



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

Donate

In this edition of the ReCAP...

1. [Next CPC Meeting](#)

2. [BOS & PC Meetings](#)
3. [Fossils of mastodon discovered near Valley Springs](#)
4. [San Andreas Voters Approve Measure A](#)
5. [Celebrate your birthday with CAP](#)
6. [Did you know...Drought is the new normal in California](#)
7. [Humans suck even worse than we thought, study finds](#)
8. [Biden directs \\$1 billion for severe weather preparedness](#)
9. [California to invest in sustainable groundwater management](#)
10. [Video: Home Outward - Hardening homes against wildfire](#)
11. [The Barbed Wire by RCRC - new forest task force, Feinstein on Wildfires and more](#)
12. [Sierra Nevada Funding Resources](#)
13. [Nature Note: Mother Mergansers](#)
14. [Poem: Balk by David Axelrod](#)

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

June 7, 2021 3 P.M. - 5 P.M.

New Members Welcome at CPC Meetings

Organizations, groups, and individuals (known as associate members) 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 and CPC meetings will be held online via Zoom until restrictions are lifted by the Public Health Department.

BOS Regular Meeting Tuesday, June 8, 2021

Agenda Upcoming

Planning Commission Meeting June 10, 2021

Cancelled

Local News

Fossils of mastodon, other ancient mammals millions of years old discovered near Valley Springs

Giuseppe Ricapito / Union Democrat / May 21, 2021

East Bay Municipal Utility District Ranger Naturalist Greg Francek was patrolling familiar ground on the perimeter of the Camanche and Pardee reservoirs in July last year when he spotted what appeared to be a petrified tree buried partially in the ground.

"It caught my eye as unusual," said Francek, who has a background in paleontology and geology. "I stopped in my tracks and looked down at my feet. This is an area I patrol and spend a lot of time in. I had no idea that existed here."

The discovery spurred an archaeological investigation that unearthed a treasure-trove of late Miocene-era fossils — two-tusked mastodon, four-tusked gomphothere, rhinoceros, camel, horse, bird, fish, tortoise and tapir — all of which roamed the area, now known as the Mokelumne River watershed near Valley

Springs, 5 to 10 million years ago.

"I can't imagine this is going to happen again," Francek said. "The implications to science, it's very important. There may not be as many sites in California which are as significant as this."

Most significant about the find is the volume of the specimens and their diversity, buried and fossilized on or near the shores of the reservoirs and preserving an epoch of North American biological history rarely observed by scientists.

"It's a find once every 10 million years," joked Nelsy Rodriguez, spokeswoman for EBMUD.

The Lodi-based district owns the reservoirs and land surrounding them, comprising approximately 28,000 acres of protected area in the Mokelumne River watershed. The water serves as the primary drinking water source for 1.4 million people in the East Bay Area, Rodriguez said.

The discovery area includes small excavation sites within a geographic range of 10 linear miles, Rodriguez said. The district is not releasing the exact location of the digs in order to protect the fossils and discourage any hobbyist explorations on the protected land. The excavation does not disrupt the flow of water.

The discoveries are considered to represent species that lived long before the appearance of bipedal hominids — of which human beings are likely the most well-known ancestors. And though reconstructions of the flora and fauna composition of the region can be largely speculative, the discoveries may assist in filling in some of the gaps.

The closest modern comparison could be like an African savanna, Francek said, long before the Sierra Nevada mountain range arose approximately 4 million years ago in the midst of tectonic shifts and cyclones of volcanic activity.

"That's something we're trying to figure out," he said. "Based on studies in the region, the landscape was changing from more forested to grasslands. There were probably river deltas and river and stream channels that attracted a lot of wildlife. That would be the situation we would have here because we have so many animal burials occurring."

Treading over the top of this prehistoric savannah would have been the great beasts of mammalia, tens of millions of years following the mass extinction of dinosaurs and some reptiles 65 million years ago.

