



Harris & Associates



Statement of Qualifications (SOQ)

# Environmental Planning + Compliance

# Firm Profile

Harris & Associates (Harris) has served public agencies and private clients since 1974. Our robust program of services includes environmental and regulatory compliance, engineering, program and construction management, municipal district finance services, and strategic services. Our Environmental Planning + Compliance team is anchored by experienced directors with extensive experience preparing California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) compliance documents and supporting technical studies. The staff has earned an esteemed reputation for providing high-quality, legally defensible documents that are easily understood by the general public. Our team experience includes bridge, roadway and other infrastructure projects; Caltrans technical studies; and permit application packages for compliance with Clean Water Act Section 404/401, Endangered Species Act Section 7/10, National Historic Preservation Act Section 106, Fish & Game Code Section 1602, and the California Coastal Act.

This Statement of Qualifications (SOQ) focuses on Harris’ environmental planning and compliance services. It also includes project examples and select personnel profiles. Harris has some of the industry’s best leaders with abilities to solve your most complex challenges. The personnel included in this SOQ only scratch the surface of the pool of experts we offer to our clients. Please visit our website for more information: [www.WeAreHarris.com](http://www.WeAreHarris.com).



## COMPREHENSIVE SERVICES

- Advisory Services
- Asset Management
- Civil Design
- Climate Change + Sustainability
- Community Development + Housing
- Community Planning
- Construction Management
- Environmental Planning + Compliance
- Municipal Engineering
- Municipal Finance
- Program Management
- Risk + Resilience
- Special District Finance
- Water Consulting





# Services

Harris' core Environmental Planning + Compliance staff each have 15–35 years of experience in California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) compliance, with expertise in project management, impact assessment, permitting, and technical writing. Our environmental services staff have earned an esteemed reputation for providing high-quality, legally defensible documents that are easily understood by the general public. Harris staff have experience with a wide range of planning, development, and infrastructure projects, from small residential infill projects to large master-planned communities, creek restoration projects, and new roadways. As such, our experience includes program-level, tiered, and project-specific documentation. To support the environmental documents, Harris also prepares technical studies for several environmental topics. We understand that each project and lead agency is unique, and Harris is adept at adjusting project management styles and work approaches to provide the most effective and efficient environmental documentation process possible.

Our environmental planning and compliance services include:

- CEQA/NEPA Documentation
- Environmental Constraints Analysis
- Air Quality Modeling and Reports
- Biological Resources
  - Flora and Fauna Surveys
  - Habitat Assessments
  - Habitat Conservation Plans
  - Mitigation Plans and Monitoring
  - Natural Resource Management Plans
  - Restoration Plans
  - Vegetation Mapping
  - Wetland Delineations
- Climate Action Plans and Sustainability Assessments
- Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Emissions Modeling and Reports
- Health Risk Assessments
- Hydrology and Water Quality Studies
- Noise Modeling and Reports
- Planning Staff Support Services
- Public Outreach
- Regulatory Compliance and Permitting



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# Areas of Expertise

## Legally Defensible Documentation

Harris is known for preparing legally defensible documents. Our environmental staff have worked on many controversial projects, some of which have been subject to legal challenge. To withstand those challenges, our staff works to identify environmental concerns and issues early in the process; strategizes with the lead agency and the project proponent to provide a comprehensive environmental analysis; coordinates with responsible agencies/stakeholders to obtain input and address concerns; and confirms the issues are thoroughly addressed with substantial evidence in the environmental document. The goal is to avoid legal challenges; however, a challenge may be inevitable if a project is controversial. Therefore, our documents are comprehensive, legally defensible, and easily understandable to a judge and the general public. Our staff has a track record of preparing CEQA documents that are upheld in court.

## Environmental Constraints Analysis

Drawing on years of experience consulting on all types of projects in California, our team excels at identifying environmental issues and potential permit requirements to inform project design and the scope of environmental review. We routinely partner with project proponents to help them design environmentally-sensitive projects that reduce their environmental impacts and minimize the need for regulatory permits. This adds value by saving the lead agency and the applicant time and budget.

