

WILDLIFE CORRIDOR CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

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MEMORANDUM

Date: January 12, 2005

To: The Governing Board Members

From: 
Joseph T. Edmiston, FAICP, Executive Officer

Subject: **Agenda Item VIII: Discussion and possible action regarding Riverside County-Orange County Corridor Major Investment Study.**

Staff Recommendation: That the Governing Board make a motion to send the accompanying letter requesting that WCCA be added to the email/ mailing list for the Project Development Team, and that the Board designate a WCCA representative to attend meetings.

Background: The purpose of this agenda item for discussion by WCCA is three-fold. First, the staff report provides a brief update on the Riverside County to Orange County Major Investment Study (MIS), being developed by Riverside County Transportation Commission (RCTC) and Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA). Second, the WCCA Board may want to make a motion to send the accompanying letter, requesting that WCCA be added to the email/ mailing list for the Project Development Team. Third, WCCA may want to designate a representative to attend the meetings.

The purpose of the MIS is to develop a range of feasible multimodal alternatives that will improve mobility between Riverside County and Orange County. The MIS will examine a comprehensive range of capital and operational improvement alternatives to the State Route-91 facility and will identify other inter-county multimodal transportation corridor opportunities. It is anticipated that a final report will recommend the selection of a Locally Preferred Strategy. A map of the area is attached. Additional information can be found on the web at <http://www.octa.net/freeway/ocrmis/intro.asp>.

There are several steps and issues in the planning process in which WCCA would have an interest. Specifically, one alternative, the Prado Expressway Conceptual Analysis, appears to pass through Chino Hills State Park, near Coal Canyon. California Department of Parks and Recreation (State Parks) has been participating in the Project Development Team meetings and wrote a letter (see October 19, 2004 letter attached), indicating that such an alternative is unacceptable and must be removed from consideration. The following item on this January 12, 2005 agenda involves WCCA considering taking a position

opposing such road through Chino Hills State Park. WCCA would also be interested in alternatives that pass through Cleveland National Forest. Other alternatives pass through other Orange County Natural Communities Conservation Plan areas, and other open space areas. State Parks also provided written comments on the Draft Evaluation Criteria (see November 10, 2004 letter attached).

There are three committees providing input to the study process: the MIS Policy Committee, Stakeholder Group, and technical committee, or Project Development Team. These committees are advisory. The Policy Committee is comprised of elected officials. The Stakeholder Group is comprised of non governmental organizations, and members of the public. The Project Development Team is comprised of several public agencies, including cities, California Department of Transportation, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, California Department of Fish and Game, State Parks, Southern California Association of Governments, Federal Highways Administration, U.S. Forest Service, RCTC, and OCTA.

WCCA staff requested that WCCA be added to email list for the Stakeholder Group and the technical advisory committee. The consultant replied that WCCA was added to the Stakeholders Advisory Committee list. Staff recommends that the WCCA Governing Board direct staff to send the attached letter requesting that WCCA be added to the technical committee, or Project Development Team email/ mailing list also.

Staff also recommends that the Board designate a representative to attend meetings. This may be a WCCA Advisory Committee member, WCCA Board member, or WCCA alternative Board member. The Project Development Team has been meeting monthly on Wednesday mornings in Orange or Riverside. The Stakeholder Committee has been meeting less often. The last meeting was Monday morning, December 13, 2004.