train, bus, and automobile idling time will also minimize increases in emissions.

### 3.3.5 Mitigation Strategies

Based on the analysis above, and considering the CEQA Appendix G thresholds of significance for air quality, the proposed Rail Improvements Alternative is considered to have a potentially significant effect on air quality in the LOSSAN region. From data currently available at the Program level, for example, it appears that the project could result in exceedances of daily air quality thresholds for NO<sub>x</sub> and, potentially, for other pollutants. Continued improvements in air pollution controls for locomotives, along with the anticipated Tier 3 standards (potentially finalized by 2008 and implemented thereafter), will result in continued reductions of pollutant emissions per mile of locomotive travel. In addition, as older locomotives are replaced with new ones, additional reductions will occur. Mitigation measures, along with new technologies and locomotive emission standards, are expected to reduce potential air quality impacts of the Rail Improvements Alternative below significance thresholds in the future. However, at this time, it cannot be determined with certainty that this would occur, or that new emission standards and technologies would be implemented throughout passenger and freight locomotive fleets in a time frame coinciding with project implementation.

At the project level, mitigation measures will be evaluated based on ultimate design of alignments and stations to address the potential for regional and localized impacts of the Rail Improvements Alternative. Potential construction impacts, which will be analyzed once more detailed project plans are available, can be reduced by following local and state guidelines, and by implementing the following measures as appropriate during construction:

- Water all active construction areas at least twice daily.
- Cover all trucks hauling soil, sand, and other loose materials or require that all trucks maintain at least two feet of freeboard.
- Pave, apply water three times daily, or apply (non-toxic) soil stabilizers on all unpaved access roads, parking areas and staging areas at construction sites.
- Sweep daily (with water sweepers) all paved access roads, parking areas and staging areas at construction sites.
- Sweep streets daily (with water sweepers) if visible soil material is carried onto adjacent public streets.
- Hydroseed or apply (non-toxic) soil stabilizers to inactive construction areas (previously graded areas inactive for ten days or more).
- Enclose, cover, water twice daily or apply (non-toxic) soil binders to exposed stockpiles (dirt, sand, etc.).



- Limit traffic speeds on unpaved roads to 15 miles per hour.
- Install sandbags or other erosion control measures to prevent silt runoff to public roadways.
- Replant vegetation in disturbed areas as quickly as possible.
- Use alternative fuels for construction equipment when feasible.
- Minimize equipment idling time.
- Maintain properly tuned equipment.

Mitigation measures and strategies to reduce operational impacts to air quality will be examined in detail for efficacy and feasibility at the project level. Measures to be evaluated include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Install diesel particulate filters on locomotives.
- Use liquefied natural gas for engines.
- Reduce idling time to reduce DPM and other emissions.
- Install anti-idling devices on locomotives, designed to automatically shut-off the main diesel internal combustion engine used for locomotive motive power after a specified time period when specified parameters (e.g., engine water temperature, ambient temperature, battery charge, railcar brake pressure, etc.) are at acceptable levels, and then automatically restart the engine when parameters are no longer at acceptable levels.
- Retrofit head-end power sources (HEPs) in passenger locomotives with after-treatment technologies to reduce emissions.
- Use a combination of lean-NO<sub>x</sub> catalyst and diesel particulate filter.
- Design stations and associated ingress/egress to provide efficient vehicle movements, to reduce idling time and congestion.

### 3.3.6 Subsequent Analysis

Subsequent air quality analysis would be undertaken for individual rail improvements that have a potential to increase rail related emissions as follows:

Locations of potential hotspots, especially around existing and new stations, will be identified and analyzed at the project level. Local traffic counts would be conducted at access roads near any new station locations.

Specific locations of potential sensitive receptors for air toxics such as DPM will be identified based on project-level design information. A risk assessment of potential health impacts will be conducted in consultation with appropriate regulatory agencies, and mitigation measures will be refined based on results.

Potential construction impacts and mitigation measures will also be addressed in subsequent analyses. Once an alignment option is established a full construction analysis will be conducted. This analysis should quantify emissions from construction vehicles, excavation, worker trips, and other related construction activities. Mitigation

measures will be evaluated further, and a construction monitoring program, if required would be designed.

Potential tunnel ventilation (if required) would be designed at the project-level, and any air quality effects of such design would be evaluated at that time.

### 3.4 NOISE AND VIBRATION

This section identifies the potential for noise and vibration impacts on sensitive receptors or receivers, such as people in residential areas, schools, and hospitals, for the No-Project and Rail Improvements Alternatives. This analysis generally describes the sensitive noise receptors in the project region and the methodology for determining the potential for noise and vibration impacts on those receptors for each alternative and alignment option. The comparison of alignment options considers the potential for noise impacts from both passenger and freight trains on the LOSSAN rail corridor. The section also discusses the potential for benefits of adding grade separations<sup>1</sup> along the existing LOSSAN corridor, thereby reducing noise generated at grade crossings. Since this is a program-level environmental document, the analysis of potential noise and vibration impacts broadly compares the relative differences in the potential for impacts between the proposed alignment options.

#### 3.4.1 Regulatory Requirements and Methods of Evaluation

##### A. REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS

Noise and vibration are among the environmental issues to be evaluated under NEPA and CEQA. The FRA enforces compliance with the Noise Emission Regulation adopted by the EPA for noise emissions from interstate railroads. The FRA's Railroad Noise Emission Compliance Regulation (49 C.F.R. Part 210) prescribes minimum compliance regulations for enforcement of the railroad noise emission standards adopted by the EPA (40 C.F.R. Part 201). The FRA has also established criteria for assessment of noise and vibration impacts for high-speed<sup>2</sup> ground transportation projects (U.S. Department of Transportation 1998). For speeds less than 125 mph (200 kph) the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) has similar criteria for assessment of noise and vibration impacts (U.S. Department of Transportation 1995). The methodology and impact criteria for noise and vibration from the FRA and FTA guidance manuals have been used in the assessment of the Rail Improvements Alternative.

As described below, each agency's criteria were used to define a screening distance for assessing the potential for noise impact from relevant sources. The FRA and FTA have also established vibration impact criteria related to rail transportation.

At the state level, the California Noise Control Act was enacted in 1973 (Health and Safety Code § 46010 *et seq.*) and provides for the Office of Noise Control in the Department of Health Services to (1) provide assistance to local communities developing local noise control programs, and (2) work with the Office of Planning and Research to provide guidance for the preparation of the required noise elements in city and county general plans, pursuant to Government Code Section 65302(f). In preparing the noise element, a city or county must identify local noise sources and analyze and quantify to the extent practicable current and projected noise levels for various sources, including highways and freeways, passenger and freight railroad operations, ground rapid transit systems, commercial, general, and military aviation and airport operations, and other ground stationary noise sources. Noise level contours must be mapped for these sources, using both community noise equivalent level (CNEL) and day-night average

<sup>1</sup> For this analysis, a grade separation is the separation, using overpasses or underpasses, of the rail and roadway components of an at-grade crossing. This separation reduces the need for trains to blow horns at grade crossings and eliminates the need for warning bells.

<sup>2</sup> In this context, "high speed" is defined as rail with a maximum speed of 125 mph (200 kph) or greater.

level ( $L_{dn}$ ) and are to be used as a guide in land use decisions to minimize the exposure of community residents to excessive noise.

## B. METHOD OF EVALUATION OF IMPACTS

Two basic evaluation techniques were used for this analysis: a screening analysis, and more specific analysis of typical case studies of representative locations for the proposed Rail Improvements Alternative. The screening analysis provides a basis for a comparison of relative differences between existing conditions and the Rail Improvements Alternative in potential noise impacts. The case studies were used to verify screening analysis assumptions and to provide a basis for comparison of alignment options, including consideration of the potential effectiveness of mitigation and the potential impacts or benefits associated with grade separation of the existing rail line.

### Screening Procedure

Transportation noise impacts are typically assessed according to the number of people and noise-sensitive land uses potentially impacted by new or changed noise sources from a project. However, for a three-county project such as the proposed Rail Improvements Alternative (especially before many project-level details have been defined) it is not possible to develop a specific measure of the potential noise impacts because information necessary for performing a detailed noise analysis is not available. Consequently, a screening method was used to develop a general estimate of the relative potential for impact among alignment options. Screening distances were applied from the center of potential alignments to estimate all potentially impacted land uses in noise sensitive environmental settings (Appendix 3.4-A). The estimated number of people and number of noise-sensitive land uses are tabulated within the defined screening distance (see Appendix 3.4-B). The method is conservative in that it overestimates the potential impact. The method identifies all potentially impacted developed lands by type of use within the study area, but subsequent project-level analysis using better-defined system parameters and affected populations is likely to indicate lower levels of potential impact. Because potential noise impacts decrease dramatically if a structure blocks the path to the receptor, this is a conservative approach.

Noise screening analyses were performed for the Rail Improvements Alternative. Screening distances were selected for the railroad based on criteria established by the agencies that regulate these modes, the FRA and FTA (see Appendix 3.4-A).

The analyses were accomplished using available GIS data for land use and alignment geometry for each alternative. The number of people potentially affected and the area of noise-sensitive land uses within the screening distance were determined using GIS and census data.

The potential impacts were subsequently combined to develop an impact rating for each rail segment, described as low, medium, or high, as an indication of the potential for noise impact.

### Application of Screening Method to Conventional Rail Mode

Railroad noise and vibration criteria developed by FTA are consistent with criteria adopted by the FRA for high-speed trains. The FRA screening procedure was

developed for train speeds from 125 mph to 210 mph (200 kph to 338 kph).<sup>3</sup> For speeds less than 125 mph (200 kph) and for areas near stations, the FTA screening method was used in concert with the FRA method. The FRA and FTA screening distances for noise are included in Appendix 3.4-A. They were used to assess conventional rail operations in the No-Project and the Rail Improvements Alternative.

Criteria for rail noise impact assessment are based on activity interference and annoyance ratings developed by EPA. These criteria, described and presented in graphical form in Appendix 3.4-C, provide the basis for the rail noise analysis procedures used in the screening and the representative typologies (U.S. Department of Transportation 1998).

The screening procedure used by the FRA and FTA takes into account the noise impact criteria, the type of corridor, and the ambient noise conditions in typical communities. Distances within which potential impacts may occur are defined based on operations of a typical high-speed train system. These distances were developed from detailed noise models based on empirical measurements of noise emissions of existing steel-wheel/steel-rail high-speed trains, expected maximum operation levels and speeds, and residential land use. The width of the potential impact along the length of the rail alignment is the area in which there is potential for noise impact.

The screening distances are different for the different types of developed areas along a potential alignment according to their estimated existing ambient noise. "Urban" and "noisy suburban" areas are grouped together. These areas are assumed to have ambient noise levels greater than 60 dBA  $L_{dn}$ . Similarly, "quiet suburban" and "rural" or "natural open-space" areas are grouped as areas where ambient noise levels are less than 55 dBA  $L_{dn}$ . For developed land with  $L_{dn}$  between 55 and 60 dBA, the classification is dependant on other factors such as proximity of major transportation facilities and density of population. The screening procedure was applied to first allow for the comparison of impacts between alignment options and to identify areas of potential impacts for further consideration in project-level analysis. The screening procedure estimates the affected receptors to ensure that all potential impacts are included at the program level.

While the screening procedure is based on the type of equipment, operational characteristics of the future rail services (speeds and frequencies), the type of support structure (aerial or at grade), and the general ambient noise level, it does not address the horn and bell noise associated with existing passenger and freight trains because these are regarded as part of the existing environment and are assumed to be held constant for both the No-Project and the Rail Improvements Alternatives. To develop a relative comparison of the rail improvement alignment options, the results of the screening analysis were adjusted to account for noise reductions from the elimination of grade crossings along the existing rail line, proposed as part of some alignment options. The degree of adjustment was based on the representative typologies for similar circumstances and is defined in the following section.

As a final step for those areas rated medium or high for potential impacts, the screening analysis assessed the potential use of noise barriers and other mitigation options to

<sup>3</sup> The maximum speed of the trains on the LOSSAN corridor with proposed rail improvements in place is expected to be 125 mph (200 kph).

assess the potential for reducing noise impacts. The mitigation analysis is discussed in Section 3.4.5.

Vibration impact screening was performed for the Rail Improvements Alternative to compare potential impacts among alignment options and to provide an estimate of the length of alignments where consideration of vibration attenuation features may be appropriate.

### **Representative Typologies for Trains**

To better understand the potential impacts of the Rail Improvements Alternative, several noise impact assessment studies were prepared for representative situations of noise- and vibration-sensitive land uses. The more detailed General Assessment Method of FTA's and FRA's guidance manuals were used to provide noise impact estimations. The FRA and FTA noise impact criteria of *severe impact*, *impact* and *no impact* were applied to the results. These typological studies verified the general results from the screening procedure. Representative situations were chosen to provide a range of potential impact types and levels. This approach provides a means of considering at the program level the potential impacts on communities along any potential rail improvement alignments. The typology locations in the study area are illustrated on Figure 3.4-1. (Between Union Station and Fullerton, no specific land use points are shown on Figure 3.4-1. This segment of the corridor is urban residential and commercial, largely built up to or near the existing rail corridor. This entire segment was characterized by the residential typology in the screening analysis.)

Developed land use categories consist of individual medium- and low-density residential zones, schools, hospitals, parks, and other unique institutional receptors such as museums, libraries, etc. Residential land uses were chosen for the typologies for new and shared corridors that varied in local zoning densities, ambient noise conditions, set back distances from the alternative corridors, and rail operational speeds. Institutional uses as mentioned above and parks were individually identified for each focused study. These representative typologies were evaluated on the topics listed below.

- Verification of screening distances (noise and vibration).
- Effectiveness of noise barriers.
- Benefits from elimination of grade crossings.

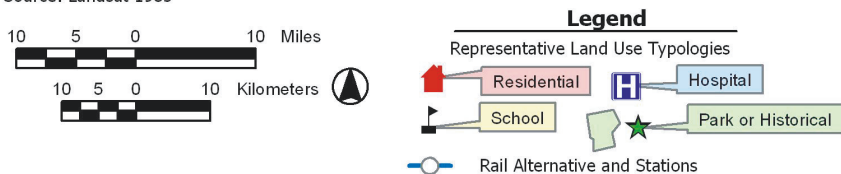
Verification of Screening Distances (Noise and Vibration): The results of the representative typologies confirm that the screening method used an appropriate upper boundary as an indicator of potential for noise impact. Impacts were found to occur in 80% of the cases identified in the screening procedure; in 70% of those studied, consideration of mitigation may be appropriate. Those that would have insignificantly low noise impact were either at outer edges of the screening distance or were shielded sufficiently by other buildings. Shielding by terrain features or buildings is not taken into account in the screening process, except to indicate some receptors would not need further analysis.





Source: Landsat 1985

March 3, 2004



**FIGURE 3.4-1**

## **Noise and Vibration Land Use Typologies LOSSAN Region**

LOSSAN Rail Corridor Improvements

Program Environmental Impact Report / Environmental Impact Statement



U.S. Department  
of Transportation  
Federal  
Railroad  
Administration



Representative studies were also completed that assess the range of the potential vibration impact levels that are likely to be encountered in project-level analyses. The results generally show that the nearer buildings would be to a proposed alignment, the greater the likelihood of impact. Where speeds are expected to be low, the vibration potential impacts are confined to within 100 ft (30 m) of the track. At top speeds, the potential impacts extend to 200 ft (61 m). The special typologies generally validate the vibration screening distances that are included in Table 3.4-A2 in Appendix 3.4-A.

Effectiveness of Noise Barriers: The representative typology studies generally indicated that mitigation by sound barrier walls can be an effective means of reducing the potential impacts by one category, for example, from severe impact (mitigation appropriate) to impact. Noise barrier mitigation is shown to be especially effective for receivers close to the tracks. While noise barrier walls would not be the only potential mitigation strategy to be considered, they were used to represent mitigation potential in this Program EIR/EIS.

Benefits from Elimination of Grade Crossings: The representative typology studies were also used to estimate the potential benefit of noise reduction resulting from grade separations. A focused noise study was done for the existing grade crossing at Tamarak Street in Oceanside. Assessment of noise impact from horns at grade crossings was performed with FRA's horn noise model and annoyance based criteria. The study showed that the elimination of horn blowing by commuter trains at this grade crossing would result in a 77 percent reduction in the number of people impacted within 0.25 mi (0.40 km) of that intersection. Although results would vary depending on the local population density and proximity of residences and other sensitive land uses at each grade crossing, the Oceanside study illustrates the magnitude of the potential change to be expected if the sounding of horns and bells at existing rail crossings could be eliminated.

Removing all potential remaining horn noise would not eliminate noise impacts, however, because the sound of the trains would remain. As described in Chapter 1, under the No-Project Alternative, train traffic in the corridor would increase over 60 percent between now and 2020. The proposed Rail Improvements Alternative would accommodate approximately 10 percent more train traffic in the corridor than the No-Project Alternative by 2020, and therefore would increase train noise. Nonetheless, there would be a clear benefit from the elimination of the horns and warning signals.

Based on these results, the potential noise impact ratings from screening were adjusted to account for segments where grade crossings would be eliminated for existing passenger and freight trains as part of the implementation of the Rail Improvements Alternative along that segment. A reduction of one impact rating level (high to medium or medium to low) was made for segments where a proposed alignment option would eliminate horn and bell noise due to grade separation.

This adjustment was made on the segments listed below.

- Fullerton to north of San Juan Capistrano.
- Oceanside to Solana Beach.
- University Towne Centre to the northern portion of Mission Bay.

### 3.4.2 Affected Environment

#### A. STUDY AREA DEFINED

The study area for the noise and vibration assessment is defined by the screening distances that are used by the FRA (U.S. Department of Transportation 1998) and FTA (U.S. Department of Transportation 1995) to evaluate rail corridors. The study area is within 1,000 ft (305 m) of the centerline of the rail improvement alignment options.

#### B. GENERAL DISCUSSION OF NOISE AND VIBRATION

This section describes the characteristics and associated terms and measurements used for transportation-related noise and vibration. When noise from a train or highway reaches a receptor, whether it is a person outdoors or indoors, it combines with other sounds in the environment (the ambient noise level) and may or may not stand out in comparison. The distant sources may include traffic, aircraft, industrial activities, or sounds in nature. These distant sources create a background noise in which usually no particular source is identifiable and to which several sources may contribute, but is fairly constant from moment to moment and varies slowly from hour to hour. Superimposed on this slowly varying background noise is a succession of identifiable noisy events of relatively brief duration. Examples include the passing of a train, the over flight of an airplane, the sound of a horn or siren, or the screeching of brakes. These single events may be loud enough to dominate the noise environment at a location for a short time, and when added to everything else, can be an annoyance. The descriptors used in the measurement of noise environments are summarized below.

The fundamental measure of noise is the decibel (dB), a unit of sound level based on the ratio between two sound pressures—the sound pressure of the source of interest (e.g., passenger and freight trains) and the reference pressure (the quietest sound that a human can hear). Because the range of actual sound pressures is very large (a painful sound level can be over 1 million times the sound pressure of the faintest sound), the expression of sound is compressed to a smaller range with the use of logarithms. The resulting value is expressed in terms of dB. For example, instead of a sound pressure ratio of 1 million, the same ratio is 120 dB.

The human ear does not respond equally to high- and low- pitched sounds. In the 1930s, acoustical scientists determined how humans hear various sounds and developed response characteristics to represent the sensitivity of a typical ear. One of the characteristics, called the *A-curve*, represents the sensitivity of the ear at sound levels commonly found in the environment. The A-curve has been standardized. The abbreviation dBA is intended to denote that a sound level is expressed as if a measurement has been made with filters in accordance with that standard.

- *Maximum Sound Level ( $L_{max}$ )*, measured in dBA, is the highest noise level achieved during a noise event.
- *Equivalent Sound Level ( $L_{eq}$ )*, measured in dBA, describes a receptor's cumulative noise exposure from all noise events that occur in a specified period of time. The hourly  $L_{eq}$  is a measure of the accumulated sound exposure over a full hour. The  $L_{eq}$  is computed from the measured sound energy averaged over an hour (nothing one would read from moment to moment on a meter)



representing the magnitude of noise energy received in that hour. FHWA uses the peak traffic hour  $L_{eq}$  as the metric for establishing highway noise impact.

- **Day-Night Sound Level ( $L_{dn}$ )** describes a receptor's cumulative noise exposure from all noise events that occur in a 24-hour period, with events between 10 p.m. and 7 a.m. increased by 10 dB to account for greater nighttime sensitivity to noise. The  $L_{dn}$  is used to describe the general noise environment in a location, the so-called "noise climate." The unit is a computed number, not one to be read from moment to moment on a meter. Its magnitude is related to the general noisiness of an area. EPA developed the  $L_{dn}$  descriptor and now most federal agencies, including the FRA, use it to evaluate potential noise impacts. Typical  $L_{dns}$  in the environment are shown in Figure 3.4-2.
- **CNEL**, a variant of  $L_{dn}$ , is used in noise assessments in California. Rather than dividing the day into two periods, daytime and nighttime, CNEL adds a third period to account for increased sensitivity to noise in the evening when people are likely to be engaged in outdoor activities around the home. An evening addition of 5 dB is applied to noise events between the hours of 7 p.m. and 10 p.m. to reflect the additional annoyance noise causes at that time. In general, the difference between  $L_{dn}$  and CNEL is slight and the two measures will be considered interchangeable for purposes of this noise analysis.

The way people react to noise in their environment has been studied extensively by researchers throughout the world. Based on these studies, noise impact criteria have been adopted by the FRA (U.S. Department of Transportation 1998) and other federal agencies to assess the contribution of the noise from a source like conventional rail to the existing environment. The FRA bases noise impact criteria on the estimated increase in  $L_{dn}$  (for buildings with nighttime occupancy) or increase in  $L_{eq}$  (for institutional buildings) caused by the project for direct and indirect impacts. Criteria are discussed in Section 3.4.1 and Appendix 3.4-C.

### **Transportation Noise**

Noise from highways and rail lines tends to dominate the noise environment in their immediate vicinity. Each mode has distinctive noise characteristics in both shape and source levels. Highway and rail noise affects an area that is linear in shape, extending to both sides of the alignment. Individual highway vehicles are generally relatively quiet, but the accumulation of noise from the volume of traffic throughout the majority of the day and night results in a nearly continuous high sound level. Noise from road traffic is generated by a wide variety of vehicle types, makes, and models. In general, the noise associated with highway vehicles can be divided into three classes of vehicle: automobiles, medium trucks, and heavy trucks. Each class has its own noise characteristic depending on vehicle type, speed, and the condition of the roadway surface.

**Train Noise and Vibration:** If the Rail Improvements Alternative were implemented, higher operating speeds for passenger rail operations on the LOSSAN corridor of up to 125 mph (200 kph) would be possible for the less constrained areas, in terms of alignment (i.e., flat and straight). In contrast, much lower operating speeds would be expected in the more developed areas. Noise from a train can be expressed in terms of a source-path-receptor framework. The source of noise is the train moving on its tracks. The path describes the intervening course between the source and the receptor wherein

the noise levels are reduced by distance, topographical and human-made obstacles, atmospheric effects, and other factors. Finally, at each receptor, the noise from all sources combine to make up the noise environment at that location.

The total noise generated by a train is the combination of sounds from several individual noise-generating mechanisms, each with its own characteristics, including location, intensity, frequency content, directivity, and speed dependence. These noise sources can be grouped into two categories according to the speed of the train.

For low speeds, below about 40 mph (64 kph), noise emissions are dominated by the propulsion units, cooling fans, and under-car and top-of-car auxiliary equipment such as compressors and air conditioning units.

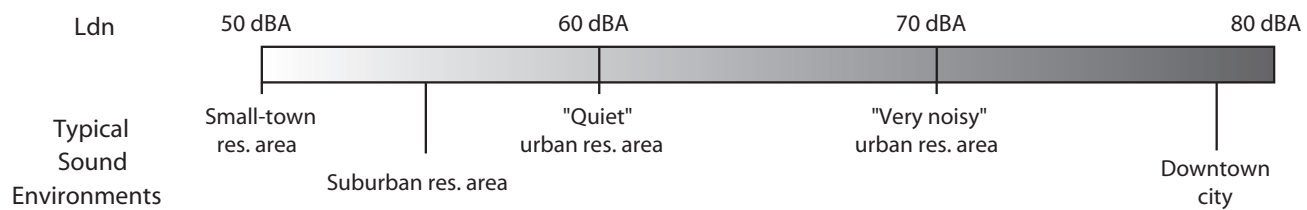
In the speed range from 60 mph to about 150 mph (98 kph to 241 kph), mechanical noise resulting from wheel/rail interactions and structural vibrations dominate the noise emission from trains. In the existing LOSSAN rail corridor, trains seldom exceed 79 mph (127 kph), so this speed range is the top end of noise characteristics for trains with which most people are familiar.

Noise from trains also depends on the type and configuration of its track structure. Typical noise levels are expressed for conventional rail at grade on ballast and tie track. For trains on elevated structure, train noise is increased, partially due to the loss of sound absorption by the ground and partially due to extra sound radiation from the bridge structure. Moreover, the sound from trains on elevated structures spreads about twice as far as it does from at-grade operations of the same train, due to raising the sound source higher above ground.

Horns are an example of a train noise source that is a dominant noise source at any speed. Audible warnings at grade crossings, including train horns and warning bells, are a common feature of conventional trains and a vital safety component of railroad operations. These noise sources often prove to be a source of annoyance to people living near railroad tracks. Elimination of horns and bells at existing grade crossings would provide a noise benefit associated with the implementation of the Rail Improvements Alternative for some alignment options along the existing LOSSAN corridor.

Ground-borne vibration from trains refers to the fluctuating motion experienced by people on the ground and in buildings near railroad tracks. In general, people are not commonly exposed to vibration levels from outside sources that they can feel. Little concern results when a door is slammed and a wall shakes or something heavy is dropped and the floor shakes momentarily. Concern results, however, when an outside source like a train causes homes to shake. The effects of ground-borne vibration in a building located close to a rail line could at worst include perceptible movement of the floors, rattling of windows, shaking of items on shelves or hanging on walls, and rumbling sounds. None of these effects is great enough to cause damage, but could result in annoyance if repeated many times daily.





**FIGURE 3.4-2**

**Typical Day-Night Sound Level Environments**  
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Program Environmental Impact Report / Environmental Impact Statement





As with noise, ground-borne vibration can be understood as following a source-path-receptor framework. The source of vibration is the train wheels rolling on the rails. They create vibration energy that is transmitted through the track support system into the track bed or track structure. The path of vibration involves the ground between the source and a nearby receptor such as a building.

### **Mode Noise-Level Comparisons**

Noise levels of typical individual transportation vehicles are compared in Figure 3.4-3 with each other and with other commonly experienced sounds in the environment. Jet aircraft are clearly the noisiest of the transportation sources, followed by train horns and diesel trucks. Noise levels of freight and commuter trains at speeds of 50 to 80 mph (80 to 129 kph) are similar to high-speed trains at speeds of 100 to 150 mph (161 to 200 kph). The descriptor for the figure is the  $L_{\max}$  which represents the highest sound level associated with a single event such as the passage of a train, aircraft, or truck.

As described above, the descriptor used in environmental assessments is the  $L_{dn}$ , which represents the cumulative noise exposure during a 24-hour period, rather than the  $L_{\max}$ . A comparison of noise associated with surface transportation sources at various distances on either side of an unobstructed highway or railway is shown in Figure 3.4-4. This example is based on conventional passenger and freight trains at typical operating speeds compared with high-speed trains at a range of speeds, for a hypothetical situation of one train per hour. The graph shows the relative differences between these types and speeds of trains in terms of cumulative noise exposure. The graph also includes the cumulative noise levels over a 24-hour period of an 8-lane freeway with traffic traveling at 65 mph (105 kph) in relation to the train examples.

The graph in Figure 3.4-5 shows the difference in cumulative noise exposure for the same train types and speeds given typical frequency levels. Commuter trains are assumed to have much higher frequencies than freight trains based on existing rail operations in the LOSSAN Corridor. For this illustration commuter trains are assumed to have 46 day- and 28 night-trains made up of 1 locomotive and 5 coaches; and freight trains are assumed to have 10 day- and 3 night-trains made up of 2 locomotives and 40 freight cars. The 8-lane freeway in this and the preceding plot is assumed to carry 1,885 vehicles/hour/lane with 2% medium trucks and 3% heavy trucks. This example shows that as commuter train frequencies and speeds are increased the noise exposure is increased relative to the existing rail services on the LOSSAN Corridor. Again, the graph includes the cumulative noise levels of a typical 8-lane freeway with traffic traveling at 65 mph (105 kph) in relation to the train examples. This example also shows how the cumulative noise diminishes with distance from the linear-type surface transportation sources. In the first 300 ft (91 m) from the centerlines,  $L_{dn}$  from rail sources tends to diminish more with respect to distance than that from a busy freeway. The freeway constitutes a continuous long source of noise, whereas a rail line has a series of transient noise events with relatively short sources.

## **C. NOISE ENVIRONMENT IN THE STUDY AREA**

Regional noise and vibration environments are generally dominated by transportation-related sources, including vehicle traffic on freeways, highways, and other major roads, existing passenger and freight rail operations, and aviation sources, including civilian and military. Existing noise along highway and rail corridors has been estimated using

data in the noise element from the general plan for cities and counties in the project area, along with general methods provided by FHWA, FRA, and FTA for estimating transportation noise. Ambient noise levels are characterized in the section below. Ambient vibration conditions are very site-specific in nature and are not characterized as part of the program environmental process.

The project region includes a portion of the Los Angeles basin and the coastal areas of southern California between Los Angeles and San Diego, generally following the existing LOSSAN rail corridor. The ambient noise in the northern portion of the region is dominated by motor vehicle traffic in densely populated areas and along freeways.

Along the LOSSAN corridor south from Union Station, existing passenger service (Amtrak, Metrolink, and Coaster) and freight rail contribute to the local noise. Throughout this portion of the region, roadway traffic also contributes to the ambient noise. In Los Angeles and northern Orange counties, freight rail and motor vehicle traffic comprise the sources of ambient noise. Along the coast, local roadway traffic and passenger rail service contribute to the ambient noise conditions, most notably horn blowing at grade crossings. Freeway noise is the dominant noise source in this region.

In the urban areas and suburban areas of Los Angeles and northern Orange counties, the ambient noise ranges from  $L_{dn}$  63 to 68 dBA depending on the proximity to noise sources such as rail, roadways and airports. In the more suburban areas of the region, the ambient noise ranges from 58 to 63 dBA. Along the coast, the ambient noise environment ranges from  $L_{dn}$  54 to 64 dBA depending on proximity to local noise sources.

For this program-level assessment, sensitive noise receptors in the study area were defined as residences, schools, hospitals and other medical care facilities, parks, historic structures, and other unique institutional receptors such as libraries and museums. These uses are prevalent throughout the study area, and are more concentrated along the urban parts of the corridor. These uses were not mapped in the study area at this program level, but representative receptors were specifically identified for the screening analysis for noise. Sensitive receptors used in the screening analysis were shown previously on Figure 3.4-1.

The existing LOSSAN rail corridor was established before most of surrounding land uses, and in many instances sensitive receptors are at least partially buffered by other uses from the rail corridor. New development expected within the study area was also planned with the existing rail corridor in mind, so it is expected that most future sensitive receptors would not be directly adjacent to the rail corridor.

Noise Level dBA	Extremes	Home Appliances 3ft	Speech at 3 ft	Motor Vehicles at 50 ft	Trains at 100 ft
120	Jet aircraft at 500 ft				
110		Chain saw			Horns
100		Power Lawn mower		Diesel Truck (not muffled)	HST, 200 mph
90		Shoptools		Diesel Truck (muffled)	HST, 150 mph
80					Locomotives 50 mph
70		Blender	Loud voice	Automobile 70 mph	Passenger Train 50 mph
60		Dishwasher	Normal Voice	Automobile 40 mph	Freight Cars 50 mph
50		Air conditioner	Normal voice (back to listener)	Automobile 20 mph	
40		Refrigerator			
30					
20					
10					
0	Threshold of hearing				

**FIGURE 3.4-3**

**Typical  $L_{max}$  Values**

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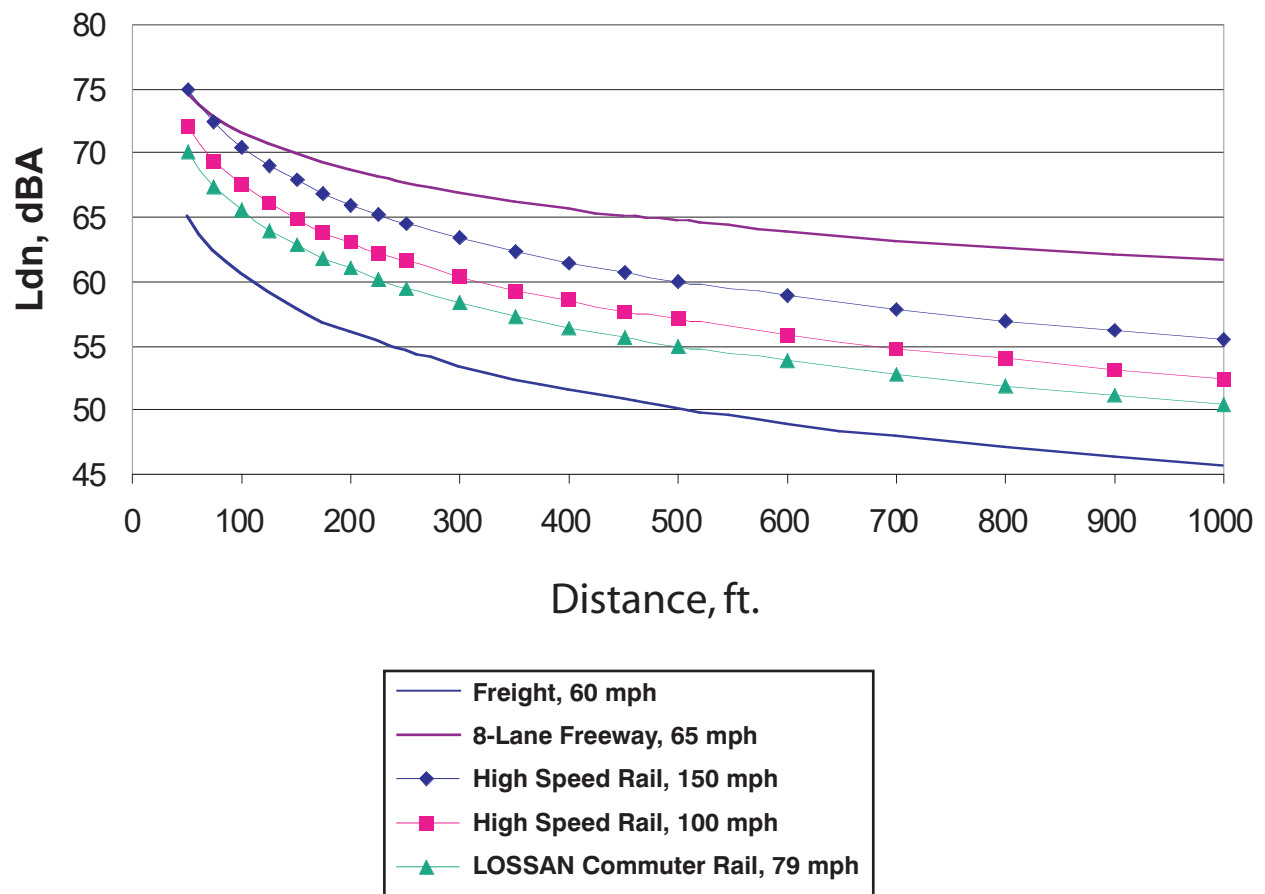


FIGURE 3.4-4

**Example of Noise Exposure vs. Distance  
with Typical Frequencies**

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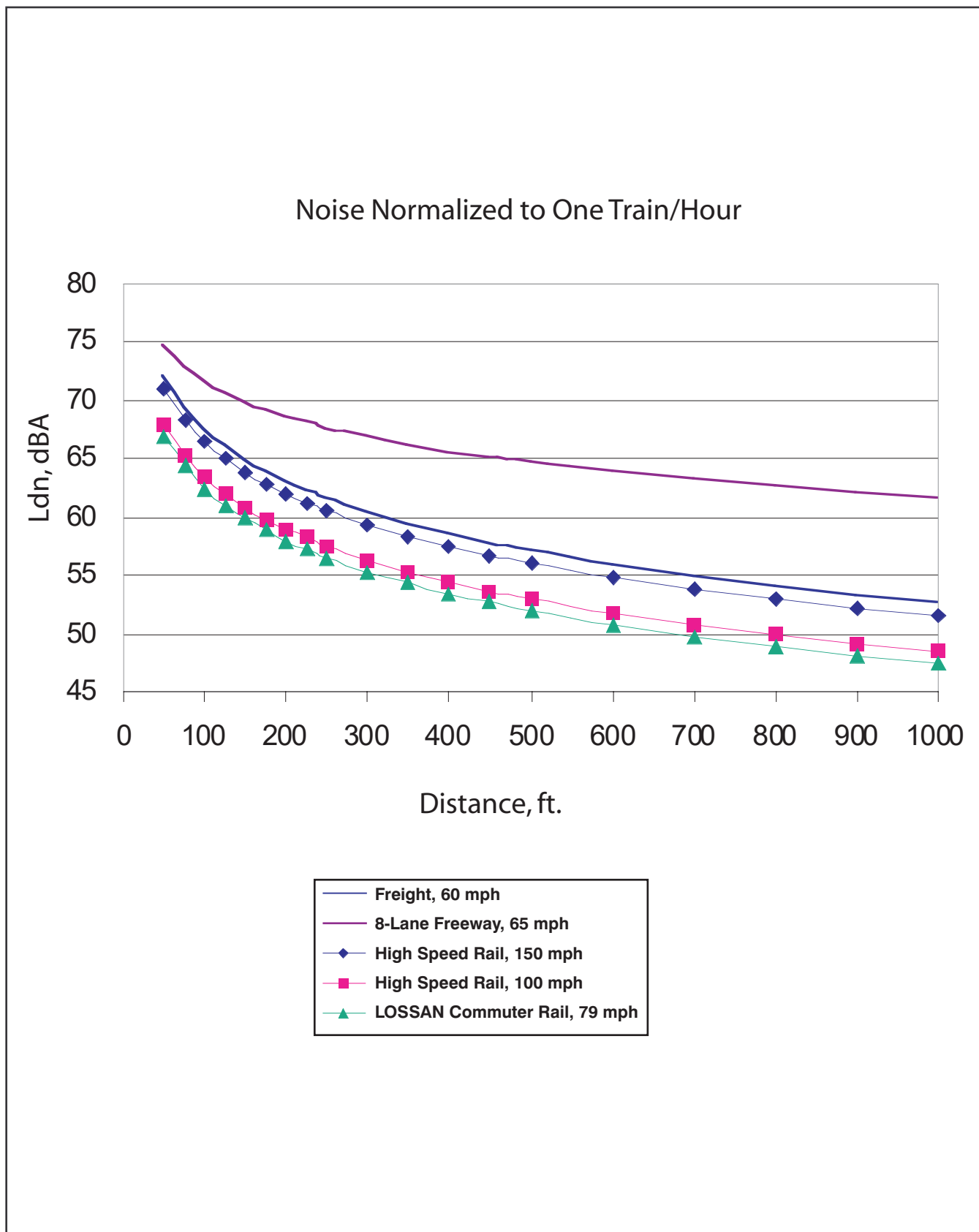


FIGURE 3.4-5

**Example of Noise Exposure vs. Distance  
with Normalized Frequency**

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### 3.4.3 Environmental Consequences

#### A. EXISTING CONDITIONS COMPARED TO NO-PROJECT ALTERNATIVE

The No-Project Alternative includes programmed and funded transportation improvements that will be implemented and operational by 2020 in addition to the existing conditions. These improvements are not major system-wide capacity improvements (e.g., major new highway construction or widening) and will not result in a general improvement of intercity travel conditions across the study area.

For purposes of this analysis, it is assumed that there will be no additional noise and vibration impacts associated with the development of the programmed projects included under the No-Project Alternative, as compared to existing conditions. The potential significant impacts associated with programmed projects would be addressed with mitigation measures in a manner consistent with existing conditions in accordance with the project-level environmental documents and approvals for the projects as prepared by the project sponsors. While the implementation of the No-Project Alternative may result in some increases, any estimate of such increases would be speculative.

Beyond the potential noise and vibration impacts for programmed improvements (to be addressed in other project-level documents), the No-Project Alternative potentially would have additional noise impacts on sensitive land uses along the LOSSAN rail corridor. As described in Chapter 1, *Purpose and Need*, combined passenger and freight rail service in the corridor is projected to increase approximately 62 percent over 2005 levels by 2020, independent of the proposed rail improvements. The No-Project Alternative would leave the rail corridor at grade along much of its length. With the projected increase in numbers of passenger and freight trains in the corridor, there would be a substantial increase in the noise from train horns and warning bells at grade crossings, compared with existing conditions.

#### B. NO-PROJECT COMPARED TO RAIL IMPROVEMENTS ALTERNATIVE

Potential direct noise impacts include increases in the ambient noise near sensitive receptors such as residences, schools, hospitals, and other areas where people live, sleep, or generally expect relative quiet. Potential indirect impacts may include an increase in noise levels that alter the overall setting of historic structures, or that occur in relatively quiet open-space and wildlife habitat areas. During construction, temporary increases in ambient noise levels may occur from construction equipment and increased truck traffic. These temporary impacts may be more pronounced if construction occurs during nighttime hours when the ambient noise levels are lower.

The No-Project Alternative is used as the basis for comparison of potential noise impacts. It is assumed that any impacts associated with the proposed Rail Improvements Alternative would be in addition to No-Project conditions.

#### Operational Impacts

The relative level of potential operational noise impacts for the Rail Improvements Alternative is illustrated in Figure 3.4-6. The figure shows the relative noise impacts in terms of high, medium and low categories for all of the alignment options. The potential noise impact ratings account for the reduction of horn and bell noise associated with the elimination of grade crossings on the existing LOSSAN rail line, where appropriate. As shown in the figure, only the rail section between Fullerton and Irvine (approximately

20 mi [32 km]) would have potentially high noise impacts attributable to the proposed Rail Improvements Alternative.

South of San Clemente the noise impact rating for conventional rail improvements would be low due to the presence of the U.S. Marine Corps base at Camp Pendleton. Through this area, rail service could reach speeds up to 125 mph (200 kph). At Oceanside the I-5 rail alignment would encounter higher population densities and would represent medium potential impact from there through Encinitas. Maximum speeds south of Oceanside would not be expected to exceed 100 mph (161 kph). All alignment options from Encinitas to San Diego would have a low noise impact rating.

Overall, the LOSSAN corridor would benefit from grade crossing eliminations that would be part of the proposed improvements. A major benefit is the elimination of horn noise at the grade crossings. Horn noise dominates the area within 0.25 mi (0.40 km) of a grade crossing, such that its elimination would more than make up for any increased train noise due to higher speeds or more frequent service. It is estimated that potential noise impacts can be reduced by approximately 80 percent at adjacent receptors by eliminating freight and passenger train horns, according to the focused noise study results performed at a grade-crossing site in Oceanside.

South of Irvine, the higher-level rail improvement options would result in a fully grade separated LOSSAN rail alignment. The communities along the LOSSAN alignment would receive benefits from full grade separation by the elimination of warning bells and train horn noise from existing services (Amtrak, Metrolink, and freight) along this heavily used rail line. In contrast, the lower-level rail improvement options would result in continued noise impacts without the benefits of full grade separation.

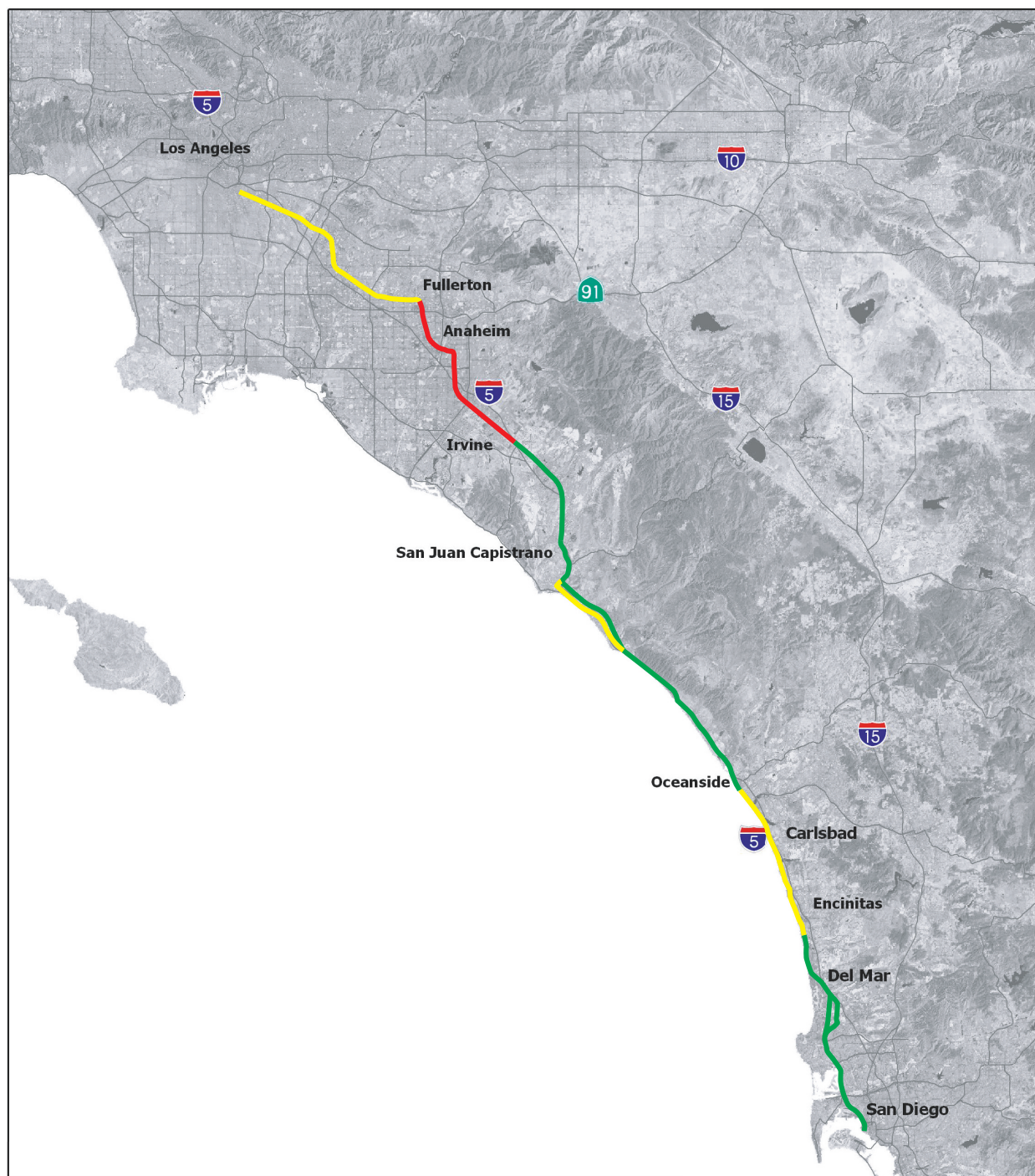
Potential noise impacts and key differences between alignment options are summarized below.

Between Los Angeles Union Station and Fullerton, communities along the LOSSAN alignment would receive benefits from full grade separation due to the elimination of warning bells and train horn noise from existing services (Amtrak, Metrolink, and freight) along this heavily used rail line. Between Fullerton and Irvine, the trenching option also would result in a fully grade-separated LOSSAN rail alignment. The communities of Orange, Santa Ana, and Tustin would benefit from full grade separation and the elimination of warning bells and train horn noise. In contrast, the at-grade option in this rail segment would permit additional frequencies of service and higher speeds, which would have additional noise impacts without the benefits of grade separation.

Based on the program-level noise assessment, both alignment options within San Juan Capistrano would have a low impact rating for noise. However, the Trabuco Creek option would be expected to have more impact than the tunnel under I-5. Trabuco Creek would be at-grade on the edge of the historic district, while the I-5 option would completely bypass historic San Juan Capistrano.

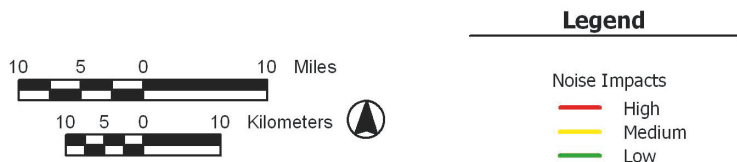
The long tunnel option through San Clemente would have a low potential for impacts since it completely removes the LOSSAN alignment from the sensitive coastal communities, and would place it in a deep tunnel under I-5. The short tunnel option is ranked as having medium potential impacts. This option would remove the LOSSAN alignment from the beach along San Clemente, resulting in significant benefits to that community. However, the short tunnel option would continue to utilize the coastal





Source: Landsat 1985

March 3, 2004



**FIGURE 3.4-6**

**Rail Alternative Potential Noise Impacts**

LOSSAN Rail Corridor Improvements

Program Environmental Impact Report / Environmental Impact Statement





alignment along Dana Point. While there could be some noise improvement from the partial grade separation (elimination of warning bells and train horns), this corridor segment would continue to be a source of rail noise, particularly along Capistrano Beach and the residential areas along the existing rail corridor.

The short trench option through Carlsbad would have fewer potential noise impacts for downtown Carlsbad than the option to leave several crossings at grade through downtown near the Carlsbad Coaster Station. The short trench concept would eliminate the train horn noise and remove the warning bells at the existing at-grade crossing. It would also place part of the alignment underground in a cut-and-cover tunnel, reducing train noise through the center of this coastal community. Leaving several crossings at grade through the town center would result in continued noise impacts.

The short trench option through Encinitas, like Carlsbad, would have fewer noise impacts for downtown Encinitas than the option to leave several crossings at grade through downtown near the Encinitas Coaster Station. The short trench option would eliminate the need for train horn noise and remove the warning bells at the existing at-grade crossing. It would also place part of the alignment underground in a cut-and-cover trench, reducing train noise through the center of this coastal community. Leaving several crossings at grade through the town center would result in continued noise impacts.

Both of the tunnel concepts for Del Mar would be expected to have low potential noise impacts. While these options may result in some additional noise impacts (particularly at the portals for the I-5 tunnel, which would be located between two residential areas), both would provide considerable benefit to the community as a result of grade-separation improvements (the elimination of warning bells and train horn noise).

In quieter, open-space or wildlife areas, increased noise levels could degrade the quality of recreational activities. These potential indirect impacts are not likely to be substantial because the proposed rail improvements would be done along existing rail and highway corridors where the ambient transportation-related noise dominates the noise environment. Increases in noise due to increased rail service would be gradual, intermittent, and incremental, rather than sudden and sustained.

### **Construction Impacts**

During construction, temporary noise impacts would occur in active construction zones and could affect residential, commercial and institutional uses along the rail corridor. These impacts would be higher if construction occurred during quieter times such as evenings, nights, and weekends.

Construction noise sources include the use of heavy equipment, tunnel boring machines, truck or rail traffic associated with muck hauling, and pile driving. In quieter, open space areas and park or beach settings, construction noise may disrupt recreational activities and enjoyment of these facilities. Tunneling operations could involve nighttime haul-truck traffic, and would typically last longer than at-grade construction operations. Construction noise impacts would be localized and would migrate along the alignment as construction proceeds.

### **Vibration Impacts**

Vibration impacts are less predictable at a program level of analysis due to the site-specific nature of vibration transmission and variable soil conditions along the alignment. Generally, vibration impacts would occur in areas where the rail right-of-way and/or tracks would be moved closer to existing, sensitive receptors, depending on the underlying soil conditions. At this program level, it is estimated that the proposed Rail Improvements Alternative has the potential to create additional vibration impacts along up to approximately 40 mi (64 km), or about 30 percent of the corridor. These areas include the following:

- Parts of the Union Station to Fullerton segment, where a fourth main track would move the existing rail corridor somewhat closer to sensitive receptors (within the existing rail corridor, based on conceptual design information).
- The Trabuco Creek alignment in San Juan Capistrano, where new rail corridor would be constructed along the east side of the creek.
- The Dana Point curve realignment/short tunnel option, where straightening the curve would move the tracks closer to some receptors and would remain at grade.
- The alignments through Carlsbad and Encinitas, where a second track would move the existing rail corridor slightly closer to sensitive receptors.

### **3.4.4 Design Practices**

Many of the alignment options carried forward are in a tunnel or trench section. For these segments of the system the potential for substantial operational noise impacts are greatly reduced.

Where the existing rail corridor would be grade separated from roadways, reduced noise benefits would occur. Particularly in the urban areas where potential for noise impacts is typically at the highest levels, grade separations would eliminate existing horn sounding and warning bells at existing grade crossings and would result in noise benefits that would offset much of the noise impact attributable to increased rail service along the corridor.

### **3.4.5 Mitigation Strategies**

Based on the analysis above, and considering the CEQA Appendix G thresholds of significance for noise, the Rail Improvements Alternative would have a potentially significant impact on noise. The Rail Improvements Alternative would create temporary construction-related noise impacts. It would also create long-term noise impacts from an increase in both speed and frequency of service for passenger rail, and additional freight rail service (especially between Los Angeles and Fullerton). At the same time, the Rail Improvements would result in some long-term noise reduction benefits due to elimination of noise sources with grade separation of existing grade crossings. While the significance of the impacts is dependent on the sensitivity of the landscape and noise receptors, the analysis finds some high impacts on noise-sensitive land uses and populations and these impacts are therefore considered significant. Mitigation strategies, as well as the design practices discussed above, will be applied to reduce this impact.



General mitigation strategies are discussed in this programmatic review of potential noise impacts associated with proposed alignment options. Specific mitigation for expected noise and vibration impacts would be developed in the next stage of environmental analysis. Noise and vibration mitigation measures can generally be applied to the source (train and associated structures), the path (area between train and receiver) and/or the receiver (property or building).

