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## California Hydrogen Car Owners Association (CHCOA) Proton Monthly September 2024

September 30, 2024

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### First Meeting of the Capitol and Northern CA CHCOA members!

**Henry Jepson, Iwatani Operations Manager  
to be Guest Speaker**

You are cordially invited to the home of fellow CHCOA member Tim McHargue, 2729 Marty Way, Sacramento, CA on the evening of Thursday, Oct. 10 from 6:00 to 8:00. This will be a chance for us to meet Henry Jepson, the new Operations Manager for Iwatani. He'll be available to discuss the new West Sac station reliability project and Iwatani's plans, in general. Light refreshments will be served.

Please RSVP to: [timothymchargue@cs.com](mailto:timothymchargue@cs.com);  
916-448-8707 home; 916-531-3109 cell (appreciated but not required).

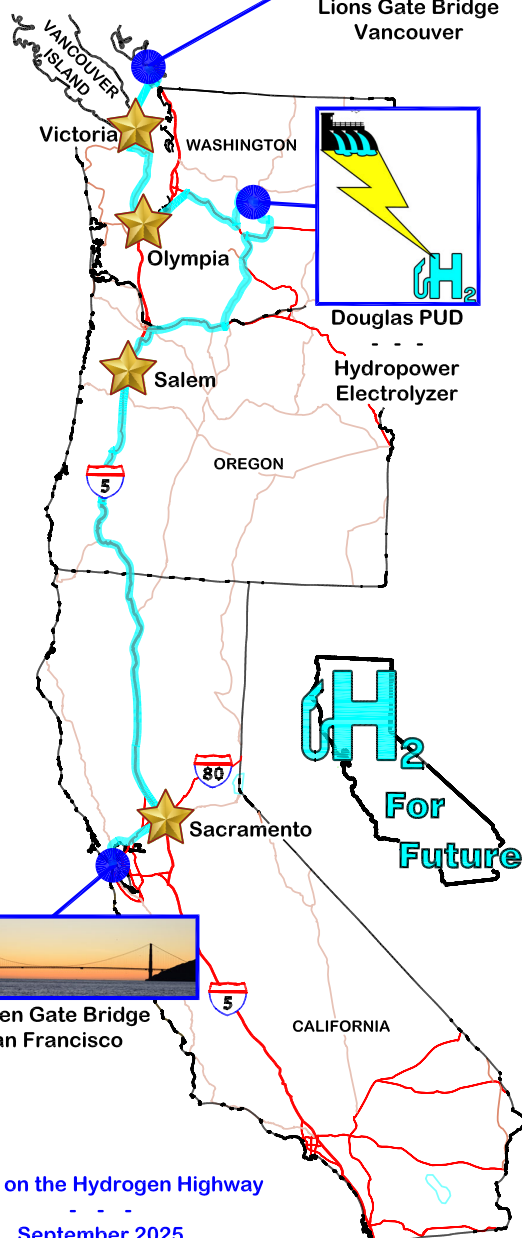
Hope to see you there!

California Hydrogen Car  
Owners Assn

- - - -  
- Water to Water -



Lions Gate Bridge  
Vancouver



Golden Gate Bridge  
San Francisco

A Trip on the Hydrogen Highway

September 2025  
(Preliminary Route - 9/2024)



# A Visit to the Toyota North American Hydrogen Headquarters, aka 'The Skunk Works'

By Steve Mirkin

“The Skunk Works”? Isn’t that the name of Lockheed - Martin’s super-secret location that developed such mind-blowing aircraft like the SR-71 and so on? Well, yes. And as you read on, you will understand why I call the tech center by that name (which it isn’t).

I contacted Jackie Birdsall, Senior Engineering manager for the facility via email (obtained from Bobbie and Greg Cane) about a visit to the Toyota North American Hydrogen Headquarters (H2HQ) and she replied that it would be possible to do this. I knew of Jackie from numerous YouTube videos (not just for cat fanciers, I might add) and saw a number of them before I even purchased my 2022 Mirai. It was those videos that showed me the beauty of the Mirai, how it works, the simplicity of refueling it (a major reason for the Mirai vs. BEV) and so on.

But I wanted to learn more. So, by contacting Jackie and obtaining an invitation to visit the facility, I was ready to go. The facility is located in a residential area, across the street from a public school, so it seemed like any other location. A security guard met me at the entrance, and I was told where to go to enter the building. Since Bobbie and Greg had visited it once before, I knew that security precautions were in place, and I was not surprised to see my phone camera lenses covered and the need to sign an NDA (Non-Disclosure Agreement).

Finally, I was good to go and was greeted first by Alex Sanchez, Principal Engineer for Fuel Cell Integration Research & Development (whew). He began my tour of this amazing facility.

Now, yes, I did sign an NDA, but you know what? We Hydrogen car owners are a rebellious breed. We go against the norm. So, with that written, I am going to share with you some of the amazing things I saw at the Toyota H2HQ...bring on the attorneys!

