

Community Action Project
PO Box 2633,
Murphys, CA 95247
telephone: (209) 728-0710
email: CAP@goldrush.com
www.CalaverasCAP.com

CAP/CPC Newsletter

Community Action Project / Calaveras Planning Coalition

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Citizens Encouraged to Speak Up as CCWD Updates Planning

Required by the State of California every five years, an Urban Water Management Plan is a check-up to see if a water district is able to meet the needs of its customers for the next twenty years

By Tom Infusino, Facilitator, Calaveras Planning Coalition

We often focus on the County's General Plan Update. The draft plan will be out soon for review and comment, so expect more information on the CAP/CPC website in the weeks to come.

It is less well known that in May, the Calaveras County Water District is scheduled to release the draft of its updated Urban Water Management Plan. They will provide a public review and comment period on the draft plan before the plan is adopted by the CCWD

Board. So this month we are providing some background on these water plans, and some guidance to those interested in reviewing and commenting on the plan.

I. What is an Urban Water Management Plan?

An Urban Water Management Plan is a check-up to see if a water district is on schedule to secure rights to, divert, store, purify, deliver, conserve and reclaim sufficient water to meet the needs of its service area over the next twenty years.

II. Why does an Urban Water Management Plan need to be updated?

The State of California requires that an Urban Water Management Plan be updated every five years. This gives an agency and the public the notice they need to make corrections if the agency gets off schedule early in plan implementation. This also allows an agency the chance to adjust plans as things change.

In the past there was an incentive in California to put water to use, even frivolously and at great expense to ratepayers, in order to meet the conditions of state water permits.

This is no longer the case.

Here in Calaveras, since the last update of the Urban Water Management Plan there have been a number of developments that could be

factored into an updated Urban Water Management Plan. In 2008, Amador and Calaveras county stakeholders engaged in collaborative workshops to identify water supply and watershed management efforts that would help the region's water supply and quality. In 2009, CCWD completed drafting a Water Element for the Calaveras County General Plan Update. CCWD will have a major role in working with the County to implement its provisions. In 2010, Calaveras County identified a preferred General

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Water Plans ... (con't.)

Plan Alternative, estimated economic and population growth for 25 years, and proposed that new development be close to existing community centers. Today, the local effects of the national economic downturn place limits on available funding. These and many other changes will affect the amount of water needed; the infrastructure needed to divert, to store and to deliver that water; and the ability of existing and future residents to pay for all of this.

III. What does one look for in an urban water management plan?

Because an Urban Water Management Plan (UWMP) will focus on comparing future water demand and future water supply, not all of the answers to the questions below will be obvious from just reading the plan itself. Nevertheless, you will want the district to address these issues in a staff report or in response to your comments.

A) Does the UWMP include the basic required parts?

When you pick up an Urban Water Management Plan, you want to make sure it contains the basic required parts. Each part will raise its own questions. For example:

An UWMP must identify the expected growth within the district's service area in five year increments. (Are the growth projections defensible if challenged by a water competitor?)

An UWMP must identify the water supply needed to service that growth in five year increments. (Are the needed water supply projects scheduled to be completed in time? Are the existing water supplies secure? Are the new water supplies realistic?)

An UWMP must describe the reliability of each water source in normal, dry, and multiple dry years; and identify contingency plans for any water shortages that may result. (Can we make our local water supplies less vulnerable to shortages? Can we make our homes and businesses more resilient to water shortages?)

An UWMP must identify past and current water use in five year increments for each water use sector (i.e. industrial, commercial, agricultural, etc.). (Are there any trends in water use that the plan should address?)

An UWMP must look at water quality issues and how they affect water supply. (Are there steps that we can take to manage our watershed better to avoid water quality problems?) Other UWMP sections will raise other issues.

B) Will we be conserving water resources under the plan?



