

NEWS

From the Office of

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County Secures Funds for Lenwood Rail Crossing, Needles Highway

SAN BERNARDINO – A new Needles Highway and an important rail crossing in Barstow took major steps today after the San Bernardino County Board of Supervisors accepted more than \$4 million in federal money for the projects.

“These are both critically needed projects that will improve traffic flow and safety, and spur economic development,” said First District Supervisor Brad Mitzelfelt, who represents the desert regions. “By securing this funding, we are ensuring that design work and environmental review will continue in a timely manner.”

The Board accepted \$3.8 million for work on Needles Highway and \$237,500 for the Lenwood Road rail crossing in Barstow. A bridge that will cross over the railroad tracks at Lenwood Road is currently in the design phase. It is listed as one of the top priority rail crossings in the county. It is anticipated that the bridge will facilitate industrial development in the area, leading to local job creation.

“I would like to thank Congressman Jerry Lewis for the Needles Highway funding, and Congressman Buck McKeon for his help with Lenwood Road,” added Supervisor Mitzelfelt.

Needles Highway stretches 17.4 miles from just south of Interstate 40 in the City of Needles to the Nevada state line not far from Laughlin, Nevada. It has received about \$8 million in federal funding in recent years. The project is still undergoing environmental review. When the environmental review and final design are complete, it is possible some early construction work could begin in about two years with the funding currently available. The entire project is estimated to cost \$60 million.

The existing highway is narrow, with sharp turns and dips. The new highway will be realigned, with improved sight lines, passing lanes and flood control features.