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November 7, 2024

California Coastal Commission
45 Fremont Street, Suite 2000
San Francisco, CA 94105

Re: Support for Commission Staff Recommendation to Approve with Conditions California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) Replacement of the Lagunitas Creek Bridge along Highway 1 (Application No. 2-24-0786)

Dear Chair Hart,

I write to express my strong support for approval of the Caltrans application to demolish and replace the existing two-lane Highway 1 bridge crossing over Lagunitas Creek in Pt Reyes Station, with the conditions that Coastal Commission staff have recommended.

This is a vital project for my district, which includes all of West Marin County north of the Marin County Headlands. This project has also been a long time coming: we have known for many years that this bridge has reached the end of its useful life, and its structural integrity may soon be at risk if it is not replaced in a timely fashion. Without replacement soon, a weight limit could be put on the current, aged structure – and the consequences would be significant for the community and the millions of visitors alike. Heavy vehicles (including emergency responders) would have to detour 4-5 miles through an alternative route. There is no doubt that this bridge must be replaced, and I urge your approval of this Caltrans application to ensure that work can begin as soon as possible.

Additionally, I wanted to highlight some of the benefits that the planned project and new bridge replacement will bring. Construction of the new bridge includes: 1) a wider, separated pedestrian pathway; 2) a wider, safer shoulder for bicyclists; and 3) habitat restoration and new visitor services including parking and public restrooms at the adjacent B Street parcel. One of the core tenants of the Coastal Act is protecting public access to our coastline and coastal regions, and the improvements including in this project strongly support enhanced multi-modal visitor access and coastal recreation in Pt. Reyes.

As you consider approval of this application, I urge you to concurrently approve the conditions of approval in the staff recommendation. These conditions appropriately balance the need to move forward swiftly with construction and replacement of the bridge, with protection of adjacent natural resources and habitats.

Thank you for your consideration. I urge your approval of this application at your November 14 meeting so that Caltrans can move forward in replacing and improving this important community asset for the thousands of residents, and millions of visitors in West Marin.

Sincerely,

Dennis Rodoni
Marin County Supervisor District 4

CC: Marin County Board of Supervisors