The Mokelumne River
photo courtesy of Katherine Evatt

In the past, there was an incentive in California to put water to use, even frivolously and at great expense to ratepayers, in order to meet the conditions of state water permits. This is no longer the case. Due to water code reforms, the permit system now favors those who conserve water, reclaim water, or use it to recharge an aquifer. The code system rewards such permittees for these efforts by preserving and enhancing their water use under a permit, and by giving them more time to develop the raw water granted by a permit.

An UWMP must report on the effectiveness of a district's demand management measures. The importance of this requirement has been heightened since the last UWMP, because now new state grants and loans for water projects will be conditioned on a district implementing demand management measures. An UWMP must also evaluate the cost effectiveness of additional demand management measures relative to other sources of water supply. An UWMP must evaluate the opportunities for additional water recycling. Does the plan include sufficient components of water conservation, water reclamation, and groundwater recharge with a reasonable schedule for their implementation? Will these efforts be monitored and their success recorded so that we get credit for the water savings with the state?

C) Does the UWMP collaborate responsibly with those willing to do so?

An UWMP must identify the opportunities for both short and long-term water exchanges. Increasingly different water providers in a region have found that they can help each other. Some utilities are inter-tying lines for response to emergency outages, and /or for short-term water exchanges. For example, in the San Francisco Bay Area, Contra Costa Water District and East Bay MUD are doing this. More and more, utilities are seeking partners to jointly use water storage facilities. In our region for example, East Bay MUD is working on joint water storage proposals with Amador, Calaveras, and San Joaquin counties. When looking at such proposals in the water plan, we ask ourselves: Will these collaborative agreements provide the opportunity both to partner with trustworthy agencies, and also to verify and enforce compliance with the agreements? What are the consequences if collaboration fails? Do we have a reliable backup if collaboration fails? Are we participating in open forums that will result in implementable collaborative efforts, or are we closing

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Water Plans ... (con't.)

the doors and creating enemies?

In addition to the issues identified above, the UWMP is likely to stimulate other questions regarding the feasibility of its implementation.

D) Is the plan cost conscious?

Often water costs and water rates are the figurative “gorillas in the room” that a district does not want to talk about when it comes to water planning. Thus, if you do not ask for this information, the issue may get overlooked. Questions you want to ask when you look at an UWMP include:

1) Can we afford the price tag? Just as not every household can afford a new Cadillac, and many do just fine with a used Ford; water agencies need to make sure that the systems they plan will be affordable to their ratepayers. Ultimately, because of the opportunity for Prop. 218 rate protests, the ratepayers can have the last word on their willingness to pay for water system improvements. For example, the Amador County Water Agency got a wake up call last year when the rate increase to help fund a new pipeline project was rejected by the ratepayers.

2) Are expenditures prioritized? Sometimes the list of water projects in an UWMP plans look like the list your kid rattles off to the department store Santa at Christmastime: long but unrealistic. Some capital plans look like the grocery list on days when you are in a hurry: just getting the basics you need to get by. A good Urban Water Management Plan will set priorities on its water supply projects list, so that the district is prepared for any eventuality from high growth prosperity to slow growth frugality.

3) Will the beneficiaries pay? If a

new facility is needed for water for new economic or residential development, what guarantees are in place to ensure that new development pays for the facility? For example, the Amador Water Agency borrowed funds to

Can we afford the price tag (of the UWMP)?

Ultimately, because of the opportunity for Prop. 218 rate protests, the ratepayers can have the last word ...

enhance future water supplies by piping the water that previously traveled through a leaky ditch and flume system. However, because the new development has not arrived, existing ratepayers are paying the vast majority of the payments on the debt.

