

Weekly ReCAP June 19, 2020

Next CPC meeting July 6, 2020 now starting at 3:00 p.m. to 5 p.m. Until the COVID-19 is resolved in our community, the CPC meetings will be held remotely by ZOOM and/or conference calling. To participate please watch for connection information from Jenny. New members are welcome, and members only will be able to participate in any closed session

BOS- June 23 meeting- Closed Session Items below- rest of agenda available on county website.

CLOSED SESSION AGENDA

33. Conference with Real Property Negotiator pursuant to Government Code §54956.8 - Instruction to negotiator regarding potential purchase, price, and terms of payment for the following property affected by the Dogtown Road over French Gulch Project; Agency Negotiator: Monument ROW; Negotiating Party and Respective Property APN; Board action:
- a. Thomas M. Tryon and Denise E. Tryon, Trustees, Thomas M. Tryon and Denise E. Tryon Family Trust as to APN 056-002-010
 - b. Russell P. Stephens 3/11ths sole and separate property, Sharon P. Miller-Dunn 3/11ths sole and separate property, Larry E. Ponte 5/22nds undivided interest, and Mary Helen Ponte 5/22nds undivided interest, as to APN 056-002-011
 - c. James C. Bankosh and Cal Leigh Bankosh, Joint Tenants as to APN 056-002-002
 - d. Rodney V. Sanders and Savannah L. Tindell, Joint Tenants as to APN 056-002-001
 - e. Denise Orr, Trustee, 2000 Denise Orr Revocable Trust as to APN 056-002-007
 - f. Bartow T. Rush and Tina A. Rush, Joint Tenants as to APN 056-002-003
34. Conference with Real Property Negotiator pursuant to Government Code §54956.8 - Instruction to negotiator regarding potential purchase, price, and terms of payment for the following property affected by the Dogtown Road over Indian Creek Project; Agency Negotiator: Monument ROW; Negotiating Party and Respective Property APN; Board action:
- a. Deirdre Dalton, Trustee, Deirdre Dalton Revocable Trust as to APN 038-012-034
35. Conference with Real Property Negotiator pursuant to Government Code §54956.8 - Instruction to negotiator regarding potential purchase, price, and terms of payment for the following property affected by the Dogtown Road over San Domingo Project; Agency Negotiator: Monument ROW; Negotiating Party and Respective Property APN; Board action:
- a. Anita Valente Nyland, Trustee, Walter Valente Trust as to APN 056-001-018 and 024 Pursuant to Government Code Section 54956.9 (d)(1): conference with legal counsel re: existing litigation; Michael Scott Taylor, et al., v. County of Calaveras, United States District Court – Eastern District of California - Case No. 1:18-CV-00760-DAD-BAM;
36. Board action

37. Conference with Labor Negotiator – Pursuant to Government Code 54957.6, County designated labor negotiator Judy Hawkins regarding employee organizations; Board action
- a. Calaveras County Sheriff's Management Unit
 - b. Calaveras County Public Safety Employees Association
 - c. Calaveras County Deputy Sheriff's Association
38. Pursuant to Government Code Section 54956.9 (d)(1): conference with legal counsel re: existing litigation; Calaveras Planning Coalition v. Calaveras Board of Supervisors, et al. Calaveras County Superior Court Case No. 19CV44471; Board action:

Meeting Notice:

FYI, as per Peter Maurer, the VS Town Center Connectivity Plan will be heard at the Planning Commission June 25. The plan is posted on the CCOG website:

<https://calacog.org/valley-springs-town-center-connectivity-plan/>

Colleen

From Colleen – (thank you!)

The June 25 Planning Commission meeting has significant items on the agenda. See summary below.

Agenda and staff reports can be accessed at this link:

<https://calaverasgov.us/Meeting-Calendar/ModuleID/3891/ItemID/731/mct/EventDetails#gsc.tab=0>

(re-check the planning page for posting of Cannabis Cultivation Ordinance Amendment and second addendum to the EIR).

Planning Commission Meeting

Start Date/Time:

Thursday, June 25, 2020 9:00 AM

AGENDA

- [2019-052 TSTM for Sierra Parkway Properties](#) - **Continued from 5-28-20**
- [2019-051 Zoning Amendment for Naber/Daly](#) - **Continued from 5-28-20**
- [2019-085 Zoning Amendment for Terrance Strange](#)
- [Valley Springs Town Center Connectivity Plan](#)

•2020-009 Cannabis Cultivation Ordinance Amendment - Will upload when available

•[2020-01 Appeal of Code Compliance Citation - Pismo](#) - **Continued from 5-28-20**

RCRC – The Barbed Wire – June 12, 2020

Bi-Partisan Legislation Promises Direct Federal Aid for Smaller Counties

Last week, Representative Paul Cook (R-San Bernardino) introduced the *Coronavirus County Relief and Stability Act* ([H.R. 7090](#)), allowing every county to receive direct federal assistance amidst the coronavirus and reauthorizing the federal Payments in Lieu of Taxes (PILT) program for five years.

