



NEWS RELEASE

Today's Date: Friday, September 30, 2011

District: 05 – Santa Barbara, San Luis Obispo, Monterey, San Benito and Santa Cruz Counties

Contact: Jim Shivers or Colin Jones

Phone: (805) 549-3237 or (805) 549-3189

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CALTRANS BEGINS WORK ON SANTA MARIA RIVER BRIDGE PROJECT

SANTA MARIA – Caltrans broke ground today in a ceremony to mark the start of construction on a \$47 million project to widen the Santa Maria River Bridge on U.S. Highway 101 near the Santa Barbara-San Luis Obispo County Line. This project is primarily funded (\$24.5 million) by Proposition 1B, a 2006 voter-approved transportation bond.

“This section of Highway 101 is an important route, used by local commuters, tourists and the large agricultural community on the Central Coast. The widening of the bridge will improve safety for everyone,” said Acting Caltrans Director Malcolm Dougherty.

This project will widen the bridge from two to three lanes by adding a new 12-foot wide lane in each direction and new ten-foot wide shoulders. A bicycle path will be constructed on the southbound side of the highway.

In addition to the Proposition 1B funds, the Santa Barbara County Association of Governments (SBCAG) will contribute \$7.8 million and The San Luis Obispo Council of Governments (SLOCOG) will contribute \$2.5 million. To date, the state has allocated nearly \$9 billion in Proposition 1B funds for transportation purposes statewide.

The contractor for this project is Flat Iron West Inc. of San Marcos, CA. This project is expected to be completed in 2013. Caltrans' efforts to minimize impacts to travelers include working at night and behind barriers during commute times.

For traffic updates on other state highways in San Luis Obispo County, motorists can call Caltrans District 5 Public Affairs at 805-549-3318 or can visit the District 5 website at: http://www.dot.ca.gov/dist05/road_information.htm

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