



Caltrans Releases Supplemental Environmental Document for I-5 Project

The North Coast Corridor (NCC) Program, a comprehensive package of highway, rail, transit, and environmental protection and coastal access improvements, represents a \$6.5 billion investment in the San Diego economy over the next few decades. The NCC Program is detailed in a Public Works Plan (PWP), which establishes the blueprint for the corridor's future that will improve circulation by integrating all forms of transportation including bicycles, pedestrians, trains, cars, and environmental enhancements. The Interstate 5 (I-5) NCC Project is one of more than 40 highway, rail, transit or environmental projects proposed or underway in the 27-mile corridor.

To provide the public with additional clarifying information on the Draft Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement (EIR/EIS) for the I-5 NCC Project released



The Supplemental Draft EIR/EIS includes additional information on how the corridor's six lagoons could be enhanced.

in 2010, the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) released a supplemental environmental document on August 31, 2012 to expand the information contained in the Draft

EIR/EIS. The Supplemental Draft EIR/EIS does not substantially change the analysis contained in the highway project's original document. Information regarding lagoon hydrology studies, which were recently completed, measures adopted to address coastal wetlands, proposed community and regional enhancement features, and project phasing presented and adopted in the 2050 Regional Transportation Plan are among the topics detailed in the document.

The Supplemental Draft EIR/EIS does not address responses

to comments received during the original comment period for the Draft EIR/EIS for the I-5 NCC Project. All public comments will be addressed in the project's Final EIR/EIS, which is scheduled to be completed in early 2013.

The release of the Supplemental Draft EIR/EIS begins a 45-day public review and comment period. The document provides the community an opportunity to take a more in-depth look at the studies completed for the project which evaluate how enhancements to the corridor's highway and rail bridges may improve tidal flow and overall health of the NCC's six lagoons in conjunction with the highway project.

Additionally, the Supplemental Draft EIR/EIS affirms the Express Lanes Only option (8+4 Buffer Alternative) as the Caltrans Locally Preferred Alternative for the I-5 NCC Project, which was announced in July 2011. Caltrans identified the Locally Preferred Alternative after extensive outreach and collaboration with the community, resource agencies and the Federal Highway Administration.

The Express Lanes Only option would improve mobility and reduce travel times by adding two Express Lanes in each direction on the highway from La Jolla Village Drive in San Diego to Harbor Drive in Oceanside. This option has the smallest footprint, resulting in the least overall environmental impacts, the fewest property acquisitions and the lowest construction costs. The Express Lanes would provide a free flow alternative to the general purpose lanes and guarantee commuter travel times throughout the corridor.

Additionally, Caltrans and the San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG) will release for public review the PWP for the NCC Program early next year, providing the community with another opportunity to provide input on projects in the corridor. As a requirement of recent state legislation, Senate Bill 468, there will be two public hearings on the PWP before it is submitted to the California Coastal Commission in Spring 2013.

Supplemental Draft EIR/EIS Public Meeting

Please join Caltrans and SANDAG at a public meeting to learn more about the findings from the Supplemental Draft EIR/EIS. Members of the public will have an opportunity to provide formal comments on the new items not contained in the original Draft EIR/EIS issued in 2010.

Wednesday,
September 19, 2012
6 p.m. – 8 p.m.

Encinitas Community and
Senior Center

1140 Oakcrest Park Drive
Encinitas, CA 92024

In addition to attending the meeting, there are a number of ways to get your comments into the official record including submitting comments by web, letter, email or U.S. mail via the information below.

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All comments must be
submitted by October 15, 2012.

NCC Program Progress Report

Significant progress has been made on several projects within the NCC Program. The following are just a few of the projects that have been completed or are currently underway in the corridor.

January 2012: Eroding bluffs were stabilized along a two-mile stretch of coastline in Del Mar, helping to protect sections of the railroad track bed for years to come.

January 2012: Construction began on a pedestrian undercrossing beneath the railroad tracks near Santa Fe Drive in Encinitas, which will provide a safe and legal crossing for pedestrians traveling to and from the coast.

