

Responses to Oral Comments from the August 25, 2016 Public Hearing

This section provides responses to oral comments received on the draft environmental document from persons attending the public hearing held on August 25, 2016. A total of 9 oral comments were recorded and are summarized below. Transcripts of the oral comments and responses to topics of concern are provided on the pages that follow.

Summary of Oral Comments Received at the August 25th, 2016 Public Hearing

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1 other speakers; no clapping or applause or boos or
2 hisses. We're all here; it's a democracy. We're trying
3 go get your input.

4 I'll leave this screen up at the end. These
5 are the other ways you can provide comments on the
6 Environmental Impact Report.

7 So with that, we will start off with Ron
8 Hawkins.

9 PUBLIC COMMENTS

10
11 MR. HAWKINS: Hi. I'm Ron Hawkins.

12 I'm concerned about the impact on the traffic
13 pattern through the adjacent streets, for instance,
14 60th, 70th, 80th, 90th, heading north from -- I'm
15 sorry -- south on Avenue D. Those intersections we have
16 accidents on them now. I live at 80th and G, and I see
17 emergency vehicles going to 90th and G, 70th and G, 60th
18 and G, at least every other month.

19 MR. DIERKING: Thank you very much. Next we
20 have L. D. Canfield. I hope I got that right.

21 MR. CANFIELD: I'm Dane Canfield. I've been
22 driving probably longer than some of you have been
23 alive. I've lived in Illinois, Indiana, Virginia,
24 Maryland, and Oklahoma, in addition to California.

25 I've driven traffic circles; they are horrible.

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1P-1

Responses to Oral Comment 1P-1 Ron Hawkins

Response to Comment 1P-1

These intersections are already being studied by Caltrans for safety type improvements. The improvements include intersection controls such as roundabouts, or signals to provide cross traffic preference for crossing moves. The current accident data supports these types of improvements to improve the current safety at these intersections as a priority in the near term.

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1P-2

Responses to Oral Comment 1P-2 Dane Canfield

Response to Comment 1P-2

The school buses that currently serve the corridor will be coordinated with to continue to provide adequate bus stops along and within the corridor. The design of Roundabouts considers the design vehicles such as fire trucks and School buses along with large trucks to address the proper sizing of the facilities prior to construction.

Your opposition to the roundabouts has been noted.

**Responses to Oral Comment 1P-2
Dane Canfield**

See previous page.

1 They are wonderful until you get some traffic, and then
2 they are accidents just waiting to happen. So I'm
3 definitely against traffic circles.

4 I'm also against interrupting school buses and
5 all the truck traffic and all the people, and I've seen
6 Highway 138 when there was snow, and it was jammed from
7 14 to 5 with cars lined up in streams 20 and 30 deep.

8 And I think it's absolutely ridiculous that
9 you're talking about tearing up one highway in order to
10 build another. And I know when highways are improved,
11 you have to tear up something. And it has to be
12 bypasses or stops. And I think you ought to consider
13 putting it along Avenue B or somewhere up near there
14 where you're not stopping all the traffic that we've
15 already got on 138.

16 Thank you.

17 MR. DIERKING: Thank you very much. Jason
18 Zink.

19 MR. ZINK: Hi. Good evening.

20 Yeah, Highway 138 is personal to me because I
21 lost my brother on 138. And I've also lost three other
22 friends during my lifetime on Highway 138; so it's very
23 personal to me.

24 I don't understand why it takes our government
25 so long just to put in bypass lanes. You know, it just

1P-2

**Responses to Oral Comment 1P-3
Jason Zink**

See next page.

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2 they are accidents just waiting to happen. So I'm
3 definitely against traffic circles.

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25 so long just to put in bypass lanes. You know, it just

1P-3.1

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1 seems so simple to put in a couple bypass lanes. Why do
2 we have to wait for this extreme construction and do all
3 this stuff? Why can't we just spend \$10 million and get
4 some bypass lanes on there so people can know, you know,
5 drive five miles, there's going to be a bypass lane and
6 you can pass safely. So every time you have to risk
7 your life. It's not right.