4) Will the plan help us to recapture our taxes? Despite the efforts of local tax reduction enthusiasts, in normal

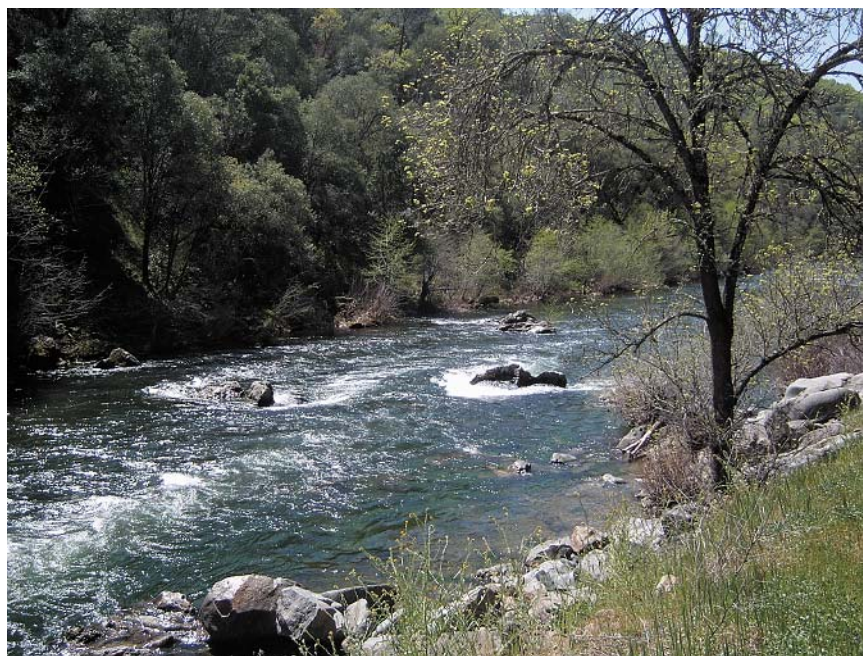
their taxes back in the form of water diversion, storage, delivery, purification, and reclamation project funding. These facilities in turn form the basis for future jobs, future businesses, future agriculture, and future water supply security for local residents. In only some cases is an UWMP required to disclose opportunities to fund new water supply projects. Nevertheless, it is always worth asking, does the Urban Water Management Plan prepare us to tap state and federal funding programs, so that we can get our tax money back to work for us in Calaveras County? In recent years CCWD has been very diligent in this regard.

5) Will the plan result in rates that are equitable? Will the plan allow for baseline usage at low rates for those on fixed incomes or with low incomes? This issue can come up in an Urban Water Management Plan when a district considers drought contingencies and demand management.

E) Is the plan consistent with other local values?

As with any plan, it is critical that a plan have the buy-in of the people for whom it is to be implemented. For example, if drought regulations are too onerous, people may object or not comply. People in Calaveras County have a diversity of values. For a plan to be acceptable to most people, it must respect these diverse perspectives. Does the water plan recognize

the wishes of some folks who want no part of water from the water agency? Does the plan include ways to encourage and instruct “do it yourselfers” who are willing to take their own efforts to install drip irrigation, water saving fixtures and



The Mokelumne River
photo courtesy Katherine Evatt

economic times, Calaveras County taxpayers pay about \$200 million State and Federal income taxes annually. This is a huge drain on the capital we need to invest in our future. Other cities, counties, and states are getting

appliances, capture rainwater, re-using grey water, etc.? Will the plan enhance or detract from the value of people's real property? Will the water plan protect waters for multiple uses including: fishing, mining, wading, swimming, boating, kayaking, rafting, and tubing?

F) Does the water plan support the County General Plan or interfere with its objectives?

Since the General Plan is trying to encourage economic and residential development in and near existing community centers, does the Urban Water Management Plan focus on providing infrastructure to these areas? Since the General Plan seeks to retain and enhance productive agricultural lands, does the Urban Water Management Plan provide water to support agriculture? Does it reduce residential dependence on groundwater needed by agricultural operations?

G) Does the plan facilitate water rights retention and acquisition?

Finally, because the State Water Board holds the keys to the County's use and development of its current water rights, its area of origin assignment, and any future water rights applications, we look at the Urban Water Management Plan to see if it will help us meet our existing water permit and license conditions, and help us secure future water permits and licenses.