March 2012: Amtrak crews finished double tracking approximately two miles of rail line from Carlsbad Village Drive south past Cannon Road, resulting in a five-mile stretch of continuous double track in Carlsbad.

Mid/Late 2012: Work will begin to restore native upland and wetland habitat at the 31.4-acre property in Carmel Valley, located just south of SR 56 and Carmel Valley Road.

Early 2013: The Public Works Plan (PWP), which provides a comprehensive and coordinated package of improvements for the North Coast Corridor, will be released for public review.

Summer 2013: The I-5/I-805 Carroll Canyon Direct Access Ramp/High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) Project is expected to open to traffic.



The Supplemental Draft EIR/EIS: Enhancing the Coastal Environment



North Coast Corridor
A better environment for the future

Spotlight on Coastal Rail

Caltrans and SANDAG recognize and understand the unique aspects of the six lagoons along the North Coast Corridor. A benefit of the Supplemental Draft EIR/EIS was the opportunity to further explore these distinctive lagoon features and come up with ways to enhance each one. The collaborative effort establishes a plan to ensure the sustainability to continue the enhancements and health of the lagoons into the future.

The findings of the document show that the water quality at the corridor's six lagoons could be improved by lengthening, widening or replacing some of the existing rail and highway bridges. Habitat restoration efforts also will expand or accommodate existing wildlife corridors and provide funds for long-term lagoon maintenance. An added benefit is the opportunity to complete a system of bike and pedestrian loops around the lagoons and fill gaps between existing trails.

In conjunction with what's outlined in the Supplemental Draft EIR/EIS, further improvements are planned in and around the six coastal lagoons as part of the Public Works Plan (PWP) to include coastal rail, highway, bike and pedestrian, and environmental enhancements.

Highlighted to the right are additional features unique to each lagoon, which are detailed in the Supplemental Draft EIR/EIS.

Los Peñasquitos Lagoon

- Provides missing bike and pedestrian trail connection to the State Route 56 (SR 56) Regional Bicycle Trail to Sorrento Valley Road/Carmel Valley Road, completing the Sea to Sea Trail from the Salton Sea to the Pacific Ocean
- Enhances bike and pedestrian paths from Carmel Valley Road to Carmel Mountain Road
- Allows for more than 35 acres of upland habitat creation and preservation



San Dieguito Lagoon

- Includes more than 100 acres of wetland creation and upland preservation
- Provides a new bike and pedestrian trail across the lagoon on the west side of I-5 that will connect to the Coast to Crest Trail



San Elijo Lagoon

- Allows for 30 acres of upland creation
- Provides funding for future lagoon restoration efforts
- Includes the lengthening of the highway bridge, which would increase tidal flow
- Provides for a bike and pedestrian trail on both sides of the freeway and across the lagoon to Manchester Avenue

Batiquitos Lagoon

- Provides a new bike and pedestrian path trail across the lagoon on the west side of I-5
- Includes lengthening the existing highway bridge to improve tidal flow and long-term sustainability



Agua Hedionda Lagoon

- Provides a new bike and pedestrian trail across the lagoon on the east side of I-5
- Allows for the creation, preservation and restoration of nearly 20 acres of wetland and upland habitat
- Includes replacement of the existing highway bridge to maximize tidal flow and long-term sustainability by reducing the number of support columns in the lagoon



Buena Vista Lagoon

- Accommodates the Buena Vista Lagoon Restoration Project, which will restore 200 acres of wetland habitat
- Provides funding for future lagoon restoration efforts
- Includes lengthening the existing highway bridge to improve tidal flow and long-term sustainability



Construction Begins on Sorrento Valley Rail Segment

Project to Improve Rail Efficiency

To help improve regional rail and transit efficiency, improvements are being made to the coastal rail in the Sorrento Valley area. Construction of the project, called Sorrento to Miramar Double Track, Phase 1, began in June and includes double tracking approximately one mile of the rail system, upgrades to the rail signals and construction of a new bridge southeast of Sorrento Valley Station. The project is expected to be completed in 2013.

