

## WEEKLY ReCAP

March 5, 2021

### A Sampling of News and Views



P.O. Box 935, San Andreas, CA, 95249 • (209) 772-1463

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

**The Community Action Project (CAP) administers the Calaveras Planning Coalition (CPC), 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](http://www.calaverascap.com).**

[In this edition of the ReCAP....](#)

*Click to go directly to the article!*

1. **Next CPC Meeting**
2. **BOS & PC Meetings - No Agendas Yet**
3. **Tuolumne County to host workshop on climate action plan**

4. **Gray Wolf makes rare visit to Tuolumne County, areas farther south**
5. **If you are a Calaveras County landowner, the zoning of your property may be changing next week**
6. **Public comment sought on Utica hazard mitigation plan**
7. **Then and now: A "megadrought" in California**
8. **Business groups criticize TUD Board's recent decisions**
9. **SNC Funding Opportunities**

### ***Join Us!***

*Get a glimpse into what CPC membership is like by attending a meeting.  
There is no commitment, just show up and listen in!*

## **NEXT CALAVERAS PLANNING COALITION MEETING:**

**April 5, 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 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](http://www.calaverascap.com). There is no membership fee. However, members are encouraged to donate to the CAP/CPC. Visitors and prospective members will, by necessity, be excluded from attorney/client privileged discussions.

If you are interested in CPC membership, please email CPC Facilitator Tom Infusino, [tomi@volcano.net](mailto: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.***

**Learn about more ways to get involved with CAP/CPC here!**

**Board of Supervisors Meeting March 23, 2021  
No Agenda Yet**

## Planning Commission – March 25, 2021 No Agenda Yet

You can find current agendas and agenda packets, as well as previous agendas on the County page here

Interested in learning more about the General Plan Update? Click Here

### *Shop for CAP!*

If you shop at select grocery stores, such as Sierra Hills Market in Murphys, MAR-VAL, and O'Briens (click here for the full list) *you could be earning CAP/CPC money!!*

Participating grocery stores contribute a percentage of your spending to CAP/CPC when you sign up and use your Escript card.

[Click here for more information and to sign up!](#)



## Tuolumne County to host workshop on climate action plan

*Guy McCarthy / February 25 2021 / Union Democrat*

The Tuolumne County Community Development Department plans to host a Zoom webinar from 6 to 7:30 p.m. tonight to update people on a county Climate Action Plan, which is intended to address human-caused greenhouse gas reduction strategies.

County planners intend to provide an overview on the Climate Action Plan process; share preliminary findings from a project analysis; and get input from people watching the webinar regarding the development of the plan as well as vulnerable facilities and critical facilities.

Developing local strategies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions has been discussed by the county government since at least 2012.

The “Tuolumne Tomorrow: Tuolumne County Regional Blueprint Project Report” in 2012 listed goals that included: “Reduce the region’s greenhouse gas emissions and its vulnerability to the effects of climate change including sea level rise and changes in temperature and precipitation.”

Preparing a Climate Action Plan is county policy 18.A.1, dating from the Tuolumne County 2018 General Plan, which states in part, “Prepare a Climate Action Plan, or similar greenhouse gas emission reduction plan, that establishes a greenhouse gas reduction target consistent with the Senate Bill 32 goal to reduce statewide greenhouse gas emissions to 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030.”

The Climate Action Plan will identify greenhouse gas reduction and adaptation measures that can be adopted by the county government.

According to federal scientists, many greenhouse gases in the planet’s atmosphere occur naturally, like carbon dioxide, methane, water vapor, and nitrous oxide. Manmade greenhouse gases include chlorofluorocarbons, hydrofluorocarbons, perfluorocarbons, and sulfur hexafluoride.

Atmospheric concentrations of natural and manmade gases have been rising over the last few centuries due to the industrial revolution. Meanwhile, populations have increased, and human reliance on fossil fuels

like coal, oil and natural gas has increased fossil fuel emissions.

Human interference in the carbon cycle, by burning forest lands, mining and burning coal, has artificially moved carbon from solid storage to its gaseous state, thereby increasing atmospheric concentrations, according to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, a branch of the U.S. federal government.

Greenhouse gases from human activities are the most significant driver of observed climate change since the mid-20th century, according to the federal Environmental Protection Agency.

For more information about Climate Action Plan, go online to [www.tuolumnecounty.ca.gov/1332/Climate-Action-Plan](http://www.tuolumnecounty.ca.gov/1332/Climate-Action-Plan). For more about the Zoom webinar on Thursday and to RSVP, go online to [zoom.us/j/93331091041](https://zoom.us/j/93331091041). For other questions, contact Quincy Yaley at (209) 533-5961 or [qyaley@co.tuolumne.ca.us](mailto:qyaley@co.tuolumne.ca.us).

