



TCA stalls coastal commission vote The new hearing will be in february 2008 - PLAN TO ATTEND!

The awaited release of the California Coastal Commission staff toll road review was welcome news to every Californian concerned about protecting our state parks and beaches. However, for the Transportation Corridor Agencies (TCA), it came as a hard blow—the report states that their road couldn't possibly be done in an environmentally conscious way, and there was no amount of mitigation that could justify it. To review the Coastal Commission's staff toll road analysis please visit <http://documents.coastal.ca.gov/reports/2007/10/Th19a-10-2007.pdf>

The Coastal Commission is one of the state agencies that needs to approve TCA's proposal to build the Foothill South Toll Road.

Just days before the hearing, and after 200 people attended the Sierra Club/Surfrider Foundation Coastal Commission Community Briefing, the TCA requested to postpone the hearing. They said they needed more time to examine the Coastal Commission staff report.

It's no wonder the TCA is stalling. A recent vote by the San Diego City Council passed a resolution to protect San Onofre State Park, a recent poll found 70% of Orange County voters oppose a toll road through a state park, and even the TCA's recent effort to win support by offering \$100 million to California State Parks is not getting as much traction as they had hoped for. They are really feeling the heat, and that is all because of you!

What happens now? The hearing has been rescheduled for February, though the date is not yet certain. We will keep you informed of the new hearing date in February and the ways you can help.

Your continued support is more important than ever! Your participation in "Stop the Toll Road" events keeps the pressure on the TCA. If

you aren't on our email action alert list, simply send an email with the subject "add me" to robin.everett@sierraclub.org



Send the Coastal Commission a message telling them you want to Save the Park and Stop the Toll Road. Go to: <http://www.youtube.com/group/savesanonofre>



you're invited...

sierra club/friends of the foothills 9th annual holiday party!

thursday, december 13th

6:30 p.m.

See inside flyer for details.

new study shows viable alternative

more evidence of the TCA's flawed analysis

Recently, the Save San Onofre Coalition along with Friends of the Foothills and the Sierra Club commissioned a transportation study called the Arterial Improvements Plus-Refined (AIP-R) authored by respected transportation experts Smart Mobility Inc. The results demonstrate there are reliable alternatives to the Foothill-South Toll Road that have been previously overlooked. **The report found that widening the I-5 could be accomplished with far less cost and far less loss of structures than the Transportation Corridor Agencies (TCA) had previously stated.**

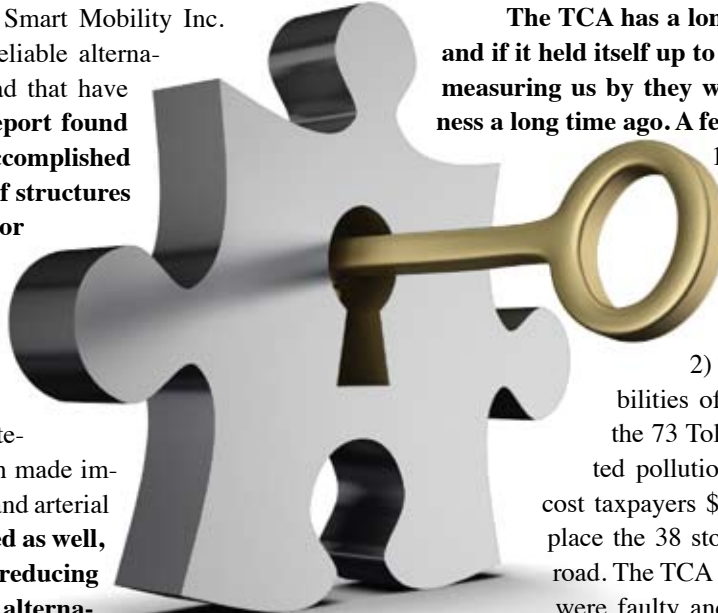
In selecting the final alignment, the TCA had a number of alternatives to choose from, one of those alternatives was called the Arterial Improvements Plus (AIP), which made improvements to the I-5, interchanges, and arterial roads. **The AIP alignment performed as well, if not better, than the toll road in reducing congestion. The TCA rejected this alternative on the grounds that it would displace an unacceptable number of residential and commercial units, despite the fact that the TCA did not provide factual support for this claim, nor did they make any attempt to refine the AIP to reduce the amount of purported displacements.**

For its 2007 study, the firm of Smart Mobility Inc, applied state-of-the-art interchange designs and other refinements to the AIP alternative on a design planning level. **These studies documented that a refined AIP would cause only a small fraction of the displacements alleged by the TCA, based on a level of information and detail far greater than anything the TCA has ever produced.**

The TCA has criticized the Smart Mobility study for small flaws that can be fixed while refusing to recognize a viable alterna-

tive. This is not an engineering report, it wasn't intended to be. This design review is meant to show that the AIP-R is a viable transportation alternative to the proposed Foothill-South Toll Road.