Co-sponsored by Representative Salud O. Carbajal (D-Santa Barbara), Representative Doug LaMalfa (R-Butte), and Representative Jimmy Panetta (D-Monterey), the bi-partisan legislation would provide a \$1 million base to each and every county and allocate funds above the \$1 million base relative to the overall population of each county. Furthermore, the legislation provides much-needed flexible aid, which can be spent on a wide range of purposes, including backfilling revenue losses as well as efforts to respond to the outbreak and address other budget shortfalls.

In addition, the *Coronavirus County Relief and Stability Act* would authorize the federal PILT program in Fiscal Year 2021 through Fiscal Year 2026. The federal PILT program is vital for many of California’s counties, particularly rural counties that contain significant federal land, where these funds are a sizeable share of the county’s general fund budget and are used to provide critical services. Unfortunately, many counties have had to use general fund dollars to support COVID-19 pandemic responses.

RCRC strongly supports this legislation which reauthorizes PILT to counties, and ensures that counties will receive significant funding to address the outbreak as well as recover once the public health emergency has passed. Read RCRC’s letter of support [here](#). Anticipating that these provisions may be incorporated into another coronavirus relief package rather than continue as a stand-alone piece of legislation, RCRC staff will be working through our federal advocates and our partners at the National Association of Counties to ensure a second round of federal funding – directly dedicated to low-population counties - is enacted.

Bill of the Week: AB 2421 (Quirk) - Telecommunications Streamlining Permits

RCRC has offered its support for the recently-amended Assembly Bill 2421 authored by Assembly Member Bill Quirk (D- Hayward). AB 2421 would set forth a streamlined local permitting process for siting back-up power generators on macro cellular tower sites through January 1, 2024.

Specifically, AB 2421 provides that siting an emergency standby generator that meets specified standards, proposed at an existing permitted macro cell tower site, is subject only to a ministerial permitting process. Additionally, a local agency that receives a permit application to install an emergency standby generator is required to approve or deny the application with 60 days of submittal of the application, or the application will be deemed approved.

The unprecedented number of public safety power shut off (PSPS) events in the 2019 wildfire season brought to the forefront the systemic infrastructure weaknesses that exist in both the electricity grid, and the telecommunication systems. Many communities, especially those in rural fire-prone areas, were left without a reliable means of communication in case of an emergency. RCRC believes the streamlined local permitting process will help telecommunication providers effectively and expeditiously deploy back-up power generation to cell towers to mitigate loss of wireless communication services during a power outage.

The recent amendment, suggested by RCRC and accepted by the author, would explicitly require, as a condition of permit approval, that a project must comply with all applicable laws. As amended, AB 2421 would maintain the ability of local governments to protect its residents by only approving projects that meet applicable health and safety standards. RCRC's letter can be accessed [here](#). For more information, please contact Tracy Rhine, RCRC Legislative Advocate, at (916) 447-4806 or trhine@rcrcnet.org.

CPUC Issues Report on 2019 PSPS Events

This week, the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) issued a long-awaited [report](#) on 2019 public safety power shutoffs (PSPS) events and outlined a number of recommendations. While the CPUC's Safety and Enforcement Division's (SED) report "provides an initial assessment" of utility notifications, communications, and mitigation actions, it does NOT evaluate the reasonableness of the utilities' decisions to shut off power or their conduct during the PSPS events. The SED noted that such an evaluation would require a far more extensive inquiry than is currently available.

The SED noted that all investor-owned utilities (IOUs) ineffectively coordinated with public safety partners, inadequately considered access and functional needs (AFN) communities, and failed to comprehensively consider public safety risks caused by PSPS events.

The report makes the following recommendations for future CPUC PSPS guidelines:

- Clarify identification of public safety partners.
- Clarify when notices are required, rather than recommended, to be provided to public safety partners, critical facilities, and the general public.
- Require priority notification to transmission-level customers.
- Require utilities Emergency Operations Center staff to have emergency management experience or training.
- Require utilities to coordinate with local and tribal governments to proactively identify and share lists of medical baseline customers.

- Require utilities to develop partnerships with local organizations to improve outreach and assistance for AFN communities.
- Require coordination with locals to comprehensively identify critical facilities and infrastructure.
- Require coordination with local governments and community-based organizations to deploy community resource centers and mobile assistance vehicles.
- Require utilities to report on projects that improve situational awareness, including weather stations and high-resolution cameras.
- Allow public safety partners to opt out of some utility notifications.
- Increase and improve the information contained in utility post-PSPS event reports and improve their consistency across all utilities.

The SED report recognizes that utilities have room to improve efforts to minimize public impacts through CRCs, but somewhat troublingly, also urges the CPUC to recognize that resources to mitigate PSPS impacts were also provided by local governments. This comment fails to recognize that locals were often left with no alternative to dedicate resources to mitigate PSPS impacts because they were left with few other choices in the absence of utility mitigation efforts.

The report relies heavily on utility reports and comments made in CPUC proceedings by RCRC, CSAC, and the Joint Local Governments (Kern, Marin, Mendocino, Napa, Nevada, San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, and Sonoma Counties and the City of Santa Rosa). RCRC has been supportive of efforts to require the CPUC to evaluate last year's PSPS events and determine the reasonableness of the utilities' actions in initiating and implementing those events.

