

Holiday Potluck

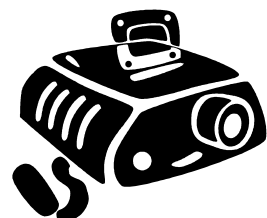
The Yolano Group Sierra Club invites you to join us for our third annual holiday potluck to celebrate the season. Our last two holiday season potlucks were great successes, and we hope that you will join us this year for another evening of great food, entertainment and fellowship.

The potluck will take place on Sunday, December 3, 2006 from 6:30 to 9 in the Blanchard Room of the Yolo County Library, 315 Fourteenth Street in Davis.



The potluck will begin at 6:30 with a slide show or film (TBA) at approximately 7:15.

Please bring your own utensils, plates, cups and a favorite dish to share. The Yolano Group will provide beverages.



For more information, contact Pam at 530-756-6856, pnieberg@dcn.davis.ca.us or Holly at 530-753-2773, holly@hollytime.com.

Annual Election to the Management Committee of the Yolano Group

The annual election to the Yolano Group Management Committee is upon us. You will find a ballot in this issue of the Flame.

The time line for the election is as follows:

- Nov 13, 2006: ballots mailed;
- Dec 15, 2006: election closes
- Dec 20, 2006: ballots counted
- Jan 11, 2006: new committee takes office

Ballots must be postmarked no later than December 15, 2006

For information, contact Pam Nieberg at 530-756-6856

Capay Valley Coalition Challenges Caltrans' Highway 16 Project.

By Cathy Suematsu and Trini Campbell

For years, Caltrans has insisted that the proposed State Route (SR) 16 safety improvement project must meet certain design standards such as 12 foot lanes, 8 foot shoulders, and a 12 foot, unpaved, clear recover zone. Now they have begun to respond to pressure from the community and are reducing the scope of the project.

In a letter dated August 21st from Caltrans to the community group Capay Valley Coalition (CVC), Robert Nguyen, the State Route 16 Project Manager wrote: "At your request, the Department has re-evaluated our current preliminary design and we were able to reduce the scope of work at Segment 5 between Esparto and Capay. Instead of the curve modification originally proposed at this segment, we will continue to utilize the existing roadbed with some shoulder modifications. Doing so will minimize impacts and help to maintain the rural environment and natural resources of the valley."

(Continued on page 2)

In this issue:

- ◆ Holiday Potluck
- ◆ Caltrans' Highway 16 Project
- ◆ Annual Election of the Yolano Group
- ◆ Candidates' statements and Ballot
- ◆ Old Sugar Mill Development.
- ◆ Conservation Musings
- ◆ 2007 Calendar sales

Call Ida to help sell Sierra Club calendars at the Farmers Market

However, concerned citizens must continue pressuring Caltrans, because they are still planning a drastic alteration of the roadway for the rest of the project from I 505 to Brooks in western Yolo County. They plan to:

- ◆ Expand the present width of the roadway by 2.5 times to a total roadway width (paved and clear recovery zone) of 64 feet.
- ◆ Widen, straighten, and flatten the highway to a 65 miles per hour design standard.
- ◆ Replace the current road with a brand new 2-lane highway: some segments adjacent to and others completely deviating from the existing roadbed.
- ◆ Acquire right-of-way from the owners of 70 parcels through the eminent domain process if necessary.
- ◆ Consume approximately 170 acres of farmland, destroy 10 dwellings, raze historical sites, and bulldoze an undisclosed number of riparian or orchard trees as well as approximately 700 mature Oak and Black Walnut trees.
- ◆ Ignore the safety issues in the towns of Esparto, Capay, and Madison.
- ◆ Spend an estimated \$51 million dollars.

The Highway 16 Project maps and a detailed project description can be obtained at Caltrans' website:

<http://www.dot.ca.gov/dt3/projects/yolo16/documents.htm>

The Capay Valley Coalition insists that Caltrans make safety improvements within the project area and simultaneously preserve the

unique, rural character of the Capay Valley region by scaling down the project. Concerned citizens recommend that Caltrans construct a series of smaller projects along SR 16 that include the following:

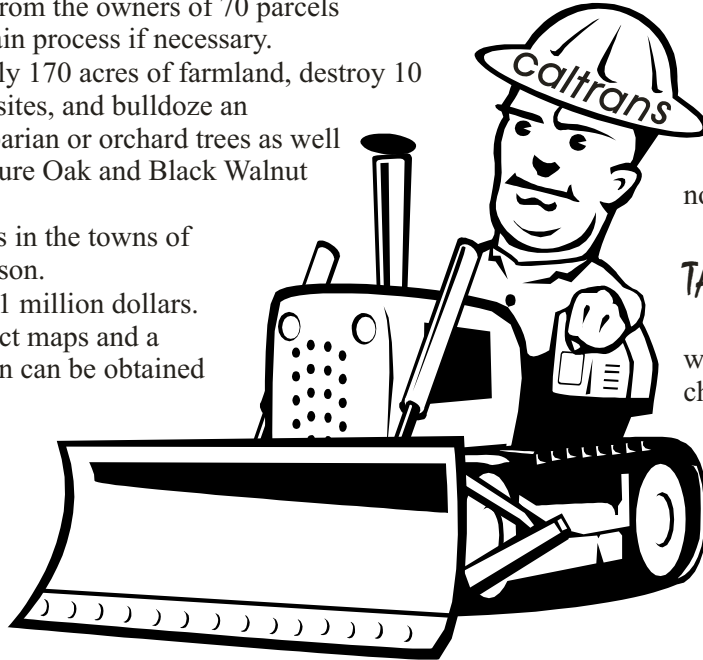
- ◆ Maintain the highway on the current roadbed
- ◆ Pave existing shoulders
- ◆ Provide regular pullouts for slower vehicles and law enforcement activities
- ◆ Construct turn pockets for major valley intersections
- ◆ Install rumble strips and guardrails where appropriate

- ◆ End the project at the casino stoplight
- ◆ Support implementation of the park and ride facility for 800 casino employees which was mandated by the 2002 County-Tribe Agreement
- ◆ Bury utility lines along the highway for enhanced safety and to allow the heritage oaks to grow unimpeded by pruning for power wire clearance
- ◆ Reduce the amount of right of way acquisition

Caltrans plans to release the Final Environmental Impact Report for the proposed Highway 16 project this fall. The environmental document was reviewed by the US Department of the Interior due to the potential impact to historical

resources within the project area.

Caltrans does not plan on holding any further public hearings, yet our long-term, environmental future is at stake. People who value the natural resources of Capay Valley must take other steps now for our voice to be heard.



TAKE ACTION!

The Capay Valley Coalition is meeting with elected officials and raising a legal challenge against Caltrans, questioning the extensive scope of the State Route 16 project. The organization has retained the Law Office of J. William Yeates based in Sacramento. CVC welcomes donations and citizen involvement. Please inform your neighbors about the project and write letters to your representatives and to the editors of local

newspapers. Contributions may be sent to:

Capay Valley Coalition P.O. Box 894 Esparto, CA 95627

The Capay Valley Coalition (CVC), is a 501c4, non-profit organization. Its mission is to preserve the environment and communities of rural western Yolo County by protecting common resources and to enhance the quality of life through education and the promotion of agricultural land preservation, open space, and public safety.

For additional information, please contact Anne Pym McDonald, President, at 530-796-3821 or Trini Campbell, Secretary, at 530-796-4122. ☒

Yolano Group Elections

- ☛ This election is for 3 members of the 7 member Management Committee.
- ☛ Terms are for 2 years.
- ☛ Please vote for up to 3 candidates.
- ☛ Ballots must be postmarked no later than December 15, 2005.

The candidates' statements follow in alphabetical order:

Stacie-Hartung-Frerichs

I would like to represent you on the Sierra Club's Yolano Group management committee because of my unique qualifications and environmental background.

- ◆ Everyday in my job, I manage the cleanup of contaminated pollution sites, working to formulate cleanup plans that benefit



both the environment and local communities.

◆ I am the most recent past Chairperson of the City of Davis' Natural Resources Commission. I have gained a lot of experience working with local government agencies on environmental issues.

◆ I am an avid hiker and backpacker. I am also a docent at the Cold Canyon UC Reserve, where I co-lead hikes that introduce watercolor painting to hikers as a means of further connecting them to the natural world.

I previously worked as a park ranger in Zion National Park, and as a rafting guide for UC Davis' Outdoor Adventures. I learned a strong leave no trace ethic and developed an appreciation for nature's healing and transformative ability in people's lives.