1P-3.1

8 How to we expedite that? Number 1.

9 On the east 138. I don't understand why you
10 had to tear up that highway. Why didn't you just go
11 over another 70 feet, build a two-lane highway? That
12 way it wouldn't affect the traffic on the existing
13 highway. You wouldn't have to stop, pay all these
14 people, you know, with the flags, you know, delays and
15 stuff like that, and then go back, then that's a
16 two-lane road that can go in both directions, then come
17 back and tear up the old highway. And then when that's
18 completed, then you have a two-lane that way and two
19 lanes coming this way. To me it just saves time, saves
20 productivity, and just makes it so it's not a mess.
21 It's just common sense.

1P-3.2

22 The other thing is coming from on the 14
23 freeway, most people that go on Avenue D probably, I
24 would say 90 percent of them, are coming from the south
25 side -- right? -- san Bernardino, L. A., to go to

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Responses to Oral Comment 1P-3 Jason Zink

Response to Comment 1P-3.1

Caltrans is responsible for regional highway connectivity and maintains and operates the State Highway System. With the entire project limits within Los Angeles County, Los Angeles County land use included in the Los Angeles County General Plan and the recently approved Antelope Valley Area Plan (AVAP), that was adopted as the governing documents for this portion of North Los Angeles County. The planning efforts were comprehensive and the ultimate Antelope Valley Area Plan was approved. These local planning documents define and provide a blue print for planning within the current 20-year planning horizon. Local land use discussions are at the local level and Caltrans is responsible for implementing and maintaining the state infrastructure identified in these plans. A widening of SR-138 is in this area needs to comply with the local land use decisions and the transportation elements identified to allow the growth to occur. These improvements are consistent with the existing planning efforts.

Response to Comment 1P-3.2

A series of improvement projects have been implemented along SR-138 over the years; these have added lanes in various locations such that the corridor currently varies from a two- to six-lane highway. Widening the highway from two to four lanes between Avenue T in Palmdale to SR-18 in Llano has been an ongoing project. Caltrans plans call for further widening in segments over the course of several years. As of mid 2015, eight segments have either been completed or are in construction, and three more segments are in the design stage. In Palmdale, right-of-way constraints can be attributed to the existing dense urban development. In Llano, further widening would result in impacts to sensitive cultural resources (see SR-138 Safety Improvement Project Mitigated Negative Declaration, approved February 15, 2014, on the Caltrans website, for more details [<http://www.dot.ca.gov/dist07/resources/envdocs/>]). Constraints to widening the current SR-18/SR-138 facility also exist farther east. In Adelanto, Victorville, and Apple Valley, right-of-way issues exist due to existing and planned urban development. Collectively, these constraints make development of an improved continuous facility problematic.

Responses to Oral Comment 1P-3 Jason Zink

Response to Comment 1P-3.3

The routing of the new highway would run directly through the County and the City of Lancaster and the connection to SR-14 (SR-138) would require significant improvements to the existing interchanges along the SR-14 (SR-138) including Avenue G, H, I. Standard interchange spacing is 1 mile in urban areas and 2 miles in rural areas for safety and operational benefits. If this traffic was rerouted on an alignment to meet SR-14 (SR-138) as suggested, the mainline of SR-14 (SR-138) would require significant upgrades to allow the spacing and the volume of traffic anticipated. Avenue I and H would both require significant upgrades to provide this new connection and the City of Lancaster and the County land use plans would need to be revised. Neither agency has plans for a new highway through this portion of the City/County. Another major challenge will be the locations of the new highway corridor and access from the existing highway corridor. The alignment would traverse open space areas which contains biological habitat.

