

WEEKLY ReCAP**DEC. 18, 2020**

A Sampling of News and Views
WISHING YOU ALL A SAFE AND
PEACEFUL HOLIDAY SEASON!



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***Protecting our rural environment by promoting citizen participation
in sustainable land use planning since 2006***

The Community Action Project administers the Calaveras Planning Coalition, which is comprised of regional and local organizations, community groups, and concerned individuals who promote public participation in land use and resource planning to ensure a healthy human, natural, and economic environment now and in the future. Learn more at www.calaverascap.com.

NEXT CALAVERAS PLANNING COALITION MEETING:
January 4, 2021, 3:00 P.M. TO 5:00 P.M. VIA ZOOM

NEW MEMBERS WELCOME AT CPC MEETINGS

Organizations, groups, and individuals may join the Calaveras Planning Coalition (CPC). Prospective members may attend two consecutive meetings before making a final decision on membership in the Coalition. The membership form is a pledge to support and advocate for the Coalition's eleven Land Use and Development Principles, which you will find on our website: www.calaverascap.com. There is no membership fee. However, members are encouraged to donate to the Community Action Project/Calaveras Planning Coalition. Visitors and prospective members will, by necessity, be excluded from attorney/client privileged discussions. If you are interested in membership, please email CPC Facilitator Tom Infusino, tomi@volcano.net, to receive a membership form, agenda, and the Zoom meeting connection.

To help prevent the spread of Covid-19 in our county, all CAP/CPC meetings will be held online via Zoom until restrictions are lifted by the Public Health Department.

FYI All,

To view the **proposed rezoning map** (General Plan Update Implementation), visit the Planning Department web page: <https://planning.calaverasgov.us/>, then click on "**Zoning Map Update**" or just click here directly: <https://gisportal.co.calaveras.ca.us/arcgis/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=ebdd24eb70db4b5494fbdce6427454bc>.

The map and zoning layers are a bit tricky to use. For **Directions**, see the top right of the Planning page under **Zoning>Zoning Map Help** or just click here directly for directions: https://planning.calaverasgov.us/Portals/Planning/Documents/General%20Plan%201996/Zoning%20Help.pdf?ver=Qa2glnCvLb_bIyIq0e1Dfw%3d%3d.

There are approx. 5,000 parcels that have been changed to new zones. Most are in the "interim" (U) zone; the rest are in "inconsistent" zones.

Stay tuned for more zoning map information.

Colleen

Planning department releases proposed zoning map

- by [Noah Berner](#) / The Calaveras Enterprise
- Dec 15, 2020

The Calaveras County Planning Department recently released a proposed zoning map update in order to bring the county's zoning into compliance with the General Plan.

"The purpose of the map changes are to rezone parcels zoned with the interim zones of Unclassified and Highway Service to a zone compatible with the General Plan land-use designations," a press release from the planning department reads. "This affects approximately 5,000 parcels in the county. Additionally, another 1,100 parcels are proposed for rezoning to make them consistent with the land-use designations."

The interim zones have been in place for "many, many years," and were put in place until permanent zones could be adopted for the sites, Planning Director Peter Maurer said.

"The vast majority of those parcels are probably going to either rural residential, residential agriculture or general agriculture," he said.

An additional 1,100 parcels also need to be rezoned to make them consistent with the General Plan's land-use designations.

"One of the primary implementation tools of the General Plan is its zoning ordinance, which includes a zoning map," Maurer said. "When the land-use designations were changed on some parcels, that meant that we needed to modify the zoning as well to bring it into conformance with the General Plan."

Some of the reasons for rezoning the parcels include encouraging development in areas that have adequate services, limiting the need for travel and greenhouse gas emissions and making communities more economically viable, Maurer said.

The proposed map includes rezoning for about 6,100 parcels, about 13% of the county's 45,000 total parcels.

"It's a relatively small percentage, but it's significant enough," Maurer said. "There will be at least two public hearings before the planning commission and the board before this gets adopted."

The public can view the proposed zoning map by visiting the planning department's website at planning.calaverasgov.us.

For directions on viewing the map, [click here](#).

Those with questions and concerns on the proposed zoning map can contact Planning Director Peter Maurer by phone at (209) 754-6394 or by email at pmaurer@co.calaveras.ca.us.

The amendment is expected to be reviewed by the planning commission in January 2021, and comments should be received no later than Jan. 8, 2021.

RCRC – The Barbed Wire – December 11, 2020

California Board of Forestry Unveils New Draft Fire Safe Regulations

This week, the California Board of Forestry (BOF) released proposed revisions to its State Fire Safe regulations. These rules set forth basic wildfire protection standards for development in Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones of both the State Responsibility Area (SRA) and the Local Responsibility Area (LRA) beginning July 1, 2021.

