Investing in California Small Businesses

SMALL BUSINESS NEWSLETTER • VOLUME 2: ISSUE 2 AUGUST 2014

Contents

1. Central Valley Small Businesses Play Major Role on First Work
4. High-Speed Rail Program Accelerates in SoCal
5. San Bernadino County Small Business Involved in CP1
6. Small Businesses Celebrate Economic Investment in California
7. Veteran-Owned Small Businesses Contribute Unique Skills to High-Speed Rail
8. #Iwillride Campaign
9. Michael Aguillio Stumps State to Aid Small Businesses
10. Authority Partners with the Department of Conservation
10. Authority Approves Alignment Within Fresno to Bakersfield Project Section
11. Authority Certification Workshop Pays Off for Small Business Owner
12. Calendar of Upcoming Events

The ***Investing in California Small Businesses*** newsletter is published quarterly by the External Affairs Division of the California High-Speed Rail Authority.
To view past newsletters visit: ***www.hsr.ca.gov/Programs/Small_Business/newsletter.html***

Central Valley Small Businesses Play Major Role on First Work

Over the last few months, the Authority, design-build contractor Tutor-Perini/Zachry/Parsons (TPZP), and their subcontractors, have been hard at work on building the nation's first true high-speed rail system. They have been completing design, acquiring properties, getting permits, hiring people and conducting various testing. In the last few weeks, activities within Construction Package 1 (CP 1), the 29-mile stretch from Avenue 17 in Madera to East American Avenue in Fresno, have become more noticeable.

Starting on June 23, TPZP and their contractors started test pile work along the Fresno River in Madera County to finalize design for a viaduct (i.e., bridge) where the high-speed trains will cross the river. To conduct this work, the teams constructed a rebar cage and drilled a hole that was approximately 80 feet deep and 10 feet in diameter. They then inserted the cage, filled the hole with concrete and allowed the concrete to cure for about 10 days. Once the concrete was set, there was a gamma-gamma test to inspect it. Next was the load cell test that moved the column up and down and reported the data to a computer at ground level. The third and final test was the statnamic test, which applied pressure to the side of the column. ››

> "It's been exciting for us to be able to actually start the demolition process. We will be hiring more employees as the job progresses"
>
> - Jill Kroeker
> Owner
> J. Kroeker, Inc.

Investing in California Small Businesses

SMALL BUSINESS NEWSLETTER
VOLUME 2 • ISSUE 2
AUGUST 2014

Contact Information

California High-Speed Rail Authority
770 L Street, Suite 800
Sacramento, CA 95814

Small Business Program
Main: (916) 324-1541
Direct: (916) 431-2930
Email: *sbprogram@hsr.ca.gov*

Small Business Workshops
Email: *sbworkshops@hsr.ca.gov*

Robert Padilla
Small Business Advocate
Mobile: (916) 420-0619
Email: *robert.padilla@hsr.ca.gov*

To access and download more information pertaining to the small business program, visit the Authority's SB Resources webpage at ***www.hsr.ca.gov/Programs/Small_Business/index.html***

