

# **Request for Expression of Interest California High Speed Rail Heavy Maintenance Facility**

California High-Speed Rail Authority  
ATTN: Mehdi Morshed, Executive Director  
925 L Street, Suite 1425  
Sacramento, CA 95814

## **Summary of Proposal**

### **Local Government Participation and Property Owner Acknowledgement**

The following Expression of Interest in providing the High Speed Rail Heavy Maintenance Facility (HMF) has been prepared in cooperation with local governmental entities including the City of Chowchilla. The property owners' expression of interest in providing land and other High Speed Rail (HSR) Alternative Route right-of-way on land they control is acknowledged in this document. The City of Chowchilla was contacted by the property owners as the nearest source of potential services to the proposed HMF site. The City of Chowchilla is located in Madera County just south of the Chowchilla River which is the boundary between Merced County and Madera County. City of Chowchilla municipal services are within two miles of the proposed HMF site. The City of Chowchilla considered the extension of municipal services, if allowed by Merced County, in its economic and environmental interests. The City of Chowchilla is seeking to enter into discussions with Merced County regarding this shared opportunity.

### **Site description**

The proposed HMF site consists of Merced County Assessors Parcels (all or part) 075-110-010, 075-130-026 and 075-130-022 as shown in Attachment 1 for a total of approximately 155 acres of land. These maps show a proposed parcel that will be created by the property owner and transferred to the High Speed Rail Authority. The property owners have agreed to provide this parcel at no cost to the CHSRA.

The proposed site is adjacent to the proposed Alternative Route A-2 and can also serve Alternative A-3 as adjusted to meet the edges of the proposed HMF project site. None of the Alternative Routes have been formally adopted by the CHSRA. Adjustments to the Alternative Route A-3 are not significant and within the general corridor described by the HSR Alternative documents presented at public meetings. Please refer to Attachment 2 for a map locating the proposed HMF on Alternative Route maps as adjusted/proposed by this application.

The proposed HMF project site is currently served by SR 99, Harvey Pettit Road, Plainsburg Road and South Vista Avenue (Road 13 in Madera County). Caltrans is beginning construction on the SR 99/Plainsburg Road interchange which will provide safe access to both east and west travel across Highway 99. This new interchange will

open up additional land for commercial and industrial development in southern Merced County adjacent to the proposed HMF site. The Merced County General Plan identifies the proposed project site as Agricultural. Should the site be selected the property owners will seek to amend the General Plan and re-zone the site for industrial use.

The City of Chowchilla was contacted regarding extending infrastructure from that City to the proposed HMF site. The City has expressed interest in considering extending sewer, allowing road development, power line extensions, Union Pacific Rail Road (UPRR) surface rail spur development within in its environs. If this site is selected for further consideration, the City of Chowchilla is prepared to participate in solving potential inter-jurisdictional issues between Merced County and the City.

### **Constructability**

The General Plan of the City of Chowchilla proposes major transportation facilities that will serve the growth area south of the Chowchilla River that could also serve the proposed site. A spur rail line from UPRR can be extended to the site to provide access to a surface rail mainline. A major Pacific Gas and Electric (PG&E) electrical transmission facility is located on Chowchilla Blvd. approximately 4 miles to the south west of the proposed HMF site. Access to the proposed HMF will be on publicly owned right-of-way. Any relocation necessary of existing infrastructure or relocation of residential or commercial uses will be addressed prior to providing right-of-way.

**Displacements:** Agricultural operations will cease on approximately 155 acres with the construction of the HMF at this location. The agricultural crops that would be lost are mature almond trees and row crops. Residential dwellings will not be displaced as a result of the HMF being constructed on this location. Several agricultural irrigation lines will have to be relocated to accommodate the proposed HMF. The estimated distance is approximately 2,100 linear feet. Land use in this area is currently designated as Agricultural by the Merced County General Plan. Approximately 155 acres of active farmland will be displaced. The 100-year FEMA flood zone is approximately 1,300 feet northeasterly of the northerly edge of the proposed HMF location. Harvey Pettit Road forms the southern boundary of the flood plain on the easterly side of Highway 99.