CPUC Issues Proposed Decision Requiring Wireless Companies to Increase PSPS Planning and Resilience

On June 11, the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) issued a [Proposed Decision](#) requiring wireless companies to take several actions to improve system planning and resiliency to maintain customer service during a PSPS event.

Last year's late-October PSPS events had a devastating impact on communications networks, with 57% of cell towers losing power in Marin County, followed by 39% in Calaveras County and over 19% in each Humboldt, Lake, Napa, Santa Cruz, and Sonoma Counties. Those outages impaired the ability for many residents to receive emergency notifications and access 9-1-1 services and also frustrated local emergency response efforts.

In particular, the Proposed Decision requires wireless providers to:

- Submit emergency operations plans to the CPUC, CalOES, and local emergency response agencies and include plans for communicating with the public during disasters and outages impacting their networks.
- Adopt a 72-hour backup power requirement to maintain minimum service and coverage during a disaster or power outage in a high fire risk area.

- File a comprehensive communications resiliency plan that outlines how the provider will maintain a minimum level of service during a disaster or power outage, including through use of backup power, system redundancy, network hardening, temporary facilities, preparedness planning, etc.

The CPUC will formally consider this Proposed Decision at its July hearing. While this Proposed Decision only applies to wireless companies, the CPUC indicated that it will be adopting similar requirements on wireline communications providers in a subsequent proposal.

RCRC is a party to the CPUC's Emergency Disaster Relief Program proceeding and urged the adoption of communications system resiliency improvements in [comments](#) filed on March 26. RCRC is similarly supporting Senate Bill 431 (McGuire), which would require telecommunication providers to have backup power systems for their infrastructure in high-fire threat areas. View RCRC's support letter [here](#).

California Transportation Infrastructure Projects Supported by SB 1 Funds

In 2017, the Legislature enacted the Road and Repair Accountability Act (Senate Bill 1- Beall), which addressed increased motor vehicle fees and taxes to improve state and local transportation needs. Through voter action, SB 1 funds are constitutionally protected so they can only be used for transportation. A collection of resource documents released last week by Transportation California highlight how state and local agencies are utilizing those funds to make road improvements. Transportation California reports that:

- 8,000 state and local transportation projects are already underway
- 68,000 jobs are supported annually
- \$18 billion in economic activity is generated each year

For local information, Transportation California has prepared reports on the projects funded by SB 1 and compiled them by each of the State's 80 Assembly Districts. A district-by-district report is available [here](#).

RCRC lent its support for SB 1 as many RCRC member counties recognized the perilous condition of state and local road infrastructure and the need to rehabilitate transportation assets at that time in order to avoid dramatic cost increases in the future.

RCRC Joins Effort to Provide Funds for Drinkable Water in the Town of Paradise

On Monday, RCRC joined voices with a coalition of resource and labor advocacy groups to urge Governor Newsom to maintain the second year of funding for the Paradise Irrigation District (PID). This effort follows a funding allocation by the Newsom Administration in 2019 to restore water services in the aftermath of the Camp Fire of 2018 which devastated PID's ability to provide water services in the Town of Paradise. The hard work of IBEW and its sister labor organizations has helped to ensure the second-year allocation is included in the Legislature's current budget proposal. The vital

funding must survive the difficult budget decisions ahead in the coming weeks as the Legislature and the Governor enact a State Budget for 2020-2021 by July 1.

PID provides clean drinking water to the homes and business within the Town of Paradise, located in Butte County. Due to the destruction of the Camp Fire, PID was unable to remain operational and the Town of Paradise was left without a drinkable water source. Last year, the Newsom Administration decided to allocate two years of backfill funding to PID to allow it to remain operational while it works on a long-term plan to become economically self-sufficient. Without the second year of funding, PID will need to declare bankruptcy and terminate many employees. Citing state budget difficulties during the May Revise, second-year funding was proposed to be eliminated. The collapse of PID would undermine the area's recovery and would be disastrous for the Town of Paradise. Read the coalition letter [here](#).

[Congress Takes Steps to Fund the Land and Water Conservation Fund](#)

Last week, Representative Joe Cunningham (D-South Carolina) and Representative TJ Cox (D-Kings) introduced the *Great American Outdoors Act* ([H.R.7092](#)), a bipartisan effort to fully and permanently fund the Land and Water Conservation Fund. The second key component of the legislation provides nearly \$20 billion to address priority repair needs in the National Park Service and other federal land management agencies. In March, President Trump [called](#) on Congress to send this legislation to his desk to be signed into law. Furthermore, he has recently called upon the U.S. Senate to pass this effort. The legislation has drawn the support of more than [900 organizations across the country](#), including local businesses, the recreation industry, veterans groups, conservation organizations, tourism and travel associations, sportsmen, and infrastructure groups. More importantly, earlier in the week, the U.S. Senate voted 80-17 to invoke cloture, thus limiting debate on the Senate's version of the *Great American Outdoors Act* ([S.3422](#)) which enjoys broad bi-partisan support. This sets the stage for action on the Senate Floor to adopt this bill. It is expected that the House of Representatives will expedite the consideration of the Great American Outdoors Act in order to have the legislation on President Trump's desk in July.