The TCA has a long history of flawed analysis, and if it held itself up to the same standards they are measuring us by they would have been out of business a long time ago. A few examples include:



1) TCA overestimated traffic demand and revenue projections on the 73 Toll Road, and the road has been on the verge of bankruptcy since it opened.

2) TCA overestimated the capabilities of their storm water system on the 73 Toll Road, resulting in unpermitted pollution and, according to Caltrans, cost taxpayers \$13.3 million to repair and replace the 38 storm drain filters along the toll road. The TCA has now conceded these filters were faulty and should never have been installed in the first place.

3) TCA claimed the Foothill-South Toll Road would comply with the Coastal Act. However, after extensive review of the TCA's application, the Coastal Commission staff has concluded the project would violate numerous provisions of the Coastal Act and is the most destructive of toll road alternatives.

San Onofre State Park supporters have been charged with designing the perfect road because the TCA refuses to consider any alternatives to the Foothill-South Toll Road. Ultimately, the Smart Mobility study has provided a sound alternative to the Foothill-South Toll Road. To learn more about the Smart Mobility study please attend Friends of the Foothills holiday party (see insert) featuring Michael Fitts, Staff Attorney for Endangered Habitats League.

Susan Davis Amendment to help protect San Onofre State Beach is continuing to hold on!

Earlier this year Congresswoman Susan Davis proposed an amendment to the National Defense Authorization Bill that would repeal riders passed in previous legislation that exempt the Transportation Corridor Agency from adhering to state and federal laws. The amendment has passed the House of Representatives and we will soon know if it will remain on the final bill that is sent to the President. Congresswoman Loretta Sanchez was a critical vote in support for the amendment which helps the effort to protect San Mateo Campground, Trestles Beach and San Onofre State Park.

Thank you Susan Davis and Loretta Sanchez for standing up for San Onofre State Beach.

year at a glance... 2007

Sierra Club's Friends of the Foothills campaign had a busy and exciting year filled with a lot of changes, some good, some bad, but in the end 2007 proved to be quite remarkable. As we look ahead to 2008 and begin to prepare for what is sure to be another exciting year, let's take a look back and remember the ups and downs of this incredible time.

Sierra Club/Friends of the Foothills began the year by collecting many postcards and letters to the Coastal Commission at various festivals and events in South Orange County. We had a great victory early in the year when the California Democratic Party passed a resolution to protect San Onofre State Park.

Our biggest change of the year came with the departure of long-time organizer, Brittany McKee who moved to Georgia early in the summer. By August, Robin Everett, who had been a volunteer with the Sierra Club for many years signed on as our new Conservation Organizer.

We participated in some great events towards the end of the summer, such as San Clemente's Fiesta Day, the Rip Curl Fund-raiser and the Boost Mobile Surf Contest at Trestles where we gathered lots of cards and letters for the Coastal Commission.

In September, after reviewing TCA's application, the California Coastal Commission staff released their report recommending denial of the Foothill-South Toll Road because it did not comply with the Coastal Act. The Save San Onofre Coalition worked hard to gain support from local governments to stop the toll road. One of the biggest victories was the resolution to protect San Onofre by the city of San Diego. Additionally, the Save San Onofre Coalition unveiled the Smart Mobility report, which offers a plan to widen the I-5 as an alternative to the Foothill-South Toll Road.

With the Coastal Commission hearing originally scheduled for October 11th, we kicked into high gear working with the Save San Onofre Coalition to turn out hundreds of people to the hearing. Sierra Club and Surfrider Foundation held a community briefing, featuring Mark Massara, Sierra Club's Coastal Programs Director, on October 1st which was attended by 200 people. The following weekend Sierra Club and Surfrider Foundation teamed up again to host an Endangered Species Hike followed by a Surfrider Foundation Paddle-Out at Trestles Beach.

By October, the TCA was really feeling the heat. They were dealing with a scathing Coastal Commission report, they failed to get the support of the city of San Diego, and Sierra Club and Surfrider Foundation had hundreds of people committed to attending the hearing. Not surprisingly, the TCA requested and received a hearing postponement.