1 Gorman. Most people don't come, you know, from Rosamond
2 and Mojave to go to Gorman; they go 58.

3 So why not drop this down to Avenue H-8, as I
4 emailed you, I emailed you a year ago. I don't know why
5 that's not on the plans.

6 There's going to be 50,000 people that will be
7 living over there in the next 20 years; they are planned
8 within the city of Palmdale and Lancaster. That's where
9 all the infrastructure is. That's where the water, the
10 sewer lines are. Why build a freeway and separate the
11 community in half in Antelope Acres?

12 By dropping it down there, you're serving a
13 future population. It's a quicker road for people that
14 live in Antelope Acres and people that are going to live
15 there. You're going to solve a lot of congestion
16 problems; you're going to improve the air quality in the
17 state of California by doing that. And it going to be
18 closer to go to Antelope Valley Hospital for emergency
19 room. You know what I'm saying?

20 So all those people, they have to go, you know,
21 stop every stoplight to get to the ER room. By doing it
22 on H-8, all those people that live over there will have
23 a direct access to our hospital.

24 There is no water; there is no sewer; there is
25 no hospital out there. So why not? It just makes

1P-3.3

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**Responses to Oral Comment 1P-3
Jason Zink**

See previous page.

1 common sense to me. Why not serve the future population
2 since this is such a big investment of a billion dollars
3 to serve where the population will be.

4 Thank you for your time.

5 MR. DIERKING: Thank you very much. Next we
6 have Mike Grimes.

7 MR. GRIMES: Hello. I'm Mike grimes. Thank
8 you for all your input, gentlemen; very enlightening.

9 A couple of comments here. One, I don't think
10 we're, as you pointed out, we're not quite ready for a
11 freeway yet. So I'm in favor of the expressway.

12 As a former police officer and professional
13 accident investigator, I question the Antelope Acres
14 bypass route putting four more curves in a high-speed
15 roadway. And other than it costing more, I think it
16 would be easier and safer to go in a straight line and
17 spend less money.

18 The other thing that I want to point out is
19 people that bought and built on the highway obviously
20 wanted to live on the highway. And the people in the
21 country got away from the highway to stay away from it,
22 and the bypass is going to make both groups unhappy.

23 Thank you.

24 MR. DIERKING: Thank you very much. Next we
25 have Don Goeschl with the Antelope Valley Audubon

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1P-4

Responses to Oral Comment 1P-4 Mike Grimes

Response to Comment 1P-4

Thank you for your comment. Your support for Alternative 2 and opposition to the Antelope Acres Loop Option has been noted.

1 Society.
2 MR. GOESCHL: Thank you, gentlemen, for
3 bringing this program to us tonight.
4 I'm kind of surprised that we have not been
5 notified. I know it's been going on for quite some
6 time, but my concern is we have a lot of endangered
7 species out here, we have endangered birds, we have
8 endangered plants.
9 And the Audubon Society knows nothing about it.
10 Why?
11 MR. DIERKING: Well, we can talk later.
12 MR. GOESCHL: Okay. I'll let it ride there.
13 But in the future, I want to be a part of this as an
14 Audubon representative of the entire Antelope Valley.
15 MR. DIERKING: All right. And you still have a
16 chance.
17 MR. GOESCHL: All right.
18 MR. DIERKING: Thank you very much.
19 Mike Enms with the Sundale Mutual Water
20 Company, Director.
21 MR. ENMS: Hi. I appreciate the chance to talk
22 a little bit.
23 For the other people that made comments, I
24 heard some pretty good comments here, too; so thank you.
25 And I might build on a little bit of that.

1P-5

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Responses to Oral Comment 1P-5 Don Goeschl

Response to Comment 1P-5

The Audubon Society has been added to the project distribution list.

1 Society.

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3 bringing this program to us tonight.

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5 notified. I know it's been going on for quite some
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1P-6

Responses to Oral Comment 1P-6 Mike Enms

Response to Comment 1P-6

Thank you for your comment. Your request for involvement is noted.