In making water rights and water development decisions regarding Calaveras County, the State Water Board will look at the local need for water, the efficiency of delivery, the lack of waste, the diversity of beneficial uses (including fish and wildlife), the County's success in treating wastewater and returning clean water to the hydrologic system, and the degree to which the County will meet its water needs through conservation and reclamation/re-use.

Other cities, counties, and utilities seeking to protect their water interests may protest Calaveras County's water rights applications. These opponents

will exploit any weakness Calaveras County may have in these areas to convince the State Water Board to deny or to strictly limit the water right. Thus, a key part of water planning is to ensure that your district is keeping up with its competition when it comes to each of the items that the State Board will scrutinize.

The Calaveras Planning Coalition looks forward to commenting on the draft Urban Water Management Plan and hopes that you too will provide your input to CCWD.

Worth a Thousand Words

Have you ever read about a debate or vote at a Board of Supervisors meeting and thought, "Oh, I wish I could have been there to see that."

Or have you heard people refer to an earlier action of the Board and thought, "Wait a minute. Is that actually what happened?"

Now you can be there first-hand, or nearly so. CAP has joined with MyValleySprings.com to acquire, post and archive on the CAP website complete videos of every Board of Supervisors meeting. The videos are posted within a day of the meetings.

CAP and MVS.com began filming and posting videos of Planning Commission meetings in 2008. In addition, you can find on the CAP website full tapings of study sessions, public hearings and community meetings that have been part of the General Plan update process.

Why? CAP's mission is to promote community-based democracy in Calaveras County so that local citizens have the maximum possible control of quality of life issues that affect us. The video record serves our democratic involvement in at least three ways.

First, it gives us a front-row seat even when we can't be present. It is hard for even the most dedicated citizen to

attend every relevant event and meeting in person. There is no better way to know what was said, what decisions were made and why, than to see the whole meeting yourself, rather than just reading or hearing about it.

Second, it provides an accurate record we can go back to. Often, memories are unreliable. What is said now about what happened then can become very distorted over time. But the video record allows us to review the unfolding of events as they occurred.

Third, it holds public officials accountable. There they are, on the screen. Their performance is available for anyone interested to see. The unfiltered nature of the video record really allows citizens to be informed through their own direct witnessing, not just through reporting, through the opinions of others, or through any interpretation or spin.

All current and archived videos are easily located, by date, by clicking the "Video" box at the top of the CAP website home page. Enjoy a stroll through this amazing video record, or view the most recent meetings, or conduct a search for specific earlier postings. What the CAP website makes available to you is the most complete video record in the county.

If you find this service to be a valuable contribution to local democracy, we invite your financial support for CAP or MVS.com, or both. Donations of any size are welcome and are tax deductible.

Community Action Project (CAP), P.O. Box 2633, Murphys, CA 95247
MyValleySprings.com (MVS.com), P.O. Box 1501, Valley Springs, CA 95252

The CAP/CPC Newsletter is produced by the Calaveras Community Action Project. CAP's fiscal sponsor is [Ebbetts Pass Forest Watch](#).

For more information please contact CAP@goldrush.com.

Calaveras County

Agriculture Land / Golf Course Controversy 2001-2011



On March 15, 2011 the Calaveras County Board of Supervisors rejected a zoning code amendment that would have allowed golf course development on agricultural lands with a generic conditional use permit. This was only the latest chapter in a much longer struggle...

by Kathy Mayhew, co-founder,
Keep It Rural Calaveras

2001-2007 Golf Course Built Without Entitlements on AP Land

Calaveras County has been dealing with the issue of golf courses on agricultural land since 2001, when surrounding landowners in rural Wallace were told that Michael and Michelle Nemees were surveying to build a golf course on their recently purchased 280 acre ag-zoned property. That August, the County officially informed the Nemees that a golf course for public or private use was not allowed under existing Williamson Act contracts or County Code section 17.18 - Agriculture Preserve (AP). They built it anyway, denying until 2004 that grading was for a golf course, then saying they were putting in a few holes for personal use. In 2005, with 95 acres graded, irrigation infrastructure installed and greens construction in progress, the Nemees applied for entitlements to build an 18-hole commercial golf resort, with clubhouse, restaurant and bar, a 30-unit motel/lodge/spa, and a 13-lot housing subdivision.