CALIFORNIA High-Speed Rail Authority
www.hsr.ca.gov

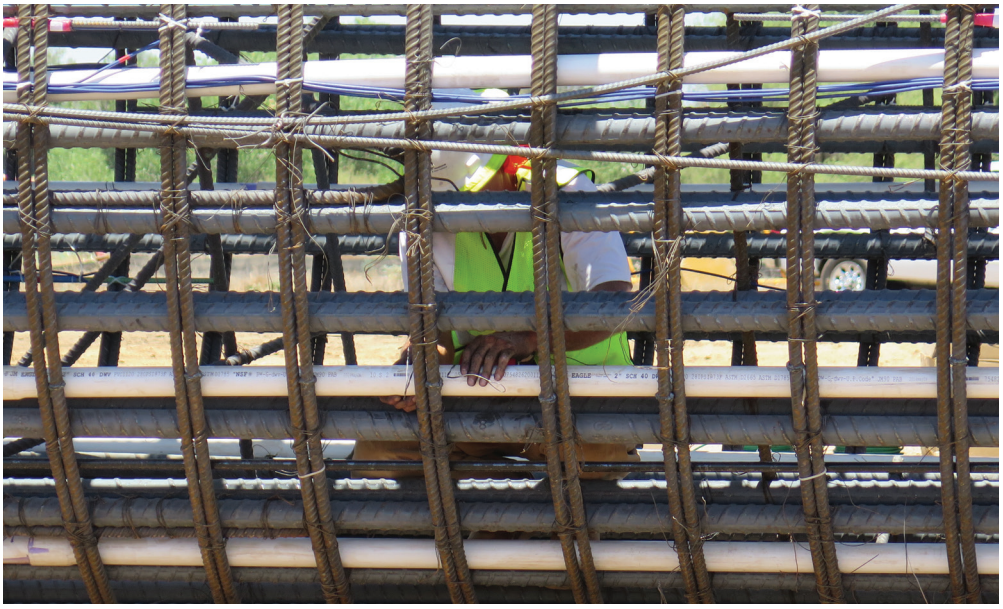
Construction of the viaduct is anticipated in the coming months.

Four firms won contracts to do the test pile work. Outback Materials is a certified Small Business Enterprise. Two others are certified small businesses – Moore Twining Associates, which opened in Fresno in 1898, and Martinez Steel, based in Fontana, and is owned by Debbie Martinez and her husband Joe. Martinez's company makes the steel rebar cage used for the test pile. She said she's excited and anxious about winning that contract. "As a small business, you're not afforded the luxuries of a larger corporation. You have to worry about a tight cash flow, " she explained. "But we're not worried about our performance. We have the experience to know what is expected and get it done."

Several miles away near downtown Fresno, a group of people showed up on Fresno's Golden State Boulevard to watch other work crews demolish buildings to make way for the first leg of high-speed rail and the relocation of Golden State Boulevard.

The first building to go was the old Hollywood Inn at 1473 N. Golden State Blvd. In its heyday it was not a hotel, but a bar. For the last several years it's been abandoned and sat in a blighted area of town. Some of the spectators said that they were happy to see the place go because recently it's been associated with prostitution and drugs. Work crews also demolished an older commercial building at 43 and 63 Belmont in Fresno.

J. Kroeker, Inc., a woman-owned small business based in Fresno, won a $6.2 million dollar contract to do the demolition work. Owner Jill Kroeker said the influx of funds has allowed



A worker with Martinez Steel cinches together a giant steel rebar cage that will be used to test concrete pilings for the high-speed rail construction project in the Madera area. Tests conducted by TPZP and its subcontractors will help in the design of a bridge that will cross the Fresno River.

Small Business Program

The Authority is committed to small businesses playing a major role in building the statewide high-speed rail system. The Small Business Program has an aggressive 30 percent goal for small business participation including Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (DBEs), Disabled Veteran Business Enterprises (DVBEs) and Micro-Businesses (MBs).

her to grow and expand her company. "We just completed moving into a larger office in Clovis. I have also been able to hire a project manager who has proven to be huge asset to our company," she said. "It's been exciting for us to be able to actually start the demolition process. We will be hiring more employees as the job progresses."

Katch Environmental, also based in Fresno, got in on the demolition work. The company hired 24 men, who had not worked in months, to eradicate lead paint and asbestos in buildings scheduled to be torn down.

High-speed rail work translates into local jobs and economic activity for small businesses in the region. There are currently 71 companies and/or certified small businesses based or with offices in the Central Valley that have commitments for work on the high-speed rail program, with 45 of those certified as Small Business/Disabled Veterans Business Enterprises/Disadvantaged Business Enterprises. On CP 1 alone, there are nine Fresno County companies and/or Certified Small Businesses with executed contracts totaling $56 million.

