

**Washington, DC** – Congressman Sam Farr (D-Carmel) today hailed the decision by the Surface Transportation Board to allow the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (SCCRTC) to purchase the Union Pacific rail line along the proposed route of the Santa Cruz portion of the Monterey Bay Sanctuary Trail. The decision paves the way for the RTC to purchase the rail line for the trail and to increase transportation alternatives for the region.

“Today’s decision brings us all one step closer in realizing our long-standing dream of providing greater access and use of this transportation corridor that connects Santa Cruz and Monterey counties around the Monterey Bay,” **said**

**Congressman Sam Farr.**

“This transportation project will not only offer our region an environmentally friendly and healthy form of alternative transportation, but it has the potential to spur economic activity and educate residents and tourists about the value of the Monterey Bay Sanctuary. I have championed this project for a long time, but it is days like this that we are reminded of what is possible when communities come together.”

"Today's decision is a milestone event in our long journey to secure the Santa Cruz Branch Line as an infrastructure asset for the community. Future generations will benefit from the transportation and trail opportunities that this purchase will provide," **said Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission Chair and Chair of the Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors Mark Stone**

"Congressman Sam Farr has been a vital proponent of this project every step of the way, and we are grateful for his leadership in aggressively seeking viable alternative forms of transportation for the Monterey Bay region."

"Once in a while, when you've just about given up hope, miracles actually do happen. But in truth, luck is made out of people, and a lot of people worked to make this happen. We at FORT are looking forward to an exciting new chapter working with the RTC to get a coastal rail trail built as the centerpiece of the Santa Cruz County portion of the Monterey Bay Sanctuary Scenic Trail Network while preserving the rail functionality of the corridor for potential future uses," **said the Chair of Friends of teh Rail & Trail Bruce Sawhill.**

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