

**American River Parkway Preservation Society**  
**Annual Organizational Report**  
**October 1, 2011- September 30, 2012**

**Mission**

**Preserve, Protect, and Strengthen the American River Parkway,  
Our Community's Natural Heart.**

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**Vision**

**We want our Parkway, seven generations from now, to be a vibrant,  
accessible, and serene sanctuary, nourishing and refreshing the spirit of all  
who enter it.**

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**American River Parkway Preservation Society  
Organizational Leadership**

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

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Michael Rushford, President  
Criminal Justice Legal Foundation

Vice President

Kristine Lea, Training Developer  
Scientific Applications International Incorporated

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David H. Lukenbill, President  
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Robert J. Slobe, President  
North Sacramento Land Company

Franklin Burris, President  
North Sacramento Chamber of Commerce

Mary E. Tappel, Environmental Scientist  
California State Water Board

Dave Lydick, Deputy Director  
American River Parkway & Regional Parks Division

Rob Kerth, President  
North Sacramento Chamber of Commerce

Phil Serna, Supervisor, 1<sup>st</sup> District  
Sacramento County Board of Supervisors

## Introduction

For one of the major issues for our organization, the illegal camping by the homeless in the North Sacramento area of the Parkway, this has been an extraordinary year; as our *Fall 2012 Newsletter* noted:

### **News Update: Illegal Camping in Parkway Seriously Addressed**

This past month has seen a flurry of editorials, columns, and articles in the *Sacramento Bee* and other local media about the severe degradation of the Parkway in the North Sacramento area caused by illegal camping by the homeless and—finally—policy action by the County to solve it.

The homeless issue is a Parkway issue because the North Sacramento area of the Parkway has been the de facto tent city for the homeless for years, with large encampments springing up regularly.

After vigorous advocacy by members of our organization, particularly Bob Slobe, public leadership by County Supervisor Phil Serna, and a stunning series of columns by Marcos Breton in the *Sacramento Bee*, a serious, determined and, apparently, long-term effort is now underway to resolve the problem and restore that area of the Parkway for safe use by the adjacent community and other visitors.

Here are five excerpts from the recent stories:

**1) “Sacramento homeless feedings infuriate nearby business owners, residents”** *Sacramento Bee*, **September 9, 2012**. Retrieved September 9, 2012 from <http://www.sacbee.com/2012/09/09/4801174/sacramento-homeless-feedings-infuriate.html>

It's Sacramento's newest type of drive-by.

Business owners and residents complain that dozens of good Samaritans, often informal religious-based groups, are turning sidewalks, empty lots and street corners in the district and the nearby American River Parkway into group feeding zones.

They say the feeding areas are littered with debris, food wrappers, bottles and worse. Sometimes different groups drive up to the same spot at the same time to distribute food. Locals say they fear the street feedings are enticing even more homeless to the troubled area. They're seeking action from city and county officials, who say they're trying to find a way to limit the food giveaways, either through cooperation or – if need be – an ordinance.

The River District for many years has been a homeless magnet because of its concentration of social services and plentiful hideaways for sleeping by the river. The

increase in drive-by feedings follows national news in 2011 spotlighting Sacramento's homeless problem.

That coverage, an embarrassment to the city, culminated with the police breaking up a large tent city near the river. Since then, the homeless have scattered into smaller, dispersed camps, Sacramento County officials say.”

**2) “Marcos Breton: Stench of hypocrisy surrounds homeless issue in Sacramento”** *Sacramento Bee*, **September 9, 2012**. Retrieved Sacramento 9, 2012 from <http://www.sacbee.com/2012/09/09/4801445/marcos-breton-stench-of-hypocrisy.html>

The people who act out of love and compassion for our most downtrodden will often show no compassion for the people who get in their way.

The issue reeks of hypocrisy in Sacramento, just as certain pockets of the region reek with urine and human excrement...

In the language of the streets, there are some bad dudes out there. Large dogs protect illegal encampments and stashes of pornography are all over the place.

There are mentally ill people and people who will take the food that church groups put out there – but that's it.

It seems they don't want to be in shelters.

As you walk along trails meant for hiking and horseback riding, you see tents on one side and toilets the other.

What kind of toilets? The kind you find in nature: People relieve themselves on the ground and leave scattered pieces of toilet paper in piles.

When that smell hits you, it only punctuates an unsafe feeling as you go deeper into the parkway.

**3) “Marcos Breton: Homeless Hub is Destroying the American River Parkway”** *Sacramento Bee*, **September 16, 2012**. Retrieved September 16, 2012 from <http://www.sacbee.com/2012/09/16/4823940/marcos-breton-homeless-hub-is.html>

If you dare take issue with homeless advocates in Sacramento, the first rock hurled in your direction is a question meant as an accusation:

"What's your solution to the homeless problem?"...

No one is suggesting that we shouldn't be compassionate or that people seeking shelter shouldn't get it or that homeless people with mental health and substance abuse issues shouldn't get help.

They should, but it's unbelievably unfair how this issue plays out in Sacramento.

Most people in this region get to pontificate about homelessness without ever truly feeling its effects.

That burden is most intensely felt in North Sacramento, the American River Parkway and the River District.

These are folks who have the misfortune of being so close to Loaves & Fishes and an overly saturated area of social services.

"These are solid residents who feel compassion for others but who also live with a reality too long ignored.

"I've experienced a lot of things in a few years of riding that stretch (of the American River Parkway)," said Michael Heenan, a North Sacramento resident. "Each morning includes an episode of navigating between the ubiquitous pit bulls that accompany the river residents, and each afternoon requires riding through the massive pot party that takes place under Highway 160 where Northgate and Del Paso meet.

"The one thing I have not experienced is a tranquil, relaxed moment to enjoy the parkway and the river."

The American River Parkway is a jewel being decimated because it is – by virtue of politics and political correctness – the hub of homelessness in Sacramento.

**4) "Marcos Breton: Enforce illegal camping laws to protect the parkway"**  
*Sacramento Bee*, **September 19, 2012**, Retrieved September 19, 2012 from  
<http://www.sacbee.com/2012/09/19/4832888/marcos-breton-enforce-illegal.html>

Beginning today, Sacramento County authorities will begin taking several significant steps aimed at saving the American River Parkway from environmental harm caused by illegal camping.

Large swaths of Sacramento's gorgeous urban park have been degraded by human waste, fires and enough debris for 2,000 volunteers to collect 14,000 pounds of garbage over the weekend.

Today, teams of park rangers and sheriff's deputies will begin enforcing a dusk-to-dawn closure of the parkway with a goal of preventing people from camping there overnight.

A representative of the county's Department of Human Assistance will be on hand beginning Sunday to provide homeless campers with information on housing options.

A county memo detailing the operation states: "The enforcement will be daily and continue indefinitely. This is not a short-term effort."

The Sacramento Police Department has a role to play and may conduct enforcement sweeps several times a week.

5) "Rangers rousting Sacramento homeless campers as shelters are unveiled"  
**Sacramento Bee, September 20, 2012**, Retrieved September 20, 2012 from  
<http://www.sacbee.com/2012/09/20/4836852/rangers-rousting-sacramento-homeless.html>

Sacramento County park rangers launched night patrols in the American River Parkway in an intensified effort Wednesday to root out and evict scores of homeless people camping illegally.

Responding to complaints from businesses and residents near the parkway's troublesome west end, officials say they will send out two rangers nightly for the foreseeable future, accompanied by a county social worker, to order campers out of the park after sunset. The rangers will patrol until sometime after 10 p.m.

"We're informing people the park is closed from dusk to dawn, and they have to leave," county parks chief Jeff Leatherman said....

Homeless advocates estimate 1,000 people sleep outside every night in Sacramento County. Officials guess as many as 200 of them hunker down in the brush along the American River north of downtown between Discovery Park and the Bushy Lake area behind Cal Expo.

Previously, the county employed a two-person ranger team, four days a week, to patrol the lower parkway during the day, evicting and sometimes citing campers. That has proved to be insufficient, county officials said. With stepped-up patrols, parks officials say they hope to wrest back the lower parkway, cleaning it up and making it attractive again for hikers, bikers and other recreational users.

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## **American River Parkway Preservation Society**

**E-Letter #125, October 5, 2012**

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### **The American River Parkway, Our System Works**

During a period of time when the economy is struggling and all too many people are experiencing very difficult times, the recent example of the public, government, nonprofit organizations, and media coming together to begin to solve the problem of

illegal camping in the Parkway, that for so many years had appeared to be intractable, is a very good local reminder that our system of community and governance works.

For many years members of the public had been complaining about the growing presence of the homeless illegally camping in the American River Parkway, specifically the North Sacramento area of the Parkway, but for too long, these complaints seemed to be of no avail.

To put a historic light on the history of the danger emanating from the North Sacramento area of the Parkway, one of the postings on the *Sacramento Bee's* Photo Gallery of Death Row inmates from Sacramento, notes about inmate Larry Junior Webster, whose Date of Offense is August 30, 1981, that:

“Webster, a transient who lived along the American River and led a band of four men who committed a series of robberies, was convicted in the stabbing death of Charles W. Burke, 36. Webster met Burke at a gas station and lured him to his camp at Discovery Park, where he stabbed him 25 times, then buried him and fled in Burke’s 1967 Chrysler.”

Nonprofit organizations, such as the North Sacramento Chamber of Commerce and ARPPS have highlighted the environmental and public safety degradation that marked the Parkway in the North Sacramento area, and called for providing the adjacent communities safe access to their area of the Parkway, but again, what action did occasionally occur, had little lasting impact.

Government, either the County through its Parks Department or by individual supervisors such as Phil Serna had, over the years, noted and responded to the problem and called for and implemented some solutions, which generated some temporary activity, but the long-term norm of wide-spread illegal camping continued.

The media, especially the *Sacramento Bee*, had run stories on the issue for years, with dramatic photos and stories, but again, little seemed to happen to bring lasting resolution.

And this policy of starting, stopping, starting again has continued virtually uninterrupted for the past several years.

Until the past couple of weeks.

With front page stories and three columns from Marcos Breton in the *Sacramento Bee*, all magnified through various informal email networks, it became evident that the actions taken this time by the County to remove illegal campers from the Parkway was going to be effective and lasting, and though there are still reports of ongoing problems, we take the County at its word and understand they need time to effect the dramatic change they have outlined.

Compassion for the homeless is widespread and deep in our community and there will be disagreements about whether the illegal camping strategy now being used is helping or hurting the homeless, but our organization believes it will help.

Living in the wild, even in such a comfortable place as the American River Parkway, is no way to spend one's life, nor is it conducive to rebuilding one's life, where being able to make oneself presentable for job interviews and public networking is crucial.

The type of housing help exemplified by Cottage Housing <http://www.cottagehousing.org/> in Sacramento and Pathways to Housing <http://www.pathwaystohousing.org/> in New York for the chronic homeless, are models needing more replication.