Treatments such as sound insulation or vibration controls to impacted buildings may be possible, but could be difficult to implement for the potentially numerous properties adjacent to the right-of-way. Such treatments require protracted implementation procedures and separate design considerations. The most feasible and effective mitigation treatments are typically those involving the path. These mitigation measures can often be applied to the path within the right-of-way, adjacent to the tracks. Potential noise impacts can be reduced by the installation of sound barrier walls constructed to shield receivers from train noise. For vibration mitigation, a number of track treatments may be considered for reducing train vibrations. The appropriateness of treatments would depend on the site-specific ground conditions found along the corridor. This program-level analysis has identified areas where potential project-induced vibrations should be assessed in the future.

#### A. NOISE BARRIERS

Noise barriers are often a practical way to reduce noise impacts from transportation projects including rail corridors. The representative typologies considered mitigation with noise barriers for certain areas. In most cases the potential noise impacts could be reduced from the severe impact category to FRA's impact category, and to the no impact category in some locations, with the application of appropriately dimensioned noise barriers next to the tracks. The design of noise barriers appropriate for the rail right-of-way line would depend on the location and height of noise-sensitive buildings, as well as the speeds of the trains. Noise barriers 8 to 12 ft (2 to 3.7 m) tall might be used to reduce noise in noise-sensitive areas.

Application of mitigation to the Rail Improvements Alternative would result in a considerable reduction of potential noise impacts. The estimates obtained from the results of the representative typologies showed noise barriers to be effective in reducing the potential noise impact rating by one category, for example, from high to medium or from medium to low. Consequently, segments with a medium rating would be adjusted down to a low rating.

The cost of constructing a noise barrier on one side of a rail line is estimated at approximately \$1 million per mi (\$625,000 per km) for a concrete wall of 12 ft (4 m) in height. Specific mitigation would be developed as a part of project-level review, including a cost-benefit analysis and an assessment of other impacts that may be caused by noise walls (such as visual or land use impacts).

Sound walls in semi-rural areas such as in parklands, wildlife or recreational areas are typically impractical. Alternatives to noise barriers, such as trenches or earth berms, could be explored during project level environmental review; however, they may be impractical due to cost and other impacts related to the extent of land required as well as the associated construction impacts. Other noise mitigation techniques would be considered during project-level studies to address site-specific noise impacts. For

alignment options where the corridor would remain at-grade, potential strategies for reducing horn and warning bell noise will be examined on a site-specific basis during project-level environmental evaluations.

## B. VIBRATION MITIGATION

Vibration mitigation is less predictable at a program level of analysis due to the site-specific nature of vibration transmission through soil conditions along the alignment. However, an estimate can be made of the length of corridor where special mitigation may need to be considered by totaling the segments with potential vibration impact rating of high. Preliminary estimates show that up to 40 mi (64 km) of the rail corridor could have vibration impacts, depending on site-specific soil conditions.

## C. CONSTRUCTION MITIGATION

Potential mitigation strategies for construction noise impacts associated with the Rail Improvements Alternative are listed below.

- Reduce construction noise by using enclosures or walls to surround noisy equipment, installing mufflers on engines, substituting quieter equipment or construction methods, minimizing time of operation and locating equipment farther from sensitive receptors.
- Identify specific truck haul routes, avoiding quieter areas (residential, hospital, etc.) where feasible, and restrict truck operations during nighttime hours in these areas.
- Suspend construction operations between 7:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m. and on weekends or holidays in residential areas.
- Require that contractors comply with all local sound control and noise level rules, regulations and ordinances.
- Equip internal combustion engines with mufflers of a type recommended by the manufacturer.

Other measures that will be evaluated during project-level analyses include the following:

- Specifying the quietest equipment available would reduce noise by 5 to 10 dBA.
- Turning off construction equipment during prolonged periods of non-use would eliminate noise from construction equipment during those periods.
- Requiring contractors to maintain all equipment and train their equipment operators would reduce noise levels and increase efficiency of operation.
- Locating stationary equipment away from noise sensitive receptors would decrease noise impact from that equipment in proportion to the increased distance.

The above mitigation strategies are expected to reduce the short-term and long-term noise impacts of the Rail Improvements Alternative to a less-than-significant level. Additional environmental assessment will allow a more precise evaluation in the project-level environmental analyses.



### 3.4.6 Subsequent Analysis

#### A. NOISE ANALYSIS

The FRA provides guidance for two levels of analysis in project environmental review, a general assessment method to quantify the potential noise impacts at locations with potential noise impacts, and a detailed analysis procedure for evaluating suggested noise mitigation at locations where general assessment shows there is potential for significant impacts. The process is designed to focus on problem areas as more detail becomes available during project development. Subsequent analysis would proceed along the following lines.

##### **Ambient Noise Conditions**

Ambient noise values would be measured at the project-level. A measurement program involving both long-term and short-term noise monitoring would be performed at selected locations to document the existing noise environment. As it would be impractical to measure everywhere, the monitoring would be supplemented by estimates of noise environments at locations considered to be typical.

##### **Noise Propagation Characteristics**

The next stage of analysis would incorporate topography as well as consideration of shielding by buildings, vegetation, and other natural features in a particular corridor

##### **Impact Criteria**

In the next stage of analysis, assessments using the full, three-level FRA and FTA impact criteria would be performed (U.S. Department of Transportation 1998 and 1995, respectively). This detailed assessment would specifically identify locations where potential impacts may occur and locations where potentially high impact may occur and would provide for consideration of specific mitigation measures where appropriate.

In project-level analyses, an assessment would also be performed in the lagoon areas of northern San Diego County, to determine whether any potential noise impacts would adversely affect the wildlife resources. Potential impacts and mitigation strategies, if needed, would be assessed in consultation with agency representatives with specific knowledge of noise-related impact studies on wildlife in settings such as the lagoons.

##### **Mitigation**

As more detail becomes available in the project phase, there may be many areas that were identified as potentially impacted during screening analysis for which further analysis would not be needed, because they would not be impacted. The detailed analysis would provide information useful for the engineering design of mitigation measures. These measures would be considered in the project-level environmental review, and potential visual and shadow impacts of noise barriers would also be considered.

During subsequent, project-level analyses, some local jurisdictions may want to explore, with project proponents and the FRA, the potential feasibility and efficacy of establishing Quiet Zones in their communities.

## B. VIBRATION ANALYSIS

The steps involved in the project level analysis of ground-borne vibration would be similar to those for noise. The major difference would be the need for study of site-specific ground-borne vibration characteristics. Considerable variation of soil conditions may occur along the corridor, resulting in some locations with significant levels of vibration from trains and other locations at the same distance from the track where vibrations can hardly be perceived. Determining the potential vibration characteristics in the detailed analysis would involve a measurement program performed according to the method described in the FRA guidance manual (U.S. Department of Transportation 1998). This method would allow for the prediction of vibration levels and frequency spectrum information valuable not only in the assessment of impact, but also in the consideration of mitigation measures.

## 3.5 ENERGY

This analysis provides an overview of the potential operation and construction impacts associated with the use of energy for the No-Project and Rail Improvements Alternative.

### 3.5.1 Regulatory Requirements and Methods of Evaluation

#### A. REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS

##### Federal Regulations

Federal Energy Regulatory Commission: The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) is an independent agency that regulates the interstate transmission of natural gas, oil, and electricity. FERC also regulates natural gas and hydropower projects. As part of that responsibility, FERC regulates the transmission and sale of natural gas for resale in interstate commerce, the transmission of oil by pipeline in interstate commerce, and the transmission and wholesale sales of electricity in interstate commerce. FERC also licenses and inspects private, municipal, and state hydroelectric projects; approves the siting of and abandonment of interstate natural gas facilities, including pipelines, storage, and liquefied natural gas; oversees environmental matters related to natural gas and hydroelectricity projects and major electricity policy initiatives; and administers accounting and financial reporting regulations and conduct of regulated companies.

Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU): The Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA—LU), passed in 2005, builds on the initiatives established in the Transportation Equity Act for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (TEA21) and the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 (ISTEA). SAFETEA—LU directs transportation agencies to “encourage and promote the safe and efficient management, operation, and development of surface transportation systems that will serve the mobility needs of people and freight and foster economic growth and development within and between States and urbanized areas, while minimizing transportation-related fuel consumption and air pollution through metropolitan and statewide transportation planning processes.” Additionally, SAFETEA-LU requires transportation agencies to consult with resource agencies in statewide and metropolitan planning. Agencies must discuss potential environmental mitigation activities during the transportation planning process.

Executive Order 12185, Conservation of Petroleum and Natural Gas (December 17, 1979, 44 F.R. § 75093): This executive order encourages additional conservation of petroleum and natural gas by recipients of federal financial assistance.

##### State Regulations

California Code of Regulations, Title 24, Part 6, Energy Efficiency Standards: Title 24, Part 6 of the California Code of Regulations, Energy Efficiency Standards promotes efficient energy use in new buildings constructed in California. The standards regulate energy consumed for heating, cooling, ventilation, water heating, and lighting. The standards are enforced through the local building permit process. These standards may apply to any buildings (e.g., stations) constructed as part of or in association with the No-Project and Rail Improvements Alternatives.

## B. METHOD OF EVALUATION OF IMPACTS

This section explains the methodology used to evaluate the potential energy impacts and benefits attributable to operation (direct energy) and construction (indirect energy) of the alternatives under study. This section also explains the criteria used to determine whether a potential impact on energy consumption would be significant.

### **Direct Energy**

Operational energy use is addressed both quantitatively and qualitatively. The estimated direct energy consumption related to locomotive traffic in the LOSSAN corridor is quantified for the No-Project and Rail Improvements Alternatives, based on the changes that would occur between now and 2020 in the number of locomotives traveling along the corridor. Regional changes in vehicular traffic are not addressed in this analysis. Although the Rail Improvements Alternative is expected to accommodate part of the demand for increased passenger rail service, the projected population and employment increase between now and 2020 would result in increased vehicular traffic as well. Therefore, the Rail Improvements Alternative would not have a significant effect on regional VMT.

The heat content of diesel fuel was used to convert gallons of fuel consumed to energy, measured in British thermal units (Btus). Overall direct energy (Btus) was then converted to equivalent barrels of crude oil to represent potential energy impact. (Btus are the standard units used by industry and government literature for such comparisons. Metric units for energy [i.e., Joules] are not used in this report.) Annual direct-energy consumption values for locomotive travel in the LOSSAN corridor were calculated for existing conditions, the No-Project Alternative, and Rail Improvements Alternative, and compared.

The qualitative analysis of regional direct energy consumption considers the estimated effect that each alternative would have on localized vehicular and rail travel along the rail corridor, congestion and travel speeds, which would affect fuel efficiency and, therefore, energy use.

### **Indirect Energy**

The indirect energy impacts considered here include two potential construction-related energy consumption factors, construction of proposed rail improvements and construction of secondary facilities.

Construction of Rail Improvements: The estimated construction-related energy consumption for the construction of rail tracks and support facilities under the Rail Improvements Alternative is quantified in this analysis, based on data gathered for typical heavy rail systems and a heavy rail commuter system, San Francisco Bay Area Rapid Transit District (BART). Projected construction-related energy consumption for the Rail Improvements Alternative is presented in Table 3.5-1. These estimates are appropriate for comparison purposes.

**Table 3.5-1**  
**Construction-Related Energy Consumption Factors for Rail Improvements**

Type of Construction	Rural vs. Urban <sup>a</sup>	Factor (billions of Btus)
At grade	Rural <sup>b</sup>	12.29/one-way rail mi
	Urban <sup>c</sup>	19.11/one-way rail mi
Elevated	Rural <sup>b</sup>	55.46/one-way rail mi
	Urban <sup>c</sup>	55.63/one-way rail mi
Below grade (cut)	Rural <sup>b</sup>	117.07/one-way rail mi
	Urban <sup>c</sup>	163.14/one-way rail mi
Below grade (tunnel)	Rural <sup>b</sup>	117.07/one-way rail mi
	Urban <sup>c</sup>	328.33/one-way rail mi
Station	N/A <sup>d</sup>	78 <sup>e</sup> /station

<sup>a</sup> Differences between the construction-related energy consumption factors for urban and rural settings reflect differences in construction methods, demolition requirements, utility accommodation, etc.

<sup>b</sup> Estimates reflect typical rail system construction energy consumption.

<sup>c</sup> Estimates reflect BART system construction energy consumption as surrogate for rail construction through urban area.

<sup>d</sup> Discreet (i.e., non-alignment-related facilities) are not differentiated between rural or urban because the data used to develop the respective values were not differentiated as such. Some difference between the actual values might be expected.

<sup>e</sup> Value for construction of freight terminal. Used as proxy for unknown air gate and HST station consumption factors.

**Sources:**

U.S. Congressional Budget Office 1977

U.S. Congressional Budget Office 1982

Congressional Budget Office in Energy and Transportation Systems, Prepared for the Federal Highway Administration, Sacramento, CA, by California State Department of Transportation (California Department of Transportation 1983).

Energy consumption related to transportation of materials and equipment to and from the work site cannot be estimated without project-level implementation and construction plans.

**Secondary Facilities:** A *secondary facility* is a facility that consumes energy in the production of materials related to the project alternatives. For example, a factory that produces construction materials and machinery that would be used in the construction and maintenance of the alternatives' structures and attendant facilities would be a secondary facility. Potential impacts resulting from energy consumption of secondary facilities are discussed qualitatively. Consideration was given to whether nonrenewable resources would be consumed in a wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary manner, (with special attention given to the efficiency of production of construction materials and machinery and the choices made regarding construction methodology and procedures, including equipment maintenance).

### C. CRITERIA FOR DETERMINING SIGNIFICANCE OF IMPACTS

According to Appendix F of the CEQA Guidelines, the means to achieve the goal of conserving energy include (1) decreasing overall per capita energy consumption, (2) decreasing reliance on natural gas and oil, and (3) increasing reliance on renewable

energy sources. The significance criteria discussed herein are used to determine whether the alternatives would have a potentially significant effect on energy use, including energy conservation.

The No-Project Alternative is the primary basis against which potential impacts of the Rail Improvements Alternative is compared. Significant potential operational energy impacts would occur if the Rail Improvements Alternative would result in either substantial demand on statewide and/or regional energy supply, or a significant additional capacity requirement.

Significant potential construction-related energy impacts would occur if construction of the proposed rail improvements would consume nonrenewable energy resources in a wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary manner. Implementation of the Rail Improvements Alternative would have a significant adverse effect if it, together with regional growth, would contribute to a collectively significant shortage of regional or statewide energy. By contrast, if the implementation of the alternative resulted in energy savings or alleviated demand on energy resources, the alternative would contribute to energy conservation and would have a beneficial effect.

### **3.5.2 Affected Environment**

#### **A. STUDY AREA DEFINED**

The study area affected by energy use of the alternatives is defined as the LOSSAN rail corridor and the localized roadway system along the corridor that is affected by grade crossings with the rail corridor.

#### **B. GENERAL DISCUSSION OF TRANSPORTATION ENERGY CONSUMPTION**

Transportation accounts for a large portion of the California energy budget, with approximately 46% of the state's energy consumption resulting from the transport of goods and people. Between 1997 and 2020, according to the State Department of Finance, the state is forecasted to grow by about 11 million people, or approximately 30% (California Department of Finance 1998). During this same period, intercity travel is projected to grow by almost 40% to almost 215 million trips per year (California High Speed Rail Authority 2000). Although the average fuel economy of vehicles in the state has improved, the fuel savings achieved are overshadowed by the increased number of miles traveled and the marked shift in personal vehicle preference, from the standard passenger automobile (sedan) toward larger vehicles such as sport utility vehicles (SUVs) and pick-up trucks. Currently, California's 24 million automobiles consume more than 17 billion gal (64 billion L) of petroleum, most of which is consumed in southern California. The state is the third largest consumer of petroleum fuel in the world. Only the United States as a whole and the former Soviet Union exceed this volume. Because of this dependence on petroleum fuels, events in the international petroleum market can immediately and adversely affect the price and adequacy of California's fuel supply (California Energy Commission 1999).

Statewide, automobile trips account for over 84 percent of all intercity travel and over 58 percent of the longer trips. In Southern California, this is even more pronounced, as the automobile currently dominates intercity travel. Automobile travel between Los Angeles and San Diego is currently the second largest geographic travel market in the state, accounting for 34.9 million trips in 1997. Traffic volume on I-5, the major highway link



between Los Angeles and San Diego, is expected to increase 18 percent between 2001 and 2025.

Currently, this intercity corridor is also the second busiest intercity rail corridor in the nation, carrying approximately 4,700 riders each day (1.7 million riders annually) along the entire Pacific Surfliner corridor from San Luis Obispo to San Diego (California Department of Transportation 2001). Of this service, the segment between Los Angeles and San Diego has a current daily ridership of 3,900 (1.4 million riders annually). Intercity rail travel is anticipating exponential growth within the next 20 years. In 2001, Amtrak's 20-Year Improvement Plan projected 2005 and 2020 ridership along the rail corridor from San Luis Obispo to San Diego, using the total travel demand growth and constant mode share. By 2005, ridership is forecast to increase to approximately 5,500 riders per day (2 million riders annually) and to 15,800 daily riders (5.77 million riders annually) by 2020.

The effects of transportation congestion on energy consumption and air emissions can be major. Automobiles are most efficient when operating at steady speeds of 35 mph to 45 mph (56 kph to 72 kph) with no stops (Oak Ridge National Laboratory 2002). Fuel consumption increases by about 30% when average speeds drop from 30 mph to 20 mph (48 kph to 32 kph), while a drop from 30 mph to 10 mph (48 kph to 16 kph) results in a 100% increase in fuel use. Studies estimate that approximately 10% of all on-road fuel consumed is a result of congestion (California Energy Commission 1990). Likewise, energy consumption by locomotives increases as rail corridors become more congested. Bottlenecks caused by single-tracked sections of the LOSSAN corridor (currently about 41 percent of the corridor between Los Angeles and San Diego) result in locomotive idling along the corridor. At-grade crossings in urban areas require speed reduction, and there are also speed restrictions in sensitive coastal areas such as San Clemente and Del. All of these factors decrease the efficiency of locomotive travel and increase energy consumption.

### 3.5.3 Environmental Consequences

#### A. EXISTING CONDITIONS COMPARED TO NO-PROJECT ALTERNATIVE

##### Operational (Direct) Energy

Between now and 2020, the number of locomotive miles (kilometers) traveling in the LOSSAN corridor will increase an estimated 62% by 2020, with passenger rail miles increasing 56% and freight rail miles increasing 66% above 2005 levels. (Passenger trains have one locomotive, while most freight trains have four locomotives, so locomotive miles for freight are higher per train.)

These changes in existing and future No-Project conditions will increase the energy consumption by locomotives in the project region. The estimated energy consumption change between 2005 and 2020 is shown in Table 3.5-2. As indicated in the table, the 2005 energy used to power the estimated 55.4 million passenger and freight rail miles (89.2 million km) in the LOSSAN corridor was 1,124,024 million Btus (MMBtus), or 193,797 barrels of oil. The 107.9 million passenger and freight rail miles (173.6 million km) estimated under the 2020 No-Project Alternative would consume the equivalent of about 1,838,423 MMBtus, or 316,969 barrels of oil. This increase of 64% from existing to 2020 No-Project conditions would be caused primarily by the projected population and

employment increases. Because congestion levels under the No-Project Alternative would likely be higher than they are under existing conditions, the increase in direct energy used in 2020 would be higher than the projected 64% increase.

**Table 3.5-2**  
**Annual Locomotive Operational Energy Consumption**  
**in the LOSSAN Corridor**

Energy Consumption	2005 Existing	2020 No-Project Alternative
<b>Annual Rail Fuel Usage -- Gal (L) <sup>a</sup></b>		
Passenger Rail	2,202,095 (8,335,588)	3,436,866 (13,009,568)
Freight Rail	5,901,896 (22,340,447)	9,817,808 (37,163,349)
TOTAL RAIL FUEL USAGE	8,103,991 (30,676,035)	13,254,674 (50,172,916)
<b>Annual Direct Energy Consumption (MMBtus) <sup>b, c</sup></b>		
Passenger Rail	305,431	476,693
Freight Rail	818,593	1,361,730
TOTAL DIRECT ENERGY CONSUMPTION	1,124,024	1,838,423
CHANGE IN DIRECT ENERGY CONSUMPTION (2005 – 2020)		714,399
<b>Annual Energy Consumption (Barrels of Oil) <sup>d</sup></b>		
Passenger Rail	52,660	82,188
Freight Rail	141,137	234,781
TOTAL ENERGY CONSUMPTION	193,797	316,969
CHANGE IN TOTAL ENERGY CONSUMPTION (2003-2020)		123,172

<sup>a</sup> Gallons (liters) of fuel are estimated as shown in Appendix 3.3-A for air quality.

<sup>b</sup> MMBtus = million Btus. One British thermal unit (Btu) is the quantity of energy necessary to raise one pound of water one degree Fahrenheit.

<sup>c</sup> Heat content of diesel fuel used for conversion to Btus = 138,700 Btus per gallon

<sup>d</sup> One barrel of crude oil is equal to 5.8 MMBtus.

### **Construction (Indirect) Energy**

The No-Project Alternative is based on the assumption that projects currently included in existing plans and programs, including local, state, and interstate transportation system improvements, would be implemented. It is assumed that construction of the projects included in the No-Project Alternative would not result in the consumption of energy resources in a wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary manner.

## **B. NO-PROJECT ALTERNATIVE COMPARED TO RAIL IMPROVEMENTS ALTERNATIVE**

### **Operational (Direct) Energy**

As described in Chapter 2, the number of trains in the study area by 2020 is projected to increase by approximately 10% over 2020 No-Project levels. The number of locomotive miles in the corridor would increase approximately 16% over No-Project levels, with passenger locomotive miles increasing 10% and freight increasing 20%. (Locomotive

miles are a higher percent increase than trains, because each freight train is assumed to include four locomotives.)

Therefore, there would be a corresponding increase of approximately 16% in operational (direct) energy usage associated with the Rail Improvements Alternative, as compared with the No-Project Alternative. Table 3.5-3 shows the estimated energy consumption differences between the No-Project and the Rail Improvements Alternative in the year 2020.

**Table 3.5-3**  
**Annual Locomotive Operational Energy Consumption**  
**in the LOSSAN Corridor – No-Project Compared with Rail Improvements**

Energy Consumption	2020 No-Project	2020 Rail Impr. Alternative
<b>Annual Rail Fuel Usage -- Gal (L) <sup>a</sup></b>		
Passenger Rail	3,436,866 (13,009,568)	3,765,145 (14,252,205)
Freight Rail	9,817,808 (37,163,349)	11,787,776 (44,620,268)
TOTAL RAIL FUEL USAGE	13,254,674 (50,172,916)	15,552,921 (58,872,473)
<b>Annual Direct Energy Consumption (MMBtus) <sup>b, c</sup></b>		
Passenger Rail	476,693	522,226
Freight Rail	1,361,730	1,634,965
TOTAL DIRECT ENERGY CONSUMPTION	1,838,423	2,157,190
CHANGE IN DIRECT ENERGY CONSUMPTION (2005 – 2020)		318,767
<b>Annual Energy Consumption (Barrels of Oil) <sup>d</sup></b>		
Passenger Rail	82,188	90,039
Freight Rail	234,781	281,890
TOTAL ENERGY CONSUMPTION	316,969	371,929
DIFFERENCE IN TOTAL ENERGY CONSUMPTION (Rail Improvements vs. No-Project)		54,960

a Gallons (liters) of fuel are estimated as shown in Appendix 3.3-A for air quality.

b MMBtus = million Btus. One British thermal unit (Btu) is the quantity of energy necessary to raise one pound of water one degree Fahrenheit.

c Heat content of diesel fuel used for conversion to Btus = 138,700 Btus per gallon

d One barrel of crude oil is equal to 5.8 MMBtus.

In addition to the locomotive energy consumption, there would be other impacts on operational energy consumption for the Rail Improvements Alternative. The projected increase in rail traffic between now and 2020 would result in higher levels of congestion and delays in train traffic without the proposed improvements to the corridor. The existing rail service is subject to delays and congestion, particularly in segments where the corridor is single tracked. These bottlenecks would increase in severity as rail service increases over the next 20 years and beyond. The Rail Improvements Alternative would decrease the likelihood of delays along the corridor, which would decrease the energy consumption from idling locomotives. The proposed double

tracking would also decrease locomotive idling time at existing LOSSAN stations as rail service increases. At this program level of analysis, it is not possible to quantify the potential for energy benefits of decreased congestion and locomotive idle time along the corridor.

The grade separations that would occur with many of the proposed improvement options would also contribute to an increase in fuel efficiency and a reduction in energy consumption from idling automobiles and trucks at grade crossings. These reductions from reduced vehicular waiting time at crossings would be greatest in the congested urban roadways in the metropolitan areas of Los Angeles, Orange County, and San Diego. The proposed double tracking through the study area could also reduce vehicular delays at crossings by allowing two trains to pass through a given area at the same time.

The Rail Improvements Alternative would be consistent with the California Energy Plan (CEC 1997), which encourages reduction of transportation related energy needs by means including efficient public transportation.

### **Construction (Indirect) Energy**

Construction of the programmed and funded transportation improvements under the No-Project Alternative would require less energy than construction of those improvements plus the Rail Improvements Alternative.

The Rail Improvements Alternative construction-related energy consumption would result in the one-time, non-recoverable energy costs associated with construction of at-grade, underground and aerial track, stations, and support facilities. Details regarding energy conservation practices have not been specified for the Rail Improvements Alternative, which has not been designed in detail, nor have construction methods and staging been planned at this time. Given the scope and scale of the improvements proposed, however, it is anticipated that the construction-related energy requirement would be substantial.

Table 3.5-4 shows estimates of potential construction-related indirect energy consumption for the Rail Improvements Alternative, based on a higher level route combination. (Higher level is defined as alignment options within each rail segment that would require the greatest construction effort, such as tunneling or trenches as compared with at-grade work.) The proportion of rural versus urban areas is based on visual interpretation of the alignment in the context of the California Atlas & Gazetteer (DeLorme 2000). For this analysis, 30 percent of the corridor was characterized as rural, and 70 percent as urban. As shown in the table, construction of the Rail Improvement Alternative would consume energy on the order of 14,066 billion Btus.

It is reasonable to assume that secondary facilities, such as those used in the production of cement, steel, etc., would employ all reasonable energy conservation practices in the interest of minimizing the cost of doing business. Industry in California reduced electricity usage (which is mostly generated by natural gas, a nonrenewable fuel) from 54.7 million megawatt hours (MWh) in 2000 to 52.2 million MWh in 2001, a 4.6 percent reduction, even as the state's population increased by 513,352, or 1.5% (California Energy Commission 2002d). Therefore, it can reasonably be assumed that construction-related energy consumption by secondary facilities would not consume nonrenewable energy resources in a wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary manner under the Rail Improvements Alternative.

**Table 3.5-4  
Non-Recoverable Construction-Related Energy Consumption**

Structure	Rural vs. Urban <sup>a</sup>	Facility Quantity	Energy Consumption (Billion Btus)
At Grade	Rural	38.55 mi (62.04 km)	473.78
	Urban	89.95 mi (144.76 km)	1718.94
Aerial Rail Tracks	Rural	6.74 mi (10.85 km)	373.80
	Urban	15.73 mi (25.31 km)	875.06
Below Grade (Cut)	Rural	5.68 mi (9.14 km)	664.96
	Urban	13.26 mi (21.34 km)	2163.24
Below Grade (Tunnel)	Rural	8.74 mi (14.07 km)	1023.19
	Urban	20.39 mi (32.81 km)	6694.65
New Rail Stations	N/A	1 station	78
Rail Improvements Alternative Total			14,065.62

<sup>a</sup> Differences between the construction-related energy consumption for urban and rural settings reflect differences in construction methods, demolition requirements, utility accommodation, etc. This analysis assumes improvements would be construction in 30 % rural areas and 70 % urban areas.

Construction of the Rail Improvements Alternative is anticipated to take about 10 years, assuming funding becomes available on a timely and consistent basis. Construction would occur in stages, and some segments would be open for operation while others are still under construction. Given the scope and scale of the proposed improvements, it is anticipated that secondary construction-related energy requirements would be substantial.

Construction-related energy impacts of the Rail Improvements Alternative, both project and secondary, would potentially represent a significant use of nonrenewable resources.

### 3.5.4 Mitigation Strategies

Based on the analysis above, and considering the discussion in CEQA Appendix F on Energy Conservation, the Rail Improvement Alternative would have a potentially significant effect related to construction and operational fuel consumption. While the Rail Improvements Alternative would increase annual locomotive fuel usage in the LOSSAN corridor by approximately 16% over the No-Project condition, it will also decrease congestion-related delays and locomotive idling along the corridor, offsetting some of that increase. Construction would also consume a significant amount of fuel over an estimated ten-year timeframe. Mitigation strategies will be applied to reduce these impacts.

This is a broad program-level analysis reviewing potential energy use and impacts related to the proposed rail improvements. Measures to reduce the amount of energy consumed are outlined below. If the proposed improvements were implemented, the project-level of analysis and design will be evaluated for the feasibility of incorporating these measures:

- Minimize grade changes in steep terrain areas to reduce the use of diesel fuel.
- Maximize intermodal transit connections to reduce automobile VMT related to the rail system.

- Develop and implement a construction energy conservation plan.
- Use newer, more energy efficient construction equipment.
- Implement a program to encourage construction workers to carpool or use public transportation for travel to and from the construction site.

### 3.5.5 Subsequent Analysis

Subsequent analysis would be required for proposed rail improvements at the project level. Comprehensive traffic analysis for future conditions would be required to assess energy impacts in more detail.

Subsequent energy analysis at the project level would follow the methodology applied in this evaluation, but would employ more detailed traffic data for the energy consumption analysis. Energy consumption factors would be updated using the latest available published information. Detailed construction staging, sequencing, methods, and practices would be necessary to support a quantitative analysis of construction energy consumption.



## 3.6 LAND USE AND PLANNING, COMMUNITIES AND NEIGHBORHOODS, PROPERTY AND ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

This section evaluates the potential impacts of the No-Project and Rail Improvements Alternatives on land use compatibility, communities and neighborhoods, and property. This section also addresses environmental justice in accordance with the provisions of Executive Order (EO) 12898. This evaluation describes how existing conditions compare with the No-Project Alternative and how the No-Project Alternative compares with the potential impacts of the Rail Improvements Alternative, including a comparison among the alignment and station options.

### 3.6.1 Regulatory Requirements and Methods of Evaluation

#### A. REGULATORY PROVISIONS

##### Land Use, Communities and Neighborhoods, and Property

This section addresses the potential effects of each of the alternatives on existing and planned land uses. This section includes a discussion of the existing uses in and adjacent to areas where property acquisition may be needed for an alternative, an analysis of the changes to these uses which may occur with an alternative, a discussion of potential inconsistencies with land use plans, and identification of general mitigation strategies. The discussion of potential inconsistencies with planned land uses does not imply that the Department, a state agency, would be subject to such plans or local ordinances, either directly or through the NEPA or CEQA process. The information is provided in order to indicate potential land use changes that could result in potential environmental impacts.

##### Environmental Justice

EO 12898, known as the federal environmental justice policy, requires federal agencies to address to the greatest extent practicable and permitted by law the disproportionately high adverse human health and environmental effects of their programs, policies, and activities, on minority populations and low-income populations in the United States. Federal agency responsibilities under this EO also apply to Native American programs. Department of Transportation (DOT) Order 5610.2 on environmental justice defines “disproportionately high and adverse effect on minority and low-income populations” to mean an adverse effect that is predominately borne by a minority population and/or a low-income population, or will be suffered by the minority population and/or low-income population and is appreciably more severe or greater in magnitude than the adverse effect that will be suffered by the non-minority population and/or non-low-income population (DOT Order 5610.2, Appendix Definitions, subd.[g]).

The California Government Code defines environmental justice as the “fair treatment of people of all races, cultures, and incomes with respect to the development, adoption, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies” (California Government Code § 65040.12[e]). There are no specific state procedures prescribed for consideration of environmental justice issues related to the proposed LOSSAN Corridor Rail Improvements Alternative.

## B. METHODS OF EVALUATION OF IMPACTS

The analysis was conducted using existing U.S. Census 2000 tract information/data compiled in a geographic information systems (GIS) format, local community general plans or regional plans, and land use information provided by the planning agencies in the region. Existing and future conditions were described for the No-Project Alternative by documenting existing information for existing and planned future land use policy in potential alignment and potential station areas, development patterns for employment and population growth, demographics, communities and neighborhoods, housing, and economics. The No-Project Alternative was compared to the planned uses reflected in general plans and regional plans to see if it may result in potential effects on future development. The general and regional plans consulted for this section are listed in Chapter 11, *Sources Used in Document Preparation*.

The ranking systems described below were used to evaluate potential impacts for the alternatives for land use changes, land use compatibility, and property. Potential impacts on communities and neighborhoods were also considered. The presence of minority populations and low-income populations in the study area for the alternatives was identified in order to consider potential environmental justice issues. Because this is a program-level environmental review, the analysis of these potential impacts was performed on a broad scale to permit a comparison of relative differences between the alternatives and among the alignment options. Further evaluation of potential impacts would occur at the project-level environmental review, should a decision be made to proceed with the Rail Improvements Alternative.

### Land Use Compatibility

The potential compatibility of the proposed alignment options with existing land uses is evaluated based on the potential sensitivity of various land uses to the changes which would result from the Rail Improvements Alternative, and the potential impact of these changes on existing and planned land uses. For example, homes and schools are more sensitive to changes that may result in increased noise and vibration (see Section 3.4, *Noise and Vibration*) or increased levels of traffic congestion (see Section 3.1, *Traffic and Circulation*). Industrial uses, however, are typically less sensitive to these types of changes because these changes interfere less with normal industrial activities. Because an area's sensitivity or compatibility is based in this analysis on the presence of residential properties, low, medium, and high levels of potential compatibility are identified based on the percentage of residential area affected, the proximity of the residential area to facilities included in the Rail Improvements Alternative, whether or not the proposed improvement would occur within the existing LOSSAN rail right-of-way, and the presence of local or regional uses and public services (such as parks, schools, employment centers, law enforcement, fire and emergency services). For proposed alignment options, land use compatibility was assessed using GIS layers and aerial photographs to identify proximity to housing and population, and to determine whether the alignments would be within or outside an existing right-of-way in the study area.

Potential impacts are considered low if existing land uses within a potential alignment or station site are found to be compatible with the land use changes that may result from the Rail Improvements Alternative. The type of improvement proposed would also affect the level of potential impact. For example, improvements that would be done within the existing rail right-of-way generally would be more compatible with existing land uses

than those that would introduce a new rail corridor to an area. Future land use compatibility is based on information from general plans and other regional and local transportation planning documents. These documents were examined to assess an alignment option's potential consistency with the goals and objectives defined therein. The Rail Improvements Alternative is considered highly compatible if alignment options would be located in areas planned for transportation multi-modal centers or corridor development, redevelopment, economic revitalization, transit-oriented development, or high-intensity employment. Compatibility would be considered low if an alternative would be potentially inconsistent with local or regional planning documents. Table 3.6-1 summarizes the potential compatibility rating of existing and planned land use types with the alignment options. Thus, where potential compatibility would be rated low, the potential for impacts would be higher, and where potential compatibility would be rated high, the potential for impacts would be lower.

**Table 3.6-1**  
**Compatibility of Land Use Types**

Compatibility		
Low	Medium	High
Single-family residential, community parks, neighborhood park, habitat conservation area, elementary/ middle school (widened or new right-of-way needed)	Multifamily residential, high schools, low-intensity industrial, hospitals	Business park/regional commercial, multifamily residential, existing or planned transit center, high intensity industrial park, service commercial, commercial recreation, college, transportation/utilities, high-intensity government facilities, airport or train station, agricultural (tunnel, covered trench, or no new right-of-way needed)

### **Communities and Neighborhoods**

A potential impact on a community or neighborhood was identified if an alignment option would create a new physical barrier, isolating one part of an established community from another and potentially resulting in a physical disruption to community cohesion. Improvements to existing transportation corridors, including grade separations, would not generally result in new barriers.

### **Property**

Assessment of potential property impacts is based on the types of land uses adjacent to the particular proposed alignment, the amount of right-of-way potentially needed due to the construction type, and the land use sensitivity to potential impacts. Impacts include potential acquisition, displacement and relocation of existing uses, or demolition of properties. Potential property impacts were ranked high, medium, or low as summarized below in Table 3.6-2.

**Table 3.6-2**  
**Rankings of Potential Property Impacts**

Facility Requirements	Residential			Non-residential		
	Rural/ Suburban	Suburban/ Urban	Urban	Rural Developed	Suburban Industrial/ Commercial	Urban Business Parks/ Regional Commercial
No additional right-of-way needed (also applies to tunnel segments for Rail Improvements Alternative)	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low
Widening of existing right-of-way required	Medium	Medium	High	Low	Medium	High
New corridor (new right-of-way required; includes aerial and at-grade improvements)	High	High	High	Medium	Medium	High

To determine potential property impacts, the land uses within 50 ft (15 m) of either side of the existing corridor, or within 50 ft (15 m) of either side of the centerline for new rail alignments, were characterized by type and density of development. Densities of structures, buildings, and other elements of the built environment are generally higher in urbanized areas. *Rural/suburban* residential refers to low-density, single-family homes. *Suburban/urban* is medium density, multifamily housing such as townhouses, duplexes, and mobile homes. *Urban* residential refers to high-density multifamily housing such as apartment buildings. *Rural developed* non-residential uses typically occur in non-urbanized areas. *Suburban industrial/commercial* refers to medium density non-residential uses and includes some industrial uses, as well as transportation, utilities, and communication facilities. *Urban business parks/regional commercial* refers to non-residential uses that occur in urbanized areas and includes such uses as business parks, regional commercial facilities, and other mixed use/built-up uses. The classification of development types was based on land use information provided by the planning agencies in the LOSSAN region.

### **Environmental Justice**

This analysis is based on identifying the presence of minority populations and low-income populations in the study area (0.25 mi [0.40 km] from a potential alignment), and generally in the counties crossed by the alignment options. This assessment was done using U.S. Census 2000 information and alignment information to determine if minority or low-income populations exist within the study area and if they do, whether the alignments would be within or adjacent to an existing transportation right-of-way (lower potential for impacts) or new alignments (higher potential for impacts).

Based on the above information, the analysis determined the following.

- Whether at least 50% of the population in the study area may be minority or low-income.
- Whether the percentage of minority or low-income population in the study area may be at least 10% greater than the average generally in the county or community.

The assessment of potential for impacts on minority and low-income populations considered the size and type of right-of-way needed for the alternatives. For example, if an alignment were within an existing right-of-way, the potential for impacts would be lower. If the alignment would be on new right-of-way, then the potential for impacts may be higher. The potential alignments, however, have been identified to largely use or be adjacent to existing transportation rights-of-way in order to avoid or reduce potential impacts on natural resources and existing communities to the extent feasible and practicable (see Chapter 2, *Alternatives*). Since this is a program-level document, the analysis considers the Rail Improvements Alternative on a corridor-wide basis. It is not expected that the proposed Rail Improvements Alternative as a whole would result in disproportionate impacts on minority or low-income populations. Additional analysis would take place during project-level analysis to consider potential localized impacts.

## 3.6.2 Affected Environment

### A. STUDY AREA DEFINED

The study area for land use compatibility, communities and neighborhoods, property, and environmental justice is 0.25 mi (0.40 km) on either side of the centerline of the rail alignment options included in the alternatives, and the same distance around stations. This is the extent of area where the Rail Improvements Alternative might result in changes to land use; the type, density, and patterns of development; and socioeconomic conditions. For the property impacts analysis the study area is narrower—100 ft (30 m) on either side of the alignment centerlines—to better represent the properties most likely to be impacted by the proposed rail alignment options.

The planned land uses for the region are generally described by city and county general plans that encompass the alignment options. Several regulatory agencies and special districts also have future development plans that are considered in this analysis for lands these alternatives would cross. Communities have typically recognized and incorporated the existing LOSSAN rail corridor in their general land use plans, and most communities encourage transit-oriented development and transit facilities to relieve highway congestion and improve mobility.

Other resources such as U.S. Census 2000 data, aerial photos, and field observations were used to document existing and future (Year 2020) conditions for demographics, communities, and neighborhoods.

### B. LAND USE-RELATED RESOURCES IN THE STUDY AREA

Figure 3.6-1 shows the general land uses existing along the LOSSAN corridor. For this discussion, land use data came from local governments and regional agencies such as metropolitan planning organizations. The source of demographic information (existing

population and projects, ethnicity, income, and housing) was primarily U.S. Census 2000. These data, as well as existing and planned land use information, were compiled in a GIS format.

### **Existing Land Use**

The existing LOSSAN rail corridor traverses a variety of existing land uses, the majority of which are single-family residential, community parks, and low-intensity industrial uses. The area of potential impact is considered to be a 0.25-mi (0.40 km) buffer on each side of the segments of the rail line in which improvements are being considered. The LOSSAN region is largely urbanized, with the exception of the U.S. Marine Corps Base at Camp Pendleton between San Clemente and Oceanside. Between San Juan Capistrano and Del Mar, the existing train tracks run along beaches and through coastal communities.

Existing land uses and public facilities within the 0.25-mi (0.4 km) study area are summarized in Table 3.6-3. There are some agricultural lands within the study area, between Santa Ana and Irvine and near Oceanside, which include prime farmlands and farmlands of local importance. However, in these areas, proposed rail improvements would occur within the existing LOSSAN rail corridor right-of-way, so no agricultural lands would be affected. Therefore, agricultural lands are not addressed further in this document. The location of local law enforcement and emergency service facilities were not identified at this program level.

**Table 3.6-3  
LOSSAN Existing Land Uses**

<b>Land Use within Study Area</b>	<b>Acres</b>	<b>Percent of Study Area</b>
Single Family Residential	7,461	27%
Community Parks	4,639	17%
Low-intensity Industrial	3,715	14%
Transportation/Utilities	2,969	11%
High Intensity Industrial Park	1,958	7%
Commercial Recreation	1,738	6%
Business Park/Regional Commercial	1,027	4%
Agriculture	785	3%
Multi-family Residential	645	2%
College	600	2%
Neighborhood Park	597	2%
High Intensity Government Facilities	587	2%
High Schools	346	1%
Service Commercial	151	<1%
Hospitals	47	<1%
Elementary/Middle School	35	<1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>27,301</b>	<b>100%</b>



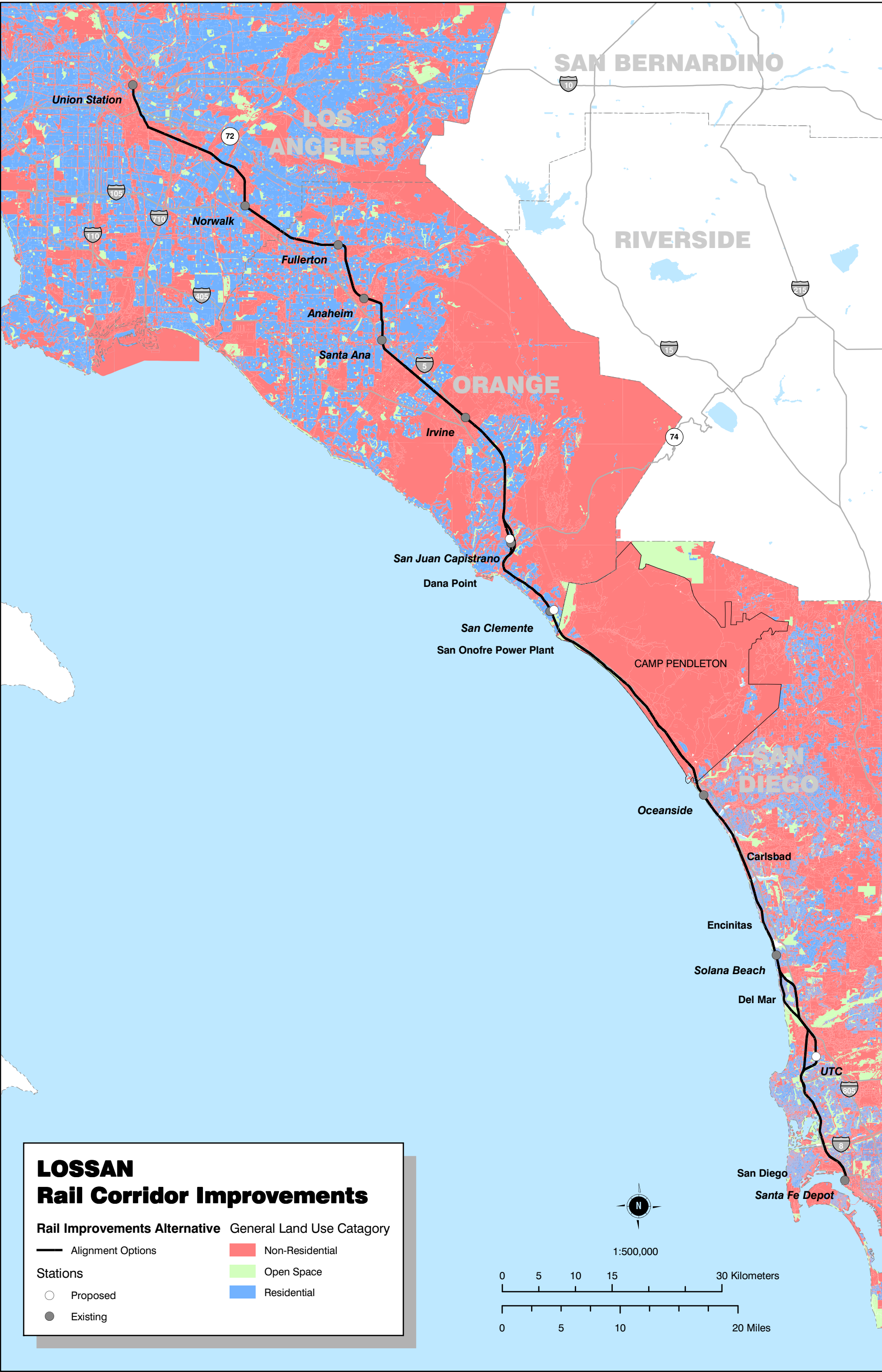


FIGURE 3.6-1  
**Generalized Existing Land Uses**  
LOSSAN Rail Corridor Improvements  
Program Environmental Impact Report / Environmental Impact Statement



### **Population Characteristics**

The LOSSAN region includes three counties: Los Angeles, Orange, and San Diego. The region's population increased by 10% between 1990 and 2000, from 13.8 million persons to 15.2 million. By 2020, population in this region is forecast to reach 18.6 million, an increase of 23% (Southern California Association of Governments [SCAG] 2001; San Diego Association of Governments [SANDAG] 2002).

Minority persons accounted for 51% of Los Angeles County in 2000, 35% of Orange County, and 34% of San Diego County. The Hispanic population is 45% in Los Angeles County, 31% in Orange County, and 27% in San Diego County.

### **Income**

According to 2000 Census data, the study area of the alignment options and expanded or new stations pass through a total of 332 Block Groups with a total population of 1,124,297 and 336,305 households. Of these, 36,060 households (11%) are living below the federal poverty level of \$17,603 annual income. In Los Angeles County per-capita income was \$20,683, with 18% of the population below the federal poverty level. Per-capita income in Orange County was \$25,826, with 10% of the population below the federal poverty level. San Diego County had a per-capita income of \$22,926, with 12% of the population below the federal poverty level.

### **Neighborhood and Community Characteristics**

The proposed Rail Improvements Alternative alignment options would pass through communities in the metropolitan area of Los Angeles, south Orange County, and the metropolitan area of San Diego. Communities in these areas have both common and unique characteristics shaped by a variety of political, physical, social, and economic factors. The Los Angeles metropolitan area can be characterized as a highly urbanized mix of single- and multifamily neighborhoods, with commercial and industrial development in such communities as Los Angeles, Norwalk, Fullerton, and Anaheim. The area is strongly influenced by the existing transportation network. The south Orange County area is characterized by smaller communities with strong ties to the coastline. The communities comprise largely single-family neighborhoods with supporting commercial and industrial development. Communities such as San Juan Capistrano, Dana Point, and San Clemente represent this area. The San Diego metropolitan area can be characterized as a highly dense urban area rimmed by lower density suburban and coastal communities that have close interaction with coastal resources. Communities that represent this area are Oceanside, Carlsbad, Encinitas, Solana Beach, and Del Mar.

## **3.6.3 Environmental Consequences**

### **A. EXISTING CONDITIONS COMPARED TO NO-PROJECT ALTERNATIVE**

Land use and local communities will change between today and 2020 as a result of population growth and changes of economic activity in the LOSSAN region. The No-Project Alternative is based on existing conditions and the funded and programmed transportation improvements that will be developed and in operation by 2020. Although it is expected that the No-Project Alternative would result in some changes related to land use compatibility, communities and neighborhoods, property acquisitions and

relocations, and environmental justice, it was assumed that projects included in the No-Project Alternative would include typical design and construction practices to avoid or minimize potential impacts, and would be subject to a project-level environmental review process to identify potentially significant impacts and to include feasible mitigation measures to avoid or substantially reduce potential impacts. Although some changes would be likely, attempting to estimate such changes would be speculative. Therefore, no additional potentially significant impacts were quantified for the No-Project Alternative.

## **B. NO-PROJECT ALTERNATIVE COMPARED TO RAIL IMPROVEMENTS ALTERNATIVE**

Potential land use impacts and key differences among alignment options are described below. During construction, direct land use impacts could include road closures and traffic detours, disruption of access to public facilities and emergency services, and physical barriers to communities and business districts. Barriers or access disruptions could require alteration or temporary relocation of public facilities or emergency service providers. Construction generally would be shorter in duration for at-grade improvements, especially within the existing LOSSAN corridor. For new alignments and tunnel options, construction would generally last substantially longer, but (in the case of tunneling) may not impact area roadways and access to the same extent as at-grade construction. Trench and tunnel options would require larger construction staging areas and involve increased truck and/or rail traffic used for spoils hauling (see Section 2.7.1). For options that include tunneling and grade separations (e.g., options in the Del Mar area), or tunneling and new station construction (e.g., Miramar Hill option), the combination of infrastructure construction would result in long construction durations and could have substantial impacts on local traffic and land uses during construction, including detours, access barriers, noise, and increased truck traffic on local roads.

Potential long-term, operational impacts include the creation of new or exacerbation of existing physical barriers to neighborhoods and business districts; property acquisition and residential or commercial relocation, and the introduction of new transportation corridors in residential areas. Improvements in access or removal of existing barriers would be long-term, beneficial impacts. For example, access to public lands and parks may be enhanced by rail corridor improvements.

All of the alignments would be compatible with existing local land use plans identified at the program level. Some alignment options would require property acquisition, and some would exacerbate an existing barrier effect of the rail corridor on communities. Other options would reduce the existing land use impacts of the LOSSAN rail corridor by removing existing rail service into trenches or tunnels, or providing grade separations or pedestrian crossings where none currently exist.

### **Land Use Compatibility and Property Impacts**

Overall, the proposed Rail Improvements Alternative would be highly compatible with local and regional plans that support rail systems and transit-oriented development. Because nearly all alignment options are within or adjacent to existing transportation rights-of-way, the Rail Improvements Alternative generally would have a low potential for new land use-related impacts. Some of the alignment options would have a beneficial effect, compared to the No-Project Alternative, by reducing or eliminating existing land



use impacts along the LOSSAN rail corridor. The Rail Improvements Alternative would also provide improved inter-modal connectivity with existing local and commuter transit systems.

Potential property impacts would be relatively low for much of the Rail Improvements Alternative because most alignment options would either be accommodated within the existing right-of-way of the LOSSAN rail corridor, or would involve deep tunnels that would avoid property impacts. In most areas, commercial and industrial uses are located along the rail corridor, and these uses buffer residential development from the railroad. However, potentially high impacts would occur in the few areas where new right-of-way would be needed or the existing right-of-way would be widened (described below). It is estimated that a total of 50 or fewer residential units could be affected by the Rail Improvements Alternative, and between 25 and 45 ac (10 and 18 ha) of non-residential property could be affected, depending on the alignment option.

The specific locations of public facilities and emergency services (such as schools, parks, fire and police stations, hospitals and medical clinics) were not identified for this program-level assessment. However, construction of various alignment options under the Rail Improvements Alternative would be expected to create some temporary access disruptions and create some barriers to access to and from public facilities, and cause an impediment to emergency response times in the vicinity of construction. It is also expected that the Rail Improvements Alternative would have some long-term, beneficial effects on access to public facilities and on emergency response times, particularly in areas where the rail corridor would be grade separated. These potential impacts would be examined in detail at the project level.

Long-term land use compatibility and potential property impacts are described below by corridor segment.

Union Station to Irvine: Between Union Station and Fullerton, the proposed fourth main track would be accommodated within the LOSSAN rail right-of-way for the majority of this alignment and, therefore, would be compatible with existing and planned land uses. However, there are segments that may require property acquisition due to limited right-of-way width, particularly between the Rio Hondo River and San Gabriel River. Residential and commercial uses adjacent to the corridor would likely be impacted. Based on program-level evaluation, it is estimated that property impacts could affect approximately 25 to 30 multi-family residential units (apartments) and up to 1 ac (0.4 ha) of commercial and industrial property.

Rail improvements proposed between Fullerton and Irvine include a covered trench option or an at-grade option between Walnut Avenue, in the City of Orange, and 17th Street, in the City of Santa Ana, and a curve realignment between Batavia Street and Walnut Ave. Up to 1 ac (0.4 ha) of commercial property acquisition could be required along the curve realignment. The covered trench and at-grade options would occur within the existing rail corridor right-of-way, and would be compatible with existing and planned land uses. The trench option would reduce existing impacts of the at-grade LOSSAN rail alignment to residential land uses that have developed adjacent to the rail corridor. The at-grade double-tracking option would exacerbate the existing rail impacts to these residential areas; however, this option would include grade separations at street intersections which would improve existing pedestrian and vehicular access to businesses and residences in the area.

Proposed improvements at existing rail stations between Union Station and Irvine would consist of additional parking at the Fullerton, Anaheim, Santa Ana, and Irvine stations. These improvements would be compatible with existing and planned land uses in these existing station areas.