These days, outside of a water mandate, the reservoirs serve as a recreation site for thousands of people. Still, the former titans of the land were buried, preserved and turned to stone underneath the ground. The excavation of the land has been ongoing since Francek's discovery, involving the EBMUD as well as paleontologists and geologists from the Department of Geological and Environmental Sciences at California State University, Chico.

"Experts from Sierra College and Sierra Nevada University, California Geological Survey, Environmental Science Associates, California State University Sacramento, the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles and other national and international institutions also are participating in the ongoing recovery and fossil identification process," a news release stated. "An official geochronology study to date the terrain more precisely is underway."

The discoveries now count in the hundreds for individual specimens from a dozen prehistoric species, including the massive mastodon, an elephant-like pachyderm known for its exaggerated and trademark tusks. A tooth of the creature found by the scientists is about as large as a human hand.

There were also the fossils of a tapir (what may have appeared like a piglet, but which is actually more biologically like a rhino), a gigantic camel the size of a giraffe, a dog-sized Merychippus (or a three-toed horse), a squat-horned Miocene rhinoceros, ground-bound tortoises, and the gomphothere.

The gomphothere, which means "welded beast" in Greek, is an extinct creature between 6 to 8 feet tall at their shoulders. The removal of a 350-pound fossil required a backhoe, the EBMUD website said.

"This new find is highly significant for both the sheer volume and diversity of the fossils," said Dr. Russell Shapiro, professor of the CSU Chico Department of Geological and Environmental Sciences. "This was a profound juncture in time when land animals evolved as forestland shifted to grassland. The partnership with EBMUD allows our students — the next generation of field scientists — an invaluable, first-hand experience from the discovery site to the preparation and the protection of these amazing fossils."

The fossils are owned in perpetuity by EBMUD. Many are on display in Chico and others are available to scientists at the University of California Museum of Paleontology in Berkeley.

"This historic discovery has revealed that the Mokelumne Watershed plays a much deeper role in our understanding of the natural history of North America," said EBMUD Board President Doug Linney in a news release. "It is simply wondrous that these fossils will help fill gaps in our understanding of the formation of the region and planet."

Contact Giuseppe Ricapito at gricapito@uniondemocrat.net or (209) 588-4526.

From CPC Member Colleen Platt...

"If anyone besides me is interested, Chico State and EBMUD published/ posted even more fascinating accounts of the fossil discovery, ongoing excavations & research with students and faculty, excavation & fossil photos with explanations, a virtual tour, more... (the Calaveras Enterprise had a good in-depth article "Unearthing the Past" which led me to these pages, thank you Enterprise http://www.calaverasenterprise.com/news/article_9a0b4ce2-bd9e-11eb-98e4-8ff02cd17b4b.html).

Chico State: "UNEARTHING CALIFORNIA'S PREHISTORIC PAST"

<https://today.csuchico.edu/unearthing-californias-prehistoric-past/>

Take the Water Survey Now!

This survey is being conducted by regional water management agencies to support a study of community water and wastewater needs in Alpine, Amador, Calaveras, Stanislaus and Tuolumne Counties. The information will help these agencies advocate for and seek grant and other funding to meet these community needs.

San Andreas voters approve Measure A

Enterprise report / May 26, 2021

On May 4, San Andreas voters approved Measure A, which institutes a special tax to increase funding for the San Andreas Fire Protection District (SAFPD).

The tax will generate about \$250,000 a year, and will make it possible to pay stipends to keep volunteer firefighters at the station 24 hours a day, seven days a week, SAFPD Board President Ken Snyder said.

“Before this, we had to hope we’d earn enough money sending strike teams to state fires to cover all our costs,” Snyder said.

During some years, the district did not take in substantial strike team earnings, forcing it to dip into its reserves to staff the station.

In order to pass, the measure required two-thirds approval. The measure passed with the approval of 68.25% of voters, with 602 voting in favor and 280 voting against.

“Owners of most improved properties such as homes or businesses will pay \$165 a year, billed with their property taxes,” a press release from SAFPD reads. “The owners of apartment buildings and manufactured homes in mobile home parks will pay \$66 per year per unit. The owners of unimproved (bare) lots will pay \$41.24.”

