

Date: _____

To: **Aileen Loe, California Dept. of Transportation
District 5
50 Higuera Street
San Luis Obispo, CA 934-1-5415**

Fr: _____

Re: **Coast Highway Management Plan (CHMP) Comments**

I would like to express my concerns regarding the current draft of the CHMP. Following are the issues I believe must be addressed before the CHMP is deemed final.

1. The CHMP must contain a map that shows the proper boundaries of the Big Sur All American Road corridor, with parcel-specific detail. The width of the corridor for aesthetic purposes must not exceed 400 feet. After a proper map is included, the CHMP must undergo a new public comment period. Federal regulations related to Corridor Management Plans state, "The corridor management plan must contain at least the following: (1) a map identifying the corridor boundaries and different land uses within the corridor." The regulations define the word corridor, "*Corridor* means the road or highway right-of-way and the adjacent area that is visible from and extending along the highway."

CalTrans has provided a map of the corridor that includes areas to the inland extent of watersheds. Part of Carmel Valley, all of the Carmel Highlands, and all of Big Sur is included within the "corridor". This includes areas that are neither visible from nor adjacent to the highway and is therefore not a proper boundary map. The CHMP must be reopened for public comment after it contains a proper boundary map, so people can know the area where the plan applies.

2. The CHMP must state that the CHMP is not a regulatory document, is not to be used by regulatory agencies for regulatory purposes, and give the reasons why. Coastal Commission staff and County planning staff have indicated intent to require permit applicants to show they have complied with the CHMP. The CHMP currently states that it is not a regulatory document, but fails to say that it is not to be used by regulatory agencies for regulatory purposes. The CHMP was not subjected to the CEQA process, is not subject to initiative or referendum, was written by people who are not answerable through the electoral process, and has not received the depth of public review that regulatory plans receive.

3. The CHMP must state that residents of areas through which the Big Sur All American Road passes will comprise the majority of the members of any future Byways organization, and must provide a means whereby the public may replace members. The CHMP must provide for public participation in decisions by the Byways organization. Byways organizations throughout the United States are often grass roots organizations made up solely of local citizens. Federal regulations require that corridor management plans provide means to ensure continued public participation. Rather than leave composition of the successor Byways organization to the present CHMP steering committee, the CHMP must state that the new Byways organization will have a majority of residents of the areas through which the All American Road passes.

4. The CHMP must not contribute to the buyout of Big Sur, and must state that further acquisition of private land by public agencies is discouraged. The CHMP must state that private developments visible from the highway, such as homes and access roads, are not to be considered visual detractors, but rather are desirable expressions of the

existence of the community. Necessary private entranceways from Highway 1 must not be prohibited. One third of the private land in Big Sur has been bought up by public or quasi-public entities since 1986. The buyout must end or the Big Sur community will eventually be no more. The CHMP presently expresses a bias against private land and homes visible from the highway. All such references must be deleted from the CHMP and supporting documents as they set up justification for further acquisitions, including purchase and demolition of people's homes. All references to funding sources for acquisition of land or interests in land must be removed from the CHMP. Instead of further acquisitions, the CHMP should encourage government agencies to provide incentives for landowners to use their land in a way that does not degrade corridor aesthetics, while retaining land in private ownership.

5. The CHMP must accurately state Highway 1 capacity, Level-of-Service, and use information. The CHMP misstates the capacity of Highway 1. The strength of a chain is determined by its weakest link. The capacity of a highway with no alternate route is determined by the segment with the lowest capacity. CalTrans misstates the capacity of Highway 1 by failing to include segments in mountainous terrain in its capacity analysis (basing capacity on the segment through Point Sur rather than the segment through Hurricane Point). The concern is that the Big Sur experience may be degraded by traffic congestion if the inaccurate figures are used as the basis for deciding when it is appropriate to market the area to encourage additional visitation.

6. The CHMP must state that the present informal and unstructured visitor experience will be retained. Big Sur is one of the few places of its kind where visitors are not over managed and controlled. The present informal experience was overwhelmingly supported by visitor comments when queried by CalTrans in a survey. Any interpretive program must be invisible to those who do not choose to participate. Gateway facilities at the north and south ends of the corridor are not needed or wanted. Informal pullouts should be retained as the preferred means for people to pull over and view the scenery. No formal viewpoints should be added (they require signs, railings, etc.).

7. The CHMP must state that before additional use of the corridor by bicyclists is encouraged, a study will be done to ensure the additional use will not result in lower capacity of the highway for use by motor vehicles. The CHMP must state that any bike path will be located on existing public land. The vast majority of the millions of visitors who come to Big Sur each year travel by car. Such a study would remove the risk of adverse impacts on motorists from increased use by bicyclists.

8. The CHMP must provide a plan to deal with gridlock on Highway 1, similar to policies proposed for the General Plan by the Big Sur and South Coast Land Use Advisory Committees. The Big Sur Coast Land Use Plan presently contains policies designed to deal with gridlock on Highway 1 if and when it occurs. At CalTrans's request, Monterey County deleted similar policies from the General Plan Update based on the understanding that the CHMP would address the issue. However, the CHMP does not address the issue. Gridlock must be addressed in the CHMP, or CalTrans must inform Monterey County to reinstate the language deleted from the General Plan.