



## ISSUE MEMORANDUM

**TO:** MALCOLM DOUGHERTY, Director  
California Department of Transportation

**FROM:** KARLA SUTLIFF, Chief Engineer  
Project Delivery  
(916) 654-6490, karla.sutliff@dot.ca.gov

**PREPARED BY:** KEITH ROBINSON, Principal Landscape Architect  
Division of Design  
(916) 654-6200; keith.robinson@dot.ca.gov

LARA JUSTINE, Statewide Scenic Highway Coordinator  
Landscape Architecture Program  
(916) 654-4234 justine.lara@dot.ca.gov

**DATE:** October 15, 2015

**SUBJECT:** State Scenic Highway Official Designation for State Route 180

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Request for Approval | <input type="checkbox"/> For Information          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Request for Discussion          | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> For Signature |

**TRACKING NUMBER:**

**TIME FACTOR:**

Not applicable.

**BACKGROUND:**

This Issue Memorandum is to recommend official State Scenic Highway designation for two segments of State Route (SR) 180 (PM 78.6/110.8 and PM 112.1/137.9).

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**SUBJECT: STATE ROUTE 180-OFFICIAL STATE SCENIC HIGHWAY  
DESIGNATION**

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**ESTIMATED COST:**

Minimal cost to Caltrans: Upon official designation, Caltrans places State Scenic Highway signs along the route, and indicates the scenic designation status on future maps produced by Caltrans.


**RECOMMENDATION:**

It is recommended that the Director officially designate two segments of State Route (SR) 180 (PM 78.6/110.8 and PM 112.1/137.9) as a State Scenic Highway by signing the attached Designation Request letter.

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**APPROVED:**

  
MALCOLM DOUGHERTY, Director

10/15/2015  
Date

Attachment(s)

- (1) Designation Request for Signature
  - (2) Memo: Revised Recommendation of Concurrence
    - a) Director 6 Letter to Sierra Gateway Trust (August 21, 2015)
    - b) Letter of Intent from Fresno County Board of Supervisors
    - c) Public Participation Comments
    - d) Letter of Support from Fresno Council of Governments
    - e) Resolution #15-030 from County Board of Supervisors
  - (3) Designation Certificate for Signature
  - (4) Congratulatory Letters for Signature (3)
- c: Sharri Bender Ehlert, District 6 Director  
Tim Craggs, Chief, Division of Design  
Keith Robinson, Assistant Chief, Division of Design  
Lara Justine, Statewide Scenic Highway Coordinator, Division of Design  
Brad Cole, District 6 Landscape Architect  
Sherry Alexander, District 6 Scenic Highway Coordinator

OFFICIAL STATE SCENIC HIGHWAY  
DESIGNATION REQUEST  
FRESNO COUNTY SR 180

August 26, 2015

LOCATION:

Eastern segments of SR 180 in Fresno County (PM 78.6/110.8 and PM 112.1/137.9)

OFFICIAL DESIGNATION RECOMMENDED:

Sherry D. Alexander

SHERRY ALEXANDER  
District 6 Scenic Highway Coordinator

Approval Date:

August 26, 2015

APPROVAL RECOMMENDED:

Brad Cole

BRAD COLE

District 6 Senior Landscape Architect

Approval Date:

August 27, 2015

APPROVED:

Sharrri Bender Ehlert

SHARRI BENDER EHLERT,  
District 6 Director

Approval Date:

10/2/2015

APPROVED:

L. Justine

LARA JUSTINE,  
State Scenic Highway Coordinator

Approval Date:

10/9/15

APPROVED:

Malcolm Dougherty

MALCOLM DOUGHERTY,  
Caltrans Director

Approval Date:

10/15/2015

**BACKGROUND:** On February 23, 2015, District Landscape Architecture received Resolution #15-030 (attached) from the County of Fresno, Department of Public Works and Planning. This Resolution states, in part, that the County has adopted a Visual Assessment (VA) and Corridor Protection Program (CPP) for State Scenic Highway Designation for eastern segments of SR 180 in Fresno County from Trimmer Springs Road to the Tulare County line and the Kings Canyon National Park boundary north of General Grant Grove to the Kings Canyon National Park boundary near Cedar Grove. Note: These boundaries correspond to the post miles (PM) 74.9 to 110.8 and PM 112.1 to 137.9 in Fresno County.