The measure contains exemptions for some property owners.

“Owners of bare lots that are next to a paying home lot under the same ownership can receive an exemption for the bare lots,” the release reads. “Low-income homeowners age 62 and older can

be exempted from the special tax.”

In order to receive an exemption, property owners can complete a form which will be posted on the fire district’s website. The form will also be available at the fire district’s office beginning in July.

“We are grateful to the community for supporting San Andreas Fire’s work to protect lives and property,” Snyder said. “Many volunteers went door-to-door and also did other work to get the word out about Measure A. Without them, this would not have been possible.”

On Tuesday, the Calaveras County Board of Supervisors adopted a resolution declaring the results of the May 4 election.

How many more candles, slippers, potted plants, or power drills do you need?



When your next birthday rolls around, ask your friends and family to make a donation in your name to the **Community Action Project/Calaveras Planning Coalition** instead of giving you a toaster or a set of socket wrenches. Celebrate your birthday and a great cause at the same time. It's easy. Here are some tips.

1. Tell people about CAP/CPC and why our mission is important to you. Tell your story. That's what they want to hear.
 2. Spread the word with Facebook, Twitter, or whatever platform you prefer. Reach out with personal emails, notes, texts, or let your birthday wishes be known in person.
 3. Make your birthday the deadline for gift giving.
 4. Ask everyone to be generous, but let them know that no gift is too small and all gifts will be greatly appreciated. You may also ask for a specific amount, \$5, \$10, \$25, \$50, \$100 or whatever is appropriate. You know your audience.
 5. Please direct your birthday well-wishers to www.calaverascap.com. Ask them to click on "donate" or mail their birthday donation to CAP/CPC, PO Box 935, San Andreas, CA 95249.
 6. Ask your birthday buddies to let CAP/CPC know they are donating in your honor.
 7. Another option is to just ask guests to bring your gift to the big birthday bash you can't wait to have now that you've been vaccinated against Covid-19.
- CAP/CPC will feature the most compelling stories in the ReCAP and on our website.
And many happy returns of the day!

***Did you know...
Drought is the new normal in
California***



"The wax and wane of wet years have given many a false sense of security; however, California has entered "a new normal" of significantly more dry years resulting in lower lake levels, less groundwater, depleted aquifers and skimpier Sierra Nevada snowpack."

[Read the full article here](#)

Regional News

Humans suck even worse than we thought, study finds

Mike Wehner / BGR.com / May 22, 2021

If you're a human — and if you're not, how are you reading this? — you've probably come to terms with the fact that you're part of the problem. Earth is headed toward a cliff and the overwhelming majority of very smart people who study our planet say it's because we can't stop messing things up. We fill the oceans with plastics, burn old dinosaurs to keep our houses warm and our cars moving, and change the landscape of entire continents, all while pretending our actions will be without consequences. Sigh.

While a lot of research has gone into revealing how dramatically we have messed the planet up with things like fossil fuel and pollution, new research suggests that our more recent habits are only a portion of the problem. Humans, it seems, have been severely stressing Earth out for up to 4,600 years, and

perhaps even longer. The work, which was published this week in the journal [Science](#), links dramatic changes in Earth's vegetation with the same window of time in which human agriculture exploded.

The researchers used hundreds of fossil pollen records to draw a timeline of sorts, stretching back over 18,000 years. After plotting all the data it became clear that there was a serious shift in the rate at which Earthly vegetation changed. The increase in vegetation changes beginning in the Late Holocene was even more dramatic than the changes in global vegetation brought on by the end of the most recent ice age. The Late Holocene also happens to be the period when humans began relying heavily on agriculture to keep growing populations well-fed and alive.

“Using a compilation of 1181 fossil pollen sequences and newly developed statistical methods, we detect a worldwide acceleration in the rates of vegetation compositional change beginning between 4.6 and 2.9 thousand years ago that is globally unprecedented over the past 18,000 years in both magnitude and extent,” the researchers write. “Late Holocene rates of change equal or exceed the deglacial rates for all continents, which suggests that the scale of human effects on terrestrial ecosystems exceeds even the climate-driven transformations of the last deglaciation.”

