

CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE

STATE CAPITOL
SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA
95814

May 21, 2021

David Kim, Secretary
California State Transportation Agency
915 Capitol Mall, Suite 350B
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Concerns of Hazardous Parking Conditions along Highway 49 by the American River Confluence

Dear Secretary Kim:

We write to highlight concerns about hazardous parking conditions created on Highway 49 at the confluence of the North and Middle Forks of the American River. It seems appropriate that Caltrans lead the effort to mitigate these public safety dangers by coordinating with local governments, law enforcement, and other agencies.

The American River Confluence's popularity has grown in the past year as more people look to outdoor recreation, exacerbating the problem of visitors walking in traffic. Congestion, both vehicular and pedestrian, along Highway 49 not only endangers visitors to the area but also emergency personnel who access the American River Canyon to respond to fires, drownings, and other accidents. In the case of an emergency evacuation, a traffic jam in the area could be life-threatening as it blocks the only northbound evacuation route for residents of the area.

The surrounding local governments are taking measures in an attempt to address the issue in a safe and efficient way, but more input is needed from Caltrans. The most recent measures include:

1. Auburn State Recreation Area eliminated parking in areas where cars partially blocked the highway;
2. Placer County Board of Supervisors followed suit to block parking on Old Foresthill Road above the confluence;
3. Auburn Transit piloted a bus program to allow visitors to park in city-owned parking lots and ride into the confluence area.

These measures alone won't solve the problem at hand, nor will superficial changes to existing signs and foliage. There are portions of Highway 49 maintained by Caltrans that enable illegal parking, and we request that Caltrans take the lead on coordinating solutions for this issue.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

Brian Dahle Megan Dahle Frank Bigelow
Senator Brian Dahle Assemblywoman Megan Dahle Assemblyman Frank Bigelow
1st Senate District 1st Assembly District 5th Assembly District

CC: US Congressman Tom McClintock
CA Assemblymember Frank Bigelow
El Dorado County Supervisor Lori Parlin
Placer County Supervisor Cindy Gustafson
Auburn City Councilwoman Alice Dowdin Cavillo
CalFire NEU Chief Brian Estes
CalFire Amador/El Dorado Unit Chief Mike Blankenheim
Forest Hill Fire District Chief Mike Ridley
Georgetown Fire Protection District Chief Glenn Brown
El Dorado County Fire District Chief Tim Cordero
Auburn Fire Department Chief Dave Spencer
State Parks & Recreation Planning Unit Alexandra Stehl
State Parks Superintendent Mike Howard
District 3 Deputy Director of Maintenance and Traffic Operations Patrick Bishop
American River Community Coalition President Lorna Dobrovolny