Contact Guy McCarthy at [gmccarthy@uniondemocrat.net](mailto:gmccarthy@uniondemocrat.net) or 770-0405. Follow him on Twitter at @GuyMcCarthy.

## **Gray Wolf makes rare visit to Tuolumne County, areas farther south**

*Guy McCarthy / March 1 2021 / Union Democrat*

A yearling male gray wolf named OR-93 from an Oregon pack has been tracked in recent days moving south into the area of Calaveras and Tuolumne counties between highways 4 and 108, an agriculture and

natural resources advisor with the University of California Cooperative Extension based in Jackson said Thursday.

"This is the first recorded observance of a collared gray wolf this far south in the Sierra Nevada," Scott Oneto with UC Cooperative Extension for El Dorado, Amador, Calaveras and Tuolumne counties said in a phone interview. "We don't have an exact location. He's been moving quickly from the Oregon border since the first of this month, doing a lot of zig zagging back and forth at a pretty good rate."

Oneto estimated Thursday the young male wolf was somewhere in Alpine, Calaveras or Tuolumne counties, based on information he received from the California Department of Fish and Wildlife.

"Fish and Wildlife got a ping off his collar somewhere between Alpine and Tuolumne counties," Oneto said.

Oneto shared information about state Fish and Wildlife tracking of the wolf on Wednesday that eventually reached Kelle Schroeder, the Tuolumne County agricultural commissioner/sealer and animal control director.

Asked about Oneto's account of the wolf OR-93 on Thursday, Schroeder issued a statement Thursday afternoon headlined "Gray Wolf Confirmed in Tuolumne County."

The state Department of Fish and Wildlife confirmed a gray wolf visited Tuolumne County on Wednesday in the area between highways 4 and 108, Schroeder's statement said.

"This is the first known visit of a gray wolf to Tuolumne County," Schroeder said.

Amaroq Weiss, a designated West Coast Wolf Advocate for the Center for Biological Diversity, said Thursday she is aware of historical sightings of gray wolves in Tuolumne County in 1854, 1863, and 1939.

When Europeans arrived in North America, there were 2 million wolves, including about 380,000 wolves in what became the western United States, scientists say.

Pioneers, settlers and cattlemen feared the predators. Gray wolves were nearly wiped out in California by the mid-1920s and all but exterminated in 48 states by the 1930s.

The first gray wolves in California in 80 years were spotted and tracked coming from Oregon into California in 2011, according to advocates with the nonprofit Center for Biological Diversity. In 2014, the California Department of Fish and Wildlife added gray wolves to the state's endangered species list. Gray wolves currently remain on a state endangered species list. They were removed from federal endangered species lists in January.

Schroeder confirmed the gray wolf that visited Tuolumne County on Wednesday is called OR-93. Gray wolves pose very little safety risk to humans, she said. Anyone who encounters a gray wolf should not run. Maintain eye contact and make noise while retreating slowly.

"The public is reminded that gray wolves are covered under the Endangered Species Act in California," Schroeder said. "It is unlawful to

harass, harm, pursue, hunt, shoot, wound, kill, trap, or capture gray wolves.”

Oneto said Thursday he has never heard of a wolf being observed in El Dorado, Amador, Calaveras or Tuolumne counties, and he said he has never personally seen a wolf in California.

In an email he shared on Wednesday, Oneto said, “Just wanted to make sure you all were notified that CA Dept of Fish and Wildlife has been tracking a single yearling grey wolf through our counties for the past couple of days.”

Oneto said he spoke to Kent Laudon, a state wolf biologist, “and it sounds like this male has been moving pretty fast,” about 18 miles a day, Oneto said. “He is collared so they are getting daily updates on his movement.”

Laudon could not be reached for comment Thursday. Mark Abraham, a state Fish and Wildlife biologist who covers eastern Stanislaus, northern Mariposa and Tuolumne counties, said Thursday he had not heard of the wolf OR-93 being tracked into Alpine, Calaveras or Tuolumne counties.

Oneto said the wolf known as OR-93 crossed Interstate 80 near Floriston in Nevada County, north of Lake Tahoe, on Friday last week, and since that time has been travelling south down through Alpine County and as of Wednesday it sounded like he was in the Calaveras-Tuolumne area between Highway 4 and Highway 108.