The findings are both interesting and troubling. The narratives surrounding humans and climate change have long been centered on fossil fuel use and pollution. If we can just get those things under control, we think, we can prevent the Earth from tumbling over the feared “tipping point” that leads to our planet's doom. We still absolutely need to reduce our reliance on fossil fuels, embrace green energy, and stop throwing our trash everywhere, but it's also likely that things we might not think of as being capable of dramatically changing the planet, like farming, are more powerful than we assumed. In our quest to ensure our species is safe, healthy, and plump, we've been changing the Earth in unexpected way.

Biden Directs \$1 Billion for Severe Weather Preparedness

Jordan Fabian and Brian K. Sullivan / Bloomberg / May 24, 2021

President Joe Biden announced on Monday a doubling of federal spending on preparations for severe weather events, the president's latest move to put climate change at the center of his domestic agenda. The administration will provide \$1 billion this year to state, local and tribal governments to prevent damage from floods, hurricanes, wildfires and other natural disasters, the White House said in a statement. Biden is also directing the National Aeronautic and Space Administration to collect more advanced climate data.

“We all know these storms are coming, and we're going to be prepared,” Biden said during a visit to the Federal Emergency Management Agency's headquarters. “We have to be ready.”

The president has pledged to address climate change, including a push to build roads, bridges and seaports better able to withstand storms that are increasing in severity due to global warming. The approach stands in contrast to the views of President Donald Trump, who called climate change a “hoax” and disputed its connection to extreme weather events.

The money will come from funding already allocated for 2021 and will be distributed through the Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities program. The announcement comes one week after Biden signed an executive order directing the government come up with a strategy to measure the risks climate change poses to public and private financial assets.

Forecasters believe 2021 will have another overactive hurricane season. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration predicted as many as 20 storm systems could be named this year. Of those, six to 10 would develop into hurricanes, and three to five would become major storms with winds of 111 miles per hour or more. A storm is named when its winds reach 39 miles per hour (63 kilometers per hour) and an average season has 14 such systems. The Atlantic Ocean has produced one storm so far this year with Tropical Storm Ana emerging to the east of Bermuda over the weekend. The short-lived system has already fallen apart, but it is the record seventh year in a row storms have begun before the official June 1 start of the six-month season. Atlantic storms are closely watched because they can disrupt global energy, agriculture, and insurance markets. The Gulf of Mexico is home to about 16% of the U.S.'s crude oil production and 2% of its gas output. In addition, about 48% of American refining capacity is located along the Gulf Coast, and Florida is the world's second-largest source of orange juice.

In addition to that, trillions of dollars of real estate from Mexico to Maine are vulnerable to hurricane strike. As the world's oceans have warmed, storms have become more destructive. Last year, a record 30 storms formed in the Atlantic, which left more than 400 people dead and caused over \$40 billion in damage and losses across North America. The National Hurricane Center resorted to using Greek letters to designate storms because so many took shape last year.

Biden's infrastructure proposal includes \$50 billion for improving resilience across the electric grid, transportation networks and cities and part of the money would go toward retrofitting buildings to make them better able to handle the effects of climate change.

California to Invest in Sustainable Groundwater Management



GOVERNOR'S BUDGET PROPOSAL: INVESTMENTS IN SUSTAINABLE GROUNDWATER MANAGEMENT

The Governor's May 14 budget proposes to invest more than \$1 billion to protect and better manage groundwater. On average, Californians rely on groundwater for 40 percent of our annual supplies in average and wet years and nearly 60 percent in drought years. The proposed investments would help address immediate needs in this second year of drought and also support longer-term, local efforts to bring groundwater basins into sustainable conditions for future generations. In the San Joaquin and Sacramento valleys, the Central Coast, and other groundwater-dependent parts of California, more than 260 local groundwater sustainability agencies (GSA) have been formed since the last drought in 2014 and are planning and implementing projects. The Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) requires these agencies to achieve sustainable groundwater conditions by 2040 or risk intervention by the state. The Governor's proposed budget, which requires legislative approval, would significantly increase state financial and technical support for the locally-driven transition to sustainable groundwater management.

