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Why Does ACE Look Only South?

From the ACE perspective, it apparently makes sense to extend ACE to Modesto. Maybe. True, the terrain is flat and ROW available. Extending to the West and North to San Francisco, makes even more sense. An ACE extension to San Francisco...via an upgraded ACE alignment, a new Dumbarton rail bridge designed to improve the health of the eastside wetlands, and the Caltrain ROW would attract far more riders than an extension to Modesto would. In fact, an effective extension to San Francisco, coupled with the existing connection to San Jose, would both ease capacity problems on transbay BART and reduce congestion pressures on I-580, I-680, I-880, I-237, I-238 and Hwy 92.

The potential benefits of extending ACE westerly is not getting nearly the attention they deserve.

Gerald Cauthen

Oakland

I think the short answer is ACE is counting on funding from the High Speed Rail Project to help pay for a new railroad over the Altamont Pass. The other side of the coin has been the lack of support in the Bay Area to build a new bridge across the Bay between Redwood City and Fremont which I agree would greatly expand travel options in that region, NB

Thoughts on the updated California Rail Plan

Thank you for an excellent overview in January 7th's Newsletter of issues that should be addressed by the California Rail Plan. Attached are some comments and specific thoughts on some of those issues. One note, while I liked your idea of extending the Surfliner 500 series schedules to Palmdale I decided to go for through service to LA using diesel hauled CHSRA equipment. One reason is that the 500 series schedules are really "yard moves" to get Santa Barbara trains that have been on the road for several days to and from the LA yard for maintenance. I did not want start off creating issues for Santa Barbara service. Also I decided it was more important to get CHSRA to take a simple very logical first step (Palmdale – LA diesel service) before going to a more complex network. Once that is accomplished we can talk about service extensions to San Diego and Riverside (Metrolink's most "express" route that adds the Inland Empire to the high-speed network). Let me know if you have any questions.

Steve Roberts

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You can send your comments to me at nbraymer@railpac.org

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