

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

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December 2, 2008

David Lackie, Supervising Planner
Erika Leachman, Planner
Santa Barbara County Office of Long Range Planning
30 E. Figueroa St, 2d Floor
Santa Barbara, CA 93101

Subject: Goleta Valley Planning Advisory Committee meeting December 2, 2008: **Hydrology**

Dear Mr. Lackie; Ms. Leachman:

In consideration of the subject GVPAC meeting this date, the Department writes to memorialize our input on the topic of the Plan Area's hydrology in its relationship to Caltrans' facilities. The County and the Department enjoy a cooperative and substantive problem solving relationship on issues of concern and capital projects involving regional watersheds, drainages and highway facilities. It is of utmost importance that we maintain interagency situational awareness on issues that could affect County drainages and Caltrans highways and hydraulic facilities. Current efforts that illuminate successful planning and improvements include projects at Las Vegas, San Pedro, and San Jose Creeks.

Additionally, the Department looks forward to working with the Community and the County on land use issues and their potential hydrological effects on Caltrans' facilities. The updated Community Plan should consider how land use intensification on the north side of US 101 can tend to increase or intensify flows due to grading modifications and impervious surface increases. As these flows will move toward the ocean, they will need to cross US 101.

The hydraulic capacity of facilities traversing the freeway is a finite resource. Existing capacity has been sized to anticipate existing, or known, 100-year events. Increasing flow potential through land use intensification may cause undesirable effects or hazards unless properly mitigated. These may include upstream flooding or embankment erosion or both. In order to avoid these types of effects, the Department requires a no-net gain in drainage runoff when land use intensifies. The Community Plan should incorporate policies and implementation strategies that adhere to the no-net gain perspective. Examples of specific implementation strategies are requiring new land uses to construct on-site retention facilities or improving (enlarging) existing drainage facilities under the freeway.

Downstream effects must also be carefully considered. Downstream conditions should be analyzed to determine whether there are natural impediments or built-up infrastructure or obstacles, which could prevent or inhibit flows through established watercourses handling existing or increased flows. Sedimentation is known to generally occur within the region and sometimes can create undesirable effects. These effects can be exacerbated by upstream changes. Early and meaningful planning can eliminate these types of effects.

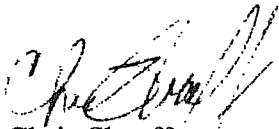
Lackie / Leachman

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The Department does not underestimate the importance of addressing hydrological concerns and their effects upon our facilities and adjacent areas, and maintains an open door for collaboration. Staff at all levels in the District are available to discuss these matters. I can be reached at (805) 549-3632 to facilitate or further any discussion.

Sincerely,



Chris Shaeffer
Caltrans District 5
Development Review

Cc: L. Newland, Planning
L. Wickham, Hydraulics
L. Gorman, Maintenance
T. Fisher, Hydraulics
D. Johnson, SB County Long Range Planning