

Caltrain electrification project lauded by Sierra Club

By: [Will Reisman](#) | 12/13/12 9:46 PM

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Perhaps not surprisingly, Caltrain's \$1.5 billion plan to transition away from diesel vehicles in favor of electrified tracks has garnered kudos from the Sierra Club.

In spring, local, regional and state transportation agencies jointly approved the electrification plan, which will allow Caltrain to run quicker, more efficient service between San Francisco and San Jose while also cutting down on air and noise pollution. Most crucially, the electrification of Caltrain will allow the state's high-speed rail network to be integrated into the Peninsula.



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Full speed ahead: Caltrain approved an electrification plan this year, a project the Sierra Club recognized as one of the 25 best transportation projects in 2012.

With its emphasis on responsible, long-term transit planning, the Caltrain electrification effort caught the eye of the Sierra Club. The venerable environmental organization touted the plan as one of the 25 best transportation projects in 2012.

"Electrification will cut the railroad's operating costs in half by avoiding the purchase of 4.5 million gallons of diesel fuel a year and replacing it with far cheaper and cleaner electricity," said Gladwyn d'Souza, a member of the Sierra Club's local chapter. "It is exactly the kind of infrastructure we need as part of a 21st century transportation system that increases our transportation choices and increases our housing options by enabling transit-oriented development."

Peninsula Assemblyman Jerry Hill, who was instrumental in getting the financing package approved for the electrification project, said the Sierra Club honor was exciting.

"They realized that this will make for a quieter, cleaner and smoother system," said Hill, who will join the state Senate next year. "It will really benefit everyone."

The Sierra Club looked at projects from across the nation in determining the best and worst planning proposals this year. A plan to widen freeway lanes in San Diego County was named one of the 25 worst projects.

Caltrain's project is scheduled to be completed by 2019.

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Read more at the San Francisco Examiner: <http://www.sfexaminer.com/local/transportation/2012/12/caltrain-electrification-project-lauded-sierra-club#ixzz2HKgxgByf>