[Senator Feinstein Prepares Legislation to Address Reform of the United States Postal Service](#)

Senator Dianne Feinstein is currently in the process of crafting legislation that would authorize the United States Postal Service (USPS) to enter into agreements with any agency of a state, local, or tribal government to provide services at a USPS location if those services provide enhanced value to the public. Examples of services that would be included are: hunting, fishing, and trapping licenses; DMV services; land use applications; and recreation permits. The legislation is designed to benefit rural areas, particularly, those that do not have physical locations for state services but do have post office locations. RCRC has conveyed its support for this effort to reform the USPS (it continues to have financial challenges) that preserves access for rural communities. Read RCRC's letter [here](#).

[Updated Railroad Safety App Available for Key County Personnel/Emergency Responders](#)

Effective response in a railroad emergency depends on access to reliable, timely information. If the train conductor cannot be located, the AskRail mobile app gives first responders an alternative resource in the palm of their hand. By entering a railcar number in the mobile interface, key county emergency personnel can identify if a car or train is carrying hazardous material or other freight that poses a risk before determining how to safely respond to an incident.

Other features of the recently-updated AskRail app include:

- full integration with North American Class I railroads;
- a mapping feature to identify points of interest and isolation zones;
- access to the field guide to tank cars, providing the types and markings of tank cars that carry hazardous and non-hazardous materials;
- emergency contact information for all Class I Railroads and Amtrak; and
- a list of the top 125 hazardous materials to help hazmat managers and emergency responders design their training strategy.

The AskRail app, available for qualified emergency responders, is included as part of standard emergency responder training from Class I railroads, and railroads can offer the app to known emergency responders along their routes. To learn more about the AskRail app, visit the website [here](#).

BULLETIN BOARD

Announcements regarding hearings, grants, and public comment notices of importance to California's rural counties.

COVID-Related Extensions Possible on CDBG Annual Performance Reports

On Monday, the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) announced that the State Community Development Block Grant Program (CDBG) for non-entitlement jurisdictions requires all CDBG Recipients to submit Annual Performance Reports (APRs) documenting any activity that occurred during fiscal year 2019/2020. The reporting period covers July 1, 2019 through June 30, 2020. APR documents must be completed and submitted via email to CDBG.Reports@hcd.ca.gov by Friday, July 31, 2020. **If the deadline can't be met due to circumstances caused by COVID-19, please [email Francisco Arnaiz](#) outlining the reasons for requesting an extension and the date you expect to submit the report.** Additional details are available in the HCD announcement [here](#).

Upcoming Hearing of the California Tax Credit Allocation Committee (CTCAC) to Adopt Changes to Affordable Housing Tax Credits in Fire Disaster Counties

On Wednesday, June 17th at 1pm, the California Tax Credit Allocation Committee (CTCAC) is expected to consider and adopt finalized regulation changes to Affordable Housing Tax Credits in fire disaster counties per federal legislation, the Further Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2020. The final proposed regulations can be viewed [here](#), and the CTCAC teleconference agenda with call in-details can be viewed [here](#).

Previously, California State Treasurer Fiona Ma announced CTCAC's intent to clarify the regulations to ensure these disaster tax credits are distributed to areas hardest hit by recent wildfires, see [here](#). Last year, federal legislation from Congressman Mike Thompson (D-Napa) provided \$100 million in affordable housing tax credits for California counties in 2017 and 2018 disaster areas. These funds are designed to assist rebuilding efforts in communities located in Butte, Lake, Los Angeles, Mendocino, Napa, Nevada, Orange, San Diego, Santa Barbara, Shasta, Sonoma, Ventura and Yuba counties which suffered devastating losses due to the Camp Fire, Tubbs Fire, Thomas Fire, and Mendocino Complex Fire.

Calaveras Initiates Phased Public Reopening Of Government Offices

By [Tori James](#) /MML Jun 12, 2020

Calaveras County CA – Beginning Monday more county government offices will reopen to the public with COVID-19 protocols in place.

Angels Camp Police also announced on Friday that it has reopened the lobby to the public. The hours are 8:30 a.m. until 5:30 p.m. on weekdays.

According to Calaveras County CAO Al Alt, the first phase of county services being restored will focus on mandatory and high-priority services.

He says many of the more critical services will continue to be provided by appointment only with limitations on the number of citizens allowed in public spaces.

Less critical services as determined by each county government department will continue to be provided electronically and telepathically.

Back in March, as county departments focused on providing mandated services, modifying protocols, largely shifting to electronic communications with some by-appointment interactions to limit the possibility for public exposure of COVID-19.

Alt says as Calaveras and many surrounding counties, continue to move through Stage 2 of the State of California Resiliency Roadmap, local services will consistently align with the various recovery stages in a phased approach.

He adds that It is difficult to anticipate when Calaveras will progress to Stage 3 but for planning purposes, set an anticipated date to restore full in-person services to the public for Monday, July 14. Of course, the date is subject to change based on county and statewide data on disease transmission.