— Karen Massie

1. J. Kroeker Inc., a subcontractor to TPZP, demolishes the blighted Hollywood Inn bar in Fresno on July 14 to clear the way for future high-speed rail structures. J. Kroeker Inc. is a women-owned small business headquartered in Fresno.
2. Workers at the test pile site in Madera conduct gamma-gamma tests to determine the integrity of the shaft drilled in preparation for further test pile work.
3. Becho Inc. and their subcontractors LoadTest and Applied Foundation Testing conduct three statnamic tests at the Madera site. This testing, which resulted in a series of loud sounds generated by hydraulic pressure, assessed the load carrying capacity of a deep foundation, such those needed at the Madera site.

FRESNO COUNTY COMPANIES AND/OR CERTIFIED SMALL BUSINESSES WITH CP 1 CONTRACTS TO DATE

FRESNO COUNTY SMALL BUSINESS FIRM	SCOPE OF WORK	CONTRACT AMOUNT
Salem Engineering	Geotechnical Investigation	$70,000.00
Technicon Engineering	Geotechnical Investigation and Design (CPT)	$25,000.00
Blair, Church & Flynn	Utility Design Work	$1,676,029.00
Hunsaker Safety & Sign	Traffic Control (Design)	$100,535.00
J. Kroeker	Demo, Clear & Grub	$6,171,254.41
Katch Environmental, Inc.	Abatement	$8,000,000.00
Moore Twining	Lab QC Services	$3,577,554.90
Valverde Construction	Utility Install & Relocation	$36,470,000.00
Hunsaker Safety & Sign	Traffic Control	$19,662.63
	TOTAL:	**$56,110,035.94**

High-Speed Rail Program Accelerates in SoCal

With the recent commitment of cap and trade funds, the high-speed rail program is accelerating statewide and in Southern California. Not only will high-speed rail come sooner to SoCal, but its existing rail system will see quicker improvements, which will benefit commuters in the near future.

On July 24, the Palmdale to Los Angeles Project Section was split in two: Palmdale to Burbank and Burbank to Los Angeles. This split allows for more effective planning for the Palmdale to Burbank Project Section, a highly populated area, in order to begin construction sooner. Meanwhile, more time can be allowed for the Burbank to Los Angeles Project Section to accommodate the complexities of LA Union Station master planning.

Splitting the sections was one of the key recommendations in the 2014 Palmdale to Los Angeles project section Supplemental Alternatives Analysis (SAA). In late May/early June, the Authority hosted five community meetings in Los Angeles, Burbank, Palmdale, San Fernando and Santa Clarita. The purpose was to share findings and gather public input on its Palmdale to Los Angeles SAA to determine the best alignments and stations for high-speed rail. There was a great turnout from residents, stakeholders and local government representatives at these public meetings; the first held in more than two years.

The Palmdale to Los Angeles SAA also makes alignment refinements in the Antelope Valley and recommends future high-speed rail stations at Burbank Airport and at the Palmdale Transportation Center. These recommendations were presented to the Authority Board of Directors in June.

As a result of these changes, there are now five project sections in SoCal: Bakersfield to Palmdale, Palmdale to Burbank, Burbank to Los Angeles and Los Angeles to Anaheim in Phase 1, and Los Angeles to San Diego in Phase 2.

Up next: seven scoping meetings in SoCal this August to gather public feedback on an alternate alignment from Palmdale to Burbank. The Authority will provide another update to the Board of Directors in the fall.

— Adeline Yee

Senior Environmental Planner **Karl Fielding** speaks with the public at Los Angeles Union Station, one of the locations of the SoCal public meetings in the Spring.

Public Scoping Meetings

All public scoping meetings will be held from 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. There will be a presentation at 6:00 p.m.

SANTA CLARITA
Tuesday, August 5, 2014
William S. Hart Regional Park
24151 Newhall Avenue
Newhall, CA 91321

BURBANK
Wednesday, August 6, 2014
Buena Vista Branch Library
300 N. Buena Vista Street
Burbank, CA 91505

PALMDALE
Thursday, August 7, 2014
Chimbole Cultural Center
38350 Sierra Highway
Palmdale CA, 93550

ACTON/AGUA DULCE
Monday, August 11, 2014
Acton-Agua Dulce Library
33792 Crown Valley Road
Acton, CA 93510

SYLMAR
Tuesday, August 12, 2014
Sylmar Public Library
14561 Polk Street
Sylmar, CA 91342

LAKE VIEW TERRACE
Thursday, August 14, 2014
Lake View Terrace Recreation Center
11075 Foothill Boulevard
Lake View Terrace, CA 91342

DOWNTOWN LOS ANGELES
Tuesday, August 19, 2014
Los Angeles Union Station,
Fred Harvey Room
800 N. Alameda Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012
Parking for a fee; public transit available.