San Juan Capistrano: The existing LOSSAN rail corridor runs through downtown of San Juan Capistrano through the historic Los Rios neighborhood. The existing rail station is listed in the City's Inventory of Historical and Cultural Landmarks (IHCL). There is an ordinance in place that provides special protection to this and other cultural resources identified in the IHCL. Based on high potential land use impacts and input from the public and City officials, double-tracking through the downtown area within the existing rail alignment was eliminated from further consideration during the LOSSAN screening process (refer to Chapter 2, *Alternatives*). Two alternative alignments are being evaluated in addition to the No-Project Alternative.

One alignment option through the City of San Juan Capistrano runs along the east side of Trabuco Creek. This alignment would leave the existing LOSSAN corridor south of Del Obispo and continue at-grade along the east side of Trabuco Creek, then transition into a cut-and-cover and open trench to a new, below-grade station site located south of Ramos Street. This site is currently being used as recreational vehicle storage, and would require up to 2 ac (0.8 ha) of non-residential property acquisition. The alignment would transition back to at-grade north of the station and rejoin the existing rail corridor at the Trabuco Creek crossing. The bridge structure over Trabuco Creek would be rebuilt to accommodate the alignment. Strategically placed pedestrian crossings over Trabuco Creek would help connect the activities on either side.

This alignment would introduce rail into a new corridor. Residential uses exist along the western boundary of Trabuco Creek, and office/commercial development and a private high school are located along the eastern boundary of the creek. This alignment would have noise, visual, and possibly vibration impacts on the existing land uses west and east of the proposed alignment, particularly on residential areas to the west. Up to 11 ac (4.4 ha) of non-residential property acquisition would be required, probably involving the high school property at the northern end of the alignment and some commercial property at the southern end. A benefit of this alignment is that it would remove the existing rail impacts on the historic neighborhood of Los Rios and downtown historic structures. It would also remove the major pedestrian barrier created by the existing rail tracks between the downtown area and the historic residential area.

Another routing option evaluated in San Juan Capistrano is a tunnel alignment along Interstate 5 that would run the length of the city. While most of the tunnel would be under Interstate 5, there would be transition areas at either end of the tunnel that would likely require up to 6 ac (2.4 ha) of non-residential property and/or easement acquisition. While this option would be compatible with existing and planned land uses, it would eliminate a rail station in the City of San Juan Capistrano.

Dana Point/San Clemente: The existing LOSSAN rail corridor is located along the coast in Dana Point and San Clemente, and runs adjacent to residences in the northern part of San Clemente along North El Camino Real. Two tunnel alignments are being evaluated in the Dana Point and San Clemente area, a short tunnel and a long tunnel option. Either option would follow Interstate 5 and have a southern endpoint at San Onofre State Beach, north of the power plant.



The short tunnel would leave the Interstate 5 corridor at Avenida Palizada, turn toward the coast and run underneath residential, industrial and vacant land uses, connecting with the existing rail corridor just south of Camino Capistrano. A new station would be located at Avenida Pico. The new station location is consistent with the future land use plan, which promotes the development of a major mixed-use development, Rancho San Clemente Town Center, in the vicinity. The station site would require up to 2 ac (0.8 ha) of non-residential property acquisition.

The tunnel portion of this option would be compatible with existing and future land uses, due to the depth of the tunnel. However, this option would also involve straightening the existing at-grade Dana Point curve alignment. The curve realignment would begin just north of Stonehill Drive and would cut through a 31-ac (12.5 ha) site owned by the South Coast Water District (SCWD). This site contains a number of major water and sewer transmission lines, a well, a wastewater lift station and maintenance area, a variety of leasehold tenants including contractor storage yards and landscape nurseries, and unimproved land. The site is largely surrounded by urban industrial development. An EIR certified by the SCWD in November of 2002 identifies three land use alternatives for the site, any of which would be impacted by the rail realignment. The proposed rail realignment would be compatible with the City of Dana Point General Plan but would be incompatible with planned land uses on the SCWD site and inconsistent with the certified EIR. The Short Tunnel option would impact the overall development potential of the SCWD parcel, and could preclude the construction of a proposed desalination plant at the southern end of the parcel between San Juan Creek and the existing rail corridor. Up to 13 ac (5.3 ha) of non-residential property acquisition could be required for the at-grade and tunnel portal areas of the short-tunnel option. The alignment could also require water and sewer infrastructure relocation on the SCWD property. In addition, this alignment would compound existing barrier and pedestrian access and safety issues along approximately 2.5 mi (4 km) of beachfront rail corridor in Dana Point. The realignment of the existing curve would allow for increased train speeds, potentially increasing safety issues with unauthorized pedestrian crossings of the tracks along the beach.

The other alignment option being evaluated is a long tunnel that would follow Interstate 5 from San Onofre State Beach to Avenida Aeropuerto in San Juan Capistrano. This option would preclude the need for realigning the Dana Point Curve. Under this option, the tunnel would be divided into two segments, with the rail daylighting at Avenida Pico where a new station would be located. The station site would be consistent with the future land use plan, which advocates a major regional commercial center at the southwest corner of Interstate 5 and Avenida Pico. Acquisition of up to 6 ac (2.4 ha) of industrial business property would likely be required at the tunnel portal area south of Avenida Aeropuerto. The long tunnel option would be compatible with existing and planned land uses, and would provide an opportunity to remove the existing rail service along the coastline, thereby eliminating existing impacts to residential development and removing the barrier to recreational use of the coastline.

**Camp Pendleton:** The Rail Improvements Alternative would involve at-grade double-tracking within the existing LOSSAN corridor from the San Onofre Power Plant to north of Oceanside, across Camp Pendleton. All but approximately 5.5 mi (8.9 km) of this 16-mi (26-km) rail segment are double-tracked under the No-Project Alternative. The section that remains to be double tracked in the Rail Improvements Alternative includes

the corridor from Stationing Point 315+00.00 to Stationing Point 505+00.00. The completion of double-tracking in this segment would be compatible with existing and planned land uses, and would remain within the existing rail right-of-way.

Oceanside/Carlsbad: An at-grade and a trench option within the LOSSAN rail right-of-way are being evaluated for double tracking through Carlsbad. Existing land uses abutting the LOSSAN corridor include residential, commercial and industrial. Although the at-grade option would be compatible with existing and planned land uses, it would compound the barrier effect of the existing rail corridor. The trench option would reduce some of the rail impacts on adjacent land uses, and would provide for grade separations at key intersections through downtown, resulting in improved pedestrian and vehicular circulation.

Proposed improvements to the existing Oceanside Station would include by-pass tracks and expanded parking. The surrounding land use is a mix of commercial and residential. The improvements would be compatible with existing and planned land use. Any parking expansion would likely involve up to 1 ac (0.4 ha) of commercial property acquisition.

Encinitas: Two double-tracking options were evaluated for the LOSSAN corridor through the City of Encinitas – at-grade, and a short trench. Residential, commercial, and industrial land uses are adjacent to the rail corridor and the corridor acts as a barrier to pedestrian and vehicular movement between residential and commercial areas on opposite sides of the LOSSAN right-of-way.

The at-grade option would reconfigure the street intersection at Birmingham Drive and San Elijo Avenue, and close Chesterfield Drive at San Elijo Avenue. This proposal would involve a short trench segment for the rail corridor, on either side of Birmingham Drive, providing improved pedestrian and vehicular circulation across the existing rail corridor via Birmingham Drive. The Coast Highway 101 would need to be elevated about 20 ft (6 m) in this area to intercept Birmingham Drive. This would impact adjacent commercial and residential land uses. Another grade separation would occur at Leucadia Boulevard. The rail tracks would be depressed with Leucadia Boulevard going over the tracks and Coast Highway 101. This would require acquisition of some businesses along the highway. Pedestrian undercrossings would be strategically placed along the entire route to reduce the physical barrier created by the existing rail corridor.

The short trench alternative would be similar to the at-grade alternative, except for a covered trench under Encinitas Boulevard and a transitional open trench about 1,500 ft (457 m) either side of Encinitas Boulevard. This trench would improve pedestrian and vehicular circulation through the downtown area.

Both options would be compatible with existing and planned land uses along the existing rail corridor. A total of up to about 2 ac (0.8 ha) of non-residential property would likely be acquired for implementation of either the at-grade or short-trench option through Encinitas.

Proposed improvements at the Solana Beach Station would include platform modifications and parking expansion. These improvements would be compatible with the existing and future land use for this area.

Del Mar: Two alignment options for double-tracking are being evaluated through the City of Del Mar, between the Solana Beach Station and the I-5/805 split. Land uses along the existing rail corridor include the Del Mar Fairgrounds and San Dieguito Lagoon on the north, Los Penasquitos Lagoon on the south, and residential and commercial development through most of Del Mar.

One option is a tunnel underneath Camino Del Mar. The tunnel would begin at Jimmy Durante Boulevard, and improvements would involve a grade separation of the rail and road system in this area. Either Jimmy Durante Boulevard or Camino Del Mar would be redesigned to cross over the tracks and “T” into the other. This would require up to 2 ac (0.8 ha) of non-residential property acquisition. The tunnel would daylight at Carmel Valley Road and connect with the existing LOSSAN corridor across Los Penasquitos Lagoon. This option would remove the existing rail service from the coastal bluffs and separate the rail from low-density residential land use. This alternative would be compatible with existing and planned land use. The other option is a tunnel that would run under I-5. This option would diverge from the LOSSAN corridor near the Del Mar Fairgrounds, cross along the south boundary of San Dieguito Lagoon on an elevated structure, and then proceed in a tunnel under I-5 to a point approximately midway along the existing alignment through Penasquitos Lagoon where it would rejoin the existing rail corridor. Like the other tunnel option, this alignment would provide the benefit of removing rail service from the bluffs. The I-5 tunnel option would be incompatible with existing single-family residential development at the tunnel portals and along the southern edge of San Dieguito Lagoon where the rail structure would be elevated. The I-5 tunnel option would require acquisition of approximately 15 to 20 residential units, and up to 8 ac (3.2 ha) of non-residential property.

I-5/805 Split to Highway 52: In this section of the LOSSAN Corridor, two tunnel alignments are being evaluated. One tunnel would run under Interstate 5 and the other would cut through Miramar Hill. The Miramar Hill tunnel option would run under mixed land uses and include a new underground station at University Towne Centre. Either tunnel would be at a depth where impacts to residential and commercial development would be avoided except at tunnel portals. The I-5 tunnel could require up to 1 ac (0.4 ha) of non-residential property acquisition at portal areas. Both tunnel options would be compatible with existing and planned land use. The Miramar Hill tunnel would have the added benefit of providing a rail station near a highly populated employment center.

Highway 52 to San Diego Santa Fe Depot: Proposed improvements for the LOSSAN Corridor between Highway 52 and the Santa Fe Depot include a curve realignment just south of Highway 52, new bridges over Tecolote Creek and San Diego River, a trench between Sassafras Street and Cedar Street, and double tracking for the length of the section. The curve realignment would involve two new bridge structures over wetlands in San Clemente Canyon and potential property acquisition of a business. Existing land uses along the route are a mix of industrial and commercial. The improvements would enhance vehicular circulation and reduce impacts to businesses adjacent to the trench segment, by depressing the existing rail corridor. These improvements would be compatible with existing and planned land use.

At the Santa Fe Depot, parking would be expanded at the northwest corner of Broadway and Pacific Coast Highway. The surrounding land uses are commercial and industrial. The proposed expansion would be compatible with existing and planned land use.

## **Communities and Neighborhoods**

Potential impacts to communities and neighborhoods were assessed on the basis of whether or not an alignment option would divide an existing residential neighborhood where no division exists under current conditions. Nearly all alignment options evaluated under the Rail Improvements Alternative are within or adjacent to existing transportation corridors (rail or roadway) and many involve deep tunnels, reducing the potential for creating new divisions of existing communities.

There are locations where the existing rail tracks divide residential communities that have developed around the rail corridor, as described above under *Land Use Compatibility*. Some improvement options would add a second track within the rail right-of-way in these areas (e.g., the at-grade options between Fullerton and Irvine, and in Carlsbad). Double-tracking may exacerbate the existing barrier effect in these areas, but no new barrier would be created and, therefore, no substantive impact to communities or neighborhoods would occur beyond those that exist under the No-Project Alternative.

In other areas, some alignment options would reduce the existing barrier effect of the LOSSAN rail corridor. For example, in Encinitas, the at-grade improvement option would add pedestrian crossings to alleviate existing impacts of the rail corridor. Other options would involve tunnels or covered trenches where existing tracks would be removed and placed underground, either within the LOSSAN corridor alignment (e.g., trench option in Encinitas) or within another transportation corridor (e.g., the Camino del Mar tunnel option through Del Mar). In these cases, any existing barrier effect of the rail would also be reduced or eliminated entirely, resulting in an improvement compared to the No-Project Alternative.

There are two areas where alignment options would introduce an above-ground rail corridor into residential areas where there currently is no rail corridor. The Trabuco Creek at-grade and trench option in San Juan Capistrano would add rail in a new area; however, the creek itself creates a barrier in this area, so the rail would not add a new barrier. Similarly, the northern end of the I-5 tunnel in the Del Mar area would add rail infrastructure near residences at the south end of the San Dieguito Lagoon. In this area, however, the rail structure would be elevated along the edge of a residential area and so would not divide an existing community.

## **Environmental Justice**

Nearly all of the alignment options evaluated under the Rail Improvements Alternative would be located within or adjacent to existing transportation corridors, which would serve to reduce the potential for significant adverse impacts generally. Considering the Rail Improvements Alternative overall, it is not expected that the alternative would result in disproportionate impacts on minority populations or low-income populations.

Project-level reviews would include more detailed analysis, including additional consideration of the potential for disproportionate localized impacts on Environmental Justice communities, as well as potential community enhancements and benefits. Based on program-level data, areas of potential localized concern occur between Union Station and Irvine, and in the San Juan Capistrano area.

### 3.6.4 Design Practices

The Preferred Rail Improvements Alternative utilizes existing rail and transportation corridors to minimize the need for additional rights-of-way and the associated potential property impacts. Nearly 90 percent of the rail improvement alignments carried forward are either within existing rail or transportation corridors, or in deep tunnels. To a large extent, the existing transportation corridors already present barriers and impose other impacts on existing communities. Although double tracking the existing corridor may increase the barrier effect, especially for options that require that the right-of-way be fenced, the HST existing access conditions would be maintained. In cases where the rail corridor would be grade separated, access conditions would improve. Options that include tunnels and aerial structures would allow for vehicular or pedestrian access across the alignment.

### 3.6.5 Mitigation Strategies

Based on the analysis above, and considering the CEQA Appendix G thresholds of significance for land use and planning, the Rail Improvements Alternative would have a potentially significant impact on land use compatibility. While every effort has been made to develop alignment and station options that are compatible with existing local land use plans and ordinances to the extent feasible, in some cases local plans and ordinances do not address transportation options such as passenger and freight rail service. While the existing LOSSAN rail corridor is incorporated into local and regional use plans, other alignment options may not be addressed or may be incompatible with local or neighborhood plans. In some areas, local land use plans and ordinances have not been updated for several years, and may be updated over time to acknowledge and support rail improvement projects. The potential for land use incompatibility is considered significant at this programmatic level due to the uncertainties involved; however, such impacts may not be realized over the 20-year time horizon for implementing the rail improvements. Regardless, mitigation strategies will be applied to reduce this impact, and the lead agencies will work closely with local government agencies in implementing these strategies.

The analysis in this Program EIR/EIS compares potential impacts from the alternatives and the Rail Improvements Alternative alignments and station options. Potential impacts have been considered on a broad scale and on a corridor-wide basis. Project-level review of the rail improvement options will include detailed analysis of the potential for localized impacts.

#### A. LAND USE COMPATIBILITY

Local land use plans and ordinances will be further considered in the selection of alignment options. Project-level reviews will evaluate consistency with existing and planned land use, neighborhood access needs, and multi-modal connectivity opportunities. Potential mitigation measures to alleviate or minimize impacts to land uses may include, but would not be limited, to the following:

- Coordinate with cities and counties along the corridor to ensure that project facilities are consistent with land use planning processes and zoning ordinances.
- Establish requirements for station-area planning and opportunities for transit-oriented development where existing stations are expanded or new stations are developed.



## B. COMMUNITIES AND NEIGHBORHOODS

Proposed Rail Improvements Alternative alignments will be refined during project-level evaluations in consultation with local governments and planning agencies, with consideration given to minimizing barrier effects to maintain or improve existing neighborhood integrity. Potential mitigation strategies to reduce the effects of any existing or exacerbated barrier effects will be evaluated at the project-level environmental review and could include additional grade separation of rail lines and streets, new pedestrian crossings, new cross-connection points, improved visual quality of project facilities, and traffic management plans to maintain access during and after construction.

In addition, site-specific mitigation measures will be developed for temporary construction-related impacts on neighborhoods and communities. Potential strategies to alleviate or minimize community disruption during construction may include, but would not be limited to, the following:

- Provide opportunities for community involvement early in project-level studies.
- Conduct design workshops within each affected neighborhood to develop an understanding of key linkages (automobile, bicycle, pedestrian) across the rail corridor so that those linkages can be preserved, including the use of grade-separated crossings.
- Develop facility, landscape, and public art design standards for project facilities and corridors that reflect the character of adjacent affected neighborhoods.
- Ensure that connectivity (pedestrian/bicycle and vehicular crossings) across the rail corridor is maintained where necessary to maintain neighborhood integrity.
- Develop traffic management plans to reduce barrier effects during construction.
- To the extent feasible, maintain connectivity during construction.
- Maintain high level of visual quality of project facilities in neighborhood areas by implementing such measures as visual buffers, trees and other landscaping, architectural design and public artwork.
- Develop procurement specifications and incentives for construction contractors for reducing the duration and disruption of infrastructure construction. Requirements may include restrictions on construction vehicle traffic and routes, haul routes, hours of construction activity, and advance public notification of all closures or expected travel delays.

## C. PROPERTY

Potential land use displacement and property acquisition (temporary use and/or permanent, residential and non-residential property) are expected to be avoided to the extent feasible by considering further alignment adjustments and design changes in the future at the project level. In addition, analysis at the project level would consider relocation assistance in accordance with the Federal Uniform Relocation and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970. Design strategies would be developed for application at the project level to avoid or minimize the temporary or permanent acquisition of residential and non-residential property. Access modifications, including



over- or under-crossings, may be required to mitigate impacts arising from temporary or permanent property acquisitions where land uses are divided or otherwise disrupted.

#### D. ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

On a corridor basis, it is not expected that the proposed Rail Improvements Alternative would result in disproportionate adverse effects to minority or low-income populations. Additional consideration of environmental justice issues would occur during project-level review, and include evaluation of potential disproportionate localized impacts and potential benefits to and enhancements for communities along potential rail alignments. Project-level review would include evaluation of detailed mitigation measures, including mitigation for temporary construction-related impacts. Project-level review would also include outreach to potentially affected communities as part of the public review process.

Potential mitigation strategies to alleviate or minimize land use impacts associated with the Rail Improvements Alternative could include, but not be limited to, the following:

- EO 12898 requires federal agencies to ensure effective public participation and access to information. Consequently, a key component of compliance with EO 12898 is outreach to the potentially affected minority and/or low-income population to discover issues of importance that otherwise may not be apparent. Outreach to affected communities would be conducted as part of the decision-making process, and this outreach would be documented.
- DOT Order 5610.2 requires DOT agencies to develop procedures to provide meaningful opportunities for public involvement by members of minority populations during activities including identification of mitigation measures. Minority and low income populations would be provided access to information about health and environmental impacts, measures to avoid, minimize and/or to mitigate any disproportionately high and adverse effects and offsetting benefits and opportunities to enhance affected communities, neighborhoods, or individuals during an outreach program conducted as part of the decision-making process.
- In addition to examining all impacts, specific attention would be given to the permanent impact categories that are commonly of concern for this type of project and to those that previously have been identified as being of concern. These include:
  - Air quality
  - Noise and vibration
  - Public health
  - Visual resource/aesthetics
  - Parklands
  - Relocation

The above mitigation strategies are expected to reduce land use compatibility impacts to a less-than-significant level. Additional environmental assessment and engineering refinement of alignment options during project-level reviews will allow a more precise evaluation of site-specific impacts and mitigation effectiveness.

### 3.6.6 Subsequent Analysis

The subsequent environmental evaluations and project-level reviews of proposed alignment options and new or expanded stations would address the need for the following studies.

- Land use studies for specific alignment and station areas potentially impacted, including evaluation of potential land use conversion, potential growth, and potential community benefits.
- Review of localized potential environmental justice issues.
- Relocation impact analysis for potentially displaced housing and businesses.
- Pedestrian and vehicular circulation studies.
- Construction logistics analysis to estimate durations, impacts and localized mitigation measures to reduce disruption to communities, activities, traffic and circulation.

### 3.7 AESTHETICS AND VISUAL RESOURCES

Visual resources are the natural and human-made features of a landscape that characterize its form, line, texture, and color. This section describes the existing landscape in the LOSSAN region and identifies potential impacts on visual resources related to the proposed addition of infrastructure in, or removal of infrastructure from, the existing landscape. Infrastructure may include rail tracks, tunnels, fences, noise walls, elevated rail structures, and stations. This assessment evaluates the potential changes to existing scenic landscapes for each alignment and station option during construction (addition of construction staging areas, site work, construction equipment, temporary barriers, fences, and temporary power poles) and operation.

#### 3.7.1 Regulatory Requirements and Methods of Evaluation

##### A. REGULATORY PROVISIONS

There are no specific regulatory requirements or federal or state standards for aesthetics and visual resources. However, there is a requirement in both federal and state environmental guidelines to address topics related to the visual environment. The most explicit guidance is in the CEQA environmental checklist, which requires that a project proponent identify whether a project would have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista; substantially damage scenic resources, including trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway; substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings; or create a new source of substantial light or glare that would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area (CEQA Appendix G Environmental Checklist Form, 2001). The FRA Procedures for Considering Environmental Impacts (FRA Docket No EP-1, Notice 5, May 26, 1999), under the topic of aesthetic environmental and scenic resources, states: "The EIS should identify any significant changes likely to occur in the natural landscape and in the developed environment. The EIS should also discuss the consideration given to design quality, art, and architecture in project planning and development as required by DOT Order 5610.4." Consideration of local community design guidelines would be part of a subsequent phase of analysis for project-specific environmental review when more detailed engineering and architectural information would be developed if the Rail Improvements Alternative is carried forward. California Department of Transportation design standards would apply to state highway improvements under the No-Project Alternative.

##### B. METHOD FOR EVALUATION OF IMPACTS

The analysis of aesthetic and visual resources for this Program EIR/EIS focuses on a broad comparison of potential impacts on visual resources (particularly scenic resources, areas of historic interest, and natural open space areas and significant ecological areas) along proposed Rail Improvements Alternative alignment options and around stations. The potential impacts for each of these alternatives are evaluated against the existing conditions, as described in Section 3.7.2, *Affected Environment*.

Based on conceptual design, the facilities associated with the Rail Improvements Alternative were evaluated for a set of typologies (or general descriptions) representative of highly scenic landscapes most subject to potential significant visual impacts. The evaluation focused on how the distinguishable (dominant) visual features (color, line, texture, form) that characterize the existing landscape would change if the alignment

option were implemented. Of particular interest are locations where options would involve elevated structures (bridges or overpasses) or tunnel portals. Also addressed in the evaluation is the potential shadow effect of elevated structures and the light and glare effects of the proposed improvements.

Potential changes to the dominant landscape features, or potential visual impacts, are described and ranked as high, medium, or low according to the potential extent of change to existing visual resources. Visual contrast rankings, or impact rankings, are defined as follows.

- *High visual impacts* would be sustained if features of the alternative were obvious and began to dominate the landscape and detract from the existing landscape characteristics or scenic qualities.
- *Medium visual impacts* would be sustained if features of the alternative were readily discernable but did not dominate the landscape or detract from existing dominant features.
- *Low visual impacts* would be sustained if features of the alternative were consistent with the existing line, form, texture, and color of other elements in the landscape and did not stand out.
- *High shadow impacts* would occur if a new (not existing) elevated structure were within 75 ft (23 m) of residential or open space, natural areas, or parkland.
- *Beneficial visual impact* would result if the alternative eliminated a dominant feature in the landscape that currently detracts from scenic qualities or blocks vistas.

### 3.7.2 Affected Environment

#### A. STUDY AREA DEFINED

The study area for aesthetics and visual resources is defined as 0.25 mi (0.40 km) from the centerline of proposed alignment options and around stations. However, where there are scenic viewing points or overlooks within 1 mi (2 km) of the alignment option, these scenic viewing points have been included in the study area. The distance range of up to 0.25 mi (0.40 km) from proposed alignments and stations and up to 1 mi (2 km) for scenic viewing points is considered the area where a change in landscape features would be most noticeable to viewers, and where newly introduced features could begin to dominate the visual character of the landscape.

#### B. AESTHETICS AND VISUAL RESOURCES IN THE STUDY AREA

The existing local visual setting in the LOSSAN region ranges from highly urbanized landscapes to undeveloped areas. Much of the existing rail and highway system in the southern part of the region parallels the coastline of the Pacific Ocean. The existing LOSSAN rail corridor provides passengers with scenic views of the ocean and open spaces along portions of its route.

There are no local- or state-designated scenic corridors in the study area for visual resources in this region, though some highways (e.g., SR-1 along the coast) are considered eligible for designation as California State Scenic Routes and are located

near the existing rail corridor. These routes do not offer continuous views of the ocean within the study area.

The LOSSAN region includes a number of distinct types of landscapes spread over a large geographic area. A typology of typical landscapes is used to describe the aesthetic and visual resources in the study area. The typologies provide the baseline or existing conditions against which the analysis of potential change or visual impact for each of the rail improvement option is evaluated. Photographs of highly scenic and typical landscapes within the LOSSAN region are provided to illustrate the dominant line, form, color, and texture for that landscape typology.

The landscape typologies discussed below are urban mixed use, suburban and coastal communities, and parks and natural open space.

### **Urban Mixed Use**

The majority of the existing rail corridor traverses through dense development that includes warehouses, commercial and industrial buildings, and residential housing (areas in Los Angeles County and northern/central Orange County, for example). The industrial uses often are located along the railroad right-of-way, so the rail corridor is visible only from the streets that intersect it and parallel it as a frontage road. Limited landscaping and native vegetation exist in these industrial areas that are dominated by the typically large, box buildings. There are areas of high-density housing (multi-family and single-family dwelling units) in the foreground along the railroad right-of-way, most of which are typical, rectangular building shapes and regular lot patterns. Residential, commercial and industrial building structures blend with the surrounding environment with neutral colors, tones and textures. Rooftops and some mountains can be seen in the background along the rail corridor. Historic structures such as Mission San Juan Capistrano and the Los Rios District (also in San Juan Capistrano), and more modern developments such as downtown Los Angeles or San Diego are examples of various urban settings. The historic areas typically include older structures, often with architectural importance that varies in texture, size, and color.

Urban areas include a number of potential redevelopment sites. Underused areas subject to redevelopment often consist of abandoned buildings, pavement, industrial infrastructure, and junkyards. While these areas often served important military or industrial activities in the past, they are usually not visually compatible with the surrounding area. Reuse plans for such locations typically are prepared by local jurisdictions, and may improve the visual quality of the area. Parts of the downtown areas in Los Angeles and San Diego are examples of redevelopment areas in the urban setting.

### **Suburban and Coastal Communities**

There are a number of suburban communities in the region that are located close to commuter and transportation hubs, and surrounded by retail, business and residential land uses. The neighborhoods are moderately dense with more vegetation and landscaping than the residential areas found in the urban environment. Business locations and building structures are smaller and less dense with softer textures, color and tones than the urban environment. The city center and neighborhoods in these communities are separated by transportation corridors and/or undeveloped land.

Examples include Santa Ana, Carlsbad, and Encinitas. Figure 3.7-1 shows the existing at-grade LOSSAN corridor within the City of Carlsbad.

In the area from Dana Point south to San Diego, many of the suburbs are coastal communities where the ocean and local beaches influence (and often dominate) the visual setting of the area. Ocean views in these areas are open and highly scenic. The topography varies from flat shorelines to vertical cliffs. Views from many homes and businesses are dramatic, and the buildings are situated to take full advantage of these views. Residences and small businesses in coastal communities are typically landscaped to blend in with the surrounding environment. Areas within the coastal communities may include small pockets of open space. Examples of coastal communities include San Clemente, Cardiff, Del Mar, and Solana Beach.

Figure 3.7-2 shows the beachfront alignment of the existing LOSSAN rail tracks at the base of the coastal bluffs in San Clemente. The view shown is to the north from an existing pedestrian footbridge located just south of the pier. The strong horizontal line of the rail corridor interlocks and contrasts with the strong vertical line of the bluffs. Residences along the bluff tops provide highly scenic, distant views of the shoreline and ocean. In Del Mar, the rail corridor is on top of a narrow portion of the coastal bluffs. As shown in Figure 3.7-3, the existing tracks are set between the shoreline below and the residences above.

### **Parks and Natural Open Space**

Parks and open space in the region typically are high points with a dramatic backdrop to various settings such as urban areas, historical districts, parks, and wildlife preserves. Calafia Park (in San Clemente), Camp Pendleton, area beaches, and a number of lagoons are examples of parks and open space areas along the existing LOSSAN rail corridor. The Camp Pendleton area is undeveloped land with some large overhead transmission lines, some industrial facilities (e.g., San Onofre Power Plant), and the I-5 corridor. The beach areas and lagoons include residential and some small commercial buildings. These are usually landscaped to blend with the surrounding environment and are often found in small clusters. Figure 3.7-4 illustrates an example of open space in the region and shows the existing railroad bridge across the San Elijo Lagoon.

## **3.7.3 Environmental Consequences**

### **A. EXISTING CONDITIONS COMPARED TO NO-PROJECT ALTERNATIVE**

The existing conditions, or existing landscapes, are used as the baseline and are considered to be representative for the analysis of potential visual impacts for the Rail Improvements Alternative. Though it is likely that the existing landscape character will change in the region by the year 2020 due to development and urban growth, it is not possible to characterize these changes at this time with precision. To base comparisons of alternatives on current conditions is to take a conservative approach. The extent of change to some of the landscapes (particularly the open space landscapes) reported in this section may not be as pronounced as they appear in this impact evaluation.





**FIGURE 3.7-1**

**Existing LOSSAN Corridor - Carlsbad**

LOSSAN Rail Corridor Improvements

Program Environmental Impact Report / Environmental Impact Statement







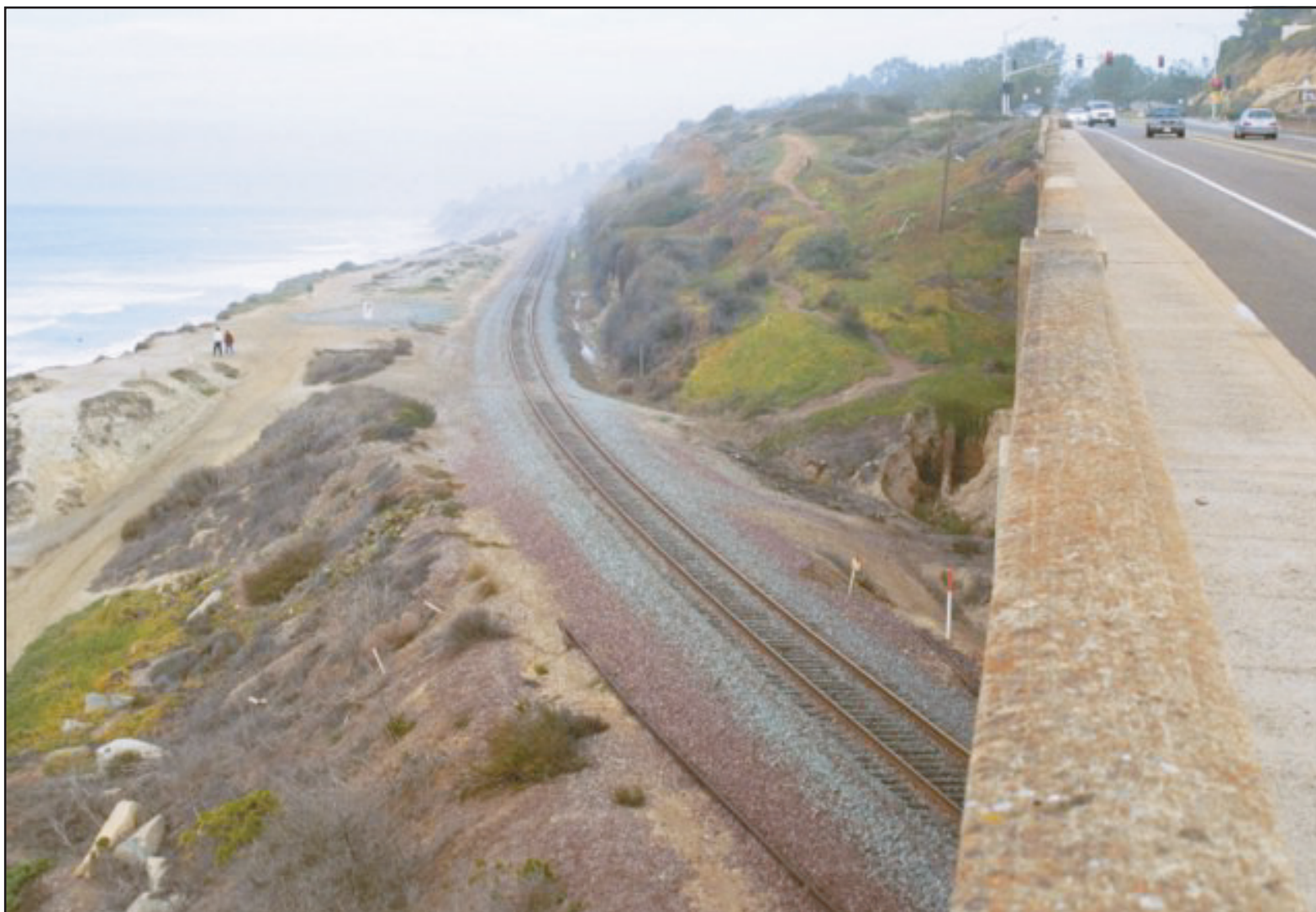
**FIGURE 3.7-2**

**Existing LOSSAN Corridor - San Clemente**  
LOSSAN Rail Corridor Improvements  
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**FIGURE 3.7-3**

**Existing LOSSAN Corridor - Del Mar Bluffs**  
LOSSAN Rail Corridor Improvements  
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**FIGURE 3.7-4**

**Existing LOSSAN - Bridge Structure Across San Elijo Lagoon**

LOSSAN Rail Corridor Improvements

Program Environmental Impact Report / Environmental Impact Statement





The highway projects approved and funded for construction by 2020 and included in the No-Project Alternative are described in Chapter 2, *Alternatives*. In the LOSSAN region, these improvements or changes to the existing highways are generally expansions or reconfigurations of existing facilities that would not result in substantial visual contrasts or changes to the dominant line, form, color, or texture characterizing the existing landscape condition. No significant visual impacts, shadow, or glare impacts have been identified for the changes between the existing conditions and No-Project Alternative for this program-level analysis. As these projects advance, the project sponsors may identify and address some localized visual impacts in separate environmental documentation.

## B. NO-PROJECT ALTERNATIVE COMPARED TO RAIL IMPROVEMENTS ALTERNATIVE

The comparison of potential aesthetic and visual resource impacts for the Rail Improvements Alternative is a broad overview of potential differences among alignment options for the construction (short-term) and operation (long-term), direct and indirect, and cumulative impacts. During construction, visual impacts would include the presence of construction equipment, the dismantling of old structures and erection of new structures, light and glare impacts from nighttime construction work, and contrast impacts from newly disturbed soils along the rail corridor. These impacts would be temporary, most occurring only during active construction periods along the corridor. Soil contrast impacts would last longer, but weathering of disturbed soils and revegetation would minimize the duration of these potential impacts.

Operational impacts would be long term visual effects of new, permanent structures, including track and stations or station additions such as parking area or increased parking structure height. Table 3.7-1 summarizes the potential long-term visual contrast impacts and shadow impacts of the alignment options and station areas. These impacts are further described for each corridor segment in the following sections.

**Table 3.7-1  
Potential Visual Impacts**

Rail Improvements Options	High Contrast Impacts (H/M/L/B)	Shadow Impacts (H/M/L)
Union Station To Fullerton Station – 4th Main Track	Low Area is highly urbanized and the proposed improvements would be consistent with existing environment	No impact
Fullerton Station To Irvine Station--Double Tracking		
AT-GRADE between Orange and Santa Ana	Low Area is highly urbanized and the proposed improvements would be consistent with existing environment	Low Grade separations at street intersections would create some shadow effects in urban areas
TRENCH between Orange and Santa Ana	Beneficial Impact Covered trench would remove at-grade rail infrastructure from view	No Impact

**Table 3.7-1  
Potential Visual Impacts (continued)**

<b>Rail Improvements Options</b>	<b>High Contrast Impacts (H/M/L/B)</b>	<b>Shadow Impacts (H/M/L)</b>
Stations Fullerton	Low Proposed improvements at existing station would be consistent with existing environment	No Impact
Anaheim	Low Proposed improvements at existing station would be consistent with existing environment	No Impact
Santa Ana	Low Proposed improvements at existing station would be consistent with existing environment	No Impact
Irvine	Low Proposed improvements at existing station would be consistent with existing environment	No Impact
<b>San Juan Capistrano Double Tracking</b>		
TUNNEL along I-5 between Hwy 73 and Avenida Aeropuerto	Beneficial Impact Existing rail service would be removed into tunnel; new impacts would occur at tunnel portals but would be relatively minor	No impact
AT-GRADE and TRENCH along east side of Trabuco Creek	Medium New impacts to residential and commercial areas on west side of creek	Low Proposed structure widening over San Juan creek would increase shadow impacts but would be consistent with existing environment
Stations San Juan Capistrano	Low Proposed improvements to existing station would be consistent with existing environment	No impact
<b>Dana Point/San Clemente Double Tracking</b>		
Dana Point Curve Realignment; San Clemente - SHORT TUNNEL	Beneficial Impact Tunnel would remove existing rail service along the coast and improve existing beach aesthetics at San Clemente but not at Dana Point, where impacts would be Low	No impact
San Clemente - LONG TWO-SEGMENT TUNNEL; Double	Beneficial Impact Tunnel would remove existing rail service along the coast and improve beach aesthetics in both San Clemente and Dana Point	No Impact
Stations San Clemente	Low New station would add visual mass, parking and new light sources but station would be below-grade, minimizing its visibility	No Impact

**Table 3.7-1  
Potential Visual Impacts (continued)**

<b>Rail Improvements Options</b>	<b>High Contrast Impacts (H/M/L/B)</b>	<b>Shadow Impacts (H/M/L)</b>
<b>Camp Pendleton At-grade Double Tracking</b>	Low Proposed improvements would not alter existing viewshed; additional infrastructure would not be discernable from distant viewing point	No Impact
<b>Oceanside/Carlsbad Double Tracking</b>		
Carlsbad - AT-GRADE; double tracking	Low Proposed improvements would be consistent with existing environment; additional infrastructure would not be discernable from distant viewing point	Low Proposed structure widening over lagoons would increase shadow impacts but would be consistent with existing environment
Carlsbad - TRENCH; double-tracking	Low Would remove existing at-grade tracks into trench through Carlsbad, but open-trench sections would require fencing; additional infrastructure would not be discernable from distant viewing point	Low Proposed structure widening over lagoons would increase shadow impacts but would be consistent with existing environment
Stations Oceanside	Low Proposed improvements at existing station would be consistent with existing environment	No Impact
<b>Encinitas/Solana Beach Double Tracking</b>		
Encinitas - AT-GRADE;	Low Proposed improvements would be consistent with existing environment	Low Proposed grade separations and structure widening over lagoons would increase shadow impacts but would be consistent with existing environment
Encinitas - SHORT TRENCH	Beneficial Impact Covered trench would place existing tracks underground in part of the existing rail corridor	Low Proposed grade separations and structure widening over lagoons would increase shadow impacts but would be consistent with existing environment
Stations Solana Beach	Low Proposed improvements at existing station would be consistent with existing environment	No Impact
<b>Del Mar Double Tracking</b>		
TUNNEL under Camino Del Mar	Beneficial Impact Tunnel option would remove existing rail service from bluffs and place it underground	Low Proposed structure widening over lagoons would increase shadow impacts but would be consistent with existing environment

**Table 3.7-1  
Potential Visual Impacts (continued)**

Rail Improvements Options	High Contrast Impacts (H/M/L/B)	Shadow Impacts (H/M/L)
TUNNEL along I-5	Medium Tunnel would remove existing rail service and place underground, but new visual impacts to residential views would result from elevated rail structure south of San Dieguito Lagoon, and from tunnel portal/transition located between two residential areas	Low Tunnel would remove existing rail structure across Penasquitos Lagoon but structure over San Dieguito Lagoon would be widened, and elevated structure across south end of lagoon would add new shadow impacts
<b>I-5/805 Split To Hwy 52 Double Tracking</b>		
Miramar Hill TUNNEL	No Impact Proposed tunnel improvement	No Impact Proposed tunnel improvement
I-5 TUNNEL	No Impact Proposed tunnel improvement	No Impact Proposed tunnel improvement
Stations UTC (Only applies to Miramar Hill Tunnel)	No Impact Proposed station would be underground	No Impact Proposed station would be underground
<b>Hwy 52 To Santa Fe Depot Curve realignment and Double Tracking</b>	Low Proposed improvements would be consistent with existing environment	Low New bridge structures over wetlands and creeks would increase shadow effects in these areas
Stations Santa Fe Depot	Low Proposed improvements at existing station would be consistent with existing environment	No Impact

### Union Station to Irvine

Proposed rail improvements between Union Station and Fullerton Station would consist of a fourth main track within the existing rail corridor. The majority of this segment traverses through a heavily developed area of existing residential, business, and industrial/commercial uses adjacent to the existing corridor. Low visual impacts are anticipated for this segment because the improvements would be consistent with the existing environment and existing rail corridor.

The LOSSAN corridor between Fullerton Station and Irvine Station traverses through an urbanized and heavily developed area that includes residential, business, and industrial structures. The at-grade option for corridor improvements would be consistent with the existing environment and rail corridor. The covered trench option would have a beneficial impact on the existing visual environment by moving the at-grade tracks into a covered trench and eliminating the view of operating trains.

### San Juan Capistrano

The tunnel option in San Juan Capistrano would follow the I-5 corridor, located east of the existing rail corridor. The tunnel would remove the tracks from the viewshed of



surrounding areas and uses adjacent to the existing corridor, thus improving the existing visual environment. There would be new visual impacts created at the tunnel portals but these impacts would be low, and the removal of the existing at-grade tracks would result in an overall benefit to area aesthetics.

The other option through San Juan Capistrano would consist of a cut-and-cover and open trench and at-grade alignment west of the existing rail corridor, along the east side of Trabuco Creek. Although portions of this alignment would be below grade, the at-grade sections would create a new rail corridor and operating trains along the creek. This would cause impacts to the viewshed of residences along the west side of Trabuco Creek, and office/commercial uses and a private school located east of the creek. A pedestrian overpass may be needed at one or more locations across the trench, which would also create a new visual mass and shadow effects in the area. Because this option introduces new visual impacts to the residential and commercial uses in the vicinity, this option was evaluated as having a Medium visual impact.

### **Dana Point/San Clemente**

The potential Dana Point curve realignment is located in a heavy industrial area. The realignment would cross underneath Pacific Coast Highway 1 (PCH) and the tracks would be located southwest of the existing tracks and a hotel. The realignment is consistent with the existing environment, and would not introduce a new visual impact to the area or the hotel. Low visual impacts are anticipated for the realignment.

Rail improvements proposed through the City of San Clemente and portions of southern Dana Point include double tracking with tunnel options. Both tunnel options follow the I-5 corridor. The existing rail corridor through San Clemente and southern Dana Point is along the coastline on the beach/shore. The tunnel options through south Dana Point and San Clemente would reduce existing visual impacts to the residential areas, beaches, and PCH traffic because the tracks would be underground in an alignment that follows I-5. The tunnel options would improve the viewshed from homes, beaches, and roadways. In the Dana Point area, the Short Tunnel option would not remove the existing rail service from the beach, but the Long Tunnel option would. Therefore, the Short Tunnel would result in more visual impact to Dana Point than the Long Tunnel.

The existing rail corridor is constructed along the toe slope of the bluffs in San Clemente, which creates visual impacts to the area beachfronts and shoreline residences. The Rail Improvements Alternative would potentially result in a beneficial visual impact to these bluff areas by precluding further rail construction along the bluffs and removing the existing rail service from the bluff areas.

### **Camp Pendleton**

Camp Pendleton is primarily undeveloped land aside from the I-5 corridor and the San Onofre power plant. The existing rail corridor traverses through Camp Pendleton and the proposed improvements would not alter the viewshed from I-5, the rest stops and viewing points from I-5, or San Onofre State Beach. Low, largely indiscernible impacts would occur through Camp Pendleton.

### **Carlsbad**

Proposed rail improvements through Carlsbad include double tracking in either an at-grade or a trench alignment. Both options would be consistent with the existing environment at Buena Vista Lagoon, north of Carlsbad, but the bridge would be widened so shadow impacts would increase somewhat. The existing tracks traverse through residential and commercial/business districts. The at-grade option would be consistent with the existing environment and existing tracks. The trench option would reduce visual impacts because the existing tracks would be set behind businesses and below grade. Open trench sections would have to be fenced for security, so at-grade visual impacts would occur. Both options would be consistent with the current environment at Agua Hedionda Lagoon and Batiquitos Lagoon, but the widening of bridge structures would increase the visual mass and shadow impacts in these crossing areas. Both lagoons are located east of Coast Highway 101 (101) and west of I-5 with residential areas located to the north and south of the lagoons. The two options would be generally consistent with the current environment and existing tracks. Low impacts are anticipated for the improvements through Carlsbad and the lagoons.

### **Encinitas**

Alignment options through the City of Encinitas include at-grade or trenching. Grade separations would be provided at major intersections. A mixture of land uses can be found along the existing rail corridor in the area, including residential and business/commercial areas. The at-grade option would reconfigure the intersection of Birmingham Drive and San Elijo Avenue, close Chesterfield Drive at San Elijo Avenue, and modify Leucadia Boulevard. A short trench section would be located at Birmingham Drive to improve vehicle and pedestrian traffic across the existing tracks. The 101 would be elevated to accommodate Birmingham Drive. The closure of Chesterfield Drive would eliminate the crossing with the existing tracks. In addition, the tracks would be depressed and Leucadia Boulevard would run above the tracks and the 101. San Elijo Lagoon is located north of Solana Beach, east of 101 and west of I-5 with residential areas located to the north and south of the lagoon and a few businesses and restaurants along the 101 adjacent to the lagoon. The grade separations and structure widening over the San Elijo Lagoon would increase shadow impacts in these areas, but would be consistent with the existing visual environment. Impacts of the at-grade option are evaluated as Low.

The trenching option would improve the existing visual characteristics of the area and would have a beneficial impact. The tracks would be depressed, thus removing the existing rail infrastructure from views along the corridor from residential and business areas. Grade separations would create new visual mass and some shadow impacts in the urban environment. Structure widening over the lagoon would increase shadow effects but would be consistent with the existing aesthetics. Visual impacts are rated as Low for the trench option through Encinitas and across San Elijo Lagoon.

### **Del Mar**

Proposed rail improvements through the City of Del Mar include double tracking with two tunnel options. Predominant land uses along the existing rail corridor in this area include residential areas, the San Dieguito Lagoon, a restaurant and the Del Mar Fairgrounds and Racetrack at the north end near the San Dieguito Lagoon; residential development

through most of Del Mar; and the Los Penasquitos Lagoon on the south end. The Camino del Mar tunnel option would remove the existing rail service from the bluffs and place them in a tunnel under the street through Del Mar, resulting in a beneficial impact on area aesthetics and the coastal viewshed. While the two tunnel portals would have some visual impact, the impact would be within the urban environment along transportation corridors (roadway and rail), and would not substantially alter existing aesthetics.

The I-5 tunnel option would also remove the existing tracks from the bluffs and remove the existing rail structure crossing the Penasquitos Lagoon, improving the views from some residences, the beaches/bluffs and the lagoon. This results in a low impact for this portion of the segment. This tunnel option, however, would create new visual impacts and shadow impacts for residents along the south edge of the San Dieguito Lagoon where an elevated rail structure would be located. The existing San Dieguito Lagoon Bridge would be rebuilt to accommodate the double tracking, increasing the existing shadow effects somewhat. The southern tunnel portal would be located at the edge of the Los Penasquitos Lagoon. The northern portal and tunnel-transition area would be located between two clustered residential areas, creating a new visual impact in the near-views from these homes. These features of the project would result in high visual impacts for this portion of the segment. Therefore, despite the beneficial aesthetic effect of removal of rail service from the bluffs, the impacts of the elevated structure, portals and tunnel-transition areas would result in an overall Medium level of visual impact for the entire I-5 tunnel option.

### **I-5/805 Split to Highway 52**

Proposed rail improvements between the I-5/805 split and Highway 52 consist of two tunnel options. One option would traverse through Miramar Hill and into La Jolla and the University Towne Centre (UTC) area. The other tunnel option would follow the I-5 corridor. Either tunnel would connect to the existing rail corridor in Sorrento Valley near the intersection of I-5 and Highway 52. The tunnel options would avoid visual impacts to the homes, beaches, roadways, businesses, and schools.

### **Highway 52 to Santa Fe Depot**

Proposed rail improvements between Highway 52 and the Santa Fe Depot include the Elvira curve realignment and double tracking. The curve realignment would be located at-grade within the San Clemente Canyon area near Highway 52 and south through an urbanized and developed area with business and industrial buildings to just south of Balboa Avenue. Potential minor visual impacts to the public recreational uses and two bridge structures at San Clemente Canyon may occur with the realignment. Low visual impacts are anticipated in the area of the Elvira Curve, specifically through the San Clemente Canyon.

In the area just south of the Elvira Curve realignment towards Taylor Street, double tracking would be done in the existing rail right-of-way through a heavily urbanized (business/industrial with light residential) area parallel to I-5. The bridge crossing design at the San Diego River would be consistent with the current environment and existing rail corridor and thus would not alter the viewshed. Double tracking would be done within the existing rail right-of-way as it enters downtown San Diego and the Santa Fe Depot

through an existing urbanized area parallel to I-5. Double tracking within the existing rail corridor would not create any new visual impacts on the existing viewshed.

### **Rail Stations**

Except where otherwise noted below, proposed station improvements along the LOSSAN corridor would involve adding bypass tracks and/or additional parking at existing stations. These impacts would all be Low and nearly unnoticeable. New stations are proposed as part of three alignment options. As described below, two of those proposed stations would be below-grade in a trench, and one would be underground. Existing visual settings at the stations are briefly summarized below.

- Fullerton Station is located in a heavily developed area of existing residential, business, and industrial/commercial uses.
- Anaheim Station is located within the parking lot of Edison Field and an adjacent business park.
- Santa Ana Station is located in an urbanized area with industrial and residential uses.
- Irvine Station is located in a developed area that includes industrial uses and the old El Toro Marine Corps Air Station.
- In San Juan Capistrano, the Trabuco Creek at-grade and trenching option would involve construction of a new station, which would be located below-grade in an open trench. This station would result in Low impacts on the surrounding area, due to the introduction of (below-grade) visual mass of the structure, new parking area, and new light sources.
- In San Clemente, a new below-grade station would be constructed along the long, two-segment tunnel alignment where the tunnel would transition to a trench just south of Avenida Pico on the east side of I-5. Similarly, for the short tunnel option, a new station would be located at Avenida Pico near Calle De Los Molinos. Either of these stations would create Low visual impacts due to the addition of (below-grade) visual mass of the structure, parking areas, and new light sources.
- The Oceanside Station is located within an urbanized area with commercial and residential uses.
- The Solana Beach Station is located adjacent to the Cedros Design District (businesses and commercial shops) and some scattered residences.
- For the Miramar Hill Tunnel option, a new underground station is proposed in the La Jolla/University Towne Centre area, which is primarily developed with a mix of residential and commercial uses. The underground station would not create any visual contrast, shadow or light and glare impacts.
- The Santa Fe Depot is located in downtown San Diego in an urbanized and redeveloped area with mixed uses of residential and commercial.

### 3.7.4 Design Practices

It would be speculative to address specific aesthetic treatments at the conceptual level of design of this Program-level study. The Project level would involve working with local agencies and communities to develop context-sensitive aesthetic designs and treatments for rail infrastructure (bridges, tunnel portals, stations, etc.).

### 3.7.5 Mitigation Strategies

Based on the analysis above, and considering the CEQA Appendix G thresholds of significance for aesthetics, the Rail Improvements Alternative would have a potentially significant effect on aesthetics in some areas. Construction would create temporary visual changes, and the improvements would introduce new visual elements in some areas, particularly where elevated structures and tunnel portals would be located in lagoon environments or residential areas. Significance is dependent on the sensitivity of the landscape and compatibility with existing visual features, but at least some changes would occur in highly scenic areas along the corridor and are expected to be significant. Mitigation strategies will be applied to reduce this impact.

General mitigation strategies would include the design of proposed facilities that are attractive in their own right and that would integrate well into landscape contexts, so as to reduce potential view blockage, contrast with existing landscape settings, light and shadow effects, and other potential visual impacts. Further consultation with local and regional agencies and with the public will help the Department refine these general mitigation strategies during project-level environmental review. The measures described below will be considered during subsequent review and design development to enhance project appearance and reduce potential project visual impacts.