**Responses to Oral Comment 1P-6
Mike Enms**

See previous page.

1 First off, I'm not here representing Sundale.
2 I'm just here to pick up information for them. But I
3 want to say to the rest of you that have utilities in
4 Antelope Acres, I did notice some of the utility
5 companies that I believe are providing services are not
6 listed on the utility relocation. So please look at
7 that. If you don't see your company, please contact the
8 representative for that company and ask them how they
9 are going to be working with Metro on this relocation.

1P-6

10 Second thing was on -- I've been out there for
11 six years. And the last three years I have seen a
12 dramatic increase in truck traffic to me. And we've
13 seen increased accidents on 90th. We had a terrible
14 accident two years ago at 60th, involved two high school
15 students were heading home around twilight, and a truck
16 westbound hit them and killed both of them.

17 And on that issue I talked a couple years ago,
18 asked a question as far as trucking. There's, you know,
19 what this is going to do if we expand the highway,
20 especially dramatically. And these guys with GPS are
21 just pushing it in, and they're going, "Look, that's a
22 reroute."

23 So that's where, I think, we can see if we can
24 expand the highway rapidly.

25 The third part of that that I also expressed

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**Responses to Oral Comment 1P-6
Mike Enms**

See previous page.

1 two years ago is the dropoff. The one gentleman said

2 like "Why aren't we doing it at H-8?"

3 I have been here in the valley since the 1960s.

4 There was an original bypass that tried to take 138 in a
5 diagonal line across this valley, and it never got done.

6 So now what is going to happen is if we have a
7 major expressway, we will drop everybody at the freeway.

8 I happen to work at Edwards, and I can tell you
9 also the truck traffic coming down Avenue E heading off
10 base going westbound is treacherous, and those roads are
11 getting killed out there. If you have to -- in fact, I
12 have to drive over to Hesperia multiple times a month,
13 and right now I will not drive the back roads because
14 the traffic and because of the condition of the roads;
15 it's just horrible.

16 So I'm asking as far as an indirect
17 environmental impact, air quality is the responsibility
18 of this report, if you're going to increase trucking.
19 You're also -- in talking to Robert earlier, I know
20 you're trying to work with Kern County. I would
21 encourage that. Because if there's other ways that they
22 should be driving, and in doing that, you know, how do
23 we get that whole puzzle put together?

24 Thank you for your time.

25 MR. DIERKING: Thank you very much; I

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**Responses to Oral Comment 1P-7
Christopher Meza**

Response to Comment 1P-7

Thank you for your comment. Your support of the overall Project and Alternative 1 has been noted.

1 appreciate that.

2 I have one left. It's Christopher Meza.

3 MR. MEZA: Good evening. My name is
4 Christopher Meza. And I would like to say that I am in
5 support of what you guys are doing. You guys are
6 working very hard. So thank you for that.

7 The 138 enhancements to the safety enhancements
8 of widening the road has been a long time coming. It's
9 something that's necessary. It's dangerous. So you
10 guys are taking the steps to move us along.

11 I think as far as the alternatives are
12 concerned, Alternative 1 is really the only alternative
13 that makes sense to proactively meet our future needs.
14 Taking a 200-foot easement over time is going to help
15 proactively meet our future needs. If you start
16 incorporating 150 foot or whatever the Alternative 2
17 easement has, which is a smaller easement, you will have
18 bottlenecks of traffic in the future, and we'll be
19 revisiting it, and something that could have been
20 handled now. So I'm in favor of and support of what you
21 guys are doing, and Alternative 1.

22 Thank you.

23 MR. DIERKING: Thank you. So at this point I'm
24 going to just sort of close the public testimony until
25 Saturday, and we'll reopen it for additional comments.