San Bernardino County Small Business Involved in CP1

Working with rebar is a family tradition for Debbie Martinez. Her grandfather, father and husband all started out as iron workers. So it's no surprise that Debbie and her husband Joe Martinez own a company called Martinez Steel in Fontana. This state-certified small business in Southern California is already making a big impact in helping build the nation's first high-speed rail system.

"Honestly, we were shocked and excited," said Martinez when she first learned her company was awarded a contract with Tutor-Perini/Zachary/Parsons (TPZP), a Joint Venture, to work on the high-speed rail program. "Just the chance to be able to be part of something that big and have a chance to prove that we can do it," she added.

Martinez Steel fabricated the huge metal cage that is being used in test pile work in the Central Valley. It will also provide the rebar for Construction Package 1 (CP 1), the initial 29 miles of high-speed rail construction project currently ongoing from Madera to Fresno.

Started in 1994, Martinez says their company went through tough times during the recession. "It was really difficult in this industry, the competition was really tough, there were no profit margins on projects and there were companies taking jobs at a loss just to get cash flow," said Martinez.

A year and a half ago, she saw a solicitation in the mail from TPZP to bid on the high-speed rail project. "I was kind of hesitant but then decided what the heck? We have nothing to lose, this could be a real blessing for us and could help us get back on our feet," she said.

> "There are programs out there to help small businesses. It's small businesses that keep this country going."
>
> - Debbie Martinez
> Owner
> Martinez Steel

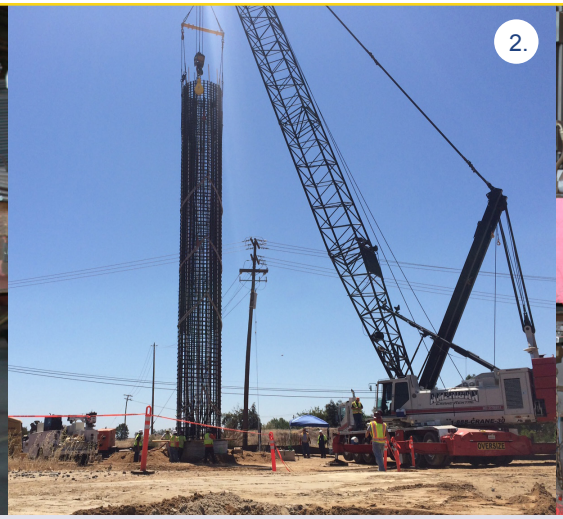
Fast forward to today, things are finally picking up. Martinez Steel currently employs 40 to 50 workers, depending on the project. Once heavy construction begins on high-speed rail, she anticipates hiring about 50 to 60 more employees, some from Iron Workers 155, the local union in Fresno.

The high-speed rail program has helped turn Martinez Steel around and in turn, she believes her small company will create more jobs and provide new opportunities for young workers. "As an iron worker, once you learn the skills, you can go anywhere. It's a legitimate good occupation," said Martinez.

Martinez Steel is also working on the 91 freeway in Corona and the Third Street Light Rail Project in San Francisco. Debbie encourages all small businesses to take advantage of what government agencies, like the Authority, can offer.

"There are programs out there to help small businesses. It's small businesses that keep this country going," said Martinez.

— Adeline Yee



1. **Joe Martinez** and **Debbie Martinez** (owners) and **Harry Williams** (Vice President) of Martinez Steel at their Fontana plant.
2. Martinez Steel fabricated this huge metal cage used for test pile work in the Central Valley.
3. Steel workers **Diego Torres** and **Simon Alvarado Vasquez** working at the Fontana plant.