**Traffic effects:** The rural nature of the proposed site generates little traffic on rural County roads. The County roads are typically 28 foot wide paved sections with a marginally maintained shoulder on a 50 foot right-of-way. Several important east-west and north south roads are near the northern end of the proposed HMF site. Plainsburg Road is an important north-south road and Sandy Mush Road travels east-west from Highway 99 to the San Joaquin River near Los Banos. These facilities would be effected by increased local traffic generated by the proposed HMF requiring increasing the road capacity in the immediate area near the HMF. The construction of the SR99/Plainsburg Road interchange will improve traffic safety on SR 99 and provide an incremental increase in the capacity of those local roads served by the interchange in the immediate area around the interchange. Beyond the immediate area local roads lack significant capacity to accommodate increased traffic demand from the HMF.

Anticipated traffic from the proposed facility would significantly overwhelm the local roads. The Infrastructure Plan for the proposed HMF at this site includes substantial upgrades to the road system surrounding the HMF location to meet acceptable Level-of-service standards (See Attachment 3). Improving local roads is included in the off-site improvements contemplated for the HMF that would be funded as part of the public/private partnership.

The site is indirectly served by State Route 99 (SR 99), which parallels the HMF site on the east. SR 99 is a major north-south freeway in the San Joaquin Valley. Currently, access to the proposed HMF site is available from SR 99 and Plainsburg Road. The new interchange will improve that access. The new SR 99/Plainsburg interchange is part of a program to improve SR 99 from a 4 lane facility to a 6 lane facility from the City of Merced to the Chowchilla River. Access to Highway 152 is available through Madera County/City of Chowchilla via Road 13 (a two lane rural facility). SR 152 is an east-west expressway between SR 101 and SR 99. SR 99 is classified as a 4-lane freeway through Madera County and presently handles a peak volume of 45,000 vehicles at the East Robertson Boulevard (SR 233) interchange. At the Merced County line, SR 99 peak ADT is about 41,000.

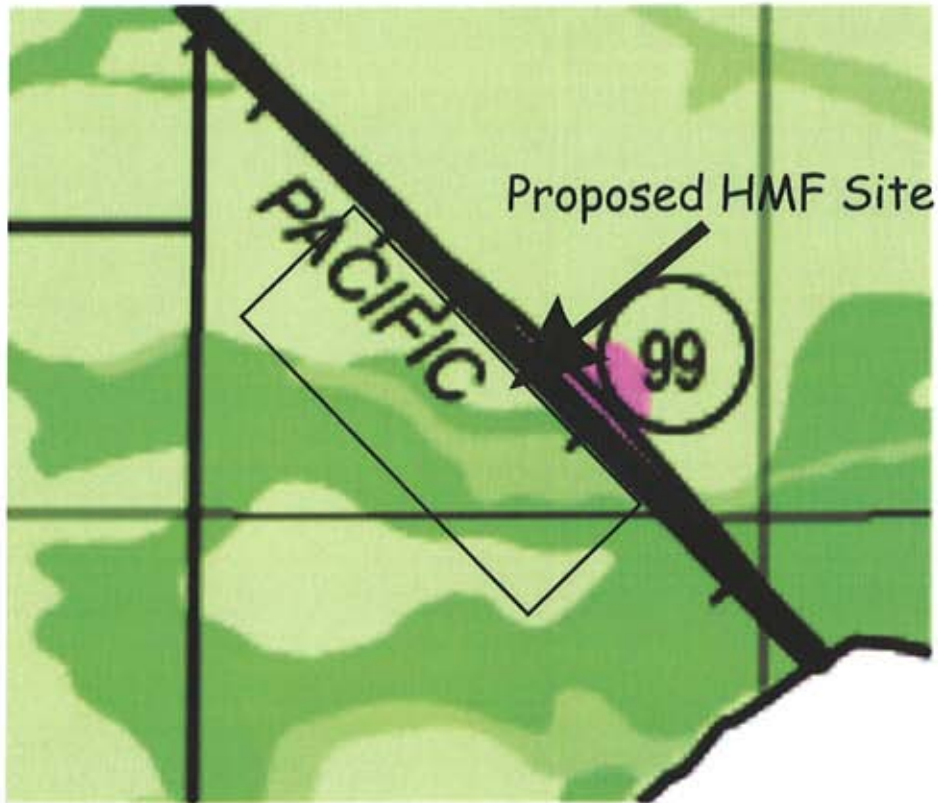
The infrastructure plan for the proposed HMF shows improvements to the access to the SR 99/Minturn interchange north of the City of Chowchilla and connection to new roads constructed with the HMF to provide two points of ingress and egress to the facility. This local road connection is necessary to avoid significant impacts to the existing local road system and improve traffic operations and safety. When the HSR tack is constructed for Alternative A-2 entering Merced County, modifications to the Minturn interchange are anticipated to be required to accommodate the HSR construction.