In the development of the final design for the Rail Improvement projects, there is a need to generate design solutions will help to integrate new rail infrastructure into existing landscapes. Potential mitigation measures that could enhance project appearance and minimize visual impacts include:

- Bridges and other elevated rail infrastructure could be designed with graceful lines and with minimal apparent bulk and potential shading effects. Features that could be considered include use of contoured, rounded edges for columns and other structural elements.
- In the LOSSAN corridor, the existing rail line crosses six lagoons. The existing structures across the lagoons have been in place for many years, and are relatively dense, opaque structures. The proposed double tracking in these areas presents a potential for opening up the views in some of the lagoon areas, if new structures are constructed across the lagoons. The potential for removing existing structures and building new structures in lagoon areas needs to be evaluated during project-level review as a means of mitigating potential impacts visual impacts, as well as impacts to hydrologic and biological resources associated with the lagoons. (See Section 3.12, *Hydrology and Water Resources*, and Section 3.13, *Biological Resources and Wetlands*.)

As an illustration of how structure replacement could open up lagoon views, Figure 3.7-5 shows the existing structure across San Elijo Lagoon, and a photo-simulation of a new structure type that represents one possible means of replacing the existing structure. As shown in the figure, the views across the lagoon would be opened up and expanded with a more open-cell structure

with widely spaced support columns. Causeway structures may also be considered for some lagoon crossings in project-level reviews. The photo-simulation illustrates only the potential for opening up views across the lagoon, and does not represent the level of design effort that would be done at a project-level assessment. Context-sensitive designs will be developed for any replacement structures, taking into account the localized aesthetic environment and public input.

- Where at-grade or depressed route segments pass through or along the edge of residential areas or heavily traveled roadways, landscape treatments could be installed along the edge of the right-of-way such as trees, shrubs, and groundcover to provide partial screening and to visually integrate the right-of-way into the residential context.
- Night lighting at stations will be the minimum required for operations and safety. All lights should be hooded and directed to the area where the lighting is required to minimize excess shedding of waste light. For lights that are not required to be on all the time, sensors and timers should be specified.
- In the project-level review of new stations, the potential shadow impacts on adjacent pedestrian areas, parks, and residential areas will be taken into account.
- Areas outside of the operating rail trackbed that are disturbed by cut, fill or grading will be seeded or planted, as feasible, such that these areas will blend with the surrounding vegetated areas. Native vegetation will be placed in appropriate locations and densities to fit adjacent natural settings. Appropriate native or ornamental species will be used adjacent to developed and landscaped areas. Steep areas of cut in rock may not be able to support plants.
- In areas where elevated structures are close to residential areas, parks, and public open spaces, use of strategic plantings of fast-growing trees to provide partial or full screening of the structures will be evaluated.

These measures are expected to reduce visual impacts in many cases, but design options will need to be reviewed at the project level with local jurisdictions, resource agencies and the public to determine site-specific effectiveness and acceptability of aesthetic treatments and structure designs.

The above mitigation strategies are expected to substantially lessen or avoid impacts to aesthetics in many circumstances. Sufficient information is not available at this Program level, however, to conclude with certainty that the above mitigation strategies will reduce impacts to aesthetics to a less than significant level in all circumstances. This document therefore concludes that impacts to aesthetics could remain significant, even with the application of mitigation strategies. Additional environmental assessment will allow a more precise evaluation in the project-level environmental analyses.

### 3.7.6 Subsequent Analysis

Specific analyses that would be appropriate for project-specific environmental evaluation are discussed below.

- Detailed analyses of potential visual effects will be performed, particularly in areas with elevated structures, to identify potential visual intrusions into residential and park and open space areas. These analyses should focus on identifying the potential for obstruction of valued views; the areas where shadows would be cast on residential and





Existing LOSSAN Bridge Structure Across San Elijo Lagoon



Photo-Simulation -New Bridge Structure Across San Elijo Lagoon

Source : Company 39, 2003



U.S. Department  
of Transportation  
Federal  
Railroad  
Administration

**FIGURE 3.7-5**  
**Photo-Simulation**  
**New Bridge Structure Across San Elijo Lagoon**  
LOSSAN Rail Corridor Improvements  
Program Environmental Impact Report / Environmental Impact Statement



open space lands; and the areas where the scale, form, line, and color of project facilities would substantially alter the existing character and quality of the setting. In addition to producing a detailed inventory of area-specific impacts, this analysis would serve as the basis for identifying areas where project siting adjustments and design modifications, landscaping, and other design measures may be incorporated to avoid potentially significant impacts.

- Review of local urban design plans and policies will be conducted to take into account local design objectives. The analyses would provide a basis for considering specific design measures that would modify the impacts of the project in ways that would make the project design more consistent with local urban design goals.
- For each of the proposed below-grade station sites, further analyses would be conducted in consultation with local agencies to develop an understanding of the relationship of the proposed station architecture, parking lots, lighting systems, and other features to the surrounding natural and built setting and historic context of the surrounding landscape setting. The analyses should identify areas where the scale, form, line, and color of project facilities could be designed to blend with the surrounding landscape. The analyses would be used to provide a basis for considering specific measures that could be integrated into the final station designs to reduce the visual impacts of the stations on their surroundings.

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### 3.8 PUBLIC UTILITIES

This section describes the existing public utilities within the project area and identifies the potential for impacts on utility systems for the No-Project and Rail Improvements Alternatives. The public utilities evaluated in this section include electrical transmission lines, natural gas facilities, and wastewater treatment facilities. A potential utility impact is any potential conflict between an alignment or station and a utility, including crossings regardless of depth or height.

#### 3.8.1 Regulatory Requirements and Methods of Evaluation

##### A. REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS

###### California Public Utilities Commission

The California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) primarily regulates the provision of privately owned utilities in California. These utilities include privately owned telecommunications, electric, natural gas, water, railroad, rail transit, and passenger transportation companies. The CPUC is responsible for assuring that California utility customers have safe, reliable utility services at reasonable rates; protecting utility customers from fraud; and promoting the health of California's economy. The CPUC does not issue permits for proposed projects that would cross utility lines. The CPUC does, however, regulate at-grade rail crossings and, therefore, the Rail Improvement Alternative would require CPUC approval.

###### Office of the State Fire Marshall

The Office of the State Fire Marshall, Pipeline Safety Division, regulates the safety of approximately 5,500 mi (8,851 km) of intrastate hazardous liquid (e.g., oil, gas) transportation pipelines and acts as an agent of the Federal Office of Pipeline Safety concerning the inspection of more than 2,000 mi (3,219 km) of interstate pipelines. Pipeline safety staff inspects, tests, and investigates to ensure compliance with all federal and state pipeline safety laws and regulations. All spills, ruptures, fires, or similar incidents are responded to immediately; all such accidents are investigated for cause.

###### Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration, U.S. Department of Transportation

The Office of Pipeline Safety, which is part of the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA), is responsible for carrying out the duties regarding pipeline safety set forth in 49 U.S.C. §§ 60101 et seq. and 49 C.F.R. §190. The regulations apply to the owners and operators of the facilities and cover the design, installation, inspection, emergency plans and procedures, testing, construction, extension, operation, replacement, and maintenance of pipeline facilities transporting oil, gas and hazardous liquid. The regulations require operators of gas pipelines to participate in a public safety program, such as a one-call system that would notify the operator of any proposed demolition, excavation, tunneling, or construction that would take place near or affect the facility.

### **Wastewater Regulatory Setting**

Many regulatory agencies are involved in wastewater treatment oversight. These agencies include the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the California Water Resources Control Board (CWRCB), and nine California Regional Water Quality Control Boards (RWQCBs). Primary wastewater regulation occurs via the issuance of wastewater discharge standards that are implemented through National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permits and waste discharge requirements issued by the various RWQCBs.

Wastewater conveyance and treatment facilities in the study area are owned and/or operated by different agencies and entities. Any potential conflict with such facilities would be addressed in consultation with the respective agency. If a proposed rail improvement alignment option would require use of wastewater facility properties, the need for easements, agreements, or other arrangements with the agency and/or local jurisdiction would be considered and addressed.

## **B. METHOD OF EVALUATION OF IMPACTS**

Various methods, including the following, were used to gather the appropriate information for the study area:

- Review of the project Geographical Information System (GIS) to identify cities and counties in the study area.
- Review of the general plans for potentially affected communities in which proposed alignment options are being studied, as well as maps from the Thomas Bros. California Atlas and from the California State Automobile Association.
- Review of project alignments/proposed improvements against GIS information of electrical transmission lines, and gas and oil pipelines compiled by Pennwell MAPSearch (2003).
- Exploration of Web sites of the GIS-identified cities and counties in the study area, to gather appropriate setting information.
- Examination of applicable utility system maps and Web sites to gain a better understanding of facility distribution.
- Contact with public utility providers via telephone to obtain or confirm the locations of their current and planned services and facilities in the study area.

Public utilities can generally include a range of services such as water, power, sewage, communications, and other systems. For the purposes of this analysis, three of the most common major facilities that may pose construction challenges were identified to best represent potential utility impacts. These facilities not only provide critical services, they are likely to create a hazard if damaged during construction operations.

- Electrical facilities are defined as major transmission lines and substations that meet or exceed a power rating of 230 kilovolts (kV).
- Natural gas facilities are defined as high-pressure gas pipelines and facilities of various sizes.



- Wastewater treatment facilities are defined as wastewater pipelines with a minimum 36-in (91-cm) diameter, and any treatment facilities located an alignment option corridor.

The methodology used to assess potential conflicts (any crossing or longitudinal encroachment of an existing utility by the defined improvement) included overlaying the available utility maps with the alignment options and identifying the facilities within 100 ft (30 m) of the centerline and the proposed alignment options. Because public utilities are so prevalent throughout the study area, it was not practical to assess each potential conflict. Rather, the relative impact between alignment options was determined by quantifying the number and type of potential conflicts for each option. In addition, a qualitative ranking of high, medium, or low was assigned to describe the potential severity of the conflict, as described below and summarized in Table 3.8-1.

Linear facilities, such as electric transmission lines, natural gas pipelines, and wastewater pipelines, would be less likely to be affected by an alignment option because, with relatively minimal disruption or construction impacts, they could be avoided, or conflicts could be minimized or mitigated by routing either the public utility or the rail improvement around, over, or under the facility. Where unavoidable, relocations of the utilities would not pose adverse environmental risks, based on current construction practices. However, they do represent additional project-related costs.

Fixed facilities, such as electrical substations or power stations and wastewater treatment plants, would be more likely to be affected by a rail alignment option because they could require more significant engineering, design, and construction to avoid, minimize, or mitigate potential conflicts. These types of fixed facilities have more significant constraints regarding any potential conflict such as routing the transportation improvement around, over, or under the facility, or relocating the fixed facility to another location.

**Table 3.8-1**  
**Rankings for Potential Public Utilities Impacts/Conflicts**

Potential Impact Ranking	Electrical Facilities	Natural Gas Lines	Waste Treatment Facilities
Low	No 230kV or greater facility within study area	1 to 15 gas lines within study area	No wastewater pipelines of 36-in (91-cm) diameter or greater or treatment facilities within study area.
Medium	N/A*	16 to 30 gas lines within study area	N/A*
High	One or more 230kV or greater facility, substation, or power station within study area	31 or more gas lines within study area	Wastewater pipelines of 36-in (91-cm) diameter or greater or treatment facilities within study area.

\* There is no medium rating for this category; impacts are either low (no facilities in the segment) or high (one facility or more in the segment).

## 3.8.2 Affected Environment

### A. STUDY AREA DEFINED

The study area for public utilities encompasses the area within 100 ft (30 m) of the centerline of each alignment and 100 ft (30 m) around stations. The study area is generally located within developed and urbanized areas. These areas typically include various underground, at-grade, and elevated utilities that provide water, power, communications, and sewage service to residential, business and manufacturing, and agricultural practices.

### B. PUBLIC UTILITIES IN STUDY AREA

Figure 3.8-1 illustrates the major utilities that are present in the LOSSAN study area. The key service providers and resources in the LOSSAN study area are summarized below.

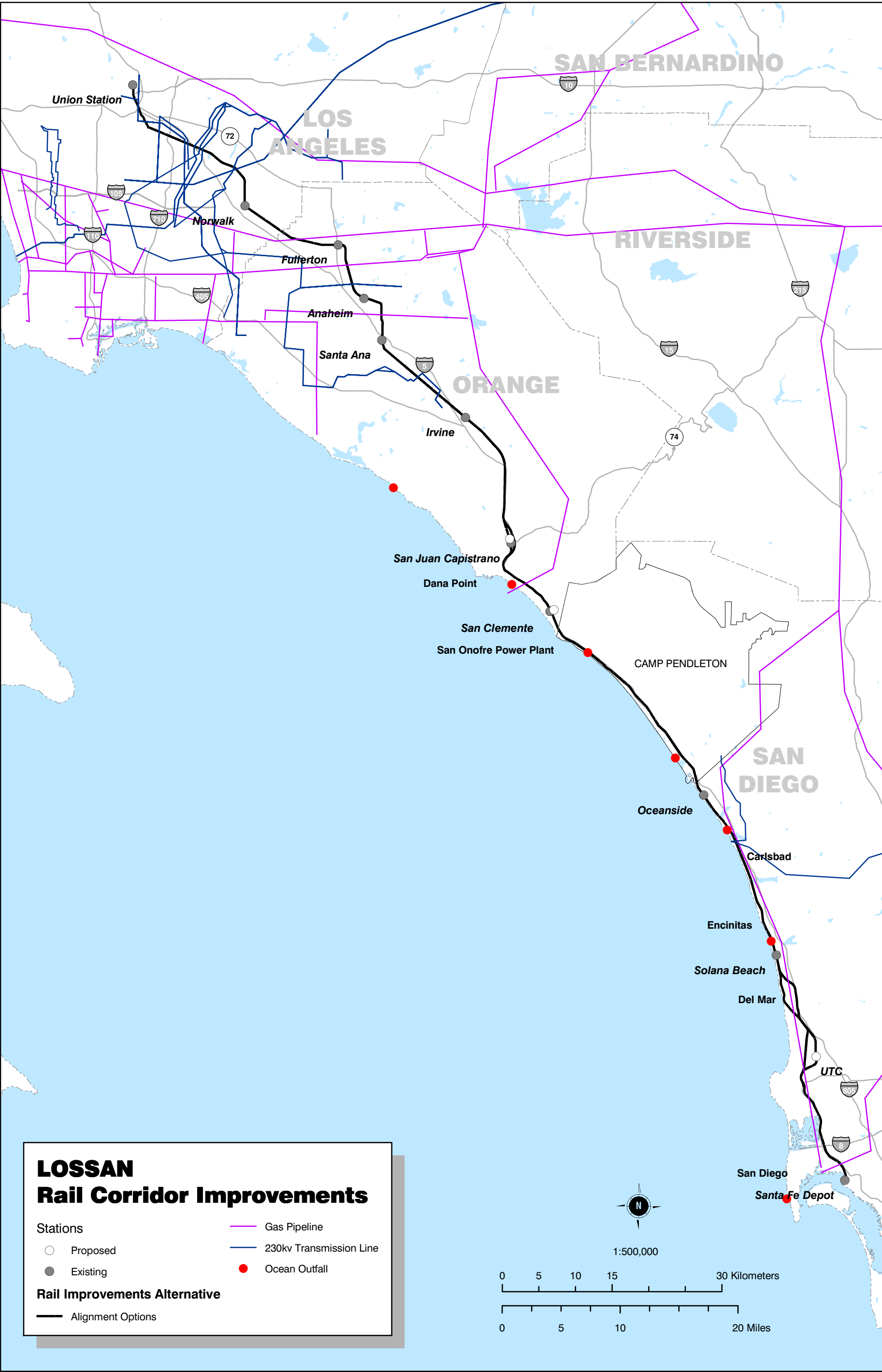
- **Electrical Facilities**—Providers include Los Angeles Department of Water and Power (LADWP); Southern California Edison (SCE); and Sempra Energy/San Diego Gas & Electric (SDG&E).
- **Natural Gas Facilities**—Provided by Southern California Gas (SCG) and two wholesale utility customers -- SDG&E and Southwest Gas Corporation.
- **Wastewater Treatment**—Provided primarily by San Diego Metropolitan Wastewater District, Encina Wastewater Authority, San Elijo Joint Powers Authority, United States Marine Corps, and South Orange Wastewater Authority.

## 3.8.3 Environmental Consequences

### A. EXISTING CONDITIONS COMPARED TO NO-PROJECT ALTERNATIVE

The existing conditions assume the continued operation of the transportation and public utilities infrastructure described above. The No-Project Alternative assumes that, in addition to existing conditions, additional transportation and utility improvements will be developed and operational by 2020. The transportation improvements include projects that are programmed or funded to 2020 (as described in Chapter 2, Alternatives).

It was not possible as part of this study to identify or quantify the utility improvements expected to occur by 2020. Rather, it is assumed that utility development will occur to meet projected demand and growth characteristics near the alignment options of the proposed Rail Improvement Alternative. For existing transportation facilities, conflicts with electrical transmission lines, natural gas pipelines, oil pipelines, wastewater and water utilities, and other utilities have previously been addressed and few additional or increased impacts are expected from the future transportation improvements included in the No-Project Alternative. In addition, it is assumed that measures would be taken to avoid these potential conflicts to the extent feasible and practical, as well as to greatly limit any potential additional costs or disruption of service. It is common practice to coordinate onsite with utility representatives during construction in the vicinity of critical infrastructure such as high-voltage overhead/underground transmission lines, high-pressure gas pipelines, or aqueduct canals. Also, future transportation or utility



Source : EIAGIS, 2001



**FIGURE 3.8-1**  
**Major Utilities**  
LOSSAN Rail Corridor Improvements  
Program Environmental Impact Report / Environmental Impact Statement



improvements would be expected to be analyzed in a project-level environmental document, which would incorporate feasible measures to mitigate potentially significant adverse environmental impacts.

Based on the above assumptions, the existing conditions of the No-Project Alternative are used to provide the baseline for analysis of potential conflicts with utilities.

## B. NO-PROJECT COMPARED TO RAIL IMPROVEMENTS ALTERNATIVE

Existing conditions from the No-Project Alternative provide the baseline condition. Improvements associated with the proposed Rail Improvements Alternative would result in potential impacts in addition to those resulting from the No-Project Alternative. With respect to public utilities, the analysis did not show significant differences when comparing the No-Project Alternative to the Rail Improvements Alternative, or comparing the various alignment options. As described above, the number of potential utility conflicts under the No-Project Alternative was not identified, and existing conditions were used as the baseline for analysis. For the purposes of this analysis, the existing conditions are treated as representative of the No-Project Alternative, and the analysis summarizes the relative differences between the existing conditions and the Rail Improvement Alternative.

Table 3.8-2 summarizes the potential impacts of the alignment options on the various public utilities examined as part of this document.

**Table 3.8-2  
Potential Utility Conflicts**

Rail Improvement Design Options	Electrical Transmission Lines	Electrical Substations	Natural Gas Pipelines	Wastewater Treatment Pipelines & Sewer Outfalls
<b>Union Station To Fullerton Station 4<sup>th</sup> Main Track</b>	15	0	24	0
<b>Fullerton Station To Irvine Station Double Tracking</b>				
AT-GRADE between Orange and Santa Ana	4	1	6	0
TRENCH between Orange and Santa Ana	4	1	6	0
Stations Fullerton	0	0	0	0
Anaheim	0	0	0	0
Santa Ana	0	0	2	0
Irvine	0	0	0	0
<b>San Juan Capistrano Double Tracking</b>				
TUNNEL along I-5 between Hwy 73 and Avenida Aeropuerto	0	0	0	0
AT-GRADE and Cut/Cover TRENCH along east side of Trabuco Creek	0	0	0	0

**Table 3.8-2  
Potential Utility Conflicts (continued)**

<b>Rail Improvement Design Options</b>	<b>Electrical Transmission Lines</b>	<b>Electrical Substations</b>	<b>Natural Gas Pipelines</b>	<b>Wastewater Treatment Pipelines &amp; Sewer Outfalls</b>
Stations San Juan Capistrano	0	0	0	0
<b>Dana Point/San Clemente Double Tracking</b>				
Dana Point Curve Realignment; San Clemente - SHORT TUNNEL	0	0	1	1
San Clemente - LONG TWO-SEGMENT TUNNEL	0	0	1	1
Stations San Clemente	0	0	0	0
<b>Camp Pendleton At-grade Double Tracking</b>	0	0	0	2
<b>Oceanside/Carlsbad Double Tracking</b>				
Carlsbad - AT-GRADE	2	0	0	0
Carlsbad - TRENCH	2	0	0	0
Stations Oceanside	0	0	0	0
<b>Encinitas/Solana Beach Double Tracking</b>				
Encinitas - AT-GRADE	0	0	0	1
Encinitas - SHORT TRENCH	0	0	0	1
Stations Solana Beach	0	0	0	0
<b>Del Mar Double Tracking</b>				
TUNNEL under Camino Del Mar	0	0	0	0
TUNNEL along I-5	0	0	0	0
<b>I-5/805 Split To Hwy 52 Double Tracking</b>				
Miramar Hill TUNNEL	0	0	9	1
I-5 TUNNEL	0	0	9	1
Stations UTC (Miramar Hill Tunnel only)	0	0	0	0
<b>Hwy 52 To Santa Fe Depot Curve realignment and Double Tracking</b>	0	0	4	1
Stations Santa Fe Depot	0	1	0	0



Overall, the analysis indicated that, with regard to potential conflicts with utilities, there was little difference between and among the proposed alignment options. This is because utilities generally do not present significant potential impacts that cannot be avoided, minimized, or mitigated through conventional design and construction processes. For instance, most potential conflicts typically would be identified during the design or construction stage of a project and standard measures would be taken to minimize costs and disruption of service.

Twenty-one 230kV transmission lines are crossed by proposed alignment options between Los Angeles and San Diego. Nineteen of these transmission lines are located in the Union Station to Irvine Station segment, leaving the rest of the corridor relatively free of higher voltage electrical facilities. Two substations were identified in the study area, one located in the Fullerton to Irvine segment, and one near the Santa Fe Depot in San Diego. Actual impacts in the existing LOSSAN rail corridor are likely to be low because the rail pre-dates the electrical infrastructure that has been developed around the existing and operating LOSSAN rail corridor.

High-pressure natural gas pipelines, ranging in diameter from 4 inches to 30 inches, are crossed by the proposed rail alignment options in 44 locations, and 2 locations within the Santa Ana Station study area. In all but one area, these gas lines are distributed such that construction activities would result in low or no impacts. Only in the Union Station to Fullerton Station segment are impacts considered to be higher, where the alignment options cross 24 gas lines. It is assumed that any construction in this corridor would require gas lines to be exposed through excavation and then re-cased for protection.

Additional impacts to gas pipelines could result in areas where tunneling and trenching require minor or major pipeline relocations, or where utilities are excluded from the corridor. Tunneling and trenching may occur in the Union Station to Fullerton segment (24 pipelines), Fullerton to Irvine Station segment (6 pipelines), Dana Point/San Clemente segment (1 pipeline), I-5/805 Split to Highway 52 segment (9 pipelines), and the Highway 52 to Santa Fe Depot segment (4 pipelines). In most cases, potential impacts relate to construction cost and time, and should not result in disruption of service.

Wastewater treatment facilities intersecting the various alignment options include five treated wastewater ocean outfalls and two major sewer lines. No wastewater treatment plants were identified within the study area. The ocean outfalls are located in the Dana Point/San Clemente segment (1), Camp Pendleton segment (2), Oceanside/Carlsbad segment (1), and the Encinitas/Solana Beach segment (1). Major sewer lines include a 60-inch-diameter line that enters the rail corridor in the I-5/805 Split to Highway 52 segment and parallels it to the Airport pump station and a 96-inch trunk line in the Highway 52 to Santa Fe Depot segment. Impacts to ocean outfalls and sewer trunk lines are rated as high due to high relocation impacts because of their large diameter, high construction costs and time, and potential for service interruption.

### 3.8.4 Design Practices

The public utilities impact analysis is programmatic and addresses only representative utilities; it does not address all utilities and does not address local details. Project-level analysis would address all utilities and local issues once the alignments are more defined. Potential conflicts with utilities will be avoided to the extent feasible and practical which will greatly limit any

potential additional costs or service disruption. It is common practice to coordinate onsite with utility representatives during construction in the vicinity of critical infrastructure such as high-voltage overhead/underground transmission lines, high-pressure gas pipelines, or aqueduct canals. Also, future transportation or utility improvements would be analyzed at the project-level environmental review along with feasible measures to mitigate potentially significant adverse environmental impacts.

### 3.8.5 Mitigation Strategies

Potential general mitigation strategies for potential utility conflicts will first focus on avoidance of the potential conflicts. If such conflicts are unavoidable, the next strategy will focus on reducing and minimizing the potential impact. The mitigation strategies would be refined during subsequent project-specific review.

For large utilities, such as wastewater treatment facilities, electrical substations, and pipelines, the strategy will be first to avoid crossing or using any of the utility right-of-way or facility footprint as the project-specific review proceeds and as engineering designs are refined. Avoidance opportunities will include consideration of modifying both the horizontal and vertical profiles of the proposed rail improvements.

If avoidance is not feasible, and adjustment of alignments has not eliminated potential conflict, then in close coordination with the utility owner, relocation/reconstruction/restoration of the utility will be evaluated as a second mitigation strategy. This type of mitigation could include combining several utilities into a single utility corridor, or relocation or reconstruction. Where feasible and cost-effective, consolidating several utilities, primarily underground electrical and communications utilities, into one conduit will be considered during utility relocation planning.

In areas where rail improvements would occur within the existing rail corridor, utility conflicts are expected to be low because utilities have generally been sited to avoid the active rail corridor. New or realigned rail corridors may encounter more conflicts, and below-grade options such as trenching or tunneling may have the highest potential conflicts due to the presence of buried utilities. Measures to avoid and/or mitigate potential utility conflicts associated with the Rail Improvements Alternative include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Adjust rail alignments and profiles to avoid major utility lines or facilities.
- Relocate transmission lines or substations.
- During final design, consult with each utility provider/owner to avoid or reduce potential impacts on existing and planned utilities through design refinements. Where impacts are unavoidable, all affected facilities would be relocated or protected in place prior to, during and after construction, as appropriate, and in accordance with methods and designs approved by the affected utility provider/owner.

Based on the analysis above, and considering the CEQA Appendix G thresholds of significance for public utilities and service systems, the Rail Improvements Alternative would not be expected to result in a significant effect on utilities and utility services. The proposed location of the proposed improvements within existing rail and other transportation corridors reduces the corridor-wide potential to affect utility operations. In locations where a rail alignment would intersect or be in close proximity to existing utility pipelines or facilities, design modifications and avoidance strategies would be applied to avoid and to limit impacts to utilities. Opportunities for utility relocation and coordination would also help avoid utility impacts. Design practices and

mitigation strategies would be applied also to avoid even temporary curtailment of services during construction. The above mitigation strategies are expected to reduce impacts of the Rail Improvements Alternative to utilities to a less-than-significant level. Additional environmental assessment will allow a more precise evaluation in the project-level environmental analyses.

### 3.8.6 Subsequent Analysis

As previously mentioned the public utilities impact analysis is programmatic and addresses only representative utilities; it does not address all utilities and does not address local details. Project-level analysis would address all utilities and local issues once the alignments are defined. Project-level environmental documentation and subsequent planning documents should include more detailed information on the following utilities.

- Water supply lines.
- Wastewater conveyance lines.
- Wastewater and water pump stations.
- Storm drains.
- Fiber optic lines.
- Telecommunication lines.
- Other utilities, and pipelines likely to be crossed or conflict with the various alignment options, including liquid petroleum, crude oil, etc.

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### 3.9 HAZARDOUS MATERIALS AND WASTES

This section identifies the potential for impacts on areas that may be contaminated with hazardous materials and/or wastes for the No-Project and Rail Improvements Alternatives. According to Title 22, Section 66261 of the California Code of Regulations (CCR), waste is considered hazardous if it exhibits at least one of the four characteristics of ignitability, corrosivity, reactivity, or toxicity, or if it is a “listed waste.” Waste can be liquid, semi-solid, or gaseous. A potential hazardous waste impact is any potential conflict between an alignment, station, or airport facility and a known contaminated site, including crossings of a known contaminated site regardless of depth or height. The section focuses on contamination at sites on the National Priorities List (NPL)/Superfund, California’s high-priority Annual Work Plan (AWP) sites, and solid waste landfill (SWLF) sites.

#### 3.9.1 Regulatory Requirements and Methods of Evaluation

##### A. REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS

Hazardous materials and waste sites, including their use and remediation, are regulated by a number of federal laws, including the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) and the Comprehensive Environmental Response and Liability Act (CERCLA).

California’s hazardous materials regulations for the discovery of hazardous substances in the subsurface during construction, and the disposal of hazardous materials and cleanup of the hazards area incorporate most federal hazardous materials regulations. California’s statutes and regulations on hazardous materials are contained in Health and Safety Code (HSC) 25130 et seq. and CCR Title 22, which contains regulations adopted and administered by the California Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC). California regulations require that hazardous waste be managed according to applicable regulations that include worker operational safety procedures as identified in Title 8 CCR; handling, storage, and exposure requirements; transportation and disposal requirements under a uniform hazardous waste manifest; and documentation procedures. In California, waste disposal facilities are classified in three categories: Class I, Class II, and Class III. A Class I disposal facility may accept federal and California hazardous waste. Class II and Class III facilities are only permitted to accept non-hazardous waste at facility-specific acceptance threshold levels established by the Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB), the permitting agency.

Additional federal and state regulations address worker exposure to safety and health hazards. The federal regulations are identified in Title 29 of the Code of Federal Regulations, and the state regulations are in CCR Title 8. The federal and California Occupational Safety and Health Administrations are the primary agencies responsible for enforcing these regulations.

##### B. METHOD OF EVALUATION OF IMPACTS

###### Identification of Hazardous Sites

Impacts on hazardous waste and/or material sites are an important consideration in the development of any major transportation improvement project. Remediation of such sites can dramatically increase the overall cost of a project. It is important to know early in the environmental analysis process where potential conflicts with these sites may

occur, so that proper planning can be done to avoid these locations where possible. At this program level of analysis, available databases and information regarding the extent and nature of known hazardous materials/hazardous waste sites were reviewed. The following databases were consulted for information on potential hazardous materials risks.

- **Federal National Priorities List/Superfund:** This U.S. Environmental Protection Agency-developed database lists sites that pose an immediate public health hazard, and where an immediate response to the hazard is necessary. These listings are also found in the CERCLA database, also known as CERCLIS (Title 42 U.S.C. Chapter 103).
- **State Priority List:** Sites listed in this DTSC and RWQCB database are priority sites that were compiled from AWP and CAL-SITE databases, and sites where Preliminary Endangerment Assessments were conducted by the California Environmental Protection Agency (CEPA). The AWP database lists contaminated sites authorized for cleanup under the Bond Expenditure Plan developed by the California Department of Health Services as a site-specific expenditure plan to support appropriation of Hazardous Substance Cleanup Bond Act funds.
- **State of California Solid Waste Landfills:** The landfill sites listed in this database generally have been identified by the state as accepting solid wastes. This database includes open, closed, and inactive solid waste disposal facilities and transfer stations pursuant to the Solid Waste Management and Resource Recovery Act of 1972 and is maintained by the California Integrated Waste Management Board. The locations of the disposal facilities are primarily identified through permit applications and local enforcement agencies.

### **Methods of Analysis**

The hazardous materials and wastes analysis for this Program EIR/EIS entailed a qualitative comparison of potential impacts on humans and the natural environment from exposure to hazardous materials or wastes that could result from proximity to or potential disturbance of sites containing these materials due to the No-Project Alternative or the proposed Rail Improvement Alternative. As described above, the analysis was based on the results of a database search (Environmental Data Resources 2003) for a study area that included the potential Rail Improvements Alternative alignment options as well as proposed station locations and existing stations where expansion is proposed, as described below in Section 3.12.2. For this program-level broad analysis of potential impacts related to known priority hazards sites, the analysis was limited to hazardous materials sites and hazardous waste sites listed on the NPL, SPL, and SWLF databases. Other types of sites, such as sites with leaking underground storage tanks (LUSTs), would be considered in a subsequent phase of analysis, when site-specific analysis could be tied to more detailed alignment plans and profiles. No site-specific investigations were conducted for this analysis. Because of the large area covered, such analyses would not be cost-effective at this program-level analysis.

Potential impacts of the Rail Improvements Alternative were compared to conditions under the No-Project Alternative. This assessment assumed that impacts related to hazardous materials or hazardous waste exposure could occur both during project



construction and during project operation. It was based on the anticipated difference between No-Project conditions and conditions under the Rail Improvements Alternative, in terms of the estimated area of the proposed improvements described in Chapter 2, Alternatives, which guided the identification of study area boundaries. This analysis focused on the number of identified NPL, SPL, and SWLF sites within the study area. The program-level comparison of alternatives in this section assesses the relative degree to which known hazardous material and waste sites could constrain the alignment options by requiring costly disposal conditions and site cleanup and remediation. In this comparative analysis, each type of listing (NPL, SPL, and SWLF) was given equal weight. The program-level analysis does not include a detailed assessment of the nature or extent of any hazardous materials or wastes that may be present at identified sites, or the degree or specific nature of potential impacts under the various alignment options. The analysis and identification of potential hazards within the study area of alignment options is useful in comparing the options and in identifying areas where avoidance may be possible in subsequent project-level review.

### 3.9.2 Affected Environment

#### A. STUDY AREA DEFINED

The Rail Improvements Alternative would result in substantial improvements to existing rail infrastructure, within or adjacent to existing rights of way, in addition to the No-Project transportation improvements. Therefore, the study area for the presence of hazardous materials and wastes includes existing transportation corridors, new rail corridors, and the areas where passenger stations are being considered or expanded. The study area consisted of a 500 ft-wide (152 m-wide) (250 ft [76 m] on either side of the centerline) corridor along each alignment option identified for the Rail Improvement Alternative, and a 250-ft (76-m) radius around each station facility. The study area boundaries were based on the distance within which a hazardous material or waste site could impact the possible location of a rail improvement.

#### B. HAZARDOUS MATERIALS AND WASTE SITES

Two hazardous materials/hazardous waste sites were identified within the study area through the database search. One NPL/Superfund site, the El Toro Marine Corps Air Station, was identified in the northern limits of the City of Irvine, within the study area of the Fullerton Station to Irvine Station rail segment and within the study area of the Irvine Station. One solid waste landfill was identified south of Highway 52 in the Rose Canyon area, within the study area of the Highway 52 to Santa Fe Depot rail segment. These two sites are relatively minor in extent and could be effectively mitigated through typical design and construction practices.

Additional information on the results of the database search is provided in the hazardous materials and wastes technical evaluation (HDR, 2003).

### 3.9.3 Environmental Consequences and Comparison of Alternatives

The potential severity of impacts from hazardous material or waste releases on the construction, operations, and maintenance of the proposed alignment options would depend on two factors: the nature and severity of contamination, and the construction and operations/maintenance activities that are likely to occur near the sites. The sites

that pose the greatest concern are those with soil or groundwater contamination within or adjacent to the right-of-way, and those with groundwater contamination near areas where excavation down to groundwater would be necessary. For example, dewatering during excavation, trenching, or tunneling could alter local subsurface hydraulic gradients and draw existing groundwater contamination into excavated areas, trenches, or tunnels. In addition, fuel or chemical vapors could move through the vadose zone<sup>1</sup> to excavated areas (during construction), or to underground structures associated with the rail line such as vaults and manholes (during project operation).

#### A. EXISTING CONDITIONS COMPARED TO NO-PROJECT ALTERNATIVE

The description of existing conditions in the study area is based on the known hazardous materials sites in the vicinity of the transportation infrastructure that exists in 2003. The No-Project Alternative would incorporate local, state, and interstate transportation system improvements designated in existing plans and programs. This analysis assumed that no additional hazardous material or waste impacts would occur beyond those already addressed or those that would be addressed in the environmental documents for those improvement projects, and that any such impacts would largely be mitigated as part of those projects.

For the purpose of this analysis, existing hazardous materials sites and hazardous waste sites identified in the available databases were treated as the baseline for comparison. While the future conditions for the No-Project Alternative may result in some additional hazardous materials or waste impacts, they cannot be predicted or estimated for purposes of this program-level analysis. Similarly, it can be presumed that between now and the year 2020 some of the existing hazardous waste sites would be cleaned up or remediated as part of CEPA and RWQCB efforts.

#### B. NO-PROJECT ALTERNATIVE COMPARED TO RAIL IMPROVEMENTS ALTERNATIVE

As described above, the No-Project Alternative was used as a proxy for the baseline 2020 condition; the impact from any improvements associated with the Rail Improvements Alternative would be in addition to the impacts from the 2020 No-Project Alternative.

The Rail Improvements Alternative study area contains only two hazardous materials/wastes sites, described below.

- **Superfund Sites:** One NPL/Superfund site, the El Toro Marine Corps Air Station, was identified within the study area. This site is located in the City of Irvine between Union Station and Irvine Station via the LOSSAN corridor alignment. This site could potentially affect the Fullerton Station to Irvine Station double tracking design options, either at-grade double tracking or double tracking in a trench. In addition, this NPL site has the potential to affect construction and operation at the Irvine Station, where proposed improvements include bypass tracks and additional parking.
- **Solid Waste Landfills:** One solid waste landfill was identified within the study area. The Rose Canyon Landfill is located in San Diego County (Highway 52 to Santa Fe Depot segment), south of Highway 52. The curve realignment and

<sup>1</sup> The vadose zone comprises the region between the land surface and underlying groundwater aquifers and is the geologic zone through which pollutants and contaminants travel prior to entering groundwater (INEEL National Vadose Zone Project, 2002).

double-tracking option proposed in this segment could be affected. This landfill would not affect existing or proposed stations in the study area.

Due to the complexity of hazardous materials/wastes sites, it was not possible to assign levels of severity of impacts of these sites without information addressing nature and extent of contamination and precise locations and boundaries of contamination zones. However, the presence of identified hazardous materials and hazardous waste sites along various alignment options indicates a potential need for cleanup or remediation of those sites. The extent of cleanup or remediation would translate into additional costs for construction, which could affect the practicality or feasibility of an alignment option.

As described above, this analysis was limited to searches of standard databases listing known sites and did not incorporate information on other smaller sites that could contribute to risk on a local basis and would be studied at the project-specific level, if the proposed Rail Improvements Alternative is pursued. In addition, because neither site-specific investigations nor onsite fieldwork was performed, little or no information is available about the nature and severity of contamination at the sites identified, or the schedule or program for cleanup, if any, so the information in this section represents a "site-count" approximation and may not fully divulge potential risk levels. Finally, all of the Rail Improvements Alternative alignment options would be within or adjacent to existing rights-of-way, and these alignments have a land use history under which additional unknown contamination (e.g., spills or accidental releases) would be a possibility. Consequently, although no unavoidable hazardous materials and hazardous waste impacts are expected for any of the alignment options, hazardous materials and hazardous waste information available at the program level is not sufficient to distinguish between alignment options.

### 3.9.4 Design Practices

At this Program-level of study it is not possible to identify specific hazardous material impacts, determine the nature and severity of contamination, or the construction, operations and maintenance activities that are likely to occur near specific sites. However, the lead agencies are committed to avoiding and minimizing potential impacts through design refinement at the project level as well as the use of best practices to avoid potential impacts during construction. (Refer also to Section 2.7.1 for additional best practices.)

### 3.9.5 Mitigation Strategies

Mitigation for impacts related to hazardous materials and/or hazardous wastes depends on detailed site-specific investigations (environmental site assessments) that would be performed at the project level of analysis. Mitigation strategies include realignment of one or more Rail Improvements Alternative options or relocation of proposed stations to avoid an identified site, or remediation of identified hazardous material/waste contamination.

In addition, potential mitigation strategies would include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Investigate soils for contamination and prepare environmental site assessments (ESAs) when necessary.
- Prior to demolition of any buildings or existing structures such as bridges for project construction, survey for lead-based paint and asbestos-containing materials.
- Acquire necessary permits if ground dewatering is required

- When indicated by project level ESAs, perform a Phase II ESA (e.g., hydrogeologic investigation) to identify specific mitigation measures. Perform Phase II ESAs in conformance with the ASTM Standards Related to the Phase II Environmental Site Assessment Process (E1903-01)
- Prepare a Site Management Program/Contingency Plan (SMP/CP) prior to construction to address known and potential hazardous material issues SMP/CP including:
  - Measures to address management of contaminated soil and groundwater
  - Site-specific Health and Safety Plan (HASP) including measures to protect construction workers and general public
  - Procedures to protect workers and the general public in the event that unknown contamination or buried hazards are encountered

Based on the analysis above, and considering CEQA Appendix G thresholds of significance for hazardous materials and hazardous wastes, the proposed Rail Improvements Alternative would have a potentially less than significant effect on hazardous materials and hazardous waste. At this programmatic level of review, it is not possible to identify specific hazardous material impacts, or the nature and severity of contamination at specific sites. However, the lead agencies' commitment of using design practices to minimize impacts, and the use of best practices and mitigation strategies for remediation of hazardous sites, are expected to substantially lessen or avoid impacts to hazardous materials and wastes. During project-level reviews, specific impacts to sites with hazardous materials will be identified, and mitigation measures based on the above mitigation strategies will be applied on a site-specific basis. Additional environmental assessment will allow more precise evaluation in the project-level environmental analyses.

### 3.9.6 Subsequent Analysis

Specific studies that would be required for project-level environmental documentation include environmental site assessments, which would study the identified hazardous materials and hazardous waste sites in more detail to evaluate the nature and level of contamination and allow thorough analysis of potential impacts in accordance with applicable regulatory requirements. Tasks to be performed as part of the project-level environmental site assessment would be expected to include the following:

- Environmental database search. This would include additional databases (e.g., Cortese list, LUST list, other sites, etc.).
- Review of historical land use for all alignment options or corridor alternatives carried forward for detailed analysis.
- Site reconnaissance.
- Review of agency records and agency consultation.
- Data analysis and report preparation.

## Chapter 4 COSTS AND OPERATIONS

### 4.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter summarizes the estimated Capital, Operations and Maintenance (O&M) Costs, and Operational Performance associated with the LOSSAN Rail Corridor Improvements evaluated in this Program Environmental Impact Report / Environmental Impact Statement (Program EIR/EIS). The O&M Costs for the LOSSAN Rail Corridor Improvements were developed based on the operations plan and network simulation model, which represents the physical characteristics of the No-Project Alternative and proposed Rail Improvements Alternative and the performance characteristics of the conventional train equipment currently in use by the rail operators.

#### 4.0.1 Capital Costs

The Capital Costs that were calculated for the improvements to the LOSSAN corridor were calculated using 2003 dollars. The costs are associated with infrastructure improvements defined for each alternative and do not include the costs associated with the No-Project Alternative. The programmed and funded improvements included under the No-Project Alternative are assumed to have been implemented by 2020.

##### A. RAIL IMPROVEMENTS ALTERNATIVE

Capital costs were estimated for all of the proposed improvements along the LOSSAN corridor evaluated in this Program EIR/EIS. Because of the variations in the improvements being considered in the environmental analysis process, there is potentially a wide range of capital costs associated with this corridor.

The capital costs are representative of all aspects of the implementation of improvements to the conventional train system, including construction, potential right-of-way acquisition, environmental mitigation, and design and management services. The construction costs include procurement and installation of additional line infrastructure (tracks, bridges, tunnels, and grade separations); facilities (passenger stations, additional storage and maintenance facilities); systems (communications, train control); and removal or relocation of existing infrastructure (utilities, tracks). The right-of-way costs include the estimated costs to acquire properties needed for construction of the additional infrastructure associated with the conventional rail improvements. The environmental mitigation costs include a rough estimate of the proportion of capital costs required for mitigating environmental impacts, based on similar completed highway and railroad construction projects. However, no specific mitigation costs are identified at this program level of review. Infrastructure and facility costs account for the materials necessary to accommodate the representative (high-end) ridership forecasts. Other implementation costs are estimated in terms of add-on percentages to construction costs to account for agency costs associated with administration of the program (design, environmental review, and management).

### **Unit Cost Estimates**

The capital costs have been categorized into discrete cost elements. In general, the capital costs were estimated by determining the appropriate unit costs for the identified elements and the element quantities from the conceptual corridor improvement plans prepared for the LOSSAN corridor. Each cost element is defined in Appendix 4-A, along with the methods, assumptions, and unit cost applied in each case. Application of these unit costs and assumptions provides sufficient detail for the comparison of alignment and station options at this program level.

### **Adjustment to Unit Costs**

The unit costs were adjusted to account for inflation from 2000 to September 2003, based on the *Engineering News Record Construction Cost Index Report*. The revised unit costs are based on the unit costs originally developed by the California High-Speed Rail Authority to be used in estimating the cost of incremental improvements to the conventional rail system along the LOSSAN corridor to allow for the intercity service operating along this corridor to perform as a feeder service to the proposed statewide High Speed Train (HST) system.

Adjustments were also made to the tunneling unit costs, based on the Tunneling Conference held in December 2001. This technical tunneling conference was held to address issues associated with the tunneling proposed for the statewide HST system. The conference was attended by seven representatives of major tunneling contractors, nine specialized tunneling consulting engineers, two geologists/geotechnical engineers, and representatives of the consultant team. The conference reviewed past assumptions and requirements, construction methods, and cost estimating. The conference focused on gaining insights and input regarding feasibility, construction methods, and cost assumptions associated with the proposed tunneling. As a result of the conference and subsequent research and analysis, the tunneling-related unit costs were revised to reflect changes in design and construction assumptions (e.g., advance rates and tunnel lining).

## **4.0.2 Operational Performance**

As part of the Operational Analysis, a network computer model was developed for the LOSSAN corridor to simulate train operations in order to estimate the travel times and speeds to assist in further analyzing the effects between the No-Project and Rail Improvements Alternatives.

The Berkeley Simulation Software Rail Traffic Controller model was selected as the platform for the LOSSAN corridor simulation model (the Model) developed for this analysis. The Model provides a range of analysis and reporting capabilities encompassing the range of information required for this analysis and can realistically simulate higher-speed train operations in a mixed-use operational environment (Commuter and Freight services). The advantage of the Model is that it is designed as a flexible tool that can continue to be modified, refined and upgraded to evaluate different operational and infrastructure configurations. The numbers that were input into the model were based on the existing and forecasted service numbers provided by the operators within the corridor.



## A. OPERATING SPEEDS

Operating speeds of 110-125 mph are proposed for areas where the alignment is less constrained, and lower operating speeds (less than 90 mph) are proposed in the more heavily developed areas. Due to the spacing between stations, service would not necessarily reach the maximum speeds on a given segment. Figures 4.0-1 and 4.0-2 show the operating speed profiles put out by the model. These graphics illustrate the speeds that can be attained through implementing the Rail Improvements Alternative.

The gray regions in both charts represent the proposed maximum allowed speed along a given segment of the corridor. The green line represents the actual speed of each train and the red the dynamic braking application. As shown in both the Low- and High-Build Rail Improvements Alternative, the maximum allowed speed for a given segment of track is rarely achieved due to the time it takes to accelerate and decelerate a train.

## B. CONCEPTUAL OPERATING SCHEDULE

The degree of service to be provided along the corridor formed the basis for the train data that was input to the Model. The service levels tested in the system network simulation were provided by the operators for forecast year 2020. The level of operation projected for intercity travel would allow for hourly service along the corridor. The service type and stopping patterns of the corridor operators is summarized below:

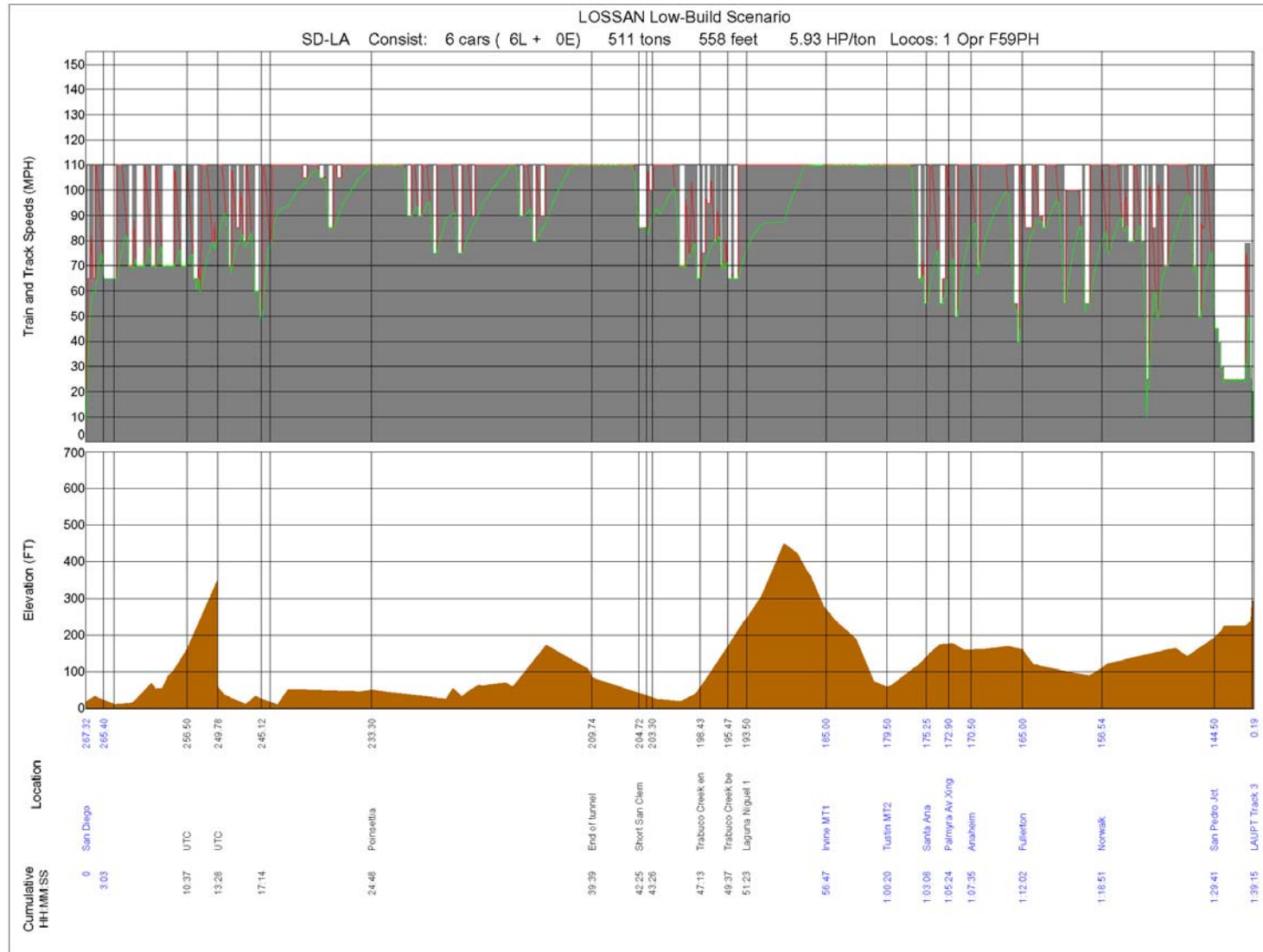
- Intercity (16 trains per day in each direction): Trains stopping at all intermediate stops, with potential for skipping stops to improve service depending on demand.
- Commuter:
  - Metrolink* (29 trains per day in each direction north of Irvine / 8-18 trains a day between Irvine and Oceanside): Trains would stop at all intercity and commuter stations with no express service provided.
  - Coaster* (27 trains per day in each direction): Trains would stop at all intercity and commuter stations with no express service provided.
- Freight (9-12 total trains per day): No stops at stations, freight consists only and would provide service to local branch lines and industries along the corridor.

These service levels represent projections provided by the operators along the corridor based on the projected demand for service and were incorporated into the model to assist in determining any capacity constraints associated with the scenarios.

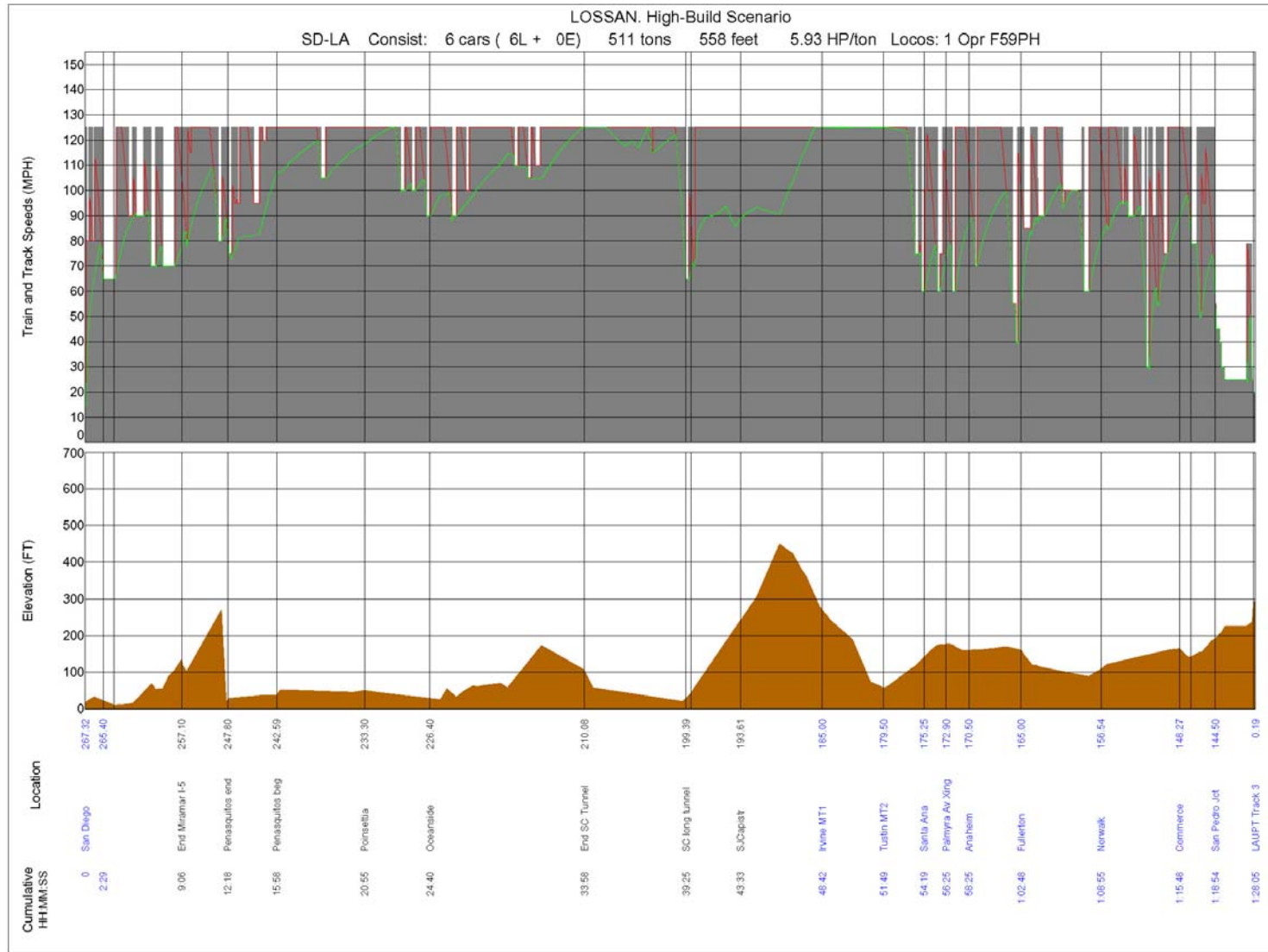
### 4.0.3 Operations & Maintenance Costs

Operations and Maintenance (O&M) Costs were calculated for the LOSSAN corridor improvement alternatives and were assumed to be in addition to the costs of the existing system. Therefore, only the incremental (marginal costs) to operate and maintain the improved conventional rail system beyond the existing system were estimated.