Consistent with County policy, zoning code enforcement was “stayed” (halted, paused) during the application and environmental review process, pending Board action on the requested Recreation zoning amendment which would have brought the golf course into compliance.

Ignoring County warnings to cease

golf course construction until the Board of Supervisors processed their land use application, the Nemees completed work on the course, sold memberships in a private golf club, opened a pro shop and snack area, and began operating the course illegally in the spring of 2007, before the environmental impact report was even available for public review.

2007 KIRC Formed to Oppose Trinitas/EIR

Concerned neighbors—personally familiar with impacts of course construction and operation—organized in June 2007 as Keep It Rural, Calaveras (KIRC) and hired attorney Mark Connolly to represent our interests. KIRC joined with the Central Sierra Environmental Resource Center (CSERC) and various members of the Calaveras Planning Coalition (CPC) to oppose the project. CPC facilitator Tom Infusino provided us information on the County’s responsibilities and the public’s role under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), and outlined the most effective and appropriate ways to comment on an EIR.

Coalition comments led to a Revised Draft EIR which identified significant adverse impacts in almost every category. The project was not served by public sewer and water infrastructure. The roads failed to meet County standards. It was isolated from a community center, growth inducing, and fundamentally

incompatible with surrounding uses and the County’s right to farm ordinance. The Final EIR identified numerous conditions of approval, 72 mitigation measures and a dozen significant and unavoidable impacts.

On May 5, 2009, a Board majority—Supervisors Tom Tryon, Merita Callaway and Steve Wilensky—denied the Trinitas project in its entirety, citing its incompatibility, environmental impacts, and lack of public infrastructure. They concluded the Statement of Overriding Considerations provided no substantial evidence that public benefits outweighed adverse impacts. Ten days later, the Planning Director notified the Nemees to halt all golfing activity or face legal action for code violations.

“Golf as Agritourism” Appeal and Lawsuits

The Nemees appealed, claiming golf was “agritourism,” and filed the first of three lawsuits against the County in Calaveras Superior Court. Under County Code and policy, the appeal and lawsuits again put enforcement proceedings on hold. In June, Community Bank of San Joaquin began foreclosure proceedings against the Nemees for defaulting on loans approaching \$2.5 million. On October 6, 2009, the Board denied the agritourism appeal; but then discussed possible future consideration of golf courses as a conditional use on A1

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Ag. Land / Golf ... (con't.)

land, separate and distinct from Trinitas litigation and controversy. The next day, two days before the property was to be sold at auction, the Nemees filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection, triggering a Federal court stay on actions affecting their property. Liabilities exceeded \$7.5 million.

Zoning Amendments Proposed / Rejected

Last fall, Bankruptcy Court documents and testimony indicated lawsuit settlement talks were moving toward a possible political resolution, whereby the County could adopt zoning amendments making golf courses a conditional use on A1 land, rezone the Nemees' property from AP to A1, and process a conditional use permit application to legalize Trinitas golf course. The prospect of this process beginning in January 2011 and resolving within 120 days led the judge to postpone two significant Bankruptcy Court hearings, including the Bank's motion for relief from stay to foreclose on the property.

In mid-January, the County issued legal notice of a Planning Commission hearing on Project 2010-031—County Initiated Zoning Amendments related to golf courses and associated uses. The Negative Declaration and Initial Study claimed that the amendments were not associated with any site-specific project or pending application, and that adopting them would result in *no* environmental impacts.