First there was:

\_\_\_\_\_.

And then there was:

\_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

After that, Jackie joined us on the tour and I was shown behind closed and secured doors:


\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.

But the really amazing thing I was shown was:

|||||

|||||.

Can you believe it? Truly amazing stuff. When the tour was over, I thanked Jackie and Alex for such an extensive tour of the facility. I can say that they are truly proud of the fuel tanks in our Mirai cars. And then I asked the final question: will there be a Gen 3 Mirai? To paraphrase Jackie, she said, “you know I can’t speculate about future projects”. A test to see if she could keep a secret and she passed with flying colors.



*A Couple of Pieces of Tape  
Can't Stop me!*



*A Couple of Pieces of Tape  
Can't Stop me!*

I came away with the knowledge that Toyota is truly committed to the future of Hydrogen for our light, medium and heavy-duty vehicles. Seeing the Kenworth trucks parked in the lot for all the world to see with Fuel Cell written on the cabs lets me know that one day, we will see them on the Interstate freeways delivering products we need with fuel efficiency and cleaning the air we breathe with every mile.

Jackie did acknowledge that this is a global operation, that the creation and development of fuel cell cars includes the collaboration of other carmakers like Hyundai, Honda, BMW and others. This leaves me with great hope for the future.

And the future is Hydrogen!



## Join us on the Hydrogen Highway - September 2025



## Sacramento, CA



**Salem, OR**



## Olympia, WA

**Victoria, BC**



Thank you to all of you who wrote the Governor asking him to sign the four transportation hydrogen bills that we are supporting. 3 of the 4 were signed by the Governor. Sadly, one was vetoed.

Bill Number	Author	Signed by Governor
<a href="#">SB 347</a>	Newman	9/25/2024
<a href="#">SB 983</a>	Wahab	See Below
<a href="#">SB 1418</a>	Archuleta	9/25/2024
<a href="#">SB 1420</a>	Caballero	9/25/2024

SB 983 was vetoed by the Governor on 9/22/24. Reasons given are provided [here](#).

## Hydrogen Snippets



### CTP Investment Plan and Advisory Committee Meeting

Back in June, after the publication of the first draft of the 2024-2025 CTP Investment Plan, **over 100 supporters** of transportation hydrogen wrote comments to the [docket](#) asking for a more fair treatment of hydrogen in California's green energy future. Sadly, that outpouring of support does not seem to have made an improvement to what is proposed in the [Revised Plan](#). Tomorrow, Oct. 1 beginning at 9 a.m., the Advisory Committee will meet to discuss the Revised Plan.

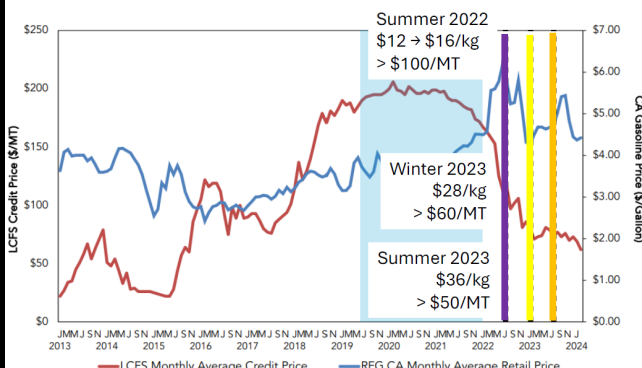
Directions for joining the Zoom meeting are [here](#).

Thank you all, for your ongoing support of this important work!



(cont.)

### A Call to FirstElement Fuel about LCFS



To better understand why hydrogen fuel prices have spiked to such high levels, the CHCOA Exec. Committee contacted (by Zoom) Matt Miyasato of FirstElement Fuel (much more about this next month). For this snippet, one telling graph is included. As noted by the red line, beginning in 2021, the LCFS credit price tanked. As LCFS dropped, the H2 price increased to \$16/kg (purple line) then to \$28/kg (yellow) and now to \$36/kg (orange).

There should be another opportunity to comment to CARB in the next few weeks about LCFS levels.

### Chevron's Vacaville H2 Station

We stopped by the new Chevron hydrogen station in Vacaville last Wednesday (9/25/24) and had



a chance to talk to the Cavendish construction crew. It sounds like the station is near opening, but the challenge now may be in accessing available hydrogen gaseous supply. Wishing them well; when station operators succeed, we succeed.

## CLASSIFIEDS

We can use your help:

If you would like to write a short article for the Proton Monthly or have current information about the status of an H2 station construction (preferably with a photo), please contact us. Thanks!

- [greg@h2tonps.org](mailto:greg@h2tonps.org) - [bobbie@h2tonps.org](mailto:bobbie@h2tonps.org)

### Join us on the Hydrogen Highway - September 2025