**Figure 4.0-1  
Low-Build Operating Speed & Travel Time Profile**



**Figure 4.0-2**  
**High-Build Operating Speed & Travel Time Profile**



## A. METHODOLOGY

The annual O&M costs of an improved LOSSAN corridor are based on system indicators, including operating speed, travel time, station configuration, and operating schedule. All of these system indicators were obtained from the output of the operational simulation model as documented in the Operations Analysis Report for this Program EIR/EIS.

O&M costs are shown in 2003 dollars and were calculated per-train-hour, using the most recently obtained Amtrak billing data for fiscal year 2002-03. Total yearly costs were averaged to derive average, per-train-hour costs for the categories shown in Table 4.0-1 on the following page. It must be noted that the table shows only the variable cost elements for Amtrak expenses incurred for O&M by category, to reflect the marginal costs associated with the proposed service improvements.

**Table 4.0-1  
Incremental Annual Operating Costs for a  
Conventional Intercity Rail System**

Item <sup>1,2,3</sup>	Annual Cost (millions 2003 \$)	Derived Annual Dollars per Train Hour (2003 \$)
<b>Wages</b>		
Train and Engine Crews	\$6.86	\$310.85
On-Board Svc - Labor	\$2.45	\$111.11
<b>Daily Operations</b>		
Train Fuel	\$3.47	\$156.94
Transportation	\$11.17	\$505.79
Maintenance of Equipment	\$9.41	\$426.13
<b>Total per Year</b>	<b>\$33.36</b>	<b>\$1,510.81</b>

Source: Amtrak California 2003

<sup>1</sup> O&M costs were derived using the billing statements from *Monthly Expense Detail of Amtrak Operations Billing for Pacific Surfliner Route Report - FY 2002-03*.  
September 2003

<sup>2</sup> O&M costs are based on a calendar year - 365 days.

<sup>3</sup> Numbers are subject to rounding.

## B. RAIL IMPROVEMENTS ALTERNATIVE

### Operations & Maintenance Annual Costs

The projected annual O&M Costs for an improved intercity rail system along the LOSSAN corridor are based on the track miles and train hours resulting from the simulation model described above in the Operational Analysis, which was based on information obtained from the Department and Amtrak, and the unit costs developed initially by the California High Speed Rail Authority. Updated estimates of total train miles from the simulation model have provided a cost estimate for both the Low- and High-Build Rail Improvements Alternative developed for the LOSSAN Corridor Incremental Improvements Study.

In order to determine the O&M Costs associated with the proposed improvements, daily train miles and hours were calculated. The number of train miles for the intercity

passenger system along an improved LOSSAN corridor (assuming the Low-Build Rail Improvement Alternative) is 4,080 per weekday, or 1,489,200 per year, and the total number of train hours per day was determined to be 64, or 23,360 per year. Table 4.0-1 summarizes annual O&M unit costs for train operations and maintenance assuming the Low-Build Rail Improvements Alternative, for all future scenarios of the conventional intercity rail system. Included in the O&M costs are only the variable costs that would be sensitive to a change in travel time, which includes wages for labor, costs for operating and maintaining trains, and train fuel. Cost items including general support, general administration, insurance and taxes, depreciation and supplemental expenses were not considered in the cost calculations since they would not vary significantly with a change in end-to-end travel time. The conventional train fleet O&M costs are shown on a per-train-hour basis.

Other costs associated with operating a conventional train system include the costs for maintaining the infrastructure (maintenance-of-ways). The costs of operating and maintaining infrastructure for a conventional intercity rail system are shown on a per-track-mile basis in Table 4.0-2. The unit cost per-track-mile for track maintenance represents average costs. It must be noted that the unit cost per-track-mile may vary significantly, based on track type (at-grade, trench, tunnel, or water crossing).

**Table 4.0-2**  
**Annual Maintenance of Way Costs for a**  
**Conventional Rail Infrastructure**

Item <sup>1,2,3</sup>	Annual Dollars per Track Mile (2003 \$)
<b>Maintenance of Way</b>	
Track Maintenance <sup>4</sup>	\$11,616
Signal Maintenance	\$12,076
Structure Maintenance	\$2,329
Procurement	\$2,066
Other	\$8,696
Agency	\$11,616
<b>Total per Year</b>	<b>\$48,399</b>

Source: Southern California Regional Rail Association (Metrolink) 2003

<sup>1</sup> O&M costs were derived using the billing statements from *Monthly Expense Detail of Amtrak Operations Billing for Pacific Surfliner Route Report - FY 2002-03*. September 2003

<sup>2</sup> Total existing number of track miles between Los Angeles and San Diego is estimated at 214 miles.

<sup>3</sup> Numbers are subject to rounding.

<sup>4</sup> The figure shown represents an average cost, based on available information.

## 4.0.4 Comparison of Alternatives

### A. NO-PROJECT VS. RAIL IMPROVEMENTS ALTERNATIVE

This section compares the Rail Improvements Alternative with the No-Project Alternative to allow for a clear understanding of the cost and performance benefits and impacts of the scenarios proposed in this environmental document.

### **Capital Costs**

For the improvements along the corridor, comprised of either the Low-Build or High-Build Rail Improvements Alternative, or a mixture of both, the capital costs could range from \$3.8 to \$5.5 billion in addition to the improvements already implemented as part of the No-Project. The proposed alignment and station configuration options and design assumptions will be reviewed in greater depth at the project-level to identify cost savings through application of value engineering practices.

### **Operational Performance**

The train operations and improvements assumed for the LOSSAN corridor in 2020 in the No-Project were simulated to estimate the capacity of the corridor between the Los Angeles Union Passenger Terminal (LA Union Station) and the San Diego Santa Fe Depot (San Diego) to determine the feasibility of this system to support more frequent and higher speed passenger rail service with only the funded and programmed improvements implemented. As illustrated in Table 4.0-3 below, using the operational assumptions presented above in Section 4.0.2-C, the average speed and travel time of the No-Project Alternative is significantly worse than the Low- and High-Build Rail Improvements Alternative, taking almost 38 minutes longer from LA Union Station to San Diego. These averages represent the actual travel time and speed calculated when assuming the full range of operations projected to be occurring along the corridor by 2020.

**Table 4.0-3  
Operational Intercity Rail Performance Comparison  
No-Project vs. Rail Improvements Alternative**

	Existing Conditions <sup>1</sup>	No-Project Alternative <sup>2</sup>	Rail Improvements Alternative	
			Low-Build <sup>2</sup>	High-Build <sup>3</sup>
Projected Travel Time (Hours:Minutes)	2:44	2:36	1:58	1:48
Average Speed (mph)	47	50	63	69

<sup>1</sup> Assumes 7 intermediate station stops

<sup>2</sup> Assumes 8 intermediate station stops

<sup>3</sup> Assumes 9 intermediate station stops

The existing condition provides a travel time of almost 3 hours for intercity passenger rail between LA Union Station and San Diego. This travel time is representative of single track operations and demonstrates the delay that results from the interference between trains caused by having to wait along a siding for the passing of a train in the opposite direction. In the event of incidents, existing segments of single track can account for even more unreliability and delay in the travel times along the corridor, providing for an even slower travel time.

With Intercity Passenger Rail ridership along the corridor projected to top 5 million by the year 2020 as well as the planned expansion of commuter rail services and freight operations, the improvements identified in the No-Project Alternative do little to relieve the capacity and reliability constraints. The lack of significant travel time savings represented in the No-Project Alternative is largely the result of the remaining segments



of single-track present. As stated previously, single track segments create “chokepoints” where trains are delayed in sidings, holding for trains to pass in the opposite direction. These delays are eliminated in both the Low- and High-Build Rail Improvements Alternative as the corridor would be improved to incorporate double-track along its entire length from LA Union Station to San Diego, providing operational benefits for all rail services.

Implementing the projects identified as part of either Rail Improvements Alternative would provide for a fully double-tracked rail corridor that offers to the passenger six specific advantages over the No-Project Alternative:

- 1) Increased Capacity & Average Speed. The proposed corridor improvements will produce improved corridor geometrics, straightening the alignment wherever possible, but most importantly, will eliminate all single track segments, providing greatly increased capacity within the corridor. With these improvements, maximum speeds of 90mph will be possible in urban area (e.g. Los Angeles and San Diego) and 110 to 125mph in more rural areas (e.g. Camp Pendleton). Using the plans and profiles designed for the corridor improvements that incorporate the double-tracking and new geometrics, and track charts where necessary, an operational model was developed which determined the average speed for the Rail Improvements Alternative would increase an average of 16 to 22 miles per hour (mph) ranging from 63 to 69mph, depending on the improvements selected, when compared to existing conditions (47mph), and an average improvement of 13 to 19mph when compared to the No-Project Alternative (50mph). These speeds are an average that incorporates the deceleration and acceleration rates for curves and station areas, and locations where speed restrictions have been removed or may still be present.
- 2) Reduction in Travel Time. With increased speed there are improved travel times. Depending on which Rail Improvements Alternative is selected, passengers could save as many as 45 to 60 minutes on their trip between Los Angeles and San Diego when compared to existing conditions. This is a 28 to 34-percent reduction in travel time. The No-Project Alternative only produces an average of an 8-minute (or a 5-percent) savings in travel time. These times assume local service, which would stop at all stations. The Rail Improvements Alternative would be able to further decrease travel times by also allowing for the potential of skip-stopping/express service along the corridor. For example, express service which made only 3 intermediate stops could further reduce the overall travel times by up to 20 minutes, assuming an average time of 4 minutes per station stop.
- 3) Increased Safety & Reliability. With the increase in capacity provided by double-tracking the length of the corridor, reliability will be greatly improved. Both safety and reliability would further increase in the High-Build Rail Improvements Alternative, as this alternative would grade-separate the length of the corridor, eliminating all remaining at-grade crossings.
- 4) Enhanced Multimodal Opportunities. Slow travel times and restricted reliability often deter people from using public transportation alternatives. With the improvement in reliability and travel times making it easier to reliably connect to

other transit modes, passengers would be provided with additional transportation options.

- 5) Operational Flexibility. Two tracks allow for trains to pass each other easily along all segments of the corridor, eliminating the delay caused by waiting at single-track segments, and allows for operational options such as “skip-stopping”, express trains, and other improved service choices for both Intercity and Commuter rail services. The Rail Improvements Alternative would also provide for rail operational enhancements to be made such as providing for the flexibility necessary to accommodate planned future expansions in Intercity and Commuter rail service frequencies.
- 6) Reduction of Vehicle/Rail Conflicts. The Low-Build Rail Improvements Alternative will significantly reduce the number of at-grade crossings along the corridor, while the High-Build provides for a fully grade-separated corridor. However, both of these improvements provide for significant improvements in:
  - a. *Safety* – Reduces the number of vehicle/rail/pedestrian conflicts at crossings
  - b. *Reliability* – Reduces delays associated with vehicle/rail/pedestrian conflicts for both train and automobiles. Elimination of at-grade crossings reduces the delay of automobile traffic by preventing automobiles from stopping for trains at crossings.
  - c. *Noise* – Eliminates the need for horns at crossings
  - d. *Pollution/Energy* – By reducing the amount of delay for automobiles at grade crossings, the amount of pollution emitted by idling vehicles is significantly reduced.

### **Operations & Maintenance Costs**

Operations & Maintenance (O&M) Costs were calculated for the scenarios that represented the three corridor alternatives (No-Project, Low-Build and High-Build Rail Improvements Alternatives). Total annual O&M costs for operating and maintaining trains ranges from \$58.1 million for the No-Project Alternative and \$47.7 and 45.3 million for the Rail Improvement Alternatives. The total annual O&M costs for operating and maintaining trains decreases for the Rail Improvements Alternative from the No-Project, due to increased operating efficiency (decreased travel times, faster train turn-around times and replacement/upgrading of infrastructure).

## **B. LOW-BUILD VS. HIGH-BUILD ALTERNATIVE**

Though both the Low- and High-Build Rail Improvements Alternative provide the capacity improvements necessary to accommodate the levels of service projected for the LOSSAN corridor, their associated costs and overall operational performances differ. This section provides a clear comparison between the Capital Costs, Operational Performances, and O&M Costs of the Low- and High-Build scenarios.

### **Capital Costs**

Both the Low-Build and High-Build Rail Improvements Alternative include a mix of double-, triple-, and quadruple tracked segments. The derived capital cost estimates for

the Low- and High- Build Rail Improvements Alternatives are directly affected by type of cost elements and the estimation of quantities for the improvement options. Because the High-Build Rail Improvements Alternative incorporates the highest level of extensive infrastructure investment and/or construction complexity, this option also has the highest estimated capital costs associated with the proposed improvements. The range of capital costs between the Low- and High-Build Rail Improvements Alternative is \$3.8 to \$5.4 billion (a difference of forty five percent).

The estimated total capital costs for the Rail Improvements Alternative is summarized in Table 4.0-4 below. Further detail regarding the capital costs is provided in Appendix 4-A.

### **Operational Performance**

Although there are several differences between the Low- and High-Build Rail Improvements Alternative, these variations provide solutions that improve travel time but do not measurably affect capacity (i.e. the number of main tracks to support the train volumes assumed for 2020).

As shown in Table 4.0-5, the overall difference in travel time along the length of the corridor from LA Union Station to San Diego between the Low- and High-Build Rail Improvements Alternative is 10 minutes, assuming the projected corridor traffic for 2020, with the High-Build Rail Improvements Alternative producing an average travel time of 1 hour and 48 minutes compared to 1 hour and 58 minutes with the Low-Build.

Corresponding to the faster travel time shown in Table 4.0-5, and as a result of the improved curve geometrics of the High-Build over the Low-Build Rail Improvements Alternative, the High-Build has an average operating speed that is 6 mph faster over the length of the corridor when compared to the Low-Build, with the High-Build achieving an average operating speed of 69 mph and the Low-Build an average speed of 63 mph.

In addition, both safety and reliability would further be increased in the High-Build Rail Improvements Alternative, as this alternative would grade-separate the length of the corridor, eliminating all remaining at-grade crossings.

The specific improvements identified under the Low- and High-Build Rail Improvements Alternatives would provide varying levels of travel time enhancements to each station segment along the corridor. Several of the individual improvements incorporated into the Rail Improvements Alternative provide significant travel time and reliability enhancements at locations such as San Juan Capistrano, San Clemente, Del Mar, and Miramar Hill (University City). Table 4.0-6 breaks down the travel time savings by station segment to help provide a summary of how each of the individual projects contributes to the overall improvements along the corridor. The Baseline Condition travel times are provided in order to allow of a comparison of travel times between the Rail Improvements Alternative and existing conditions.

**Table 4.0-4  
Capital Cost Summary**

Area / Options	Improvements Considered	Estimated Capital Costs
<b>Downtown San Diego</b>		
(Low-Build)	Double Tracking and Curve Straightening; San Diego River Bridge	\$33 million
(High-Build)	Double Tracking and Curve Straightening; San Diego River Bridge; Trench between Sassafras St and Cedar St (includes partial or full grade separation)	\$310 million
<b>University Towne Centre</b>		
Interstate-5 Freeway Tunnel Option (Low-Build)	Double Tracking and Curve Straightening (including tunnel under Interstate-5 Freeway)	\$440 million
Miramar Hill Tunnel Option (High-Build)	Double Tracking and Curve Straightening (including tunnel under University City/Miramar Hill with new station)	\$370 million
<b>Del Mar</b>		
Camino Del Mar Tunnel #1 Option (Low-Build)	Double Tracking and Curve Straightening (including tunnel under Camino Del Mar; crosses San Dieguito and Los Penasquitos Lagoons)	\$365 million
Penasquitos Lagoon Bypass Tunnel Option (High-Build)	Double Tracking and Curve Straightening (including tunnel along Interstate-5; Penasquitos Lagoon Bypass Option averts San Dieguito and Los Penasquitos Lagoons)	\$560 million
<b>Encinitas</b>		
At-Grade with Grade Separations Option (Low-Build)	Double Tracking and Curve Straightening along existing alignment (including partial grade separation)	\$154 million
Short Trench with Grade Separations Option (High-Build)	Double Tracking and Curve Straightening along existing alignment (including full grade separation)	\$305 million
<b>Carlsbad to Oceanside</b>		
At-Grade Option (Low-Build)	Double Tracking and Curve Straightening along existing alignment (including partial grade separation); crosses San Luis Rey, Buena Vista, Aqua Hedionda, and Batiquitos Lagoons	\$270 million
Trench Option (High-Build)	Double Tracking and Curve Straightening along existing alignment (including full grade separation); crosses San Luis Rey, Buena Vista, Aqua Hedionda, and Batiquitos Lagoons	\$420 million
<b>Camp Pendleton</b>		
(Low- and High-Build)	Double Tracking along existing alignment; crosses Santa Margarita River	\$39 million
<b>Dana Point/San Clemente</b>		
Short Tunnel Interstate-5 Freeway Option (Low-Build)	Dana Point Curve Straightening; San Clemente – Short Tunnel; Double Tracking (crosses San Mateo and San Onofre Creeks)	\$895 million
Long Split (Two Segment) Tunnel with Station Option (High-Build)	San Clemente – Long Split Two Segment Tunnel with Station Construction; Double Tracking (crosses San Mateo and San Onofre Creeks)	\$1.2 billion
<b>San Juan Capistrano</b>		
Trabuco Creek Cut-And-Cover Tunnel (Covered Trench) Option (Low-Build)	Double Tracking and Curve Straightening (including Covered Trench between Trabuco Creek and Avenida Aeropuerto (trench goes under San Juan Creek)	\$200 million
Interstate-5 Tunnel Option (High-Build)	Double Tracking and Curve Straightening (including Tunnel beneath I-5 between Hwy 73 and Avenida Aeropuerto (tunnel goes under Trabuco Creek and San Juan Creek)	\$560 million

**Table 4.0-4  
Capital Cost Summary (continued)**

Area / Options	Improvements Considered	Estimated Capital Costs
<b>San Juan Capistrano to Irvine</b>		
	No Major Improvements Planned	\$0
<b>Irvine to Fullerton</b>		
At-Grade Option (Low-Build)	Curve Straightening (including partial grade separation)	\$720 million
Covered Trench Option (High-Build)	Double Tracking and Curve Straightening (including Covered Trench in Orange and Santa Ana) (including full grade separation)	\$860 million
<b>LA Union Station to Fullerton Station (4<sup>th</sup> Main Track)</b>		
(Low- and High-Build)	Addition of Fourth Main Track (including full grade separation)	\$730 million
<b>Total Cost for LOSSAN Corridor Improvements</b>		
<b>Low-Build Scenario</b>		<b>\$3.8 billion</b>
<b>High-Build Scenario</b>		<b>\$5.4 billion</b>

**Table 4.0-5  
Operational Performance Comparison  
Low-Build vs. High-Build Alternatives**

	Low-Build	High-Build
Projected Travel Time (Hours:Minutes)	1:58	1:48
Average Speed (mph)	63	69

**Table 4.0-6  
Intercity Rail Station Segment Travel Time Comparison  
(Hours:Minutes)**

Rail Segment	Baseline Condition	No-Project Alternative	Rail Improvements Alternative	
			Low	High
Los Angeles to Fullerton	0:37	0:34	0:29	0:26
Fullerton to Anaheim	0:09	0:07	0:06	0:06
Anaheim to Santa Ana	0:10	0:09	0:06	0:06
Santa Ana to Irvine	0:12	0:11	0:08	0:08
Irvine to San Juan Capistrano	0:14	0:13	0:11	0:11
San Juan Capistrano to San Clemente	0:33*	0:09	0:07	0:05
San Clemente to Oceanside		0:24	0:17	0:16
Oceanside to Solana Beach	0:16	0:15	0:10	0:12
Solana Beach to San Diego	0:33	0:34	0:24	0:18
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2:44</b>	<b>2:36</b>	<b>1:58</b>	<b>1:48</b>

**Notes:**

\* San Clemente station is not included in the Baseline Condition.

\*\* For the High-Build Rail Improvements Alternative, the travel time break is at the UTC station.

### **Operations and Maintenance Costs**

Table 4.0-7 summarizes the estimated incremental annual O&M costs for the improved LOSSAN corridor. As previously noted, O&M costs were calculated for the scenarios that represented the three corridor alternatives (No-Project, Low-Build and High-Build Rail Improvements Alternative).

Due to operating efficiencies, as stated previously, there is an inverse relationship between the marginal O&M costs for operating and maintaining the trains and the level of improvements. Conversely, in regards to O&M costs for maintenance-of-ways, there is a direct relationship between the level of improvements for track alignment options and the cost, where the highest Rail Improvements Alternative has the highest cost for maintenance-of-ways.

The incremental O&M cost for the Low-Build Rail Improvements Alternative is 17.9% lower than the No-Project, and 5.0% higher than the High-Build Rail Improvements Alternative. The incremental O&M cost of the High-Build Rail Improvements Alternative is 22.0% lower than the No-Project.

**Table 4.0-7  
Annual Costs of Operating and Maintaining an  
Improved Conventional Rail Infrastructure**

<b>Item<sup>1,2</sup></b>	<b>No-Project</b>	<b>Low-Build</b>	<b>High-Build</b>
Annual Cost for Operating and Maintenance of Train (millions 2003\$)	\$45,880,272.82	\$35,292,517.55	\$31,763,265.80
Annual Cost for Maintenance of Ways (millions 2003\$)	\$12,240,107.10	\$12,428,863.20	\$13,551,720.00
Total Annual O&M Costs (millions 2003\$)	\$58,120,379.92	\$47,721,380.75	\$45,314,985.80

### **4.0.5 Consequences for LOSSAN Corridor without Improvements**

As has been presented throughout this chapter, conventional rail improvements to the LOSSAN rail corridor are necessary in order to meet current and future transportation demands.

The data presented in this chapter clearly shows that without these improvements, increasing costs and capacity constraints will continue to hamper existing services, as well as make problematic the expansion of new service to meet increased travel demand. The known and potential cost and operational impacts include:

- Higher maintenance costs due to deferred replacement of timber bridges, as well as bluff stabilization along the corridor.
- Higher operational costs associated with idling trains and reduced efficiency
- Increased deaths, injuries, insurance and equipment costs due to at-grade collisions



- Continuing or worsening air quality due to rail traffic delays at road crossings and lack of track capacity for goods movement coming from the Ports of LA and Long Beach
- Worsening on-time performance for commuter and intercity passenger trains and the inability to expand the number of passenger trains.

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## Chapter 5

### RAIL IMPROVEMENT ALIGNMENT OPTIONS COMPARISON

#### 5.1 INTRODUCTION

##### 5.1.1 Purpose and Content of this Chapter

The purpose of this chapter is to summarize and compare the physical and operational characteristics and potential environmental consequences associated with the Rail Improvements alignment and station options. The comparison focuses on subject areas in which there are relative differences among the potential impacts of the various alignment options in each segment of the LOSSAN Corridor. This chapter summarizes potential environmental consequences for each alignment comparison for the environmental resource areas where relative differences were identified. (Refer to Chapter 3, Affected Environment, Environmental Consequences, and Mitigation Strategies, for a comprehensive presentation of potential environmental consequences in each environmental resource area.)

For many of the environmental topics discussed in this chapter, the quantities presented represent areas within which potential impacts might occur. For example, the area of floodplains includes all floodplains within 100 ft (30m) of either side of the centerline of the alignment considered; whereas the right-of-way necessary for the improvements considered is smaller (generally only 25 ft [7.6 m] on either side of the centerline for the Rail Improvements Alternative). Therefore the magnitude of potential impacts reported in this document is considerably larger than the actual impacts that would be expected from the proposed rail improvements.

##### 5.1.2 Organization of this Chapter

The alignment option comparisons are presented in tabular form by segment. The station options are presented individually and compared where multiple options are considered for the same general station area. The alignment and station options are briefly described in the tables and illustrated on the associated maps. For each alignment comparison, the following summary information is presented and compared where relative differences were identified.

- Physical/operational characteristics.
  - Alignment.
  - Length.
  - Capital cost.
  - Travel time.
  - Ridership.
  - Constructability.
  - Operational issues.

- Potential environmental impacts.
  - Transportation and related topics (air quality, noise and vibration, and energy).
  - Human environment (land use and community impacts, aesthetics and visual resources, socioeconomic, utilities and public services, hazardous materials and wastes).
  - Cultural resources (archaeological resources, historical properties) and paleontological resources.
  - Natural environment (geology and seismic hazards, hydrology and water resources, and biological resources and wetlands).
  - Section 4(f) and 6(f) resources (certain types of publicly owned parklands, recreation areas, wildlife/waterfowl refuges, and historical sites).

Comparative data in the tables below are organized into the following rail segments.

- Los Angeles Union Station to Irvine
- Irvine to Oceanside
- Oceanside to San Diego Santa Fe Station

There were numerous alignment and construction options evaluated in the Rail Improvements Alternative. To allow a reasonable comparison of alignment options, a range of potential impacts is represented in the following tables by two or more of many possible route alignment combinations between Union Station and San Diego, using -- the highest level of improvements, and the lowest level of improvements that could occur within each rail segment. The highest level of improvement is based on combining the alignment/construction options within a rail segment that would involve the most extensive infrastructure investment and/or construction complexity. For example, where there is an at-grade option and a trenching option in the same general alignment, the trenching option was used in the highest-level route and the at-grade option was used in the lowest-level route. Where two tunnel options are the only options in one sub-segment, the longer tunnel was included in the highest-level route. In this way, a range of potential impacts could be bracketed to allow a valid comparison of corridor-wide improvement options.

## 5.2 LOS ANGELES UNION STATION TO IRVINE ALIGNMENT OPTIONS

All information presented is for the area from Los Angeles to Irvine. This segment is shown in Figure 5.2-1

	Proposed Rail Improvements Alternative	
	LOSSAN Corridor Highest level of improvement to Irvine	LOSSAN Corridor Lowest level of improvement to Irvine
<b>Alignment Description</b>	This alignment would provide improved service along a fully grade-separated system, with bypass tracks at station locations. Station options considered in this segment include Fullerton Transportation Center, Anaheim Transportation Center, Santa Ana Regional Transportation Center, and Irvine Transportation Center.	This alignment would provide improved service along a partially grade-separated system. Station options considered in this segment include Fullerton Transportation Center, Anaheim Transportation Center, Santa Ana Regional Transportation Center, and Irvine Transportation Center.
<b>Length miles (km)</b>	43.9 mi (70.7 km)	43.9 mi (70.7 km)
<b>Cost (dollars)</b>	\$1.59 billion	\$1.45 billion
<b>Travel Time (min)</b>	38 min	41 min
<b>Ridership</b>	Additional reliability due to full grade-separation will boost ridership.	
<b>Constructability</b>	Within existing rail right-of-way. Would require additional right-of-way and construction of extensive grade separations while maintaining existing service. Would require construction of trenched segments.	Within existing rail right-of-way. Would require additional right-of-way and construction of partially grade-separated system while maintaining existing service.
<b>Operational Issues</b>	Fourth main track between Los Angeles and Fullerton would allow segregation of freight and passenger trains, assuming additional track modifications approaching Fullerton and Los Angeles Union Station (LAUS). Improvements would benefit freight, passenger, and commuter services.	Fourth track between Los Angeles and Fullerton would allow segregation of freight and passenger trains, assuming additional track modifications approaching Fullerton and LAUS. Remaining at-grade crossings would present a challenge for safety and reliability. Improvements would benefit freight, passenger, and commuter services.
<b>Travel Conditions</b>	Infrastructure improvements would provide benefits to existing rail services. The fully grade-separated LOSSAN corridor would improve traffic flow and reduce air pollution at existing rail crossings.	Increased train frequencies at remaining at-grade crossings would have some potentially negative traffic impact. Infrastructure improvements would provide benefits to rail services.
<b>Noise and Vibration:</b> <sup>1</sup> High, medium, and low potential impacts	Medium potential impacts. There would be an increase in noise levels due to increased frequency of trains. There would be a reduction in noise levels due to the elimination of horn noise and gate noise from existing services as a result of the grade separations at some existing grade crossings.	High potential impacts. No reduction of noise at grade crossings due to the lack of a fully grade-separated corridor.

<sup>1</sup> Generally, vibration is not a significant impact. However, sensitive and specific areas, such as historical structures and special habitats, could be affected.

	Proposed Rail Improvements Alternative	
	LOSSAN Corridor Highest level of improvement to Irvine	LOSSAN Corridor Lowest level of improvement to Irvine
<b>Land Use and Planning, Communities and Neighborhoods, Property, and Environmental Justice</b>	Compatible. Environmental Justice: Minority populations are present at points along this alignment option. Community: Low potential impacts. Property: High potential impacts.	Compatible. Environmental Justice: Minority populations are present at points along this alignment option. Community: Low potential impacts. Property: High potential impacts.
<b>Aesthetics and Visual Resources</b> Potential high contrast/impact areas	Low potential impacts. Potential low impacts to high contrast/impact areas.	Low potential impacts. Potential low impacts to high contrast/impact areas.
<b>Hydrology and Water Resources:</b> <sup>2</sup> Potential impacts and associated ac (ha) of floodplains, and linear ft (m) of streams within potential impact study areas	Floodplains: 75 ac (30 ha) Streams: 3,265 linear ft (995 linear m)	Floodplains: 75 ac (30 ha) Streams: 3,265 linear ft (995 linear m)
<b>Biological Resources, Including Wetlands:</b> <sup>3</sup> Linear ft of non-wetland waters (waters), number of special-species (species)	Waters: 20,780 linear ft (6,334 linear m) Special-Status Species: 5  Trains would travel in existing right-of-way within an urban area.	Waters: 20,780 linear ft (6,334 linear m) Special-Status Species: 5  Trains would travel in existing right-of-way within an urban area.
<b>Section 4(f) and 6(f) Resources:</b> <sup>4</sup> Number of resources rated high (potential direct effects)	Resources rated high: 7  Potential impacts would be limited due to the use of existing rail corridors in which few resources are found.	Resources rated high: 7  Potential impacts would be limited due to the use of existing rail corridors in which few resources are found.

<sup>2</sup> The hydrology and water resources study area is defined as 100 ft (30 m) on each side of the alignment centerline.

<sup>3</sup> The biological resources and wetlands study area is defined as 1,000 ft (305 m) for urban areas, 0.25 mi (0.40 km) for undeveloped areas, and 0.5 mi (0.80 km) for sensitive areas on each side of alignment centerline.

<sup>4</sup> The 4(f) and 6(f) resources study area is defined as 900 ft (274m) on each side of the alignment centerline. . Potential high impacts would be those that would occur within 150 ft (43 m) of alignment centerline.



### 5.3 IRVINE TO OCEANSIDE ALIGNMENT OPTIONS

All information presented is for the area from Irvine to Oceanside. This segment is shown in Figures 5.3-1a and 5.3-1b.

	Proposed Rail Improvements Alternative		
	Highest Level Improvements (I-5/LongTunnel/Double-Track)	Highest Level Improvements (Trabuco Creek/Long Tunnel/ Double-Track)	Lowest Level Improvements (Trabuco Creek/Short Tunnel/ Double-Track)
<b>Physical/Operational Characteristics</b>			
<b>Alignment Description</b>	The alignment would bypass San Juan Capistrano via an I-5 tunnel, include the long I-5 tunnel option with station through San Clemente and Dana Point, and complete double-tracking through Camp Pendleton. Station options considered in this segment include San Clemente Amtrak, and Oceanside Transit Center.	The alignment would bypass the existing San Juan Capistrano alignment via Trabuco Creek, include the long tunnel option with station through San Clemente and Dana Point, and complete double-tracking through Camp Pendleton. Station options considered in this segment include San Juan Capistrano Trabuco Creek, San Clemente Amtrak, and Oceanside Transit Center.	The alignment would bypass the existing San Juan Capistrano alignment via Trabuco Creek, include the short tunnel option through San Clemente and Dana Point (including the at-grade curve realignment at Dana Point), and complete double-tracking through Camp Pendleton. Station options considered in this segment include San Juan Capistrano Trabuco Creek, San Clemente Amtrak, and Oceanside Transit Center.
<b>Length in miles (km)</b>	40.8 mi (65.7 km)	41 mi (66 km)	41.4 mi (66.6 km)
<b>Cost (dollars)</b>	\$1.82 billion	\$1.46 billion	\$1.13 billion
<b>Travel Time (min)</b>	26 min	28 min	28 min
<b>Ridership</b>	Alignment would eliminate a station stop at San Juan Capistrano for intercity service (though Metrolink commuter rail service could be retained on this existing line).	Alignment would provide a new San Juan Capistrano station along Trabuco Creek, replacing the existing downtown station.	Alignment would provide a new San Juan Capistrano station along Trabuco Creek.
<b>Constructability</b>	This alternative would require tunneling (approximately 12.7 mi [20.4 km]).	This alternative would require tunneling (approximately 8.8 mi [14.2 km]) and could cross some environmentally sensitive habitats.	This alternative would require tunneling (approximately 5.6 mi [9.0 km]) and cross some environmentally sensitive habitats.
<b>Operational Issues</b>	Beneficial. Would provide safer and more reliable operating conditions by providing full grade separations and removing tracks from the beach.		Beneficial. Would provide safer and more reliable operating conditions by grade separating much of the alignment, but could retain Dana Point curve.

	<b>Proposed Rail Improvements Alternative</b>		
	<b>Highest Level Improvements (I-5/LongTunnel/Double-Track)</b>	<b>Highest Level Improvements (Trabuco Creek/Long Tunnel/ Double-Track)</b>	<b>Lowest Level Improvements (Trabuco Creek/Short Tunnel/ Double-Track)</b>
<b>Travel Conditions</b>	This alignment would provide the most improvement in travel times, allowing for double tracking of the entire segment. Consequences of this alignment would be the elimination of a station stop in San Juan Capistrano and the addition of a new station in San Clemente. The fully grade-separated corridor would improve traffic flow and reduce air pollution at existing rail crossings.	This alignment would provide improved travel times, allowing for double tracking of the entire segment. San Juan Capistrano would be served by a new station located along Trabuco Creek and a new station located in San Clemente. The fully grade-separated corridor would improve traffic flow and reduce air pollution at existing rail crossings.	This alignment would provide improved travel times, allowing for double tracking of most of the segment while keeping some of the scenic coastal route. San Juan Capistrano would be served by a new station located along Trabuco Creek, and the San Clemente Metrolink and Amtrak stations would be located at a single station along Avenida Pico. There would be ongoing speed restrictions through Capistrano Beach and potentially the Dana Point curve.
<b>Potential Environmental Impacts</b>			
<b>Noise and Vibration:</b> <sup>5</sup> High, medium, and low potential impacts	Low potential impacts.  Minimal potential noise/vibration impacts as a result of extensive tunneling under existing transportation corridors. Would eliminate potential impact along coast by realigning the right-of-way. Would realign corridor away from historical buildings in San Juan Capistrano.		Low potential impacts.  Minimal potential noise/vibration impacts as a result of extensive tunneling under existing transportation corridors, removing right-of-way from majority of coastal alignment. Some potential impact may still occur along the coast in Capistrano Beach. Would realign corridor away from historical buildings in San Juan Capistrano.
<b>Land Use and Planning, Communities and Neighborhoods, Property, and Environmental Justice</b>	Compatible. Environmental Justice: Minority populations are present at points along this alignment option. Community: Low potential impacts. Property: Low potential impacts.  I-5 would avoid historical resources, and tracks would be removed from existing beach alignment.	Some incompatibility, but Trabuco Creek avoids historical resources. Environmental Justice: Minority populations are present at points along this alignment option. Community: Low potential impacts. Property: Medium potential impacts.  Tracks would be removed from existing beach alignment.	Some incompatibility. Environmental Justice: Minority populations are present at points along this alignment option. Community: Low potential impacts. Property: Medium potential impacts.  Potential impacts from increased frequencies of trains along Capistrano Beach.

<sup>5</sup> Generally, vibration is not a significant impact. However, sensitive and specific areas, such as historical structures and special habitats, could be affected.

	Proposed Rail Improvements Alternative		
	Highest Level Improvements (I-5/LongTunnel/Double-Track)	Highest Level Improvements (Trabuco Creek/Long Tunnel/ Double-Track)	Lowest Level Improvements (Trabuco Creek/Short Tunnel/ Double-Track)
<b>Aesthetics and Visual Resources:</b> Potential high contrast/impact areas	Low potential impacts.  Potential beneficial impact for communities. Would remove tracks from beach alignment.	Low potential impacts.  Potential beneficial impact for communities. Medium potential impact on residential along Trabuco Creek. Would remove tracks from beach alignment.	Low potential impacts.  Potential beneficial impact for communities. Medium impact on residential along Trabuco Creek and Capistrano Beach. Would remove tracks from part of beach alignment.
<b>Hydrology and Water Resources:</b> <sup>6</sup> Potential impacts and associated ac (ha) of floodplains, and linear ft (m) of streams within potential impact study areas	Floodplains: 25 ac (10 ha) Streams: 2,475 linear ft (linear 754 m)	Floodplains: 5 ac (2 ha) Streams: 3,625 linear ft (linear 1,105 m)	Floodplains: 35 ac (14 ha) Streams: 4,020 linear ft (linear 1,225)
<b>Biological Resources, Including Wetlands:</b> <sup>7</sup> Ac (ha) of wetlands, linear ft (m) of non-wetland waters (waters), and number of special-status species (species).	Wetlands: 41 ac (17 ha) Waters: 6,105 linear ft (1,861 linear m) Special-Status Species: 14  Tunneling would limit the potential impacts. Would eliminate potential coastal impacts by removing tracks from beach.	Wetlands: 35 ac (14 ha) Waters: 11,425 linear ft (3,483 linear m) Special-Status Species: 14  Tunneling would limit the potential impacts. Would eliminate potential coastal impacts by removing tracks from beach.	Wetlands: 9 ac (4 ha) Waters: 17,325 linear ft (5,281 linear m) Special-Status Species: 14  Tunneling would limit the potential impacts.
<b>Section 4(f) and 6(f) Resources:</b> <sup>8</sup> Number of resources rated high (potential direct effects)	Resources rated high: 8	Resources rated high: 8	Resources rated high: 9  Continued operation along Doheny State Beach.

<sup>6</sup> The hydrology and water resources study area is defined as 100 ft (30 m) on each side of the alignment centerline.

<sup>7</sup> The biological resources and wetlands study area is defined as 1,000 ft (305 m) for urban areas, 0.25 mi (0.40 km) for undeveloped areas, and 0.5 mi (0.80 km) for sensitive areas on each side of alignment centerline.

<sup>8</sup> The 4(f) and 6(f) resources study area is defined as 900 ft (274m) on each side of the alignment centerline. Potential high impacts would be those that would occur within 150 ft (43 m) of alignment centerline.

## 5.4 OCEANSIDE TO SAN DIEGO ALIGNMENT OPTIONS

All information presented is for the area from Oceanside to San Diego. This segment is shown in Figures 5.4-1a and 5.4-1b.

	Proposed Rail Improvements Alternative				
	Highest Level Improvements (Short Trench/Peñasquitos Bypass/I-5 Tunnel/Grade Sep.)	Highest Level Improvements (Short Trench/Peñasquitos Bypass/UTC Tunnel/Grade Sep.)	Highest Level Improvements (Short Trench/Camino del Mar & UTC Tunnels/Grade Sep.)	Lowest Level Improvements (At Grade/ Camino del Mar & UTC Tunnels/Grade Sep.)	Lowest Level Improvements (At Grade/Camino del Mar & UTC Tunnels/At Grade)
<b>Physical/Operational Characteristics</b>					
<b>Alignment Description</b>	Would include short trench and cover through downtown Carlsbad and downtown Encinitas, bypass Peñasquitos Lagoon and Del Mar with tunnel under I-5, tunnel under I-5 to shorten alignment by bypassing Miramar Curve, and provide full-grade separation through San Diego. Station options considered in this segment include Solana Beach Transit Center and San Diego Downtown Santa Fe Depot.	Would include short trench and cover through downtown Carlsbad and downtown Encinitas, bypass Peñasquitos Lagoon and Del Mar with tunnel under I-5, tunnel under UTC, and provide full grade separation through San Diego. Station options considered in this segment include Solana Beach Transit Center, UTC, and San Diego Downtown Santa Fe Depot.	Would include short trench and cover through Carlsbad and Encinitas, tunnel under Camino del Mar and UTC, and provide full grade separation through San Diego. Station options considered in this segment include Solana Beach Transit Center, UTC, and San Diego Downtown Santa Fe Depot.	Would be at grade through Carlsbad and Encinitas with partial-grade separation, tunnel under Camino del Mar and UTC, and provide full grade separation through San Diego. Station options considered in this segment include Solana Beach Transit Center, UTC, and San Diego Downtown Santa Fe Depot.	Would be at grade through Carlsbad and Encinitas, tunnel under Camino del Mar and UTC, and be at grade through San Diego. Station options considered in this segment include Solana Beach Transit Center, UTC, and San Diego Downtown Santa Fe Depot.
<b>Length in miles (km)</b>	36.4 mi (58.6 km)	37.2 mi (59.9 km)	37.2 mi (59.9 km)	37.2 mi (59.9 km)	37.2 mi (59.9 km)
<b>Cost (dollars)</b>	\$2.04 billion	\$1.96 billion	\$1.77 billion	\$1.47 billion	\$1.19 billion
<b>Travel Time (min)</b>	25 min	27 min	29 min	29 min	29 min
<b>Ridership</b>		Alignment would provide a new potential underground UTC station.	Alignment would provide a new potential underground UTC station.	Alignment would provide a new potential underground UTC station.	Alignment would provide a new potential underground UTC station.

	Proposed Rail Improvements Alternative				
	Highest Level Improvements (Short Trench/ Peñasquitos Bypass/I-5 Tunnel/Grade Sep.)	Highest Level Improvements (Short Trench/ Peñasquitos Bypass/UTC Tunnel/ Grade Sep.)	Highest Level Improvements (Short Trench/Camino del Mar & UTC Tunnels/ Grade Sep.)	Lowest Level Improvements (At Grade/ Camino del Mar & UTC Tunnels/Grade Sep.)	Lowest Level Improvements (At Grade/Camino del Mar & UTC Tunnels/ At Grade)
<b>Constructability</b>	Requires considerable earth moving from trenching and tunneling (approximately 12.2 mi [19.6 km]). Avoids tunneling under main commercial street in Del Mar.	Requires considerable earth moving from trenching and tunneling (approximately 10.5 mi [16.9 km]). Avoids tunneling under main commercial street in Del Mar.	Requires considerable earth moving from trenching and tunneling (approximately 7.7 mi [12.4 km]).	Requires some earth moving from trenching and tunneling (approximately 6.2 mi [10.0 km]).	Requires some earth moving from trenching and tunneling (approximately 6.2 mi [10.0 km]).
<b>Operational Issues</b>	Beneficial. Reduces operational issues in Del Mar by eliminating bluff alignment. Overall speeds greatly improved by bypassing Soledad grade through Miramar Curve and grade separation of crossings. Does not provide station at UTC.	Beneficial. Reduces operational issues in Del Mar by eliminating bluff alignment. Speeds improved by bypassing Soledad grade through Miramar Curve and grade separation of crossings.	Beneficial. Eliminates operational issues in Del Mar by eliminating bluff alignment and providing the straightest, flattest alignment through Del Mar. Speeds improved by bypassing Soledad grade through Miramar Curve and grade separation of crossings.	Beneficial. Eliminates operational issues in Del Mar by eliminating bluff alignment and providing the straightest, flattest alignment through Del Mar. Speeds improved by bypassing Soledad grade through Miramar Curve and grade separation of crossings in San Diego. At-grade issues remain in Carlsbad and Encinitas.	Somewhat beneficial. Eliminates operational issues in Del Mar by eliminating bluff alignment and providing the straightest, flattest alignment through Del Mar. Ongoing reliability issues due to remaining grade crossings.

	Proposed Rail Improvements Alternative				
	Highest Level Improvements (Short Trench/ Peñasquitos Bypass/I-5 Tunnel/Grade Sep.)	Highest Level Improvements (Short Trench/ Peñasquitos Bypass/UTC Tunnel/ Grade Sep.)	Highest Level Improvements (Short Trench/Camino del Mar & UTC Tunnels/ Grade Sep.)	Lowest Level Improvements (At Grade/ Camino del Mar & UTC Tunnels/Grade Sep.)	Lowest Level Improvements (At Grade/Camino del Mar & UTC Tunnels/ At Grade)
<b>Potential Environmental Impacts</b>					
<b>Travel Conditions</b>	Would improve travel times, allowing for double tracking of the entire segment and grade separations through north San Diego County and San Diego. The fully grade-separated corridor would improve traffic flow and reduce air pollution at existing rail crossings.	Would improve travel times, allowing for double tracking of entire segment and grade separations through north San Diego County and San Diego. This option would also provide for a potential station at UTC, serving the businesses and residents of UTC/Sorrento Valley and students at UC-San Diego. The fully grade-separated corridor would improve traffic flow and reduce air pollution at existing rail crossings.		Would considerably improve travel times, allowing for double-tracking of the entire segment and grade separations through San Diego. This option would also provide for a potential station at UTC, serving the businesses and residents of UTC/Sorrento Valley and students at UC San Diego.	Would considerably improve travel times, allowing for double-tracking of the entire segment and partial grade separations through San Diego. This option would also provide for a potential station at UTC, serving the businesses and residents of UTC/Sorrento Valley and students at UC San Diego.
<b>Noise and Vibration:</b> <sup>9</sup> High, medium, and low potential impacts	Medium potential impacts.  Some noise/vibration would potentially continue to impact San Dieguito Lagoon and some residential areas. Could introduce new potential impacts along southern edge of San Dieguito Lagoon.		Low potential impacts.  Some noise/vibration would potentially continue to impact lagoon areas.	Low potential impacts.  Some noise/vibration would potentially continue to impact lagoons and some residential areas due to at-grade segments through Encinitas and Carlsbad.	Low potential impacts.  Noise/vibration would potentially continue to impact lagoons and some residential areas due to at-grade segments through Encinitas, Carlsbad, and San Diego.

<sup>9</sup> Generally, vibration is not a significant impact. However, sensitive and specific areas, such as historical structures and special habitats, could be affected.



	Proposed Rail Improvements Alternative				
	Highest Level Improvements (Short Trench/ Peñasquitos Bypass/I-5 Tunnel/Grade Sep.)	Highest Level Improvements (Short Trench/ Peñasquitos Bypass/UTC Tunnel/ Grade Sep.)	Highest Level Improvements (Short Trench/Camino del Mar & UTC Tunnels/ Grade Sep.)	Lowest Level Improvements (At Grade/ Camino del Mar & UTC Tunnels/Grade Sep.)	Lowest Level Improvements (At Grade/Camino del Mar & UTC Tunnels/ At Grade)
<b>Land Use and Planning, Communities and Neighborhoods, Property, and Environmental Justice</b>	Some incompatibility. Environmental Justice: Low potential impacts. Community: Low potential impacts. Property: Low potential impacts.	Some incompatibility. Environmental Justice: Low potential impacts. Community: Low potential impacts. Property: Low potential impacts.	Some incompatibility. Environmental Justice: Low potential impacts. Community: Low potential impacts. Property: Low potential impacts.	Some incompatibility. Environmental Justice: Low potential impacts. Community: Low potential impacts. Property: Low potential impacts.	Some incompatibility. Environmental Justice: Low potential impacts. Community: Low potential impacts. Property: Low potential impacts.
<b>Aesthetics and Visual Resources:</b> Potential high contrast/impact areas	Medium potential impacts.  Medium potential impacts on communities due to elevated rail structure along southern edge of San Dieguito Lagoon.	Medium potential impacts.  Medium potential impacts on communities due to elevated rail structure along southern edge of San Dieguito Lagoon.	Low potential impacts.  Beneficial potential impact on communities.	Low potential impacts.  Low potential impact on communities.	Low potential impacts.  Low potential impact on communities.
<b>Hydrology and Water Resources:</b> <sup>10</sup> Potential impacts and associated ac (ha) of floodplains, and linear ft (m) of streams within potential impact study areas	Floodplains: 120 ac (49 ha) Streams: 6,230 linear ft (1,899 linear m)	Floodplains: 100 ac (40 ha) Streams: 6,365 linear ft (1,940 linear m)	Floodplains: 140 ac (57 ha) Streams: 6,155 linear ft (1,876 linear m)	Floodplains: 140 ac (57 ha) Streams: 6,155 linear ft (1,876 linear m)	Floodplains: 140 ac (57 ha) Streams: 6,155 linear ft (1,876 linear m)

<sup>10</sup> The hydrology and water resources study area is defined as 100 ft (30 m) on each side of the alignment centerline.

	Proposed Rail Improvements Alternative				
	Highest Level Improvements (Short Trench/Peñasquitos Bypass/I-5 Tunnel/Grade Sep.)	Highest Level Improvements (Short Trench/Peñasquitos Bypass/UTC Tunnel/Grade Sep.)	Highest Level Improvements (Short Trench/Camino del Mar & UTC Tunnels/Grade Sep.)	Lowest Level Improvements (At Grade/ Camino del Mar & UTC Tunnels/Grade Sep.)	Lowest Level Improvements (At Grade/Camino del Mar & UTC Tunnels/At Grade)
<b>Biological Resources Including Wetlands:</b> <sup>11</sup> Ac (ha) of wetlands, linear ft (m) of non-wetland waters (waters), and number of special-status species (species)	Wetlands: 881 ac (357 ha) Waters: 56,437 linear ft (17,202 linear m) Special-Status Species: 37  Would improve tidal flow within coastal lagoons by replacing structures across lagoons to eliminate or reduce fill. Would bypass Peñasquitos Lagoon and remove existing fill along it, but could introduce new potential impacts along southern edge of San Dieguito Lagoon because would pass edge of lagoon.	Wetlands: 874 ac (354 ha) Waters: 53,962 linear ft (16,448 linear m) Special-Status Species: 37  Would improve tidal flow within coastal lagoons by replacing structures across lagoons to eliminate or reduce fill. Would bypass Peñasquitos Lagoon and remove existing fill along it, but could introduce new potential impacts along southern edge of San Dieguito Lagoon because would pass edge of lagoon.	Wetlands: 907 ac (367 ha) Waters: 46,750 linear ft (14,249 linear m) Special-Status Species: 37  Would improve tidal flow within coastal lagoons by replacing structures across lagoons to eliminate or reduce fill.	Wetlands: 892 ac (361 ha) Waters: 45,990 linear ft (14,018 linear m) Special-Status Species: 37  Would improve tidal flow within coastal lagoons by replacing structures across lagoons to eliminate or reduce fill.	Wetlands: 892 ac (361 ha) Waters: 45,990 linear ft (14,018 linear m) Special-Status Species: 37  Would improve tidal flow within coastal lagoons by replacing structures across lagoons to eliminate or reduce fill.

<sup>11</sup> The biological resources and wetlands study area is defined as 1,000 ft (305 m) for urban areas, 0.25 mi (0.40 km) for undeveloped areas, and 0.5 mi (0.80 km) for sensitive areas on each side of alignment centerline.

	Proposed Rail Improvements Alternative				
	Highest Level Improvements (Short Trench/ Peñasquitos Bypass/I-5 Tunnel/Grade Sep.)	Highest Level Improvements (Short Trench/ Peñasquitos Bypass/UTC Tunnel/ Grade Sep.)	Highest Level Improvements (Short Trench/Camino del Mar & UTC Tunnels/ Grade Sep.)	Lowest Level Improvements (At Grade/ Camino del Mar & UTC Tunnels/Grade Sep.)	Lowest Level Improvements (At Grade/Camino del Mar & UTC Tunnels/ At Grade)
<b>Section 4(f) and 6(f) Resources:</b> <sup>12</sup> Number of resources rated high (potential direct effects)	Resources rated high: 14  Potential impacts on several state beaches would be limited due to use of existing rail corridors.	Resources rated high: 14  Potential impacts on several state beaches would be limited due to use of existing rail corridors.	Resources rated high: 15  Potential impacts on several state beaches would be limited due to use of existing rail corridors.	Resources rated high: 15  Potential impacts on several state beaches would be limited due to use of existing rail corridors.	Resources rated high: 15  Potential impacts on several state beaches would be limited due to use of existing rail corridors.

<sup>12</sup> The 4(f) and 6(f) resources study area is defined as 900 ft (274m) on each side of the alignment centerline. Potential high impacts would be those that would occur within 150 ft (43 m) of alignment centerline.

