



## SACOG Board of Directors

Item #06-5-16  
Action

May 11, 2006

### Position on SB 1556 (Torlakson) – The Great California Delta Trail System

**Issue:** Whether to issue a letter of support for SB 1556 (Torlakson).

**Recommendation:** Because there was no quorum, the Legislation & Public Affairs Committee did not take an official vote, but it was the consensus of those attending that they recommend that the SACOG Board of Directors issue a letter of support for SB 1556 (Torlakson).

**Committee Action/Discussion:** SB 1556 (Attachment A) will authorize the planning and implementation of the Great California Delta Trail and require the Delta Protection Commission to develop and adopt a development plan and implementation program, including finance and maintenance plans, for the Delta Trail. The bill also allows--but does not require--transportation planning agencies, such as SACOG, to allocate funds to the Delta Protection Commission for specified activities related to the planning and implementation of the Delta Trail. This concept is modeled after the very successful San Francisco Bay Trail, which is managed by the Association of Bay Area Governments.

On March 28, 2006, the bill passed the Senate Committee on Natural Resources and Water by a vote of 5-2 and has been re-referred to the Senate Committee on Appropriations. The bill has been held in suspense by the Senate Appropriations Committee and will be considered later this spring with all other state cost measures. The committee analysis is included as Attachment B. This bill is supported by nine recreation and conservation organizations, including the Delta Protection Commission, the cities of Pittsburg and West Sacramento, the town of Knightsen, and Yolo County; it has no known opposition.

In January of this year, SACOG staff and SACOG Director Helen Thomson were invited to a meeting in Senator Torlakson's district office to discuss this proposal; representatives from Yolo County Parks and Natural Resources, the Delta Protection Commission, the Association of Bay Area Governments, and the San Joaquin Council of Governments were also in attendance. Senator Torlakson asked SACOG to review and support this legislation, and he has expressed interest in coming to a future SACOG Board meeting to discuss the Great California Delta trail in a SACOG context. A draft letter of support is included as Attachment C.

Approved by:

Mike McKeever  
Executive Director

MM:AH:ts  
Attachments

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[Date]

The Honorable Tom Torlakson  
California State Senate  
State Capitol, Room 4032  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**DRAFT**

Re: Support for SB 1556

Dear Senator Torlakson:

The Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG) is an association of local governments in the six-county Sacramento Region. SACOG provides transportation planning and funding for the region, and serves as a forum for the study and resolution of regional issues.

I am writing in support of Senate Bill 1556, which authorizes the creation of the Great California Delta Trail and requires the Delta Protection Commission to create a plan for designing, implementing and maintaining this Trail. The Delta Trail would be a bicycle, pedestrian, and recreation corridor along more than 1,000 miles of Delta waterfront in Contra Costa, San Joaquin, Sacramento, Yolo and Solano Counties.

We commend this legislation for seeking to address the many unmet transportation needs for the Delta region including trails for walking and bicycling, facilities for wildlife observation and education, water sports access, bank fishing areas, and improved historic and cultural sites with interpretive information.

Specifically, the Delta Trail will provide access to the Delta ecosystem, 22 current recreational facilities within the area, and miles of historic agricultural lands and small towns. The Delta Trail will connect major trail systems, planned and existing in the cities, towns and counties along the Delta waterfront, and fill in the gaps between in order to create one contiguous loop around the region.

Providing non-motorized transportation facilities and inter-regional connections improves our transportation systems and provides new choices for local residents. Improved access to the Delta's recreation facilities and historic sites will enhance the economic vitality of the region.

Thank you for your efforts to ensure that Delta residents have access to this opportunity.

Sincerely,

Mike McKeever  
Executive Director

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