Adding a second main track will improve efficiency for COASTER and Amtrak passenger services by reducing the areas in which trains have to wait to pass one another on stretches of single track. It will also improve freight, thereby benefitting the local economy.

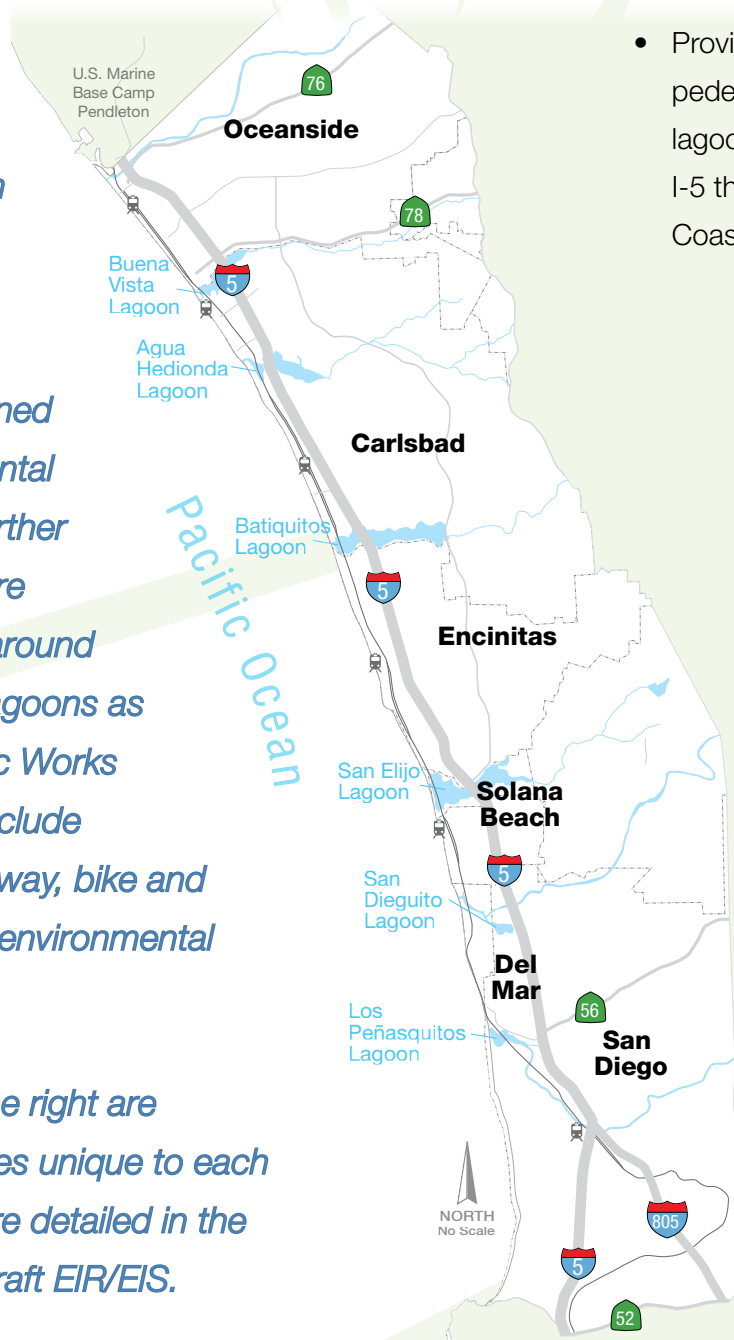


The Sorrento Valley project is part of a plan to double track the majority of San Diego's coastal rail line.

The total cost of the project is projected to be \$39 million. It is funded primarily through state sources and *TransNet*, the voter approved, half-cent sales tax initiative that helps fund transportation projects in the region. The project is fully funded through construction.

A later second phase of the project will add an additional 1.9 miles of double track between Sorrento and Miramar Road. The second phase of the project will straighten sharp curves that currently slow existing passenger and freight rail services, which will help improve travel times and reliability. Phase II is currently in the environmental review phase.