## CEQA + NEPA

With in-depth knowledge of CEQA and NEPA, Harris delivers rigorous, objective analyses supported by substantial evidence. While Harris may be contracted with either the lead agency or applicant, we consider ourselves to be an extension of agency staff, and will objectively prepare and review environmental documents in compliance with state and federal law and guidance. We assume responsibility for customizing easy-to-read documents that meet all applicable topics under CEQA and NEPA – including hot-button issues such as the new transportation standards, greenhouse gas emissions, balancing biological resources and resiliency planning.

Our staff are CEQA experts that teach CEQA courses to our clients and at the university level, and have taught environmental assessment courses to clients such as the City of Fresno and universities including UC San Diego extension and University of San Diego.

Clients rely on us to:

- Apply CEQA streamlining whenever feasible.
- Peer review and provide third party input on documents and analysis.
- Explore the least-damaging alternatives and consult on feasible solutions when project challenges arise.
- Evaluate the potential for cumulative impacts when a project's direct impacts are combined with other past, present and future project impacts.
- Prepare an objective analysis based on substantial evidence using quantitative and qualitative thresholds to identify potential impacts and feasible mitigation measures.
- Manage public participation in the reporting process and incorporate feedback into our documents.
- Prepare comprehensive and legally defensible documents.
- Include complete Mitigation, Monitoring and Reporting Programs (MMRP) to assist the agency in cohesive implementation of project conditions.

## Technical Studies

Harris' in-house environmental technical services include: Air Quality Studies, Biological Resources and Permitting, Greenhouse Gas Emissions/Climate Change Reports, Noise Reports, Hydrologic Modeling, Water Quality Assessments, and Visual Resources.

# Our Staff

Our staff is very active and well-connected in the environmental professional field, as well as experienced with teaming, to address any project-specific technical analysis required. To supplement our in-house expertise, Harris can assemble a team to provide all technical studies necessary to support the environmental document.

Harris is also experienced with providing quality control reviews of technical reports, including all subconsultant reports and applicant-prepared reports.

Because much of the environmental documentation relies on technical reports and the provision of adequate substantial evidence, the Harris quality-control review process focuses on ensuring that technical reports include sound methodology and support for conclusions in the environmental document.

We understand that each project and lead agency is unique. Harris is adept at adjusting project management styles and work approaches to provide the most effective and efficient environmental documentation process possible.

Most importantly, Harris provides legally defensible documents and has an in-house CEQA attorney to provide guidance and legal review. The environmental staff have worked on many controversial projects, some of which have been subject to challenges. To withstand legal challenges, our staff works to identify potential environmental concerns early in the process to ensure issues are adequately addressed in the environmental documents. Scoping meetings and outreach are a vital tool for identifying potential legal issues on a controversial project.

Harris staff work closely with the lead agency and applicant to develop a comprehensive project description, including adequate detail about project construction and operation, to provide a thorough analysis with sound rationale and support for conclusions. For environmental impact reports (EIRs), we ensure a reasonable range of alternatives have been analyzed, and that responses to public comments are thorough. By working with CEQA attorneys and staying informed on CEQA case law, Harris staff is aware of potential litigation issues and solutions to avoid litigation.



# Experience & Expertise



## Project Awards

- Merit Award, Association of Environmental Professionals (AEP)
  - City of Santa Cruz, County of Santa Cruz, & Santa Cruz County RTC, North Coast Rail Trail EIR (2018)
  - City of Santa Cruz, County of Santa Cruz, & Santa Cruz County RTC, Coastal Rail Trail Segments 10 and 11 EIR (2023)
- Outstanding Environmental Analysis Award, AEP
  - City of Solana Beach, Solana 101 Mixed-Use Redevelopment EIR (2018)
  - City of Santee, Fanita Ranch Development EIR (2020)

Harris has performed environmental planning and compliance work on a vast array of projects across California. Some of our notable projects completed in recent years are listed below. Details on select projects (marked with an asterisk) are included on the following pages.