The draft rulemaking, presented at the BOF Joint Committee on Tuesday, provided the first opportunity for the public to evaluate the specific changes being proposed to the fire safe standards. At the meeting, RCRC staff conveyed serious concerns regarding the scope of the changes, and the extraordinary impacts this proposal will have on housing production, not only in rural areas of the state, but also in more urbanized regions of California. For instance, the draft regulations would prohibit any future building construction on property served by a road that has not been upgraded, or that cannot be upgraded to meet current standards, such as dead-end roads. These upgrade requirements include road widening, re-surfacing, leveling grades and curves, and bridge improvements, from the property line to the nearest fire station, and apply to the building of a single residential unit or any business increasing its "service capacity." All required upgrades would be at the expense of the property owner.

RCRC staff has been in discussions with the BOF since April of this year on proposed revisions to the State Fire Safe regulations and have offered both written and oral comments on the preceding emergency rulemaking that ultimately made more minor changes to the regulations. RCRC has formed a working group of local government partners and other interested stakeholders, to provide coordinated comments on the current draft regulation, which are scheduled to be considered at the January, 2021 BOF meeting. The proposed rulemaking can be found [here](#). For more information, please contact Tracy Rhine at Trhine@rcrcnet.org.

Bill of the Week: Senate Bill 4 (Gonzalez) – Broadband for All Act

On the first day of the 2021 Legislative session, Senator Lena A. Gonzalez (D-Long Beach), introduced Senate Bill 4, the *Broadband for All Act*, which would make significant changes to the way the state funds broadband infrastructure projects. SB 4 is a retooling of Senator Gonzalez's similar proposal last year which failed passage in the Assembly.

The Broadband for All Act revises the State's broadband funding mechanism, the California Advanced Services Fund (CASF) program, to create a more equitable broadband funding stream that prioritizes those areas of the state that lack the most basic broadband service. For instance, currently local governments are only eligible for CASF funding if no other service provider applies to fund a project in that area. SB 4 would not only make local governments eligible for CASF but would also enable those jurisdictions to utilize state funding to leverage other public and private funding opportunities.

RCRC staff has worked collaboratively with Senator Gonzalez throughout the interim on finding innovative solutions to closing the digital divide, including supporting local governments that are interested in providing high-quality, reliable internet service to their constituents. Bringing robust, high-speed internet access to RCRC member counties is essential to, not only economic growth, but to the basic health and safety of our communities.

RCRC joined a large coalition supporting SB 4 at introduction. The coalition letter can be found [here](#). For more information, please contact Tracy Rhine at TRhine@rcrcnet.org.

Hometown California – The Episode That Started It All

Launched in late July, the *Hometown California* podcast has been telling California's rural story through some of the most challenging months of the year. During a political season oversaturated with rhetoric and propaganda, RCRC's interviews with Jeremy White (co-writer of Politico California's *Playbook* newsletter) and Leah Askarinam (Editor-in-Chief of the National Journal's *Hotline* publication) cut through the noise and delivered relevant information to voters, with an emphasis on the impact on California's rural counties. In other episodes, *Hometown California* has offered a look into issues and industries impacting rural communities. This week, [listen again](#) to the episode that started it all: An Interview with Daron McDaniel, Merced County Supervisor. Supervisor McDaniel has been the RCRC Chair in this tumultuous year. In the first episode, he shares his story and reflections on what it has been like to lead during a worldwide pandemic.

Coming next week: The Intersection of the UC and Rural California, An Interview with Michael V. Drake, M.D.- The 21st President of the University of California. Stay tuned, and spread the word!

All past episodes of *Hometown California* can be found [here](#).

Water Resources Development Act Passes House – Passage in the Senate Likely

On Tuesday, the House approved the *Water Resources Development Act* (WRDA) of 2020. The bill would approve 46 new flood control, harbor, ecosystem and lock and dam projects on waterways across the country and would authorize the study of 27 more. For California, the bill includes projects in:

- The Sacramento River, Yolo Bypass, California
- Lake Isabella, California
- Lower San Joaquin River, California
- Sacramento River, Glenn-Colusa, California
- San Diego River and Mission Bay, San Diego County, California
- San Francisco, California, Waterfront Area
- Western Pacific Interceptor Canal, Sacramento River, California

Both the House and the Senate had originally planned to include additional water legislation to boost clean water and drinking water programs in the final package, however those efforts were scrapped amid cost objections from Republicans and disputes over the stringency of drinking water regulations. The U.S. Senate is expected to take up the unaccompanied WRDA 2020 measure as part of year-end legislation.

