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Kyle Simerly

(C) 916-718-5733

Kyle.Simerly@hsr.ca.gov

California High-Speed Rail Authority Releases 2020 Sustainability Report Highlighting Project Benefits to Improve Air Quality

SACRAMENTO, Calif. – The California High-Speed Rail Authority (Authority) today released its *2020 Sustainability Report: Building Resilience*. The annual report details ongoing efforts to advance the nation’s largest and greenest infrastructure project and reduce greenhouse gas emissions in transportation. In the past year, the Authority has expanded efforts to deliver a system that maximizes benefits to underserved communities, protects natural resources and is a catalyst in the transition to a low-carbon economy.

Electrified high-speed rail, running on renewable energy, will be the spine of clean, long-distance travel in California, connecting Northern and Southern California through the Central Valley. The Sustainability Report outlines policies for station planning, energy needs, emissions and community partnerships including:

- Opening of the Central Valley Training Center in Selma offering pre-apprenticeship classes in construction industry courses to connect the local community to green high-speed rail jobs
- Continuation of the work to environmentally clear the full phase one of the project by 2022
- Preserving 3,645 acres of natural habitat and agricultural land
- Providing more than 4,400 good paying construction jobs in which 73% are local to the Central Valley and 40% are from disadvantaged areas

“Making a positive impact on our environment starts now during construction. We take pride in implementing the greenest construction practices at our more than 30 active work sites,” said Authority CEO Brian Kelly. “The 2020 Sustainability Report shows that we’re removing more emissions than we create. We’re proud to do our part to green the transportation sector, even before we’ve gotten to operation. We are not just leading the state, but the nation and the world.”

“Our approach to sustainability is to plan and construct in a way that will allow Californians to live a good quality of life for future generations to come,” said Margaret Cederoth, Director of Sustainability and Planning for the Authority. “The environment and climate are important

aspects of sustainability, but we also address the social and economic realities that are all part of constructing high-speed rail in California.”

The report highlights a new green standard for the nation’s transportation infrastructure. The Authority has achieved a [97% recycling rate](#) of all waste to date and works through community agreements to neutralize all emissions that are released from construction. Through a voluntary agreement to offset all emissions from construction sites, the Authority’s urban forestry program has planted more than 5,000 trees, sequestering 25,000 tons of CO₂ over the trees’ lifecycle. Planted primarily in disadvantaged communities, the trees help offset emissions generated during construction.

To learn more about the sustainability of high-speed rail, join a free webinar on Wed, Oct. 28 with Director Cederoth, who will present on the major themes of the 2020 Sustainability Report and answer questions from the public.

A copy of the full report can be found at hsr.ca.gov.