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1P-7

1 You're all welcome to come back to that
2 meeting, as well. And appreciate everybody coming out
3 tonight.

4 We will still hang around, if you've got
5 questions now that you saw the presentations of people
6 in the back. But if you have a comment for the record,
7 you need to put it over with the court reporter, put it
8 down. That's really important. I want to stress that.

9 So once again, thank you for coming tonight and
10 appreciate your time.

11 MR. VOSTIC: Glen Vostic. Background: I was
12 for a time a Class A driver. I was raised by a Class A
13 driver, and my mother for years was a Class A driver.
14 And both of my parents did long-haul stuff off and on.

15 My concern is I want to understand they are
16 going to be routing more truck traffic, I guess, is it
17 to give a little bit aid to the I-5, you know, from that
18 traffic. But if more truck traffic is coming up the 14,
19 I just am afraid that the 14 won't be able to handle all
20 that because it's such small freeway, especially up in
21 the Antelope Valley. It's fine up until before Acton,
22 but yeah, up here just a couple lanes. If they don't
23 widen the 14 freeway here, I think it's going to be a
24 mess.

25 MR. ZOMORODI: At the time they were designing

1P-8

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Responses to Oral Comment 1P-8 Glen Vostic

Response to Comment 1P-8

The traffic analysis for the project studied I-5, SR-14, SR-58, and SR-138 so we could understand how the improvement on SR-138 would impact each of these routes. The regional truck volumes will increase over time, but the traffic data reflects that the percentage of trucks will actually decrease as the volumes increase along the corridor. The traffic projections reflect the increase in truck traffic, but the existing lanes configurations on the SR-14 are adequate for the increased volumes. These volumes are continually monitored for validating existing patterns and changes that occur across the highway network.

**Responses to Oral Comment 1P-9
Farhad Zomorodi**

See next page.

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10 appreciate your time.

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12 for a time a Class A driver. I was raised by a Class A
13 driver, and my mother for years was a Class A driver.
14 And both of my parents did long-haul stuff off and on.

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23 widen the 14 freeway here, I think it's going to be a
24 mess.

25 MR. ZOMORODI: At the time they were designing

1P-9

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1 the expressway, they had no knowledge of the state
2 mandate road bill by state of California on 245th West
3 because Accudoc cut that property. So state provided
4 the road in order for the property owners to have access
5 to 138.

6 And now by building this new expressway, there
7 is no exit to north of 245th west. The exit is provided
8 to the south, not to the north. In order to go 245th
9 West on the north side, you have to go to 240th West and
10 get the access, which is going to be provided, and come
11 back. And by doing that they are cutting the access
12 that was provided by the state of California when they
13 build the access. Highway 138, Accudoc, and 245th West,
14 they all meet in one location, all three of them.

15 Again, I want to emphasize that when they were
16 designing this expressway, they had absolutely no
17 knowledge of that state road that was provided by state
18 of California. And I brought them to the recognition,
19 and I want that access to be maintained exactly the way
20 it was intended to be by the state of California.

21 (PROCEEDINGS CONCLUDED AT 8:20 P.M.)
22
23
24
25

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1P-9

Responses to Oral Comment 1P-9 Farhad Zomorodi

Response to Comment 1P-9

The location of local access in the area of 245th Street West and the Eastern Branch of the California Aqueduct is challenging. We have had several discussions with property owners in this area and have tried to resolve all access issues within the corridor. In the case of access to the north of 245th Street West, access is provided by traveling north to 240th Street West. This is because the aqueduct is immediately to the south and parallel to the existing driveway. The preferred solution is to limit direct access to the identified locations to provide safer access along the entire corridor. During all of the project public meetings and workshops, the SR-138 team worked with and discussed the access granted that was granted to the property owner by the Department of Water Resources when the aqueduct was constructed. The location at the current intersection with SR-138 is constrained and provides minimal options for improving this overall section of SR-138, without providing access at 240th Street West. All viable options would have significant impact to the California Aqueduct and not provide adequate clearances to provide a safe access at this location.

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