CPC members who had opposed Trinitas and concerned citizens from all

five supervisorial districts challenged the proposed zoning amendments on several key points, including:

- the Trinitas connection, and the appearance that approving the Project could lead to granting legal entitlements to developers who spent a decade flagrantly violating County law;
- the Negative Declaration's inadequacy under CEQA, which requires preparation of an EIR when a fair argument is made that significant adverse impacts may result from a project;
- the proposal's inconsistency with the existing County General Plan, and the inappropriateness of amending the A1 zoning district before completing the General Plan update; and
- golf courses' inconsistency with the purpose of the A1 zone and the incompatibility of such intense commercial activities with surrounding agricultural and rural residential uses.

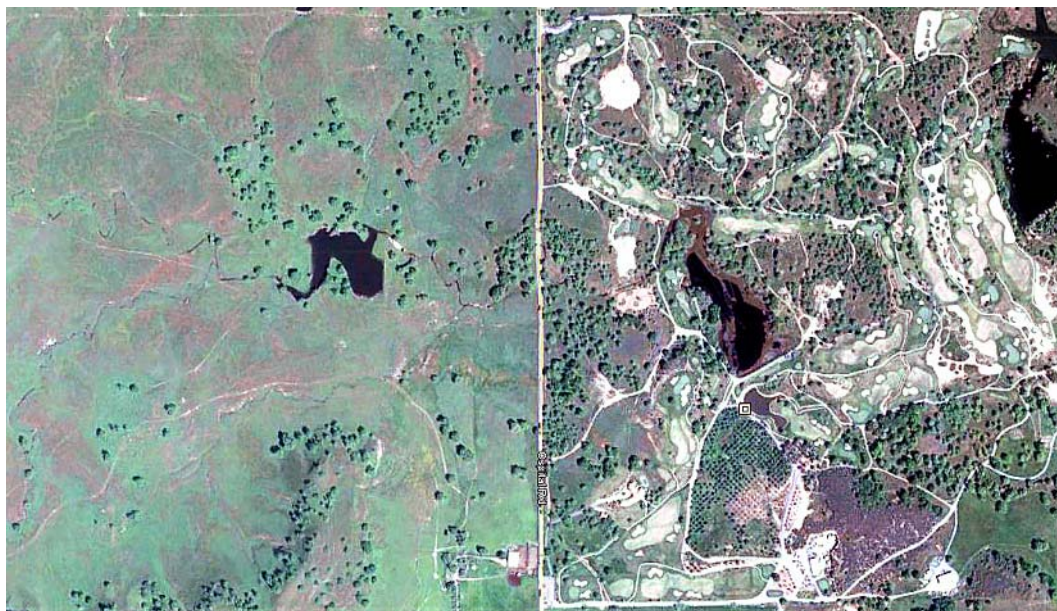
Mark Connolly and Tom Infusino presented strong legal arguments for project denial, and everyone who submitted comments and spoke out against the negative declaration and amendments before the Planning Commissioner and the Supervisors played an important role in building the case against the project.

On February 17, the Planning Commission voted to recommend adoption of the negative declaration, by a 3-2 majority, (Bill Mason, Ted Allured and Lyle Wallace), but *against* recommending adoption of the zoning amendments 2-3 (Suzanne Kuehl, Fawn McLaughlin and Allured).

On March 15, a Board majority of Tryon, Callaway and Wilensky voted *against* the negative declaration, and indicated their opposition extended to the proposed zoning amendments. Since the zoning amendments could not be passed without adopting the environmental document, no further vote was taken, and the project was rejected. Supervisors discussed a variety of conditions and standards that golf courses on A1 land

should meet, but that were missing from the proposed zoning code, including: recycled or surface water for irrigation, access to public sewer and potable water service, proximity to community centers and major roads, and compatibility with surrounding agricultural uses. The majority concluded that zoning reforms related to golf courses should be handled as part of

the General Plan update process, and amended—with appropriate conditions and performance standards—when Title 17 zoning ordinances are reviewed for consistency with the new Plan.