Small Businesses Celebrate Economic Investment in California

California has a lot to be proud of when it comes to economic recovery. State lawmakers just approved a budget with a surplus and small businesses have played a major role in that comeback. Many small businesses and the Authority were on hand on June 16 when California celebrated Small Business Day in Sacramento.

Authority Small Business Advocate Robert Padilla and Information Officer Karen Massie staffed an exhibit booth where they distributed information and networked with dozens of people who wanted to know more about high-speed rail, the Authority's Small Business Program and how their company can participate in the project.

As of June, 168 small businesses are committed to work on the project statewide and of those firms, 26 are certified as Disabled Veteran Business Enterprises (DVBE).

"This comes at a time when many small businesses, especially those owned by disabled veterans, are still struggling to recover from the recent recession," explained Padilla. "Getting a contract with high-speed rail enables these firms to get enough money to put people to work and put food on their tables."

Of course, the highlight of the day was the Small Business Day luncheon where California Assembly and Senate members announced who they selected as the Small Business of the Year from their legislative districts. Among the firms and owners being honored – The Sacramento River Cats baseball team, India House Restaurant in Folsom, and two Fresno firms, A to Z Insurance and Sam's Italian Deli.

As we ramp up heavy construction on the nation's first high-speed rail project, the Authority expects the number of small businesses participating in high-speed rail to grow. Several firms are currently bidding on upcoming high-speed rail contracts. The results will improve the lot of many small businesses and help keep California's economic engine chugging along.

— Karen Massie

168 Small/Disadvantaged Businesses are commited to work on High-Speed Rail Statewide

45 Certified Small/Disadvantaged Businesses located in Fresno County

26 are Disabled Veteran Business Enterprises (DVBE)

1. Former football star and Heisman Trophy winner **Johnny Rodgers** strikes a pose with Information Officer **Karen Massie**. Rodgers was in Sacramento for California Small Business Day, a statewide celebration that honors small businesses.
2. Small business owners and representatives who attended the California Small Business Day celebration stopped by the Authority's exhibit booth to ask about upcoming business opportunities on high-speed rail projects. *Left to right:* **Paul Pendergast**, Pendergast Consulting Group Owner; **Jana Sastaad**, Pendergast Consulting Group; Authority Small Business Advocate **Robert Padilla**, and **Eric Goforth**, Golden Gate Business Association, President.

Veteran-Owned Small Businesses Contribute Unique Skills to High-Speed Rail

While the overarching goal of the Authority's Small Business Program is to achieve and exceed the 30 percent small business participation target on the high-speed rail program, within that target, the Authority is also working to achieve at least 3 percent participation of Disabled Veteran Business Enterprise (DVBE) businesses.

Over the last two years, the Authority's Small Business team has aggressively pursed partnerships with other organizations to market to DVBEs and get them involved in the project. The Authority has also done outreach to DVBEs through public events, conferences and in coordination with the California Department of Veteran Affairs. The fruit of these labors is starting to pay off. As of June, the Authority has a total of 26 DVBE firms that are currently committed to work on high-speed rail throughout the state.

This spring, three certified DVBEs were brought on board to perform activities on Construction Package 1 (CP1) between Madera and Fresno. In May, Fresno-based Katch Environmental, Inc. and Moore Twining Associates, Inc. joined the project and the 111th Aerial Photography Squadron joined in July.

Katch Environmental specializes in industrial hygiene, inspection and remediation, and is an expert in cutting-edge environmental technologies. Prior to demolition, they ensure that the buildings and structures are cleared of environmental hazards such as asbestos and lead.

> "High-Speed Rail is investing badly needed dollars into our community, which is still recovering from the recession. My company is proud to be a part of this world-class project and to help create jobs in this city I call home."
>
> - Paul Katchadourian
> President
> Katch Environmental

"High-speed rail is investing badly needed dollars into our community, which is still recovering from the recession," said Paul Katchadourian of Katch Environmental. "My company is proud to be a part of this world-class project and to help create jobs in this city I call home."