Click [here](#) for the WRDA Section-by-Section; Click [here](#) for the WRDA Bill Text; Click [here](#) for a detailed interactive map of authorized projects and studies.

Coronavirus Relief Negotiations Appear To Be At An Impasse – State and Local Aid In Jeopardy

As of early Friday, it appeared that passage of a second comprehensive COVID-19 relief package is unlikely before the end of the year. Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-Kentucky) indicated that Republican members of the U.S. Senate will not support a package that contains \$160 billion in aid for state and local governments. State and local assistance and provisions for COVID-19 liability relief for businesses remain the biggest stumbling blocks to reaching a deal. Both state and local aid and liability relief were included in a \$908 billion package put forth by a group of bi-partisan/bi-cameral lawmakers; however, the liability relief section, albeit much more limited, warranted further construction to satisfy top Congressional Republicans.

The bi-partisan/bi-cameral plan also includes a number of other important aspects such as increased unemployment benefits, monies for vaccine development and distribution, monies for small business relief, among others. Complicating matters was Majority Leader McConnell support for a [\\$916 billion proposal](#) released by Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin which differed with the bi-partisan package by resurrecting direct relief to many U.S. residents. The bi-partisan package focuses on enhanced unemployment benefits.

House Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-San Francisco) and most Congressional Democrats view the bi-partisan \$908 billion plan as the best path to a deal. During the week, Majority Leader McConnell expressed willingness to set aside his top priority of business liability relief in exchange for the elimination of state and local government aid. This was rejected by the House Speaker.

Online Tool Connects Residents in High Risk Areas with a Pathway to Home Insurance

As a result of the work of the California Tree Mortality Task Force, in 2018, the California Insurance Commissioner issued a report containing recommendations to address homeowners' insurance cancellations and non-renewals in tree mortality and other high fire risk areas. The report identified Yapacopia, a public benefit corporation, as the provider of a free online service connecting homeowners in high risk areas—even those who have been denied previously—with insurers, insurance agents, and brokers. The [MatchUP Insurance Finder](#) connects county residents with insurance providers quickly. A unique webpage has been created for each county, providing information, links, and useful tools. In addition, Yapacopia will provide a webinar for any county to discuss wildfire preparation and recovery, and insurance issues. More information about Yapacopia and the MatchUP Insurance Finder is available [here](#).

Marijuana Legalization Passes the House

Last week, the U.S. House of Representatives approved a bill to legalize cannabis at the federal level. While the vote was mostly along party lines — approved 228 to 164 — five Republicans supported the reform (including Representative Tom McClintock of Placer County) and six Democrats opposed it. Under the Marijuana Opportunity, Reinvestment and Expungement Act, cannabis would become federally de-scheduled and those with prior convictions would have their records expunged. The bill would also authorize a 5 percent tax on

marijuana that would fund community and small business grant programs to help those most impacted by the criminalization of marijuana. However, the legislation is almost certainly destined to fail in the current Republican-led U.S. Senate, where GOP leaders have disparaged the legislation as a superficial distraction from the work of passing coronavirus relief. RCRC did not offer comment on this latest cannabis-related legislation; however, liberalizing the federal banking laws for cannabis remains a top Congressional priority.

Public Health reports 35 new COVID-19 cases in Calaveras County, advises public to stay safe during holidays

· Dec 15, 2020 / The Calaveras Enterprise

The following press release was issued by Calaveras Public Health.

On Tuesday, December 15, 2020, Calaveras Public Health confirmed 35 additional cases of COVID-19 in Calaveras County. To date, Calaveras Public Health reports a total of 677 confirmed cases of COVID-19. Of those cases, 555 cases have since recovered while 100 cases remain active. There have been a total of 22 confirmed deaths related to COVID-19 reported in Calaveras County.

The Regional Stay at Home Order remains in effect. Calaveras County is grouped with 11 other counties which include: Fresno, Kern, Kings, Madera, Mariposa, Merced, San Benito, San Joaquin, Stanislaus, Tulare, Tuolumne. Calaveras is currently subject to the requirements of the Regional Stay at Home Order given that the regional ICU bed capacity remains below 15%.

The Regional Stay at Home Order urges Californians to stay at home as much as possible to limit the mixing with other households that can lead to COVID-19 spread. It allows access to (and travel for) critical services and allows outdoor activities to preserve Californians' physical and mental health. The order will be lifted when a region's projected ICU capacity meets or exceeds 15%. This will be assessed on a weekly basis after the initial 3-week period.

