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Potential Yolo Rail Realignment Offers Positive Economic Benefits

(Woodland, CA) – Yolo County, the cities of Davis, West Sacramento and Woodland, and the Sacramento Area Flood Control Agency are excited to announce completion of the Yolo Rail Realignment Economic Benefits Study.

Prepared with support from a 2014 U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) grant, the study analyzes the economic potential of relocating the rail line that runs through the centers of Davis and Woodland, and extending rail service to industrial areas in Woodland, the west side of West Sacramento and the Port of West Sacramento. Study findings show rail relocation could generate substantial economic benefit in Yolo County and align well with regional flood protection options currently being studied.

With last week's U.S. EDA conference and the Sacramento Metro Chamber's annual Capital-to-Capital trip this week, the timing and tangible outcomes of this collaborative effort are particularly meaningful for Congressman John Garamendi (D-CA-03) and Congresswoman Doris Matsui (D-CA-06).

"I strongly encouraged this collaborative partnership to apply for the EDA grant to study this project during the Cap-to-Cap trip in 2013, because I saw the potential value it could bring our region," said Congressman Garamendi. "This project demonstrates how federal support, regional collaboration and broader, more comprehensive analysis results in new opportunities to align major infrastructure projects that can reduce costs and increase regional flood protection, public safety and economic growth."

"The more efficiently we are moving goods, the more our economy will grow, which is why I've worked with the EDA to fund the Yolo Rail Relocation project," said Congresswoman Matsui. "The findings of this study reinforce the value of crafting multi-benefit, regional infrastructure projects that generate new economic opportunities that advance the entire region. Rail realignment could spur redevelopment and increase public safety, creating opportunities for new homes, businesses and jobs in our community."

Economic growth opportunities, including redevelopment in urban corridors presently impacted by rail lines, increased rail access for agribusiness and industry and creation of sustainable employment were examined. Using a 20-40 year full-build-out timeframe, the study found net new commercial and residential development enabled by the phased rail relocation could generate between 38,700 to 53,200 ongoing jobs countywide and beneficial economic impacts projected at between $5.9 and $8.1 billion of annual output (market value of goods and services, including $2 to $2.7 billion of labor income).

Opportunities to significantly reduce the estimated $156-335 million project costs by integrating the rail relocation project with other flood control projects under consideration in Yolo and Sacramento counties were also identified. By eliminating 22 at-grade crossings, the project will improve access and increase safety. The relocated line will also allow for the proposed widening of the Sacramento Weir and Yolo Bypass, and will remove of the short-line rail trestle over the Yolo Bypass providing increased flood protection for the entire Central Valley.

The Yolo Rail Realignment Partnership will continue to seek state and federal funding to move this project forward. For more information, contact Yolo County Legislative & Government Affairs Specialist Alexander Tengolics [(530) 666-8150 or atengolics@yolocounty.org] and visit: www.yolocounty.org/Rail-Relocation.

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