## Development

- City of Anaheim, ocV!BE Project\*
- City of Chino, Chino Hills Parkway Residential Project
- City of Chula Vista, Otay Villages 9 & 10 Biological Resources
- City of Gilroy, StorQuest Self Storage Facility IS/MND
- City of Santee, Fanita Ranch Development EIR
- City of Solana Beach, Solana 101 Mixed-Use Redevelopment EIR\*

## Infrastructure

- City of Corona, Reclaimed Water Master Plan PEIR\*
- City of Fresno, On-Call Environmental Services
- City of San Diego/City of Chula Vista, Otay Pipeline 2 Segment A6 Replacement IS/MND
- County of San Diego Department of Public Works (DPW), Palomar Airport Projects
- City of Santa Cruz, Graham Hill Water Treatment Plant Improvements Project CEQA Plus IS/MND
- City of Santa Cruz, County of Santa Cruz, & Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (RTC), Coastal Rail Trail Projects\*
- County of Santa Cruz, Buena Vista Landfill Redevelopment Project EIR
- County of Santa Cruz, Freedom Sanitary Sewer Rehabilitation CEQA Plus IS/MND

## **Industrial/Logistics**

- City of Gardena, Hitco Project\*
- County of San Bernardino, Logistics Ordinance
- San Diego Unified Port District, Lockheed Martin Harbor Island Facilities Demolition and Offshore Sediment Remediation Project EIR
- Chesnut Properties, Weld Boulevard Distribution Center\*

## **Education**

- San Diego Unified School District, As-Needed CEQA Services
- University of California San Diego (UCSD), As-Needed Environmental Services\*
- UCSD, 2019 Hillcrest Campus Long Range Development Plan EIR\*

## **Sustainability**

- City of Salinas, Salinas Creeks Flood Control and Habitat Restoration Permitting
- City of San Diego, Coastal Resilience Master Plan & Program EIR\*
- County of San Diego, Climate Action Plan
- City of Vista, Climate Action Plan IS/ND
- City of Walnut Creek, Sustainability Action Plan
- City of Watsonville, Climate Action & Adaptation Plan\*

## **Planning Documents**

- City of Brea, Brea 265 Specific Plan EIR\*

- City of Coronado, Coronado Housing Element Environmental Assessment
- City of Escondido, East Valley Specific Plan EIR
- City of San Diego, Midway-Pacific Highway Community Plan Supplemental EIR
- City of Santee, Safety & Environmental Justice Elements
- City of Walnut Creek, 6th Cycle Housing Element & General Plan/Safety Element Update\*
- County of Monterey, General Plan Update

## **Staff Support**

- City of Carmel-by-the-Sea, Planning Support Services
- City of Marina, Planning Support Services\*
- City of Pacific Grove, Planning Support Services
- County of Humboldt, Planning/Environmental Review Support Services
- County of Monterey, Planning Support Services
- County of San Bernardino, On-Call CEQA/Planning Services\*
- County of San Diego DPW, As-Needed Environmental Services for Non-Federally Funded Projects
- County of San Diego Planning & Development Services (PDS), On-Call CEQA Consulting



# Harris Projects



## Weld Boulevard Distribution Center

Chesnut Properties

The project involved the development of an approximately 142,756 SF distribution warehouse, parking, and designated product pick-up and drop-off areas. Harris prepared technical studies and reports, as well as an Addendum to the previously certified 2009 EIR to address the modifications to the project. The team identified a mitigation bank for upland habitat impacts and potential receiver sites for the translocation of San Diego ambrosia, a federally listed plant.



## Hitco Project

City of Gardena

The proposed project involves the demolition of 22 existing on-site industrial buildings, totaling 296,630 square feet of building space, parking lots, and associated improvements. The project consists of a new 190,860-square foot tilt-up concrete industrial building, constituting 180,860 square feet of industrial uses and 10,000 square feet of office uses. This building project includes a Conditional Use Permit (CUP #7-21) and a Site Plan Review (SPR #9-21 ). Harris prepared an MND for the project and associated technical studies.



## ocV!BE Project EIR Addendum

City of Anaheim/PlaceWorks

The ocV!BE project is the premier mixed-use community and live entertainment district coming to Anaheim in 2024. Harris assisted with the preparation of the Addendum to the Certified EIR, along with various technical studies. Harris conducted noise analysis to identify and quantify the potential noise reduction measures to allow the project to be processed, using an addendum to the previously certified EIR. This provided significant time savings to allow expedited approval of this high priority project.



