

DEPARTMENT OF CALIFORNIA HIGHWAY PATROL

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Governor's Office of Planning & Research

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STATE CLEARINGHOUSE

State Clearing House
1400 Tenth Street, Room 121
Sacramento, CA 95814

The California Highway Patrol (CHP) recently received the "Notice of Completion" environmental document for the Jackson Ranch Specific Plan, SCH #2019080497. The CHP is the primary agency which provides traffic law enforcement, safety, and management services within the unincorporated portions of Kings County. As a result of this project, we anticipate local CHP operations may be impacted.

The Jackson Ranch site is located within a rural portion of southwestern Kings County, and primarily surrounded by agricultural land. Though Interstate 5 (I-5) has a dedicated exit at Utica Avenue, the on and off ramps are not used for ingress/egress of any businesses or other destinations in the area. As such, the freeway interchange does not currently have traffic signal lights or cloverleaf style on ramps to mitigate traffic congestion.

Our concern relates to the potential for traffic congestion, and consequently traffic collisions, on I-5 and the freeway ramps which intersect Utica Avenue. Included in the June 2020 Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for this project are proposed improvements at the intersections of the I-5 on and off ramps with Utica Avenue to include roundabouts (traffic circles). Although these measures may mitigate traffic congestion, the EIR relates they are not guaranteed to be completed within a specified period of time. Without these improvements, the EIR indicates the impact would be "significant and unavoidable" under the Phase One (2023), and Phase Area Buildout (2040). In addition, the EIR suggests the complete reconstruction of I-5, including additional traffic lanes, is needed to reduce the impact to the freeway to an acceptable level under the Plan Area Buildout (2040). The EIR relates no funding has been allocated for these improvements, and the impact without these improvements would also be "significant and unavoidable."

The Coalinga Area is comprised of 25 field officers and a shared communications center located in the city of Fresno which serves four geographically separate CHP Area offices within the San Joaquin Valley. This project is likely to create additional demand for our resources, and pose challenges to our current operations due to the associated increase in traffic. I recommend the proposed improvements identified in the EIR be implemented in a timely manner at the



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appropriate stage of development in order to maintain acceptable levels of service on I-5, to mitigate traffic congestion and collisions, and to ensure the safety of motorists traveling in the vicinity of the project.

If you have any questions regarding these concerns, please contact me at (559) 935-2093.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "R. M. Brunell".

R. M. BRUNELL, Lieutenant
Commander
Coalinga Area