PROPOSED INVESTMENTS IN THE GOVERNOR'S BUDGET:

- **\$500 million to the Department of Conservation for multi-benefit land repurposing** through local planning and collaboration to guide reuse of farmland where more acres are currently irrigated than groundwater aquifers can support. A multi-benefit land repurposing grant program would support regions in their efforts to reduce irrigated crops in ways that protect public health, ecosystems, and local economies.
- **\$300 million to the Department of Water Resources (DWR) for SGMA implementation**, including infrastructure projects to improve water supply security, water quality, and/or the reliability of drinking water wells through the implementation of SGMA, to provide technical assistance grants to ensure broad engagement of under-represented communities in SGMA implementation, and to provide under-represented communities with direct and tangible drinking water quality and supply benefits where analysis and mitigation are needed.
- **\$10 million to DWR to accelerate collection and reporting of subsidence data**. This satellite-based method measures changes in ground surface elevations over broad areas caused by the over-pumping of groundwater basins. The data will help water managers anticipate damage to water infrastructure, including levees and canals.
- **As part of the \$49 million to DWR for critical data collection**, the groundwater elements include:
 - **enhanced groundwater monitoring** near disadvantaged communities, interconnected surface water and groundwater systems, and groundwater-dependent ecosystems. The installation of dedicated monitoring wells will improve data used by the state agencies, GSAs, disadvantaged communities, and environmental interests.

- **support an open-source groundwater accounting tool** guidance, and data standards that can help GSAs, landowners, environmental interests, and communities manage the transition to sustainable groundwater use and support efficient and equitable water markets. This includes a state-local pilot project to inventory abandoned and active agricultural and drinking water wells to inform water accounting and improve the management of groundwater quantity and quality.
- **aerial electromagnetic surveys of groundwater basins** building on current efforts to fill data gaps and improve understanding and management of interconnected surface water and groundwater systems, groundwater-dependent ecosystems, and impacts to drinking water wells. This information will support implementation of shovel-ready recharge projects identified in GSPs.

OTHER INVESTMENTS PROPOSED BY THE GOVERNOR THAT WILL BENEFIT GROUNDWATER MANAGEMENT:

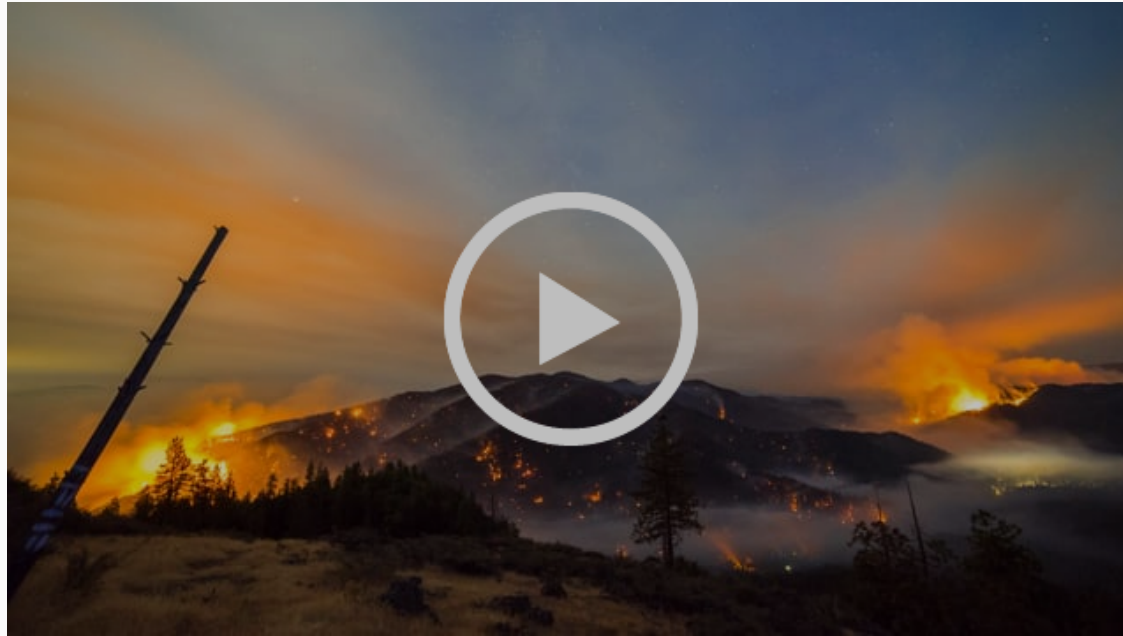
- **\$200 million** to repair subsidence-damaged canals in the San Joaquin Valley.
- **\$150 million** for water recycling projects and groundwater cleanup projects.
- **\$150 million** to assist small water supply systems (those that serve 15-2,999 connections) with drought contingency planning.
- **\$150 million** to larger urban water districts for drought response and water supply projects.
- **\$60 million** for grants to incentivize agricultural water use efficiency.
- **\$25 million** for detailed, watershed-scale climate analyses to inform water managers about likely future climate effects.
- **\$20 million** for grants to local water districts to monitor and clean up groundwater contaminated by the chemical PFAS.
- **\$13 million** to provide California's share of the costs of a \$100 million federal desalination research hub that aims to reduce the energy consumption and cost associated with de-salting water, including brackish groundwater and agricultural runoff.
- **\$12 million** to address drought-related drinking water emergencies.

The Governor's proposed budget, now under consideration by the Legislature, addresses short- and long-term groundwater management needs comprehensively, with support for planning, projects, data, and monitoring, and an emphasis on meeting the needs of groundwater-dependent disadvantaged communities.



Outward:

Hardening our Homes against Wildfire



A new report "Working from the Home Outward: Lessons from California for Federal Wildfire Policy" features many wildfire experts. This short video features excerpts from interviews conducted for the report from a handful of those experts.

From "The Barbed Wire"

A publication by the RCRC

State Relaunches Forest task Force Under New Name, New Mission

On Thursday, the state relaunched the former Forest Management Task Force with a new set of goals guided by the Wildfire Prevention and Forest Resilience Action Plan released in January. Rechristened as the Wildfire Prevention and Forest Resilience Task Force, the newly reorganized team has been streamlined and will be guided by

an Executive Committee that spans all levels of government, including RCRC Chair Supervisor Stacy Corless, Mono County among its membership.

The Task Force has been refocused on implementing the 99 tasks included in the Action Plan, which range from wildfire fuels treatment to forest restoration to community fire hardening to biomass utilization to recreation and tourism opportunities on forests and wildlands. The meeting signaled the first of planned quarterly meetings by the Task Force, with regional meetings being scheduled for community participation and input in between.

For more information, visit the California Wildfire Prevention and Forest Resilience Task Force [website here](#).

PG&E Provides Additional Information on Impact of New PSPS Criteria on Projected Size and Frequency of Future PSPS Events

On Thursday, PG&E submitted a [detailed response](#) to the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) outlining how its proposed Public Safety Power Shutoff (PSPS) criteria may impact the size and frequency of PSPS events across their service territory.

PG&E has been under intense pressure from U.S. District Court Judge William Alsup, who is overseeing PG&E's criminal probation, to dramatically reduce the risk of utility-caused wildfire, including through expanded use of PSPS events to prevent these wildfire ignitions from electrical equipment. While Judge Alsup recently backed away from requiring PG&E to take specific actions to deenergize power lines that are at risk of being struck by nearby trees, PG&E is using its discretion to revise criteria it uses to determine when power lines should be shut down to give greater consideration to tree overstrike risk.