## Solana 101 Mixed-Use Redevelopment EIR

City of Solana Beach

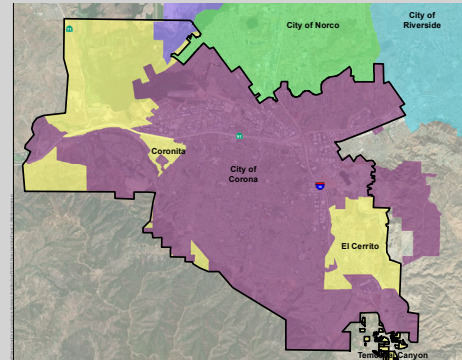
Harris worked with the City of Solana Beach to prepare an EIR for a mixed-use development project along Highway 101 in Solana Beach. The project included energy efficiency, on-site renewable solar energy, conservation of water and solid waste, and transportation demand management measures. When the project team decided to pursue one of the project alternatives during the final review, Harris rewrote the EIR and technical studies in only five weeks.



## Coastal Rail Trail Projects

Santa Cruz City/County/RTC

Harris provided CEQA documentation and permitting support to three lead agencies for the Coastal Rail Trail projects, located within the rail corridor along the Santa Cruz County coastline. The 32-mile trail is comprised of 20 segments, extending through unincorporated county and three cities. The project is complex and controversial because the corridor is narrow in locations, which requires substantial tree removal resulting in impacts to biological resources, aesthetics, and greenhouse gas emissions.



## Reclaimed Water Master Plan PEIR

City of Corona

Harris partnered with the City of Corona to evaluate the Reclaimed Water Master Plan. The purpose of the project was to expand reclaimed water use consistent with the City's General Plan, Strategic Plan, Recycled Water Ordinance, and Reclaimed Water Policy. Harris prepared a Program EIR and technical studies including air quality, greenhouse gas emissions, noise, biological resources, and cultural resources evaluating the environmental impacts of infrastructure needed to expand reclaimed water use Citywide.





## As-Needed Environmental Services

University of California San Diego

Harris was the prime consultant for this three-year, unlimited contract, leading a team providing as-needed environmental services. Highlighted projects on this contract include the Hillcrest Campus Long-Range Development Plan (LRDP) Phase 1A EIR Addendum and the LRDP Phase 1A Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program Implementation.



## 2019 Hillcrest Campus Long Range Development Plan (LRDP) EIR

University of California San Diego

Harris worked with UC San Diego staff to prepare an EIR addressing the 2019 Hillcrest Campus LRDP update, which proposes to redevelop approximately 34 acres of the 62-acre campus. Harris worked closely with the planning consultant to develop LRDP policies (i.e. principles) that will self-mitigate environmental impacts to the extent feasible.



## Coastal Resilience Master Plan & Program EIR (PEIR)

City of San Diego

Harris assisted the City with Phase 1 of this project, which satisfies the requirements of the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) – National Coastal Resilience Fund 2021 grant (NFWF grant). The Harris team developed nature-based solutions that achieve multiple benefits, such as (but not limited to): habitat protection, water quality improvements, flood storage, resilience from potential upstream impacts, recreational opportunities, and increased access for Communities of Concern.



## Climate Action & Adaptation Plan

City of Watsonville

Harris led the City of Watsonville's climate planning efforts, which encompasses the preparation of the City's first Local Hazard Mitigation Plan, Climate Action and Adaptation Plan, and Environmental Justice Element. Harris incorporated these disparate analyses into the General Plan to meet State mandates. This approach enabled the City to holistically consider climate change across sectors, departments and programs and resulted in a robust and coordinated response that protects community resources and reflects community priorities.



## **Brea 265 Specific Plan EIR**

City of Brea/PlaceWorks

The Brea 265 project is a phased, master-planned residential community of low and medium-density residential neighborhoods. The Brea 265 Specific Plan is divided into separate Planning Areas (PAs) that delineate the different land uses and residential densities. As a result of the efforts of Harris staff, The City Council approved the Specific Plan unanimously and certified the EIR.



