

Chowchilla Water District

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Board of Directors

Dan Maddalena ♦ Michael Mandala ♦ Vince Taylor ♦ Kole M. Upton ♦ Mark Wolfshorndl

August 12, 2010

Curt Pringle
Chair Person
California High Speed Rail Authority
925 L Street, Suite 1425
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Mr. Pringle:

The Chowchilla Water District Board of Directors (CWD) is gravely concerned about the future effect of California High Speed Rail (HSR) on our community, water infrastructure, and this area's agricultural economic base.

We also wish to express our disappointment and uneasiness with the outreach and open house efforts in our area. The result of these meager efforts has been to devise solutions that have a disproportionate adverse impact to farmland and rural areas, as well as possible violations of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

The public input process in this area has been indifferent and apathetic to rural concerns, and seems to have only concentrated on avoiding urban impacts. In two cases, routes were removed after rural residents and organizations voiced concerns, only to reappear a few months later. There is not a lot of confidence in the integrity of this process.

It appears the HSR is either unable or unwilling to devise solutions that are consistent with California's mandate to utilize established transportation corridors, which minimize impacts to agricultural land and native species habitat. As elected public officials, we cannot stand idly by and allow this flawed process to permanently damage this part of rural California.

Also, regarding the consideration of a location for the HSR maintenance facility, the HSR staff and consultants have allowed submission of proposed sites in our area by public officials with no jurisdiction in the proposed locations. Additionally, they have ignored the objections of surrounding landowners.

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For the reasons described above, and that the HSR system will operate at a huge deficit and has no private investors, CWD recommends that the HSR Authority select the 'no build' option. In this time of economic challenge, California cannot afford to waste valuable public resources on a poorly planned, a flawed and inadequate public input process, and an out of control financial boondoggle that is certain to be challenged in court.

Sincerely, 

Dan Maddalena
President, Board of Directors

cc: Madera County Board of Supervisors
Merced County Board of Supervisors
Chowchilla High School
Chowchilla Elementary School District
Dairyland Union Elementary School
Madera County Farm Bureau
Merced County Farm Bureau
Kings County Farm Bureau
Nisei Farmers League
LeGrand-Athlone Water District
Assemblywoman Cathleen Galgiani
Congressman Jim Costa
Senator Jeff Denham
Congressman Dennis Cardoza
Congressman Devin Nunes
Madera County Cattleman's Association
Chowchilla Red Top Conservation District
Carrie Bowen
City of Chowchilla
Madera Irrigation District