The CPUC requested more granular information about the specific impacts that these new criteria would have in communities across the state, including how many more events counties may experience and how many more customers may be impacted in those counties. Among the most significant projections, PG&E notes that the new criteria could result in:

- Butte, El Dorado, Nevada, Placer, Shasta, Sierra, Siskiyou, Tehama, and Yuba Counties experiencing an additional 1.9 to 2.5 PSPS events per year.
- ***Amador, Calaveras, Humboldt, Lake, Madera, Napa, Plumas, Sonoma, Trinity, and Tuolumne Counties experiencing an additional 1 to 1.7 PSPS events per year.***
- Trinity County experiencing a 59% increase in average PSPS event duration.
- Shasta and Tehama Counties experiencing a 39-42% increase in average PSPS event duration.
- Contra Costa, Mariposa, Mendocino, and Sierra Counties experiencing a 20%-29% increase in average PSPS event duration.
- Contra Costa, Shasta, and Trinity Counties experiencing a 108% to 149% increase in the average number of customers impacted by a PSPS event.
- Humboldt and Mendocino Counties experiencing a 69% to 82% increase in the average number of customers impacted by a PSPS event.
- ***Amador, Calaveras, Monterey, Nevada, Plumas, and Tuolumne Counties experiencing a 20%-36% increase in the average number of customers impacted by a PSPS event.***

For more information on PG&E's PSPS criteria or CPUC's de-energization rulemakings, please contact John Kennedy or Leigh Kammerich by email or call (916) 447-4806.

Bill of the Week: AB 537 (Quirk) - Communications: Wireless Telecommunications and Broadband Facilities

In a joint letter last month, the Rural County Representatives of California (RCRC), Urban Counties of California (UCC), California State Association of Counties (CSAC), and the American Planning Association, California Chapter (APA), expressed the position of "Oppose Unless Amended" to AB 537, which is intended to expedite wireless telecommunications facility permitting.

Authored by Assembly Member Bill Quirk (D- Hayward), AB 537 attempts to expedite the siting of wireless facilities by establishing additional limitations on local government permit application review with confusing processing timeframes and unclear impacts. Specifically, the proposed language provides that when a

telecommunication siting application is deemed approved, “all necessary permits shall be deemed issued,” which creates a new construct that could make it more difficult for local agencies to address deficiencies related to health and safety requirements. This is especially concerning in the public right-of-way where pedestrians and automotive traffic intermix, requiring thorough mitigation planning.

While in its current form AB 537 is ambiguous and problematic, RCRC and our partners continue to seek a mutually agreeable compromise that will appropriately expediate deployment of high-speed internet service to California’s unserved and underserved communities.

The joint letter may be [viewed here](#). For additional information, contact Tracy Rhine [by email](#) or call 916-447-4806.

Hometown California Gets Up Close with Rich Gordon, California Forestry Association President and CEO

On the newest episode of Hometown California, Paul A. Smith sits down for an up-close interview with Rich Gordon, President and CEO of the California Forestry Association (soon-to-be retired).

Aside from being at the CA Forestry Association, Mr. Gordon has a long history of service in California. Learn what sparked his interest in getting involved with public education and public policy making, when he ran (and won) a seat on the San Mateo County Board of Education—his first elected position. After 13 years on the San Mateo County Board of Supervisors, find out why Rich still describes it as “the best electoral job in California.” Find out what motivated him to become President of one of RCRC’s sister organizations, the California State Association of Counties (CSAC), and hear about highlights of his leadership years. Listen to hear about how Rich fell in love with rural California, went on to serve in the California State Assembly, and so much more. His fascinating journey, from his first elected position nearly 20 years ago to his current role, will give you a glimpse of how his experiences have impacted Rich Gordon’s understanding of California’s rural counties. [Listen now](#).

Senator Dianne Feinstein on Wildfires in California

On Wednesday, Senator Dianne Feinstein [laid out her plan](#) to introduce her Wildfire Emergency Act next week. The bill would fund wildfire mitigation projects, harden critical infrastructure against wildfires, and bolster wildfire workforce development. In particular, the bill would include critical elements to reduce the potential for future fires and protect California's infrastructure from the fires that do occur.

