

## Help Us Stop the Dixon Downs Race Track!

The Sierra Club has taken an official position opposing the Dixon Downs race track proposal citing traffic concerns, degradation of air quality, fiscal issues, and quality of life impacts. This project would result in major changes to the character of surrounding communities and to the region. The track and entertainment facility would draw thousands of additional vehicle trips to the area on event days. These events generally would attract from 6,800 up to 15,000 attendees. Some events could draw up to 50,000 people. This is wrong for the small town of Dixon and for the surrounding communities that would also be affected by the increases in traffic on I-80 and near-by county roads, degradation in air quality, noise, and other impacts. Costs to mitigate for traffic impacts alone would be in the hundreds of millions of dollars and are not being born by the project. The state will be left to deal with the costs to the region, while Magna Entertainment Corp., a multinational corporation from Canada, takes millions of our dollars out of the country.



*From the grassroot...*

**TAKE ACTION!** Please join us in opposing the Dixon Downs racetrack. The campaign organization that got this issue on the ballot needs volunteers and donations. To learn how you can help defeat this project, see the article "Stop Dixon Downs!" on page 2.

## Author to Speak on Post-Oil Era

The Sierra Club Yolano Group is sponsoring a talk by Tim Holt on our future in the post-oil era. Depending on which expert you believe, we have reached or will reach in the next few years the point at which declining oil supplies and surging world demand cause skyrocketing gas prices. This will produce major changes in our society.

"With soaring fuel prices in the not-too-distant future, you can say goodbye to long-distance retail and food delivery networks. No more Wal-Marts," Holt points out. "We will also witness the demise of the whole suburban lifestyle as it currently exists. We must prepare for a future when we will no longer be a mobile society, when neighborhoods and the idea of community will take on new importance, and food and other essentials will be provided by local producers."

Holt is the author of *Songs of the Simple Life*, a collection of essays, and *On Higher Ground*, a futuristic novel. He also writes frequent pieces on environmental topics for the San Francisco Chronicle's Sunday Insight section.

Mark your calendars. **The presentation will take place on Sunday, April 15, 2007 at a location to be determined.** A press release will appear on our website <http://motherlode.sierraclub.org/yolano/Main/Calendar.html> and in the Davis Enterprise with more information. For details contact Pam at 530-756-6856 or [pnieberg@dcn.davis.ca.us](mailto:pnieberg@dcn.davis.ca.us).

## Yolano Group Election Results

Thanks to everyone who took the time to vote for Management Committee members in our recent election. Please welcome back Marc Vayssières and Bob Schneider, and give a big welcome to new Management Committee member, Stacie Hartung-Frerichs. All are pleased to work for the Club and all of you for the next two years. Continuing members are Holly Bishop, Ida Bryan, Carolyn Hinshaw, and Pam Nieberg.

The Management Committee meets on the second Thursday of each month. All are invited to attend the Yolano Group meetings. Meeting locations and agenda are announced on our website, in the Davis Enterprise or you can call Pam at 530-756-6856.

All the work done by the Management Committee is volunteer effort. We can use your help wherever you feel you can fit in. To volunteer, contact Pam at [pnieberg@dcn.davis.ca.us](mailto:pnieberg@dcn.davis.ca.us) or Holly at [Holly@hollytime.com](mailto:Holly@hollytime.com).

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## Stop Dixon Downs!

Dear Sierra Club Members,

I am writing on behalf of Dixon Citizens for Quality Growth, a grassroots organization that has been successful in qualifying four measures for the ballot in a Special Election in Dixon, CA to "Stop Dixon Downs"! The four measures, (M, N, O, & P) consist of local traffic changes, a development agreement, a General Plan amendment and the rezoning of 260 acres which would allow the race-track/gambling facility to be built.

We will urge our local citizens to "Vote No on April 17th!" If we are successful, the Dixon Downs racetrack will not be built.

To get to this point - qualifying for a Special Election (after the City Council refused twice to call for an election! ), we have spent countless volunteer hours over the past two years to stay connected to the public.

Please help us now through this last huge step if you would like to see our "Vote No" campaign succeed!!

**We need volunteers and donations.** You may contact us to volunteer in many ways: phone calling, lawn sign distribution, assembling letters, etc. or to make a donation! Contact info: [dixoncacinizen@yahoo.com](mailto:dixoncacinizen@yahoo.com) or call Ada Preston at 707-693-642. Please visit our website - [www.dumpthedowns.org](http://www.dumpthedowns.org).