Sorrento to Miramar Double Track, Phase I, is one of several coastal rail improvement projects that are included in the NCC Program. Caltrans, SANDAG, North County Transit District and Amtrak are dedicated to improving the coastal rail system in order to enhance regional mobility and offer new transportation options for the future.



NCC Program Area

Interstate 5/Genesee Avenue Interchange Project Update

A project to improve traffic flow, reduce congestion and enhance bicycle and pedestrian access at the I-5 and Genesee Avenue interchange in San Diego is scheduled to start construction in early 2013. The \$94 million project is fully funded through contributions from Caltrans, SANDAG, the City of San Diego, area businesses and *TransNet*, the voter approved half-cent sales tax for San Diego's regional transportation projects.

The I-5/Genesee Avenue Interchange Project calls for widening the existing overcrossing at Genesee Avenue to accommodate additional vehicle lanes, turn lanes and sidewalks. The freeway on-ramps and off-ramps north and south of Genesee Avenue will also be expanded to ease access to the freeway and surrounding businesses.

A north-south bike path will be constructed west of I-5, extending from Sorrento Valley Road to Voigt Drive. The 12-foot-wide path will provide a safe commute for bicyclists by separating them from existing traffic lanes and add a long-desired bicycle and pedestrian link to the Sorrento Valley COASTER Station, employment centers, hospitals and UC San Diego.

The project will also facilitate the restoration and preservation of about 17 acres of land located near the Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve just south of SR 56 in San Diego. Plans include adding wetland and upland habitats to improve water quality and create wildlife habitat.

The project is representative of the typical features that will be implemented as part of the NCC Program. The California Coastal Commission voted unanimously in June to approve the project's coastal development permit. Pending additional review and approval by the City of San Diego, work could begin in early 2013 and be open to traffic late the next year.

Comment Period Closes for I-5/SR 56 Interchange Project Draft EIR/EIS

Caltrans to Identify Preferred Alternative Later this Year

Since 2000, the City of San Diego, SANDAG and Caltrans have been studying the I-5/SR 56 Interchange in an effort to improve regional mobility between two of San Diego's most critical north-to-south and east-to-west freeways.

On May 18, 2012, the Draft EIR/EIS for the I-5/SR 56 Interchange Project was released for a public review and comment period governed by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

The Draft EIR/EIS was a direct result of more than 10 years of community, private and public collaboration. Five alternatives (four build and one no build) were included in the Draft EIR/EIS, which analyzed environmental, air quality, visual and other community impacts.

During the public review, Caltrans received 97 public comment letters that addressed community needs, environmental concerns, and local traffic congestion.

Caltrans will use the feedback provided by the community and resource agencies to help determine a preferred alternative, which is expected to be announced this fall. The Final EIR/EIS is expected to be released by late 2013.

For more information about the I-5/SR 56 Interchange Project, please visit the North Coast Corridor section of KeepSanDiegoMoving.com.



The I-5/SR 56 Interchange Project will reduce traffic congestion for both the highway and surface streets in area.

NCC PROGRAM NEXT STEPS

Summer 2012: Supplemental Draft EIR/EIS public review

Early 2013: Final I-5 Express Lanes Project EIR/EIS release

Early 2013: PWP/Transportation and Resource Enhancement Program (TREP) public review

Spring 2013: California Coastal Commission review of the PWP/TREP

For more information about the NCC Program, please visit the North Coast Corridor section of KeepSanDiegoMoving.com, contact Caltrans Public Affairs at (619) 688-6670 or scan the QR code to the right using your smartphone's code reader app.



Nota: Para recibir este boletín de noticias en español por favor visite KeepSanDiegoMoving.com.



North Coast Corridor

A better environment for the future

California Department of Transportation
District 11
4050 Taylor Street
San Diego, CA 92110

NCC Updates! *Look inside to see what's planned in your community as part of the North Coast Corridor Program.*

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