Improving local roads is included in the off-site improvements contemplated for the HMF that would be funded as part of the public/private partnership.

**Environmental:** According to the California Environmental Protection Agency's (Cal/EPA) Geotracker web service, there are no known underground and/or above ground fuel tanks or any other hazardous sites or clean up areas located within the HMF alternative site. Based on the biological assessments compiled for the Merced County General Plan, research on the US Fish and Wildlife Service mapping, and also that the land has been highly disturbed through agricultural processes, there are no known wetland areas located within this HMF site. Wetlands are associated with the stream beds of the Chowchilla River and Dutchman Creek to the south and north of the proposed site.

The proposed site consists partially of Unique Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance with narrow bands of Prime Farmland land running diagonally across the site. The exhibit below shows the location on the Merced County Important Farmland Map for 2006 as prepared by the California Department of Conservation Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program. Based on the biological assessments compiled for the County of Merced County General Plan, research on the US Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) mapping, and also that the land has been highly disturbed through

agricultural processes, there are no known wetland areas located within this HMF site, aside from the Chowchilla River and Dutchman Creeks north and south of the HMF site.

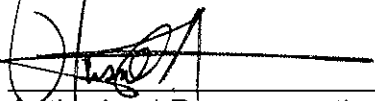


**Availability of local labor force:** The County of Merced and County of Madera along with its federal, state, and local partners are prepared to provide a trained and trainable labor force for the HMF project.

**Public-Private Partnership:** The public-private partnership approach may include economic or financial incentives. The City of Chowchilla along with the County of Madera and the City of Madera are forming a JPA to assist in providing financing for the infrastructure improvements necessary for the proposed HMF.

**Signature of Commitment and Cooperation**

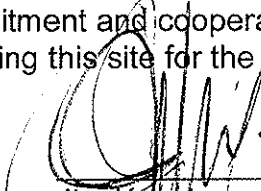
The following signatures express the commitment and cooperation of the property owners and the City of Chowchilla in providing this site for the proposed HMF.



