

Citizens of Skyline  
c/o W. J. Sorich  
22330 Skyline Boulevard  
La Honda, CA 94020

Dear Mr. Sorich,

The District Board of Directors and General Manager received and reviewed the Skyline Community's petition to Cal Fire, Caltrans, the County of San Mateo, and the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District, to "Request Proper Maintenance of Highway 35 Skyline Boulevard".

The District agrees, proper maintenance and care of Skyline Boulevard and other roadways in the Santa Cruz Mountains, which many of the District's Preserves front, is important from both an ecological and scenic perspective. The District tries to use that perspective when maintaining both its boundaries and staging areas. We understand the frustration the community feels in these times of economic recession, with all the cutbacks the State and County have experienced that have resulted in reduced services. However, the District continues to work with our partnering agencies, wherever possible and appropriate, when maintaining District property and in encouraging proper road maintenance in general.

The Board of Directors, General Manager, and District Staff received your suggestions of how the District could participate and improve the care of the Skyline Boulevard Corridor. In many cases we agree and have contributed funds and labor towards these concerns as the following response to your suggestions indicates:

"We want to insure that maintenance continues. What does it mean to you?"

- "Skyline is the access route to your parks and trails and should be taken care of."
  - *The District agrees and is participating in the South Skyline Fire Safe Association with the Area Superintendent attending monthly meeting when pertinent issues involving the District are on the agenda.*
  - *The District financially contributed \$2,000.00 to a road side fuel reduction project in the summer and fall of 2010, led by CalFire and Caltrans using the California Department of Correction Field Crews (CDC) for vegetation removal.*
- "Abundant brush and dead trees are a visibility and fire prevention problem. Non-native scotch broom is taking over. This is not the scenic corridor we want to see!"

- *The District has been one of the more active property owners along Skyline Boulevard, removing invasive weeds and reducing brush where appropriate.*
- *The District worked with Caltrans to get permits for brush removal in their right of way at the trail crossing between the Skyline Ridge Parking Complex and the trailhead into Monte Bello Open Space Preserve. The brush removal opened up the frontage and improved visibility making it safer for District visitors to cross Skyline Boulevard.*
- *The District worked with Cal Fire and the CDC Crews to reduce brush along Portola Heights Road from Skyline Boulevard to the Peters Creek culvert crossing.*
- *Currently, the Area Superintendent is working with the South Skyline Fire Safe Association, Caltrans, and Cal Fire to find funding and encourage the continuation of roadside fuel reduction work along Skyline Boulevard from Black Road to Highway 84.*
- “Many people come to your park territory and never get on a trail...the roads are part of the public mandate.”
  - *The District agrees many people come up to drive through and enjoy the background of District Preserves without ever getting out of their vehicle. We believe District property along Skyline Boulevard is our responsibility and we believe the District does a very good job of presenting our staging areas and managing invasive plants along our road side boundary.*

“What can be done?”

- “Lobby the state. Skyline Blvd is one of the heaviest used roads of the Bay Area.”
  - *District Staff maintain good working relationships with Caltrans Staff and communicate regularly on projects for improvement.*
  - *The District works closely with Caltrans on maintaining and repairing pullouts, runoff erosion, dumping, and vegetation management.*
  - *The District is currently encouraging Caltrans and Cal Fire to continue fuel reduction projects along the road frontage.*
- “Have the maintenance contract awarded to the firm that maintains Highway 9 from 35 to Boulder Creek. This stretch of the road is impeccably maintained. Why?”
  - *Caltrans is responsible for the work on Highway 9 from Skyline Boulevard to Boulder Creek. They would need to respond to the methods that are used in the maintenance of Highway 9.*
- “Put pressure on Cal Fire and San Mateo County to pressure the State of California.”
  - *District Staff works with and maintains a close relationship with Caltrans, Cal Fire, and San Mateo County on issues that affect District Property and Skyline Boulevard in general, as demonstrated in the joint effort of fuel reduction in the Skyline Corridor.*

- “Take responsibility for the removal of the Scotch Broom that is choking the road at the entrance of your Skyline headquarters.”
  - *The District’s Resource Management Crew has cleared almost all of the Scotch Broom on District property frontage of Skyline Boulevard between Highway 9 and Alpine Road with the exception of the Coal Creek Open Space Preserve section on the northeast corner of Skyline Boulevard and Alpine Road. Our hope is they will begin to address that area in the fall of 2012.*
  - *The Broom located on private property along Skyline Boulevard between Highway 9 and Alpine Road is not the jurisdiction of the District and would need to be approached from a homeowners concern or through your fire safe association.*

In closing, I want to emphasize our appreciation for the active involvement and concern the citizens of Skyline express in the management of District Lands. The District is committed to developing and maintaining a cooperative relationship with our neighbors. Together, we believe we can provide a better environment throughout the Skyline Corridor.

Thank you for your continued interest in the District.

Sincerely,

Larry Hassett, Board President  
Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District Board of Directors