Work programs like Ready Willing & Able <http://www.doe.org/> in New York are also wonderful examples that even the hardcore homeless, parolees, and drug addicts can reclaim their lives.

And this is the part of the system that really works.

When individuals, who have fallen into difficult times—either through their own behavior or through other circumstances—pick themselves up and start rebuilding their lives, they will find Sacramentans are a very strong support network and the numerous stories of lives being rebuilt with community are very easy to find.

Our community is blessed with a multitude of nonprofit organizations ready, willing, and able to help the homeless rebuild their lives and their donors represent a wide cross section of Sacramentans.

Yes, our system of community and governance works and we are fortunate to live in a country and a region where it does.

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## **Public Communication & Education**

### ***Weblog***

ARPPS maintains a daily weblog at <http://riverparkwayblog.wordpress.com/> and during our program year, from October 1, 2011 to September 30, 2012 we posted 212 individual messages concerning articles, reports, news items, and event information connected to our mission.

### ***Letters to Public***

ARPPS mailed 628 letters to members of the public describing the work ARPPS does and inviting them to apply for membership.

### ***Public Advocacy, Support Letters, Press Releases***

#### ***Public Advocacy***

Senior Policy Director & ARPPS President met with the Auburn Dam Task Force Meeting March 16 2012 to discuss a strategy to support the Auburn Dam.

Senior Policy Director completed & posted to website ARPPS 5<sup>th</sup> Research Report, *The American River Parkway's Suburban Setting, The Sacramento Dream*, April 9, 2012.

Senior Policy Director reviewed Cordova Parks & Recreation District proposals for the American River Parkway—enlarging existing picnic area and developing outdoor classrooms—and submitted email of ARPPS support as consistent with our goal of increasing legitimate usage to increase public safety, April 13, 2012.

#### ***Support Letters***

##### **#1) November 7, 2011**

Mr. Bryan Cash, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Bonds Grants  
California Natural Resources Agency  
1416 Ninth Street, Suite 1311  
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Mr. Cash:

We are in support of the grant application submitted by the City of Sacramento, in partnership with Friends of Sutter's Landing Park, for Proposition 84 River Parkways Program grant funding in the amount of \$1.48 million for the American River Parkway Enhancement at Sutter's Landing Park Project.

This project would restore a 3-acre area on the south bank of the American River with native plants, as well as construct interpretive signage, a ¾-mile multi-use trail, and parkway entry improvements at the levee.

The American River Parkway is the premier recreational resource in the Sacramento region and being able to enhance this area will be a great addition to the community asset.

Take care.

Sincerely,

David H. Lukenbill, CFO  
Senior Policy Director

Cc: Steve Cohn, ARPPS Board.

**#2) February 18, 2012**

Mr. Jeffery Leatherman, Director  
Sacramento County Regional Parks  
4040 Bradshaw Road  
Sacramento, CA 95827

Dear Mr. Leatherman:

Welcome to Sacramento and to your new job.

You have assumed a local leadership role in work of vital importance to all Sacramentans and to our organization in particular.

If we can be of any service to you in your work, please let us know.

In the meantime, you've been given a complimentary membership in our organization, which includes monthly e letters (once I have your email address) quarterly newsletters (most recent enclosed) and several research reports and annual organizational reports—all of which are posted to our website.

I've also enclosed our brochure for a quick overview of our organization.

Take care and we wish you all the very best in your work for Sacramento Regional Parks.

Sincerely,

David H. Lukenbill  
Founder & Senior Policy Director

CC: ARPPS Board  
Enclosures: Newsletter #33 Winter 2011 Brochure

**#3 August 7, 2012**

**Delivered Via E-Mail**

**OPEN LETTER TO THE SACRAMENTO COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**

Dear Supervisors:

Our organization does not support the ban on alcohol in the American River Parkway as it unfairly penalizes the majority of Parkway visitors, who use alcohol responsibly, in order to sanction the minority who do not.

We would direct your attention to a much more serious problem, which is the illegal camping in the North Sacramento area of the Parkway, dramatically captured in photographs and narrative from the past week posted to the American River Parkway, Woodlake Area Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/AmericanRiverParkwayWoodlakeArea>

This is an issue that has plagued the Parkway for decades and will take dedicated and focused public leadership to remedy, which our organization and the beleaguered citizens of North Sacramento, hope to see realized at some point.

We realize the budget constraints you are dealing with and we suggest a potential remedy is to consider the formation of a Joint Powers Authority to contract with a new or existing nonprofit for dedicated management and supplemental fundraising for the Parkway, as outlined in our strategy at <http://www.arpps.org/strategy.html>

Take care.

Sincerely,

*Michael Rushford*  
President

*Kristine Lea*  
Board Officer/VP

*David H. Lukenbill*  
Board Officer/CFO

Cc: ARPPS Board

***Press Releases***

**1) April 17, 2012**

**PRESS RELEASE**

**For Immediate Release**

**April 17, 2012**

**Sacramento, California**

**AMERICAN RIVER PARKWAY PRESERVATION SOCIETY (ARPPS)**

## **Trouble at Gibson Ranch?**

A recent story in the *Sacramento Bee* seems to indicate that is so, but we have always supported Doug Ose's management of Gibson Ranch (see our January 5, 2011 Press Release: ARPPS SUPPORTS OSE PROPOSAL FOR GIBSON RANCH on our news page at <http://www.arpps.org/news.html>) and our inclination would be to give Doug Ose the benefit of the doubt.

He has taken on a very difficult and complicated job—the re-opening and management of a 300+ acre park with very few resources, but has so far restored and enhanced the extensive range of activities the park was known for before being closed by Sacramento County.

Their website tells the story in pictures and listing of events, <http://gibson-ranch.com/index.html>

From what we can see, Doug Ose's management is hands-on, transparent, and responsible management at its best, and we wish all of the parks in our region were as well managed.

The online comments to the *Sacramento Bee* article reveal the substantial level of support for Gibson Ranch as it is now being managed.

Here is Doug Ose's online response to the *Bee* article from the comments section.

“Interesting article. I apologize in advance for the length of this posting. I posted earlier but for some reason it has not been put up on the blog.

“In the public arena, our critics keep us honest. I just wish they were honest about their private agendas. Brisbois and Moore are active participants in a cabal that is advocating for the creation of another layer of government with a new layer of property taxes governed by a whole new group of elected officials for the purpose of managing our public lands. I actually respect their advocacy, but strongly disagree with their proposal. Their proposal includes no reforms to prevent a recurrence of the mismanagement that occurred for years under the previous department head; "just mo' money, honey." Their worst nightmare is that my team and I will succeed, thereby showing the public that this pipedream of bigger government and higher taxes are unnecessary. Consequently, they are doing everything they can to cause delays and increase costs at the park in the mistaken belief that we will grow tired and give up.

“How do we measure success in this endeavor? We measure success by comparing the current condition of the park against the likely condition had we not gotten involved. Prior to our involvement, the park was closed. The County was spending over \$200,000

per year to keep it closed. No public use was allowed. No maintenance was performed. Improvements and infrastructure at the park were deteriorating at an increasing rate. Many people, including the individuals cited in this article and the editorial board of the Bee, said the County should keep the park closed rather than privatize operations. Therefore, the baseline condition against which we compare ourselves starts with: the park was closed, the public didn't have access, the County was spending a lot of money and no maintenance was being done, and the grounds were increasingly occupied by homeless men (not homeless families - homeless men).

“We asserted in June, 2010 that the park could be operated using private management and pay all the operating expenses associated therewith. We developed a plan. That plan was put through a public vetting process. Interestingly, none of the "experts" cited in this article proposed an operating plan, lacking either the will or the vision or the ability to do anything to cure the problem.

“How has our plan worked out? Let's review the facts. Sacramento County, instead of paying over \$200,000 per year to keep the park closed, has paid or is on the hook for just over \$70,000 in reimbursements to us for 2011 for correcting some, but not all, of the deferred maintenance that existed at the park on April 1, 2011. Therefore, the County is approximately \$130,000 ahead of where it would otherwise be, and the park is open for the public's use. For us, we operated the park at a loss of about \$35,000 through December 31, 2011. However, we expected to lose over \$100,000 in that time period, so we are \$65,000 ahead of where we otherwise expected to be.

“Simply put, we succeed by persuading people to come to the park. How do we do that? Primarily, we let our work speak for itself. The park is open every day from sunrise to sunset. The park is clean. The bathrooms are clean. The garbage is removed regularly. The homeless men who previously resided throughout the park have been asked (politely, of course) to reside elsewhere. The grass is cut regularly. The fishing lake is stocked regularly. The phone is answered. If a message is left, someone returns the call. If there is an opportunity, we try to seize it. If there is a problem, we deal with it. If there is a maintenance issue, we address it. If we make a mistake, we correct it.

“Are we perfect? No. There are things that are not yet done. That's the way it is on a working ranch.

“Or a business. Or a family. Or any other organization you can think of.

“Are we succeeding? My answer is: I think so. Thirty Boy Scouts spent the night last night in the park. Two weeks ago the Girl Scouts were onsite in the rain for a "thinking day" event. On Easter there were over 3,000 people in the park enjoying the sunny weather and family time. We are still cleaning up the eggs and plastic and piñatas from that. Later today, the Sacramento Valley Women's Soccer League will play on our soccer fields. Next week there will be 450 Boy Scouts on a camporee. The week after that there will be 750 Boy Scouts on a camporee. The week after that we are hosting a motorcycle get-together of an estimated 1,000 retired Marines. The week after that we are hosting 1,200 to a labor union annual picnic. The week after that we expect 10,000 people to

visit us for the Civil War Days re-enactment. The week after that is Memorial Day when we honor those who have gone ahead. The week after that we have a concert with The Fish. Etc etc etc. In the interim, we will host weddings, barbeques, birthdays, fishing clinics, horse riding, fun runs, yard sales, corporate team building events, camping, and a gazillion other active and passive recreational pursuits. (BTW - we can host your event, too. :))

“I invite you to visit the park. We are open every day. My team and I are there every day. If you call ahead I will be pleased to give you a personal tour. We can be reached at 916-806-3868. If we don't answer it's because we are on the other line or dealing with another visitor. Leave a message and someone will call you back. Bring your family and make it a picnic.

“Come see the park and judge our work for yourself. Constructive criticism is always welcome. Thank you for taking the time to read this.”

