



ECOS

ENVIRONMENTAL
♦ COUNCIL ♦
OF SACRAMENTO

Post Office Box 1526 | Sacramento, CA 95812-1526

December 18, 2020

Dear ECOS Supporter,

We hope that this letter finds you and your family safe and healthy.

Because of the pandemic, we at ECOS had to cancel our fund- and friend-raising events: Sacramento Earth Day and the Environmentalist of the Year Awards ceremony. We have a substantial budget shortfall, despite receiving funds from the CARES Act Payroll Protection Program and a similar Sacramento City program.

Because of this, we are asking for your help.

We have reason for hope. Vaccinations for the coronavirus are already underway for essential workers, with more coming. The incoming U.S. President's team is committed to addressing the climate crisis as an urgent national security issue. We're all aware of the increased heat waves, the droughts and flooding and the horrific wildfires that have come with climate change. We know that there's limited time to prevent the crisis from worsening. We must protect our natural environment – its waters, land and creatures. The urgency of these times requires that we pool all resources possible to deter the effects of climate change, especially for disadvantaged communities.

We at ECOS work with many partners to influence regional leaders and make the necessary changes.

Following are some recent ECOS accomplishments and ongoing work.

Climate Change:

After convincing Sacramento County supervisors to begin a long-promised Climate Action Plan, ECOS and partners now serve on staff's Stakeholder Committee – a draft Plan is expected soon. We are advocating for the most expeditious reduction in greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions possible – to meet the state's targets for 2030 and 2045.

ECOS is currently monitoring the City's implementation of recommendations by the Mayors' Commission on Climate Change. Serving on its advisory committees, we advocated for GHG reductions – especially in the built environment and in transportation and transit, factoring in climate resiliency and environmental justice. We supported electric vehicles, improvements for bicyclists and pedestrians, and advocated for using the Sacramento City's influence to limit sprawl by preserving the County's Urban Services Boundary.

Habitat: ECOS' Habitat 2020 committee works to protect our region's lands, waters, native plants and wildlife. The South Sacramento Habitat Conservation Plan was recently approved – more than 40,000 acres of critical habitat will be conserved in south Sacramento County. We sit on its Implementation Review Committee, and collaborate with regional organizations and agencies to take advantage of its voluntary conservation targets. We helped pool all habitat-related data into a hub to aid conservation entities.

We comment on Environmental Impact Reports for development projects that have unacceptable impacts on habitats. A recent example is the California Northstate Hospital – a proposed 12-story facility with helicopter access adjacent to Stone Lakes National Wildlife Refuge. We monitor Groundwater Sustainability Plans, and

participate in the Water Forum to protect the lower American River and our water supply. Serving on the Delta Water Conveyance project's Stakeholder Engagement Committee, we seek to improve the engineering placements of the project that would help terrestrial species.

Land Use: We made comments on the proposed NewBridge development project on Jackson Road, addressing the need for stronger measures to reduce GHGs. This led to the planned inclusion of better pedestrian and bike connectivity, increased requirements for solar panels and for electric vehicles infrastructure, and elimination of natural gas.

Infill & Affordable Housing: ECOS advocates for quality infill developments, including higher density and affordable housing. Our Land Use Committee reviews ways to increase infill and affordable developments in the Sacramento area. A focus of our meetings has included the building of accessory dwelling units – secondary dwellings on single-family residential lots, as an approach to increase infill.

We took issue with UC Davis' Aggie Square Environmental Impact Report – this proposed high-tech center would double the size of its Medical Center. In this rapidly gentrifying area, UCD would provide more jobs, but only housing for students. We commented on the displacement of neighborhood residents due to rising home prices and rents, and GHG emissions and air pollution from more commute trips. By working with nearby neighborhood associations and community groups, we helped spawn the nonprofit "Sacramento Investment Without Displacement." This coalition has been pressing the City of Sacramento, UC Davis and the project developer (Wexford) to sign a Community Benefits Agreement that has been shaped in part by the community members who will be most impacted. This would ensure a measure of accountability for years to come.

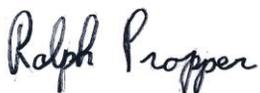
Transportation & Transit: ECOS sued Caltrans over its plans to add additional lanes to US Highway 50, arguing that congestion could be alleviated by more transit. We settled the lawsuit when Caltrans agreed to have funds go to Regional Transit to add passing lanes to the Gold Line between Sacramento and Folsom. When completed in 2023, the doubled train frequency should lead to increased ridership.

ECOS initiated the formation of the SacMoves Coalition, which works to influence a transportation sales tax measure that had been approved for Sacramento County's November ballot – however, this measure was pulled due to the pandemic. Stakeholder engagement and rallies helped persuade the Sacramento Transportation Authority to increase the percentage of funds for transit. We are considering a citizen-led initiative in 2022.

Summary: ECOS continues to work on these issues throughout this challenging time. **Although our dedicated volunteers do much of the work, our efforts are significantly enhanced by two paid staff.** We now face a fiscal shortfall due to the necessary cancelling of fund-raising events.

Your generous commitment to our efforts makes our work possible. Please consider a tax-deductible donation to ECOS in your giving plans.

Sincerely,



Ralph Propper
ECOS President