



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Ecology Action Endorses Coastal Rail Trail**

*Build the Rail Trail and Preserve the Tracks*

**SEPTEMBER 13, 2017 — SANTA CRUZ, CA** — Ecology Action is a long-time advocate and supporter of the Coastal Rail Trail that is currently being designed and built section by section alongside the rail tracks. Ecology Action also supports further study, analysis, and community engagement to determine if some form of public transit is feasible within the coastal rail corridor, which would provide much-needed alternatives to driving in Santa Cruz County. The Ecology Action Board of Directors has endorsed the Coastal Rail Trail, and approved the following position statement.

### **Ecology Action's Coastal Rail Corridor Position Statement**

- Ecology Action supports the most practical, feasible and highest sustainable multi-modal transportation use possible from the rail corridor. We support an integrated system that will increase sustainable and practical transportation options, that is neighborhood compatible, and utilizes clean, quiet technology that can be upgraded over time. The planning and design of this integrated system will consider the environmental, economic, health, safety and social equity impacts and benefits in its final determinations.
- We urge that the rail trail be constructed as quickly and cost effectively as possible in the form outlined in the Monterey Bay Sanctuary Scenic Trail Network Master Plan. We believe the trail should be constructed with Measure D Rail Trail funds (not Measure D local street funds), which should also be used to leverage additional grant and private investments. We believe the trail will offer viable sustainable options for community members to bike and walk for their daily trips.
- We support preserving the rail tracks until further study determines if rail transit is a feasible option for our future. We recognize emerging rail transit technologies hold promise to meet future local transportation needs and could provide environmental, economic, health, safety and social equity benefits. Therefore, it is prudent to preserve the rail tracks and thoroughly study transit options within the coastal rail corridor.
- We request that the Santa Cruz Regional Transportation Commission lead a Unified Corridor Study process that is transparent, objective, critical, data-driven, comprehensive, impartial to particular forms of transportation but rather focused on identifying which overall system provides the highest environmental, economic, health, safety and social equity benefit for the community.

*Ecology Action's guiding principles for Coastal Rail Trail work*

Ecology Action will continue to be actively involved with the community, agencies and other organizations in this decision making and planning process. As is our practice, we will respect those with differing opinions as we support this important project.

**About Ecology Action**

Ecology Action is a Santa Cruz based environmental non-profit that specializes in energy efficiency, water conservation and sustainable transportation. Ecology Action runs the most extensive bike transportation programs in the county including Bike to Work Day, Bike Week, school based youth bike safety education and encouragement programs and employer based bike commuter services. Learn more at <http://ecoact.org/>

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