Doug Ose

Retrieved April 15, 2012 from <http://www.sacbee.com/2012/04/15/4414667/ose-at-helm-but-gibson-ranch-still.html>

**Organizational Leadership  
American River Parkway Preservation Society  
Sacramento, California  
April 17, 2012**

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**2) August 17, 2012**

**PRESS RELEASE**

**For Immediate Release**

**August 17, 2012**

**Sacramento, California**

**AMERICAN RIVER PARKWAY PRESERVATION SOCIETY (ARPPS)**

**Illegal Camping in North Sacramento/Woodlake Area of the Parkway**

Over the past several days we, and other Parkway organizations and public leaders, have been receiving emails with photos and pegged maps attached designating the ongoing proliferation of illegal camps in the North Sacramento/Woodlake area of the Parkway.

Much of this material is also being posted to the American River Parkway Woodlake Area Facebook page at

<https://www.facebook.com/AmericanRiverParkwayWoodlakeArea>

This is a signal issue for us, as we believe that, until the entire American River Parkway is safe to visit by the families who live adjacent to it, public leadership is neglecting public safety in one of the most significant parks in the country.

We are, as is everyone else involved in this issue, deeply aware of the financial difficulties faced by local governments trying to meet their obligations in an era of diminished public funding.

This is why we have advocated for the formation of a Joint Powers Authority of Parkway adjacent entities who would then contract with, either an existing nonprofit or create a new one, to provide daily management and supplemental funding for the American River Parkway

More detail is on our website strategy page <http://www.arpps.org/strategy.html>

The benefits from forming this type of public private partnership are obvious from the example we often point to, Central Park Conservancy in New York City.

The Conservancy raises 85% of the funding needed by Central Park and has actually made the Park safe to venture into at night, virtually unheard of in the past, as this article from the *New York Times* notes:

“For as long as most New Yorkers can remember, the rules have been clear: Enjoy Central Park by day. Keep out at night.

“Someone, however, forgot to tell Fleur Bailey, a petite Wall Street trader who was walking her two Dalmatians in the park after 10 the other night.

“I can’t remember the last time I came across something that made me uncomfortable,” said Ms. Bailey, who lives on the Upper West Side and takes her dogs into the park as late as midnight. “Some people say, ‘You walk your dogs *where* at night?’ But I tell them that it’s perfectly fine.”

“And she is hardly alone. On any given evening, the park now hums with life well into the night. Couples stroll under pools of lamplight, while the park drive pulses with the footfalls of runners, the whirl of cyclists and the desultory clop of carriage horses. Men and women jog happily around the reservoir.”

(Retrieved August 17, 2012 from <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/12/29/nyregion/as-crime-falls-central-parks-night-use-grows.html>

Right now, in the North Sacramento/Woodlake area of the Parkway, venturing into it alone during the daylight hours is not recommended, and as for going there at night, forget about it.

We can do better Sacramento, we can do much better!

**Organizational Leadership  
American River Parkway Preservation Society  
Sacramento, California  
August 17, 2012**

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**3) September 20, 2012**

**PRESS RELEASE**

**For Immediate Release      September 20, 2012      Sacramento, California**

**AMERICAN RIVER PARKWAY PRESERVATION SOCIETY (ARPPS)**

**Response to the Illegal Camping in the North Sacramento Area of the  
Parkway**

The response to the illegal camping outlined in yesterday's Marcos Breton column in the *Sacramento Bee* is extraordinary: daily and indefinitely enforced dusk to dawn Parkway closure; social service agency involvement; City police may conduct several enforcement sweeps each week; Highway 160 area fortified against dug-in camping; fencing off of feeding areas around Highway 160 bridge and adjacent wooded areas; and a media campaign led by County Supervisor Phil Serna to raise money for additional homeless shelter.

If this multi-effort strategy is carried out with vigor and persistence, it will surely stop the illegal camping and restore that area of the Parkway to safe use by the communities adjacent to it.

Many deserve credit here, and first is Bob Slobe, whose relentless advocacy has driven this discussion to this apparent solution, as well as the long-term support of the North Sacramento Chamber of Commerce and its leaders Rob Kerth and Franklin Burris who've consistently spoke to restoring the Parkway.



County Supervisor Phil Serna has been the one public leader who has taken a solid and sustained approach to this issue and deserves significant credit.

New County Executive Brad Hudson surely deserves credit for leading the County to action.

The *Sacramento Bee*, in particular columnist Marcos Breton, whose detailed columns over the past few weeks, along with the front page story in the Bee and various editorials, have truly brought the magnitude of the damage being caused to environment and community by the illegal camping, also deserves sustained kudos.

And the multitude of local residents and Parkway users, whose voices have been raised in various forms of media deserve great credit, for they remind us all that being safe on the Parkway and enjoying its beauty is truly what all in our community treasure.

We can make the Parkway the jewel of Sacramento once again, and this is a significant start, so once again, Bravo! to all those who made it happen.

**Organizational Leadership  
American River Parkway Preservation Society  
Sacramento, California  
September 20, 2012**

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***Articles Published***

**1) Published in Sacramento Press October 17, 2011**

**[http://www.sacramento.com/headline/58782/Public\\_Safety\\_in\\_the\\_American\\_River\\_Parkway](http://www.sacramento.com/headline/58782/Public_Safety_in_the_American_River_Parkway)**

**Public Safety in the American River Parkway**

by [David H. Lukenbill](#), published on October 17, 2011 at 6:34 PM

By David H. Lukenbill, senior policy director, American River Parkway Preservation Society

Recently there has been some attention from local media about public safety in the American River Parkway.

In the October 16, 2011 *Sacramento Bee* story “Ranger cutbacks prompt concerns about bike trail safety”, we read:

"Most of the stuff we deal with is quality of life stuff," said Chief Ranger Stan Lumsden, who took over the job last month just as an arsonist was setting 15 fires in two separate sprees near River Bend Park.

“Car break-ins, vandalism or dogs running off leash are the norm, he said, "unless you get down to the last six miles of the parkway."

“There, in the area starting near Discovery Park, a growing homeless population continues to pose challenges for the rangers and the army of bicycle commuters who pass through that stretch each weekday.

"We're starting to see a lot more violent crime down there, assaults, anything you can imagine that the transient population does," Lumsden said."

While this is tragic news, it is certainly not new news, as witnessed by the story in the December 2, 2004 issue of the *Sacramento News & Review*, entitled, “Trail of fears: The American River Bike Trail is idyllic, as long as you don’t get maced, mugged or beaten with a rock”, wherein we read:

“Between May 10 and June 30 this year, there were six robberies, assaults or combinations of the two reported on the trail in the Northgate and Del Paso Heights areas. In one incident, the victim was stabbed before the assailant took money; in two, the assailants pointed a gun or what appeared to be a firearm; and in another, a victim was hit with a stick.

“According to reports filed by the Sacramento Police Department, in all cases, the suspect descriptions were different, as was the method of operation.

“In addition to those, since 2002, there have been 11 other reported cases of assault or battery on the trail, two robberies, one rape and one attempted rape. In one case, a bicyclist was seriously injured after riding into a head-high length of what may have been fishing line strung across the path.”

In another story from the *Sacramento News & Review* from November 6, 2008, “Hell’s half-acre, Sacramento’s homeless weigh in: Tent Town’s top 25 tips for surviving the economic downturn”, notes:

#### **“14. Stay away from the river**

“It’s a half-mile from Tent Town to the American River, where the hard-core, chronically homeless hole up in the dense foliage leading up to its banks. The level of depravity increases the nearer you get to the water, which is why the American River Parkway is heavily patrolled by park rangers from Discovery Park to Cal Expo. “We heard screams coming from there last night,” says Kim. She’d be pretty if all of her front teeth hadn’t been knocked out. “They hauled another body out of there the other day, some mummified dude,” Ace adds. Kim shivers.”

The residents of Woodlake and North Sacramento bear the major burdens of this long term influx of illegal camping and the subsequent problems of crime, aggressive panhandling, habitat degradation, vandalism, and corrosion of the level of public safety residents rightfully expect to receive.

The situation is one stemming from a familiar source, the historic lack of attention Sacramento—and many other river cities unfortunately—have devoted to cultivating their river banks for public use and public safety.

It is especially troublesome in our area due to the history attached to our two major rivers, just in their naming.

William Holden, in his wonderful book, *Sacramento: Excursions into its History and Natural World*, wrote:

“One October morning in 1808 when Spanish sea captain Gabriel Moraga, 39, trekking up the big river in a horseback expedition, was struck by the lovely scene. Canopies of oaks and cottonwoods, many festooned with grapevines, overhung both sides of the blue current... the Spaniards ...drank in the beauty around them. ‘Es como el sagrado Sacramento!’ ...This is like the Holy Sacrament! So the river got its name ...” (p. 9)

The American river was given its permanent name in 1837, according to Peter Hayes in his book, *The Lower American River: Prehistory to Parkway*, “by Governor Alvarado who called it the “Rio do los Americanos” because the area was frequented by “trappers of revolutionary proclivities.” (p.17)

These are two wonderful rivers, which are dearly loved by residents and we, as a community, can do so much more to ensure safe and easy access to their beauty, history, and majesty.

As far as the public safety issue along the lower section of the American, it must be of equal concern to community leaders to helping the homeless. Crimes from major to minor occur regularly in the Woodlake/North Sacramento area of the Parkway, and many in those neighborhoods are justifiably fearful about venturing into it.

As a community, we can never give up on the vision that public compassion and public safety are compatible concepts.

***Disclosure:*** *The author is the founder of the Parkway advocacy nonprofit organization, American River Parkway Preservation Society*

**2) Published in Sacramento Press April 6, 2012-10-04**

[http://sacramento.press.com/headline/66112/The\\_Arena\\_Downtown\\_the\\_Parkway](http://sacramento.press.com/headline/66112/The_Arena_Downtown_the_Parkway)

**The Arena, Downtown & the Parkway**

by [David H. Lukenbill](#), published on April 6, 2012 at 12:09 PM

On March 6, 2012, a historic and visionary step was taken by the Sacramento City Council that has the potential to change the way in which the downtown portions of the riverfronts of our two major rivers are used far into the future, and the vision could not be more compelling, a National Basketball Association arena for the Sacramento Kings in the old railyards putting the games—and all other events held there—within walking distance of thousands of people who work downtown.

The *Sacramento Bee* reports the vote: “In a historic vote, the Sacramento City Council approved the financing plan Tuesday night for a \$391 million sports arena in the downtown railyard. By a 7-2 vote, the council accepted a nonbinding "term sheet" agreed to by city officials, the Sacramento Kings, arena operator AEG and the development firm slated to build the project.”

There has been a snag with the deal—par for the course with the current owners—but the benefits for Sacramento are substantial enough that it will probably (let’s say a prayer and keep our fingers crossed) finalize someday soon.

Our organization has not been too keen on most of the downtown development efforts over the years, but this particular effort looks to be a winner; especially for the downtown areas bordering the Parkway.

The key to the urban use of the riverbanks in the downtown area of our two major rivers as a destination area, is downtown development, especially the long-troubled J, K & L, 7<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> Street grid that has been squalid for decades but which the bustling evening/nightlife the downtown arena will stimulate, will certainly change.