**Send Donations to:** DCQG P.O. Box 342 Dixon, CA 95620.  
**Make checks out to:** "Dixon Citizens for Quality Growth". In the memo line write: DCQG against Measures M, N, O, P. Any donation amount will be greatly appreciated and used wisely!

Sincerely,

Cissie Perkins, DCQG member - 707-628-9211



## Vote in the National Club Elections

The annual election for the Club's Board of Directors is now underway. In March, those of you who are eligible to vote will receive in the mail (or by Internet if you chose the electronic delivery option) your national Sierra Club ballot. This will include information on the candidates and where you can find additional information on the Club's website.

The Sierra Club is a democratically structured organization at all levels. The Club needs a regular flow of views on policy and priorities from its grassroots membership in order to function well. Your Board of Directors sets Club policy and budgets at the national level and works closely with the Executive Director and staff to operate the Club. Voting for candidates who express your views on how the Club should grow and change is both a privilege and a responsibility of membership.

Visit the Club's election website: <http://www.sierraclub.org/bod/> and click on "2007 Election". This site provides links to additional information about the candidates and their views on a variety of issues facing the Club and the environment.

## Old Sugar Mill Project denied by the Delta Protection Commission

In the early morning hours on Friday January 26, environmentalists and Concerned Citizens of Clarksburg scored a victory. The Delta Protection Commission (DPC) blocked what could have been the first urban development in the primary zone of the delta since the Delta Protection Act was passed in 1992. After hours of testimony on both sides of the issue, the Commission concluded that the Old Sugar Mill Project violated parts of the Delta Protection Act and Delta Management Plan. This decision marked the first test of the Delta Protection Act, a 15-year old law designed to protect about 500,000 acres of delta open space from urban development.

The Commission found that the project did not meet requirements for flood protection or for adequate buffers between urban and agricultural areas. The Army Corps of Engineers recently released new maps of locations where levees are in the greatest need of repair. According to these maps, there are three "Order 1" (the most serious) sites on the west levee on the Sacramento River right next to the proposed Sugar Mill site. The Delta Resource and Land Use Management Plan also requires 500 to 1,000 foot buffers between urban and agricultural zones. The Old Sugar Mill plan contains only a 300 foot buffer between the project and near-by vineyards.

The Sugar Mill project had been approved by the Yolo County Board of Supervisors (Supervisor Mariko Yamada was the only dissenting vote) late last year, despite concerns regarding inadequate levees and flooding issues. Two appeals to the DPC were filed shortly after.

The project would have more than doubled the size of the small town of Clarksburg and was opposed by many of its residents. One of the major concerns was the potential for setting a precedent for further urban development in the primary zone of the delta in violation of the Delta Protection Act. The DPA prohibits dense residential development in the primary zone of the delta, and Clarksburg is in the primary zone.

The Commission denied the project and sent it back to the county for reconsideration. The county could try to redesign the plan or challenge the DPC's action in court. However, it appears that as long as residential development is included along the winery, grape processing and reception facility in the Sugar Mill proposal, it will be difficult if not impossible to get it approved.



## Conservation Musings

By Bob Schneider

The beginning of a new year is a good time to take stock. Wow! 2006 has been a very good year. Successes included the redevelopment of Lake Berryessa to offer more family-oriented and nature-friendly recreation; Tuleyome's purchase of the 640-acre Ireland Ranch that gave public access to the BLM lands on Berryessa Peak; and congressman Mike Thompson's wilderness bill on October 17th that created the 27,000 acre Cache Creek Wilderness and the 6000 acre Cedar Roughts Wilderness.

We are building a community of folks that share a vision for the future of our region. We enter 2007 with renewed energy, active volunteers, committed supporters and a lot of passion. I want to thank you for your inspiration, support and active involvement. With new ideas and dreams we will continue our work to protect and restore our region.

So what's coming up? It is time to look at creating management structures throughout the upper Putah and Cache Creek region that could maximize the protection of our natural resources, offer recreation compatible with those resources, and ensure a future of sustainable agriculture. I noticed that several worthy conservancies including the "Sierra Nevada", "Santa Monica Mountains", and "San Joaquin River" conservancies received specific funding in



Proposition 84. So where are we? Left out? We need to be able to secure this type of funding for future conservation easements and resource protection.

Climate Change and Energy are also important. While many decisions are international and national in scope, there is much that we need to think about on a local level. With climate

change the need for effective wildlife corridors becomes more urgent so species can migrate. The prospect of increasing fuel costs requires new thinking on how and where development occurs and how we plan for agriculture when fertilizer, diesel fuel, and transportation jump in cost.