Due to the unique nature of the various services, locations, and office space configurations, each county government department is in the process of assessing how best to implement processes to ensure an effective and safe return to serving the public. For that reason, he says to call ahead to the department you may need services from before heading to the San Andreas Government Center.

Water Recreators Urged To Report Harmful Algal Blooms On Local Waterways

By Tracey Petersen / MML / **Jun 13, 2020**

Sonoma, CA – State water officials are warning that with summer approaching and recreation on the waterways increasing — watch out for harmful algal blooms (HABs) that can make humans sick and even kill pets.

It is a concern echoed by Tuolumne County Environmental Health Officer Rob Kostlivy, “All the waters of California are subject to the algal bloom and that is something that we have seen an uptick in the past several years.”

Last year in July and August samples were taken of an algal bloom that was growing near a log jam in the Middle Fork of the Stanislaus River and also nearby in the New Melones Reservoir. Cyanobacteria, small microbes that live on land and in the water, were found in the algal bloom by a log jam and in the bright green waters of the lake downstream but at lower levels. While harmful toxins were not detected in the blooms, caution advisory signs were posted from the Tuttle town boat ramp all along the river to Camp Nine and the log jam, as reported [here](#).

“We have not been out on the lake yet, but we’re assuming that we will have a similar situation. As the weather heats up, the algal blooms typically start to grow again,” acknowledges Kostlivy.

The freshwater HABs thrive in warm, still waters. Kostlivy indicates that this year with much of the winter snowpack already melted off the mountains the water flow will be minimal, making it conducive for blooms to grow. Currently, his department is keeping an eye on area lakes, rivers, streams, and ponds for any signs of algae growth and they encourage the public to do the same.

“We urge all county residents to look for bright green, blue, or brown or red color on the water that does not look normal, or it looks like there is some type of spill in over the top of it,” instructs Kostlivy. He also details, “It will have a smell to it like rotten eggs or sewer and there could be some dead fish and plants around it.”

Another good way to describe the algal blooms is like paint floating on the water a pictured is in the image box. If that or the aforementioned signs are observed, the public is asked to call the county’s

environmental health department at 209-533-5665. Koslivy explains reporting is key, “It’s extremely important because we are limited in staff and when we can have the public be our eyes and ears out there and can report a situation to us. It at least makes us aware and we can make the correct phone calls and assemble a team to go out and investigate.”

A report can also be filed with the state by clicking [here](#). Last year, there were 240 reports of these algal blooms across the state. So far, 20 counties have filed reports this year. While pictures in the image box taken this week of New Melones show a tint of green, the only Mother Lode county reporting blooms is Alpine. One, reported in mid-May, is in the Indian Creek Reservoir and the other was reported at the end of that month in Red Lake. Both can be viewed along with a map marking all the areas in the state that have had reports filed by clicking [here](#). To get an update anytime on waterways in the region, click [here](#).

When toxins are produced by cyanobacteria, it can harm the environment, people (mostly small children), and even kill pets, wildlife, or livestock. Exposure to it can cause eye irritation, skin rash, mouth ulcers, vomiting, diarrhea, and cold and flu-like symptoms. Most vulnerable are dogs, as they tend to drink while in the water and lick their fur afterward, increasing their risk of exposure and illness. They can experience vomiting or diarrhea, lethargy, abnormal liver function test results, difficulty breathing, foaming at the mouth, muscle twitching, and sometimes death.

The California Water Boards offer these recommend healthy water habits to practice while on the state’s waterways:

- Heed all instructions on posted advisories if present · Avoid algae and scum in the water and on the shore · Keep an eye on children and pets
- If you think a harmful algal bloom is present, do not let pets and other animals go into or drink the water or eat scum/algal accumulations on the shore
- Don’t drink the water or use it for cooking
- Wash yourself, your family and your pets with clean water after water play
- If you catch fish, throw away guts and clean fillets with tap water or bottled water before cooking
- Avoid eating shellfish if you think a harmful algal bloom is present
- Report any suspected or confirmed algal bloom and any related human, animal illness

PG&E Pleads Guilty To 84 Counts Of Involuntary Manslaughter

[By Tori James](#) / MML / Jun 16, 2020

Butte County, CA – The nation’s largest utility admitted to the blood on its hands for causing deadly fires, including one that destroyed a town, by neglecting to properly tend to its equipment.

On Tuesday, outgoing PG&E CEO Bill Johnson traveled from the company's San Francisco headquarters to a Butte County courthouse and pled guilty to 84 felony counts of involuntary manslaughter that occurred as a result of the November 2018 Camp Fire incident that sparked from an aging electrical grid. The blaze, which all but decimated the entire town of Paradise also forced PG&E to initiate bankruptcy proceedings early last year.

Under its negotiated plea agreement with Butte County DA Mike Ramsey, PG&E also pled guilty to one felony count of unlawfully starting a fire.

As Butte County Superior Court Judge Michael Deems read the names of each of the 84 victims as their photos appeared on a courtroom screen Johnson acknowledged the horrific toll that PG&E's history of neglect wrought.