## **6th Cycle Housing Element (HEU) & General Plan/Safety Element Update**

City of Walnut Creek

Harris prepared the 6th Cycle HEU and required Safety Element update in accordance with State law. The City completed two key Specific Plans, for the North and West Downtown areas, that provide higher density zoning and opportunities for redevelopment. Harris helped the City to overcome several challenges, most notably the departure of several key staff members, including the City's original project manager.



## **Planning Support Services**

City of Marina

Harris provided planning support services to the City of Marina. In this role, Harris staff served as an extension of City staff by updating planning processes/systems, working with the public at the front counter, updating land use-related applications/forms, and processing Discretionary Permits for various project types throughout the City. Harris was responsible for application review and compliance determination with applicable general plan, zoning code, and individual land use and area plan requirements, as well as CEQA.



## **On-Call CEQA/Planning Services**

County of San Bernardino

Harris provides professional on-call planning and environmental services to the County of San Bernardino Land Use Services department. Harris reviews and prepares planning applications and CEQA environmental documents and technical analysis for publicly and privately initiated projects. Harris staff authors staff reports, CEQA documents, technical studies, and presentations on behalf of the County and prepares for and attends public hearings and meetings.



## Key Personnel



**Diane Sandman, AICP**

*Vice President / Environmental Planning + Compliance*

Diane manages Harris' 30+ person Environmental Planning + Compliance team. Over her 23+ year career, she has worked extensively on CEQA and NEPA compliance documents for public projects. She has been responsible for permitting coordination with a variety of resource agencies and has successfully managed contracts up to \$15 million in fee. Her projects have required a variety of discretionary approvals, including general plan, community plan, specific plan and master plan amendments, rezones, grading exemptions, coastal development permits, tentative subdivision maps, annexations, and conditional use permits. Diane is a hands-on leader that enjoys the technical aspects of the work along with team management and client interaction.

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**Ryan Binns, PMP,  
ENV SP**

*Senior Director / Environmental Planning + Compliance*

Ryan has 24 years of experience managing environmental projects and on-call contracts. He has experience in all aspects of project management, from preparing and reviewing technical reports and environmental assessment documentation to budget and schedule compliance and invoicing. Ryan is well-versed in managing diverse teams of specialists for complex projects, including a mix of both in-house and subconsultant staff, to prepare CEQA and NEPA documentation and supporting technical reports. He has worked with numerous federal, state, and local agencies. With a solid background in environmental analysis and documentation, Ryan brings a balanced perspective to both public and private projects.

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**William (Bill) Halligan,  
Esq.**

*Senior Director / Environmental  
Planning + Compliance*

An environmental practitioner and attorney with more than 30 years of experience in private- and public-sector planning, Bill has prepared hundreds of environmental documents for a range of projects throughout California. Throughout his career, Bill has leveraged his specialty in land use and environmental law to help agencies continually withstand legal challenges related to CEQA. Bill also provides third-party review for legal adequacy of EIRs prepared by other consultants. His diverse background provides him with a unique understanding of planning and zoning law, CEQA, and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). As a key member of AEP's Legislative Review Committee, Bill works directly with the State Legislature on proposed legislation related to CEQA.

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**Kate Elliott**

*Director / Environmental  
Planning + Compliance*

Kate has more than 30 years of experience in project management of California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) environmental compliance documents for development and infrastructure projects, including complex and controversial projects. Her infrastructure experience includes pedestrian/bicycle trail, roadway, bridge, water, sewer, and pipeline projects. Her development experience includes residential, mixed use, park, and recreation projects. Kate has led large multidisciplinary teams of technical specialists, subconsultants and vendors. She possesses excellent written and interpersonal communication skills and is organized, attentive to detail, and committed to producing high quality legally defensible work products.

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**Darin Neufeld, AICP**

*Director / Sustainability*

Darin has over 16 years of experience in environmental planning and project management, eight of those working for lead agencies. He specializes in CEQA compliance and has experience with master-planned communities, commercial/retail, industrial, renewable energy, climate action planning, and long-range planning projects. Darin has managed complex and controversial projects including general plan amendments, community plans, climate action plans, and large-scale renewable energy projects. For six years, Darin managed the CEQA process for the County of San Diego Planning & Development Services Department. He oversaw the review and production of CEQA documents while managing 32 staff in his role as Chief of Departmental Operations.