On December 14, the Governor announced the arrival of the first doses of the Pfizer vaccine in California. Calaveras Public Health has been working with state and local partners to begin distributing the vaccine when it arrives. The vaccine will be administered in phases by prioritizing groups by risk and level of exposure. Initial doses will go to front-line health care workers and vulnerable members in long-term care settings with broader distribution happening in months. While this is hopeful news to people, the best thing everyone can do right now is to stay home as much as possible and only go out for work, exercise, or for essential services.

Calaveras Public Health understands that some people may be nervous about the COVID-19 vaccine — this is reasonable. Researchers have been working tirelessly to develop and test the vaccine. They have shared data, held hearings, and paused trials when it was important to slow down. Vaccine makers have made sure to complete all phases of testing before making the vaccine available to the public. This has given us the confidence in the COVID-19 vaccines as they become another critical tool in our toolbox to slow the spread of COVID-19 and helping our communities move forward. As we head into the winter holidays we are reminded of how important our friends, family members, and our community are. People have sacrificed so much this year to keep others safe. Calaveras Public Health advises people to keep up-to-date on vaccinations – including the seasonal flu shot and the COVID-19 vaccine once it is available.

Everyone is at risk for COVID-19 and should take precautions to avoid getting exposed to the virus. Older adults and people with underlying medical conditions are at increased risk for severe illness and death from COVID-19. This means that they may be hospitalized, require a ventilator to help them breathe, or may even be fatal. COVID-19 can be very serious and Calaveras Public Health asks that you follow the safety guidelines.

During the holidays, Calaveras Public Health urges the public to remain cautious. The safest way to gather during the holidays is to spend time with people in the same household and gather virtually with family and friends who aren't from your household. Traveling to see friends and family during the holidays could increase your risk of infection and further the spread of COVID-19 in your community.

The California Department of Public Health (CDPH) strongly recommends:

- Californians stay home or in their region and avoid non-essential travel
- Anyone arriving into California should voluntarily self-quarantine for 14 days.

For complete details and requirements, read CDPH's Travel Advisory.

No-cost testing for COVID-19 is available at the OptumServe COVID-19 testing site in Sonoma. The site is located at the Mother Lode Fairgrounds, Blake Elliot Building (Creekside), 220 Southgate Drive, Sonoma, CA 95370. The OptumServe site is now open 7 days a week. If you would like to be tested for COVID-19 please register at www.lhi.care/covidtesting or call (888) 634-1123. Additional COVID-19 test sites can be found on the Calaveras County COVID-19 website.

Testing for COVID-19 is advised, especially:

- People who have symptoms of COVID-19
- People who have had close contact with someone that is confirmed to have COVID-19
- People who have been asked or referred to get tested by their healthcare provider

Public Health staff continue to investigate new cases to determine any possible persons who may have had close personal contact with the positive individuals. Close contacts may be contacted by the health department and monitored for signs and symptoms of COVID-19 illness.

Protect yourself and others from COVID-19. The virus is spreading in the community. Stay safe by taking some simple precautions. The best ways to avoid exposure to COVID-19 are to:

- Wear a mask that covers your nose and mouth in public places and anywhere you will be around people who do not live with you, including close friends and family.
- Wash your hands often. Use soap and water for at least 20 seconds or use hand sanitizer. Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Stay at least 6 feet away from other people.
- Stay home if you are sick.
- Avoid crowds

Symptoms can appear 2-14 days after exposure to the virus. The symptoms of COVID 19 include:

- Fever or chills
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fatigue
- Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- New loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea

A person who has tested positive with COVID-19 may not have all or any of these symptoms. A person who has tested positive but does not have any symptoms is considered asymptomatic and can still pass on the virus to others while they are infectious.

Look for emergency warning signs for COVID-19. If someone is showing signs, seek emergency care immediately:

- Trouble breathing
- New confusion or weakness
- Bluish lips or face
- Persistent pain or pressure in the chest
- Inability to wake or stay awake

Calaveras Public Health asks the public to be aware of scams. A contact tracer will never ask for your social security number, bank account number, or credit card information. Our contact tracers work for Calaveras Public Health. Contact tracers help contact people who have COVID-19 to track symptoms and make sure to keep our community safe and prevent the spread of COVID-19.

Calaveras Public Health encourages that all people 6 months and older get their yearly flu vaccine. While getting the flu vaccine will not protect against COVID-19, it is shown to reduce the risk of flu illness, hospitalization, and death. Please speak with your local medical provider or pharmacist for flu vaccine.

To receive information and resources related to COVID-19 visit the Calaveras County COVID-19 website.

Calaveras Community Action Project/Calaveras Planning Coalition
www.calaverascap.com

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