



## Item #13-1-13 Information

### Strategic Planning Committee

December 20, 2012

#### Federal Advocacy Principles for 2013

**Issue:** What policy objectives should SACOG pursue at the federal level in 2013?

**Recommendation:** The Federal Advocacy Principles are largely consistent with direction from the SACOG Board of Directors in 2012. Staff is seeking approval of amendments to accommodate new areas of focus.

**Discussion:** Congress continues to maintain an earmark ban, increasing challenges for funding hard-to-fund projects both in transportation and water authorization legislation. The 2012 adoption of a two-year surface transportation authorization bill, MAP-21, consolidated programs, increased performance-based programs, and encouraged streamlined federal review processes. Stable federal revenue dedicated to transportation was not addressed in MAP-21, so it is anticipated that the relevant committees in the new Congress will focus on revenue in anticipation of funding a typical five-year authorization bill.

In November, Senate Environment and Public Works Chairman Barbara Boxer released draft bill text for renewal of the Water Resources Development Act (WRDA), which includes specific funding for 18 specific projects recommended by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to Congress, including the Natomas Levee Improvement Project. Boxer is seeking movement on WRDA as first order of business in the new Congress.

SACOG's existing federal advocacy principles have four focus areas: authorization, grants, appropriations, and other relevant legislation. Staff recommends the addition of specific focus on Water/Flood to include direct advocacy on WRDA, inclusion of key water projects both for water access and flood protection, and habitat conservation plan mitigation needs for the Delta.

Additions to the continuing four themes carrying forward:

- encouraging continued coordination and integration among federal agencies, such as the Partnership for Sustainable Communities;
- seeking funding sources for an updated list of key projects based on the adoption of the Metropolitan Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (MTP/SCS);
- continuing to leverage the region's integrated planning for fund development in competitive programs;
- advocating for strategic funding formulas for farm-to-market road maintenance in the Farm Bill;
- advocating for unique flood protection requirements for agricultural lands in National Flood Insurance Program legislation;
- encouraging federal environmental and regulatory streamlining to reduce barriers to economic growth; and
- support open space conservation efforts, including market-based solutions for resource lands protections.

Staff is seeking input from the Strategic Planning Committee on any other areas of new focus for federal advocacy in 2013.

Approved by:

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