Former Indianapolis mayor, Stephen Goldsmith, adds to the discussion in a recent *Sacramento Bee* article: “The still-evolving arrangement could be structured any number of ways, and the city will have to decide how much of a ***gamble*** it's willing to take in hopes of maximizing its income. “It's a trade-off; there's no right answer,” said Stephen Goldsmith, a former mayor of Indianapolis who teaches public policy at Harvard University. “The more risk you take, the more reward you get.”

Explore the history page of the White River State Park in Indianapolis, <http://inwhiteriver.wrsp.in.gov/ABOUTthePARK/ParkHistory> a downtown riverfront park that has become a destination and see if it doesn’t stimulate thinking about what we can do right here in our river city.

## ***Letters Published***

### **1) Published 2/3/12 , Sacramento Bee**

<http://www.sacbee.com/2012/02/03/4236911/parkway-crime.html>

## **American River Parkway crimes is down but camping is up**

Re American River Parkway crimes decline, despite cuts in ranger staffing, Feb. 03, 2012

Violent crime in the parkway has dropped by about 60 percent during the past year, which is very good news.

Illegal camping citations from Discovery Park to Cal Expo have increased by 1,462 percent, which impacts the adjacent neighborhoods of River Park, Midtown, Woodlake, and North Sacramento, suffering from the related crime illegal camping generates, which probably isn't calculated in the Parkway crime statistics.

Those adjacent neighborhoods should not have to suffer from the de facto permanent tent housing, albeit with the occasional sweeps, and the related crime.

-- David H. Lukenbill, American River Parkway Preservation Society senior policy director, Sacramento

### **2) Published 4/3/12, Sacramento Bee**

<http://www.sacbee.com/2012/04/03/4384531/privatization-of-parks.html>

#### **Privatization is the key to saving parks**

Re "County parks chief: Partnerships key to sustaining system" (Our Region, April 2) <http://www.sacbee.com/2012/04/02/4383287/qa-with-jeff-leatherman-director.html> : The privatization of local parks is a necessary strategy in a period of declining public funding available for their support. The ideal situation is for a nonprofit to assume the management, as has been done with Effie Yeaw and McKinley Park Rose Garden & Events. For-profit management is ideal when the right people are involved, as is the case with Doug Ose at Gibson Ranch.

The larger parks, such as the American River Parkway require a more complicated approach. Our organization suggests that the parkway be managed, and conduct fundraising, by a nonprofit organization contracting with a Joint Powers Authority (JPA) of Parkway adjacent governments. Ideally the nonprofit organization would be created by the JPA for that specific purpose and the management would be sought nationally, befitting the national status of the parkway.

David H. Lukenbill, Sacramento

### **3) Published 6/12/12, Sacramento Bee**

#### **Nonprofits and for-profits should have a role in state parks**

Re "State still needs clear vision for its state parks" (Editorial, June 11)

<http://www.sacbee.com/2012/06/11/4552142/state-still-needs-clear-vision.html>

: Your editorial position of bringing some balance into the funding and management of state parks via nonprofit or for-profit partnerships is a good strategy. It is a good strategy not only when times are tough for public funding but even when public funding is adequate. The sharing of responsibility for funding and management of public recreational resources while retaining public ownership is a sound strategy anytime. It is also a strategy we advocate for the American River Parkway.

Sacramento Bee Online, June 12, 2012

<http://www.sacbee.com/2012/06/11/4553431/comment-on-state-parks-editorial.html>

#### **4) Published 7/17/12, Sacramento Bee**

##### **Don't ban alcohol on American River**

Re "Raucous rafters spur talk of wider alcohol ban" (Page B3, July 17)

<http://www.sacbee.com/2012/07/17/4635436/rafting-day-mayhem-on-american.html>

We did not support the American River holiday ban on alcohol. Nor do we support a year-round ban. Punishing the thousands who peacefully enjoy a cold beer on a hot day in a raft, on the beach or in the parkway, for the sake of the relatively few who cause problems, is a bad idea. The way to address bad behavior, in any public place, is with a strong police presence, not by banning all behavior. If funding is the issue, consider contracting out management of the Parkway to a nonprofit who can raise funds for adequate public safety measures. -- David H. Lukenbill, Sacramento

Sacramento Bee Online, July 17, 2012:

<http://www.sacbee.com/2012/07/17/4636803/alcohol-ban.html#storylink=cpy>

#### **5) Published 9/9/12, Sacramento Bee**

##### **Auburn dam would help increase flood protection**

Though the gist of Stuart Leavenworth's column says bureaucratic infighting is why Sacramento is under threat of major flooding, it hardly represents the reality.

The reason Sacramento is under threat of major flooding is because we have not done what other major river cities have done, develop a 500-year level of flood protection.

Instead most of our leadership are apparently satisfied with reaching a 200-year level of protection, which is less than New Orleans had when Katrina hit.

One project that will give Sacramento a doubling of flood protection from 200 years to 400 years is building the Auburn Dam.

*-David H. Lukenbill, Sacramento*

# AMERICAN RIVER PARKWAY PRESERVATION SOCIETY FINANCIAL STATEMENT

October 1 2011 to September 30, 2012

## PART I Revenue, Expenses, and Changes in Net Assets or Fund Balances

### Revenue

1. Contributions, gifts, grants, and similar amounts received.....	\$2,405.00
2. Program service revenue including government fees and contracts.....	\$0
3. Membership dues and assessments.....	\$0
4. Investment income.....	\$0
5a. Gross amount from sale of assets other than inventory .....	\$0
b. Less: cost or other basis and sales expenses.....	\$0
c. Gain or (loss) from sales of assets other than inventory.....	\$0
6. Special events and activities.....	\$0
a. Gross revenue (not including contributions on line 1).....	\$0
b. Less: direct expenses other than fundraising expenses.....	\$0
c. Net income or (loss) from special events and activities.....	\$0
7a. Gross Sales of inventory, less returns and allowances.....	\$0
b. Less: costs of goods sold.....	\$0
c. Gross profit or (loss) from sales of inventory.....	\$0
8. Other revenue (describe).....	\$0
<b>9. Total Revenue (Add 1, 2, 3, 4, 5c, 6c, 7c and 8).....</b>	<b>\$2,405.00</b>

### Expenses

10. Grants and similar amounts paid.....	\$0
11. Benefits paid to or for members.....	\$0
12. Salaries, other compensation, and employee benefits.....	\$0
13. Professional Fees and other payments to independent contractors.....	\$1,368.75 (\$1,200.00, Capacity Building Consultant) (\$168.75 Web Services)
14. Occupancy [web], rent, utilities, and [web] maintenance.....	\$0
15. Printing, publications, postage, and shipping.....	\$647.23 (\$659.34 Postage) (\$91.05; Publications) (\$5.93 Printing)
16. Other expenses (describe) [Supplies, Meetings, Awards, Dues].....	\$119.97 (Envelopes \$19.98) (Adobe One yr Subscription, \$99.99)
<b>17. Total Expenses (Add 10-16).....</b>	<b>\$2,135.95</b>
18. Excess or (deficit) for the year (Subtract 17 from 9).....	\$23.98
19. Net assets or fund balances at beginning of year (from line 27, column A) must agree with end-of-year figure reported on prior year's return).....	\$44.67
20. Other changes in net assets or fund balances (attach explanation).....	\$0
21. Net assets or fund balances at end of year. Combine lines 18-20.....	\$23.98

## PART II Balance Sheets

22. Cash, savings, and investments.....	\$23.98
23. Land and buildings.....	\$0
24. Other assets (describe).....	\$0
<b>25. Total Assets.....</b>	<b>\$23.98</b>
<b>26. Total Liabilities (describe).....</b>	<b>\$0</b>
<b>27. Net assets or fund balances (line 27 of column B must agree with line 21)....</b>	<b>\$23.98</b>

## AMERICAN RIVER PARKWAY PRESERVATION SOCIETY BUDGET NARRATIVE

### Revenue

1. Contributions, gifts, grants, and similar amounts received.....	\$2,405.00
2. Program service revenue including government fees and contracts.....	\$0
3. Membership dues and assessments.....	\$0
4. Investment income.....	\$0
5a. Gross amount from sale of assets other than inventory .....	\$0
b. Less: cost or other basis and sales expenses.....	\$0
c. Gain or (loss) from sales of assets other than inventory.....	\$0
6. Special events and activities.....	\$0
a. Gross revenue (not including contributions on line 1).....	\$0
b. Less: direct expenses other than fundraising expenses.....	\$0
c. Net income or (loss) from special events and activities.....	\$0
7a. Gross Sales of inventory, less returns and allowances.....	\$0
b. Less: costs of goods sold.....	\$0
c. Gross profit or (loss) from sales of inventory.....	\$0
8. Other revenue (describe).....	\$0
9. <b>Total Revenue (Add 1, 2, 3, 4, 5c, 6c, 7c and 8).....</b>	<b>\$2,405.00</b>

### Expenses

10. Grants and similar amounts paid.....	\$0
11. Benefits paid to or for members.....	\$0
12. Salaries, other compensation, and employee benefits.....	\$0
13. Professional Fees and other payments to independent contractors.....	\$1,368.75 (\$1,200.00, Capacity Building Consultant) (\$168.75 Web Services)
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23. Land and buildings.....	\$0
24. Other assets (describe).....	\$0
25. <b>Total Assets.....</b>	<b>\$23.98</b>
26. <b>Total Liabilities</b> (describe).....	<b>\$0</b>
27. <b>Net assets or fund balances</b> (line 27 of column B must agree with line 21)....	<b>\$23.98</b>

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# Current Membership Status

## FINANCIALLY SUPPORTING MEMBERS

The membership composed of students, individuals, families, businesses, nonprofit organizations, chambers of commerce, and foundations that provide financial support on an annual or one-time donation basis.

**Subtotal** **316 Members**  
**Retention Rate** **63%**

## HONORARY LIFETIME MEMBERS

Honorary memberships given to students, individuals, families, businesses, nonprofit organizations, chambers of commerce, and foundations that have provided extraordinary support to the organization.

**Subtotal:** **30 Members**

## HONORARY LEADERSHIP MEMBERS

Memberships given to individuals in public leadership roles related to the Parkway.

**Subtotal:** **266 Members**

## ADVISORY GROUP MEMBERS

The membership comprised of community members who have donated time and support working on one of several committees and/or advisory groups, or who are part of a community leadership group.

**Subtotal:** **36 Members**

**TOTAL MEMBERSHIP** **648 Members**

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## **Strategic Plan (2009-2014)**

### **The American River Parkway Preservation Society Strategy & Implementation**

#### **Preserve, Protect & Strengthen the American River Parkway *For As Long As The River Runs Through It* 2009 – 2014**

### **Introduction**

The leadership in our community has a responsibility to create a vision that preserves, protects and strengthens the treasured resource of the American River Parkway in perpetuity.

