

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

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*Flex your power!
Be energy efficient!*

March 15, 2013

Mr. Jim Sayer
Executive Director
Adventure Cycling Association
150 E Pine Street
Missoula, Montana 59802

Dear Mr. Sayer:

Thank you for supporting active transportation in California. As the director of Caltrans, I share your goal of getting more people moving under their own power, and am well aware that transportation should not always rely on an engine beyond the human body.

Like you, I know the importance of maintaining a quality surface on which to push, pedal or amble, and I have heard from members of the bicycling community who are displeased with the way a recent road maintenance operation on the Central California coast has affected the cycling experience along a stretch of our iconic Highway 1. Please be assured Caltrans takes this issue seriously, and is working to find a timely and cost-effective solution that meets the shared needs of California's taxpayers, motorists and cyclists.

At issue, as you know, is a road-preservation technique called "chip sealing," in which a layer of bonded aggregate – essentially small pieces of gravel – are affixed to the top of an existing asphalt road. This resurfacing technique can save taxpayers enormous amounts of money by postponing, often by decades, the need for replacing an aging road. Along with these benefits, as you clearly point out, there can be drawbacks, which may include a rougher road surface that, while safe and sturdy, may make for a less-than-ideal bicycling experience.

In response to feedback received we are reaching out to cyclists and have enlisted the expertise of the UC Davis Pavement Research Center (UCPRC) to find the most prudent way to address this issue. I am hopeful that what we learn can be used statewide, and that we can protect California's transportation assets in a way that continues to encourage and accommodate active transportation options like bicycling.

Researchers already have made intricate measurements of the road surface. In just a matter of days, Caltrans and UCPRC will use heavy rollers to see whether the roadway can be smoothed by using weight to more deeply imbed the chip seal pieces and create a smoother ride. As this research is completed in May 2013, the data will be shared with elected officials and the bicycle

Mr. Jim Sayer
March 15, 2013
Page 2

community, and we will determine whether further measures are required at this location, as well as what modifications need to be done to our practices when using this pavement strategy where there is frequent bicycle traffic. Please be assured that the highway remains safe for bicyclists during these evaluations.

Once again, thank you for your contribution as California strives for a transportation system as inviting and accommodating as possible.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Malcolm Dougherty". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "M" and a long, sweeping tail.

MALCOLM DOUGHERTY
Director



Adventure Cycling Association

February 14, 2013

Mr. Malcolm Dougherty
California Department of California, Director
1120 N Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Director Dougherty,

This letter is in regards to a chip-seal project on a 25 mile section of Highway 1, also known worldwide as the Pacific Coast Highway (PCH), from Cambria north to Ragged Point. I would like to begin by thanking Caltrans for initiating the study with the Pavement Research Center at UC Davis. We expect the research to highlight long-term, safe, and affordable methods of maintaining roads for cyclists and all road users. The results will guide not only California, but help set a standard for other states and local jurisdictions to follow. While we appreciate the swift action by the UC Davis research team, we are still deeply concerned by the current road condition due to the size and shape of the chip-seal (3/8"-1" sharp/jagged aggregate). The situation is hazardous to cyclists and has caused serious injury.

[Adventure Cycling Association](#) is a non-profit bicycle organization with over 45,900 members world-wide. Our mission is to inspire and empower people to travel by bicycle. We create bicycle touring maps, produce an award-winning magazine, provide bicycle tours across North America, sell bike travel gear and provide on-line resources to make bike travel more accessible. The [Adventure Cycling Route Network](#) has 41,420 mapped miles of bicycle routes across North America. We also provide technical assistance to states working on designating interstate bicycle routes in partnership with AASHTO, called the [U.S. Bicycle Route System](#).

We are concerned about the impact this project is already having on cyclists and communities that rely on bicycle tourism. We strongly encourage Caltrans to allocate resources and set a timeline to rectify the conditions before June 1, 2013. Meeting this deadline is imperative to execution of cycling events planned for the summer. There are five charity rides that use this portion of PCH beginning in June. The current condition will force the charity rides to either cancel or reroute events off of PCH. The charities depend on these events to raise upwards of \$6.7 million for their organizations, and local communities depend on the revenue generated by the thousands of riders who participate in these rides every year.

In addition to the multi-million dollar negative impact on charity rides, we are concerned about the overall impact on bicycle tourism. The Pacific Coast Bicycle Route is one of the most popular routes in the Adventure Cycling Route Network (www.adventurecycling.org/routes/RouteNetwork.pdf) and the 25-mile segment is one of the bestselling map sections in our 41,420-mile network. Though we can't count how many cyclists

Adventure Cycling Association

A member-supported nonprofit organization, inspiring and empowering people to travel by bicycle.

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use our routes every year, we do track our maps sales. Out of 33,648 maps sold in fiscal year 2012, 16% of our maps sales include the Pacific Coast Route and 1,500 maps sold consist of the section that's been chip-sealed in such a dangerous way.

In addition to the fact that cyclists often travel in groups and use our maps over and over, passing them along to other cyclists over the years, we also know that Highway 1 is traveled by thousands of cyclists who don't use our maps and by local cyclists using the highway as a recreation and transportation corridor. This evidence demonstrates the Pacific Coast Highway to be one of the most cycled roads in North America, bringing economic and health benefits to the local communities. It's documented that touring cyclists spend almost \$100 per day ([Great Allegheny Economic Impact Study](#), 2009) and stay in a region longer than motorized travelers. A Wisconsin study estimated the economic and health impact of bicycling in their state at \$1.5 billion/year ([Valuing Bicycling's Economic and Health Impacts in Wisconsin](#)), much of it from tourism. With California's weather, population and global reputation combined, it is almost certain that California's returns from bike tourism are much greater. The effects of leaving the aforementioned segment of PCH in its current dangerous state will harmful to local communities, charities, and coastal California's reputation as a fantastic place to ride.

The PCH is a "Crown Jewel" of California cycling, attracting many thousands of cyclists from all over the world and serving as an important route for local interests. Please ensure that PCH is promptly re-surfaced to ensure that peak touring season and the many upcoming charity rides can take place safely and enjoyably by June 1, 2013.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jim Sayer', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Jim Sayer
Executive Director
Adventure Cycling Association