

Appeals court upholds Pacheco Pass corridor for high-speed rail

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A train travels through a wind farm in an illustration from the California High-Speed Rail Authority.

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State appeals justices on Thursday upheld a lower court's approval of an environmental report that selected Pacheco Pass between Gilroy and Los Banos as the preferred corridor for running high-speed trains from the Bay Area to the San Joaquin Valley.

The Third District Court of Appeal in Sacramento heard the appeal by the Bay Area town of Atherton, challenging a 2012 ruling by Sacramento County Superior Court Judge Michael Kenny approving the California High-Speed Rail Authority's environmental impact report for that broad section of the proposed statewide rail network.

The case is one of three high-speed rail issues that have been pending with the appeals court. Rulings are still awaited on whether the rail authority's 2012 business plan for the statewide bullet-train program complies with Proposition 1A, a \$9.9 billion high-speed rail bond measure approved by voters in 2008, or whether the state should be allowed to sell bonds from Prop. 1A to finance construction of the rail system's initial stages in the central San Joaquin Valley.

This story will be updated.

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