We have invested our first five years—since our organization was founded in 2003—pursuing a strategy of organizational capacity building and conducting research in the practical approaches, emanating from our guiding principles, we've determined can address the critical issues impacting the Parkway, and communicating with our members and the public those results.

### **Six Critical Issues & Corresponding Guiding Principles**

1) Continuing depletion of public funding to provide vital ongoing maintenance, facility repair, law enforcement presence, invasive plant management, and fully restore a sense of safety for those using our priceless public resource.

*Our Guiding Principle:* Preserving the Parkway is not an option, it's a necessity.

2) Continuing pressure on the river, whether through flooding, illegal sewage discharge, or taking water for new development, hurts the salmon and other aquatic life.

*Our Guiding Principle:* What's good for the salmon is good for the river.

3) Continuing habitat devastation, fires, and pollution from widespread illegal camping by the homeless, primarily in the North Sacramento area of the Parkway.

*Our Guiding Principle:* Regarding illegal camping by the homeless in the North Sacramento area of the Parkway: Social and environmental justice calls upon us to help the poor and distressed person but not at the expense of the adjacent community to visit the Parkway safely.

4) Continuing development pressure to build large homes along the Parkway edges, intruding on the view space, and encroaching into the commons.

*Our Guiding Principle:* If it can be seen from the Parkway, it shouldn't be built along the Parkway.

5) Continuing exclusion of responsible usage by new Parkway user groups is contrary to the spirit upon which public ownership of a natural resource is predicated.

*Our Guiding Principle:* Regarding new parkway usages: Inclusion should be the operating principle rather than exclusion.

6) Continuing encasement of open space, restricting suburban community development upon which a sustainable tax base funding necessary public works is built, is contrary to sound future planning.

*Our Guiding Principle:* The suburban lifestyle—as surrounds the American River Parkway—which is imbued within the aspirational center of the California Dream and whose vision is woven into the heart of the American Dream, is a deeply loved way of life whose sustainability we all desire.

This past five year period resulted in the creation of our first strategic plan—designed to guide our work from 2004 to 2009—a stable membership base of about 700, designation of an annual parkway advocate (five individuals were acknowledged), and

regular communications (letters, articles, daily blogging, monthly e-letters, quarterly newsletters, annual organizational reports and four research reports covering critical issues, and periodic planning position papers).

All of this information is available on our website.

## **Strategic Summary**

We will be investing the next five years in two directions; one major, the other ongoing.

The major work will focus around trying to encourage local government to bring into reality the one idea from our research into approaches that can most significantly impact the major critical issues—funding and management—which is the creation of a Joint Powers Authority (JPA) to govern the Parkway.

The ongoing work will focus on continuing to help build a community knowledge base around the results of our four research reports, buttressed by new information that becomes available.

The American River Parkway is the most valuable natural resource in our community and one of the most valuable in the nation.

Because of this singular nature, it has the potential to be governed through a singular process, a Joint Powers Authority (JPA), as other signature park areas in the country are governed.

This type of governance will give our Parkway the dedicated management and fund raising capability that are so necessary to retain and enhance its premier local and national status.

## **Implementation Summary**

To help create an environment where the JPA policy concept we have presented become accepted public policy it is important to provide information about successful adaptations of the concept to other public park areas in the nation, to the public and public leadership through the following venues.

### **Community Information**

- Daily blogging: The Parkway Blog at <http://riverparkwayblog.wordpress.com/> is part of the ongoing work of ARPPS public education and advocacy around public policy issues that may be related to the Parkway and the adjacent communities along the American River in Sacramento, California. (200 - 250 blog postings annually)
- Daily letters to members of the public: We will be sending information to members of the public, concerning the advisability of creating a JPA to govern the Parkway. (500 - 600 letters annually)
- Monthly & special e-letters to membership and public leadership: We will continue the monthly e letters, with a focus, when possible, on illegal camping in the North Sacramento area of the Parkway and JPA governance. (12 - 16 annually)
- Quarterly newsletters to membership and public leadership: We will continue the quarterly newsletters with a focus, when possible, on JPA governance. (4 annually)
- Regular letters to the editor: We will seek opportunities to send letters that focus on JPA governance, Auburn Dam & Illegal camping. (4-10 annually)
- Occasional articles in local publications: We will seek to have articles published that look at governance by a JPA and a nonprofit conservancy as a viable option for the Parkway. (1-3 annually)
- Occasional policy planning papers: We will, when possible, cover the viability of Parkway governance by a JPA. (1-3 annually)
- Organizational report (1 annually)

## **Public Forums**

- Regular forums around Parkway issues: We will seek opportunities to conduct public forums around the issue of JPA governance. (1-2 annually)
- Presentations to local business and neighborhood organizations: We will seek the opportunity to present information about JPA governance. (1-2 annually)
- Meetings with public leadership: We will meet with public leadership to discuss the option of JPA governance. (4-6 annually)

## **Study Mission**

- Advocate for a study mission to the San Dieguito River Park in San Diego, which is governed by a JPA.

## **Review & Update**

This plan is subject to annual review and updating every five years.

## **Status Summary**

*Our Guiding Principles, Critical Issues & Suggested Solutions: Status of Progress*

### **Guiding Principles**

- 1) *Preserving the Parkway is not an option, it's a necessity.*
- 2) *What's good for the salmon is good for the river.*
- 3) *Regarding illegal camping by the homeless in the North Sacramento area of the Parkway: Social and environmental justice calls upon us to help the poor and distressed person but not at the expense of the adjacent community to visit the Parkway safely.*
- 4) *If it can be seen from the Parkway, it shouldn't be built along the Parkway.*

5) *Regarding new parkway usages: Inclusion should be the operating principle rather than exclusion.*

6) *The suburban lifestyle—as surrounds the American River Parkway—which is imbued within the aspirational center of the California Dream and whose vision is woven into the heart of the American Dream, is a deeply loved way of life whose sustainability we all desire.*

**Status:** These guiding principles—Number 6 was added in 2011—still animate our work, being prioritized as warranted.

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### **Critical Issues/Solutions**

We encourage policy discussions about the Parkway, addressing the five critical issues and our proposed solutions.

**1) Continuing depletion of public funding to take care of the Parkway.**

**Solution:** *Create a Joint Powers Authority and nonprofit organization for daily management and fundraising.*

**Status:** Being discussed by a designated committee with representation from Sacramento County and the cities of Sacramento, Folsom, & Rancho Cordova.

**2) Continuing pressure on the river, whether through flooding, illegal sewage discharge, or taking water for new development, hurts the salmon and other aquatic life.**

**Solution:** *Build the Auburn Dam.*

**Status:** On hold, but still a congressionally approved dam site which could be revived by Congress.

**3) Continuing habitat devastation, fires, and pollution from widespread illegal camping by the homeless in the Lower Reach.**

**Solution:** *Strengthen and enforce laws against illegal camping.*

**Status:** While the legal argument—that has had some success—that sleeping in public is not illegal, has given some pause to some local jurisdictions in enforcement and strengthening laws against public camping in the Parkway, the increase in the aggressiveness of panhandlers congregating in struggling downtown areas, has caused other local areas to *increase* their efforts to restrict public camping.

4) Continuing development pressure to build large homes along the Parkway edges, intruding on the view space, and encroaching into the commons.

**Solution:** *Prohibit such new building.*

**Status:** The new Parkway Plan strengthened the restrictions.

5) Continuing exclusion of responsible usage by new Parkway user groups is contrary to the spirit upon which public ownership of a natural resource is predicated.

**Solution:** *Give such groups an opportunity to make their case.*

**Status:** New groups seeking access to the Parkway, such as dogs-without-leases groups, mountain-bike groups, disc-golf groups, mini-train groups, etc. are still finding little opportunity to present their proposals—which almost always includes doing the maintenance and initial set-up themselves—to the Parkway governing agency which has traditionally favored passive recreation over active.

6) Continuing encasement of open space, restricting suburban community development upon which a sustainable tax base funding necessary public works is built, is contrary to sound future planning.

**Solution:** *Support the growth of suburban communities.*

**Status:** There is an advocacy element in the Sacramento region which does not support suburban communities, and we shall continue to note that they are where the majority of people wish to live, and that planning decisions need to reflect this.

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## Appendix I: E-Letters

### American River Parkway Preservation Society

#### E-Letter #113: October 6, 2011

#### Golden Necklace Trail; Sacramento County (map attached)

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*The Golden Necklace Trail* is envisioned as beginning in Coloma, running southwest along the South Fork of the American River over the Salmon Falls Bridge, southwest along Folsom Lake to connect with the American River Parkway, continuing southwest along the Parkway Trail to the confluence with the Sacramento River, turning south along the Sacramento River to the historic Chinese town of Locke, and then turning northeast up the Cosumnes River Preserve, to—either the Folsom South Canal Trail or the Deer Creek Hills Preserve Oak Woodland—both of which would then turn northeast to connect back to the American River Parkway at Lake Natoma.

Let's begin at the gold discovery site at Sutter's Mill where modern California really began, along the south fork of the American River, in Coloma, and their website [www.parks.ca.gov/default.asp?page\\_id=484](http://www.parks.ca.gov/default.asp?page_id=484)

The American River Conservancy is working on a trail project eventually linking the discovery site at Coloma to downtown Sacramento, and their website is [www.arconservancy.org](http://www.arconservancy.org)

From downtown, continuing south along the Sacramento River, our envisioned *Golden Necklace* links to the Sacramento River Greenway project working to extend the trail along the Sacramento River, and their website is <http://friendsofsacrivergreenway.org/>

As the necklace extends south along the Sacramento it links with the historic Chinese town of Locke, and here is their website [www.cr.nps.gov/history/online\\_books/5views/5views3h52.htm](http://www.cr.nps.gov/history/online_books/5views/5views3h52.htm)

From Locke we connect to another link in the *Golden Necklace*, the Cosumnes River Preserve, and here is their website [www.cosumnes.org](http://www.cosumnes.org)

From the Cosumnes link in the necklace we proceed to the Folsom South Canal Corridor Plan and their 14 mile link from Sloughouse Road to the Aquatic Center and the American River Parkway. Their website is <http://folsomsouthcanal.com/recreation.asp>

Another trail variation from the Cosumnes north is the vision presented by the Sacramento Valley Conservancy on their website, the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Open Space Vision Map at <http://www.sacramentovalleyconservancy.org/vision-map.asp> which would be