## 5.5 LOS ANGELES TO SAN DIEGO STATION OPTIONS

Station Name (Alignment)	Discussion
<b>North &amp; Central Orange County</b>	
<b>Fullerton Amtrak Station</b>	The Fullerton Amtrak Station would continue to serve improved Amtrak Pacific Surfliner and transcontinental trains. The station in Fullerton is located within a minority population and would have low potential impacts on biological resources, visual resources, cultural and paleontological resources, public utilities, and Section 4(f) and 6(f) lands; and high potential impacts on hydrology and water quality as a result of the high potential for erosion.
<b>Anaheim Transportation Center</b>	The Anaheim Transportation Center is an existing transit hub with high connectivity for central Orange County. The station is a bus transit hub and serves existing Amtrak and Metrolink Commuter Rail services. The station in Anaheim would have low potential impacts on biological resources, visual resources, cultural and paleontological resource, public utilities, and Section 4(f) and 6(f) lands; and moderate potential impacts on hydrology and water quality (affecting 15 ac [6 ha] of floodplain). The site is located within a minority population.
<b>Santa Ana Amtrak Station</b>	The Santa Ana Amtrak Station would provide service to an improved Pacific Surfliner, Metrolink Commuter, and proposed CenterLine LRT system currently under design. The station in Santa Ana would have low potential impacts on biological resources, visual resources, cultural (specifically historical structures) and paleontological resources, hydrology and water quality, public utilities, and Section 4(f) and 6(f) lands. The site is located within a minority population.
<b>Southern Orange County</b>	
<b>Irvine Transportation Center</b>	The master site plan for the Irvine Transportation Center indicates that this station area will develop into a transit-oriented environment serving as a station stop for improved Pacific Surfliner service and Metrolink Commuter service. The Irvine Transportation Center is an existing transit hub for bus routes with high connectivity for southern Orange County. The station in Irvine would have low potential impacts on biological resources, visual resources, cultural and paleontological resources, public utilities, hydrology and water quality (affecting 5 ac [2 ha] of floodplain), and Section 4(f) and 6(f) lands at the former El Toro Marine Corps Air Station. The site is located within a minority population.
<b>San Juan Capistrano</b>	Depending on the alignment chosen through San Juan Capistrano, the San Juan Capistrano station would either continue to serve improved Amtrak Pacific Surfliner and Metrolink Commuter trains or would be eliminated as San Juan Capistrano would be bypassed. The station in San Juan Capistrano would have low potential impacts on biological resources, visual resources, hydrology and water quality, public utilities, and Section 4(f) and 6(f) lands. It is located within a minority population. It would have high potential impacts on paleontological resources (formations with high fossil sensitivity) and on cultural resources (six known archeological sites).
<b>Trabuco Creek</b>	Depending on the alignment chosen through San Juan Capistrano, a new station may be constructed along the Trabuco Creek alignment. This station would be located in a trench adjacent to Trabuco Creek, west of the existing Amtrak station. Due to its proximity to the existing downtown San Juan Capistrano Amtrak station, many of the potential environmental impacts would be similar. Potential biological and hydrological impacts may result due to the location of the station adjacent to Trabuco Creek.

Station Name (Alignment)	Discussion
<b>San Clemente Amtrak</b>	Two potential station locations are being considered along the alignment options for the LOSSAN corridor options. Along the short tunnel option, a station is being considered adjacent to Avenida Pico, just north of the existing Metrolink station. The second station location would be along the I-5 tunnel option, where the proposed alignment crosses Avenida Pico, just north of I-5. These stations would replace the existing Amtrak and Metrolink stations, allowing for both the Surfliner and Metrolink to continue to serve San Clemente along the potential new railroad alignments. Station sites in San Clemente would have low potential impacts on biological resources, visual resources (trenched stations), public utilities, and Section 4(f) and 6(f) lands and moderate potential impacts on geology (difficulty in excavations), hydrology and water quality (affecting 5 ac [2 ha] of floodplain), and cultural resources (specifically historical structures).
<b>San Diego County</b>	
<b>Oceanside Transit Center</b>	The Oceanside Transit Center is an existing transit hub with high connectivity for northern San Diego County. The station is a bus transit hub and serves existing Amtrak service and both Coaster and Metrolink Commuter Rail services. The station in Oceanside would have low potential impacts on public utilities, Section 4(f) and 6(f) lands, and visual resources; and moderate potential impacts on biological resources (affecting wildlife movement corridors, threatened and endangered species, and species of special concern), wetlands and non-wetland waters, hydrology and water quality (potential for erosion), and cultural resources (specifically historical structures).
<b>Solana Beach Amtrak Station</b>	Solana Beach Amtrak station is an existing transit hub with high connectivity for northern and central San Diego County. The station is a bus transit hub and serves existing Amtrak and Coaster Commuter Rail services.. The station in Solana Beach would have low potential impacts on visual resources, public utilities, and Section 4(f) and 6(f) lands; and moderate potential impacts on biological resources (threatened and endangered species and species of special concern), wetlands and non-wetland waters, hydrology and water quality (potential for erosion), and cultural resources (specifically historical structures).
<b>University Towne Centre</b>	The University Towne Centre (UTC) station site would be a deep-bore station, and the location would depend on the design option to tunnel under UTC to bypass the majority of the existing Sorrento Valley and Rose Canyon rail alignment. UTC is a densely developed portion of San Diego. The station would also be served by the Coaster commuter rail service and could have a direct connection to the regional LRT service. The station would have low potential impacts on biological resources, visual resources, public utilities, and cultural resources; and moderate potential impacts on geology (seismic hazards and difficult excavations), hydrology and water quality (erosion potential), and Section 4(f) and 6(f) lands at Mandell Weiss Eastgate Park.
<b>San Diego Downtown–Santa Fe Depot</b>	The Santa Fe Depot is an existing transit hub in the heart of downtown San Diego with high connectivity for coastal San Diego County. The station is a bus transit hub for several transit services and serves existing Amtrak and Coaster Commuter Rail operations. It is a major transfer station for San Diego's trolley network. The station would have low potential impacts on visual resources, hydrology and water quality, and Section 4(f) and 6(f) lands; and moderate potential impacts on biological resources (threatened and endangered species, species of special concern, and non-wetland waters), geology (seismic hazards and difficulty in excavations), public utilities (electrical facilities), and cultural resources (specifically historic structures).

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## Chapter 6

# UNAVOIDABLE ADVERSE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

This chapter of the Program EIR/EIS describes any potentially significant environmental effects that may not be avoidable if the proposed Rail Improvements Alternative is selected for implementation, as required by CEQA, and any unavoidable adverse impacts of the alternatives, as required by NEPA. This chapter also describes any significant irreversible or irretrievable commitments of resources or foreclosures of future options that would result from implementation of the proposed Rail Improvements Alternative or the No-Project Alternative<sup>1</sup>.

This Program EIR/EIS represents the first conceptual planning stage of a tiered environmental evaluation that analyzes a broad range of alternatives and alignment options. Most potentially significant impacts that have been described in previous sections of this document can be avoided or minimized by selecting an alignment option that avoids or minimizes impacts on environmental resources through refinement to the design or specific location of the alignment or station improvements or through incorporation of mitigation measures. For example, some potentially significant impacts on sensitive habitat or wetlands would occur in areas where alignment options are available that would avoid or minimize the impact, such as tunneling or designing the alignment to avoid the sensitive area. In addition, potential noise impacts would occur in residential areas along the alignment corridors where significant noise levels could be reduced to less than significant with implementation of mitigation measures such as noise walls between the train track and the residential receptors. However, there are some unavoidable potentially significant impacts that could occur as a result of implementation of the alternatives under consideration. Those impacts are discussed below.

## 6.1 UNAVOIDABLE POTENTIALLY SIGNIFICANT IMPACTS

### 6.1.1 Air Quality and Energy Use

Based on current locomotive and fuel standards, the Rail Improvements Alternative has the potential to exceed significance thresholds in the study area for NO<sub>x</sub> and possibly other pollutants, and to violate or contribute to violations of the NAAQS. Continued improvements in air pollution controls for locomotives, along with the anticipated Tier 3 standards (potentially finalized by 2008 and implemented thereafter), will result in continued reductions of pollutant emissions per mile of locomotive travel. In addition, as older locomotives are replaced with new ones, additional reductions will occur. Mitigation measures, along with new technologies and locomotive emission standards, are expected to substantially reduce potential air quality impacts of the Rail Improvements Alternative in the future. However, until project-level impact assessments and conformity determinations are completed, it cannot be said with certainty that impacts would be less than significant.

The projected 60% increase in train traffic between now and 2020 in the LOSSAN corridor under the No-Project Alternative would increase the emission burdens in the study area substantially (15% for NO<sub>x</sub>, 21% for PM, and as much as 64% for CO and CO<sub>2</sub>). These increases are projected as part of programmed and conforming transportation plans.

<sup>1</sup> As described in Chapter 3, potential impacts of the No-Project Alternative in this document are those impacts beyond those identified in separate environmental documents prepared for specific, programmed highway and rail projects included in the No-Project Alternative (defined in Chapter 2).

Energy consumption from the number of locomotives traveling in the LOSSAN corridor would be approximately 17% higher under the Rail Improvements Alternative than under the No-Project Alternative by 2020. This would result in an annual operational (direct) energy use in 2020 of 371,929 barrels of oil, or nearly 55,000 barrels per year above No-Project conditions.

Construction of rail improvements would consume on the order of 14,066 billion Btus. This, along with energy consumed by secondary facilities supporting project construction, would potentially represent a significant, unavoidable use of nonrenewable resources. The No-Project Alternative would not result in any construction-related energy consumption.

### 6.1.2 Biological and Wetlands Resources, Hydrology and Water Resources, Land Use, Section 4(f) and 6(f) Resources, Cultural and Paleontological Resources, Visual Resources, Noise, and Geology and Soils

The Rail Improvements Alternative would commit the use of land and natural resources to an expanded or relocated rail right-of-way. Some potentially significant unavoidable impacts on biological resources (habitat for threatened and endangered species, and wetlands) may occur where the land required for right-of-way for rail expansion contains wetlands or wildlife habitat for special-status species. Temporary impacts during construction could also be potentially significant, especially in areas of sensitive lagoon habitat. Similarly, potential unavoidable impacts on hydrology and water resources in the lagoon areas, although there is also the potential for improvements and beneficial impacts on lagoon hydrology if existing fill is reduced and new structures are designed to allow tidal flushing.

Potential, unavoidable impacts on land use and communities, Section 4(f) resources, cultural, and visual (scenic landscapes) resources could occur where alignment options that could avoid resources (tunnels or elevated alignments or right-of-way adjustments) would not be feasible or practicable. Proposed rail alignments would require relatively straight, flat, long linear features; moving or curving the alignment to avoid resources might not always be feasible, and may result in additional impacts to other resources. However, the majority of proposed rail improvements would be within the existing LOSSAN rail corridor or in tunnels. Therefore permanent impacts outside the existing rail right-of-way would be reduced or avoided along much of the corridor's length. Tunnel portals may pose unavoidable impacts to communities and neighborhoods in some locations where residential and/or small commercial development surrounds portal areas. There may be new, unavoidable noise impacts to neighborhoods near portals, as well as communities between Los Angeles and Fullerton that have been built up adjacent to the LOSSAN rail corridor.

Only general statements of potential impacts can be made at this program level of review, since field studies were not conducted and the study area used for the analysis was in most instances many times larger than the actual right-of-way for the alignments under consideration. Such impacts would need to be further studied and clarified in the next stage of project design and environmental review, when more specific information would be available on the right-of-way needed for proposed alignments and station improvements and on the specific properties potentially affected. The objective at the project-specific stage of analysis would be to identify design options (plans and profiles) that would avoid these sensitive resources, to the extent feasible.

The No-Project Alternative would not result in any additional unavoidable, adverse impacts to biological resources and wetlands, Section 4(f) or 6(f) properties, cultural and paleontological resources, or aesthetic resources. The No-Project Alternative may result in potentially significant impacts to geology and soils in the coastal bluff areas of Del Mar and San Clemente. In these areas, the existing rail service along the bluffs would continue to operate with more frequency in the future, and may require increased and on-going stabilization measures due to on-going erosional processes. Both the natural erosion processes and the construction of stabilizing structures could have potentially significant effects.

### 6.1.3 Construction Impacts

Construction of the Rail Improvements Alternative would result in the irreversible commitment of resources. Fossil fuels, labor, and construction materials would be expended in the construction of the rail improvements. Further, labor and natural resources would be used in the fabrication and preparation of construction materials. Once used or expended, these materials are generally not retrievable. However, these materials are not in short supply and their use would not have an adverse effect on the continued availability of resources.

Any construction of the Rail Improvements Alternative would also require the expenditure and allocation of local, state, and federal funds, which are not retrievable. Once used, these funds could not be used for other projects.

Temporary construction impacts related to earthwork (cut and fill and grading) that would result in dust (PM<sub>10</sub>) and localized emissions and noise from construction equipment and haul-truck traffic would occur under the Rail Improvements Alternative. These impacts would be in addition to the construction impacts associated with already planned projects included in the No-Project Alternative. Any required in-water work in the lagoon areas would have impacts to water quality from increased turbidity and sedimentation, and may have impacts on wildlife and fish from noise and vibration of activities such as pile driving. Temporary disturbance from construction staging areas, access roads, and equipment yards would have potential impacts on natural resources, communities and neighborhoods. Traffic circulation would be impacted by detours and delays, particularly in urban and suburban areas that have high visitor traffic as well as local traffic. In tunnel staging and portal areas, and areas where grade separations are constructed, potential construction impacts are likely to last longer than in areas where at-grade double-tracking can be accomplished in a relatively short timeframe. The potential impacts of construction activity would be addressed in more detail during project-level analysis when additional design information is available.

The No-Project Alternative would not involve any additional construction-related impacts.

## 6.2 RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SHORT-TERM USES OF THE ENVIRONMENT AND ENHANCEMENT OF LONG-TERM PRODUCTIVITY

Implementation of the proposed rail improvements would result in some relocations associated with potential property acquisitions and potential relocation of wildlife from habitat disturbance during construction and operation. These factors would be considered in more detail during project-level review. While some relocations associated with property acquisition are likely if a decision is made to proceed with the proposed rail improvements, long term benefits would also result, including enhanced long-term productivity related to increased mobility and safety, and the reduced travel time that an improved intercity rail system would provide.

Short-term benefits of the Rail Improvements Alternative include employment opportunities during construction (spread over a number of years) and locally purchased materials and services.

As indicated in Chapter 1, *Purpose and Need and Objectives*, the existing and programmed transportation improvements in southern California will not keep up with the currently projected rate of future population growth and the increased intercity travel demand projected for the region. The proposed rail improvements would provide user benefits (travel time savings, cost reductions, accident reductions) and accessibility improvements for southern California's citizens.

## 6.3 CEQA Significance

This section describes those environmental effects identified in Chapter 3 that would be considered significant under the CEQA. The potential for the proposed project to stimulate unplanned growth is considered in Section 3.15, *Growth Inducement*. Cumulative impacts are discussed in Section 3.16, *Cumulative Impacts Evaluation*.

Use of the term "significant" differs under NEPA and CEQA. While CEQA requires that the significance of impacts be discussed in an EIR, the NEPA does not require such discussion in an EIS. Under NEPA, significance is used to determine whether an EIS or some other level of documentation is required, and once a decision to prepare an EIS is made, the EIS reports all impacts and discusses feasible mitigation. Under CEQA, significance is used to determine whether to prepare an EIR and then to evaluate the severity of potential adverse environmental impacts in the EIR. The EIR must also discuss feasible mitigation measures that could reduce potentially significant effects to below the level of significance. For this reason, CEQA significance criteria and the determination of significant impacts under CEQA have been addressed separately in this section.

NEPA anticipates that mitigation will be considered for the potential impacts of a project where it would be feasible. For this reason, while consideration of some mitigation strategies described in this EIR/EIS and in this section is appropriate under NEPA, the potential impacts they address may not be considered significant under CEQA.

### 6.3.1 CEQA Significance Thresholds

CEQA requires that an EIR identify the potentially significant environmental effects of the project (CEQA Guidelines Section 15126), but does not promulgate specific thresholds for significance. Instead, CEQA Guidelines Section 15064(b) states that "the determination . . . calls for careful judgment on the part of the public agency involved..." and that "an ironclad definition of significant effect is not possible because the significance of an activity may vary with the setting." The fundamental definition of significant effect under CEQA is "a substantial adverse change in physical conditions." This criterion underlies the evaluation of environmental impacts for most of the impact issues identified in the CEQA Environmental Checklist Form (Guidelines Appendix G). CEQA encourages lead agencies to develop and publish their own thresholds of significance for the purpose of determining the significant effects of their projects. Given the planning-level impact analysis considered in this Program EIR/EIS the Department has not developed project-specific significance thresholds.

Some impact categories lend themselves to scientific or mathematical analysis, and therefore to quantification. Some categories have significance thresholds established by regulatory

agencies, such as noise criteria or regional air pollutant criteria. For other impact categories that are more qualitative or are entirely dependent on the immediate setting, a hard-and-fast threshold is not generally feasible, and the "substantial adverse change in physical conditions" is applied as the significance criterion. In the current analysis, the Department has determined to apply the CEQA checklist thresholds to evaluate the significance of effects of the Rail Improvements and No-Project alternatives.

CEQA states that economic and social changes resulting from a project shall not be treated as significant effects on the environment (CEQA Guidelines, 15064(e)). Economic or social changes may be used, however, to determine that a physical change should be regarded as a significant effect on the environment. Where a physical change is caused by economic or social effects of a project, the physical change may be regarded as a significant effect in the same manner as any other physical change resulting from the project. If the physical change causes adverse economic or social effects on people, those adverse effects may be used as a factor in determining whether the physical change is a significant effect on the environment. Because many of the potential rail improvements would be done within the existing LOSSAN corridor or involve widening of the existing right-of-way, the potential for adverse environmental impacts in these areas, and for potential economic or social effects, is reduced since the transportation corridor and its associated impacts are already well established.

### 6.3.2 Significant Unavoidable Adverse Effects Under CEQA

This section identifies those environmental categories that, given their potential for impact, would be those most likely to experience potentially significant, unavoidable adverse effects at some locations along the alignments being considered for the proposed rail improvements. The planning level of environmental review presented in this Program EIR/EIS does not seek to quantify impacts as would typically be done at a project level. Instead, this Program EIR/EIS evaluates the potential for significant effects for each alternative, based on the density of resources and/or sensitive receptors within the project vicinity and thus ranks the potential for impact as high, medium, or low. This is an appropriate assessment of potential impacts at this stage of such a large, regional undertaking. The Program EIR/EIS considers alternatives and options, identifies the lesser impacting approaches in each rail segment, and provides a basis for identifying mitigation strategies that is relevant to the decisions at hand.

Based on this planning level of analysis, therefore, potentially significant unavoidable impacts are only identified generally. With the three-county scope of the project and the size of the geographic area traversed by the potential rail alignment and station options, it is likely not feasible to avoid or reduce all of the potentially significant impacts of the proposed improvements at every location under consideration through project modifications, or to mitigate all these potential impacts to a less than significant level. Table 6.3-1 provides a summary list of the environmental categories, general mitigation strategies, potentially significant impacts and potential levels of significance after mitigation. Depending upon the alignment options that may ultimately be selected, potentially significant unavoidable effects can be expected at some locations along the rail corridor in the general environmental categories of wetlands and biological resources, hydrology and water resources, and cultural resources, as described on Table 6.3-1. However, neither the extent of such potential impacts, nor the potential locations for such impacts, can be determined at this level of analysis.

For several of the environmental categories listed in the table below (including wetlands, hydrology, and cultural resources) the quantities presented represent areas within which potential impacts might occur by including all the potentially affected resources or acreage in the



study area for the resource topic listed. For example, the area of floodplains includes all floodplains within 100 feet of either side of the centerline of the alignment being considered; whereas the right-of-way needed for the improvements considered and the area which would be used for the improvements being considered (e.g., the footprint for the proposed rail improvement) would be much less, so the potential for impacts would likewise be less. Therefore, the determination of significance is "potential" rather than absolute. The determination of a "potentially" significant or unavoidable impact would be used to focus attention at the next phase of planning and environmental review (project-specific, detailed analysis).

The No-Project Alternative may result in potentially significant unavoidable impacts to geology and soils in the areas where the existing rail corridor operates along the coastal bluff slopes in Del Mar and San Clemente. It may also have potentially significant impacts on traffic and circulation due to increasing congestion on area roadways without the additional capacity of an improved LOSSAN intercity rail service.

### 6.3.3 CEQA Environmentally Superior Alternative

The CEQA Guidelines state that, where the No-Project Alternative is the environmentally superior alternative, the EIR shall also identify the environmentally superior alternative from among the other alternatives (CEQA Guidelines 15126.6(e)(2)). Based on the evaluations documented in Chapter 3 of this EIR/EIS, the Rail Improvements Alternative has been identified as the environmentally superior alternative.

The Rail Improvements Alternative would increase the efficiency, capacity, and safety of rail service in the LOSSAN corridor, and decrease passenger costs. Grade separation of the corridor would decrease existing barriers in urban areas, and decrease the impact on roadway travel at intersections with the rail corridor, as compared with the No-Project Alternative. Grade separation would also substantially decrease noise from train horns and warning bells along the corridor. In the coastal areas, the Rail Improvements Alternative would have beneficial impacts from removing the existing rail service into tunnels, thereby improving aesthetics and reducing the on-going erosional problems along the coastal bluffs areas.



**Table 6.3-1**  
**Potentially Unavoidable Adverse Impacts For System Alternatives**

Key Environmental Issues	No-Project Alternative	Potential Significance for No-Project Alternative	Rail Improvements Alternative <sup>1</sup>	Mitigation Strategy for Rail Alternative	Potential Significance for Rail Improvements Alternative	
					Before Mitigation	After Mitigation
<b>Traffic and Circulation</b>	Capacity is insufficient to accommodate the projected growth. All but one of the 8 intercity highway segments considered would operate at unacceptable levels of service with increased congestion, travel delays, and accidents over existing conditions. Congestion would increase considerably from existing conditions.	Potentially Significant	Congestion reduction on intercity highways as compared to the No-Project Alternative. However, the analyses could not take into account potential use of the excess capacity by non-intercity (commuter, and short-distance) trips. Has the potential to help reduce the number of intercity automobile trips. Localized traffic conditions around stations impacted.	Encourage use of transit to stations. Work with transit providers to improve station connections.	Potentially Significant	Potentially Less than Significant
<b>Travel Conditions</b> (Travel Time, Reliability, Safety, Connectivity, Sustainable Capacity, Passenger Cost)	Longer travel times, more delay.  Lower reliability due to increased dependence on the automobile.  Increase in injuries and fatalities due to increase in highway travel.  No net improvement to connectivity options.  No significant increase in capacity for highway infrastructure, and significant worsening of congestion due to increased demand.	Potentially Significant	Travel time reduction as compared to the No-Project Alternative. Greatest improvement in reliability due to higher reliability of the rail mode; additional modal option improves reliability for overall transportation system.  Decrease in injuries and fatalities due to improvements to rail infrastructure Highest level of connectivity. Provide additional connections to existing modes, additional frequencies, and greater flexibility.  Improved rail system would provide sufficient capacity to meet the representative demand and would provide additional capacity with minimal additional infrastructure.  Overall savings in passenger costs of 39% on average compared to No-Project. Intercity rail passenger costs are competitive with the automobile travel.	Not Applicable	Beneficial	Not Applicable

<sup>1</sup> Quantities are listed as ranges to represent the variation in potential impacts depending on the alignment options selected.

**Table 6.3-1**  
**Potentially Unavoidable Adverse Impacts For System Alternatives (continued)**

Key Environmental Issues	No-Project Alternative	Potential Significance for No-Project Alternative	Rail Improvements Alternative <sup>2</sup>	Mitigation Strategy for Rail Alternative	Potential Significance for Rail Improvements Alternative	
					Before Mitigation	After Mitigation
<b>Air Quality</b> (tons of pollutants; potential violation of NAAQS)	NOx and CO emissions from locomotives in LOSSAN corridor are predicted to increase by 2020 approximately 645% over 2005 levels. Estimated CO 386 tons/year, NO <sub>x</sub> 2,000 tons/year, TOG 108 tons/year; PM 70 tons/year; CO <sub>2</sub> 147,790 tons/year.	Not Applicable	17% increase in locomotive miles and emissions due to proposed project. Potential violation of NOx or other pollutant thresholds or standards with current technology. Air quality benefits from reduced locomotive delays and idling time, vehicular idling at grade crossings. Construction impacts from PM emissions in nonattainment air basins.	Control of construction related emissions.  Diesel filters, automatic anti-idling devices, newer technologies and locomotive standards by 2020 expected to cut NOx and PM by up to 90% of current standards.	Potentially Significant	Potentially Less Than Significant
<b>Energy Use</b>	Energy consumption is estimated to increase by 2020 to 36,969 barrels of oil annual consumption for operation of locomotives in LOSSAN corridor.	No Significant Impact	17% increase in locomotive miles over No-Project levels; annual consumption of 54,960 additional barrel of oil. Some energy consumption reduction would occur due to reduced congestion and grade separation of rail corridor. Construction energy consumption would be potentially significant use of nonrenewable energy.	Minimize grade changes in steep terrain areas to reduce the use of diesel fuel.  Maximize intermodal transit connections to reduce automobile VMT related to the rail system.  Develop and implement a construction energy conservation plan.  Develop potential measures to reduce energy consumption during operation and maintenance activities.	Potentially Significant	Potentially Significant Unavoidable

<sup>2</sup> Quantities are listed as ranges to represent the variation in potential impacts depending on the alignment options selected.

**Table 6.3-1**  
**Potentially Unavoidable Adverse Impacts For System Alternatives (continued)**

Key Environmental Issues	No-Project Alternative	Potential Significance for No-Project Alternative	Rail Improvements Alternative <sup>2</sup>	Mitigation Strategy for Rail Alternative	Potential Significance for Rail Improvements Alternative	
					Before Mitigation	After Mitigation
<b>Land Use</b> (Compatibility and Property Impacts)	Expansion of urban sprawl as population grows and congestion increases; development on open space. Existing barriers resulting from existing LOSSAN rail corridor in some communities and coastal areas would remain.	No Impact	Most alignments highly compatible with land uses because of existing rail corridor or tunnel proposals.  Small amount of property acquisition along existing rail corridor, some acquisition along new rights of way with one alignment option; between 5 and 7 mi. of improvements could affect high impact land uses.	Continued coordination with local agencies.  Relocation assistance during future project-level review.  Design refinements to avoid tunnel portals and other infrastructure in residential neighborhoods.	Potentially Significant	Potentially Less Than Significant
<b>Visual Quality</b>	No predictable change to existing landscape. Existing visual impacts of rail corridor on beaches and coastal views would remain.	No Significant Impact	High sensitivity in scenic open space and residential coastal views. Some beneficial impacts would occur by removing existing service from beaches and coastal bluffs. Potentially significant impacts in lagoon areas where new elevated structures may be built.	Design strategies to minimize bulk and shading of bridges. Use of neutral colors and materials to blend with surrounding landscape features.	Potentially Significant	Potentially Less Than Significant
<b>Noise</b>	More vehicular traffic, rail and air operations from growth in the intercity demand generates more noise. Existing high impacts to noise-sensitive land use/populations would continue or worsen. Noise from train horns and warning bells at grade crossings would worsen due to projected 60% increase in rail traffic by 2020. More freight service would likely run at night to accommodate increased volumes.	Potentially significant noise impacts between Union Station and Fullerton during nighttime hours from increased freight traffic.	20 miles of alignment length in region would have high impacts to noise sensitive land use/populations (most of which are already impacted by existing rail corridor). Noise increase due to increased speeds of trains and 10% increase in train volume in the LOSSAN corridor, compared with No-Project Alternative. Substantial noise reduction from existing and 2020 No-Project conditions due to elimination of horn warning bell noise at grade crossings resulting from grade separation of existing rail line in most alignment options.	Consider sound barriers or berms in some areas along noise sensitive corridors; good track maintenance for vibration.	Potentially Significant	Potentially Less Than Significant

**Table 6.3-1**  
**Potentially Unavoidable Adverse Impacts For System Alternatives (continued)**

Key Environmental Issues	No-Project Alternative	Potential Significance for No-Project Alternative	Rail Improvements Alternative <sup>2</sup>	Mitigation Strategy for Rail Alternative	Potential Significance for Rail Improvements Alternative	
					Before Mitigation	After Mitigation
<b>Biology / Wetlands</b> (Includes area within 100 feet on either side of centerline of alignment)	No predictable change from existing conditions.	No Impact	Up to 28 acres of sensitive vegetation, 12,564-15,541 linear feet of non-wetland jurisdictional waters, 20-27 acres of wetlands, and 36-46 special-status species could be affected directly or indirectly.	Work with resource agencies to develop site specific mitigation and impact avoidance strategies for project level review.	Potentially Significant	Potentially Significant Unavoidable
<b>Hydrologic Resources and Water Quality</b> (Includes area within 100 feet on each side of alignment centerline 200 feet total.)	No predictable change from existing conditions.	No Impact	Between 205 and 315 acres of floodplains, 11,760 and 13650 linear feet of streams, and up to 12 acres of lagoons within 100 feet of proposed alignment options, plus some areas crossing the California Coastal Basin Aquifer.	Avoid or minimize footprint in floodplains; conduct project-level analysis of surface hydrology and coastal lagoons; Best Management Practices for construction as part of SWPPP.	Potentially Significant	Potentially Less Than Significant / Potentially Significant Unavoidable
<b>Section 4 (f) 6 (f) (Parks, Wildlife Refuges)</b> (Includes area within 900 feet on each side of alignment centerline (1,800 feet total).)	No predictable change from existing conditions.	No Impact	From 29 to 33 Section 4 (f) or 6(f) properties could be affected. Most along existing rail corridor so impacts may be minimized. Some opportunity for new parklands to be created where rail would be removed from beaches.	Evaluate site-specific design refinements to avoid parklands; identify potential site specific measures to minimize harm.	Potentially Significant	Potentially Less Than Significant / Potentially Significant Unavoidable
<b>Cultural Resources (Including Section 4(f) Historic Resources)</b>	Low ranking for impacts to archaeological resources and historic property.	No Significant Impact	Medium to High ranking for potential impacts to archaeological resources and historic properties (Many improvements would use existing rail corridor and stations; nearby resources developed in historic period). Tunnel options would avoid most impacts.	Develop procedures for field work, identification, evaluation and determination of effects for cultural resources in consultation with SHPO and Native American Tribes	Potentially Significant	Potentially Significant Unavoidable

**Table 6.3-1**  
**Potentially Unavoidable Adverse Impacts For System Alternatives (continued)**

Key Environmental Issues	No-Project Alternative	Potential Significance for No-Project Alternative	Rail Improvements Alternative <sup>2</sup>	Mitigation Strategy for Rail Alternative	Potential Significance for Rail Improvements Alternative	
					Before Mitigation	After Mitigation
<b>Growth Inducement</b>	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Rail improvements would not induce growth because improvements would accommodate projected rail service increases between now and 2020. May change rate of some development around new station (potentially at University Towne Centre	Work with local communities to design station access and facilities to blend with area and provide appropriate mixed-use development that complies with land use plans and codes	No Significant Impact	Not Applicable
<b>Public Utilities</b>	No Impact	No Impact	Potential conflicts with 22 transmission lines, 44 gas lines, 5 ocean outfalls, and 2 major sewer lines. depending on alignments	Relocate or reconstruct or restore utility, consolidate several utilities underground into one conduit during relocation	Potentially Significant	Potentially Less Than Significant
<b>Geology</b>	Potentially susceptible to seismic hazards; coastal bluffs in Del Mar and San Clemente would continue to require stabilization for reliable operation of existing rail service.	Potentially Significant (could be mitigated to Potentially Less Than Significant)	Potential seismic hazards, slope stability in cut sections. Would remove rail service from coastal bluffs in Del Mar and San Clemente, reducing stability problems.	Use of ground motion data and instruments.  Routine maintenance of track, slope reinforcement.  Project-level design to minimize cut-and-fill ; Best Management Practices to prevent tunnel subsidence.	Potentially Significant; Beneficial in coastal bluff areas.	Potentially Less Than Significant
<b>Hazardous Materials</b>	No Impact	No Impact	Disposal, clean-up or remediation of exposure to hazardous materials during construction. Two Superfund, SPL or SWLF sites potentially affected by construction.	Detailed Initial Site Assessment, avoid sites where practicable, sub-surface investigation where needed to characterize sites and identify remediation	Potentially Significant	Potentially Less Than Significant

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## Chapter 7 PUBLIC AND AGENCY INVOLVEMENT

### 7.0 INTRODUCTION

Pursuant to the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) as well as the Department's commitment to proactive public participation, a comprehensive program of public and agency involvement was conducted as part of the environmental document preparation process. Public and agency involvement was accomplished through a variety of means including a formal scoping process that included a series of public and agency scoping meetings, extensive one-on-one and small group agency consultation, and presentations and public workshops held as part of the development of the LOSSAN Corridor Strategic Plan.

The following subsections describe the various forms of public and agency involvement effort undertaken during this study.

Pre-Scoping Period: Prior to the inception of the LOSSAN Proposed Rail Corridor Improvements Study, the California High-Speed Rail Authority conducted its own Scoping Process in conjunction with its Program-Level EIR/EIS for the Statewide HSR system, which extended from April 8, 2001 through May 31, 2001.

Six officially noticed formal scoping meetings were conducted in the Los Angeles-Orange County-San Diego Region 4 between May 2, 2001 and May 23, 2001. Two meetings were held in each county. All these meetings were open to the general public, but public agencies were encouraged to attend the meetings scheduled during business hours, leaving the evening meetings to focus on the general public.

Scoping activities also included interviews or meetings with more than 50 government officials, business, environmental and ethnic community leaders, four workshops or presentations to major stakeholder groups in Los Angeles and Orange Counties, and an assessment of interviews and meetings about high-speed rail train options with San Diego leaders that occurred in the year preceding the NOP on this project.

The following major themes came out of the Authority's scoping process with regard to the LOSSAN Corridor, were considered by the Department, and led to the initiation of the LOSSAN Corridor Proposed Rail Corridor Improvements Study:

- Seeing a long-term plan put in place for the LOSSAN Corridor. Those participating in the scoping meetings were familiar with Amtrak and other upgrading efforts and supported a comprehensive improvement strategy that would accommodate short and long-term upgrades. In this context they supported moving forward with known technologies that could be implemented soon, rather than extending the implementation timeframe to achieve a newer technology.
- In south Orange County and north San Diego County, agencies and community leaders were greatly interested in preserving or enhancing access to the beaches and recreational-oriented communities. They saw a high-speed train as both a potential opportunity to eliminate existing obstructions and/or to become another obstruction, depending on how the high-speed train project was designed and implemented.

- In Orange County most of the input focused on the potential impact to San Clemente. There were strong concerns voiced about the need to protect the sensitive bluffs and reduce noise and visual impacts in the areas adjacent to the city's primary public beach. Participants supported studying alternatives that would improve beach access.
- Secondary concerns in Orange County revolved around requests that the environmental documents include extensive information about the parking required (i.e., more than the norm in a program EIR/EIS), connectivity to other transit options, and noise impacts.
- Strong concerns were expressed in San Diego to coordinate efforts between this and the Amtrak upgrade efforts. In particular, participants wanted to ensure that any alignment options considered for future study avoid creating separately dedicated rail rights-of-way or tracks or expanding the right of way devoted to rail. A second major theme here was the need to protect environmental resources in the northern communities of San Diego. Reducing negative existing visual impacts in these communities was also a significant issue. Residents were proud of recent redevelopment efforts and initiatives that were creating pedestrian-friendly community centers in these communities and stressed that the high speed train should support the creation of community focal points—or at a minimum, not do anything to disrupt ongoing improvements. Alternatives that did not reinforce clear vistas and localized community business centers will generate opposition. This extends to the visual impact of overhead catenaries associated with an electrified system.

**Scoping Period:** During the scoping phase, while the technical team was working to define evaluation methodologies and the scope of studies, the public and interested agencies were encouraged to provide comments relative to alternatives to evaluate, and issues to address. Scoping activities for the LOSSAN Proposal Rail Corridor Improvements Draft Program EIR/EIS were conducted within the period between April 2, 2002 and April 23, 2002, with an additional meeting held August 13, 2002.

The formal process was initiated with the publishing of the Federal Notice of Intent (NOI) in the Federal Register on March 6, 2002 and the Notice of Preparation (NOP) released on March 11, 2002.

**Strategic Plan:** For the LOSSAN Proposal Rail Corridor Improvements Draft Program EIR/EIS the Department determined that the creation of a LOSSAN Corridor Strategic Plan would be an important and beneficial adjunct and serve as a screening report to further focus the alternatives under study. This complementary planning document looked at the proposed rail improvements from a corridor-wide perspective. In supporting the PEIR/PEIS work underway, the Strategic Plan's objectives were:

- To provide an additional opportunity for public outreach, beyond that provided as part of the PEIR/PEIS process
- To foster better communication and understanding among stakeholders at all levels
- To provide an opportunity to screen out design options at key locations, so as to focus future work on the most promising alternatives
- To develop short- and long-term visions for the corridor, contemplating a program of projects over the next twenty years.

The Strategic Plan met these objectives through a series of public workshops held in cities along the corridor. Five public workshops were held:

**Table 7.1**  
**Strategic Plan Public Workshop Locations and Times**

City	Date	Time	Location
Encinitas	March 25, 2003	6:00 – 8:00 p.m.	Community & Senior Center, 1140 Oakcrest Park Dr.
San Diego	March 26, 2003	6:00 – 8:00 p.m.	Caltrans District 11, 2829 Juan Street
Anaheim	March 27, 2003	6:00 – 8:00 p.m.	City Hall West, 201 South Anaheim Boulevard
San Clemente	April 2, 2003	6:30 – 8:30 p.m.	Community Center, 100 North Calle Seville
Norwalk	April 3, 2003	6:00 – 8:00 p.m.	Norwalk Marriott, 13111 Sycamore Drive

The workshops helped to educate and inform the public, and provided an overview of the corridor and the rail improvements under study, including information on:

- The purpose and goals of the Strategic Plan
- The need for improvements to the corridor
- Current and projected weekday train volumes
- Corridor facts, including rail owners and operators and details on Freight Services
- Types of services provided (Intercity Rail, Commuter Rail, and Freight)
- The Strategic Plan timetable
- Ranges of costs, rail performance issues, and community/environmental issues of projects throughout the corridor
- Design options and alternatives at four key locations along the corridor where the range of options was sufficiently broad to allow the screening out of some options, the recommendations for screening, and the rationale and criteria used to reach the recommended screening decisions
- The Planning Process, including timelines for the completion of the Strategic Plan, and the Department's Draft Program-level Environmental Impact Report/ Environmental Impact Statement.

Numerous consultations were conducted during this phase throughout the LOSSAN corridor. These included briefings and consultations with: individual corridor cities; state and federal environmental and resources agencies, as well as through rail working groups in Orange and San Diego County. These rail working groups were comprised of representatives from cities, the Department, Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) such as Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA) and the San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG), as well as rail owners and operators (including Amtrak, Southern California Regional Rail Authority (Metrolink), and North County Transit District (Coaster), transit providers, and other stakeholders, and provided continuing communication and interaction throughout this phase.

Technical Studies/Preparation of the Department's Draft Program EIR/EIS: During this period, ongoing and extensive one-on-one and small group consultation occurred with federal, state,

and local agencies. In addition, the Department and FRA (as the lead CEQA and NEPA agencies responsible for the preparation of the Draft Program EIR/EIS) formed a working group of representatives of eight key federal and state resources agencies to assist in the environmental review process. The interagency group met at key milestones in the environmental process to discuss the purpose and need for the project, screening of alternatives, the methods to be used for technical evaluation of impacts, including definition of study area, data sources, and models used for analysis, and the key findings.

**Public Comment/Hearing Period:** This phase was initiated with the announcement and release of the LOSSAN Proposal Rail Corridor Improvements Draft Program EIR/EIS for formal public and agency review. During the comment period, a comprehensive program to provide the public and interested agencies an opportunity to review the results of evaluations on project alternatives and proposed mitigation measures will be conducted. The comment period included a series of public hearings as well additional informational meetings on the Environmental Document's contents to groups and organizations throughout the corridor. A comment period of 90 days was provided to allow adequate time for the review of the document and for the preparation and submission of comments. All comments received during the formal comment period were responded to in the LOSSAN Proposal Rail Corridor Improvements Program Final EIR/EIS.

## 7.1 PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT AND OUTREACH PROGRAM

The Department's Public Involvement and Outreach Program include activities to ensure that public input is sought at key milestones throughout the study process and preparation of the technical documents and LOSSAN Proposal Rail Corridor Improvements Draft Program EIR/EIS. In addition, ongoing briefings and updates are provided to interested stakeholders and policymaking entities to maintain open communication on the status of the evaluations and the direction of the study. Public involvement objectives include:

- Respond to California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) /National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requirements for public involvement.
- Disseminate information about the project to interested parties and to directly-affected communities.
- Obtain full and continuous public involvement through the entire project.
- Enable public to assist in the development and verification of findings.
- Ensure outreach to all potentially affected minority and low income populations.
- Insure that the public involvement process has been open and easily accessible through all forms of media (printed materials, electronic media, and meetings).
- Ensure that public and private concerns on issues such as environmental quality and safety are heard and incorporated into environmental documents.

### 7.1.1 Public Information

The following section details those efforts made to inform and involve the public during the LOSSAN Proposed Rail Corridor Improvements study process.

## A. DATABASE LIST

A project database (or mailing list) ensures that project information and announcements are widely disseminated in a timely fashion. The database for the LOSSAN Proposed Rail Corridor Improvements Draft Program EIR/EIS, built from an existing Department contact list, includes more than 1,500 entries of federal, state and local agency representatives, elected officials, property owners, special interest stakeholders, interested parties and others. It has been updated regularly to include public meeting participants and those who have asked to be added to the database. While this list is used for notification of project updates, it does not represent the distribution list for the Program EIR/EIS. The distribution list, as presented in Chapter 10, is a subset of this comprehensive notification list.

## B. STRATEGIC PLAN

As mentioned, the Department's LOSSAN Corridor Strategic Plan provided a process by which the public, corridor cities, state and federal agencies, rail operators and transportation agencies could review and comment on the screening recommendations contained in the Strategic Plan.

During the many meetings held to discuss LOSSAN Proposed Rail Corridor Improvements Draft Program EIR/EIS issues with various audiences other materials were used as well. Targeted PowerPoint presentations were developed to inform stakeholders about the proposed project and issues particularly germane to their interests and constituencies. Exhibit boards highlighted key information about the project and incorporated graphics which helped to more effectively present alignment and station options as well as other issues.

## C. PUBLIC MEETINGS

The Department has held both informal and formal public meetings throughout the course of the studies. These meetings presented the proposed project alternatives, described project issues, and solicited input and feedback from the public. Various meeting formats (e.g. open houses, formal presentations, and question and comment sessions) have been used to ensure effective presentation of the information and useful feedback from participants. A more formal series of meetings were conducted around key technical and decision making milestones as described below. Ongoing briefings, presentations and small group discussions occurred throughout the process (see Chapter 8, Organization, Agency, and Business Outreach, for a comprehensive listing of these meetings).

### Public and Agency Scoping Meetings

The Authority's HSR Scoping meetings within the LOSSAN Corridor, which lead to the LOSSAN Proposed Rail Corridor Improvements Study were held in Los Angeles (May 2, 2001), La Jolla, (May 10, 2001), San Diego (May 10, 2001), and Irvine (May 23, 2001).

The Department held six formally noticed Public and Agency Scoping Meetings, between April 2, 2002 and April 23, 2002 (scoping period), as shown in Table 7-2

below<sup>1</sup>. A minimum of one Scoping Meeting was held within each of the three counties through which the rail corridor travels. These meetings, part of the formal environmental document scoping process, served to further present the proposed project and alternatives to the public and solicit input on alternatives to consider, and issues to address, in the environmental evaluations. Depending on the location, meetings were conducted either during the day or during the evening to accommodate the largest number of agency representatives and the general public. Meetings generally began with an informal open house and exhibit display followed by a PowerPoint presentation and comment session.

Comments were fully documented and are summarized in the Public Scoping Report, June 24, 2002. Agendas, Facts Sheets (as described previously) and Scoping Period Comment Sheets were provided at each meeting. Scoping meetings were noticed through a variety of means including placement of the Federal Notice of Intent in the Federal Register on March 6, 2002, distribution of the Notice of Preparation to the State Office of Planning and Research and all applicable state and regional agencies on March 11, 2002, media outreach including press releases, and postings on the Department's Division of Rail Web site (<http://www.amtrakcalifornia.com>). Meetings were held as follows:

**Table 7.2**  
**LOSSAN Corridor Scoping Meeting Locations and Times**

City	Date	Time	Location
Los Angeles	April 2, 2002	1:30 – 3:30 p.m.	Metropolitan Transportation Authority, Union Station Room
San Clemente	April 2, 2002	6:00 – 8:00 p.m.	San Clemente Inn, 2600 Avenida De Presidente
Anaheim	April 3, 2002	10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.	City Hall West, 201 South Anaheim Boulevard
Carlsbad	April 3, 2002	6:00 – 8:00 p.m.	Carlsbad Senior Center, 799 Pine Street
Santa Ana	April 9, 2002	6:00 – 8:00 p.m.	Santa Ana Regional Transportation Center, Logan Room, 1000 Santa Ana Boulevard
San Clemente	April 23, 2002	6:00 – 8:00 p.m.	Heritage Christian Fellowship, 190 Avenida La Pata
San Juan Capistrano	August 13, 2002	6:00 – 8:00 p.m.	Community Center, 25925 Camino del Avion

Approximately 1,750 people participated in the formal scoping meetings noted above.

In addition to the formal scoping meetings, presentations, briefings and workshops were also held to solicit input before, and during, the scoping process. Meetings and presentations were primarily focused toward public agency and other local organization

<sup>1</sup> A seventh meeting was held at the request of the cities of San Juan Capistrano, Dana Point, and San Clemente, based on continuing concerns about improvement alternatives within the existing alignment in South Orange County, and requests to study an alternative that would bypass the highly-sensitive segments of these communities.



representatives. Noticing was conducted by a combination of direct phone calls and faxes to local/regional agency representatives, with follow-up faxes/emails with more detailed information about the meetings (as needed). Presentations at conferences, forums, local and regional governments, special interest groups and other interested parties, as well as agency meetings and other briefings were also conducted to increase the number of interested stakeholders informed about the studies. Chapter 8, Organization, Agency, and Business Outreach, includes a comprehensive list of the workshops and the statewide, regional and local groups who participated in this aspect of the Authority's outreach effort. Comments from these workshops and meetings are further summarized in the Public Scoping Report.

Comments were considered in the scoping process and summarized in meeting minutes.

#### Small Group Presentations, Briefings and Outreach

Throughout the environmental review process, presentations to local and regional governments, special interest groups and other interested parties, as well as agency meetings and other briefings have been conducted to ensure that key interested stakeholders and their broader constituencies are informed about the LOSSAN corridor studies, and have provided an additional opportunity to comment. Community planning organizations (e.g. Torrey Pines Community Association), and public agency meetings (e.g. SANDAG Board Meeting) are examples of the types of groups with whom these presentations and discussions have occurred. These activities have enhanced public awareness about the proposed project and alternatives and have encouraged broad-based discussion of key issues and impacts to be evaluated in the environmental document. Chapter 8, Organization, Agency, and Business Outreach, includes a comprehensive list of the regional and local groups participating in this aspect of the Department's outreach effort.

### **D. DIVISION OF RAIL WEB SITE**

Throughout the course of the environmental review process, project information and announcements have been posted on the Department's Division of Rail Web site at [www.amtrakcalifornia.com](http://www.amtrakcalifornia.com). The site includes information on the cooperative rail passenger program operated by Amtrak and funded by the Federal Government and the State of California, through the Department of Transportation, (Caltrans), which includes the Pacific Surfliner intercity passenger rail service that operates on the LOSSAN corridor. The Division of Rail also uses the Web site to make public documents readily available, including technical reports, screening reports, and planning documents relating to the Department-supported rail services. The Web site has provided an important mechanism through which people who choose not to attend public workshops can learn about important project milestones and provide input. The Web site is updated at least monthly.

### **E. NOTIFICATION AND CIRCULATION OF THE LOSSAN PROPOSED RAIL CORRIDOR IMPROVEMENTS DRAFT PROGRAM EIR/EIS**

The formal process of notification regarding availability and circulation of the LOSSAN Proposed Rail Corridor Improvements Program EIR/EIS was conducted pursuant to CEQA and NEPA requirements. As such, newspaper advertisements announcing the availability of the draft document and comment period were posted in newspapers of

general circulation within the project area, direct mail announcement were mailed to those on the database, a formal Notice of Availability of the LOSSAN Proposed Rail Corridor Improvements Draft Program EIR/EIS and a Notice of Completion was filed with the state clearinghouse and sent to state agencies. EPA issued a Notice of Availability for the LOSSAN Proposed Rail Corridor Improvements Draft Program EIR/EIS and it appeared in the Federal Register August 27, 2004. General notices were sent to the project mailing list including county clerks, transit agencies, and local cities/communities along the corridor.

The LOSSAN Proposed Rail Corridor Improvements Draft Program EIR/EIS was distributed to cooperating federal agencies. The Executive Summary of the LOSSAN Proposed Rail Corridor Improvements Draft Program EIR/EIS and a CD-ROM version of the entire document were also produced for distribution to State and local agencies, and for regional transportation agencies. The LOSSAN Proposed Rail Corridor Improvements Draft Program EIR/EIS document was made available on the Department's AmtrakCalifornia Web site. A public and agency comment period of approximately 60 days included a series of formal and informal public hearings held throughout the project area. These were noticed and conducted similarly to the Scoping Meetings described above.

#### Public Hearings Summary

The Department and FRA held three public hearings to present the Draft Program EIR/EIS and to receive public comments. Each of the public hearings was conducted in an "Open House" format. Exhibit boards were available for viewing, and project staff was present to answer questions and to discuss issues. Although no public testimony or prepared presentations were made, a court reporter was present at each of the public hearings to record oral comments, and comment sheets were available for providing written comments. The project staff at all meetings included Patrick Merrill, representing the Department, and David Valenstein, representing FRA, as well as members of the consultant team. At select meetings (in San Diego County), the Department's Project Manager, Arturo Jacobo, was also present. Copies of the draft document were available for reference, as well as printed copies of the Summary, and complete copies of the draft document on CD-ROM.

**Table 7.3**  
**LOSSAN Public Hearing Locations and Times**

City	Date	Time	Location
San Diego	September 27, 2004	3:00 – 7:00 p.m.	Caltrans District 11, 2829 Juan Street
Los Angeles	September 28, 2004	3:00 – 7:00 p.m.	Metropolitan Transportation Authority, 1 Gateway Center
Anaheim	September 29, 2004	3:00 – 7:00 p.m.	City Hall West, 201 South Anaheim Boulevard

Three additional informal informational meetings were offered as well. At these meetings the same staff and materials were present, but no court reporter was available to record oral comments. Comment sheets were available for providing written comments.

**Table 7.4**  
**Additional LOSSAN Draft Program EIR/EIS**  
**Public Information Meetings Locations and Times**

City	Date	Time	Location
Santa Fe Springs	September 13, 2004	6:00 – 8:00 p.m.	City Hall, 11710 Telegraph Road
Encinitas	September 14, 2004	6:00 – 8:00 p.m.	Recreational Center, 1140 Oakcrest Park Drive
Dana Point	September 16, 2004	6:00 – 8:00 p.m.	Community Center, 34052 Del Obispo Road

The distribution list for the LOSSAN Proposed Rail Corridor Improvements Program EIR/EIS (both Draft and Final versions) is provided in Chapter 10, Program EIR/EIS Distribution List, of this document.

#### Written Comments Summary

Written comments were collected throughout the comment period, and responses to comments provided. Where appropriate, the Final Program EIR/EIS was revised to reflect suggested changes from comment letters. Copies of the comment letters received and their responses can be found in **Volume 2: Response to Comments and Appendices**.

## **7.1.2 Agency Consultation and Coordination**

### **A. AGENCY SCOPING**

To initiate the formal scoping process, a Notice of Intent (NOI) was published in the Federal Register on March 2, 2002 and a Notice of Preparation (NOP) was distributed to state, regional and local agencies on April (see Scoping Report, June 24, 2002 for a distribution list). The formal scoping period was conducted from April 2, 2002 through April 23, 2002, with an additional meeting held August 13, 2002. Additional meetings and informal roundtable/workshop meetings were conducted with public agencies. Many of the agency contacts made during the scoping process led to subsequent one-on-one and small group consultation meetings that occurred throughout the preparation of the LOSSAN Proposed Rail Corridor Improvements Draft Program EIR/EIS.

### **B. INTER-AGENCY WORKING GROUP**

The Department and FRA (as lead CEQA and NEPA agencies responsible for preparation of the LOSSAN Proposed Rail Corridor Improvements Draft Program EIR/EIS) formed a Resources Agencies Working Group, comprised of representatives from eight key federal and state resources agencies, to assist in the environmental review process. The group's purpose is to ensure that agency issues are proactively raised and discussed during the environmental review process and that appropriate environmental streamlining can occur.

The Resources Agencies Working Group met seven times, on the following dates:

- June 27, 2002
- September 10, 2002

- November 26, 2002
- March 13, 2003
- April 24, 2003
- June 4, 2003
- July 30, 2003

Topics discussed at the agency meetings included: Purpose and Need for the project; screening of alternatives; alternatives to be analyzed in the LOSSAN Proposed Rail Corridor Improvements Draft Program EIR/EIS; study methods to be used in the evaluation of impacts; level of detail appropriate for a Program-level environmental document; and key findings. The Resources Agencies concurred with the Purpose and Need Statement, Strategic Plan screening recommendations, alternatives to be analyzed and methods used to evaluate impacts. Chapter 8, Organization, Agency and Business Outreach, includes a comprehensive list of the statewide and federal groups who participated in this aspect of the Department's outreach effort.

### C. RAIL WORKING GROUP CONSULTATION

In Orange and San Diego Counties, Rail Working Groups were formed, comprised of representatives from the rail owners/operators, regional transportation agencies, metropolitan planning organizations, and other.

