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Sheila de la Guerra **General Public Comment**

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**From:** Otis Calef <crahtac@explore-santa-barbara-county.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, August 19, 2024 4:26 PM  
**To:** Mona Miyasato  
**Cc:** sbcob; Villalobos, David  
**Subject:** Commendation for Public Works Director Chris Sneddon  
**Attachments:** CRAHTAC-Commendation-Chris-Sneddon-08-12-24.pdf

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Dear Ms. Miyasato:

The Santa Barbara County Riding and Hiking Trails Advisory Committee (CRAHTAC) is writing to commend the outstanding leadership of Public Works Director Chris Sneddon to protect and expand the County's trail system. CRAHTAC would like to make you aware of Director Sneddon's efforts on several projects that serve as examples of his leadership on public trail issues and excellent public service ethics on sometimes complicated or contentious trail issues.

Please see the attached letter.

Sincerely,



Otis Calef  
Chair

**CRAHTAC | County Riding and Hiking Trails Advisory Committee**

805.708.5009 | [website](#)

*The County Riding and Hiking Trails Advisory Committee (CRAHTAC) was established by the Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors in an advisory capacity to review programs, policies, and procedures affecting county recreational riding and hiking and their use.*



# \*CRAHTAC\*

COUNTY RIDING AND HIKING TRAILS ADVISORY COMMITTEE



August 12, 2024  
*Submitted via email*

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Otis Calef

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Robin Dunaetz  
Debbie Smith  
Lee Steinmetz

**5th DISTRICT**

**STAFF**  
Jeffery Lindgren

Ms. Mona Miyasato  
Executive Officer  
County of Santa Barbara  
105 E. Anapamu Street  
Santa Barbara, CA 93101

RE: Commendation for Public Works Director Chris Sneddon

Dear Ms. Miyasato:

The Santa Barbara County Riding and Hiking Trails Advisory Committee (CRAHTAC) is writing to commend the outstanding leadership of Public Works Director Chris Sneddon to protect and expand the County’s trail system. Director Sneddon has demonstrated exceptional public service to help meet the recreational and transportation needs of County residents. As discussed further below, despite their heavy workload and competing priorities, Director Sneddon, sometimes accompanied by other Public Works Department staff, has attended multiple CRAHTAC meetings to consult with us regarding trail issues. We greatly appreciate his cooperative and collaborative approach to complex trail issues.

As you know, CRAHTAC is a standing committee appointed by the Board of Supervisors to advocate for recreational trails and advise the County on matters related to recreational trail issues, including potential impacts to trails and mitigation measures. CRAHTAC is composed of three or four members from each supervisorial district and is recognized by the County as having a key role advising on trail matters. As part of the Board of Supervisors resolution that established CRAHTAC, the Board requested that the Public Works Department and Planning and Development Department directors confer with CRAHTAC on trail-related issues. Director Sneddon and his staff have performed such consultation regularly for multiple projects, with examples discussed below. As you may be aware, public use of trails is possibly the most popular form of recreation in the County and is viewed by the Board of Supervisors and the medical profession as key to public health and welfare. Director Sneddon’s efforts on behalf of public trails thus contribute substantially to the community’s health and welfare.

CRAHTAC would like to make you aware of Director Sneddon’s efforts on several projects that serve as examples of his leadership on public trail issues and excellent public service ethics on sometimes complicated or contentious trail issues:

- Tunnel Trail Parking: This project consists of circulation, pedestrian safety, and parking improvements to serve the busy Tunnel Road Trail. CRAHTAC was briefed on these improvements, and we are hopeful that incrementally increasing the number of parking

spaces at this very popular but parking-constrained trailhead might also be possible.

- Hot Springs Trailhead Parking: As you are no doubt aware, Director Sneddon led the efforts to protect the public's right to utilize public right of way (ROW) for trailhead parking where private property owners had obstructed such ROW. Although we are aware that legal action was initiated and required over this matter, Director Sneddon demonstrated the ability to lead the effort to protect the public's right to access trailhead parking in public ROW while also trying to balance this effort with property owners' concerns demonstrating his public service skills to balance public and private interests.
- Refugio Road Shoulder Trail: This is perhaps the best example of Director Sneddon's approach to outstanding public service regarding the County's public trail system. He worked with the community and the 3rd District Supervisor to restore this critical road shoulder trail. Although he perhaps lacks equestrian skills, he took much of his day to come out to the Santa Ynez Valley and ride a mule along the road shoulder to understand better the challenges that residents of this equestrian-oriented community encounter. While much work remains to be done to restore the rest of the Refugio Trail, Director Sneddon's willingness to get on a horse is a true example of an outstanding public service attitude for which CRAHTAC and the equestrian community are grateful.
- Modoc Road Bikepath: Director Sneddon and his staff have led the efforts to complete this critical link in the regional coastal bike trail system, which will allow cyclists to ride largely offroad from Hendry's Beach County Park to UCSB, a considerable accomplishment. This project requires carefully balancing the overall public interest with environmental and neighborhood concerns. The cycling, hiking, and alternative transportation advocate communities greatly appreciate his work.
- Private Property Owners' Encroachments into Public ROW: The countywide issue of private property owners obstructing public ROW has been a long-standing safety issue. These private encroachments block road shoulder access, violate fire evacuation codes, obstruct trailhead and coastal access parking, and increase risks by causing people and pets to walk in the vehicle lane rather than on the road shoulder. This countywide issue will take time and budget to improve. Still, Director Sneddon has been collaborating with CRAHTAC to develop a phased program that will begin tackling this long-term effort.

In closing, we would like to thank Director Sneddon and his staff for their efforts. While we don't always agree with every decision, Director Sneddon is an outstanding public servant who is always open to input and coordination.

Sincerely,

Otis Calef, Chair  
CRAHTAC

Cc: County Board of Supervisors  
County Planning Commission