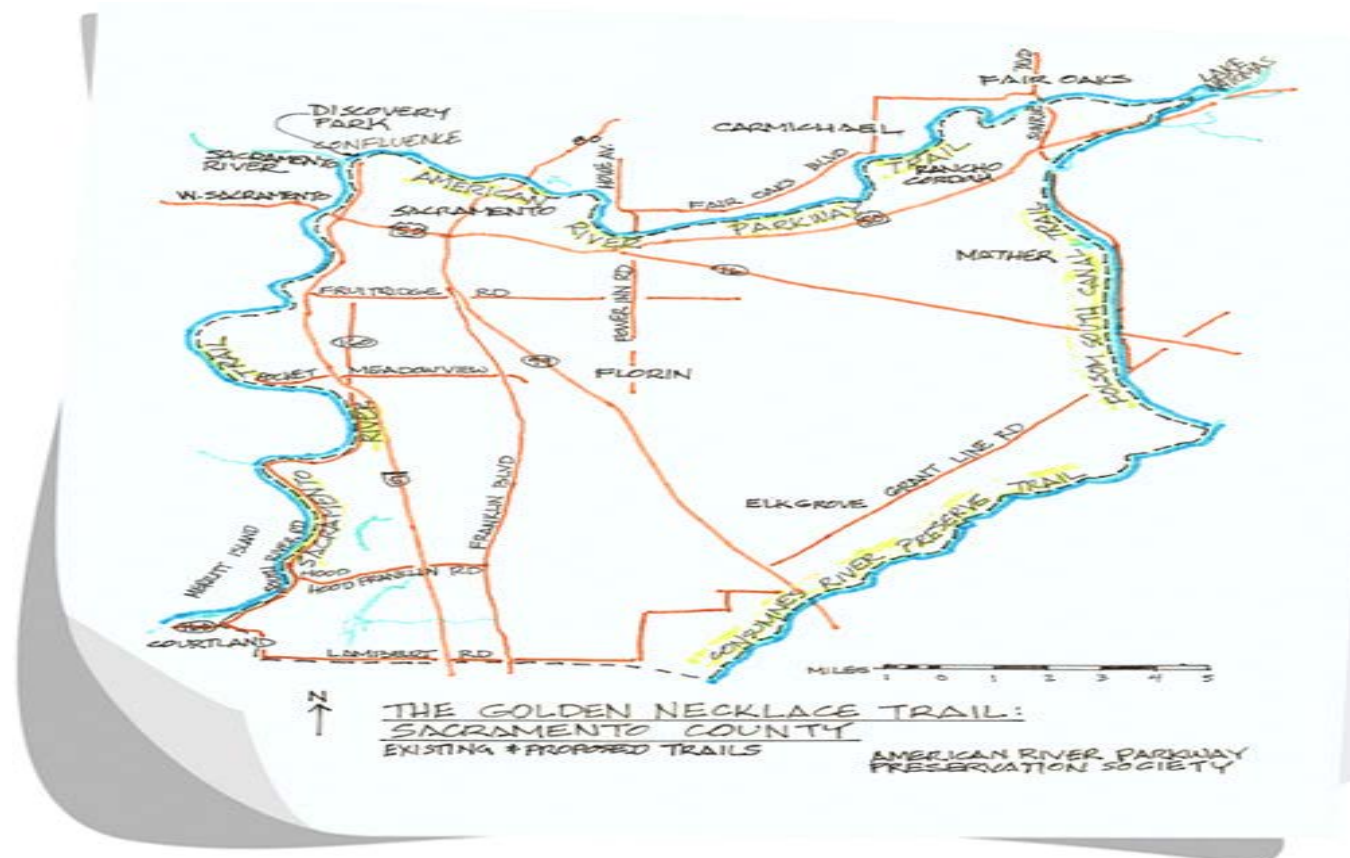
further east than the Folsom South Canal Corridor, through the Deer Creek Hills Oak Woodland.

The Rails to Trails concept design for the actual trail is the best one I have seen, accommodating pedestrians, bicyclists, and equestrians, which you can see at <http://www.cvrtf.org/html/map.html>

Visioning this complete concept as one long linked entity, allowing people to travel, by bike, by foot, and by horse along the historic and beautiful golden trails that could become the *Rivers of Gold National Heritage Area* we wrote about in our 2007 report, <http://www.arpps.org/Report3-Governance.pdf> (starting at page 30) easily outshining many of the already established sites listed at the National Park Service National Heritage Areas website [www.cr.nps.gov/heritageareas](http://www.cr.nps.gov/heritageareas) .

We've drawn a map of the Sacramento County phase of the *Golden Necklace Trail* to give you an idea of what it would look like, and it is attached.

**P.S.** Our Annual Organizational Report has been posted to our website at [http://www.arpps.org/ARPPS Annual Report 2011.pdf](http://www.arpps.org/ARPPS%20Annual%20Report%202011.pdf)



*The Golden Necklace Trail* (this map only shows the Sacramento County portion) is envisioned as beginning in Coloma, running southwest along the South Fork of the American River over the Salmon Falls Bridge, southwest along Folsom Lake to connect with the American River Parkway, continuing southwest along the Parkway Trail to the confluence with the Sacramento River, turning south along the Sacramento River to the historic Chinese towns of Courtland and Locke, and then turning east along Lambert Road, then northeast up the Cosumnes River Preserve, to—either the Folsom South Canal Trail or the Deer Creek Hills Preserve Oak Woodland—both of which would then turn northeast to connect back to the American River Parkway at Lake Natoma, thence back to Coloma.

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## **American River Parkway Preservation Society**

### **E-Letter #114: November 7, 2011**

#### **New Parkway Campsites**

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**BLOG NOTE: We're no longer posting at the old blog site, the new blog site is <http://riverparkwayblog.wordpress.com/>**

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In a November 2, 2011 walk along the river, Bob Slobe recorded over 30 illegal camping sites in and about the American River Parkway in the Lower Reach area—from Discovery Park to Cal Expo—and has sent the information, pinpointed on Google map, to County Supervisor Phil Serna, who has called for an immediate removal of the camps.

The situation is complicated by the recent court case involving the property of the homeless, as the *Sacramento Bee* in their story entitled, *After ruling, Sacramento must figure out how to handle homeless camper's property*, reported in June of this year:

An excerpt.

“Attorneys have begun sorting through a federal jury's complicated verdict in a lawsuit that pitted homeless campers against Sacramento cops.

“The jury decided the city has violated the constitutional rights of homeless people by failing to protect their property during police sweeps of illegal camps. So how does the city correct those violations? And to what degree must it reimburse homeless people for the tents, sleeping bags, medicines and other personal items they lost?”

“Sacramento County settled its portion of the class-action lawsuit in 2009 with a payment of \$488,000 and the development of elaborate policies for tagging and storing items seized during sweeps of illegal campsites. The jury verdict could end up costing the city twice that much in legal fees and reimbursements to campers, said Mark Merin, who acted as lawyer for the homeless plaintiffs.

“Merin's office already is circulating "claim forms" allowing homeless people to detail their losses.

"Interest in coming forward and claiming compensation has risen significantly," said Merin. "The city is going to have to compensate everyone who lost property."

“But Chief Deputy City Attorney Chance Trimm said he is not yet ready to concede to a big payout or a major policy change.

"We didn't settle this case because we didn't think we did anything inappropriate from a constitutional standpoint," he said. "We believed we struck the correct balance between enforcing the camping ordinance and addressing public health-and-safety issues."

“City officials might appeal the two counts the jury rendered against the city, he said. Otherwise, "we will have to work with the plaintiffs to see if we can work something out between us."

Retrieved November 3, 2011 from <http://www.sacbee.com/2011/06/06/3679128/after-ruling-sacramento-must-figure.html>

The trash accumulation impact of the illegal camping is, once again, noted in this November 5, 2011 article in the *Sacramento Bee* about the ongoing necessity to clean up after the campers,

An excerpt.

“Volunteers for the American River Parkway Foundation on Saturday cleaned up trash left at abandoned homeless encampments along the parkway.

“About 150 volunteers hit the parkway shortly before 10 a.m., leaving from the Northgate parking lot of the recreation area.

"We want people to come enjoy the parkway," said Dianna Poggetto, executive director of the foundation.

“The volunteers go out periodically to clean up what's left behind by campers along the river.”

Retrieved November 6, 2011 from <http://www.sacbee.com/2011/11/05/4033654/volunteers-clean-up-trash-from.html>

We are thankful someone is cleaning up—but stopping the illegal camping at the front end would be more effective.

We are thankful for people like Bob Slobe who continues to notify public leadership about the illegal camping sites and the devastation they cause—but stopping the illegal camping at the front end would be more effective.

We are thankful for public leaders like Phil Serna who continues to have campsites removed—but stopping the illegal camping at the front end would be more effective.

We continue our call for effective management of the premier recreational resource in our region, which, in our strategy involves: Parkway adjacent cities and the county forming a Joint Powers Authority (JPA) and the JPA then either creates a new or contracts with an existing nonprofit organization for daily management and supplemental fundraising.

This creates dedicated management of the Parkway allowing for a priority focus on public safety and facility protection.

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## **American River Parkway Preservation Society**

### **E-Letter #115, December 7, 2011**

#### **Protecting the Entire Community**

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A letter submitted to the Sacramento bee (not published) was posted to our website at <http://riverparkwayblog.wordpress.com/2011/12/01/protecting-the-entire-community/> and is enclosed:

In this *Sacramento Bee* editorial <http://www.sacbee.com/2011/11/18/4063634/lungren-needs-to-deliver-on-natomas.html>, Congressman Dan Lungren is taken to task for asking for mutual support to protect the entire Sacramento community from flooding—by building Auburn Dam—from local leadership asking for a specific neighborhood to be protected by improving the Natomas levees.

This is exactly the type of comprehensive vision congressional representatives are expected to provide, seeking to help their entire community from disaster, which will certainly help the neighborhoods within from it also.

Fortunately there are two local congressional representatives, Lungren and McClintock, who understand the importance of building Auburn Dam, which our organization also

supports to protect the physical integrity of the Parkway and provide the correct balance of water temperature and flow for spawning salmon.

An excerpt from the *Bee* editorial.

“When we last checked in on the Natomas flood control project, the situation was grim. Because of overly broad restrictions on “earmarks,” the U.S. House of Representatives has bottled up federal authorizations for water and flood control projects all over the country, including one in Natomas.

“Without such a federal authorization, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers will be unable to finish a levee improvement project needed to protect 100,000 people, the Sacramento International Airport and billions of dollars in property.

“Yet over the last month, there have been signs of progress in breaking this logjam. Numerous local officials, including Sacramento County Supervisor Phil Serna and Assemblyman Roger Dickinson, have joined U.S. Rep. Doris Matsui in pressing House Speaker John Boehner to change House policies so public safety projects can go forward....

“Another positive sign is the interest of U.S. Sens. Dianne Feinstein and Barbara Boxer in resolving the issue. On Nov. 7, Feinstein and Boxer introduced the Natomas Basin Flood Protection Improvements Act of 2011. The bill, a companion to House legislation introduced by Matsui earlier this year, would authorize nearly \$1.4 billion to upgrade Natomas levees....