Yolo County is in the middle of a General Plan Update and Davis will probably begin one in the near future. The outside pressures that are impacting our county are far more significant than those we have seen in past planning processes. As a result, the decisions that we make now will have much greater implications in determining the future of where we live.

Because of this a 20-year planning horizon is no longer adequate. We must create a longer-term vision, with a plan and an implementation strategy. The Integrated Water Management Plan, the HCP/NCCP plan, and the Agricultural Mitigation Plan must be integrated in a seamless manner to define our future.

It is a challenging and exciting time. It is a good time to engage and be active and I look forward to working with you. (And, of course, I dream about salmon returning to Cache Creek.)

**Bob can be reached at [bob.schneider@mlc.sierraclub.org](mailto:bob.schneider@mlc.sierraclub.org).**

## Sierra Club Outings

### Led by local leaders

**Saturday April 14, 2007**

**Day Hike (1B)**

**Stebbins' Cold Canyon/Blue Ridge** Hike ~5-mile loop with ~1,000' elevation gain, through U.C.D. natural reserve and up to Blue Ridge overlooking Lake Berryessa; lunch on ridge. Meet 9:30 a.m. at the BIG 5 lot on Covell & Sycamore, east of Hwy 113/Covell exit in Davis. No reservations. Rain cancels. Leader: Randy Brendia 530-400-8852, e-mail: [the\\_shamus@comcast.net](mailto:the_shamus@comcast.net)

**Saturday May 26, 2007**

**Day Hike (2B)**

**Stevens' Trail** Trailhead near Colfax. ~8 miles with 1,200' elevation gain; narrow in places, but footing good; views of American River; flowers; mining history. Lunch by river. Meet 9:30 a.m. at the Roseville Park & Ride. (Eureka/Atlantic Rd exit off I 80). No reservation. Rain cancels. Leader: Randy Brendia 530-400-8852, e-mail: [the\\_shamus@comcast.net](mailto:the_shamus@comcast.net).

### Other Outings

The Yolano Group is part of the Mother Lode Chapter. To find out about other Sierra Club outings, find them listed at: [www.motherlode.sierraclub.org/](http://www.motherlode.sierraclub.org/) and click on "outings". There are outings for people of all ages and at all levels, including hiking, backpacking, kayaking, paddle trips, etc.

## Yolano Group management committee

- ⊗ Pam Nieberg, Co-chair; pnieberg@dcn.davis.ca.us; 530-756-6856
- ⊗ Holly Bishop, Co-chair; holly@hollytime.com; 530-753-2773
- ⊗ Carolyn Hinshaw, Co-conservation chair; aaagh@comcast.net; 530-757-2830
- ⊗ Bob Schneider, Co-conservation chair; verve@dcn.davis.ca.us; 530-758-4315
- ⊗ Stacie Hartung-Frerichs; raftingcrafter@yahoo.com
- ⊗ Ida Bryan; bryan1414@sbcglobal.net; 530-758-1807
- ⊗ Marc Vayssières; marc@dcn.davis.ca.us; 530-758-3969

The Management Committee meets on the second Thursday of each month. The public is invited to the meetings. Watch for announcements in the Enterprise for location or you can call Pam at 530-756-6856 for information or to get on our email list.

- ⊗ Treasurer: Marc Vayssières
- ⊗ Secretary: Pam Nieberg
- ⊗ Newsletter editor and webmaster: Marc Vayssières
- ⊗ Flame Distribution and membership: Ida Bryan

<http://motherlode.sierraclub.org/Yolano/>

## Take Action to Stop Clear-Cutting in the Sierras!

Please help stop the devastating clear-cutting happening in the Sierras. Yes, the Sierras are a crown jewel of wild places with marvels such as Yosemite, giant Sequoia Trees and Lake Tahoe. But, Sierra Pacific Industries (SPI) has clear-cut tens of thousands of acres in the past 10 years, driving species to the brink of extinction and changing the forests of the Sierra to monoculture tree planta-



tions. The California Homebuilding Industry consumes the vast majority of this wood. If we are truly to stop the clear-cutting in the Sierra, we need to get the Homebuilding Industry to change the way

they buy wood. **But, to make this happen, we are going to need YOUR help!** Contact "Save the Sierra" to learn more about this new campaign, take part in strategy sessions, network with other activists and find out how you can take concrete steps to stop clear-cutting in the Sierra!

*Contact Josh at [sierra@forestethics.org](mailto:sierra@forestethics.org), 415-863-4563 ext 328 or visit [www.savethesierra.org](http://www.savethesierra.org).*

**Mother Lode Chapter, Sierra Club  
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