The VA and CPP are located online: <http://www.co.fresno.ca.us/ViewDocument.aspx?id=62823> and <http://www.fs.usda.gov/attmain/sequoia/specialplaces>

Resolution #15-030 is the result of several years of dedicated effort and teamwork by the County of Fresno Department of Public Works and Planning, a local community group (Sierra Gateway Trust), and District Landscape Architecture. This collaborative effort consisted of numerous meetings, both internal and public, as well as public hearings including the Fresno Council of Governments (FCOG) and the Fresno County Board of Supervisors.

Final approval by the Caltrans Director will establish the first Officially Designated Scenic Highway in Caltrans District 6.

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION/PROPOSAL:** On March 23, 2015, the County of Fresno submitted a request seeking Official State Scenic Highway Designation for 60.7 miles of SR 180 in Fresno County from Trimmer Springs Road (PM 74.9) to the Tulare County line (PM 110.8), and from the Kings Canyon National Park boundary north of General Grant Grove (PM 112.1) to the Kings Canyon National Park boundary near Cedar Grove (PM 137.9).

Note: SR 180 is not a State Route through either of the two sections of Kings Canyon National Park; it is a National Park Highway. The first segment of SR 180 ends at the entrance to the Grant Grove section (west section, PM 110.8 in Tulare County), and the second segment begins at the north boundary of the Park, which is the end of that section of the Park at PM 112.1 (the Park/Fresno County boundary), and continues to PM 137.9 which is the entrance to the Cedar Grove section of the Park, (the Fresno County/Park boundary), and the end of SR 180 in Fresno County.

**REVIEWS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:** The District Scenic Highway Coordinator (DSHC) is recommending approval of the request from the County of Fresno for Official Scenic Highway Designation, with revised post miles as shown below, and in the attached October 13, 2015 letter to the Sierra Gateway Trust, as follows:

The request from Fresno County to begin the Scenic Highway at PM 74.9 (Trimmer Springs Road), is being revised to start at PM 78.6 (Alta Main Canal), due to the planned construction project to re-align SR 180 from PM 74.1 to PM 78.6. When the construction project is complete, that part of the existing route will be relinquished to the County of Fresno and would no longer be part of the State Highway system. Therefore, it would be more appropriate at this time to remove that portion from the proposed designation and evaluate the newly re-aligned portion of SR 180 for inclusion in the State Scenic Highway designation after construction is complete.

The County of Fresno has fulfilled all requirements as outlined in the Caltrans Scenic Highway Guidelines, and therefore meets the criteria for Officially Designated State Scenic Highway status for SR 180.

The Caltrans Scenic Highway Guidelines are located online:  
[http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/LandArch/scenic/guidelines/scenic\\_hwy\\_guidelines\\_04-12-2012.pdf](http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/LandArch/scenic/guidelines/scenic_hwy_guidelines_04-12-2012.pdf)

District Landscape Architecture has reviewed the County of Fresno request and reports that it is in compliance with the Scenic Highway Guidelines:

- District Landscape Architecture received a Letter of Intent from the Fresno County Board of Supervisors stating their intent to pursue Scenic Highway Designation for SR 180 (attached).
- With public participation, a VA and CPP were prepared by the County of Fresno Department of Public Works and Planning.
- The VA and CPP were submitted by Fresno County to District Landscape Architecture, and have been approved (see above web address).
- A public meeting was held by the County of Fresno Department of Public Works and Planning (attached).
- A public meeting was held by the Fresno Council of Governments (FCOG); a letter of support was submitted to Landscape Architecture by the Sierra Gateway Trust (attached).
- A public hearing was held by the Board of Supervisors; Resolution #15-030 was adopted and submitted to Landscape Architecture (attached).
- District Landscape Architecture received from Fresno County Department of Public Works and Planning a Letter of Request for State Scenic Highway Designation for SR 180.
- Neighboring Tulare County, and the United States Forest Service both endorse the recommendation for designation, and submitted written support for the designation.

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Final Steps for Scenic Highway Designation:

- District Scenic Highway Coordinator recommends Official Designation to District Director for concurrence.
- State Scenic Highway Coordinator concurs and submits recommendation to Caltrans Director.
- Caltrans Director approves recommendation. Route becomes Officially Designated Scenic.
- Caltrans Maintenance staff places signs with the California Poppy logo along the Designated Scenic Highway. The Poppy logo identifies Designated State Scenic Highways on maps, and maps produced by the State Division of Tourism.

If you have any questions, please contact Brad Cole, Senior Landscape Architect at (559) 230-3134, or Sherry Alexander, District Scenic Highway Coordinator at (559) 230-3120.