Moore Twining Associates is a multi-disciplined engineering and testing firm providing geotechnical engineering, environmental, construction inspection, materials testing, analytical chemistry and drilling services. They are tasked with maintaining quality control throughout the construction process by means of inspection and laboratory testing of concrete, soil, rebar, asphalt and base.

The San Martin-based 111th Aerial Photography Squadron is a company specializing in aerial video and photography. They will be conducting fly-over photos of progress along the 29-mile segment.

"We recognize that these businesses are ready and willing to compete for contract opportunities, and we are doing what we can to make sure they know what is available," said Authority Small Business Advocate Robert Padilla. "It's important that we take the time to reach out to DVBEs, especially those companies located in California and connect them with the program."

— Annie Parker & Elizabeth Jonasson

KATCH ENVIRONMENTAL
MOLD • LEAD • ASBESTOS

MTA Since 1898
MOORE TWINING
ASSOCIATES, INC.

THE 111TH GROUP PHOTOGRAPHY
Aerial • Ground • Video
Architectural • Construction

"#Iwillride because trains are more productive, efficient and environmentally friendly."

- Joseph C. Szabo
Administrator
Federal Railroad Administration

1. Federal Railroad Administrator **Joesph Szabo** and CEO **Jeff Morales**.
2. San Francisco State University Engineering Department at United States High-Speed Rail Association Convention.
3. Sacramento State Association of Student Civil Engineers.
4. San Jose State Engineering Students.

#Iwillride Campaign

Do you show your high-speed rail support on social media? If not, here's how to start!

High-speed rail is using a #Iwillride campaign on our Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube accounts, and we're looking for you to provide a portion of the content. We're going to be sending out our #Iwillride signs and asking you to show the world why high-speed rail is good for your business and good for our state.

Why is there a number sign (#) in front of I will ride?

The number sign for social media purposes is a hashtag, and we use it to collect all the posts related to this campaign. When you're talking about high-speed rail and putting #Iwillride in the message, we can use that to show your pictures, posts, and messages. When you write "#Iwillride" on social media, you are showing everyone on those sites that you support high-speed rail.

What to post?

Have you hired people because you have a high-speed rail contract? Are you out in the field working on future high-speed rail projects? Is your business expanding because of our program? These are all things that fans of high-speed rail want to read...and we at the Authority want to promote!

Where to post?

facebook.com/CaliforniaHighSpeedRail

twitter.com/cahsra

youtube.com/user/CAHighSpeedRail

-Orville Thomas

Michael Aguillio Stumps State to Aid Small Businesses

He welcomes his visitors with an easy smile and an occasional joke to ease the tension. Michael Aguillio, a Customer Liaison Officer for the California Department of General Services (DGS), is about to dive into a very important workshop he is hosting in conjunction with the Authority. He'll be explaining how small businesses become certified in California and what the benefits are.

"Helping people is the best part," Aguillio said. "I share information workshop participants need to make an informed business decision."

Workshop participants are small business owners hoping to develop new revenue streams by bidding on state contracts. The Authority believes a larger pool of certified firms will make it easier for the high-speed rail program to reach its goal of 30 percent small business participation, including 10 percent for Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (DBE) and 3 percent for Disabled Veteran Business Enterprises (DVBE).

Aguillio explains if interested company owners show up with all the necessary documents, he can certify them on the spot in about an hour at workshops he gives around the state, as opposed to waiting a week or more for certification from DGS. He also points out that certified companies will be placed in the state's online vendor data base at *www.bidsync.com*, allowing people around the world to see what their companies have to offer.

During the workshop, he lets small business owners know what the advantages are to being certified as a small business in California. Certified firms can have their bids scored under a "five percent bidding preference." Aguillo tells them if the lowest bid on a contract is made by a non-certified company, the state figures out what five percent of that bid is and subtracts that amount from the bid of a certified company, essentially giving the certified business a five percent preference.