“Unfortunately, this push in the Senate hasn’t yet prompted Boehner and the House leadership to budge. U.S. Rep. Dan Lungren, R-Gold River, says he’s pushing hard for the Natomas project, but he has nothing visible yet to show for it. Indeed, Lungren may have actually complicated the task of rallying bipartisan action with a letter he sent last month to Supervisor Serna.

“In the letter, a response to one sent by the supervisor, Lungren chides Serna for “now engaging in the importance of Natoma (sic) Levee Improvements.” That’s somewhat interesting, given that Serna lives in Natomas, was active in getting a local tax assessment passed for the levee project and actually knows how to spell the word.

“But the most mysterious part of Lungren’s letter is his request that Serna, in seeking authorization for the Natomas levee project, join Lungren in supporting construction of the Auburn dam, upstream of the Folsom Dam on the American River.”

## American River Parkway Preservation Society

### ARPPS Christmas/New Years Special E Letter #115A December 29, 2011

#### Protecting the Parkway From Illegal Camping

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The inability of most public leadership (County Supervisor Phil Serna excepted) to separate an immediate problem, illegal camping on or near the American River Parkway, from a long-term one, solving local homelessness; creates a situation where the Parkway and adjacent neighborhoods suffer, while the illegal campers merely move their camps around.

This recent article from the *Sacramento Bee* reports the latest manifestation of leadership inertia. <http://www.sacbee.com/2011/12/29/4150415/sacramento-homeless-evicted-from.html>

The answer which our organization advocates is nonprofit management of the Parkway, using Central Park Conservancy as the model, and a recent article from the *New York Times* outlines the dramatic impact the conservancy's management has had on crime in Central Park, and the ability for park visitors to safely use the park, even at night. [http://www.nytimes.com/2011/12/29/nyregion/as-crime-falls-central-parks-night-use-grows.html?\\_r=1&scp=1&sq=central%20park%20conservancy&st=cse](http://www.nytimes.com/2011/12/29/nyregion/as-crime-falls-central-parks-night-use-grows.html?_r=1&scp=1&sq=central%20park%20conservancy&st=cse)

An excerpt from the *New York Times* article, which also ran in today's *Bee*.

"For as long as most New Yorkers can remember, the rules have been clear: Enjoy Central Park by day. Keep out at night.

"Someone, however, forgot to tell Fleur Bailey, a petite Wall Street trader who was walking her two Dalmatians in the park after 10 the other night.

"I can't remember the last time I came across something that made me uncomfortable," said Ms. Bailey, who lives on the Upper West Side and takes her dogs into the park as late as midnight. "Some people say, 'You walk your dogs *where* at night?' But I tell them that it's perfectly fine."

"And she is hardly alone. On any given evening, the park now hums with life well into the night. Couples stroll under pools of lamplight, while the park drive pulses with the footfalls of runners, the whirl of cyclists and the desultory clop of carriage horses. Men and women jog happily around the reservoir.

"It's boringly safe," said Christopher Moloney, 34, who cuts through the park at night, usually around 9, to get from his job in the Time Warner Center to his home on East

70th Street. “I’ve walked through the park at 3 in the morning, and there are always a couple of people here and there.”

“[Crime statistics](#) for the park show a steady decline in menace. This year through mid-December, according to the police, 17 robberies had been reported in the park, down from 37 in 2001 — and 731 in 1981. Rapes, too, are down sharply, with only two reported this year. The last homicide occurred in 2002. And many parkgoers these days have never even heard of the 1989 attack on the so-called [Central Park jogger](#), who was raped and left for dead while running in the park one evening.

“Efforts to tamp down crime have been so successful that the park’s own police precinct has lately taken to planting pocketbooks on benches to lure would-be thieves. More than three-quarters of the 68 grand larcenies in the park reported through mid-December resulted from leaving belongings unattended, itself a sign of the comfort level of park visitors.

“The [Central Park Conservancy](#), which manages the park for the city, started a late shift — from 1:30 to 10 p.m. — in the late 1990s, as the park became safer. In the past year, four more workers were added to that shift, for a total of 40. They do the usual tasks — picking up litter, inspecting bathrooms, recording broken bulbs — but, armed with cellphones and walkie-talkies, they also supplement the police.

“The Central Park police say that a main reason crime has fallen is the stricter enforcement of the park’s 1 a.m. curfew. An increase in officers north of 96th Street, which historically has had a disproportionately high number of robberies, will probably result this year in the lowest number of robberies in memory.

“Installing 30 surveillance cameras around the perimeter of the park, each with two lenses, has also enhanced security. “We can view all these cameras from the desk,” said Capt. Philip M. Wishnia, the commander of the [Central Park Precinct](#). “That’s a deterrent.”

**Wishing All a Very Happy New Year!**

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**American River Parkway Preservation Society**

**E-Letter #116, January 6, 2012**

**Help the American River Parkway**

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Sacramento City Councilmember Steve Cohn, in a recent article, was quoted as saying:



“I’m very concerned that the stretch of the American River Parkway on both sides, from the confluence all the way into midtown, is pretty much dominated by homeless and transients.”

*Sacramento Bee: American River camp extends Sacramento debate on ‘safe ground’.* (December 20, 2011) Retrieved December 27, 2011 from <http://www.sacbee.com/2011/12/20/4134401/safe-grounds-campsite-quest-proves.html>

County Supervisor Phil Serna, in an article written last year about the same area of the Parkway, wrote:

“Parkway users deserve a safe, clean environment free from harassment or other personal threat. They should not feel compelled to avoid the parkway for fear of their own safety, which is what a number of constituents have conveyed to my office in recent weeks. They deserve better; we all deserve better.”

“The American River Parkway offers one of the best recreational opportunities anywhere in the country, but it will be enjoyed only if it is safe....”

“Let’s also remember that the parkway itself is a “constituent” here. Illegal camping has produced tons of trash and debris, some of which is hazardous biological waste. Illegal campgrounds, large and small, “self-governed” or not, contribute to this problem. Along the American River Parkway, refuse has collected in makeshift dumps, and what doesn’t remain in these derelict collection sites oftentimes is spread by the wind, is scavenged by animals or ends up pooled along the riverbanks.”

*Sacramento Bee; Viewpoints: Comprehensive view needed to deal with homeless, parkway.* (February 23, 2011). Retrieved December 27, 2011 from <http://www.sacbee.com/2011/02/23/3422768/comprehensive-view-needed-to-deal.html>

As we move into the New Year, let us celebrate the public leadership exhibited and work to help other public leaders come together around strategies that can return the impacted area of the Parkway to the safe use of the residents of the adjacent neighborhoods and other Parkway users.

**Have a Very Happy New Year!**

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**American River Parkway Preservation Society**

**E-Letter #117, February 7, 2012**

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## Parkway Crime Drop?

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As reported by the *Sacramento Bee*, violent crime in the American River Parkway has dropped by about 60% over the past year and that is very good news.

However, illegal camping citations in and about the Parkway from Discovery Park to Cal Expo have increased by 1,462 %, which impacts the adjacent neighborhoods on both sides of the river—Downtown, Midtown, Woodlake and North Sacramento, suffering from the related crime illegal camping generates, which probably isn't calculated in the Parkway crime statistics.

These acts—many being quality of life issues—include the foraging through garbage cans and the resulting litter, theft of property from cars, porches, yards, and garages, aggressive panhandling, and the general sense of unease and fear many neighborhoods feel, especially children and the elderly, from the homeless wandering through their neighborhoods.

One comment—from a resident of a Parkway adjacent neighborhood, (**impappy**)—about the *Bee* story noted this: “I live within 100 ft of the parkway boundaries. The crime that is not reported in the stats for the parkway is the auto and home burglaries in the adjoining neighborhoods. The criminals use the parkway as an escape route after cutting through my fence and burglarizing my and my neighbor's homes. If you want a better picture of the amount of crime on the parkway look at the crime statistics for the neighborhoods immediately adjacent to the parkway.” **Retrieved February 3, 2012 from** <http://www.sacbee.com/2012/02/03/4236008/american-river-parkway-crimes.html>

And it is important here to remember, as Kelling (1996) reminds us: “The problem is not the *condition* of being homeless or poor; it is the *behavior* of many persons, some homeless but others not, who violate the laws of the city and state. The disorder that we describe consists of physical acts, such as panhandling, and the residual physical conditions that result from disorderly behavior, such as graffiti and abandoned cars. The *act* of panhandling, the *act* of public drinking, are disorderly behaviors of concern here—not being poor, or even being recognized widely as a prostitute or public inebriate. The issue is behavior.” **Kelling, G.L. & Coles, C.M. (1996) *Fixing Broken Windows: Restoring Order and Reducing Crime in Our Communities*, New York: The Free Press.** (p. 40) [http://www.amazon.com/Fixing-Broken-Windows-Restoring-Communities/dp/0684824469/ref=tmm\\_hrd\\_title\\_0?ie=UTF8&qid=1328290014&sr=8-1](http://www.amazon.com/Fixing-Broken-Windows-Restoring-Communities/dp/0684824469/ref=tmm_hrd_title_0?ie=UTF8&qid=1328290014&sr=8-1)

Those adjacent neighborhoods should not have to suffer from the de facto permanent tent housing that the on again off again enforcement of the law against illegal camping allows to continue, and the related crime that comes with it.

Parkway advocates and users need to join with County Supervisor Phil Serna, who wrote in a *Sacramento Bee* article last year: "Let's also remember that the parkway itself is a "constituent" here. Illegal camping has produced tons of trash and debris, some of which is hazardous biological waste. Illegal campgrounds, large and small, "self-governed" or not, contribute to this problem. Along the American River Parkway, refuse has collected in makeshift dumps, and what doesn't remain in these derelict collection sites oftentimes is spread by the wind, is scavenged by animals or ends up pooled along the riverbanks." **Retrieved February 3, 2012 from <http://www.sacbee.com/2011/02/23/3422768/comprehensive-view-needed-to-deal.html>**

Councilman Steve Cohn, sharing this concern, was quoted in a *Sacramento Bee* article from last year: "I'm very concerned that the stretch of the American River Parkway on both sides, from the confluence all the way into midtown, is pretty much dominated by homeless and transients," **Retrieved February 3, 2012 from <http://www.sacbee.com/2011/12/20/4134401/safe-grounds-campsite-quest-proves.html>**

An excerpt from the Parkway crime article in the *Sacramento Bee*.

"Despite budget cuts and reductions in the number of park rangers, crime along the American River Parkway dropped dramatically last year, new figures from Sacramento County indicate.

"Car break-ins, violent crime and misdemeanors all dropped in 2011 compared to the previous year, according to a ranger report released this week.

