

May 20, 2013

Mr. Dave Navecky
Environmental Protection Specialist
Environmental Protection Agency
395 E Street SW, Suite 1100
Washington, DC 20423

Subject: EPA EIS Number: 20130097

STB Docket: FD_35724_0: California High Speed Rail Authority-
Construction Exemption for the Merced,
Madera & Fresno Counties

Dear: Mr. Navecky

My name is Alan Scott, I am a resident of Hanford (Kings County), California and as a very concerned citizen who firmly believes the many mistakes made by the California High-Speed Rail Authority & Board is unprecedented especially in the two areas I will be addressing.

I know the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is well aware of the deadly disease called Valley Fever (Coccidioidomycosis) fungal spores that are continuing to climb up the medical investigative agencies charts as a more serious medical condition affecting the states of California and Arizona. Clearly, if this disease is not diagnosed properly and timely, the potential result is death. I have taken this information from recent headlines from the print media and on-line sources referencing both the CDC and other well-respected medical examining agencies that have presented empirical evidence demonstrated the dramatic increases with this specific disease.

The compelling reason for me to write the EPA is the information I am providing is critical in the determination of all agencies involved final decision-making process regarding this massive **earthmoving project** with a projected routing system of 800 statute miles through many of the seriously affected areas as designated by a number of medical experts.

Mr. Navecky, we asking for your agency to ensure CHSR conducted a very comprehensive review of this critical disease affecting our state. We believe CHSR's analysis of this very critical and this serious medical issue has never been properly addressed in their Merced to Fresno alignment DEIS & Final EIS. Further, we also state the same for the Fresno to Bakersfield DEIS.

producing wind borne dust, which carries the Valley Fever (Coccidioidomycosis) fungal spores.

2. Two-weeks ago, I had a discussion with a senior medical professional who works in this area and he specifically noted that watered / irrigated agricultural lands **does not** produce Valley Fever (Coccidioidomycosis) fungal spores. The concern to the medical community is those areas that **ARE NOT under agricultural production (fallow lands)** as they are the very creation of Valley Fever (Coccidioidomycosis) fungal spores. This has been validated by medical evidence conducted in the Bakersfield area.
3. In the last few weeks, the courts have directed California to remove selected ethnic populations from two state prisons Avenal located in southwestern Kings County & Coalinga located in southwestern Fresno County. The medical reason for this action is that a propensity of those named groups are more at risk to contract Valley Fever (Coccidioidomycosis) fungal spores. Furthermore, this major health issue also brings another damaging factor – excessive medical costs. These costs are borne by two groups - the state and the families of those affected. Therefore, we strongly believe it is an issue that was never ever given the oversight as required CEQA & NEPA. We also believe this is most likely an Environmental Justice matter where CHSR failed to be in compliance as there was no validated comprehensive investigative inspection demonstrating solid migration solutions.
4. The proposed CHSR routing in the entire valley is expected to transit through very prime and irreplaceable agricultural lands this creating ‘right-a-ways,’ which now become a major contributor to the creation of Valley Fever (Coccidioidomycosis) fungal spores. Whether the railhead is ‘at grade’, ‘below grade’ or ‘elevated’ the entire footprint will now create ‘fallow’ islands. It is estimated this fallow non-irrigated land will result in a 150 to 200 feet wide path for around 130 miles in the central valley. Needless to say, when reviewing the Merced to Sacramento routing it will also be transiting prime Ag land in addition to a major flood plain area south of Sacramento (the Folsom Dam flood plain area). The same methodology must be applied to all other proposed routings where very similar issues are at stake to achieve compliance with existing state and federal laws / regulations.
5. The destruction of the current underground water aquifers, irrigation canals and wells by the construction for the high-speed rail will also result in the increased areas of non-irrigated (fallow) lands, which again will greatly enhance the fallow ground. The resultant of course is the increase in wind borne dust factor that is the carrier of Valley Fever (Coccidioidomycosis)

Alan Scott
May 20, 2013

alignment; however, I would be extremely remiss by not addressing my concerns as the issues in the above area very much mirror many of the ones the authority and the board have created in our alignment. I fully support and agree with all the letters against the CHSR with the STB and EPA to date.

Further, I want to address an area where I am extremely confident and hopeful the EPA will join with the STB Board diligently reviewing all submissions and when the STB has to make a final determination, we pray it will be - not to approve the state's request for an exemption. We are very hopeful that the EPA will support this request as well.

I would appreciate to be kept apprised of all matters related to this issue in the future any notices or findings on regarding this case can be sent to me at my address below.

Mr. Navecky, I want to thank you very much for taking time to review not only my concerns but also all the others who have or will be corresponding with you regarding this very disturbing out-of-control project.

I sincerely appreciate your indulgence in reviewing submission as well as everyone's as it is most appreciated.

Sincerely,

Alan Scott
1318 Whitmore Street
Hanford, CA 93230-2848

Contact information:

Email: a_scott1318@comcast.net

Home: (559) 583-7299