Authorized Representative  
Harris Farms

1-15-2010

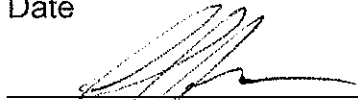
Date



Jim Kopshever, Mayor  
City of Chowchilla

1-15-2010

Date

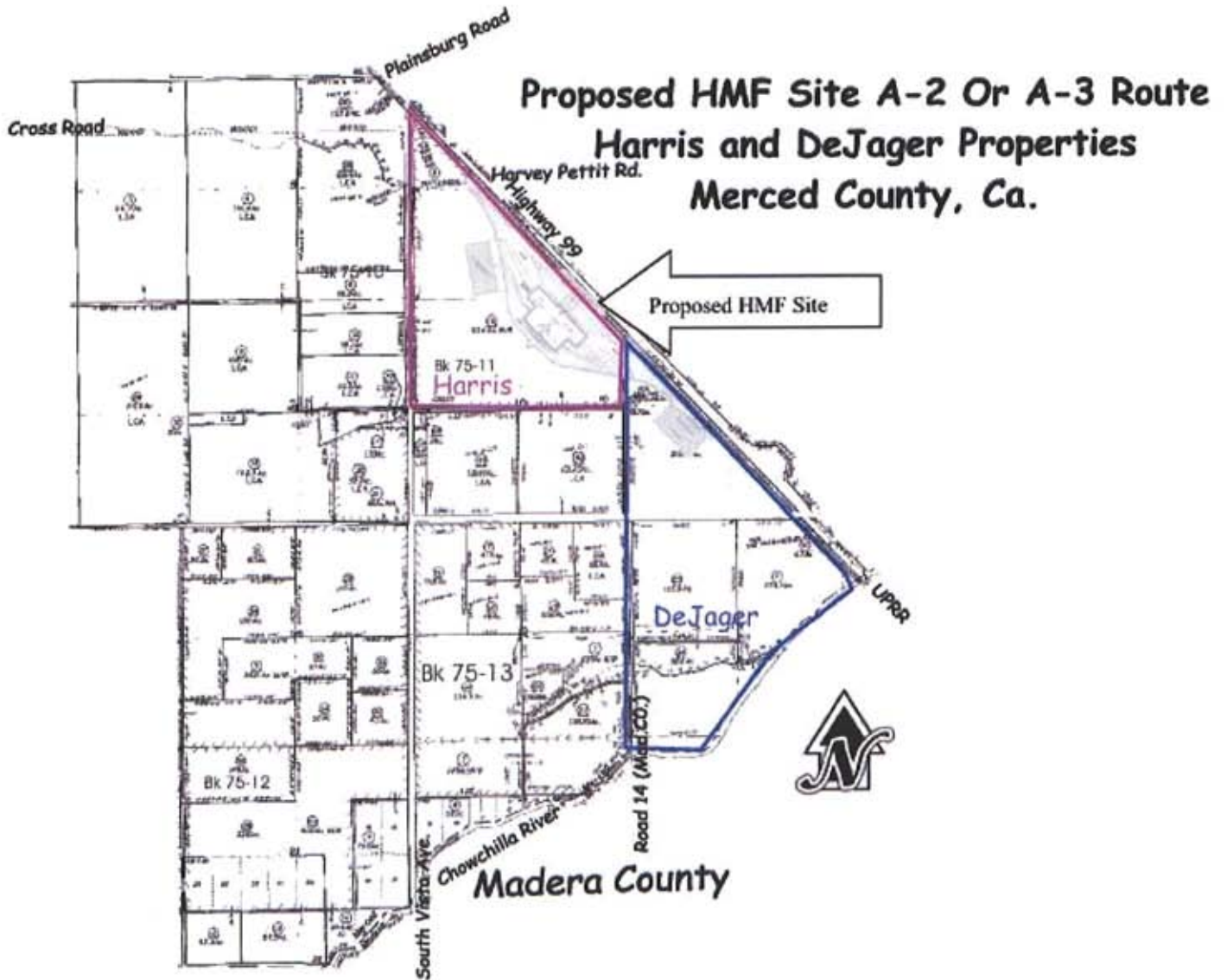


Authorized Representative  
DeJager Farms

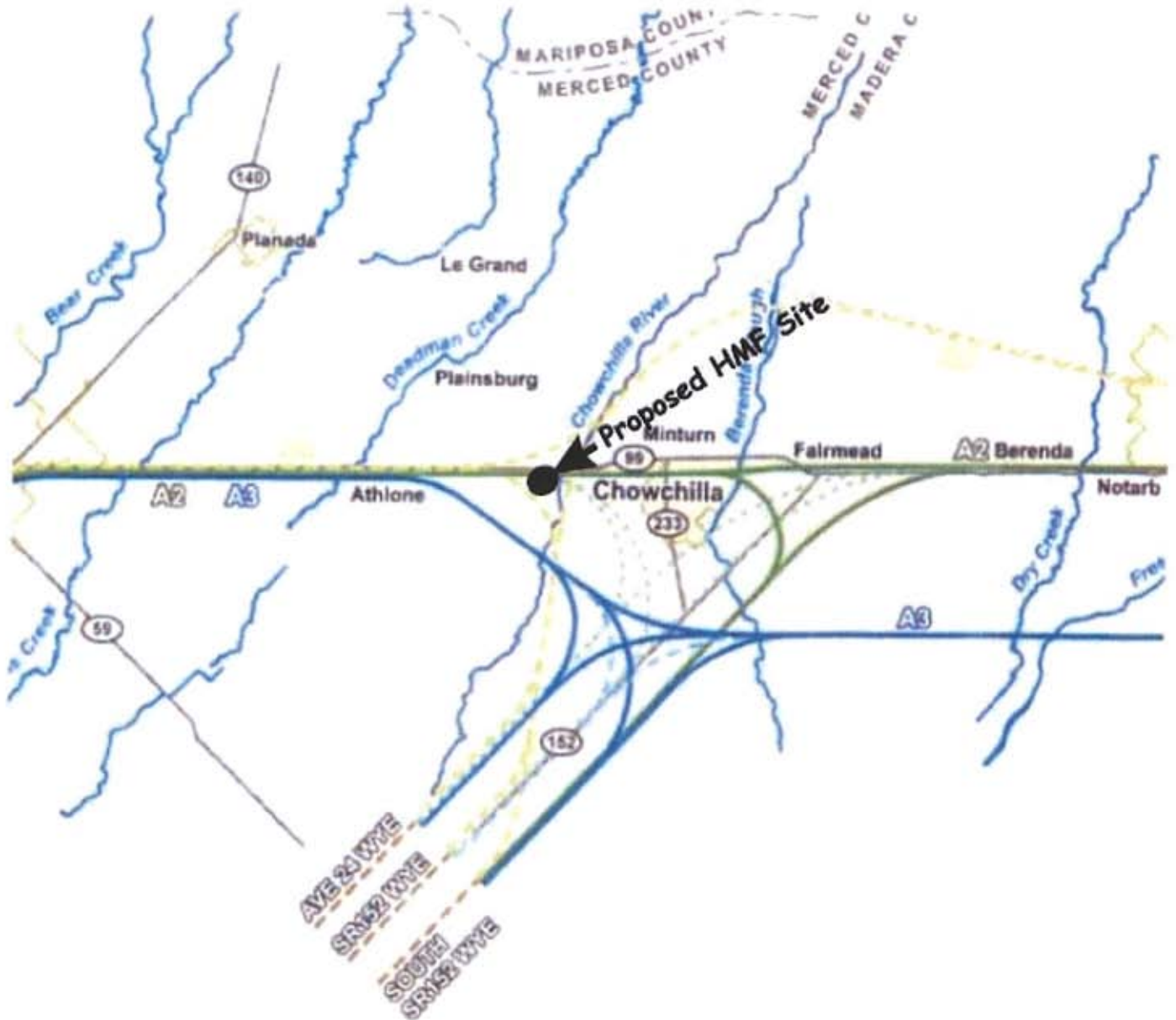
1-15-2010

Date

Attachment 1  
Land Ownership and HMF Site



**Attachment 2**  
**Location of Proposed HMF**  
**Shown on HSR Alternative Route Map**



Source: Portion of Map presented at public forum in Madera, Ca. 12-17-09

# Attachment 3

## Proposed HMF Site A-2 Or A-3 Route Harris and DeJager Properties Merced County, Ca. Infrastructure Master Plan