“He is certainly looking for a mate,” Oneto said in his Wednesday email. “He is identified as OR-93 as he is from the Oregon pack. He initially entered Modoc County on Jan. 30, after briefly returning to Oregon, OR-93 reentered Modoc County on Feb. 4. He entered Lassen County on Feb. 10.



OR-93 was collared in June 2020 and is believed to have been born in 2019. He dispersed from Oregon's White River pack."

Oneto ended his email saying he wanted to make sure everyone was on the same page, and thinking about if and how to share the information with UC Cooperative Extension clients. Oneto indicated he would share the information with livestock clients, as they seem to be very aware of this topic and have been watching closely throughout the state.

Information about the wolf OR-93 is new and it's subject to rapid change given how quickly the wolf has been moving, Oneto said Thursday. This is a new discovery this week and later this week it could be in Lassen County, and we might not see a wolf again for a very, very long time.

"It is fantastic news to learn that there may be a gray wolf or wolves ranging in Tuolumne County," Weiss said Thursday. "Historical records show that wolves were once seen there and we know from habitat modeling studies that there is good wolf habitat this far south in the Sierra Nevada."

Since many imperiled species recovery efforts often require active reintroduction of a species, the fact that wolves are getting into the Central Sierra on their own is something to celebrate, Weiss said. Oneto underscored the fact that gray wolves have been reintroducing themselves into California since 2011 without human efforts.

Wildlife advocates may be thrilled to have gray wolves returning to California, but the California Cattlemen's Association takes a dimmer view of returning wolves. The association is a nonprofit trade organization that represents the state's ranchers and beef producers in legislative and regulatory affairs, with 38 county cattlemen's association affiliates.

"While CCA supports the protection of threatened and endangered species, we are opposed to abuses of the state and federal endangered species acts such as the continued listing of recovered species and efforts to preclude livestock grazing throughout vast swaths of land deemed 'critical habitat' for listed species," the association states on a web page headlined "Protecting Wildlife."

In recent years, the association has worked to delist the gray wolf from both the California and federal endangered species acts, the association states on its wildlife web page.

California ranchers provide habitat for many of the state's native species, and they and their livestock have to deal with numerous predators, including mountain lions, coyotes, bears, ravens, and gray wolves.

"CCA and its members work with various agencies to support non-lethal management of predators," the association states on its wildlife web page, "but works to ensure the proper management of problem predators when non-lethal deterrents fail."

The fact gray wolves remain fully protected under the state endangered species act is critical to the survival of each wolf that enters the state or is born here, Weiss said. Human-caused mortality has always been the greatest threat to wolf survival.

"There is no reason to fear wolves," Weiss said. "Wolves are very shy and generally want to have nothing to do with humans. If you happen to see a wolf, consider yourself very lucky. Don't feed it and leave it alone, but also do not have unreasonable fear of the animal. Wolves also cause little

problems with livestock and are responsible for a fraction of a percent of livestock losses where they live.”

Gray wolf sightings can be reported to state Fish and Wildlife at [www.wildlife.ca.gov/Conservation/Mammals/Gray-Wolf/Sighting-Report](http://www.wildlife.ca.gov/Conservation/Mammals/Gray-Wolf/Sighting-Report) or by calling CDFW at (530) 225-2300.

Contact Guy McCarthy at [gmcCarthy@uniondemocrat.net](mailto:gmcCarthy@uniondemocrat.net) or 770-0405.

**If you are a Calaveras landowner, the zoning of your property may be changing next week**

*March 2 2021 / Calaveras Enterprise*

Editor

For those readers who read the rezoning article in (the Feb. 25) Enterprise, this is a reminder. For those who did not, this is a call for your attention.

I am a member of the Calaveras County Planning Commission. If you are a Calaveras landowner, the zoning of your property may be changing next week.

The staff of the Planning Department has long been working on the herculean task of conforming the zoning map to the land use designations

set by the 2019 General Plan. On March 9, the Calaveras County Board of Supervisors will be considering the rezoning of almost 7,000 parcels in the county to make the zoning consistent with the 2019 General Plan, including replacement of all temporary "U" (Unclassified) zoning with specific zoning. Every parcel currently zoned "U" will have its zoning designation changed, along with thousands of other parcels.

No individual notices of proposed zone changes have been sent to landowners. From what I've seen, the Planning Department has done a good job; however, you might disagree with a zoning change proposed for your property. If you have questions about whether your property is affected and, if so, how it is affected, go to [planning.calaverasgov.us/](https://planning.calaverasgov.us/) and click on the "ZONING" tab on the box at the top right. Then click on "Zoning Map Help," and follow the directions. Comments or questions can be directed to the Planning Department at (209) 754-6394 or [PlanningWeb@co.calaveras.ca.us](mailto:PlanningWeb@co.calaveras.ca.us).

