

# **THE EEMP ALLIANCE**

March 14, 2005

The Honorable Don Perata  
Senate President pro Tempore  
State Capitol Building  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: Environmental Enhancement and Mitigation Program -- SUPPORT**

Dear Senator Perata:

We urge you to support full funding for the Environmental Enhancement and Mitigation Program (EEMP) in the 2005-2006 State Budget.

The State Budget proposed by the Administration seeks to eliminate all funding for the EEMP in the next fiscal year, which was designed to offset some of the environmental impacts of California's transportation projects. Voters approved Proposition 111 in 1990 which created the EEMP, providing \$10 million annually from the Department of Transportation for mitigation projects. Today, this modest sum represents less than 1/800<sup>th</sup> of California's proposed transportation budget.

For over a decade, this state resource has helped improve the quality of life throughout California by funding over 500 conservation and alternative transportation projects that reduce air and noise pollution, enhance recreational opportunities, and conserve natural resources in nearly every California county. The program has also been an important funding source for state and local conservation corps which engage at-risk youth to improve their communities and provide them with valuable job skills and employment experience.

California's mandate to expedite transportation projects must be met with a balanced, secure resource for mitigating those projects. The EEMP is a small program that represents a mere fraction of the transportation budget, yet provides funds to plant thousands of trees throughout California, protect essential open space lands and wildlife habitat, build trails, and provide additional roadside recreational opportunities for tourists and residents using the roads and highways of the Golden State.

Your support is essential to ensuring these funds remain available to continue furthering California's quality of life.

Sincerely,