

# Big-rig route doesn't address Hi-Desert impacts

By Rebecca Unger  
Hi-Desert Star

APPLE VALLEY — Morongo Basin citizens will get a chance to comment on the High Desert Corridor expressway proposed between Palmdale and Apple Valley.

The 63-mile High Desert Corridor would link State Route 14 to State Route 18, with a terminus in Apple Valley at Joshua Road.

An open house meeting about the project is scheduled for 6 p.m. Jan. 31 in Victorville City Hall's Conference Room D.

The corridor is touted by Los Angeles Metro and its many partners as addressing regional growth and traffic

safety as goods and people move through Southern California.

The project is in the environmental impact study phase. Alternate routes could be contemplated, or it could stall.

A red light for some folks in the Morongo Basin is that they are not being considered in the project's possible environmental impacts. The High Desert Corridor could bring more traffic, especially big-truck traffic, along two-lane Old Woman Springs Road and Twentynine Palms Highway.

"This is a trade corridor that has to be addressed in its entirety," wrote Chuck Bell, president of the Luterne Val-



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Chuck Bell

Lucerne Valley Economic Development Association

ley Economic Development Association, in a comment to Metro partner Caltrans when the draft environmental impact statement was released in 2010.

Bell was present at Monday's Homestead Valley Community Council meeting, and found similar concerns about the project among attendees.

"People will use us to get to the corridor," council Presi-

dent Jim Harvey said. "By not including us in the environmental impact studies, they don't have to consider the financial costs of mitigating these circumstances. Those could include necessary improvements on Highway 247 to accommodate the subsequent traffic, and you can imagine the costs associated with that."

Council Secretary Betty

Munson added that the goal was to divert cargo traffic out of the LA Basin and bring cargo traffic from the harbor into the Hi-Desert and points beyond.

"There is a hub planned and being built that will be a train, airplane (and) truck traffic interchange for cargo near what used to be George Air Force Base," Munson said. "They're already dodging weigh stations by coming up Highway 247."

A project map shows the corridor links Palmdale Regional Airport, Krey Field Airport in Adelanto, Southern California Logistics Airport outside of Oro Grande and the Apple Valley County Airport.

A hub-type route appears to circle Krey Field, which is privately owned.

"The first part of the project is from Highway 14 to Interstate 15," Bell told the council. "The second part of the project is north of I-15 down to Bear Valley Road, with four to six lanes of traffic being dumped onto a two-lane highway with no off-site mitigation or financial planning. They need to include the entire stretch as part of the budget, and the impacts have to be addressed. We told them that we will litigate if these (affects) are not addressed."

For more information, contact the community council at [www.hvccsite.org](http://www.hvccsite.org).