



NEWS

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OCTA Buys First Property To Preserve As Open Space

Environmental program is an innovative approach to mitigating the impacts from the 13 Measure M2 freeway projects

ORANGE – Officials gathered today to commemorate the first property purchased as part of the Orange County Transportation Authority’s Environmental Freeway Mitigation Program – a comprehensive plan to preserve and restore open space.

Saddle Creek South, an 84-acre piece of property in south Orange County, bridges the gap between the O’Neill Regional Park and the Cleveland National Forest.

“The newly purchased land will build upon the preserved area and have a lasting impact on the framework of our county,” said OCTA Chair Patricia Bates, also the Fifth District Supervisor. “It is the first of many properties being purchased to help conserve our environment while planning for current and future transportation needs.”

Working closely with the environmental community, OCTA is purchasing open space to advance the environmental permitting process for the 13 freeway improvement projects as part of Measure M2. This innovative approach, opposed to a piecemeal process, saves taxpayer dollars and speeds up project delivery.

“This is a significant milestone for this pioneering program that has become a model for other transportation agencies in California, and we look forward to closing escrow on additional properties in the coming months,” said OCTA CEO Will Kempton.

More than \$240 million will be available over the next 30 years to preserve and restore land throughout Orange County.

“This program is a prime example of how development and the environment can co-exist,” said Bates. “Orange County has a diverse landscape and this will help ensure that land is preserved for future generations to enjoy.”

For more information regarding OCTA’s environmental program, visit www.octa.net/environmental.

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