The Ridge at Trinitas golf course (right side of photo), as seen from outer space. Ospital Road is the white line running up and down in the center of the photograph.

Back to Bankruptcy Court

Elimination of the last non-judicial path to legalization for Trinitas put its fate back with U.S. Bankruptcy Court Judge Ronald H. Sargis. On March 23, the judge denied, without prejudice, the Bank's motion for relief from stay to foreclose; but he ordered the debtors to pay the Bank \$6,360 per month, starting March 30, for the erosion of their collateral caused by long delays in the agritourism adversary proceeding. Debtors were also ordered to pay nearly \$14,450 in property taxes due April 10.

A trial date was set for October 13-14, but the trial may never take place. Before October, the Debtors must make all required payments on time and submit an Amended Disclosure Statement and an *effective* Reorganization Plan. According to the Bank's attorney, Dennis M. Hauser, no effective Reorganization Plan is possible, because, even were the Debtors to gain entitlements to operate the course as agritourism, Trinitas could never generate sufficient revenue from the golf course alone to repay secured and unsecured liabilities now exceeding \$9 million. Further, the judge indicated that if the Debtors default on a single payment, he will immediately reconsider granting a motion for relief or dismissal of the Chapter 11 case, which would also prevent the trial from occurring.

What's Next?

Unless a judge overturns the County's determination that golf courses are *not* agritourism, Trinitas golf course will remain an illegal use on agriculture land, regardless of who owns the property. Under County Code, it must be abated. Once the lawsuits and bankruptcy proceedings are resolved and enforcement stays are lifted, the County can begin proceedings to stop the golfing and golf course maintenance and irrigation and return the land to permitted agricultural use.

Events are still unfolding, and Keep It Rural, Calaveras will continue to monitor the proceedings in Court and at the County, and keep you posted.

CAP: Bringing Together Community Groups & Individuals

The Community Action Project and the Calaveras Planning Coalition bring together community groups and individuals who are dedicated to planning for a better future for Calaveras County.

The CAP / CPC Mission:

Promote community-based democracy in Calaveras County so that local citizens have the maximum possible control of quality of life issues that affect them.

Our Vision:

- Preserve the rural quality of life in our County
- Protect our natural environment and our agricultural lands
- Promote locally owned viable businesses
- Provide jobs and housing for all residents
- Preserve our historical and cultural resources

The Values that Drive our Work:

- Strive to encourage the widest possible public participation in decision making
- Seek educational and economic opportunities for all citizens
- Maintain an open and transparent decision making process
- Create change and growth using a positive approach based on principles that protect both our citizens and our environment

The Calaveras County Board of Supervisors meets Tuesdays at 9:00 am in the Supervisors Chambers at Government Center, 891 Mountain Ranch Road, San Andreas. Agendas are available on the County's website <http://co.calaveras.ca.us/cc/Departments/Supervisors/SupervisorsAgendaMinutes.aspx>

We Need Your Support

CAP is committed to providing information about county issues that is both timely and of the highest quality.

To do that we are ready to launch a total redesign of our information-packed website and to create regular email updates for all those on our list. Recent generous donations have made it possible for us to launch these new initiatives, including the prompt posting of video recordings of all Board of Supervisors, Planning Commission and General Plan meetings.

We need you to help us maintain this for the long term. Please consider a donation to CAP that is as generous as you are able to make it. Checks may be made payable to EPFW/CAP (EPFW is the fiscal sponsor of CAP and is a 501c3 not-for-profit organization), and mailed to CAP, PO Box 2633, Murphys, CA 95247.

If you would like to be on our email list, or know someone who would like to be, please send your email address to cap@goldrush.com.

We are deeply grateful for your support and participation!