> "Helping people is the best part. I share information workshop participants need to make an informed business decision. I don't know how many businesses I've help certify, but it surely is not enough, people are hurting and together we can make a difference in each other's lives and boost the State's overall fiscal health."
>
> - Michael Aguillio
> Customer Liaison Officer
> California Department of General Services

They can also bid under a streamlined process known as the SB/DVBE option, which applies to goods and services valued between $5,000 and $249,999.99. After contacting two eligible firms, state agencies can contract directly with companies designated as Small Businesses (SB) and Disabled Veteran Business Enterprises (DVBE). According to Aguillio, "If it only takes an hour of your time to certify your company, then these benefits are worth the effort."

Michael Aguillio (*Right*), a Customer Liaison Officer for DGS, helps general contractor **Teddy Hayes** certify his firm to do business with the state of California. Aguillio travels the state doing certification workshops for companies interested in bidding on state contracts.

Aguillio also teaches workshops called, "I'm Certified, Now What?" and "How to do Business with California State Government." Many participants are surprised when he hands out his contact information so they can call and email him directly with questions and problems about the procurement process.

He says these workshops are a win-win for everyone. DGS is eager to have more small businesses eligible for the procurement process because they are a driving force in the state's economy. According to the Governor's Office of Business and Economic Development (GoBiz), California's 3.4 million small businesses employ 52 percent of the state's workforce.

The facts are not lost on Aguillio who knows the recent economic downtown has been hard on everyone concerned. "I don't know how many businesses I've help certify, but it surely is not enough," he declared. "People are hurting and together we can make a difference in each other's lives and boost the state's overall fiscal health."

— Karen Massie

Partner Spotlight: *California Department of Conservation*

Authority Partners with the Department of Conservation

The California Department of Conservation (DOC) is responsible for land conservation, oil, gas and geothermal resources and the state mining and geology board. These programs are vital to the state's safety, environment and economy.

Like the DOC, the Authority is well aware of the state's growing population, which is expected to jump from 34 million to 50 million by 2025, and the resulting squeeze it will put on the agriculture industry and land.

As part of a Mitigation, Monitoring and Reporting Plan for the Merced to Fresno's project section, the Authority signed an agreement with DOC in 2012 that calls for avoiding and minimizing the project footprint during design and construction. It also sets aside at least one acre of land that will be preserved as farmland in perpetuity for every acre impacted by high-speed rail. An estimated five thousand acres of easements will also be purchased from willing sellers.

DOC will also help the Authority with a settlement agreement with the Madera County and Merced County Farm Bureaus that sets aside the $4 million for agriculture conservation and mitigation programs.

— Karen Massie

Strategic Partnerships

To achieve greater effectiveness in the delivery of procurement opportunities to small businesses, the Authority has cultivated ongoing strategic partnerships with local, community organizations and agencies. The intent of these partnerships is to leverage shared services and resources to become more transparent, accessible and accountable by enhancing the quality of the Authority's services. The Authority is confident that these strategic partnerships will not only maximize the participation of small business participation in its procurement process, but will also strengthen and sustain California's economy.

Central Valley Update

Authority Approves Alignment Within Fresno to Bakersfield Project Section

Perhaps fitting for a program of the magnitude of high-speed rail, the recent completion of the environmental review for the Fresno to Bakersfield project section represents the high-water mark of a multi-year, all-hands-on-deck process with some of the most complex and extensive outreach ever done in California to date. With the spring certification of the project section by the Authority Board of Directors and the subsequent Record of Decision (ROD) by the Federal Railroad Administration, the Authority has achieved one of the biggest program milestones to date.

"This document represents the culmination of work done by the Authority to identify a preferred alignment for the project and is consist with the parameters of Proposition 1A," said Board Chair Dan Richard. "As this process moves forward, we're all committed to and will continue working with property owners and businesses to ensure that impacts of high-speed rail are mitigated and that the project benefits Central Valley residents now and into the future."

The Fresno to Bakersfield project section is approximately 114 miles long from south of the terminus of the Merced to Fresno project section to north of the City of Bakersfield. The preferred alternative is comprised of the Burlington Northern Santa Fe alternative (BNSF), the Corcoran Bypass alternative, the Allensworth Bypass alternative and the Bakersfield Hybrid alternative. Proposed stations are identified as the Downtown Bakersfield station on Truxtun Avenue, and the East of Hanford/ west of Visalia station option located near State Route 198.