A zoning change on your property could be very important to you either now or in the future. As mentioned above, the proposed zoning map will be considered by the board of supervisors on March 9. To comment to the board of supervisors on any of the proposed changes, go to [bos.calaverasgov.us](https://bos.calaverasgov.us) and click on the green "Learn How to stay Engaged here!" under "Change in Business Practices ..." Specify that your comment concerns the zoning map amendment agenda item on the March 9 agenda.

Tim Laddish,

Sheep Ranch

## **Public Input sought on Utica hazard mitigation plan**

*March 3, 2021 / Calaveras Enterprise*

The following press release was issued by UPUD and Utica.

The Union Public Utility District (UPUD) and Utica Water and Power Authority (Utica) have completed a draft Multi-Jurisdictional Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (MJHMP), and the agencies are inviting the public to review and comment on the plan. The public comment period begins Monday March 1, 2021, and ends on Monday March 15, 2021.

The draft MJHMP can be viewed by clicking [here](#).

All comments from the public should be submitted via email to Paul Bockrath of Preparative Consulting, who is the consultant UPUD and Utica are working with to develop the MJHMP. Paul's email is [paul@preparative.org](mailto:paul@preparative.org).

The purpose of hazard mitigation planning is to identify potential natural hazards/disasters that could impact our community and take steps to mitigate or lessen the impact of these hazards/disasters before they occur, thus reducing loss of life and property. By understanding what natural hazards residents in Calaveras County face and how those hazards can

impact the county by damaging or destroying property or injuring people, UPUD and Utica can look for ways to lessen the impact of these hazards.

Once the plan is complete and approved by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), it will qualify UPUD and Utica to apply for millions in grant funding from California Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES) and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). These grants generally cover 75% of the planning or construction effort, with a 25% local funding match requirement.

For general questions about Utica, email [admin@uticawater.com](mailto:admin@uticawater.com) or call (209) 736-9419

## **Then and now: A "megadrought" in California**

*Mark Kivner / March 4 2021 / BBC News*

In our monthly feature, Then and Now, we reveal some of the ways that planet Earth has been changing against the backdrop of a warming world. Here, we look at the effects of extreme weather on a crucial reservoir that supplies water to millions of people in northern California.

This year is [likely to be critically dry for California](#). Winter storms that dumped heavy snow and rain across the state are not expected to be

substantial enough to counterbalance drought conditions.

Lake Oroville plays a key role in California's complex water delivery system.

[Click here to see the BBC interactive](#)

This 65km-square body of water north of Sacramento is the second-largest reservoir in California.

Not only does Lake Oroville store water, it helps control flooding elsewhere in the region, assists with the maintenance of water quality and boosts the health of fisheries downstream.

In 2014, more than 80% of California was in the grip of an "extreme drought". Against this backdrop, Oroville's capacity fell to 30% - a historic low level.

As the water level receded to hundreds of feet below normal levels, ramps and roads no longer reached the water's edge.

More worryingly, the reservoir - when full - provided enough water for an estimated seven million households, as well as providing power for hydroelectricity facilities and irrigation for agricultural land.

### **'Unusually destructive'**

The dry conditions didn't start in 2014, however, there had been a drought for years prior to Oroville recording its historic low level.

Indeed, the US space agency's Earth Observatory had warned that the multi-year drought was having a wider impact on the region. Among its effects was a contribution to "unusually active and destructive" fire seasons and poor yields from agricultural land.



"There is strong evidence from climate models and centuries of tree ring data that suggest about one-third to one-half of the severity of the current drought can be attributed to climate change," observed Benjamin Cook, a climate scientist from Nasa's Goddard Institute for Space Studies in New York.

Agency scientists added that the data suggested a "megadrought" might already be underway in this region - and that it could last for decades.

The latest update from the US Drought Monitor in December 2020, showed that much of the country's western states were gripped by extreme or exceptional drought, with Nevada, Utah, Arizona and New Mexico, Colorado and western Texas being the worst affected.

The Drought Monitor releases maps showing the parts of the country with prolonged shortages in the water supply. It is produced jointly by the National Drought Mitigation Center (NDMC) at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (Noaa), and the US Department of Agriculture (USDA).

### **From one extreme...**

Climate change is not just about a warmer world, it also means that the planet will see more extreme environmental conditions and weather. So,

for example, episodes of flooding will increase, as well as episodes of droughts.

Lake Oroville was a perfect illustration of how these extremes can threaten our existing infrastructure.