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**Kelly Bray, LEED GA**

*Manager, Sustainability Services*

Kelly has over 14 years of experience in environmental planning and project management, eight of which were spent working for public agencies. Her work is focused on policy development within climate planning and sustainability, including the preparation and implementation of climate action and sustainability plans, adaptation and resiliency planning, natural resource preservation planning, and electric vehicle and micro-mobility planning. She has broad experience in community planning and urban design, development and entitlements, and CEQA.

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**Elizabeth Kim**

*Senior Project Manager / Environmental Planning + Compliance*

Elizabeth has 22 years of professional experience in providing CEQA services with expert CEQA knowledge and skills. She has successfully completed CEQA documents for many different types and sizes of projects within approved budgets and schedules. She prepared and managed numerous EIRs, MNDs, NOEs, addenda, and peer reviews for cities, counties, K-12 school districts, and community colleges, communicating and coordinating with clients, managing diverse in-house and subconsultant teams, and advising on technical and strategic approaches and issues. Elizabeth pays keen attention to quality and detail and maintains that attention throughout the environmental review process in the most challenging situations.

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**David Mack, AICP**

*Senior Project Manager / Environmental Planning + Compliance*

David has more than 17 years of experience in community development and environmental planning. His planning experience includes facilitating planning permit compliance and review, analyzing, preparing, and reviewing CEQA documents, including NDs, MNDs, and EIRs, and processing and reviewing proposed development projects, including general plan amendments, specific plans, and rezoning requests. He communicates with the public with clarity and proficiency and is a skilled and effective presenter. Work completed by David is concise, well scripted, and allows decision makers and public members to understand the projects and potential issues/impacts clearly. He completes his projects on time and within budget.

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**Emily Mastrelli**

*Senior Manager, Biological Services*

With sixteen seasons of field expertise, Emily specializes in environmental compliance and holds a Master Bander Permit from the USGS Bird Banding Lab. She has significant experience in regulatory permitting and technical document writing and review. She specializes in ornithology and desert tortoises, and is an authorized desert tortoise biologist. She is also experienced with venomous and non-venomous snakes, butterflies, amphibians, reptiles, vernal pool branchiopods, and small mammals. Emily has led numerous projects involving threatened and endangered species, holding permits for species like California least tern, California gnatcatcher, and Quino checkerspot butterfly. She excels in leading biologists at all levels and providing clients with high-quality work.

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**Donna Beddow, RPA**

*Senior Archaeologist / Environmental Planning + Compliance*

Donna is a senior archaeologist with over 20 years of experience managing or being a member of multi-disciplinary teams. She specializes in cultural and tribal cultural resources and has extensive experience with Native American consultation, including AB 52, SB 18, and Sacred Lands. She has reviewed and prepared cultural resources studies and CEQA documents for both private and public development projects. Donna has managed highly complex projects involving sensitive or difficult environmental issues and has resolved major project issues and public controversies through applicant engagement and coordination with the public and Tribes. Her master thesis was used as the model for the County of San Diego's Guidelines for Determining Significance for Cultural Resources.

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# A Few Words From Our Clients

“Thank you for your top-grade responsiveness and excellent project management. We appreciate your polished work products, your diligent task tracking, and your caution in making sure that every millimeter of our environmental document is legally defensible. You’re a consultant super-hero, and it’s a comfort to know that our complicated and controversial project is in such trustworthy, thorough, and capable hands.”

*Cory Caletti, Senior Planner/Rail Trail Program Manager (Former), Santa Cruz County RTC*



“Ryan [Binns] and staff have been and continue to be extremely flexible, responsive, and provide appropriate, high-quality staff to meet the County’s project staff support needs.”

*Gail Getz, Planning Manager, County of San Diego DPW*

“Thank you for your dedication to this project and for your patience and perseverance!! I know it was a tall order to accelerate the schedule as we did and the fact that we were able to meet the [accelerated] hearing date was no small feat indeed!!”

*Greg Wade, City Manager, City of Solana Beach*





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 [www.WeAreHarris.com](http://www.WeAreHarris.com)  [Connect@WeAreHarris.com](mailto:Connect@WeAreHarris.com)  800.827.4901