As a member of the management committee, I would like to see the Yolano Group:

◆ Continue to focus on environmental issues which affect us all like sprawl, water quality, air quality, pesticides, transportation, and loss of open space.

◆ Host more environmental interest discussions and workshops to connect us to the reasons why we are Sierra Club members.

◆ Connect all the Yolano Group members to the broader national Sierra Club.

I would be honored to represent our local Sierra Club members; I ask you to please consider voting for me in this election.

Bob Schneider

It has been an exciting 2 years and we have achieved several of our objectives. As co-chair of the Conservation Committee I have focused my work on landscape scale issues. In the past two years Cache Creek was designated a State Wild and Scenic River; Lake Berryessa now has a Record of Decision that will eliminate the private trailers and open the Lake to more family oriented recreation; and, Congressman Mike Thompson's wilderness bill was recently enacted protecting 27,000 areas of Cache Creek as federal Wilderness. While the Conaway Ranch will stay in private hands the water and open space will be protected.

We continue to work on the challenging issues currently underway including the Yolo County General Plan, the Integrated Regional Water Management Plan and the Habitat Conservation Plan/Natural Communities Conservation Plan. These three plans will largely determine the future of Yolo County over the next 50 years.

With your support and vote I will continue to work on these issues to implement a vision for Yolo County that protects both our wild heritage and our agricultural heritage. Please call or email if you have questions about Yolo County issues or want to help implement the future we envision: verve2006@comcast.net or 530-304-6215.

Marc Vayssières

I am running for re-election to the management committee of the Yolano Group of the Sierra Club. For almost four years I have served as the group's newsletter editor and webmaster. I have tried to make our newsletter enticing to read with the hope that it would help you stay informed about local environmental issues and coming events and motivate you to write that important letter in support of our actions. I have created an internet site for the Yolano Group, linked to that of the Motherlode Chapter (<http://motherlode.sierraclub.org/Yolano/>). I intend to continue work on making our web pages a showcase of issues we care about and the place to go for timely information in between newsletters. For almost two years I have also served as the group's treasurer.

I would be honored to continue working within this management committee. It is a great team of people who are not only fighting threats to our environment such as uncontrolled urban sprawl but are also pro-actively working to preserve wilderness in our bioregion and maintain our agricultural landscapes.

Ballot

These candidates are running for two-year terms on the Yolano Group Management Committee.

Vote for up to 3 candidates.

Use one column if you have a single membership or both columns for a joint membership.

Ballots must be postmarked no later than Friday, December 15, 2006.

Stacie Hartman-Ferichs

Bob Schneider

Marc Vayssières

Mail back this whole page, folding as indicated on the other side. (or if you prefer, you may cut this ballot and mail it in an envelope.)

Mail to:

**Yolano Group Sierra Club, Elections
P.O. Box 2220
Davis, CA. 95617-2220**

Tape or staple to close

Please put
stamp here

Yolano Group Sierra Club, Elections
P.O. Box 2220
Davis, CA. 95617-2220

Fold here

Fold here

Old Sugar Mill Project Approved Despite Serious Flooding Concerns

On Tuesday, October 24, the Yolo County Board of Supervisors voted 4 to 1 to allow the Old Sugar Mill development project in Clarksburg. Supervisor Mariko Yamada was the lone “no” vote, citing serious concerns regarding the potential for flooding. The Old Sugar Mill project would be built on 105 acres offering residential, commercial and industrial uses, including 162 housing units, nearly doubling the size of Clarksburg.

The 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 identified for the west levee of the Sacramento River right next to the proposed Sugar Mill project site. Disregarding the potential for a levee break and serious flooding in the Clarksburg area, 4 of the 5 supervisors approved the development anyway.

A further concern is the fact that Clarksburg lies in the Primary Zone of the delta. The Delta Protection Act of 1992 prohibits residential development in the Primary Zone. Approval of the Old Sugar Mill Project is a violation of the Delta Protection Act. The Delta is an important ecosystem. It contains some of the state's best farmland. Delta water sustains more than 500,000 people living in the Delta region and more than 300,000 acres of Delta farmland, as well as more than 23 million people and 7 million acres of irrigated agricultural land state-wide. Ignoring the Delta Protection Act and allowing further residential development Clarksburg sets a precedent for residential development elsewhere in the Delta. Continued development in the Delta will push this fragile ecosystem over the edge, resulting in the collapse of the entire system and thus compromising much of the state's drinking water.