The Calaveras County Planning Commission meets every first and third Thursday at 9:00 am, unless otherwise posted, in the Supervisors Chambers at Government Center, 891 Mountain Ranch Road, San Andreas. Agendas are available on the County's website <http://co.calaveras.ca.us/cc/Departments/PlanningDepartment/PlanningCommission.aspx>

CAP and CPC Will Be At Sierra Green Days, Saturday & Sunday, April 30 and May 1

The next step in living a “greener” life is to have a great weekend! That would be the weekend of April 30/May 1 at Ironstone Vineyards, Murphys, where you can enjoy the second annual Sierra Green Days. No, that’s not a typo! The third “e” was added to emphasize the weekend’s themes: economy, ecology, energy. This is a truly fun, informative, inspiring event; plan now to attend.

The vision for this event is to bring the community together to experience and be inspired about ways we can live that are truly sustainable and that yield vibrant communities full of life, creativity and celebration. The two days of presentations, workshops, informational booths, and fun activities expand on the wonderful diversity and depth of last year’s inaugural Sierra Green Days event. Education in health and wellness, sustainable building, and energy efficiency will be offered, along with plenty of local entertainment (arts, dance, musicians, story-tellers, drum circle), local delicious organic food, and three special community celebrations.

The Community Action Project (CAP) and the Calaveras Planning Coalition (CPC) will lead the path to sustainability in the main exhibit room. All good design and building begins with good planning, and we’ll be there to be a voice for wise planning for Calaveras County and the Sierra Nevada region. You’ll have the opportunity to send a message to our county decision-makers and accompany it with a photo of you expressing your gratitude for particular planning options that you support. If the new General Plan map has been released by that date, you’ll be able to see it and



CAP Co-chair Joyce Techel at the
2010 Sierra Green Days

comment on it at our booth.

This builds on our very successful photo opportunity at last year’s Sierra Green Days booth. We asked people why they supported Alternative B (community-centered growth) for the new General Plan, and we took their picture holding their answer. These were presented to the Board of Supervisors at the hearing on the alternatives, and by a 5-0 vote of the Board Alternative B became the official choice for our county. We have shown, again and again, that our thoughtful and consistent participation in county planning does make a difference and has changed the conversation on issues of planning and future development.

The rest of the layout will take you to area businesses that address every aspect of building a greener home: energy audits, architects, builders, building products. Bring your questions and your calendar to schedule appointments with these great folks! Talks by many local experts will take place throughout the day, commencing with our own CPC facilitator and land use attorney, Tom Infusino.

Sierra Green Days will create a virtual village of sustainability throughout the grounds of Ironstone Vineyards. You’ll find a community marketplace of great vendors and some good food to see you through the day. The event

also showcases local nonprofit groups, all of which are eligible for free booth space. This is a great opportunity for promoting and supporting your favorite local community organizations.

Special highlights of the weekend will be two community celebrations, a Weaving of the May Pole on Saturday at 1:00 PM and the World Spirit Celebration on Sunday at 1:30 PM. One of the major highlights of last year’s event, the World Spirit Celebration is an affirmation of hope and joy from many spiritual traditions. Nurturing our souls in these times is as important, if not more important, as adding solar panels and growing our own food.

New to the weekend this year is the first Green Awards dinner on Saturday evening at 6:00 PM. It will feature a local, seasonal, organic menu with a raffle and silent auction and a time for people to share ideas and interests, dreams and visions.

Sierra Green Days is a major educational and fundraising event for FoCuS, the Foothill Collaborative for Sustainability. The event is produced and created by CSEBA (Central Sierra Ecological Building Association) and Health and Wellness, two of the many “seedgroups” within FoCuS.

The bottom line: put the dates on your calendar and be there! Be sure to visit us at the CAP/CPC booth. The event runs from 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM both days.

BREAKING NEWS!

CAP will be one of the recipients of the first annual Sierra Green Days awards at the dinner on Saturday evening. Make a date to join us and celebrate!

Where: Ironstone Vineyards, Murphys, CA

When: Saturday April 30 and Sunday May 1, 2011 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM

Free Admission! Want more info? www.SierraGreenDays.com