



PRESS RELEASE

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Valley Wells Safety Roadside Rest Area Opens May 1st

Mojave Desert – The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) will open the Valley Wells Rest Area on May 1, 2009 in the early morning hours after being closed for almost four years. The project site, which includes both north and southbound facilities at a cost of \$6.5 million, is located approximately 25 miles south of the resort community of Primm, Nevada at the California State Line. The nearest services south of the facility include the town of Baker, 25 miles away. The next available safety roadside rest area, Clyde V. Kane, is located 29 miles south of Baker.

Motorists from Nevada traveling on Interstate 15 can stop to relax and refresh themselves on their long drive into California. This portion of Interstate 15 is traveled by 45,000 motorists daily. It also serves as a major truck corridor for movement of goods from California ports to the rest of the nation. The Valley Wells Rest Area has restrooms that are ADA accessible, hot and cold vending machines and picnic benches for those who want to relax and enjoy the scenery.

Initially, the Valley Wells Safety Roadside Rest Area was programmed for minor Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance work and site repair under the Minor Projects Program. After further review, it was determined that minor repairs could not be completed without escalating the scope of the project.

Partnership involved many stakeholders and also drew the attention of California Transportation Commissioner Joe TAVAGLIONE. To insure that all needs were addressed, the Department formed the Valley Wells Group with the following agencies: California Department of Transportation, the Bureau of Land Management, California State Parks, San Bernardino County Parks, National Park Service and the Department of Defense.

The intended purpose of the rest area is to offer travelers safety, rest, refreshments and travel information. With the completion of the structures, the next phase will add an interpretive center. The exhibits, signs and associated structures at Valley Wells will

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be a model for a new approach to California rest area development on future Caltrans projects. The redesigned rest areas will also entice travelers to venture off the highway, explore the resources and opportunities of the region, and enjoy the variety of activities provided through the local, state, and federal investment. The rest areas will help promote the identity of the region and point out the culture, history, industry and environment unique to the region. They are natural places to introduce travelers to stories about settlement and culture of different peoples within the region, as well as the history of the transportation corridor itself.

The restful setting, combined with many unique features will be enjoyed by thousands of visitors every year. This rebuilt rest area is not only a fitting welcome to travelers from outside California, the people who live here will also see a direct benefit from their tax dollars for years to come. The redesigned rest areas potentially will become part of the new public face of Caltrans.

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