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Executive Director, **Stacey Mortensen**

Notice of Preparation of a Supplemental Environmental Impact Report
Elk Grove Double Track Project
Scoping Period: Tuesday, January 28, 2025 – Thursday, March 13, 2025

DATE: January 28, 2025
TO: Agencies, Organizations, and Interested Parties
FROM: San Joaquin Regional Rail Commission
SUBJECT: Notice of Preparation of a Supplemental Environmental Impact Report for the Elk Grove Double Track Project

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the San Joaquin Regional Rail Commission (SJRRC) is the Lead Agency for the Valley Rail Sacramento Extension Project and will prepare a Supplemental Environmental Impact Report (SEIR), consistent with requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The purpose of the SEIR is to evaluate the environmental issues associated with the proposed track improvements in the Elk Grove Double Track Project (proposed Project), which is a portion of the larger Valley Rail Sacramento Extension Project. In addition, at a later time, the proposed Project may comply with the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

The purpose of this Notice of Preparation (NOP) is to notify agencies, organizations, and individuals that SJRRC plans to prepare the SEIR and to request input on the scope of the environmental analysis to be performed. From public agencies, we are inviting comments on the scope and context of the environmental information relevant to each agency's statutory responsibilities for the proposed Project. SJRRC is also requesting interested individuals' and organizations' views on the scope of environmental topics the SEIR will evaluate and what alternatives are to be evaluated.

A. Scoping Period

The 45-day public scoping period will begin on Tuesday, January 28, 2025. Written responses and comments on the scope of the proposed Project will be accepted until 5:00 pm on Thursday, March 13, 2025. Please send written comments to:

San Joaquin Regional Rail Commission
Attn: Elk Grove Double Track Project
949 East Channel Street
Stockton, CA 95202

Your comments may also be sent by email to info@elkgrovedoubletrack.org.

B. Scoping Meeting

The scoping meeting for the proposed Project will take place online:

- Date and Time: February 11, 2025 (5:30 pm – 7:00 pm)
- Meeting Details: The meeting will be held via Zoom.
 - Join the meeting on your computer or mobile device by going to <https://kearnswest.zoom.us/j/87125196699>
 - You may dial in to the meeting by calling (669) 444-9171. Enter webinar ID 871 2519 6699

The virtual scoping meeting will begin with a presentation providing an overview of the proposed Project and the CEQA process. Following the presentation, interested agencies, organizations, and individuals will have the opportunity to ask questions related to the scope and content of the SEIR.

C. Project History

The SJRRC is the governing body of the Altamont Corridor Express (ACE), one of California's popular commuter rail services that links the Central Valley with Silicon Valley. SJRRC is responsible for planning, developing, and managing the ACE service, including implementing the agency's program of capital improvements. SJRRC is also the managing agency for the San Joaquin Joint Powers Authority (SJJPA) and is responsible for planning, developing, and managing the San Joaquin's service.

In October 2020, the SJRRC certified the Valley Rail Sacramento Extension Project Final EIR, which analyzed the extension of passenger rail service to new markets in San Joaquin and Sacramento counties. An EIR for a new passenger rail station and associated improvements that would serve the Elk Grove community and support the new passenger rail service between Stockton and Sacramento (the "Elk Grove Station Project") was certified by the SJRRC in April 2022. The siding track planned for the Elk Grove Station would be extended further south by 4.7 miles by the proposed Project to accommodate additional capacity enhancements needed by UPRR as part of the approved Sacramento Extension Project EIR.

D. Project Location

The proposed Project is located in California's Sacramento County within southern portion of the City of Elk Grove and is primarily within the existing Union Pacific Sacramento Subdivision railroad right-of-way (ROW). The northern terminus of the proposed Project is just north of Elk Grove Boulevard and a southern terminus just south of Eschinger Road (**Figure 1**). The proposed Project would extend siding track planned for the Elk Grove Station further south by 4.7 miles, all within the original footprint of the Valley Rail Sacramento Extension.

E. Project Goals and Objectives

The proposed Project builds upon SJRRC's Valley Rail Sacramento Extension Project. In supplementing that project, the primary objective of the proposed Project is to improve access to passenger rail service within Sacramento County and the San Joaquin Valley

Region. The proposed Project will provide unprecedented economic, mobility, and safety benefits for Sacramento County.

The proposed Project goals and objectives are to enhance the following needs as identified in the previous EIR for the Valley Rail Sacramento Extension Project:

- Enhanced intercity and commuter rail service
- Improved connectivity
- Improved regional air quality
- Improved access
- Transit oriented development

F. Project Description

The Elk Grove Double Track Project (proposed Project) proposes refinements to the proposed limits of the siding associated with the Elk Grove Station Project, which would extend the second track further south approximately 4.7 miles to Eschinger Road to tie into the existing Phillips siding (located at MP 121.3 to MP 122.6).⁽¹⁾ The siding extension would parallel the existing main track and is designed to accommodate UP's operational needs to allow passenger service to run in the corridor and allow trains to pass each other. Upon completion of the siding, it would become a second UP mainline track. The corridor is currently only used by freight trains.

Upon completion of this proposed Project and the previously approved Elk Grove Station Project, there would be a continuous segment of second mainline track, approximately 7 miles in length, along this portion of the UP Sacramento Subdivision, to allow for train meets/passes and facilitate shared use of the corridor by freight and passenger trains. A map showing the proposed Project location is provided in **Figure 1**.

G. Potential Environmental Effects

CEQA guidelines require the evaluation of the following environmental topics. The SEIR will focus on the following topics:

- Aesthetics and Visual Quality
- Agricultural and Forestry Resources
- Air Quality
- Biological Resources
- Cultural Resources
- Energy
- Geology, Soils, Seismicity, and Paleontological Resources
- Greenhouse Gas Emissions
- Hazards and Hazardous Materials
- Hydrology and Water Quality
- Land Use and Development

⁽¹⁾ As part of the Valley Rail Sacramento Extension Project, improvements would be implemented separately to the Phillips siding, including upgrades to the southern switch and signal.

- Mineral Resources
- Noise and Vibration
- Population and Housing
- Public Services
- Recreation
- Transportation
- Tribal Cultural Resources
- Utilities and Service Systems
- Wildfire
- Growth Inducement
- Cumulative Impacts

The SEIR will consider both temporary construction-period and permanent (operational) impacts. The SEIR will be focused to the topics that will have the potential for significant impacts based on preliminary assessment and public input. The SEIR cumulative impact analysis will include the impacts of the proposed Project in combination with other planned projects, including railway projects, transportation improvements, and land use plans and projects along the Project corridor.

SJRRC is seeking comments from agencies, stakeholders, and the public regarding the scope of the environmental topics that will be analyzed and alternatives to be considered in the SEIR.

Figure 1 Project Location Map