The hearing has been rescheduled for February in San Diego and the TCA has a few tricks up their sleeve. They have offered California State Parks \$100 million in order to gain their support for the toll road. Additionally, TCA will spend the next few months challenging the Smart Mobility report assertions that the I-5 can be improved. However, we are ready to meet these challenges and we are excited about the coming year.



**Thanks to all of you who have supported us this year and every year.
We cannot succeed without your dedication to saving San Onofre State Beach.**

We look forward to working with you in 2008!

volunteer profile: paul carlton



Paul Carlton is a Sierra Club member who has used hiking as a way to protect or improve public lands, instill an interest in conservation and increase awareness of the Sierra Club.

Friends of the Foothills began in 1995 in Paul Carlton's living room. Paul along with fellow environmentalists Dan Silver from Endangered Habitats League, Pete DeSimone from Audobon Society and others founded the Friends of the Foothills coalition. The coalition's original purpose was to protect the foothills of the Santa Ana Mountains from the development of Rancho Mission Viejo and the Foothill-South Toll Road.

Since that time Paul has worked tirelessly to protect our beloved foothills. Over the years he has lead many hikes at Trestles Beach and in the Donna O'Neill Land Conservancy engaging hikers in the effort to protect the Conservancy and San Onofre State Beach from the devastation of the Foothill-South Toll Road.

When asked why Paul became a volunteer he states, "because I love to hike." Paul has loved the mountains since he was a kid and has been exploring and hiking Southern California's mountains all his life. When he moved to Orange County he fell in love with its beauty and thought **"We have got to save this place!"**

Paul Carlton truly embodies John Muir's vision of engaging those who enjoy and explore our planet to work to protect it.

www.friendsofthefoothills.org

P.O. Box 3942
San Clemente, California 92674



A Project of Sierra Club

**FROM TRESTLES TO SADDLEBACK
—PROTECT OUR COMMUNITY—
STOP THE TOLL ROAD SOUTH**



you're invited

9th annual holiday party!
thursday, december 13

PRRST STD
U.S. Postage
PAID
Walnut, CA
Permit No. 50

you're invited

sierra club/friends of the foothills holiday party!



Please join us for our 9th annual holiday celebration. It's our way of saying thank you for all of the hard work you do to protect Orange County's valuable open space and clean creeks and surf. Our grassroots campaign could not be successful without you. Please bring the kids and family.

when:

thursday, december 13, 2007
6:30-8:30 p.m.

what:

great food, no-host bar, fun prizes and guest speaker—Michael Fitts

Michael Fitts is staff attorney for Endangered Habitats League and will give a presentation on the Smart Mobility Transportation Alternative Study followed by a question and answer period.

where:

del agave restaurant
215 s. el camino real
san clemente

Coming South on I-5, exit Ave. Palizada. Turn Right at the bottom of the off ramp. Turn Left on El Camino Real.

rsvp: robin.everett@sierraclub.org or call 949-361-7534



join us for a hike in our local back country

Let experienced Sierra Club hike leaders show you some of Southern California's most beautiful places.

Saturday, January 12

SIERRA SAGE/FRIENDS OF THE FOOTHILLS

trestles beach

Enjoy this walk to the famous surfing beach at Trestles and the extensive wetlands area through which San Mateo Creek flows. We will discuss the ecological importance of the surrounding area and the damage that the proposed Foothill South Toll Road would do to the state beach. *Meet 8:30 am Trestles Surfers' parking lot, 3 mi rt., 100' gain. Bring water. Rain cancels. Leader: Robin Everett, Assistant: Ed Schlegel.*

Saturday, February 23

SIERRA SAGE/FRIENDS OF THE FOOTHILLS

donna o'neill land conservancy

Enjoy the beautiful natural scenery on this slow-paced nearly level walk. We will discuss the ecological importance of the DOLC and the surrounding area and the damage the Foothill-South Toll Road would bring to the Conservancy and watershed. *Meet at 8:30 am at the SOC rideshare pt. (Ortega Business Center, on Ortega Hwy., 2 blks. E of I-5). Conservancy donation of \$5 to support the work of the DOLC is appreciated. 3 mi. rt. Bring water. Rain cancels. Leader: Paul Carlton, Assistant: Robin Everett.*

South Orange County (SOC) hikes rideshare meeting point:

Ortega Business Center parking lot, Southeast corner, at the intersection of Ortega Highway and Rancho Viejo Road in San Juan Capistrano.

Important Information for all hikes:

Always bring water; sturdy, comfortable shoes; and a hat. Wear sunscreen. Rain Cancels.

