



MARIN COUNTY FIRE DEPARTMENT
MARIN COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

TAB 60

Kenneth Massucco
FIRE CHIEF

September 8, 2009

Bob Alvarado, Chair
California Transportation Commission
1120 "N" Street
Room 2221 (MS-52)
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Chair Alvarado,

The County of Marin emergency services has been looking forward to the safety improvements in the Marin Sonoma Narrows section of Highway 101 for many years. We have worked closely with our elected officials to make sure that safety improvements are made to this stretch of highway as expeditiously as possible. The safety improvements have been a local priority and design work is underway.

In winter months, Highway 101 closes due to flooding at San Antonio Creek. This has a devastating affect on traffic and obstructs emergency service access. The impact to emergency services does not stop at hindering our crews at getting to emergency sites, but since many of our crew members live in Sonoma County on the other side of the closure location personnel are not able to get to work to. On-duty personnel can be required to stay and respond to emergency calls when relief crews cannot get to work. In December 2005, Marin was hit with a storm that caused mudslides and flooding along Highway 101 and many of our secondary roads. 28 people were called in to support emergency efforts and provide relief for personnel who had responded to non-stop emergency calls for more than 24 hours without a break.

Access is always a critical component of providing emergency services. The length of time it takes for crews to arrive on scene can mean the difference between life and death or partial and total devastation. The access issues at the Marin-Sonoma Narrows continue to complicate already challenging situations for all emergency responders, and we are anxiously awaiting the work on Highway 101 that will relocate the freeway out of the flood zone.

There has been an effort underway for over ten years to gather enough money to begin critical work in the Marin-Sonoma Narrows. Our elected officials support the safety-related work being done first, which includes the San Antonio creek re-alignment. The project got a tremendous boost when Prop 1B bond funds allowed the corridor to be funded and design and construction to proceed. We are appreciative of that dedication of funds by the CTC.

Committed to the preservation of life, property, and environment.

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We understand that a decision is before you to stop the funding for design to continue on this critical safety project. We finally have work at this location fully funded and are anxiously awaiting construction to begin in the next two years. This is disheartening to learn that funds for design, a very small amount given the size of the state's problems, may go on hold.

I strongly request the funds for this project be made available to enable work to continue. We do not look forward to more winters with the closing of Highway 101 compounding the risk to our emergency personnel and the people and communities we serve. I hope that a creative solution can be found to enable the project to stay on schedule

Thank You very much for your attention to this. It is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Ken Massucco".

Ken Massucco, Fire Chief
Marin County Fire Department