



January 22, 2008

Patrick Kruer, Chair
California Coastal Commission
45 Fremont Street, Suite 2000
San Francisco, CA 94105

Re: Proposed Toll Road through San Onofre State Beach
COPY PROVIDED TO COASTAL COMMISSION STAFF

Dear Commissioner Kruer:

On behalf of our organizations and our California members and activists who support the environment, we are writing to urge the Commission to reject federal consistency certification for the Foothill-South Toll Road.

The proposal to build a multi-lane toll road through San Onofre State Beach is inconsistent with the Coastal Act, inconsistent with the state's environmental ethic, and inconsistent with the Commission's own mandate to ensure public access to California's world-class coast. The proposed toll road would destroy one of Southern California's remaining stretches of coastal wild lands, degrade water quality and alter wave patterns at one of the most famous surf spots in the world. The construction of the toll road would destroy unique habitat for eleven threatened and endangered species and drive at least three species toward extinction.

San Onofre State Beach provides accessible, low-cost recreational opportunities for over 2.5 million visitors each year- making it one of the most popular state parks in the 278-park system. San Onofre's two campgrounds provide affordable overnight coastal accommodations for over 160,000 visitors each year. The proposed toll road would likely cause the closure of the San Mateo Campground and create even more pressure for affordable, overnight coastal access in southern California.

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In addition to providing numerous recreational opportunities and protecting invaluable natural resources, San Onofre State Beach is also home to the Village of Panhé, located on the banks of San Mateo Creek. Members of the Juareño/Acjachemen people claim the Village as an ancestral site, which has been used for ceremonial purposes and as a re-burial site.

For years, our organizations have worked to ensure that a strong Coastal Act remains a preeminent feature of California's legacy of environmental protection. Its application in this situation is unambiguous about the permanent and negative impacts that construction of the Foothill-South Toll Road would bring San Onofre State Beach. The Commission's own staff report in October 2007 on this issue could not have been more clear – "The project is fundamentally inconsistent with the spirit and letter of numerous resource protection policies of the Coastal Act." (Page 2, Staff Report and Recommendation on Consistency Certification, CC-018-07, TCA, for October 11, 2007 hearing)

For these reasons, we urge you to protect San Onofre State Beach and deny consistency to the TCA's Foothill-South Toll Road application.

Sincerely,



Garry Patton
Planning & Conservation League



Kim Delfino
Defenders of Wildlife



Jim Metropulos
Sierra Club California



Traci Verardo-Torres
California State Parks Foundation



Dan Jacobson
Environment California



Mark Gold
Heal the Bay



Dan Silver
Endangered Habitats League



Chuck Mills
California Council of Land Trusts



Jim Stewart
People for Parks

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Janis R. Hirohama

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League of Women Voters
Of California

Mark Rauscher

Mark Rauscher
Surfrider Foundation

Susan Smartt

Susan Smartt
California League of
Conservation Voters

James Birkeland

James Birkeland
Natural Resources
Defense Council

Rico Mastrodonato

Rico Mastrodonato
Trust for Public Land

CC: Senate President Pro Tem Don Perata
Assembly Speaker Fabian Núñez