"No words from me could ever reduce the magnitude of that devastation or do anything to repair the damage," Johnson said in a subsequent statement. "I hope the actions taken today bring some measure of peace." A grand jury indictment summary listing the corporate misconduct is forthcoming.

Reshuffled Board To Choose New CEO

Johnson, who was hired about six months after the Camp Fire, plans to step down as CEO on June 30, the same date that the utility hopes to secure a federal judge's approval for its plan to emerge from its second bankruptcy case in 16 years. A mostly new board of directors recently announced by PG&E as part of a deal with the State of California will hire his replacement.

The hearing was set up as a way to publicly shame PG&E for past practices that chose to boost investors' profits over upgrading and maintaining its infrastructure to protect the 16 million people who rely on it for power.

Many of the fire's victims were elderly or disabled. They took desperate measures to save themselves. More than 20 family members of the victims are expected to make statements in court Wednesday. It is anticipated that Deems will formally sentence PG&E Thursday or Friday though no one will be imprisoned for the company's crimes.

PG&E has agreed to pay a maximum fine of \$3.5 million-plus \$500,000 for the cost of the investigation. The deal does not include criminal probation.

Notably, PG&E is on criminal probation until January 2020 for a separate incident involving some of its natural gas lines that in 2010 blew up a neighborhood and killed ten people in San Bruno.

PG&E's bankruptcy case includes \$25.5 billion in settlements to pay for the damages from the Camp Fire and other deadly Northern California blazes caused by its equipment in 2017. There is also \$13.5 billion in funds earmarked for wildfire victims.

If its bankruptcy plan is approved, PG&E and other investor-owned utilities that have bought into the state's wildfire fund may tape it to help pay for wildfire damages. The fire season is shaping up to be busy one due to unusually dry winter weather and a forecast calling for a hot, dry summer with offshore wind events generating more high fire danger days.

Fire information is located under the “Community” tab or keyword: [fire](#)
Local Burn Day information is [here](#). If you see breaking news send us a photo at news@clarkebroadcasting.com.

Local hospitals have suffered financial blow during pandemic

- [by Dakota Morlan](#) / The Calaveras Enterprise
- Jun 17, 2020

As local hospitals begin to resume “business as usual,” some are reeling from the financial impact of stalling non-emergency services over the past several months.

Though these services were halted in anticipation of an oncoming wave of COVID-19 patients, Calaveras County has seen 26 confirmed cases thus far and only one reported hospitalization.

Since March, hospital staff have been stockpiling supplies and working to sustain adequate capacity and staffing levels in preparation for a worst-case scenario.

“Hospitals have stepped up to respond to this unprecedented public health crisis,” Mark Twain Medical Center (MTMC) spokesperson Nicki Stevens told the Enterprise on June 1. “We had to postpone most scheduled services and procedures, which has caused some significant financial challenges.”

According to External Communications Manager Chad Burns, layoffs have not been imposed due to the coronavirus within the Dignity Health system, which operates MTMC.

MTMC in San Andreas is now resuming some operations, with guidance from national health authorities. Its affiliated clinics in San Andreas, Angels Camp, Copperopolis and Arnold are now open, by appointment only.

“We won’t be able to provide every service right away,” Stevens said. “Rather, this will be a gradual process, with the most urgent procedures being prioritized using a process created by our clinical teams. Serving our communities is our calling, and safely resuming these procedures is one of the best ways we can help our communities heal. ”

At Adventist Health Sonora, approximately 100 employees were laid off due to staffing levels needing to match current patient volume, according to spokesperson Karen O’Brien. Other reductions have included flexing staff, furloughing positions, reducing hours or salaries and permanently reducing positions.

“Like hospitals throughout the nation, we suffered significant losses due to temporarily stopping non-emergency surgeries, office visits and diagnostic services as we prepared for an expected surge of COVID patients,” O’Brien said on May 29. “We have since resumed many of these services with additional safety measures, but visits are still far below what is expected for this time of year.”

Tuolumne County has seen some of the fewest case numbers in the state, with just nine cases reported and no hospitalizations.

Adventist Health has continued to provide medical, dental and vision benefits during employee layoffs, O'Brien said, though it remains uncertain when some may return to work as patient volume remains low.

"We are making every effort to minimize the impacts of this pandemic on our associates and provide them with support," O'Brien said. "We are working diligently to bring associates back to work as we experience increases in patient volume and are prepared to call staff back as soon as the needs arise, whether we need to address a surge of COVID-19 cases or meet other patient and community needs."

Tourism-based businesses start to see rebound of visitors

- [By Davis Harper](#) / The Calaveras Enterprise /
- Jun 18, 2020

tourism industry has been defibrillated.

On June 12, short-term lodging, restaurants, bars and wineries were given the go-ahead to do business again under restrictive state guidelines to keep visitors and locals safe.

The Highway 4 corridor had already been flooded with out-of-towners over the past few months, and local business owners are forecasting a busy summer.

Sierra Nevada Adventure Co. (SNAC) had the "best May in the history of our business," with outdoor enthusiasts flocking to the county to backpack, rock-climb, kayak and paddle board, owner Shawn Seal told the Enterprise Tuesday.