The Orange County/Orange County Transportation Authority Rail Working Group met eight times, on the following dates:

- August 14, 2002
- October 22, 2002
- January 30, 2003
- March 04, 2003
- May 06, 2003
- June 10, 2003
- July 31, 2003
- February 19, 2004

The San Diego County Coastal Rail Working Group met ten times, on the following dates:

- June 13, 2002
- July 31, 2002
- September 09, 2002
- October 22, 2002
- December 3, 2002
- February 18, 2003

- May 07, 2003
- June 09, 2003
- July 31, 2003
- February 20, 2004

Topics discussed at the Rail Working Group meetings included: Purpose and Need for the project; screening of alternatives; alternatives to be analyzed in the LOSSAN Proposed Rail Corridor Improvements Draft Program EIR/EIS; study methods to be used in the evaluation of impacts; level of detail appropriate for a Program-level environmental document; issues related to rail operations, program/projects updates by organization, and other LOSSAN-related issues. The Rail Working Groups concurred with the Purpose and Need Statement, Strategic Plan screening recommendations, alternatives to be analyzed and methods used to evaluate impacts. Chapter 8, Organization, Agency, and Business Outreach, includes a comprehensive list of the statewide and federal groups who participated in this aspect of the Department's outreach effort.

#### **D. INFORMAL AGENCY CONSULTATION**

In addition to the formal scoping process and interagency working group meetings, significant and ongoing informal consultation has occurred at the local, regional, and state levels. Chapter 8, Organization, Agency, and Business Outreach, includes a comprehensive list of agencies, organizations and businesses contacted during the study process and the dates when these contacts occurred. The Department and project team have proactively sought direction and input from agency representatives throughout this process and through a variety of mechanisms as mentioned. This consultation will also lay the groundwork for any future project-specific level environmental review process.

#### **E. NEPA 404, WETLANDS, AND SECTION 106 CONSULTATION**

The Department and its consultants met with both the EPA and USACE as part of the NEPA 404 process on November 26, 2002, to discuss the screening of alternatives in terms of Waters of the United States. As part of Section 106, the Department's cultural resources technical consultant met with the State Historic Preservation Office on October 23, 2002, to define the Area of Potential Effect for the archaeology and historic property evaluation and to discuss the method of analysis proposed for this Program-level environmental document.

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## Chapter 8 ORGANIZATION, AGENCY, AND BUSINESS OUTREACH

The following table contains a listing of the organizations, agencies, and businesses contacted formally and informally throughout the development of the LOSSAN Proposed Rail Corridor Improvements Program EIR/EIS.

**Table 8-1  
Organizations, Agencies, and Businesses Contacted**

Organization	Contact	Date	Topic
<b>Meetings</b>			
22 <sup>nd</sup> District Agricultural Association	Larry Baumann	January 29, 2003	Program update
AMTRAK	David Carol	July 24, 2003	Program Updates
	Darrell Johnson Ron Scolaro	Ongoing communication	Program updates and LOSSAN issues
Anaheim (City of)	John Lower	March 30, 2001	Alternatives and issues
	Gary Johnson John Lower	Ongoing communications	Program update and Anaheim Station
ASCE, Aviation Technical Group/WTS Presentation	Charles Adams, LAX	April 18, 2002	Program update
CA Business, Transportation & Housing	Secretary Contreras-Sweet	October 12, 2001	Program update
CA Assemblyman Tom Calderon	Representatives of Assemblyman Calderon	April 11, 2001	Alternatives and issues
CA Assemblyman Lou Correa	Representatives of Assemblyman Correa	June 29, 2001	Alternatives and issues
CA Senator Marta Esutia	Staff of Senator Escutia	April 6, 2001	Alternatives and issues
City of Carlsbad	Robert T. Johnson	February 14, 2002 June 18, 2002	Alternatives and San Diego Coastal Rail Trail
	Julie Nygard, Councilmember	Ongoing communications	Program update and LOSSAN corridor alignment options
City of Del Mar	David Scherer	November 20, 2001 December 5, 2001 May 20, 2002 June 17, 2002 June 9, 2003	Program updates, alignment and station issues, technical studies updates
	David Druker, Mayor Lauraine Brekke-Esparza, City Manager Linda Niles	Ongoing communications	Del Mar alignment options

**Table 8-1  
Organizations, Agencies, and Businesses Contacted (continued)**

Organization	Contact	Date	Topic
City of Encinitas	Richard Phillips	November 20, 2001 April 9, 2002 September 9, 2002	Discuss/refine alternatives and review proposed LOSSAN improvements
	Kristi Guerin, Mayor Richard Phillips	Ongoing communication	LOSSAN Corridor Status and alignment options
Dana Point (City of)	Douglas C. Chotkevys	August 8, 2002 April 25, 2003	Program update and screening recommendations
	Douglas Chotkevys and other officials from surrounding cities	June 24, 2003	South Orange County alignment issues
	Douglas Chotkevys	Ongoing communication	Alignment issues
Del Mar Rail Committee	N/A	January 6, 2003	Presentation
Del Mar Residents	Jim Eckmann Hershell Price	Ongoing communication	Del Mar alignment options
Disney Corporation	N/A	August 14, 2001	Briefed on emerging recommendations
	Lisa Pitney, Government Relations	February 26, 2003 March 18, 2003	Program update
Don Breazeale & Associates	Don Breazeale Jeff Amos	Ongoing communication	LOSSAN corridor alignment options
El Toro Planning Authority	Bruce Nestande	October 1, 2001	Update of HSR Study
Foothill Toll Corridor Agency	James Brown	April 25, 2001 October 29, 2002	Caltrans potential joint study, Foothill toll road alignment
Gateway Cities COG	Richard Powers	April 5, 2001 May 7, 2001 March 20, 2003	Presentations, alignment alternatives and station issues
Huntington Beach (City of)	Ralph Bauer, Councilmember	Ongoing communication	Program updates
I-5 Coalition	Ralph Webb	May 18, 2001 July 16, 2001	Alternatives and issues
Irvine (City of)	William Jacobs	April 2, 2001	Alternatives and issues
	Farideh Lyons Paul Glaab	Ongoing communication	LOSSAN Corridor Status and alignment options
James R. Mills (former CA Senator)	James R. Mills	November 28, 2001	Corridor Tour
Korve Engineering	Bill Farquhar	Ongoing communication	South Orange County Cities alignment alternatives issues
Lee Andrews Group	Donna Lee Andrews (representing Marblehead)	June 10, 2003	Potential impacts to Marblehead Development

**Table 8-1  
Organizations, Agencies, and Businesses Contacted (continued)**

Organization	Contact	Date	Topic
Los Angeles (City of)	Ruth Galanter, Councilmember Niki Tennant	August 2, 2001 August 15, 2001 February 6, 2003	Program updates and status
Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (LACMTA)	James de la Loza	March 15, 2001 May 2, 2001	Alternatives and issues
Los Angeles World Airports	Patrick Tomcheck	April 19, 2001 May 24, 2001 August 22, 2002	Alternatives and issues, LAX Coalition meeting, and LAWA presentation on proposed LAX master plan changes
LOSSAN Board of Directors	Linda Culp, SANDAG	June 29, 2001 October 5, 2001 February 15, 2002 May 17, 2002	HSR status report and draft staff recommendations for alignments
LOSSAN Environmental Resource Agencies	Regular Attendees: Teresa Henry & James Ravies, Coast. Comm. Jack Fancher & John DiGregoria, FWS Liz Varnhagen, EPA Linda Culp, SANDAG Pam Beare, CFG Susan DeSaddi, USACOE	June 27, 2002 September 10, 2002 November 26, 2002 March 13, 2003 April 24, 2003 June 4, 2003 July 30, 2003	Program updates, environmental methodologies, purpose and need, alignment and station locations design options, screening recommendations, NEPA 404 issues, and preliminary environmental findings.
LOSSAN Technical Advisory Committee	Linda Culp, SANDAG	August 7, 2001	Briefed on emerging recommendations
		January 29, 2002	Advise of project progress
		August 12, 2002	Program update
LUSK	Jim Johnson	June 10, 2003	Marblehead Development, San Clemente alignment options
Metrolink	Deadra Knox	March 5, 2001 December 17, 2001 February 5, 2002 July 10, 2002	Program update, alternatives and issues, and LOSSAN Corridor Status.
	Deadra Knox	Ongoing communication	Program updates
Metropolitan Transit Development Board (MTDB)	Brian Sheehan	November 1, 2001 Ongoing communications	Board Presentation
	Brian Sheehan	Ongoing communication	program updates, alignments and station issues

**Table 8-1  
Organizations, Agencies, and Businesses Contacted (continued)**

Organization	Contact	Date	Topic
North County Transit District (NCTD)	Leslie Blanda	Ongoing communication	Program updates, alignment and station issues, technical studies updates
	Leslie Blanda	August 22, 2002 September 18, 2003	Board Presentations
North Orange County Cities	Kurt Brotcke	October 3, 2001	Draft staff recommendations for alignments
Norwalk (City of)	Ernie Garcia	April 20, 2001	Alternatives and issues
Nossaman	Sara Katz	Ongoing communication	South Orange County alignment options
Oceanside (City of)	Frank Watanabe	July 5, 2001	Alternatives and issues
	Frank Wantanbe	July 17, 2001	Presentation to Transportation Committee
Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA)	Kurt Brotcke Michelle Bitner-Smith Richard Marcus	Ongoing communication	LOSSAN Corridor updates and Orange County alignment options
OCTA Orange County HSR Agency Working Group meetings	Kurt Brotcke, OCTA  Representatives From: OCTA San Juan Capistrano Irvine Santa Ana TCA Buena Park Orange Anaheim San Clemente Laguna Niguel Cypress Tustin Fullerton Mission Viejo Huntington Beach	April 3, 2001 June 7, 2001 July 18, 2001 August 22, 2001 October 24, 2001 December 5, 2001 February 26, 2002 June 19, 2002 August 14, 2002 October 22, 2002 January 30, 2003 March 4, 2003 June 10, 2003 July 31, 2003	Alternatives, emerging recommendations, draft and approved staff alignment recommendations, upcoming outreach meetings and conceptual sketches, Scoping Meetings and Draft No-Build, program update and Environmental findings
Orange County Business Council	N/A	March 11, 2003	Briefing on HSR and Program update
SANDAG	Linda Culp	Ongoing communications	Program Updates, alignment and station options

**Table 8-1  
Organizations, Agencies, and Businesses Contacted (continued)**

Organization	Contact	Date	Topic
SANDAG HSR Task Force Presentations	Linda Culp, SANDAG Task Force Members Invited: Chair Lori Holt Pfeiler, Mayor of Escondido Bob Emery, Poway Art Madrid, La Mesa Joe Kellejian, Solana Beach Pam Slater, San Diego Co. Mickey Cafagna, Poway Ron Morrison, National City Julianne Nygaard, LOSSAN Joint Powers Board John Fowler Richard Earnest, Del Mar Christy Guerin, Encinitas Hal Sadler, CCDC Tom Golish, NCTD Brian Maienschein, MTDB Cmdr. Roger Natsuhara, Department of Defense Ed Gallo, NCTD Nick Inzunza, MTDB Ramona Finnila, Carlsbad	March 8, 2001 May 10, 2001 November 1, 2001 February 20, 2002 June 13, 2002 October 10, 2002 March 14, 2003 May 9, 2003	Alternatives and issues, draft staff recommendations for alignments, and I-15 Corridor alignment options
South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD)	Barry Wallerstein Kathryn Higgins	October 17, 2001	Program Update
San Clemente (City of)	James Holloway	March 27, 2001 May 16, 2001 October 2, 2001 November 19, 2001 June 10, 2003	Alternatives and issues, draft staff recommendations for alignments, alternatives with Marblehead developers and local businesses and communities
	Jim Holloway Stephanie Dorey, Mayor Susan Ritschel, Councilmember	Ongoing communications	South Orange County Alignment options
San Diego (City of)	Keith Greer	May 30, 2001	Alternatives and issues
	Keith Greer Gary Hallburg	August 6, 2002	Program update and review P&P
	Council member Scott Peters	June 25, 2003	Program update and alternatives
San Diego (Port of)	Genene Lehotsky	Ongoing communications	Program update and alignment options
San Diego Airport Working Group	N/A	February 12, 2002	Kick-off Meeting

**Table 8-1**  
**Organizations, Agencies, and Businesses Contacted (continued)**

Organization	Contact	Date	Topic
San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG) Agency "Summit" meetings	Gary Gallegos, SANDAG Linda Culp, SANDAG	May 31, 2001 September 10, 2002 October 10, 2002 December 18, 2002 March 12, 2003	Alternatives and issues, LOSSAN study and strategic plan to discuss EIR/EIS issues and clarify positions
SANDAG Coastal Rail Agency Working Group	Linda Culp, SANDAG Leslie Blanda, NCTD Brian Sheehan, MTDB Darrell Johnson, Amtrak Elizabeth O'Donoghue, Amtrak Deadra Knox, Metrolink	February 27, 2001 March 22, 2001 May 21, 2001 July 5, 2001 August 28, 2001 October 23, 2001 December 5, 2001 February 5, 2002 June 13, 2002 July 30, 2002 September 9, 2002 October 22, 2002 December 3, 2002 February 18, 2003 June 9, 2003	Alternatives, preliminary evaluation of alternatives and emerging recommendations, draft staff alignment recommendations, upcoming outreach meetings and conceptual sketches, draft no-build, and initial environmental findings
SANDAG San Diego Regional High Speed Rail Task Force	Linda Culp, SANDAG Task Force Members Invited: Chair Lori Holt Pfeiler, Mayor of Escondido Bob Emery, Poway Art Madrid, La Mesa Joe Kellejian, Solana Beach Pam Slater, San Diego Co. Mickey Cafagna, Poway Ron Morrison, National City Julianne Nygaard, LOSSAN Joint Powers Board John Fowler Richard Earnest, Del Mar Christy Guerin, Encinitas Hal Sadler, CCDC Tom Golish, NCTD Brian Maienschein, MTDB Cmdr. Roger Natsuhara, Department of Defense Ed Gallo, NCTD Nick Inzunza, MTDB Ramona Finnila, Carlsbad	March 8, 2001 May 10, 2001 November 1, 2001 February 20, 2002 June 13, 2002 October 10, 2002 March 14, 2003 May 9, 2003	Alternatives and issues, draft staff recommendations for alignments, and LOSSAN Corridor alignment options
San Diego Audubon Society	Mel Hensen	Phone call	Program background information



**Table 8-1  
Organizations, Agencies, and Businesses Contacted (continued)**

Organization	Contact	Date	Topic
San Diego County	Pam Slater, Supervisor Sachiko Kohatsu	Ongoing communications	LOSSAN Corridor update and Del Mar alignment options
San Diego League of Cities	N/A	June 11, 2001	Presentation
San Dieguito River Park Joint Powers Authority	N/A	January 29, 2003	Program update
San Juan Capistrano (City of)	John Gelff, Mayor George Scarborough	Ongoing communications	San Juan Capistrano alignment options
	William Huber	December 17, 2001 July 21, 2002 March 4, 2003 March 21, 2003	Discuss/refine alternatives, review P&N and P&P
Shinanksen – Japan Railway Technical Services	Yoshihiro Akiyama	September 19, 2002	Corridor Tour and opportunities and constraints
Sierra Club, Angeles Chapter	N/A	February 12, 2002	Presentation
Society of Military Engineers, San Diego		March 14, 2002	Presentation
Solana Beach (City of)	Joe Kellijian Councilmember	Ongoing communication	LOSSAN Corridor
	N/A	February 13, 2001	Coastal Rail Forum
South Bay Cities COG	N/A	June 28, 2001	Alternatives and issues
South Orange County Rail Working Group	Norm Emerson	Ongoing communication	South Orange County alignment options
Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG)	Deng Bang Lee	January 2003	Existing & Forecast Volumes
	Barry Samsten	February 6, 2003	Transportation Committee Presentation
	Barry Samsten	Ongoing communications	Program Updates
	N/A	February 15, 2001 March 15, 2001	Coordination with SCAG Projects
Torrey Pines Community Association	Donald F. Billings	February 13, 2003	Program updates
Tustin (City of)	Lou Bone, Councilmember	October 7, 2002	Program update and LOSSAN improvements
	Lou Bone	October 21, 2002	City Council Presentation
U.S. Army Corp of Engineers	Susan DeSaddi	Ongoing communication	Environmental methodologies and alternatives analysis
U.S. Congressmember Lucille Roybal-Allard	Congresswoman Lucille Roybal-Allard	February 22, 2002	Program update

**Table 8-1  
Organizations, Agencies, and Businesses Contacted (continued)**

Organization	Contact	Date	Topic
U.S. DOT Federal Secretary Director of LAX	David M. Stone	August 19, 2002	Alignment issues
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency	Nova Blazej	July 16, 2002	Program update, tour corridor and review plans and profiles
	Liz Varnhagen	Ongoing communication	Program updates, screening of alternatives, environmental issues
U.S. Marine Corp	Lt. Col. Craig Meyers	February 27, 2001	Camp Pendleton
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency	Nova Blazej Kathleen Dadey	May 23, 2002 October 21, 2002	Alignment options, system alternatives
	Nova Blazej, Federal Activities Office Kathy Dadey, Wetlands and Sediment Nancy Levin, NEPA Review	July 9, 2002	Review of purpose and need, system alternatives and environmental analysis methodologies
	Nova Blazej Kathleen Dadey Erin Foresman Susan DeSaddi, ACE Mark Sudol, ACE	September 12, 2002	Screening process and documentation for corridor alternatives
	Nova Blazej	Ongoing communication	Alignment options, environmental methodologies
U.S. Senator Barbara Boxer	N/A	March 18, 2002	Program update
	Michael Weise	March 20, 2002 June 7, 2002 March 11, 2003 April 28, 2003	Program updates
U.S. Senator Dianne Feinstein	Senator Dianne Feinstein	October 31, 2001	Program update
	N/A	February 20, 2002	Program update
	Jim Molinari	February 21, 2002	Program update
U.S. DOT Secretary Norman Mineta	Secretary Norman Mineta	November 1, 2002	Alignment issues
U.S. Senator Barbara Boxer	Senator Boxer	December 13, 2002	Alignment issues

## Chapter 9

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Roy Choi, IBI Group	Transit Planner	Transit, Costs & Operations
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Lucy Bowen, HDR	Environmental Program Manager	Environmental Manager; Air Quality; Land Use; Energy; Visual Resources
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Name	Title	Responsibility
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Caroline Evans, AICP HDR	GIS Specialist, Urban Planner	Land Use; Socioeconomics; Environmental Justice; GIS Analysis
Daniel Miller, HDR	Senior Project Manager	Geology, Soils, Seismicity; Hazardous Wastes/Materials; Public Utilities
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LOSSAN, LOS ANGELES TO SAN DIEGO PROPOSED RAIL CORRIDOR  
IMPROVEMENTS IN THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

**FINAL PROGRAM ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT/STATEMENT**

Submitted Pursuant to:

Division 13, Public Resource Code – California Environmental Quality Act  
42 U.S.C. 4332 (2)(c) National Environmental Policy Act

by


Federal Railroad Administration

and

State of California, Department of Transportation


Date

8/28/07

  
Joseph H. Boardman, Administrator  
Federal Railroad Administration

Date

9/4/07

  
Pedro Orso-Delgado, Director, District 11  
California Department of Transportation

Date

9/27/07

  
Cindy Quon, Director, District 12  
California Department of Transportation


Date

9/29/07

  
Douglas R. Failling, Director, District 7  
California Department of Transportation

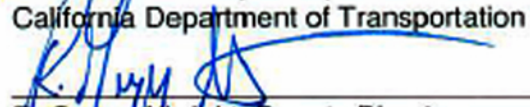
Date

10/16/07

  
for William D. Bronte, Chief, Division of Rail  
California Department of Transportation

Date

10/18/07

  
R. Gregg Albright, Deputy Director,  
Planning and Modal Programs  
California Department of Transportation

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**Abstract**

This Final Program EIR/EIS identifies the need for improvements to the Los Angeles to San Diego (LOSSAN) rail corridor that would help meet the Southern California region's transportation demands of today, as well as help address the expected increase in intercity travel demand resulting from population growth over the next 20 years and beyond. Travel along the corridor is served largely by Interstate 5 (I-5) and the LOSSAN rail corridor. The rail corridor is used by Amtrak intercity passenger rail service, Metrolink and Coaster commuter rail services, and Burlington Northern and Santa Fe (BNSF) freight service, and loosely parallels I-5 from Los Angeles Union Station through Orange County to San Diego's Santa Fe Depot. Southern California's existing transportation network, including this rail corridor, is currently operating at or near its design capacity, resulting in severe congestion. This document describes the costs, benefits, and environmental impacts associated with two alternatives: the No-Project Alternative, which would involve no corridor improvements beyond those projects already programmed, and the Rail Improvements Alternative, which would add grade separations, rail alignment alternatives and other improvements beyond the No-Project, resulting in a completely double-tracked (with four tracks between Los Angeles Union Station and Fullerton) rail corridor from Los Angeles through Orange County to San Diego. The Rail Improvements Alternative has been identified as the preferred alternative.



## SUMMARY

### S.1 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

The Los Angeles to San Diego travel corridor links California's three most populous counties - Los Angeles, Orange and San Diego. Travel along this corridor is served largely by Interstate 5 (I-5) and the Los Angeles to San Diego (LOSSAN) rail corridor<sup>1</sup>. The rail corridor is used by Amtrak intercity passenger rail service, Metrolink and Coaster commuter rail services, and Burlington Northern and Santa Fe Railway (BNSF) freight service, and loosely parallels I-5 from Los Angeles Union Station through Orange County to San Diego's Santa Fe Depot.

For the purposes of this document, intercity rail service refers to the passenger rail service, operated by Amtrak and jointly funded by Amtrak and the California Department of Transportation (Department) and known as the Pacific Surfliner. This service provides daily passenger service between San Diego, Los Angeles, Santa Barbara, and San Luis Obispo (and intermediate communities between these cities). Commuter rail refers to the services provided by Metrolink in Los Angeles, Orange and north San Diego Counties, and Coaster in San Diego County. Since three services regularly utilize the corridor, the expansion plans of each service, and those of BNSF (the freight operator), must be taken into account when considering improvements along the rail corridor.

Southern California's existing transportation network is currently operating at or near its design capacity, which results in congestion. Building additional capacity is both expensive and increasingly problematic. This condition results in highway and railroad travel delays, has a negative impact on the region's economy, and can result in environmental impacts and the reduction of the quality of life for all. Improvements to the LOSSAN rail corridor would help meet the Southern California region's transportation demands of today, as well as help to address the expected increase in intercity travel demand rising out of the growth in population over the next 20 years and beyond. This document describes the costs, benefits, and environmental impacts of improving the LOSSAN rail corridor.

The Department commenced this environmental review process to comply with federal and state laws, in particular the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) (42 U.S.C. § 4321 et seq.) and the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) (Cal. P.R.C. § 21000 et seq.). NEPA requires federal agencies to prepare an environmental impact statement (EIS) for proposed actions that have the potential to cause significant environmental impacts. Because of possible funding and regulatory action, the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) is the lead federal agency, working with the Department as the lead state agency, for the environmental review required by NEPA and related statutes. The FRA has further determined that the preparation of a Tier 1 program-level EIS for the proposed Rail Improvements is the appropriate NEPA document because of the comprehensive nature and scope of the corridor improvements proposed by the Department and the conceptual stage of planning and decision-making. The decisions related to advancing and ultimately constructing the proposed rail improvements would constitute major federal actions requiring environmental review under NEPA for several federal agencies in addition to the FRA. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA),

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<sup>1</sup> While the LOSSAN corridor is officially the "Los Angeles - San Diego - San Luis Obispo" Rail Corridor, the area of the corridor studied and described in this document is that portion between Los Angeles Union Station and San Diego Santa Fe Depot, and within this document, use of the term "LOSSAN" will refer to that segment only.

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), among others, have been active participants throughout project planning and the preparation of this Program EIS.

The proposed Rail Improvements are subject to environmental review under CEQA, and the Department is both the project sponsor and the lead agency for purposes of CEQA compliance. The Department has determined that a program environmental impact report (EIR) is the appropriate CEQA document for the project at this conceptual stage of planning and decision-making, which includes selecting a preferred rail alignment option in some locations and identifying options for phasing the future development of the Rail Improvements. No permits will be sought in this phase of environmental review. If the Rail Improvements Alternative is selected at the conclusion of the Program EIR/EIS, project development will continue with project-specific environmental documentation to assess in more detail the impacts of reasonable and feasible alignment and station options in segments of the system that are proposed for implementation.

## S.2 STUDIES LEADING TO THE PROGRAM EIR/EIS

Since 1998, four planning and feasibility studies have been completed that are relevant to the LOSSAN corridor. The first of these was conducted in 1998-1999 by the California High-Speed Rail Authority (Authority), building on previous work done in 1996 by the past California Intercity High-Speed Rail Commission. This study determined that dedicated<sup>2</sup> high-speed rail service in the LOSSAN rail corridor south of central Orange County was problematic and costly to construct. The 1999 study also concluded that conventional (non-electric) rail improvements in the LOSSAN corridor should be further evaluated.

The Department and others prepared the second and third planning studies, addressing proposed capital improvements and service goals for the state rail system, including the LOSSAN corridor. These rail plans, Amtrak's California Passenger Rail System 20-Year Improvement Plan (2001) and the Department's California State Rail Plan (2002) (State Rail Plan), helped form the basis for the Department's alternatives development, and led to the initiation of this program-level environmental review process.

The Department's Notice of Preparation (NOP) for this Program EIR/EIS was released March 11, 2002, and the Notice of Intent (NOI) was published in the Federal Register on March 20, 2002. Scoping activities for the LOSSAN corridor were conducted between April 2 and April 30, 2002 (scoping period). The scoping process identified areas of potential concern related to the proposed LOSSAN corridor improvements. Throughout the corridor, comments consistently indicated the need for an improved transportation system focusing on safety and new alignments located away from environmentally sensitive areas.

Finally, the Department's LOSSAN Corridor Strategic Plan (Strategic Plan) (2003) provided a corridor-wide review of all alternatives. This planning document served as a means to consider and refine alternatives in the ongoing PEIR/PEIS process. A series of public workshops provided an additional opportunity for public outreach, beyond that provided during the Scoping Process, and fostered better communication and understanding among stakeholders. In addition to the public workshops, meetings with elected representatives were held, as well as with working groups comprised of transportation agencies and other stakeholders, including state and federal resource agencies, FRA, and the Authority.

<sup>2</sup> "Dedicated" service would not share tracks with existing passenger and freight rail services.

The Strategic Plan served as the Department's alternative evaluation document, allowing for the elimination of certain design options at key locations within the corridor (San Juan Capistrano, Dana Point/San Clemente, Encinitas, Del Mar), so as to focus on a range of feasible alternatives. As well, through the Strategic Plan's consultative process, new alignments were presented by local working groups, leading to consideration of additional design options in San Juan Capistrano and Del Mar.

### **S.3 PURPOSE OF AND NEED FOR IMPROVED INTERCITY TRANSPORTATION IN SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA**

The purpose of the proposed Rail Improvements in the LOSSAN corridor is to develop a faster, safer, and more reliable passenger rail system that provides added capacity in response to increased travel demand through the year 2020 between Los Angeles, Orange, and San Diego Counties (between Los Angeles Union Station and San Diego Santa Fe Depot).

As stated in the current State Rail Plan and the Strategic Plan, the Department has described its overall objectives and policies for intercity rail improvements. These objectives and policies include the following:

- Increase the cost-effectiveness of State-supported intercity passenger rail systems.
- Increase capacity on existing routes.
- Reduce travel times to attract additional riders and to provide a more attractive service.
- Improve the safety of State-supported intercity rail service.

In addition to the policies set forth in the State Rail Plan, minimizing impacts to natural resources (e.g. wetlands, wildlife habitat) and human communities are also important objectives of the Department regarding any improvement within the rail corridor.

The capacity of Southern California's intercity transportation system (shown in Figure S.3-1) is insufficient to meet existing and future demand, and the current and projected future congestion of the system will continue to result in deteriorating air quality, reduced reliability, and increased travel times. The intercity rail system has not kept pace with the tremendous increase in population and tourism in the state. The interstate highway system and passenger rail system serving the intercity travel market are currently operating at or near capacity and will require large public investments for maintenance and expansion in order to meet existing demand and future growth over the next 20 years and beyond. Simply stated, the need for improvements to the corridor relates to the following issues.

- Future growth in travel demand for passenger trips between Los Angeles, Orange and San Diego Counties, as population increases from 16.6 million (2003) to 19.3 million by 2020, and trips rise from 36 million in 1997 to approximately 47 million by 2020<sup>3</sup>.
- Rail capacity constraints that will result in congestion and travel delays. Roughly 41 percent of the corridor is currently single-tracked, causing delays for passenger and commuter rail services as well as freight movements.

<sup>3</sup> Charles River Associates Incorporated, *Independent Ridership and Passenger Revenue Projections for High Speed Rail Alternatives in California*, January 2000.

- Unreliability of travel stemming from congestion and delays, weather conditions, accidents and other factors that affect the quality of life and economic well-being of residents, businesses, and tourism in Southern California. The improvements proposed in this document would increase on-time performance for rail services and reduce delay for both automobiles and trains.
- Increasing frequency of accidents on intercity highways and passenger rail lines in congested travel corridors, and the potential for accidents at at-grade crossings as highway and rail traffic volumes increase. While rail is already one of the safest modes of transportation, improvements such as new grade separations and pedestrian crossings will reduce auto-train accidents and improve safety.
- Poor and deteriorating air quality and pressure on natural resources as a result of expanded highway construction, motor vehicle use and congestion. Moving passengers by rail produces significantly less pollution per passenger mile than by automobile and can help reduce air pollution. As well, mitigating and reducing the impacts of rail service and protection of important coastal and environmental resources has been a consideration when selecting and evaluation improvements.

## S.4 ALTERNATIVES

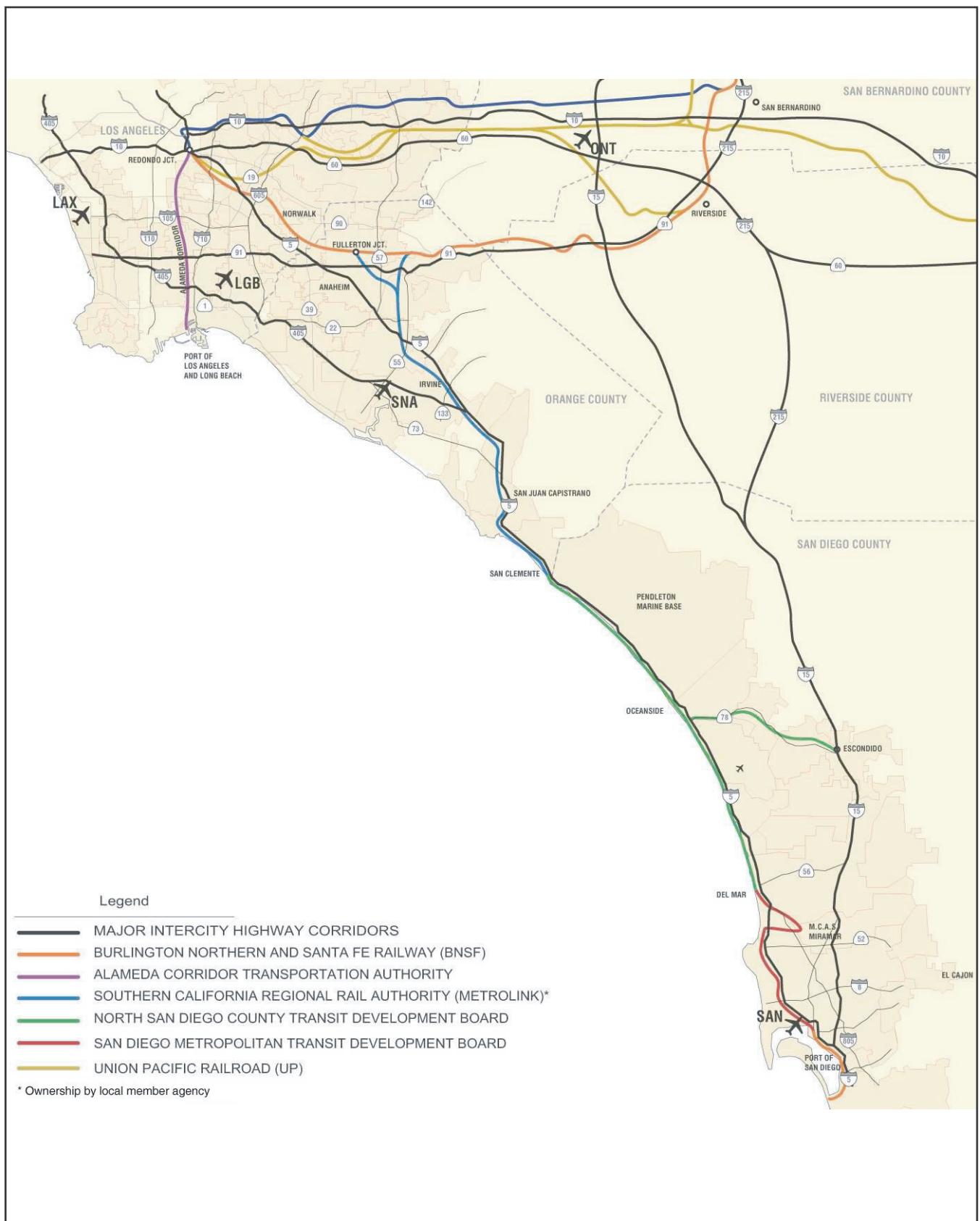
The Draft Program EIR/EIS compares two alternatives: a No-Project/No Action (No-Project) Alternative and a Rail Improvements Alternative. Each alternative is described in the following paragraphs.

### S.4.1 No-Project Alternative

The No-Project Alternative (No-Project) is the baseline for comparison of the Rail Improvements Alternative, and represents the LOSSAN region's transportation system (highway and conventional rail) as it would be after implementation of programs or projects that are currently programmed in Regional Transportation Plans (RTPs) and that are funded for implementation and expected to be in place by 2020. This financially constrained level of infrastructure improvement (which includes federal, state, regional, and local funding) is analyzed together with the significant growth in population and transportation demand that is projected to occur by 2020.

Additional modeling conducted after the release of the Draft document identified that the rail network will not be capable of supporting the rail service volumes proposed in the No-Project Alternative. Further analysis identified the "Maximum Threshold" of train volumes that could operate under the No-Project Alternative at an acceptable level of performance, which represents a reduction of 10% across intercity passenger rail, commuter rail, and freight rail services from the originally planned volumes. As well, additional minor improvement projects were identified to support the service levels, all of which can be accomplished within the existing rail right-of-way. All the intercity passenger rail system improvements identified in the State Transportation Improvement Plan (STIP) and in the Department's California Intercity Rail Capital Program for implementation in the LOSSAN corridor prior to 2020 are included in the No-Project Alternative and are identified in Table S.4.3-1.

Some No-Project Rail Improvements have already been addressed in project NEPA and/or CEQA documentation, while others are in the project environmental review process. For example, the Run-Through Tracks project at Los Angeles Union Station is being addressed in a project-specific EIR/EIS.



**FIGURE S.3-1**  
**Los Angeles to San Diego Intercity Travel Routes**  
 LOSSAN Rail Corridor Improvements  
 Program Environmental Impact Report / Environmental Impact Statement





Currently, 41 percent of the 127.5 mile portion of the LOSSAN Corridor under study consists of single track. Following the completion of all projects listed under the No-Project Alternative in Table 2.4.3-1, 25 percent of the corridor will remain single-tracked. State-of-the-art, non-electric, clean air, steel-wheel-on-steel-rail technology will continue be used along the corridor, similar to the technology being operated by passenger services along the corridor today. As track and signaling permits, train speeds will rise (though existing equipment is capable of achieving speeds of 110 to 125 miles per hour (mph) today).

By 2020, rail service along the corridor is projected to consist of 32 intercity trains, between 19 and 66 commuter trains, and between 12 and 98 freight trains each day<sup>1</sup>, as is shown in Figure S.4-1. Service quality at this volume of trains is uncertain, with increased risk of delay risks associated with train operations, breakdowns or rail maintenance activities.

## S.4.2 Rail Improvements Alternative

The Rail Improvements Alternative represents the proposed action, and was developed by studying a comprehensive range of alignment and station options. Screening of these options was accomplished with public input during the scoping period and with preparation of the LOSSAN Strategic Plan (2003). The Department reviewed and concurred with decisions regarding the LOSSAN region made by the Authority in its studies related to a statewide high-speed train system. For more information on this process, see Chapter 2 of the Program EIR/EIS Report. The Authority's work led to the elimination of some initial design options, train technologies, and several new potential rail corridors within the LOSSAN region. The Department agreed with the decisions of the Authority in the Strategic Plan and, therefore, eliminated the same options from further evaluation in this Program EIR/EIS.

As in the No-Project Alternative, state-of-the-art, non-electric, clean air, steel-wheel-on-steel-rail technology will be used along the corridor, similar to the technology being operated by passenger services along the corridor today. While the No-Project Alternative would reduce the percentage of single track, the Rail Improvements Alternative would eliminate the remaining single-tracked segments (which represent key bottlenecks), resulting in a double-tracked rail corridor, with four tracks between Los Angeles Union Station and Fullerton. Trains will be able to achieve their maximum operational speeds of up to 110 to 125 miles per hour (mph), reducing trip times. Elimination of at-grade crossings in many locations and state-of-the-art safety and signaling systems throughout the corridor will also be incorporated.

As shown in Figure S.4-1, 2020 rail service volumes along the corridor are projected to increase, and commuter rail service (Metrolink and Coaster) to double by 2020. As stated previously rail volume would consist of 32 intercity trains, between 19 and 66 commuter trains (depending on the segment of the corridor), and between 12 and 98 freight trains each day<sup>2</sup>. The improved system as a result of the Rail Improvements Alternative will be better able to accommodate the projected train volume, allowing for reduced trip time and more reliable service, as well as create the flexibility to respond to train breakdowns or maintenance needs.

To accommodate the existing and projected growth in the ridership along the corridor and provide a reliable and competitive alternative to the automobile, a series of operational and safety improvement options has been developed for the LOSSAN corridor. In certain areas along the corridor, multiple options are considered to meet the goals and purpose and need of the project. In such cases, these options in the Rail Improvements Alternative are categorized

<sup>1</sup> These forecast volumes vary depending on the corridor segment, and include the total number of trains in both directions.

<sup>2</sup> These forecast volumes range depending on the corridor segment, and include the total number of trains in both directions.

into “High” and “Low” level ranges. The highest level of improvement is based on combining the alignment/construction options within a rail segment that would involve the most extensive infrastructure investment and/or construction complexity. For example, where there is an at-grade option and a trenching option in the same general alignment, the trenching option was used in the highest-level route and the at-grade option was used in the lowest-level route. Where two tunnel options are the only options in one sub-segment, the longer tunnel was included in the highest-level route. In this way, a range of potential corridor-wide impacts is presented for combinations of improvement options.

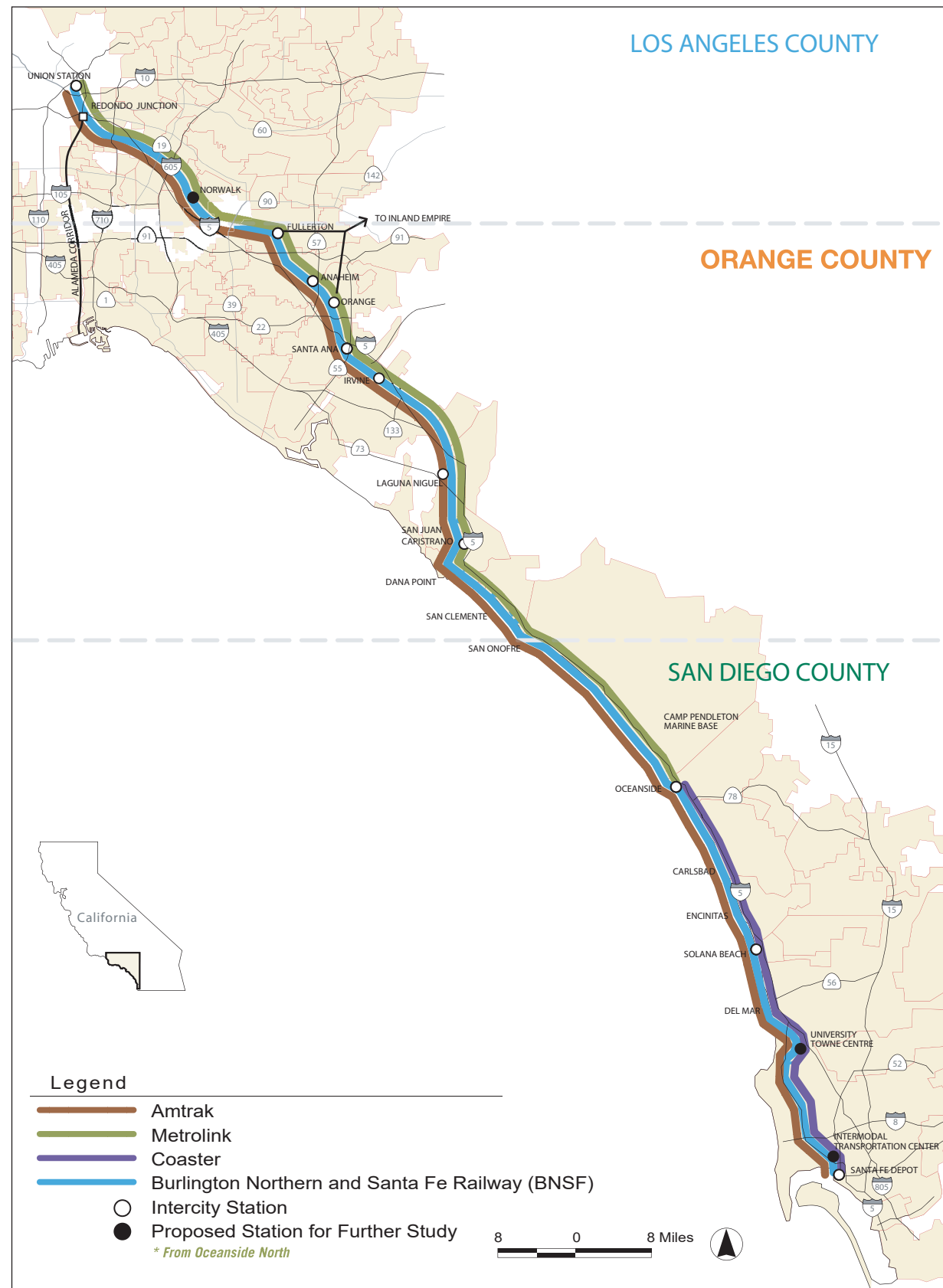
The cost to implement the proposed Rail Improvements Alternative is estimated to range between \$3.8 billion and \$5.4 billion (2003 dollars), depending on whether the Low- or High-Build Rail Improvements Alternative is implemented or a combination of either. The cost estimate includes right-of-way, additional track, tunneling, trenching, stations and mitigation.

The process used to define and assess alternatives has been extensive and thorough, and included a series of public scoping meetings and the formation of an interagency group comprised of representatives from eight key federal and state agencies:

- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- National Marine Fisheries Service (NOAA Fisheries)
- California Coastal Commission
- California State Parks
- California Department of Fish and Game
- State Water Resources Control Board (California)

The interagency group has met periodically during the Draft Program EIS/EIR development to discuss major issues from the perspective of each of their agencies and to provide input to the lead agencies and consultant team to help focus the analysis and streamline the review process, and have assisted in:

- Defining the scope of the Program EIR/EIS
- Reviewing and providing input to the Purpose and Need Statement
- Reviewing and providing input to the technical methods of analysis and study area definition
- Identifying substantive issues of particular concern
- Suggesting sources of information and data relevant to their agency
- Defining avoidance, minimization and mitigation strategies
- Reviewing and providing input to the screening process and definition of alternatives to be analyzed in this EIR/EIS
- Reviewing and providing input on preliminary findings pertinent to agency expertise
- Identifying procedural requirements and permits or approvals necessary for subsequent phases of environmental review.



	2005 ESISTING VOLUMES*	2020 FORECAST VOLUMES*
Los Angeles – Fullerton	<b>22 Amtrak</b> <b>28 Metrolink</b> 45 BNSF	<b>32 Amtrak</b> <b>42 Metrolink</b> 98 BNSF
Fullerton – Orange	<b>22 Amtrak</b> <b>19 Metrolink</b> 7 BNSF	<b>32 Amtrak</b> <b>48 Metrolink</b> 12 BNSF
Orange – Irvine	<b>22 Amtrak</b> <b>31 Metrolink</b> 7 BNSF	<b>32 Amtrak</b> <b>66 Metrolink</b> 12 BNSF
Laguna Niguel – San Clemente	<b>22 Amtrak</b> <b>18 Metrolink</b> 7 BNSF	<b>32 Amtrak</b> <b>32 Metrolink</b> 12 BNSF
San Clemente – Oceanside	<b>22 Amtrak</b> <b>18 Metrolink</b> 7 BNSF	<b>32 Amtrak</b> <b>32 Metrolink</b> 12 BNSF
Oceanside – San Diego	<b>22 Amtrak</b> 7 BNSF <b>22 Coaster</b>	<b>32 Amtrak</b> 12 BNSF <b>54 Coaster</b>

\* Train volumes as used in forecast modeling. Volumes represent total number of trains in both directions



The Department, together with FRA and the Authority, also invited input from regional and local agencies within the project area. Regional transportation agency Board meetings and working-group meetings have provided forums for discussion of the environmental process and the development of alternatives that could meet travel needs in the LOSSAN region. These meetings have been held in San Diego, Oceanside, Orange County and Los Angeles to provide convenient on-going opportunities for regional and local participation and input. As a result of early public involvement, the following additional alternatives were developed:

- Trabuco Creek (San Juan Capistrano)
- Long Tunnel (Dana Point/San Clemente)
- South Orange County Inland Bypass
- Peñasquitos Lagoon Bypass

Opportunities for public involvement and input in the environmental review process have also been thorough and on-going, through the Public Scoping meetings, through meetings with individual corridor cities and stakeholders, and through the five workshops conducted in cities along the corridor during the development of the LOSSAN Corridor Strategic Plan. The workshops provided the public with an overview of the corridor and the rail improvements under study, including information on the following topics.

- Purpose, Goals and Need for Improvements in the corridor.
- Corridor facts, including rail owners and operators and details on freight services, and current and projected weekday train volumes of each.
- Types of services provided (Intercity Rail, Commuter Rail, and Freight).
- Ranges of costs, rail performance issues, and community/environmental issues of projects throughout the corridor.
- Design options and alternatives at four key locations along the corridor where the range of options was sufficiently broad to allow the screening out of some options, the recommendations for screening, and the rationale and criteria used to reach the recommended screening decisions.
- The Planning Process, including timelines for the completion of the Strategic Plan and the Department's Program EIR/EIS.

### **S.4.3 Summary of Corridor Improvement Alternatives**

This document provides a corridor-wide comparison of the physical and operational characteristics and potential environmental consequences associated with the Rail Improvements Alternative's alignment and station options.

As previously mentioned, options in the Rail Improvements Alternative are further categorized into "High Build" and "Low Build" scenarios. There are numerous possible combinations of alignment and construction options evaluated in the Rail Improvements Alternative. The document describes corridor-wide potential impacts by grouping the many possible route alignment combinations between Union Station and San Diego, using combinations of the highest and lowest level of improvements that could occur within each rail segment.

The following table provides a summary of all LOSSAN rail corridor projects contained in the No-Project and Rail Improvements Alternative (and High/Low ranges).

The table shows corridor Improvement Alternatives by area:

- Los Angeles Union Station to Irvine
- Irvine to San Clemente
- Camp Pendleton/Oceanside to San Diego Santa Fe Station

**Table S.4.3-1  
Corridor Improvement Alternatives**

Segment/Alternative Considered	No-Project Alternative*	"Low-Build" Rail Improvements Alternative	"High-Build" Rail Improvements Alternative
<b>LA Union Station to Irvine (Central Orange County)</b>			
	Existing Rail Corridor	Partially-grade separated system	Fully grade-separated system
L.A. Union Station Run-through tracks	<b>X</b> (All projects shown are programmed and assumed built by 2020)		
Continuous third main track from Union Station to Fullerton	<b>X</b>		
Double tracking along Lincoln Avenue in Santa Ana	<b>X</b>		
Addition of Fourth Main Track (including full grade separation)		<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>
Double Tracking and Curve Straightening (including Covered Trench in Orange and Santa Ana) (including full grade separation)			<b>X</b>
Double Tracking and Curve Straightening (including partial grade separation)		<b>X</b>	
<b>Irvine to San Clemente (Central Orange County to Northern San Diego County)</b>			
Double Tracking and Curve Straightening (including Tunnel beneath I-5 between Hwy 73 and Avenida Aeropuerto)			<b>X</b>
Double Tracking and Curve Straightening (including Covered Trench along Trabuco Creek and Avenida Aeropuerto)		<b>X</b>	
Dana Point Curve Straightening; San Clemente – Short Tunnel; Double Tracking		<b>X</b>	
San Clemente – Long Split Two Segment Tunnel with Station; Double Tracking			<b>X</b>



**Table S.4.3-1  
Corridor Improvement Alternatives (continued)**

Segment/Alternative Considered	No-Project Alternative*	"Low-Build" Rail Improvements Alternative	"High-Build" Rail Improvements Alternative
<b>Camp Pendleton/Oceanside (Northern San Diego County) to San Diego</b>			
Extension of double track at San Onofre	<b>X</b>		
Extension of double track in Oceanside	<b>X</b>		
Sorrento-Miramar double-tracking and curve realignment	<b>X</b>		
O'Neill to Flores double-tracking	<b>X</b>		
Santa Margarita River Bridge Replacement and double-tracking	<b>X</b>		
Del Mar Bluffs stabilization	<b>X</b>		
Double Tracking and Curve Straightening along existing alignment (including full grade separation) – Carlsbad/Oceanside			<b>X</b>
Double Tracking and Curve Straightening along existing alignment (including partial grade separation) – Carlsbad/Oceanside		<b>X</b>	
Double Tracking and Curve Straightening along existing alignment (including full grade separation) – Encinitas			<b>X</b>
At-Grade Double Tracking and Curve Straightening along existing alignment (including partial grade separation) - Encinitas		<b>X</b>	
Double Tracking and Curve Straightening (including tunnel along Interstate-5) – Del Mar			<b>X</b>
Double Tracking and Curve Straightening (including tunnel under Camino Del Mar) – Del Mar		<b>X</b>	
Double Tracking and Curve Straightening (including tunnel under Interstate-5 Freeway) – University Towne Centre		<b>X</b>	
Double Tracking and Curve Straightening (including tunnel under University City/Miramar Hill with new station) – University Towne Centre			<b>X</b>

**Table S.4.3-1**  
**Corridor Improvement Alternatives (continued)**

Segment/Alternative Considered	No-Project Alternative*	"Low-Build" Rail Improvements Alternative	"High-Build" Rail Improvements Alternative
Double Tracking and Curve Straightening; San Diego River Bridge		X	
Double Tracking and Curve Straightening; San Diego River Bridge; Trench between Sassafras St and Cedar St (includes partial or full grade separation)			X

## S.5 OPERATIONS SUMMARY

The Rail Improvements Alternative will reduce train travel times and increase the capacity of the corridor, meeting the need for a safe and reliable mode of travel that would attract additional passengers to the rail services. Both the Low- and High-Build Rail Improvements Alternative would provide for competitive point-to-point travel times between Southern California's major intercity markets. Table S.5-1 below summarizes the point-to-point scheduled travel times between Los Angeles and San Diego, comparing the existing automobile and rail travel times with the No-Project, Low and High Build Rail Improvements Alternative. In addition to providing faster train travel, the improvements provided in both the Low- and High-Build Rail Improvements Alternative would enhance the connectivity and accessibility to the other transit modes and services when compared to the No-Project Alternative.

**Table S.5-1**  
**Estimated Point-to-Point Scheduled Travel Times**  
**(Hours: Minutes)**

	Existing Condition		2020			
			No-Project Alternative		Rail Improvements Alternative	
	Auto	Rail	Auto <sup>1</sup>	Rail	Low	High
<b>Los Angeles to San Diego</b>	2:35	2:44	3:15	2:36	1:58	1:48

The automobile and rail travel times presented in Table S.5-1 represent the expected travel times between Los Angeles and San Diego. These are the projected travel times that attainable by intercity traffic if every automobile experienced only the average level of congestion along I-5 (e.g. with no additional delays due to accidents, bad weather etc.) and every passenger and freight train ran according to schedule. The rail travel times can vary dramatically based on several variables, such as unexpected train delays, train priorities, daily variations in train volumes specifically related to the freight operators, and maintenance-of-way windows. The existing condition and No-Project Alternative are most susceptible to these variations, as they

<sup>1</sup> 2020 Estimated automobile travel times are expected to be the same in both the No-Project and Rail Improvements Alternatives.

provide fewer tracks than the Rail Improvements Alternative and thereby provide fewer opportunities for trains to use alternative tracks to bypass problem areas.

Under existing conditions intercity passenger rail travel between Los Angeles Union Station and San Diego takes almost 3 hours. This travel time is representative of single-track operations and demonstrates the delay that results from the interference between trains caused by having to wait along a siding for the passing of a train in the opposite direction. In the event of incidents, existing segments of single track can account for even more unreliability and delay in the travel times along the corridor, providing for an even slower travel time.

As shown in Table S.5-1, the No-Project Alternative shows a slight improvement in travel time for intercity passenger trains over the existing condition, mostly due to the provision of a third track between Hobart Yard in the City of Commerce and Fullerton. The model run performed for the No-Project Alternative, assumed that intercity passenger trains would continue to be given priority over freight. By following this operating practice, there was an increase in the proportion of freight trains operating outside of peak passenger hours, which are usually during the morning and early-evening periods. *Without this assumption, the corridor between Hobart Yard and Fullerton would not be able to provide the capacity required to accommodate the projected 2020 passenger train volumes under the No-Project condition.*

With the ridership along the corridor projected to surpass 5 million riders by the year 2020, the improvements currently identified and programmed for this corridor that are part of the No-Project Alternative would do little to relieve the corridor-wide capacity and reliability constraints, though reliability will improve for some train movements, including commuter rail services. As shown in Table S.5-1, without the proposed improvements included in either the Low- or High-Build Rail Improvements Alternative, little to no travel time savings for rail travel between Los Angeles and San Diego would occur along the corridor.

