



PRESS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CALTRANS COMPLETES NEW SEGMENT OF KINGS CANYON EXPRESSWAY IN FRESNO COUNTY

Additional lanes will help cut commute times and speed up movement of agriculture

FRESNO—Continuing the push to improve transportation in the Fresno area, Caltrans and the Fresno County Transportation Authority today celebrated the completion of the second segment of a project that is upgrading 13 miles of the Kings Canyon Expressway (SR-180) from a two-lane highway to a four lane expressway.

“This new segment continues our eastward extension of the expressway to provide a faster, safer route for people commuting from eastern Fresno County, farmers hauling produce, and motorists visiting Kings Canyon and the Sequoia National Parks,” said Caltrans Director Malcolm Dougherty.

The three-mile section completed today stretches from just east of Quality Avenue to just west of Smith Avenue near Centerville.

Caltrans began improving the Kings Canyon Expressway in 2009 when it widened six miles of the route between Temperance Avenue and Academy Avenue. With completion of the second segment, nearly nine miles of the route have been upgraded. As funding becomes available, the final 4.5-mile segment from Smith Avenue to just east of Frankwood Avenue will be constructed, creating a total of 13.2 miles of new, four-lane expressway.

The price tag for the second segment was \$37.6 million, including \$11.5 million from Proposition 1B, a 2006 voter-approved transportation bond. To date, more than \$18 billion in Proposition 1B funding has been put to work statewide for transportation purposes. State and local partnership programs and Measure “C”, a half-cent local sales tax dedicated for transportation, also contributed towards the overall cost of Segment Two.

Earlier this year, Caltrans completed another significant transportation improvement for Fresno motorists who regularly travel the busy traffic maze between State Routes 180, 41, and 168 a less stressful, safer commute. The SR-180 Braided Ramps Project added two braided connectors that allow motorists to use new designated lanes between interchanges to safely merge into freeway traffic. These connectors are identified as “braided ramps” since one connector goes over the other, similar to a braid. This section along SR-180, with an average annual daily traffic count that often surpasses 150,000 vehicles, is a principal artery for the Fresno area.

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