Seal said he thinks most of the new customers are wanting to escape more congested areas.

"Any sporting goods stores helping people get out and away from crowds and into nature have been slammed," he said.

Seal and other business owners the Enterprise spoke with said Arnold's population has increased as well, since second homeowners are choosing the area over their primary residences.

"We're hearing it every day for various reasons," Seal said. "Even while we were closed, we knew that Arnold had a lot more residents because kids aren't in school, parents aren't going to work ... might as well be up here."

Some recreation areas in the county have been crowded in recent months, drawing concerns that COVID-19 could've been spreading more easily.

The Natural Bridges Trailhead in Vallecito was closed earlier this year, since its narrow cave walls make social distancing impractical, said New Melones Lake Park Manager Cynthia Davenport.

But closing the gate didn't keep large crowds from coming in recent months, Davenport said, adding that trailhead staff reported that someone had cut a hole in a nearby fence to access the trail.

The bureau opened the bathrooms because people were using the ground, Davenport said.

She said the trailhead could be open by next week, pending approval from the federal Bureau of Reclamation Office.

Camping and day use at the Tuttle town Recreation Area on New Melones could be open next week as well, while the Glory Hole Recreation Area could be closed for at least another month due to needed maintenance on water conveyance infrastructure.

The Stanislaus National Forest reopened the Lake Alpine complex and Spicer Campground on June 12 for "dispersed camping." All but one seasonal road in the Calaveras Ranger District have been opened in recent weeks as well.

The county has seen an uptick in visitors since June 12, with short-term rentals booking stays again.

Cedar Creek Realty – manager of about 90 vacation rentals in Arnold, Murphys and Dorrington – will be among those back in business this weekend.

Co-owner and broker Kelley Stellar said the phone has been ringing off the hook since vacation rentals were given the green light to reopen.

"It's been crazy," Stellar said in a phone interview Tuesday. "I think the whole summer is going to be that way. A lot of people aren't wanting to get on airplanes."

Stellar said Cedar Creek Realty has had to make a number of costly changes to adjust to the new norms.

All of its staff are now equipped with personal protective equipment, and the company has spent thousands of dollars on new mattress comforters that can be washed at high temperatures after each stay.

She corroborated that some Bay Area-based property owners Cedar Creek works with have opted to move back to their second homes in Calaveras County rather than continue renting out.

Murphys Vacation Rentals started booking visitors on June 12, owner Anna Gutierrez told the Enterprise Tuesday.

Before the pandemic, the company was managing about 27 rental properties between Murphys and Angels Camp. Since that time, some property owners are no longer renting, and others have sold.

"We have several owners that are nervous to open back up, so they're still holding their homes for their own personal use to wait and see how things go," Gutierrez said. "I think it was a scare to a lot of homeowners that rent to AirBnB. They had mortgages and utilities to pay. I'm wondering if we will end up seeing a lot of second homeowners rent their homes long-term instead of short-term."

Gutierrez estimated that her income for 2020 will be about half of what it was last year, due to three months of lost sales; sunken rent, utilities and mortgage payments; and costly procedures to meet new sanitation requirements.

She said she was able to hire back cleaning staff, but one was hesitant to return to work due to potential health risks.

Some of her staff received unemployment checks within two weeks of losing their jobs, while others are still waiting, Gutierrez said.

Calaveras Visitors Bureau (CVB) Executive Director Martin Huberty was back in the office off Main Street in Angels Camp for the first time in three months Monday.

Governed by a nine-member board of directors from various business sectors, the non-profit association promotes tourism in Calaveras County.

A 2019 SMG Consulting report estimated that for every dollar the CVB spends, it generates \$56 for the county – a testament to the county’s reliance on tourists as a steady revenue source. Visitors to the CVB’s GoCalaveras.com website who were influenced to make the trip spent approximately \$25 million in travel spending in Calaveras County between June 2018 and March 2019, the report found.

The bureau closed its doors in late March after Gov. Gavin Newsom issued a statewide stay-at-home order.

Based on decreases in Transient Occupancy Tax (TOT) revenue projections for the upcoming fiscal year from its two primary funders – the City of Angels Camp (down 41%) and the county (down 50%) – the bureau will be operating under a tight budget.

The tax applies to guests staying overnight at hotels, bed and breakfasts, inns and short-term vacation rentals. Although it’s discretionary, the funding has historically been split evenly between fire districts, the Sheriff’s Office, Public Works and the CVB.

Only one other staff member is at the office for the time being, Huberty said, adding he’d be seeking cost-saving measures in the coming months.

At this time, the bureau is requesting that visitors respect whatever safety precautions individual businesses may be taking to curb the spread of COVID-19.

He said, for instance, there isn’t a consensus among Murphys businesses on whether patrons should be required to wear a protective face mask.

Restrictions could be reintroduced should a case spike occur, and the CVB hopes to do its part in ensuring visitors have the information they need to stay safe, Huberty said.

“It could turn around just as quickly as it’s come back, and we want to be smart and do it safely and sustainably going forward, working with the county to make sure we’re doing it step by step,” Huberty said.

