



North Coast Corridor Improvements on Track Environmental Process Moves Forward

Recently, there has been a lot of positive momentum related to the North Coast Corridor (NCC) Program. This \$6.5 billion program is comprised of improvements not only to Interstate 5 but also significant enhancements to coastal rail and transit, environmental protection and coastal access.

Locally Preferred Alternative • In July 2010, Caltrans released a Draft Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement (EIR/EIS), providing a detailed environmental analysis of the I-5 Express Lanes Project. Last year, Caltrans identified the “8+4 with Buffer” option as the Locally Preferred Alternative for the highway project after extensive outreach and collaboration with the community, resource agencies and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). The project would improve mobility, reduce travel times and relieve congestion in the corridor by adding two Express Lanes in each direction from La Jolla Village Drive in San Diego to Harbor Drive in Oceanside, separated from the existing general purpose lanes by a striped buffer. This option has the smallest footprint, resulting in the least overall environmental impacts, the fewest property acquisitions and the lowest construction costs.

NCC PROGRAM MILESTONES

Summer 2012	Supplemental Draft Environmental Document (SDED) public review
Fall 2012	Final Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement (EIR/EIS)
Fall 2012	Public Works Plan (PWP) public review
Early 2013	California Coastal Commission review

Environmental Process • The selection of the project facilitated additional technical studies related to how bridge lengths will be optimized to improve lagoon health. The results of those studies, in addition to updated information on the restoration and preservation of sensitive coastal habitats, and documentation of the Locally Preferred Alternative, will be provided in a Supplemental Draft Environmental Document (SDED). The public will have 45 days to review and comment on the SDED after it is released in summer 2012. There will also be a public hearing during that time. The public comments received on the SDED, combined with the comments received on the Draft EIR/EIS, will be addressed in the project’s Final EIR/EIS, which is scheduled to be completed in the fall of this year.

Public Works Plan • To ensure steps are taken to protect and enhance the environment and improve coastal access, Caltrans and the San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG) have incorporated the I-5 Express Lanes Project into a comprehensive Public Works Plan (PWP) for the corridor. The PWP creates a strategy for implementing highway, rail and environmental enhancements. 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 late this year. Caltrans anticipates review of the PWP by the Coastal Commission to occur in early 2013.

We appreciate your continued interest in the NCC Program and will continue to keep you informed as these milestones approach. In the meantime, please visit www.KeepSanDiegoMoving.com for more information.

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