While the lake's levels reached a historic low in 2014, the reservoir's vast embankment dam - the tallest in the US - was pushed to breaking point in February 2017.

Following fierce storms in the surrounding mountains, water was flowing into the lake at a rate of roughly one-and-a-half Olympic-size swimming pools each second.

Communities downstream had been evacuated, with more than 100,000 people being ordered to leave their homes.

Officials were struggling to allow water to flow out of the lake because the main spillway - a structure that provides controlled releases of water - and the emergency spillway had been eroded and damaged.

Yet they had to continue sending water down the valley because the reservoir was reaching capacity and there was a sense that there could be a "catastrophic failure" in the structure.

In the space of two years, the lake went from an unprecedented low to a capacity that had not been experienced before. Water cascaded over the emergency spillways, which had not previously been required.

Traditionally, the lake was replenished by meltwater from a thawing snowpack in surrounding mountains, whose river systems fed the reservoir. June was the month when the reservoir was expected to reach its yearly maximum level.

However, in 2017, it was rain that caused the intense water flow. The reservoir had reached capacity in February, rather than the middle of the year, as usually happened.

Scientists again suggested that the event fitted into the paradigm of a warming world.

Speaking at the time to the Guardian newspaper, Prof Roger Bale, from the University of California Merced, explained: "With a warmer climate, we get these winter storms, which dump rain rather than snow."

The United Nations Environment Programme (Unep) said that the "frequency and intensity of droughts, storms and extreme weather events are increasingly likely above 1.5C (above pre-industrial levels)".

Failure to keep the global average temperature rise to below 1.5C, as outlined in the 2015 Paris climate agreement, is likely to result in more of the world's reservoirs or flood defences being tested to breaking point.

This is a stark warning for world leaders, who will be gathering once again this year at the UN's annual climate summit (COP26) - to be held in Glasgow.

The meeting, which had to be postponed by a year because of Covid, will seek to raise global ambition on tackling climate change - with a view to keeping temperature rise within the 1.5C limit.

Our Planet Then and Now will continue up to the UN climate summit in Glasgow, which is due to start in November 2021

## **Business Groups Criticize TUD Board's Recent Decisions**

*BJ Hansen / February 26 2021 / MyMotherLode.com*

Sonora, CA — Leaders with the Tuolumne County Association of Realtors and Tuolumne County Business Council have co-authored a new myMotherLode.com blog.

Betsy Hurst, president of the realtors group, and Justin Myers, a director with the business council, point out that three TUD board members declined to vote in favor of a proposed declaration on February 12 clarifying that the district has enough water supply for future connections. [Click here to read the earlier story.](#)

While the action doesn't change the status quo, the business groups are concerned that some board members are leaning towards restricting new connections at some point.

The business leaders argue that Pinecrest and Lyons reservoirs will both "fill and spill" this year and the district can "provide enough water to meet our current demands with enough remaining water to provide 275 years of available supply at the TUD annual average of 50 new residential connections a year."

Hurst and Myers add, "Had the TUD board decided to restrict connections on February 11th, how would they tell the owners of the almost completed homes with Habitat for Humanity and other people with homes under construction that they are going to be "inconvenienced"? How do they tell the State of California they can't connect the new \$50 million dollar courthouse or how do they tell Visionary Homes to stop working on their affordable apartment project in Sonora that our County has provided some of the grant dollars needed to plan and construct?"

They also address actions related to a commercial development at the Pedro Wye, and the district's efforts to acquire PG&E infrastructure.

[You can find the full blog by clicking here.](#)

**Sierra Nevada Conservancy Funding Opportunities Newsletter  
for March/April 2021:**

[Funding Opportunities Newsletter | Sierra Nevada Conservancy \(ca.gov\).](#)

Click the link above to view this electronic newsletter published every two months containing information on upcoming grant and funding opportunities for the Sierra Nevada region. The newsletter includes federal, state, and private foundation funders as well as additional resources and information related to grant funding. The Sierra Nevada Conservancy provides the Funding Opportunities Newsletter as a free resource under its Sierra Nevada Watershed Improvement Program.

**Spring will be here soon!**



Poppy / Seepspring Monkeyflower Megan Fiske Copyright 2019 [yosemitenorthphotography.com](http://yosemitenorthphotography.com)

[Forward this email to a friend](#)  
[Interesting? Share this email on social networks](#)  
[Find more ways to help here!](#)

Community Action Project/Calaveras Planning Coalition  
[www.calaverascap.com](http://www.calaverascap.com)

Powered by [YMLP.com](http://YMLP.com)