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Wednesday, August 4th, 2004

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Suit filed by Sierra Club over ballot measure on half-cent sales tax in San Bernardino County

The Associated Press

Last Updated: August 4, 2004, 04:25:16 AM PDT

SAN BERNARDINO, Calif. (AP) - An environmental group has filed a lawsuit to prevent an extension of a voter-approved, half-cent sales tax that may cause more urban sprawl in **San Bernardino** County.

A local chapter of the **Sierra Club** filed the lawsuit Tuesday in Superior Court and claims a **measure** scheduled to be on the November ballot violates state law because an environmental study hasn't been completed to determine how detrimental hundreds of road projects would be.

The **Sierra Club** seeks to have the **measure** taken off the ballot or voided if two-thirds of voters pass the tax extension.

Officials estimate the **measure** would raise about \$5.9 billion for local transportation projects over its 30-year life. Another **measure**, which expires in 2010, has paid for about \$1 billion in road improvements since it was approved by voters in 1989.

Some of the road projects included in the **measure** include widening parts of Interstate 10 and Interstate 15. But critics said the details of the road projects are not specific enough.

"They don't tell us what all these projects are," said Allen Bartleman, the chairman of the local **Sierra Club** chapter. "They say it may be these, but they don't limit it to those."

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