



**Jared Blumenfeld**  
Secretary for  
Environmental Protection



## Department of Toxic Substances Control

Meredith Williams, Ph.D.  
Director  
8800 Cal Center Drive  
Sacramento, California 95826-3200



**Gavin Newsom**  
Governor

April 7, 2020

Governor's Office of Planning & Research

Mr. Mark A. McLoughlin  
California High-Speed Rail Authority  
770 L Street, Suite 620 MS-1  
Sacramento, California 95814

**APR 07 2020**

**STATE CLEARINGHOUSE**

MERCED TO FRESNO SECTION: CENTRAL VALLEY WYE, REVISED DRAFT SUPPLEMENTAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT/SECOND DRAFT SUPPLEMENTAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES ANALYSIS – DATED MARCH 2020 (STATE CLEARINGHOUSE NUMBER: 2009091125)

Dear Mr. McLoughlin:

The Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) received a Revised Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Report/Second Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement Biological Resources Analysis (EIR/EIS) for Merced to Fresno Section: Central Valley Wye. The California High-Speed Rail Authority proposes to construct and operate the Merced to Fresno: Central Valley Wye as part of the larger, 800-mile California High Speed Rail (HSR) system planned throughout California. The HSR system will connect the major population centers of Sacramento, the San Francisco Bay Area, the Central Valley, Los Angeles, the Inland Empire, Orange County, and San Diego. As part of the Merced to Fresno Section of the statewide HSR system, the Central Valley Wye would create the east-west HSR connection between the San Jose to Merced Section to the west and the north-south Merced to Fresno Section to the east.

DTSC recommends that the following issues be evaluated in the EIR/EIS Hazards and Hazardous Materials section:

1. The EIR/EIS should acknowledge historic or future activities on or near the project site that may have the potential to result in the release of hazardous wastes/substances on the project site. In instances in which releases have occurred or may occur, further studies should be carried out to delineate the nature and extent of the contamination, and the potential threat to public health and/or the environment should be evaluated. The EIR/EIS should also identify the mechanism(s) to initiate any required investigation and/or remediation and

the government agency who will be responsible for providing appropriate regulatory oversight.

2. Refiners in the United States started adding lead compounds to gasoline in the 1920s in order to boost octane levels and improve engine performance. This practice did not officially end until 1992 when lead was banned as a fuel additive in California. Tailpipe emissions from automobiles using leaded gasoline contained lead and resulted in aerially deposited lead (ADL) being deposited in and along roadways throughout the state. ADL-contaminated soils still exist along roadsides and medians and can also be found underneath some existing road surfaces due to past construction activities. Due to the potential for ADL-contaminated soil DTSC, recommends collecting soil samples for lead analysis prior to performing any intrusive activities for the project described in the EIR/EIS.
3. If buildings or other structures are to be demolished on any project sites included in the proposed project, surveys should be conducted for the presence of lead-based paints or products, mercury, asbestos containing materials, and polychlorinated biphenyl caulk. Removal, demolition and disposal of any of the above-mentioned chemicals should be conducted in compliance with California environmental regulations and policies. In addition, sampling near current and/or former buildings should be conducted in accordance with DTSC's 2006 *Interim Guidance Evaluation of School Sites with Potential Contamination from Lead Based Paint, Termiticides, and Electrical Transformers* ([https://dtsc.ca.gov/wpcontent/uploads/sites/31/2018/09/Guidance\\_Lead\\_Contamination\\_050118.pdf](https://dtsc.ca.gov/wpcontent/uploads/sites/31/2018/09/Guidance_Lead_Contamination_050118.pdf)).
4. If any projects initiated as part of the proposed project require the importation of soil to backfill any excavated areas, proper sampling should be conducted to ensure that the imported soil is free of contamination. DTSC recommends the imported materials be characterized according to *DTSC's 2001 Information Advisory Clean Imported Fill Material* ([https://dtsc.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/sites/31/2018/09/SMP\\_FS\\_Cleanfill-Schools.pdf](https://dtsc.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/sites/31/2018/09/SMP_FS_Cleanfill-Schools.pdf)).
5. If any sites included as part of the proposed project have been used for agricultural, weed abatement or related activities, proper investigation for organochlorinated pesticides should be discussed in the EIR/EIS. DTSC recommends the current and former agricultural lands be evaluated in accordance with DTSC's 2008 *Interim Guidance for Sampling Agricultural Properties (Third Revision)* (<https://dtsc.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/sites/31/2018/09/Ag-Guidance-Rev-3-August-7-2008-2.pdf>).

Mr. Mark A. McLoughlin  
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DTSC appreciates the opportunity to review the EIR/EIS. Should you need any assistance with an environmental investigation, please submit a request for Lead Agency Oversight Application, which can be found at: [https://dtsc.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/sites/31/2018/09/VCP\\_App-1460.doc](https://dtsc.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/sites/31/2018/09/VCP_App-1460.doc). Additional information regarding voluntary agreements with DTSC can be found at: <https://dtsc.ca.gov/brownfields/>.

If you have any questions, please contact me at (916) 255-3710 or via email at [Gavin.McCreary@dtsc.ca.gov](mailto:Gavin.McCreary@dtsc.ca.gov).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Gavin McCreary". The signature is fluid and cursive, written over a light gray rectangular background.

Gavin McCreary  
Project Manager  
Site Evaluation and Remediation Unit  
Site Mitigation and Restoration Program  
Department of Toxic Substances Control

cc: (via email)

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