

Ranchero Road Interchange Project Suffers Fire Loss

On Monday, May 5th, the Ranchero Road Interchange Project was dealt a significant blow when a construction related fire resulted in the loss of the falsework, the temporary support structure used when building the bridge. In the immediate aftermath, San Bernardino County Fire, Caltrans, and the California Highway Patrol acted swiftly to try to save the structure, but it was not possible. We know that the closure of the freeway resulted in significant traffic jams and it was a long and difficult day for commuters.

In order to mitigate the impacts to commuters, work continued around the clock to extinguish the fire and clear debris so that the freeway could be reopened as expeditiously as possible. The Northbound lanes were open by 5:20 pm on May 6th, while the more damaged portion on the southbound side opened later that night at 11:45 pm.

Crews had to close lanes overnight on May 7th on both the northbound and southbound sections near the bridge in order to repair fire-stressed pavement. This work concluded at 6:20 am on May 8th in order to minimize the disruption for morning commuters moving through the area.

The approximate \$59 million Ranchero Road Interchange Project started in January of last year and was scheduled to continue through early 2015. The recent fire that damaged the falsework for bridge construction will inevitably affect the completion date. The delay estimates are yet to be determined.

Crews continue to evaluate the remaining elements of the falsework in order to determine a strategy to resume construction. The San Bernardino Associated Governments appreciates the public's patience during this time as we develop this plan, but know that we are committed to resuming construction as soon as possible to complete this important project for the residents of Hesperia and the greater Victor Valley.

Ultimately, the new interchange will connect Mariposa Road and Caliente Road to Interstate 15 with a full-service interchange. Ranchero Road will consist of three lanes in each direction along with additional turn lanes at the freeway ramp connections and intersections with two realigned frontage roads.

