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DISTRICT 10 INTRODUCES SAM, WHO IS HELPING CALTRANS ELIMINATE LITTER & DEBRIS FROM CALIFORNIA HIGHWAYS

SAN JOAQUIN COUNTY – Litter is a glaring problem on California highways, as well as on surface streets, parks and other once-green parcels across the state. Caltrans District 10 and Clean California are determined to make the Golden State green once again!

Caltrans District 10, serving the Northern San Joaquin Valley and Sierra Nevada, is working closely with Clean California, our partnering city and county agencies and Adopt-A-Highway volunteers, to remove litter from highways across the region.

We also have our own maintenance crews on the roadway, plucking bottles and cans, fast-food wrappers, cardboard and other items.

Now we have another tool in this battle against blight: Caltrans has created a program to hire entry-level maintenance workers (Service Assistant Maintenance, or SAM).

District 10 already has one of these crews on the job. They have been busy scouring State Route 99 and other highways in Stockton this winter, creating a better visual for folks who are driving through the region or coming to the Northern San Joaquin Valley to visit family.

"We're focused on litter removal and we're already seeing the impact along Stockton highways," said Sam Sherman, Acting District 10 Clean California Coordinator. "Working with our partners and the public, we are targeting areas of chronic blight. As we add crews, we'll see the positive impact as we remove trash and litter across the region."

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The Clean California campaign – committing more than \$1 billion to litter removal and related beautification projects – is funding the SAM program. Job creation is a key element of Clean California, which will create more than 10,000 jobs over three years.

In addition to our crew in Stockton, District 10 is scheduled to hire another 16 SAM workers in early 2022. When the program is at full capacity, District 10 will have 23 dedicated positions focused on bringing the beauty back to our highways.

SAM positions make it possible for people with minimal work experience to qualify for a full-time position, one that can lead to a career. These jobs are intended for at-risk youth, people re-entering society following incarceration and the homeless, and District 10 is partnering with Ready To Work in Stockton to expand our maintenance workforce.

“This is about creating a career opportunity, not just providing a short-term job with a paycheck,” Sherman noted. “We’re focused on improving the lives of people. A young person lacking a diploma, a person without housing, a person released from incarceration... we’re providing opportunities to get on the right track.”

Creating entry-level jobs with a career path, while making California beautiful again! District 10 is adding SAM crews with the goal of lifting struggling individuals and putting them in positions where they can succeed and prosper. With the arrival of new workers as we enter 2022, District 10 will also have SAM crews based in Tracy and Merced.

“When we hear from our partners and the public that they are concerned about the litter buildup on state highways, we try to respond in the best way possible,” said Roger Ingram, the highway maintenance supervisor overseeing Clean California in District 10. “By having crews focused on trash and litter removal, we can respond quickly to troubled areas – while also addressing our daily litter commitments.”



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