Saturday, March 8

SIERRA SAGE/FRIENDS OF THE FOOTHILLS

trestles beach

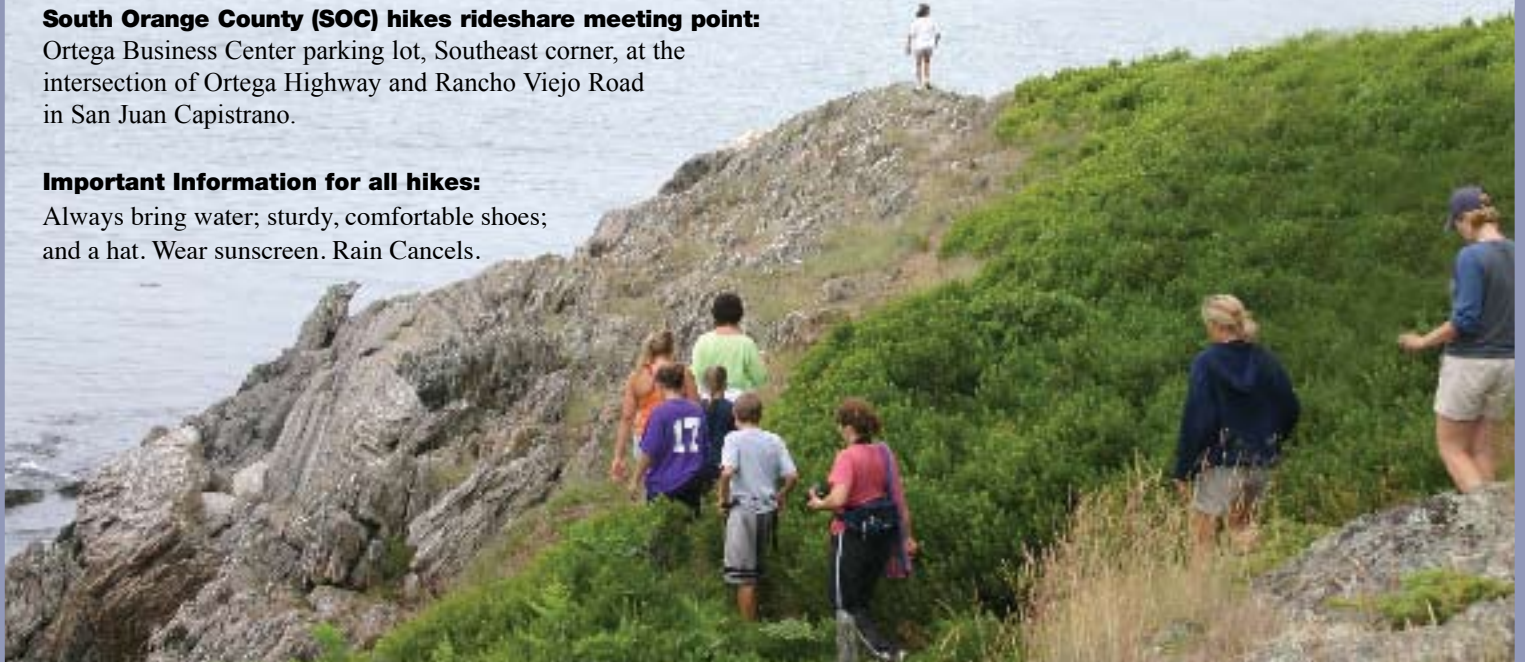
Enjoy this walk to the famous surfing beach at Trestles and the extensive wetlands area through which San Mateo Creek flows. We will discuss the ecological importance of the surrounding area and the damage that the proposed Foothill South Toll Road would do to the state beach. *Meet 8:30 am Trestles Surfers' parking lot, 3 mi rt, 100' gain. Bring water. Rain cancels. Leader: Robin Everett, Assistant: Ed Schlegel.*

Sunday, April 27

SIERRA SAGE/FRIENDS OF THE FOOTHILLS

donna o'neill land conservancy

Enjoy the beautiful natural scenery on this slow-paced nearly level walk. We will discuss the ecological importance of the DOLC and the surrounding area and the damage the Foothill-South Toll Road would bring to the Conservancy and watershed. *Meet at 8:30 am at the SOC rideshare pt. (Ortega Business Center, on Ortega Hwy., 2 blks.. E of I-5). Conservancy donation of \$5 to support the work of the DOLC is appreciated. 3 mi. rt. Bring water. Rain cancels. Leader: Robin Everett, Assistant: Duana Miller.*



For more information or directions call Robin Everett at robin.everett@sierraclub.org or call (949) 361-7534