Californians must wear face masks in public under coronavirus order issued by Newsom

- Los Angeles Times
- Jun 18, 2020
- Gov. Gavin Newsom on Thursday ordered all Californians to wear face coverings while in public or high-risk settings, including when shopping, taking public transit or seeking medical care, following growing concerns that an increase in coronavirus cases has been caused by residents failing to voluntarily take that precaution.

Newsom's order comes a week after Orange County rescinded a requirement for residents to wear masks and as other counties across California are debating whether to join other local jurisdictions in mandating face coverings. The Newsom administration did not address how the new requirement will be enforced or if Californians who violate the order will be subject to citations or other penalties.

"Simply put, we are seeing too many people with faces uncovered — putting at risk the real progress we have made in fighting the disease," Newsom said in a statement. "California's strategy to restart the economy and get people back to work will only be successful if people act safely and follow health recommendations. That means wearing a face covering, washing your hands and practicing physical distancing."

See Friday's Union Democrat for more information on the mask order.

Californians Required To Wear Face Coverings To Curb COVID-19 Spread

By [Tori James](#) / MML / Jun 18, 2020

Sacramento, CA – Californians must now wear face coverings in settings public health officials identify as high-risk to help curb COVID-19 from spreading.

The California Department of Public Health on Thursday released updated guidance, citing concern that a growing body of scientific research has shown that people with no or few COVID-19 symptoms can still spread the disease. Officials emphasize the use of face coverings, combined with continued physical distancing and frequent hand washing practices will reduce the spread of the highly contagious virus.

Governor Gavin Newsom addressed why he is taking this action now. "Simply put, we are seeing too many people with faces uncovered – putting at risk the real progress we have made in fighting the

disease. California’s strategy to restart the economy and get people back to work will only be successful if people act safely and follow health recommendations.”

“As Californians venture into our communities more, wearing face coverings is another important way we can help protect one another,” adds Dr. Sonia Angell. She stresses infection spread is still a very real threat across the state and that wearing cloth face coverings when with others outside of one’s household in addition to physical distancing and handwashing precautions will reduce it.

Handwriting Already On The Wall?

Locally, the public health officials in Tuolumne and Calaveras counties have continued to strongly recommend wearing face coverings when venturing out of the home. Recently, Calaveras Public Health Officer Dr. Dean Kelaita told Clarke Broadcasting, as [reported here](#), that the county’s recent spike in COVID-19 cases that brought it to 26 recorded coronavirus infections, was close to maxing out local metrics.

He shared that if it continued to rise at a level of more than 12.5 cases per week, mandatory face coverings would be among additional public health measures that would be enacted. Both officials are expected to mirror the new state rules in their updated orders and have the legal authority to add more stringent local rules if they deem it necessary.

Earlier Thursday, Stanislaus County public health officials announced that beginning next Monday, they were requiring mandatory face coverings due to a rapid increase in the local infection rate, as [reported here](#).

According to the [latest state guidance here](#). Californians must wear face coverings when they are:

- Inside of, or in line to enter, any indoor public space
- Obtaining services from the healthcare sector in settings including, but not limited to, a hospital, pharmacy, medical clinic, laboratory, physician or dental office, veterinary clinic, or blood bank
- Waiting for or riding on public transportation or paratransit or while in a taxi, private car service, or ride-sharing vehicle
- Driving or operating any public transportation or paratransit vehicle, taxi, or private car service or ride-sharing vehicle when passengers are present, and when no passengers are present, face coverings are strongly recommended
- While outdoors in public spaces when maintaining a physical distance of six feet from persons who are not members of the same household or residence is not feasible

Specifically work-related, face coverings must be worn when engaged in work, whether at the workplace or performing work offsite, when:

- Interacting in-person with any member of the public
- Working in any space visited by members of the public, regardless of whether anyone from the public is present at the time
- Working in any space where food is prepared or packaged for sale or distribution to others
- Working in or walking through common areas, such as hallways, stairways, elevators, and parking facilities

— In any room or an enclosed area where other people (except for members of the person’s own household or residence) are present when unable to physically distance

Officials outline specific scenarios when it is okay to not wear face coverings:

— When obtaining a service involving the nose or face for which temporary removal of the face-covering is necessary to perform the service

— When seated at a restaurant or other establishment that offers food or beverage service, while eating or drinking, provided that they are able to maintain a distance of at least six feet away from persons who are not members of the same household or residence

— When engaged in outdoor work or recreation such as swimming, walking, hiking, bicycling, or running, when alone or with household members, provided they are able to maintain a distance of at least six feet from others

— If incarcerated since prisons and jails as part of their mitigation plans have specific guidance on the wearing of face coverings of masks for both inmates and staff

As far as exemptions go, the state guidance excludes specific individuals from the requirement of wearing face coverings, They are:

— Children aged two and under

— Those with medical, mental health, or developmental disabilities that prevent wearing a face covering

— Those who are hearing impaired, or communicating with a person who is hearing impaired, where the ability to see the mouth is essential for communication

— Individuals for whom wearing a face covering would create a risk to the person related to their work, as determined by local, state, or federal regulators or workplace safety guidelines

For more information about the state’s COVID-19 guidance, [click here](#).