**Attachments:**

- Director Letter to Sierra Gateway Trust, October 13, 2015
- Letter of Intent from Fresno County Board of Supervisors
- Public Participation Comments
- Letter of Support from Fresno Council of Governments (FCOG)
- Resolution #15-030 from County Board of Supervisors
- Letter of Request from Fresno County Department of Public Works and Planning

STATE OF CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

# Designation of Official State Scenic Highway



## Number 59

Acting for and on behalf of the California Department of Transportation pursuant to Section 262 of the Streets and Highways Code, and by authority vested in me by law, I hereby designate official State Scenic Highway status to the following segments:

- State Route 180 in Fresno and Tulare Counties from:
- (a) Alta Main Canal near Minkler to near the General Grant Grove section of Kings Canyon National Park (post miles 78.6/110.8)
  - (b) General Grant Grove section of Kings Canyon National Park to Kings Canyon National Park boundary near Cedar Grove (post miles 112.1/137.9)

Malcolm Dougherty, Director  
California Department of Transportation



October 15, 2015

Date

**DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**

OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR  
P.O. BOX 942873, MS-49  
SACRAMENTO, CA 94273-0001  
PHONE (916) 654-6130  
FAX (916) 653-5776  
TTY 711  
www.dot.ca.gov



*Serious drought.  
Help save water!*

October 15, 2015

Betty Jean Spitze, President  
Donna Hacker, Vice President  
Sierra Gateway Trust, Inc.  
P.O. Box 508  
Sanger, CA 93657

Dear Ms. Spitze and Ms. Hacker:

It is my pleasure to inform you that State Scenic Highway status is officially designated to two segments of State Route (SR) 180: from Alta Main Canal near Minkler to near the General Grant Grove section of Kings Canyon National Park and from the General Grant Grove section of Kings Canyon National Park to Kings Canyon National Park boundary near Cedar Grove.

The Sierra Gateway Trust members are to be commended for their years of dedication to this effort. By participating in the development of the Visual Assessment and Corridor Protection Program, and through your collaboration with the County of Fresno Development Services Division, the Fresno County Board of Supervisors, the United States Forest Service, the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) Landscape Architecture staff, and numerous stakeholders, you have helped to make this official designation possible.

Caltrans District staff will contact you in the near future so that preparations can be made to formally dedicate SR 180 as one of California's newest officially designated State Scenic Highways. Congratulations!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Malcolm Dougherty".

MALCOLM DOUGHERTY  
Director

**DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**

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October 15, 2015

Mohammad Khorsand, Senior Planner  
County of Fresno  
Department of Public Works and Planning  
Development Services Division  
Policy Planning Unit  
2220 Tulare Street, 6th floor  
Fresno, CA 93721

Dear Mr. Khorsand:

It is my pleasure to inform you that State Scenic Highway status is officially designated to two segments of State Route (SR) 180: from the Alta Main Canal near Minkler to near the General Grant Grove section of Kings Canyon National Park and from the General Grant Grove section of Kings Canyon National Park to Kings Canyon National Park boundary near Cedar Grove.

The Department of Public Works and Planning, including John Adams, Planner with County of Fresno, Development Services Division, are to be commended for supporting this effort and collaborating with the local representatives of the United States Forest Service, the Sierra Gateway Trust, Inc., and the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) Landscape Architecture staff. Your dedication to providing the local visual quality protection measures have made this designation possible. By your actions, the scenic qualities of this area will be preserved so that they may continue to be appreciated and enjoyed by all.

Caltrans District staff will contact you in the near future so that preparations can be made to formally dedicate SR 180 as one of California's newest officially designated State Scenic Highways. Congratulations!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Malcolm Dougherty".

MALCOLM DOUGHERTY  
Director



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October 15, 2015

Kevin B. Elliott, Forest Supervisor  
United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)  
Forest Service  
1839 South Newcomb Street  
Porterville, CA 93257

Dear Mr. Elliott:

It is my pleasure to inform you that State Scenic Highway status is officially designated to two segments of State Route (SR) 180: from Alta Main Canal near Minkler to near the General Grant Grove section of Kings Canyon National Park and from the General Grant Grove section of Kings Canyon National Park to Kings Canyon National Park boundary near Cedar Grove.

The USDA Forest Service is to be commended for supporting this effort and collaborating with the County of Fresno Public Works and Development Services Division, the Sierra Gateway Trust, Inc., as well as California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) Landscape Architecture staff, and for providing the elements of protection that have made this designation possible. By your actions, you have ensured that the scenic qualities of this area will be preserved so that they may continue to be appreciated and enjoyed by all.

Caltrans District staff will contact you in the near future so that preparations can be made to formally dedicate SR 180 as one of California's newest State Scenic Highways. Congratulations!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Malcolm Dougherty".

MALCOLM DOUGHERTY  
Director