— Annie Parker

Authority Certification Workshop Pays Off for Small Business Owner

He doesn't remember who sent him an email telling him to attend a small business certification workshop hosted by the Authority, but Gregory Woods of Modesto is glad he took a friend's advice. He is now certified to do business with the state of California – a designation that's already paying off.

"Of course, I was surprised," Woods said. "People running the workshop made it clear that if you brought the proper documents and paperwork with you, you could complete the small business certification on-the spot. It only took about an hour for me to get State certified."

Statistics show it normally takes newly certified small businesses 18 months of bidding on state contracts to get a favorable response. For Woods, it only took seven months.

Woods owns GDM Distributers, a wholesale business that ships products to U.S. and foreign markets. He explained, "sixty percent of my business is bulk food and agricultural commodities that I buy directly from California growers. The products include almonds, walnuts, pistachios and organic fruit such as grapes and plums. I wanted to be certified to expand my company's reach."

Woods said he immediately started getting two emails a day from *www.bidsync.com*, the website that advertises all state contracts. In March, he was alerted about a contract proposal he believed was right for his company. It was for the California Department of Health office in Richmond that was looking for three Shimadzu scientific instruments that can be used in a medical setting.

GDM Distributors, Inc.

"People running the workshop made it clear that if you brought the proper documents and paperwork with you, you could complete the small business certification on-the spot. It only took about an hour for me to get certified."

- Gregory Woods
Owner
GDM Distributors

"This particular contract had to be let to a small business," Woods said, "so I worked a relationship with the Shimadzu representative to see if this would work for me." He filled out that contract bid and won an order worth about $31,000. Woods added, "I took advantage of an opportunity. We offered a 15 percent discount to be the lowest bidder and got the sale. Shimadzu is a nationwide company and selling their machines has given me additional access to products that I can sell to U.S. companies."

Small business owner **Gregory Woods** stays busy while running GDM Distributors, Inc., a company that ships wholesale goods worldwide. He hopes business will pick up even more now that he's attended an Authority workshop where he was certified as a small business.
Photo courtesy of Alliance SBDC.

Woods is now setting his sights on snagging a contract with the high-speed rail project. He thinks he might be able to provide raw materials such as lumber or gravel. "Everyone knows high-speed rail is going to go through. The opportunity for minority-owned and disadvantaged firms is substantial," Woods said. "I have experience in getting supplies. I'm certain if I get a contract, I can add value to the high-speed rail project."

Woods founded his firm 14 years ago while he was an investment operations analyst for the Stanford Management Company, an entity that manages the endowment and other financial assets for Stanford University. As an investment operations analyst, he settled trades in equities and bond markets all over the world.

He believes what he learned at Stanford has helped his company's success. "The main thing is to figure out how everyone in the supply chain makes money. I can provide "grade-A" products at market or just-below prices. And if everyone I'm dealing with benefits, we're all winners."

— Karen Massie

Calendar of Upcoming Events

Meeting dates, times and locations are subject to change.

EVENTS	DATE	TIME	ADDRESS	
Society of American Military Engineers	August 13, 2014	3:00 pm – 3:45 pm	Lions Gate Hotel (old McClellan AFB)	3410 Westover St. McClellan, CA
Caltrans Small Business Outreach	August 15, 2014	1:00 pm – 3:00 pm	Elihu Harris State Building	1515 Clay St. Oakland, CA
California Hispanic Chamber of Commerce	August 15, 2014	1:00 pm – 3:00 pm	Hyatt Regency	11999 Harbor Blvd. Garden Grove, CA
Authority Business Advisory Council	August 21, 2014	1:00 pm – 3:00 pm	DGS Building	707 Third St. Executive Dining Room West Sacramento, CA
Exceptional Women of Color Conference	September 13, 2014	8:00 am – 2:00 pm	Hilton Arden West	2200 Harvard St. Sacramento, CA