Additionally, last week Senator Feinstein announced that the Government Accountability Office (GAO) has agreed to assess the hiring and retention of federal firefighters at the five agencies responsible for wildland fire management. Senator Feinstein, along with Senator Alex Padilla, requested this review in an April 27th letter and urged the GAO to review the current job series and pay scale of the U.S. Forest Service and U.S. Department of the Interior.

At the state level, RCRC remains engaged on its 2021 Fire Prevention and Response Package with advocacy efforts designed to help increase the pace and scale of forest management, restoration, and wildfire prevention in California. To read more about the Package, please see a [previous Barbed Wire article here](#)

House Transportation and Infrastructure Bill to Spur High-Speed Broadband Projects in Rural Communities

Last week, the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee Ranking Member Sam Graves (R-Missouri) introduced the Eliminating Barriers to Rural Internet Development Grant Eligibility (E-BRIDGE) Act, which removes hurdles for broadband projects under Economic Development Administration (EDA) grants, including last-mile efforts that often delay rural broadband deployment. It also ensures that local communities can partner with the private sector in carrying out broadband projects and gives communities more flexibility in complying with their funding match requirements.

[read here](#)

Bill To Federally Legalize Marijuana Filed by GOP Lawmakers

Last week, Representatives Dave Joyce (R-Ohio) and Don Young (R-Alaska) introduced the [Common Sense Cannabis Reform for Veterans, Small Businesses, and Medical Professionals Act](#) which would federally legalize marijuana while also providing specific protections for cannabis banking. Under the bill, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration and the U.S. Department of the Treasury would be required to issue cannabis regulations—modeled on those for alcohol—within a year. Notably, the bill lacks social justice provisions to repair the past harms of the war on drugs, provisions that have been emphasized as key inclusions in current Democrat proposals for federal marijuana legislation.

BULLETIN BOARD

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

State Water Board Awarding O&M Grants To Disadvantaged Public Drinking Water Systems

The State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) is soliciting letters of interest from public agencies, public water systems or nonprofit organizations to award a total of \$27.5 million from uncommitted Proposition 68 funds for disadvantaged communities (DACs) treatment of contaminated groundwater. Specifically, operations and maintenance (O&M) costs are eligible for DAC water systems over a period of three to five years, including (but not limited to) permitting, monitoring and reporting, chemicals, and/or plant operator labor. Letters of interest are due to the SWRCB's Division of Financial Assistance by July 12, 2021.

For more information, [see here](#).

Forest Stewardship Workshop

The University of California Cooperative Extension is offering training opportunities to help landowners develop sustainable plans to improve and protect their forest lands. Online every Tuesday, (6-7:30pm) starting June 1, 2021 through July 27, 2021, and in-person, Saturday, June 26th in Sonoma County

For more information, [see here](#).

Sierra Nevada
Conservancy
Funding
Opportunities
Newsletter for
May/June



This is an 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.



"Even the "common" ones have beautiful secrets to be discovered ... Common Merganser chicks jump from their nests in a cavity high in a tree at just one day old, and are fishing and catching aquatic insects before they are even two weeks old. There were easily 40+ young Merganser on Union Reservoir together, melting my bird-loving heart" - Megan

Balk

by DAVID AXELROD

—before you fulfill
the performance of not being
these pasqueflowers and beargrass
radiant in the forest at dusk,
a lit face nearby
in shadows at the trailhead
saying into her phone,
the pressure to not be
in one place at the same time,
the gist of it being
lives splinter
or the waiting to admit it
is over

*

as when they called your name
and said to come inside
at the end of a spring day
to rehearse again
your sister's not being,
though by then you knew
to linger and not obey,
just listen as the contralto next door
sang lyric scales
at the open window,
enchanted and filling the garden
inside of you

*

where she falters still

in the lowest octave,
helpless as you are now
in the performance of not being
two mergansers
flying fifty-five miles an hour
along the river,
of not being these hillsides
covered in balsamroot and cous



*damp with melting snow,
gleaming as mottled sun departs,
the light mineral and clear.*

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