This lack of travel time savings is a direct result of the remaining segments of single track that will still exist in Southern Orange and Central San Diego Counties. The existence of single track segments creates a considerable barrier to achieving faster travel times and improved reliability and connectivity because it causes significant delays in service as a result of trains having to wait at either end of a single tracked segment to allow for trains to pass in the opposite direction. This problem is further aggravated when certain situations (e.g. mechanical failures, track improvements) occur. These types of problems can halt all operations along the corridor because the operational flexibility of a second track is not available, that would otherwise be utilized to bypass the problem. The amount of delay associated with the presence of single track will only increase in the future with the introduction of more and more service onto the corridor.

Implementing the Rail Improvements Alternative provides a fully double-tracked rail corridor that offers passengers six specific advantages over the existing and No-Project Conditions, which maintain large segments of single track sections.

1. Increased capacity and average speed. The proposed corridor improvements would produce improved corridor geometrics, straightening the alignment wherever possible, but most importantly, would eliminate all single track segments, providing greatly increased capacity within the corridor. With these improvements, maximum speeds of 90mph would be possible in urban area (e.g. Los Angeles and San Diego) and 110 to 125mph in more rural areas (e.g. Camp Pendleton). Using the plans and profiles designed for the corridor improvements that incorporate the double-tracking and new geometrics, and track charts where necessary, an operational model was developed

which determined the average speed for the Rail Improvements Alternative would increase an average of 16 to 22 miles per hour (mph) ranging from 63 to 69mph, depending on the improvements selected, when compared to existing conditions (47mph), and an average improvement of only 13 to 19mph when compared to the No-Project Alternative (50mph). These speeds are an average that incorporates the deceleration and acceleration rates for curves and station areas, and locations where speed restrictions may still be present.

2. A significant reduction in travel time. With increased speed there are improved travel times. Depending on which Rail Improvements Alternative are selected, passengers could save as many as 45 to 60 minutes on their trip between Los Angeles and San Diego when compared to the existing conditions. This is a 28 to 34-percent reduction in travel time. The No-Project Alternative only produces an average of an 8-minute (or 5-percent) savings in travel time. These times assume local service, which would stop at all scheduled stations. The Rail Improvements Alternative would be able to further decrease travel times by also allowing for the potential of skip-stopping/express service along the corridor.
3. Increased reliability. With the increase in capacity provided by double-tracking the length of the corridor, reliability would be significantly improved. Both safety and reliability would further increase in the High-Build Rail Improvements Alternative, as this alternative would grade-separate the length of the corridor, eliminating all remaining at-grade crossings.
4. Enhanced Multimodal Opportunities. Slow travel times and restricted reliability often deter people from using public transportation alternatives. With the improvement in reliability and travel times making it easier to reliably connect to other transit modes, passengers would be provided with additional transportation options.
5. Operational Flexibility. Two tracks allow for trains to pass each other easily along all segments of the corridor, eliminating the delay caused by waiting at single-track segments, resulting in shorter travel times and more service reliability. Service options such as express trains (that would skip some stops), and other improved choices for rail passengers would also be possible. The Rail Improvements Alternative would also allow for provide a platform for growth in train operations to accommodate as-yet-unplanned and unforeseeable future rail service expansions.
6. Reduction of Vehicle/Rail Conflicts. The Low-Build Rail Improvements Alternative will significantly reduce the number of at-grade crossings along the corridor, while the High-Build provides for a fully grade-separated corridor. Both of these improvements provide for a significant improvement in:
  - a. *Safety* – Reduces the number of vehicle/rail/pedestrian conflicts at crossings
  - b. *Reliability* – Reduces delays associated with vehicle/rail/pedestrian conflicts for both train and automobiles. Elimination of at-grade crossings reduces the delay of automobile traffic by preventing automobiles from stopping for trains at crossings.
  - c. *Noise* – Eliminates the need for horns at crossings

d. *Pollution/Energy* – By reducing the amount of delay for automobiles at grade crossings, the amount of pollution emitted by idling vehicles is significantly reduced.

7. Benefits to all Corridor Traffic. The LOSSAN corridor is shared by intercity trains (Amtrak), two commuter rail services (Metrolink and Coaster) and freight (Burlington Northern and Santa Fe). This document focuses on improving intercity travel; however, the Rail Improvements Alternative would provide the above benefits to all corridor users.

In summary, implementing the Rail Improvements Alternative would provide the LOSSAN corridor with the capacity, speed and reliability necessary to make it rail services a true attractive alternative to I-5 for intercity travelers, commuters and freight traffic from between Los Angeles, to Orange County and to San Diego.

The individual projects along the corridor identified as part of the Rail Improvements Alternative would provide varying levels of improvement to the corridor wide travel times. Several of the projects would provide significant travel time and reliability enhancements at locations such as those at San Juan Capistrano, San Clemente, Del Mar and Miramar Hill (University City). Table S.5-2 details travel time savings by station segment to summarize how each of the projects within those segments contribute to the overall improvement of the corridor.

**Table S.5-2  
Station Segment Travel Time Comparison  
(Hours: Minutes)**

	Existing Condition	No-Project Alternative	Rail Improvements Alternatives	
			Low	High
Los Angeles to Fullerton	0:37	0:34	0:29	0:26
Fullerton to Anaheim	0:09	0:07	0:06	0:06
Anaheim to Santa Ana	0:10	0:09	0:06	0:06
Santa Ana to Irvine	0:12	0:11	0:08	0:08
Irvine to San Juan Capistrano	0:14	0:13	0:11	0:11
San Juan Capistrano to San Clemente	0:33*	0:09	0:07	0:05
San Clemente to Oceanside		0:24	0:17	0:16
Oceanside to Solana Beach	0:16	0:15	0:10	0:12**
Solana Beach to San Diego	0:33	0:34	0:24	0:18**
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2:44</b>	<b>2:36</b>	<b>1:58</b>	<b>1:48</b>

\* San Clemente station not included in Baseline Condition.

\*\* For the High-Build Rail Improvements Alternative, the travel time break is at the UTC station.

## S.6 KEY ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

The Program EIR/EIS describes the existing conditions for a number of areas of environmental concern and assesses the potential impacts to these areas from both the No-Project and Rail Improvements Alternatives. The following table summarizes by issue the Program EIR/EIS key environmental impact findings for the No-Project Alternative and Rail Improvements Alternative:

**Table S.6-1**  
**Summary of Key Environmental Impacts/Benefits For System Alternatives**

Key Environmental Issues	No-Project Alternative	Potential Significance for No-Project Alternative	Rail Improvements Alternative <sup>1</sup>	Mitigation Strategy for Rail Alternative	Potential Significance for Rail Improvements Alternative	
					Before Mitigation	After Mitigation
<b>Traffic and Circulation</b>	Capacity is insufficient to accommodate the projected growth. All but one of the 8 intercity highway segments considered would operate at unacceptable levels of service with increased congestion, travel delays, and accidents over existing conditions. Congestion would increase considerably from existing conditions.	Potentially Significant	Congestion reduction on intercity highways as compared to the No-Project Alternative. However, the analyses could not take into account potential use of the excess capacity by non-intercity (commuter, and short-distance) trips. Has the potential to help reduce the number of intercity automobile trips. Localized traffic conditions around stations impacted.	Encourage use of transit to stations. Work with transit providers to improve station connections.	Potentially Significant	Potentially Less than Significant
<b>Travel Conditions</b> (Travel Time, Reliability, Safety, Connectivity, Sustainable Capacity, Passenger Cost)	Longer travel times, more delay.  Lower reliability due to increased dependence on the automobile.  Increase in injuries and fatalities due to increase in highway travel.  No net improvement to connectivity options.  No significant increase in capacity for highway infrastructure, and significant worsening of congestion due to increased demand.	Potentially Significant	Travel time reduction as compared to the No-Project Alternative. Greatest improvement in reliability due to higher reliability of the rail mode; additional modal option improves reliability for overall transportation system.  Decrease in injuries and fatalities due to improvements to rail infrastructure  Highest level of connectivity. Provide additional connections to existing modes, additional frequencies, and greater flexibility.  Improved rail system would provide sufficient capacity to meet the representative demand and would provide additional capacity with minimal additional infrastructure.  Overall savings in passenger costs of 39% on average compared to No-Project. Intercity rail passenger costs are competitive with the automobile travel.	Not Applicable	Beneficial	Not Applicable

<sup>1</sup> Quantities are listed as ranges to represent the variation in potential impacts depending on the alignment options selected.



**Table S.6-1**  
**Summary of Key Environmental Impacts/Benefits For System Alternatives (continued)**

Key Environmental Issues	No-Project Alternative	Potential Significance for No-Project Alternative	Rail Improvements Alternative <sup>2</sup>	Mitigation Strategy for Rail Alternative	Potential Significance for Rail Improvements Alternative	
					Before Mitigation	After Mitigation
<b>Air Quality</b> (tons of pollutants; potential violation of NAAQS)	NOx and CO emissions from locomotives in LOSSAN corridor are predicted to increase by 2020 approximately 645% over 2005 levels. Estimated CO 386 tons/year, NO <sub>x</sub> 2,000 tons/year, TOG 108 tons/year; PM 70 tons/year; CO <sub>2</sub> 147,790 tons/year.	Not Applicable	17% increase in locomotive miles and emissions due to proposed project. Potential violation of NOx or other pollutant thresholds or standards with current technology. Air quality benefits from reduced locomotive delays and idling time, vehicular idling at grade crossings. Construction impacts from PM emissions in nonattainment air basins.	Control of construction related emissions.  Diesel filters, automatic anti-idling devices, newer technologies and locomotive standards by 2020 expected to cut NOx and PM by up to 90% of current standards.	Potentially Significant	Potentially Less Than Significant
<b>Energy Use</b>	Energy consumption is estimated to increase by 2020 to 36,969 barrels of oil annual consumption for operation of locomotives in LOSSAN corridor.	No Significant Impact	17% increase in locomotive miles over No-Project levels; annual consumption of 54,960 additional barrel of oil. Some energy consumption reduction would occur due to reduced congestion and grade separation of rail corridor. Construction energy consumption would be potentially significant use of nonrenewable energy.	Minimize grade changes in steep terrain areas to reduce the use of diesel fuel.  Maximize intermodal transit connections to reduce automobile VMT related to the rail system.  Develop and implement a construction energy conservation plan.  Develop potential measures to reduce energy consumption during operation and maintenance activities.	Potentially Significant	Potentially Significant Unavoidable

<sup>2</sup> Quantities are listed as ranges to represent the variation in potential impacts depending on the alignment options selected.

**Table S.6-1**  
**Summary of Key Environmental Impacts/Benefits For System Alternatives (continued)**

Key Environmental Issues	No-Project Alternative	Potential Significance for No-Project Alternative	Rail Improvements Alternative <sup>2</sup>	Mitigation Strategy for Rail Alternative	Potential Significance for Rail Improvements Alternative	
					Before Mitigation	After Mitigation
<b>Land Use</b> (Compatibility and Property Impacts)	Expansion of urban sprawl as population grows and congestion increases; development on open space. Existing barriers resulting from existing LOSSAN rail corridor in some communities and coastal areas would remain.	No Impact	Most alignments highly compatible with land uses because of existing rail corridor or tunnel proposals. Small amount of property acquisition along existing rail corridor, some acquisition along new rights of way with one alignment option; between 5 and 7 mi. of improvements could affect high impact land uses.	Continued coordination with local agencies, including opportunities for joint and mixed-use development at stations.  Relocation assistance during future project-level review.  Design refinements to avoid tunnel portals and other infrastructure in residential neighborhoods.	Potentially Significant	Potentially Less Than Significant
<b>Visual Quality</b>	No predictable change to existing landscape. Existing visual impacts of rail corridor on beaches and coastal views would remain.	No Significant Impact	High sensitivity in scenic open space and residential coastal views. Some beneficial impacts would occur by removing existing service from beaches and coastal bluffs. Potentially significant impacts in lagoon areas where new elevated structures may be built.	Design strategies to minimize bulk and shading of bridges. Use of neutral colors and materials to blend with surrounding landscape features.	Potentially Significant	Potentially Less Than Significant
<b>Noise</b>	More vehicular traffic, rail and air operations from growth in the intercity demand generates more noise. Existing high impacts to noise-sensitive land use/populations would continue or worsen. Noise from train horns and warning bells at grade crossings would worsen due to projected 60% increase in rail traffic by 2020. More freight service would likely run at night	Potentially significant noise impacts between Union Station and Fullerton during nighttime hours from increased freight traffic.	20 miles of alignment length in region would have high impacts to noise sensitive land use/populations (most of which are already impacted by existing rail corridor). Noise increase due to increased speeds of trains and 10% increase in train volume in the LOSSAN corridor, compared with No-Project Alternative. Substantial noise reduction from existing and 2020 No-Project conditions due to elimination of horn warning bell noise at grade crossings	Consider sound barriers or berms in some areas along noise sensitive corridors, possibly building insulation; good track maintenance for vibration.	Potentially Significant	Potentially Less Than Significant

**Table S.6-1  
Summary of Key Environmental Impacts/Benefits For System Alternatives (continued)**

Key Environmental Issues	No-Project Alternative	Potential Significance for No-Project Alternative	Rail Improvements Alternative <sup>2</sup>	Mitigation Strategy for Rail Alternative	Potential Significance for Rail Improvements Alternative	
					Before Mitigation	After Mitigation
	to accommodate increased volumes.		resulting from grade separation of existing rail line in most alignment options.			
<b>Biology / Wetlands</b> (Includes area within 100 feet on either side of centerline of alignment)	No predictable change from existing conditions.	No Impact	Up to 28 acres of sensitive vegetation, 12,564-15,541 linear feet of non-wetland jurisdictional waters, 20-27 acres of wetlands, and 36-46 special-status species could be affected directly or indirectly.	Work with resource agencies to develop site specific mitigation and impact avoidance strategies for project level review. Project-level reviews will include coordination on local and regional habitat conservation plans.	Potentially Significant	Potentially Significant Unavoidable
<b>Hydrologic Resources and Water Quality</b> (Includes area within 100 feet on each side of alignment centerline 200 feet total.)	No predictable change from existing conditions.	No Impact	Between 205 and 315 acres of floodplains, 11,760 and 13650 linear feet of streams, and up to 12 acres of lagoons within 100 feet of proposed alignment options, plus some areas crossing the California Coastal Basin Aquifer.	Avoid or minimize footprint in floodplains; conduct project-level analysis of surface hydrology and coastal lagoons; Best Management Practices for construction as part of SWPPP.	Potentially Significant	Potentially Less Than Significant/ Potentially Significant Unavoidable
<b>Section 4 (f) 6 (f) (Parks, Wildlife Refuges)</b> (Includes area within 900 feet on each side of alignment centerline (1,800 feet total).)	No predictable change from existing conditions.	No Impact	From 29 to 33 Section 4 (f) or 6(f) properties could be affected. Most along existing rail corridor so impacts may be minimized. Some opportunity for new parklands to be created where rail would be removed from beaches.	Evaluate site-specific design refinements to avoid parklands; identify potential site specific measures to minimize harm.	Potentially Significant	Potentially Less Than Significant / Potentially Significant Unavoidable

**Table S.6-1**  
**Summary of Key Environmental Impacts/Benefits For System Alternatives (continued)**

Key Environmental Issues	No-Project Alternative	Potential Significance for No-Project Alternative	Rail Improvements Alternative <sup>2</sup>	Mitigation Strategy for Rail Alternative	Potential Significance for Rail Improvements Alternative	
					Before Mitigation	After Mitigation
<b>Cultural Resources (Including Section 4(f) Historic Resources)</b>	Low ranking for impacts to archaeological resources and historic property.	No Significant Impact	Medium to High ranking for potential impacts to archaeological resources and historic properties (Many improvements would use existing rail corridor and stations; nearby resources developed in historic period). Tunnel options would avoid most impacts.	Develop procedures for field work, identification, evaluation and determination of effects for cultural resources in consultation with SHPO and Native American Tribes	Potentially Significant	Potentially Significant Unavoidable
<b>Growth Inducement</b>	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Rail improvements would not induce growth because improvements would accommodate projected rail service increases between now and 2020. May change rate of some development around new station (potentially at University Towne Centre	Work with local communities to design station access and facilities to blend with area and provide appropriate mixed-use development that complies with land use plans and codes; also work with communities to develop higher density developments around stations as appropriate.	No Significant Impact	Not Applicable
<b>Public Utilities</b>	No Impact	No Impact	Potential conflicts with 22 transmission lines, 44 gas lines, 5 ocean outfalls, and 2 major sewer lines. depending on alignments	Relocate or reconstruct or restore utility, consolidate several utilities underground into one conduit during relocation	Potentially Significant	Potentially Less Than Significant

**Table S.6-1**  
**Summary of Key Environmental Impacts/Benefits For System Alternatives (continued)**

Key Environmental Issues	No-Project Alternative	Potential Significance for No-Project Alternative	Rail Improvements Alternative <sup>2</sup>	Mitigation Strategy for Rail Alternative	Potential Significance for Rail Improvements Alternative	
					Before Mitigation	After Mitigation
<b>Geology</b>	Potentially susceptible to seismic hazards; coastal bluffs in Del Mar and San Clemente would continue to require stabilization for reliable operation of existing rail service.	Potentially Significant (could be mitigated to Potentially Less Than Significant)	Potential seismic hazards, slope stability in cut sections. Would remove rail service from coastal bluffs in Del Mar and San Clemente, reducing stability problems.	Use of ground motion data and instruments.  Routine maintenance of track, slope reinforcement.  Project-level design to minimize cut-and-fill; Best Management Practices to prevent tunnel subsidence.	Potentially Significant; Beneficial in coastal bluff areas.	Potentially Less Than Significant
<b>Hazardous Materials</b>	No Impact	No Impact	Disposal, clean-up or remediation of exposure to hazardous materials during construction. Two Superfund, SPL or SWLF sites potentially affected by construction.	Detailed Initial Site Assessment, avoid sites where practicable, sub-surface investigation where needed to characterize sites and identify remediation	Potentially Significant	Potentially Less Than Significant

## S.7 AREAS OF CONTROVERSY

The LOSSAN Corridor passes through three of the most densely populated counties in California, as well as through areas of sensitive environmental and community concern. Consequently, many of the projects identified in this Program EIR/EIS may be controversial. Specific issues, such as which of the proposed alignment and station options would be most appropriate in a given location would be decided following a project-level environmental review process for each proposed project, assuming a decision is made following completion of the Program EIR/EIS process to advance the Rail Improvements Alternative.

The following paragraphs highlight controversial project areas along the corridor and potential impacts and mitigations.

### Los Angeles Union Station to Fullerton (North Orange County)

- Gateway Cities – Fourth main track – Right-of-Way to accommodate the provision of a fourth track would require the acquisition of some properties (largely industrial) in certain areas.

### Fullerton to Irvine (North-Central Orange County)

- Orange, Santa Ana – Provision of grade separations (including possible trenches) in these communities would increase the quality of life along the rail corridor, with improved traffic circulation, vehicular/pedestrian safety, and greatly reduced noise impacts due to the elimination of the need to sound the train's horn as it approaches frequent existing at-grade crossings. However, there would likely be construction impacts and concerns about preservation of historic structures adjacent to the corridor.

### Irvine to San Clemente (Central – South Orange County)

- San Juan Capistrano – Trabuco Creek alignment, Spur track to existing station (if I-5 alignment selected). There are potential resource concerns associated with a Trabuco Creek alignment, as well as how Commuter Rail service might be maintained to the existing San Juan Capistrano station if the I-5 alignment option is selected.
- Dana Point/San Clemente – Short Tunnel – There are continuing concerns regarding the Short Tunnel and its potential impacts to the Marblehead development in San Clemente, a planned desalination plant in Dana Point, as well as continuing issues with regard to beach access, stability of local bluffs, and noise issues.

### Oceanside to San Diego (San Diego County)

- Lagoons throughout Coastal San Diego County. Any construction at these sensitive locations requires attention to best management practices to minimize environmental impacts. Design options for crossing these lagoons could have a net environmental benefit, allowing increased tidal flushing and the removal of existing creosote pilings.
- Coastal Rail Trail (Oceanside to San Diego). The Coastal Rail Trail (CRT), a project under development in San Diego County, is being located along a parallel alignment either within or adjacent to the existing railroad right-of-way. The CRT is currently in various stages of implementation with some segments already complete and in use. Depending on the projects and options selected, the Rail Improvements Alternative may require the CRT's temporary or permanent relocation. The CRT is mainly used for transportation purposes, with incidental use for public recreational activities, including,



but not limited to, landscaping, cycling, jogging, and walking. Since transportation in the primary use definition and recreational activities are incidental, Section 4(f) resource protections would not apply to the CRT.

- Carlsbad and Encinitas – Grade separations in Downtown areas include possible trench options, and both communities are sensitive to how these grade separations and their construction would impact pedestrian and vehicle movements in those areas.
- Del Mar/Torrey Pines – Camino del Mar and Peñasquitos Bypass tunnels under consideration in this area would have lagoon impacts in case, as well as potential visual, construction and noise impacts, the former along the existing corridor, and the latter introducing impacts along a new alignment. Potential benefits include removal of the track from the Del Mar bluffs, and design options that could reduce the environmental impacts within the lagoons by reducing fill and increasing tidal flow.

## S.8 CONSEQUENCES FOR LOSSAN CORRIDOR WITHOUT IMPROVEMENTS

As shown in the Purpose and Need Statement and evidenced throughout the remaining sections of this document, conventional improvements to the LOSSAN rail corridor are needed to meet current and future transportation demands.

Without these improvements, increasing costs and capacity constraints will continue to hamper existing rail services, as well as hinder the expansion of new rail service to meet projected increases in travel demand. Known and potential Impacts include:

- Higher maintenance costs due to deferred replacement of timber bridges, as well as bluff stabilization along the corridor.
- Increased deaths, injuries, insurance and equipment costs due to at-grade collisions
- Continuing or worsening air quality due to rail traffic delays at road crossings and lack of track capacity for goods movement between the Ports of Los Angeles, Long Beach, and San Diego.
- Worsening on-time performance for commuter and intercity passenger trains and the inability to expand the number of passenger trains

Proposed improvements identified in this document could address and mitigate a number of community and environmental issues, including:

- Continuing noise impacts along corridor from the need to sound train horns when approaching at-grade crossings, especially in densely populated urban areas with closely spaced crossings.
- Inability to provide improvements in the lagoons of coastal San Diego County, including design options which could provide a net environmental benefit over the existing conditions.

## S.9 PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE

Based upon an analysis of the information provided in this document, the Department and FRA have identified the Rail Improvements Alternative (Build alternative) as the preferred alternative for the future development of the Los Angeles to San Diego portion of the LOSSAN corridor.

The lead agencies have determined that all the projects and alignment options listed in Table S.4.3-1 should be carried forward for project-level analysis prior to making alignment option decisions.

## S.10 NEXT STEPS IN THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROCESS

This Final Program EIR/EIS includes responses to comments received on the Draft Program EIR/EIS, and identifies the preferred alternative (the Rail Improvements Alternative). However, no specific alignment and station location options have been selected at the Program-level analysis stage, and all options analyzed in this document (Table S.4.3-1) will be carried forward for project-level analysis prior to implementation. It is important to note that the alignments and station options identified in this Program EIR/EIS are not intended or presented as a one-time construction effort, but as individual projects proposed for implementation over the course of the next 15 to 20 years, with each individual project providing an independent benefit as well as contributing to the overall improvement of the LOSSAN rail corridor.

At the completion of this program environmental process, the Department expects to certify the Program EIR/EIS and make findings for compliance with CEQA requirements. The FRA expects to issue a Record of Decision for compliance with NEPA requirements. The Department, metropolitan planning organizations, rail operators, individual corridor cities, or any combination thereof may sponsor future consideration of component Rail Improvements projects.

This Program EIR/EIS considers the No-Project and Rail Improvements Alternative at a corridor-wide, program level of environmental analysis. Project-level environmental review would focus on individual projects, a portion or portions of the LOSSAN rail corridor, and would provide full analysis of potential impacts and issues at an appropriate level of detail in order to obtain the necessary approvals, permits and the ability to proceed with construction.

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[www.amtrakcalifornia.com](http://www.amtrakcalifornia.com)

to view/download a copy of the Final Program EIR/EIS, or for a listing of libraries carrying a hard copy of the Final Program EIR/EIS.

## SUMMARY

<b>S.1</b>	<b>Introduction and Background .....</b>	<b>S-1</b>
<b>S.2</b>	<b>Studies Leading to the Program EIR/EIS .....</b>	<b>S-2</b>
<b>S.3</b>	<b>Purpose of and Need for Improved Intercity Transportation in Southern California.....</b>	<b>S-3</b>
<b>S.4</b>	<b>Alternatives.....</b>	<b>S-4</b>
S.4.1	No Project/No Action Alternative .....	S-4
S.4.2	Rail Improvements Alternative.....	S-7
S.4.3	Summary of Corridor Improvement Alternatives .....	S-11
<b>S.5</b>	<b>Operations Summary .....</b>	<b>S-14</b>
<b>S.6</b>	<b>Key Environmental Impacts .....</b>	<b>S-17</b>
<b>S.7</b>	<b>Areas of Controversy .....</b>	<b>S-24</b>
<b>S.8</b>	<b>Consequences for LOSSAN Corridor without Improvements .....</b>	<b>S-25</b>
<b>S.9</b>	<b>Preferred Alternative.....</b>	<b>S-25</b>
<b>S.10</b>	<b>Next Steps in the Environmental Process .....</b>	<b>S-26</b>
<b>Chapter 1</b>	<b>PURPOSE AND NEED AND OBJECTIVES .....</b>	<b>1.0-1</b>
<b>1.1</b>	<b>Introduction .....</b>	<b>1.0-1</b>
<b>1.2</b>	<b>Purpose of and Need for Improved Intercity Transportation In Southern California .....</b>	<b>1.0-4</b>
1.2.1	Purpose OF Rail Improvements .....	1.0-4
1.2.2	Need For Rail Improvements in the LOSSAN Corridor .....	1.0-6
<b>Chapter 2</b>	<b>ALTERNATIVES.....</b>	<b>2.0-1</b>
<b>2.1</b>	<b>Development of Initial Alternatives .....</b>	<b>2.0-1</b>
2.1.1	Background .....	2.0-2
2.1.2	Formulation of Initial Alternatives .....	2.0-4
<b>2.2</b>	<b>Summary of Alternatives Considered .....</b>	<b>2.0-12</b>
<b>2.3</b>	<b>Alternatives Considered and Eliminated .....</b>	<b>2.0-15</b>
2.3.1	Alternatives Eliminated in LOSSAN Region Based on Previous Studies .....	2.0-15
2.3.2	LOSSAN Corridor Rail Improvements Considered and Eliminated .....	2.0-24
<b>2.4</b>	<b>No Project/No Action Alternative.....</b>	<b>2.0-40</b>
2.4.1	Highway Element.....	2.0-41
2.4.2	Conventional Passenger Rail Element .....	2.0-42
<b>2.5</b>	<b>Rail Improvements Alternative.....</b>	<b>2.0-49</b>
2.5.1	LOSSAN Rail Improvements Alternative Carried Forward .....	2.0-62
<b>2.6</b>	<b>Summary of Alternatives Carried Forward .....</b>	<b>2.0-69</b>
2.6.1	No Project/No Action Alternative .....	2.0-69
2.6.2	Rail Improvements Alternative.....	2.0-69
2.6.3	Preferred Alternative.....	2.0-70

<b>2.7</b>	<b>Construction and Maintenance Activities Associated with the Rail Improvements Alternative .....</b>	<b>2.0-72</b>
2.7.1	Construction Activities .....	2.0-72
2.6.2	Maintenance Activities .....	2.0-78

## Chapter 3    **AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT, ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES, AND MITIGATION STRATEGIES .....**    **3.0-1**

<b>3.0</b>	<b>Introduction .....</b>	<b>3.0-1</b>
3.0.1	Purpose and Content of this Chapter .....	3.0-1
3.0.2	How this Chapter is Organized .....	3.0-1
<b>3.1</b>	<b>Traffic and Circulation .....</b>	<b>3.1-1</b>
3.1.1	Regulatory Requirements and Methods of Evaluation .....	3.1-1
3.1.2	Affected Environment .....	3.1-5
3.1.3	Environmental Consequences.....	3.1-6
3.1.4	Comparison of Alternatives .....	3.1-14
3.1.5	Mitigation Strategies .....	3.1-17
3.1.6	Subsequent Analysis .....	3.1-17
<b>3.2</b>	<b>Travel Conditions .....</b>	<b>3.2-1</b>
3.2.1	Methods of Evaluation .....	3.2-1
3.2.2	Affected Environment .....	3.2-4
3.2.3	Environmental Consequences.....	3.2-5
3.2.4	Alignment Option Comparison.....	3.2-23
<b>3.3</b>	<b>Air Quality .....</b>	<b>3.3-1</b>
3.3.1	Regulatory Requirements and Methods of Evaluation .....	3.3-1
3.3.2	Affected Environment .....	3.3-6
3.3.3	Environmental Consequences.....	3.3-15
3.3.4	Design Practices.....	3.3-20
3.3.5	Mitigation Strategies .....	3.3-20
3.3.6	Subsequent Analysis .....	3.3-21
<b>3.4</b>	<b>Noise and Vibration.....</b>	<b>3.4-1</b>
3.4.1	Regulatory Requirements and Methods of Evaluation .....	3.4-1
3.4.2	Affected Environment .....	3.4-8
3.4.3	Environmental Consequences.....	3.4-21
3.4.4	Design Practices.....	3.4-26
3.4.5	Mitigation Strategies .....	3.4-26
3.4.6	Subsequent Analysis .....	3.4-29
<b>3.5</b>	<b>Energy .....</b>	<b>3.5-1</b>
3.5.1	Regulatory Requirements and Methods of Evaluation .....	3.5-1
3.5.2	Affected Environment .....	3.5-4
3.5.3	Environmental Consequences.....	3.5-5
3.5.4	Mitigation Strategies .....	3.5-9
3.5.5	Subsequent Analysis .....	3.5-10

<b>3.6</b>	<b>Land Use and Planning, Communities and Neighborhoods, Property and Environmental Justice .....</b>	<b>3.6-1</b>
3.6.1	Regulatory Requirements and Methods of Evaluation .....	3.6-1
3.6.2	Affected Environment .....	3.6-5
3.6.3	Environmental Consequences.....	3.6-9
3.6.4	Design Practices.....	3.6-17
3.6.5	Mitigation Strategies .....	3.6-17
3.6.6	Subsequent Analysis .....	3.6-20
<b>3.7</b>	<b>Aesthetics and Visual Resources .....</b>	<b>3.7-1</b>
3.7.1	Regulatory Requirements and Methods of Evaluation .....	3.7-1
3.7.2	Affected Environment .....	3.7-2
3.7.3	Environmental Consequences.....	3.7-4
3.7.4	Design Practices.....	3.7-21
3.7.5	Mitigation Strategies .....	3.7-21
3.7.6	Subsequent Analysis .....	3.7-22
<b>3.8</b>	<b>Public Utilities.....</b>	<b>3.8-1</b>
3.8.1	Regulatory Requirements and Methods of Evaluation .....	3.8-1
3.8.2	Affected Environment .....	3.8-4
3.8.3	Environmental Consequences.....	3.8-4
3.8.4	Design Practices.....	3.8-9
3.8.5	Mitigation Strategies .....	3.8-10
3.8.6	Subsequent Analysis .....	3.8-11
<b>3.9</b>	<b>Hazardous Materials and Wastes .....</b>	<b>3.9-1</b>
3.9.1	Regulatory Requirements and Methods of Evaluation .....	3.9-1
3.9.2	Affected Environment .....	3.9-3
3.9.3	Environmental Consequences and Comparison of Alternatives .....	3.9-3
3.9.4	Design Practices.....	3.9-5
3.9.5	Mitigation Strategies .....	3.9-5
3.9.6	Subsequent Analysis .....	3.9-6
<b>3.10</b>	<b>Cultural and Paleontological Resources .....</b>	<b>3.10-1</b>
3.10.1	Regulatory Requirements and Methods of Evaluation .....	3.10-1
3.10.2	Affected Environment .....	3.10-6
3.10.3	Environmental Consequences.....	3.10-12
3.10.4	Design Practices.....	3.10-20
3.10.5	Mitigation Strategies .....	3.10-20
3.10.6	Subsequent Analysis .....	3.10-25
<b>3.11</b>	<b>Geology and Soils .....</b>	<b>3.11-1</b>
3.11.1	Regulatory Requirements and Methods of Evaluation .....	3.11-1
3.11.2	Affected Environment .....	3.11-5
3.11.3	Environmental Consequences.....	3.11-19
3.11.4	Design Practices.....	3.11-22
3.11.5	Mitigation Strategies .....	3.11-23
3.11.6	Subsequent Analysis .....	3.11-26
<b>3.12</b>	<b>Hydrology and Water Resources .....</b>	<b>3.12-1</b>
3.12.1	Regulatory Requirements and Methods of Evaluation .....	3.12-1
3.12.2	Affected Environment .....	3.12-3
3.12.3	Environmental Consequences.....	3.12-15

3.12.4	Design Practices.....	3.12-23
3.12.5	Mitigation Strategies .....	3.12-23
3.12.6	Subsequent Analysis .....	3.12-27
<b>3.13</b>	<b>Biological Resources and Wetlands .....</b>	<b>3.13-1</b>
3.13.1	Regulatory Requirements and Methods of Evaluation .....	3.13-1
3.13.2	Affected Environment .....	3.13-4
3.13.3	Environmental Consequences.....	3.13-18
3.13.4	Design Practices.....	3.13-41
3.13.5	Mitigation Strategies .....	3.13-42
3.13.6	Subsequent Analysis .....	3.13-47
<b>3.14</b>	<b>Section 4(f) and 6(f) Resources (Public Parks and Recreation).....</b>	<b>3.14-1</b>
3.14.1	Regulatory Requirements and Methods of Evaluation .....	3.14-1
3.14.2	Affected Environment .....	3.14-4
3.14.3	Environmental Consequences.....	3.14-6
3.14.4	Impact Avoidance Strategies, Including Alternatives Screened from Further Consideration.....	3.14-7
3.14.5	Avoidance Alternatives or Reasons for No Prudent or Feasible Alternative for Use of Section 4(f) or 6(f) Resource .....	3.14-7
3.14.6	Design Practices.....	3.14-9
3.14.7	Mitigation Strategies .....	3.14-10
3.14.8	Subsequent Analysis .....	3.14-11
<b>3.15</b>	<b>Growth Inducement.....</b>	<b>3.15-1</b>
3.15.1	No-Project Alternative.....	3.15-1
3.15.2	Rail Improvements Alternative.....	3.15-1
3.15.3	Mitigation .....	3.15-2
3.15.4	Subsequent Analysis .....	3.15-3
<b>3.16</b>	<b>Cumulative Impacts Evaluation .....</b>	<b>3.16-1</b>
3.16.1	Regulatory Requirements and Methods of Evaluation .....	3.16-1
3.16.2	Summary of Past, Present, and Foreseeable Actions .....	3.16-3
	Introduction to Cumulative Impacts .....	3.16-1
3.16.3	Cumulative Impacts Analysis.....	3.16-13
<b>3.17</b>	<b>Next Steps in Project Development.....</b>	<b>3.17-1</b>
3.17.1	Project Definition .....	3.17-1
3.17.2	Project-Level Analysis .....	3.17-5
<b>Chapter 4</b>	<b>COSTS AND OPERATIONS .....</b>	<b>4.0-1</b>
<b>4.0</b>	<b>Introduction .....</b>	<b>4.0-1</b>
4.0.1	Capital Costs .....	4.0-1
4.0.2	Operational Performance .....	4.0-2
4.0.3	Operations and Maintenance Costs .....	4.0-3
4.0.4	Comparison of Alternatives .....	4.0-7
4.0.5	Consequences for LOSSAN Corridor without Improvements.....	4.0-14



<b>Chapter 5</b>	<b>RAIL IMPROVEMENTS ALIGNMENT OPTIONS COMPARISON .....</b>	<b>5.0-1</b>
5.1	<b>Introduction .....</b>	<b>5.0-1</b>
5.1.1	Purpose and Content of this Chapter .....	5.0-1
5.1.2	Organization of this Chapter .....	5.0-1
5.2	<b>Los Angeles Union Station to Irvine Alignment Options.....</b>	<b>5.0-3</b>
5.3	<b>Irvine to Oceanside Alignment Options .....</b>	<b>5.0-5</b>
5.4	<b>Oceanside to San Diego Alignment Options .....</b>	<b>5.0-8</b>
5.5	<b>Los Angeles to San Diego Station Options .....</b>	<b>5.0-14</b>
<b>Chapter 6</b>	<b>UNAVOIDABLE ADVERSE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS.....</b>	<b>6-1</b>
6.1	<b>Unavoidable Potentially Significant Impacts .....</b>	<b>6-1</b>
6.1.1	Fuel Consumption and Energy Use.....	6-1
6.1.2	Biological and Wetlands Resources, Hydrology and Water Resources, Land Use, Section 4(f) and 6(f) Resources, Cultural and Paleontological Resources, Visual Resources, Noise, and Geology and Soils.....	6-2
6.1.3	Construction Impacts.....	6-3
6.2	<b>Relationship Between Short-Term Uses of Environment and Enhancement of Long-Term Productivity .....</b>	<b>6-3</b>
6.3	<b>CEQA Significance .....</b>	<b>6-4</b>
6.3.1	CEQA Significance Thresholds .....	6-4
6.3.2	Significant Unavoidable Adverse Effects Under CEQA .....	6-5
6.3.3	CEQA Environmentally Superior Alternative .....	6-6
<b>Chapter 7</b>	<b>PUBLIC AND AGENCY INVOLVEMENT .....</b>	<b>7.0-1</b>
7.0	<b>Introduction .....</b>	<b>7.0-1</b>
7.1	<b>Public Involvement and Outreach Program.....</b>	<b>7.0-4</b>
7.1.1	Public Information.....	7.0-4
7.1.2	Agency Consultation and Coordination .....	7.0-9
<b>Chapter 8</b>	<b>ORGANIZATION, AGENCY, AND BUSINESS OUTREACH .....</b>	<b>8.0-1</b>
<b>Chapter 9</b>	<b>LIST OF PREPARERS .....</b>	<b>9.0-1</b>
	California Department of Transportation.....	9.01
	Federal Railroad Administration .....	9.0-1
	List of Consultants .....	9.0-1

<b>Chapter 10</b>	<b>DRAFT PROGRAM EIR/EIS DISTRIBUTION LIST .....</b>	<b>10.0-1</b>
10.1	Repository Library Locations .....	10.0-1
10.2	Federal Agencies.....	10.0-2
10.3	State Agencies.....	10.0-2
10.4	Elected Officials .....	10.0-2
10.5	Regional/Local Agencies .....	10.0-5
10.6	Organizations and Businesses .....	10.0-5
<b>Chapter 11</b>	<b>REFERENCES.....</b>	<b>11.0-1</b>
<b>Chapter 12</b>	<b>GLOSSARY AND ACRONYMS .....</b>	<b>12.0-1</b>

## LIST OF APPENDICES

Appendix 2.3-A	Letters from Rail Operators on Feasibility of Inland Bypass Route
Appendix 3.3-A	Air Quality Emissions Calculations
Appendix 3.4-A	Noise and Vibration Screening Distances
Appendix 3.4-B	Noise and Vibration Rating Method
Appendix 3.4-C	Noise and Vibration Impact Criteria
Appendix 3.10-A	Letter to State Historic Preservation Office
Appendix 3.12-A	Detailed Description of Hydrology Regulatory Requirements
Appendix 3.13-A	General Description of Biological Resource Topics
Appendix 3.13-B	Detailed Description of Biology and Wetlands Regulatory Requirements
Appendix 3.13-C	Data Collection for Natural Resources
Appendix 3.13-D	Description of Lagoons in Study Area
Appendix 3.13-E	Special-Status Plant and Wildlife Species in Study Area
Appendix 3.14-A	4(f) and 6(f) Properties
Appendix 3.16-A	List of Projects for Cumulative Analysis

## LIST OF TABLES

Table S.4.3-1	Corridor Emprovement Alternatives .....	S-12
Table S.5-1	Estimated Point-to-Point Scheduled Travel Times .....	S-14
Table S.5-2	Station Segment Travel Time Comparison.....	S-17
Table S.6-1	Summary of Key Environmental Impact/Benefits for System Alteratives.....	S-18
Table 1.2-1	Average Daily Traffic Volumes Between Los Angeles and San Diego.....	1.0-8
Table 1.2-2	Present and Future Travel Times Between Los Angeles and San Diego During Peak Period .....	1.0-10
Table 2.2-1	Summary of All Alternatives Considered .....	2.0-13
Table 2.3-1	High-Speed Rail Corridor/Station Evaluation Objectives and Criteria .....	2.0-17
Table 2.3-2	Alternative HST Corridor Alignments and Station Options Considered but Eliminated for the LOSSAN Region.....	2.0-18
Table 2.3.2-1	LOSSAN Corridor Rail Improvement Alternatives Eliminated .....	2.0-25
Table 2.4.1-1	Programmed Intercity Highway Improvements Included in the No- Project Alternative .....	2.0-42
Table 2.4.2-1	Programmed Conventional Rail Improvements Included in the No- Project Alternative .....	2.0-49
Table 2.5-1	Conventional Rail Improvements Alternative Evaluated for the LOSSAN Corridor.....	2.0-50
Table 2.5-2	List of Existing Grade Crossings and Proposed Grade Separations.....	2.0-59
Table 2.6-1	Summary of Final Rail Improvements Alternative .....	2.0-70
Table 3.1-1	Level of Service and Volume-to-Capacity Ratio Definition .....	3.1-2
Table 3.1-2	Change in Traffic Congestion of Intercity Highway Segments Existing Conditions Compared to the No-Project Alternatives .....	3.1-9
Table 3.1-3	Change in Traffic Congestion or Intercity Highway Segments No- Project Conditions Compared to the Rail Improvements Alternative.....	3.1-13
Table 3.2-1	Relation of Travel Factors and Purpose and Need/Objectives.....	3.2-3
Table 3.2-2	Transportation Factors .....	3.2-3
Table 3.2-3	Comparison of Existing Conditions to No-Project Alternative.....	3.2-6
Table 3.2-4	Total Point-to-Point Travel Times .....	3.2-9
Table 3.2-5	Model Reliability .....	3.2-12
Table 3.2-6	Safety Performance by Mode .....	3.2-17
Table 3.2-7	Safety Performance by Alternatives .....	3.2-17
Table 3.2-8	1997 Intercity Trip Table Summary .....	3.2-18
Table 3.2-9	2020 Intercity Trip Table Summary .....	3.2-19
Table 3.2-10	Auto Ownership and Operating Costs by Category.....	3.2-22
Table 3.2-11	One-Way Door-to-Door Trip Automobile Costs .....	3.2-22
Table 3.2-12	Intercity Rail One-Way Trip Passenger Costs.....	3.2-23
Table 3.2-13	Alignment Option Comparisons.....	3.2-24
Table 3.3-1	State and National Ambient Air Quality Standards.....	3.3-3
Table 3.3-2	Attainment Status of Affected Air Basins.....	3.3-13
Table 3.3-3	Estimated Locomotive Emissions in the LOSSAN Rail Corridor – Year 2003 and 2020 No Project Alternative .....	3.3-15
Table 3.3-4	Estimated Locomotive Emissions in the LOSSAN Corridor by Air Basin – Year 2003 and 2020 No Project Alternative .....	3.3-16
Table 3.3-5	Estimated Locomotive Emissions – Year 2005, 2020 No-Project Alternative, and 2020 Rail Improvements Alternative.....	3.3-18

Table 3.3-6	Estimated Locomotive Emissions by Air Basin Year 2005, 2020 No-Project Alternative, and 2020 Rail Improvements Alternative .....	3.3-18
Table 3.5-1	Construction-Related Energy Consumption Factors for Rail Improvements.....	3.5-3
Table 3.5-2	Annual Locomotive Operational Energy Consumption in the LOSSAN Corridor .....	3.5-6
Table 3.5-3	Annual Locomotive Operational Energy Consumption in the LOSSAN Corridor – No-Project Compared with Rail Improvements .....	3.5-7
Table 3.5-4	Non-Recoverable Construction-Related Energy Consumption .....	3.5-9
Table 3.6 1	Compatibility of Land Use Types.....	3.6-3
Table 3.6 2	Rankings of Potential Property Impacts .....	3.6-4
Table 3.6-3	LOSSAN Existing Land Uses .....	3.6-6
Table 3.7-1	Potential Visual Impacts .....	3.7-13
Table 3.8-1	Rankings for Potential Public Utilities Impacts/Conflicts.....	3.8-3
Table 3.8-2	Potential Utility Conflicts.....	3.8-7
Table 3.10-1	Summary of Potential Impacts to Cultural and Paleontological Resources .....	3.10-14
Table 3.11-1	Ranking System for Comparing Impacts Related to Geology/Soils/Seismicity .....	3.11-2
Table 3.11-2	Types of Potential Impacts from Geologic Conditions.....	3.11-20
Table 3.11-3	Summary of Potential Impact Rankings and Geological Constraints .....	3.11-20
Table 3.12-1	Summary of Hydrologic Resources Potentially Impacted.....	3.12-18
Table 3.13-1	Sensitive Plant Species Potentially Occurring in Study Area .....	3.13-10
Table 3.13-2	Sensitive Wildlife Species Potentially Occurring in Study Area.....	3.13-11
Table 3.13-3	Rivers, Creeks and Bays in the Study Area .....	3.13-12
Table 3.13-4	Biological Resources and Wetlands in the Study Area .....	3.13-25
Table 3.13.5	Biological Resources and Wetlands in the 200-foot (61 m) Impact Analysis Zone (Impact Zone A) .....	3.13-30
Table 3.13.6	Biological Resources and Wetlands in the 50-foot (15 m) Impact Analysis Zone (Impact Zone B) .....	3.13-32
Table 3.13.7	Lagoon Restoration and Management Entities .....	3.13-43
Table 3.14-1	Rankings for Potential Direct and Proximity Impacts on Section 4(f) and 6(f) Resources.....	3.14-4
Table 3.14-2	Summary of 4(f)/6(f) Resources Potentially Affected in Study Area.....	3.14-8
Table 3.16-1	Rail Corridor Segments .....	3.16-3
Table 3.16-2	Proximity of Interstate 5 and the LOSSAN Rail Corridor Across Lagoons.....	3.16-4
Table 3.16-3	Major Projects Identified for Consideration in Cumulative Impact Analysis .....	3.16-8
Table 3.17-1	Summary of Alignment and Design Options Carried Forward for Project-Level Review.....	3.17-2
Table 4.0-1	Incremental Annual Operating Costs for a Conventional Intercity Rail System .....	4.0-6
Table 4.0-2	Annual Maintenance of Way Costs for a Conventional Rail Infrastructure .....	4.0-7
Table 4.0-3	Operational Intercity Rail Performance Comparison No-Project vs. Rail Improvement Alternative .....	4.0-8
Table 4.0-4	Capital Cost Summary .....	4.0-12
Table 4.0-5	Operational Performance Comparison Lo-Build vs. High-Build Alternatives.....	4.0-13

Table 4.0-6	Intercity Rail Station Segment Travel Time Comparison.....	4.0-13
Table 4.0-7	Annual Costs of Operating and Maintaining an Improved Conventional Rail Infrastructure .....	4.0-14
Table 6.3-1	Potentially Unavoidable Adverse Impacts for System Alternatives .....	6-7
Table 7.1	Strategic Plan Public Workshop Locations and Times .....	7.0-3
Table 7.2	LOSSAN Corridor Scoping Meeting Locations and Times .....	7.0-6
Table 7.3	LOSSAN Public Hearing Locations and Times .....	7.0-8
Table 7.4	Additional LOSSAN Draft Program EIR/EIS Public Information Meetings Locations and Times.....	7.0-9
Table 8-1	Organizations, Agencies and Business Contacted.....	8.0-1

## LIST OF FIGURES

Figure S.3-1	Los Angeles to San Diego Intercity Travel Routes .....	S-5
Figure S.4-1	Existing and Forecast Train Volumes on the LOSSAN Corridor .....	S-9
Figure 1.2-1	Projected Population Growth for Southern California.....	1.0-7
Figure 1.2-2	Los Angeles to San Diego Intercity Travel Routes .....	1.0-11
Figure 1.2-3	Existing and Future Train Volumes on the LOSSAN Corridor.....	1.0-13
Figure 1.2-4	2001 State Area Designation – Ozone .....	1.0-17
Figure 2.1.2-1	LOSSAN Alignment Alternatives Evaluated in HST Screening Report .....	2.0-7
Figure 2.3.1-1	Alternative HST Corridor Alignments and Station Options Considered but Eliminated for the LOSSAN Region.....	2.0-19
Figure 2.3.2-1	Options Eliminated from Further Consideration in San Juan Capistrano ...	2.0-27
Figure 2.3.2-2	Options Eliminated from Further Consideration in Dana Point/ San Clemente .....	2.0-28
Figure 2.3.2-3	Existing Rail Corridor at Mariposa Point.....	2.0-30
Figure 2.3.2-4	Options Eliminated from Further Consideration in Encinitas .....	2.0-36
Figure 2.3.2-5	Options Eliminated from Further Consideration in Del Mar .....	2.0-38
Figure 2.3.2-6	Train Passing Along Del Mar Bluffs.....	2.0-39
Figure 2.4-1	Existing Intercity Transportation Infrastructure in LOSSAN Corridor.....	2.0-43
Figure 2.4-2	LOSSAN Corridor Rail Improvement Projects Included in No-Project Alternative.....	2.0-45
Figure 2.4-3	Future Train Volumes on the LOSSAN Corridor – Maximum Threshold Modeling Results .....	2.0-47
Figure 2.5-1	LOSSAN Corridor Rail Improvement Projects Carried Forward .....	2.0-51
Figure 2.5-2	LOSSAN Rail Corridor Improvements Alternative (1 of 3).....	2.0-53
Figure 2.5-3	LOSSAN Rail Corridor Improvements Alternative (2 of 3).....	2.0-55
Figure 2.5-4	LOSSAN Rail Corridor Improvements Alternative (3 of 3).....	2.0-57
Figure 2.5.1-1	Options to be Retained for Further Study in San Juan Capistrano .....	2.0-63
Figure 2.5.1-2	Options to be Retained for Further Study in Dana Point/San Clemente ....	2.0-65
Figure 2.5.1-3	Options to be Retained for Further Study in Encinitas .....	2.0-67
Figure 2.5.1-4	Options to be Retained for Further Study in Del Mar .....	2.0-68
Figure 3.1-1	Year 2020 No-Project Alternative .....	3.1-7
Figure 3.1-2	Year 2020 Rail Improvements Alternative .....	3.1-11
Figure 3.2-1	Nationwide Highway Congestion Comparison .....	3.2-4
Figure 3.2-2	Southern California Area Highway Congestion (Year 2025) .....	3.2-7

Figure 3.3-1	Air Basins Potentially Affected by Project Alternatives .....	3.3-7
Figure 3.3-2	CO, PM, NOx, TOG Source Distribution – Year 2020 .....	3.3-11
Figure 3.4-1	Noise and Vibration Land Use Typologies LOSSAN Region .....	3.4-5
Figure 3.4-2	Typical Day-Night Sound Level Environments .....	3.4-11
Figure 3.4-3	Typical L <sub>max</sub> Values .....	3.4-15
Figure 3.4-4	Example of Noise Exposure vs. Distance with Typical Frequencies .....	3.4-17
Figure 3.4-5	Example of Noise Exposure vs. Distance with Normalized Frequency .....	3.4-19
Figure 3.4-6	Rail Alternative Potential Noise Impacts.....	3.4-23
Figure 3.6-1	Generalized Existing Land Uses .....	3.6-7
Figure 3.7-1	Existing LOSSAN Corridor – Carlsbad .....	3.7-5
Figure 3.7-2	Existing LOSSAN Corridor – San Clemente.....	3.7-7
Figure 3.7-3	Existing LOSSAN Corridor – Del Mar Bluffs.....	3.7-9
Figure 3.7-4	Existing LOSSAN Bridge Structure Across San Elijo Lagoon .....	3.7-11
Figure 3.7-5	Photo-Simulation – New Bridge Structure Across San Elijo Lagoon.....	3.7-23
Figure 3.8.1	Major Utilities .....	3.8-5
Figure 3.11-1	Faults.....	3.11-9
Figure 3.11-2	Quaternary Faults and Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zones .....	3.11-11
Figure 3.11-3	Potential Liquefaction Zones .....	3.11-13
Figure 3.11-4	Potentially Unstable Slopes.....	3.11-17
Figure 3.12-1	Special Flood Hazard Areas.....	3.12-5
Figure 3.12-2	Surface Waters and Wetlands.....	3.12-7
Figure 3.12-3	Groundwater.....	3.12-11
Figure 3.12-4	Areas Susceptible to Erosion .....	3.12-13
Figure 3.13-1	Distribution of Diegan Coastal Sage Scrub .....	3.13-7
Figure 3.13-2	Wetlands.....	3.13-13
Figure 3.13-3	North San Diego County Lagoons.....	3.13-15
Figure 3.13-4	Habitat Conservation Program Areas (Part 1).....	3.13-19
Figure 3.13-5	Habitat Conservation Program Areas (Part 2).....	3.13-21
Figure 3.13-6	Habitat Conservation Program Areas (Part 3).....	3.13-23
Figure 3.13-7	Del Mar Area Lagoons and Alignment Options .....	3.13-39
Figure 3.16-1	Existing Conditions of Interstate 5 and LOSSAN Rail Corridor .....	3.16-5
Figure 4.0-1	Low-Build Operating Speed & Travel Time Profile .....	4.0-4
Figure 4.0-2	High-Build Operating Speed & Travel Time Profile .....	4.0-5