The Delta Protection Commission, the State's Attorney General, former senator Patrick Johnston, author of the Delta Protection Act, former Secretary of the Interior Bruce Babbitt, the Natural Resources Defense Council, Earth Justice on behalf of NRDC, the Sierra Club, the Natural Heritage Institute, the California Planning and Conservation League, and the Yolo County Farm Bureau wrote letters to Yolo County to voice their concerns about the development. The Concerned Citizens of Clarksburg (a local group) plans to file an appeal to the Delta Protection Commission over the Board of Supervisors approval of the Old Sugar Mill housing development proposal. It has been joined by other supporting organizations and individuals.

Peggy Bohl, an organizer of Concerned Citizens of Clarksburg, says “By approving this project, Yolo County is challenging the Delta Protection Act. So we are now forced to appeal this decision to a higher body, the Delta Protection Commission.”

For more information, to join the challenge or to help Concerned Citizens of Clarksburg, contact John and Peggy Bohl at 1-916-744-1555.



Conservation Musings

By Bob Schneider

I took a day off on Thursday, October 19 to hike the Redbud Trail into the newly designated 27,245 acre Cache Creek Wilderness. This federal Wilderness designation became law when the President signed Congressman Mike Thompson's Northern California Coastal Wild Heritage Wilderness Act on October 17, 2006. Did it feel any different than before it was Wilderness? Well, yes it did! It felt great.



The Federal Wilderness Act was passed in 1964. The primary author and force behind the act was Howard Zahniser of The Wilderness Society. “Zahnie” had grown disillusioned with piecemeal attempts at preservation. He crafted a bill that protected the most important pieces of our wild heritage in a national system of land protection. It is an eloquently crafted piece of legislation. I love this definition: “A wilderness, in contrast with those areas where man and his works dominate the landscape, is hereby recognized as an area where the earth and its community of life are untrammelled by man, where man is himself a visitor who does not remain.” It is a truly humbling statement.

The key word “untrammelled” is little used, but appropriate as it means “unshackled and allowed to run free.” For, surely, that is Wilderness, particularly when contrasted by so much of our daily lives. A visit to the wilderness is rejuvenating and it embodies the spirit of who we are as Americans.

Setting aside Wilderness is a statement of values and our expectations for future generation. Cache Creek will remain a wild place for future generations and I am glad. Hiking in the Cache Creek Wilderness was very, very special.

There are other Yolo County issues that will also define our future. The Yolo County General Plan, the Integrated Regional Water Management Plan and the Habitat Conservation Plan/Natural Communities Conservation Plan are all currently underway. It is my belief that these key planning efforts will define the future of Yolo County over the next 50 and 100 years. Will these plans protect Yolo County as the place that you envision it in the future? Will farming stay or will it go? Will there be room for plants and animals or will the view be of roof tops? It is an important time to participate in these decisions that will impact us on a landscape scale into the future.

If you want to be involved or like more information, give me a call at 304-6215 or email bschneider@tuleyome.org

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
- ⊗ Ida Bryan; 530-758-1807
- ⊗ Don Mooney; dbmooney@dcn.davis.ca.us; 530-758-5433
- ⊗ Marc Vayssières; marcvc@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/>

Sierra Club 2007 Calendar Sales

Beginning on Saturday, November 11, at 9 a.m., Sierra Club calendars and season greeting cards will be for sale at the Davis Farmers Market. Calendars and card sales will continue every Saturday morning through January 6, weather permitting.



This is our major local fundraiser and your support is greatly appreciated. ***We need volunteers to assist at our farmers-market table on Saturday mornings.*** First-time volunteers receive a free calendar or box of season's greetings cards. ***If you would like to help, please call Ida Bryan at 758-1807.***

Buy from us and support local conservation work!

Two calendars will be available: the Engagement calendar and the very popular Wilderness wall calendar. The holiday cards come in boxed assortments (20 cards per box) or single design boxes (12

cards per box). We sell them at a substantial discount under bookstore prices.

If you cannot come to the farmers market, please call Ida. She will be happy to make home deliveries anywhere in Yolo County for people who are not farmers-market shoppers or need a large number of calendars or cards.

**Mother Lode Chapter, Sierra Club
Yolano Flame
P.O. Box 1335
Sacramento, CA. 95806**

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**This newsletter contains a ballot:
be sure to vote.**