"The only segment that saw an appreciable increase in activity was in the number of citations issued for illegal camping, an outgrowth of efforts by officials to stem the influx of homeless camping along the lower end of the parkway near Discovery Park....

"Last year there were 21 auto burglaries reported, a drop from the 53 in 2010.

"Drug arrests and citations dropped by half, falling from 10 in 2010 to five last year. And citations for other misdemeanors or infractions dropped from 204 to 102.

"Even arrests for being drunk in public dropped from 19 to eight last year, possibly a byproduct of the county's recent efforts to ban alcohol on the river during holidays such as July 4.

"There was a slight increase in thefts, with a total of six reports last year vs. three in 2010.

“But the largest increase involved citations for illegal camping. Last year 453 citations were issued, compared to 29 the previous year. That stems from efforts to deal with the burgeoning population of homeless people camping along the parkway.” Retrieved February 3, 2012 from <http://www.sacbee.com/2012/02/03/4236008/american-river-parkway-crimes.html>

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## American River Parkway Preservation Society

E-Letter #118, March 6, 2012

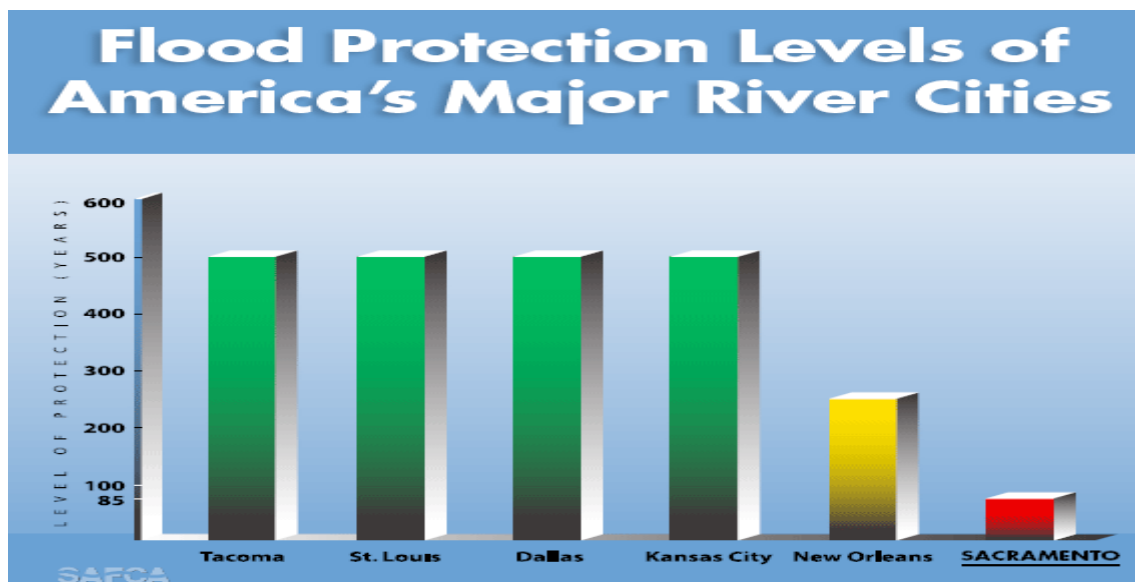
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### Flood & Drought Protection

A front page headline story in the *Sacramento Bee* at <http://www.sacbee.com/2012/01/17/4192686/new-flood-control-plan-would-change.html> touted a new \$17 billion flood control project for Sacramento that would bring us to a 200 year level of flood control.

This is less than what New Orleans had before Hurricane Katrina flooded the city.

*Sacramento will remain the most flood prone city along a major river in the United States, as this graph shows, until Auburn Dam is built and Shasta Dam is raised (see the article at [http://www.watershedportal.org/news/news\\_html?ID=165](http://www.watershedportal.org/news/news_html?ID=165)) for about the same total cost—also providing ample water storage for drought protection—thereby ensuring a 500 year level of flood protection for Sacramento.*



There is also information about: “Sacramento’s risk of flooding is the greatest of any major city in the country” at the website of the Sacramento Area Flood Control Agency (SAFCA) at <http://www.safca.org/floodhistory/floodthreat.html> putting the problem on the inadequacy of the levees, which the raising them to the 200 year level is designed to address.

However, the concluding paragraph at the SAFCA flood history page, puts 200 year protection in context:

“Note that the first storm occurring after beginning construction of Folsom was larger than any occurring in the prior 45 years. Since that 1951 storm, Sacramento has experienced four more, each somewhat larger than the previous. A comparative analysis run on the two periods (1905 to 1950 and 1905 to 2000) shows that a storm with 1 chance in 500 of occurring in any year based on the earlier period is approximately the same size as a storm with one chance in 50 of occurring using the entire 90 period. This apparent trend of larger and larger storms is the primary reason Sacramento’s risk of flood is unacceptably high.”

Translation, we need a 500 year level of flood protection.

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## **American River Parkway Preservation Society**

### **E-Letter #119, April 6, 2012**

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#### **The Downtown Arena & the Parkway**

On March 6, 2012, a historic and visionary step was taken by the Sacramento City Council that has the potential to change the way in which the downtown portions of the riverfronts of our two major rivers are used far into the future, and the vision could not be more compelling, a National Basketball Association arena for the Sacramento Kings in the old railyards putting the games—and all other events held there—within walking distance of thousands of people who work downtown.

The *Sacramento Bee* reports the vote: “In a historic vote, the Sacramento City Council approved the financing plan Tuesday night for a \$391 million sports arena in the downtown railyard. By a 7-2 vote, the council accepted a nonbinding “term sheet” agreed to by city officials, the Sacramento Kings, arena operator AEG and the development firm slated to build the project.” Retrieved March 26, 2012 from: <http://www.sacbee.com/2012/03/06/4317430/sacramento-city-council-approves.html#storylink=cpy>

There has been a snag with the deal—par for the course with the current owners—but the benefits for Sacramento are substantial enough that it will probably (let's say a prayer and keep our fingers crossed) finalize someday soon.

Our organization has not been too keen on most of the downtown development efforts over the years, but this particular effort looks to be a winner; especially for the downtown areas bordering the Parkway.

The key to the urban use of the riverbanks in the downtown area of our two major rivers as a destination area, is downtown development, especially the long-troubled J, K & L, 7<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> Street grid that has been squalid for decades but which the bustling evening/nightlife the downtown arena will stimulate, will certainly change.

Former Indianapolis mayor, Stephen Goldsmith, adds to the discussion in a recent *Sacramento Bee* article: "The still-evolving arrangement could be structured any number of ways, and the city will have to decide how much of a gamble it's willing to take in hopes of maximizing its income. "It's a trade-off; there's no right answer," said Stephen Goldsmith, a former mayor of Indianapolis who teaches public policy at Harvard University. "The more risk you take, the more reward you get." Retrieved March 9, 2012 from <http://www.sacbee.com/2012/03/09/4323469/sacramento-explores-parking-revenue.html>

Explore the history page of the White River State Park in Indianapolis, <http://inwhiteriver.wrsp.in.gov/ABOUTthePARK/ParkHistory> a downtown riverfront park that has become a destination and see if it doesn't stimulate thinking about what we can do right here in our river city.

This issue will be covered more extensively in our Spring Newsletter, due out in about ten days.

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## **American River Parkway Preservation Society**

### **E-Letter #120, May 7, 2012**

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#### **Suburban Living & Backyard Gardens**

The *Sacramento Bee* had a story this past Saturday which captured so wonderfully the joy so many of us find in our backyards and the very personal gardens we create there.

There are many reasons we create a backyard garden, but all are based in love.

Here is an excerpt from the *Bee* story.

“In his Tahoe Park backyard, Joe Rincon created a love note with a postcard view.

“A graceful waterfall splashes into a cool pond stocked with silver and orange koi. Stone lanterns light a winding path to a charming teahouse through a fantasy forest of trees trimmed to resemble puffy clouds, mimicking their bonsai brethren. An arching red bridge beckons to a secluded patio, another bit of paradise. Dwarf red Japanese maples, cherry blossoms, lavender wallflowers and magenta azaleas add pops of spring color.

“One step out on the deck and the heart relaxes, breath slows and stress disappears. Traffic on nearby 65th Avenue fades into the distance.

"I made this as a gift to my wife," Rincon explained. "She inspired me."

“Said Zelda Rincon, "It's really, really pretty. We give each other suggestions. We're not experts; we just try things."

“Their Asian-inspired garden makes their backyard a true retreat, inviting relaxation. Such gardens have seen a resurgence in popularity, particularly in California, as homeowners seek ways to get more use and enjoyment out of their outdoor space.

"Asian gardens are tranquil and harmonious, a place full of symbolism for quiet contemplation and an aid to meditation," explained Orangevale garden designer Susan Silva, who recently completed two Asian gardens for clients. "Whether a client's yard is small or large or just a small area within the yard, an Asian garden always fits in well to a design and everyone always enjoys having one."

“In addition, the gardens can be water savers. They include little, if any, lawn. Water for fountains, ponds and other features is recirculated, giving the feel of abundant water without using that much.

"Or you could go with a dry Zen garden," Silva suggested. "Gravel and sand are used to represent water; that also makes for incredible water savings."

“Interest in Asian-style gardens is natural for Sacramento, home to four bonsai clubs. Holding its 66th annual show this weekend, the Sacramento Bonsai Club is the oldest in the nation. May 12 is World Bonsai Day.

“Like bonsai (the art of creating tiny sculptured trees), Asian gardening can be labor intensive. Everything has a place and is kept in perfect balance.

"It's not for everyone," said Joe Rincon, who retired after 37 years at Kaiser Permanente as a nursing assistant. "It's very time consuming; a lot of trimming.

"I've been working on this garden for over 20 years," he said. "I'm very devoted to it. It's not for the average person."

Retrieved May 5, 2012 from <http://www.sacbee.com/2012/05/05/4457874/balancing-perfectionsymbolism.html>

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## **American River Parkway Preservation Society**

**E-Letter #121, June 7, 2012**

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### ***Water Storage, Auburn Dam & Raising Shasta Dam***

We sometimes have an abundance of rainfall, which we cannot always rely on, (Item #1) but with the water storage capability California initially planned for, (Item #2) we can get through years when we do not.

As the May 2, 2012 News Release from the Department of Water Resources shows, (Item #3) the only reason we are able to get through this dry year comfortably is because of the water stored in reservoirs from last years abundance.

With the new reality of global warming or climate change—regardless of scepticism surrounding it—another reason for additional water storage as flood protection emerges, (Item #4).

#### **1) We cannot count on abundance.**

For the long term future we need the Auburn Dam, addressed in the January 15, 2011 article from Congressman Tom McClintock in the Sacramento Bee: "*Auburn dam back in play as McClintock takes over House panel*, (The article is no longer on the Bee's website).

An excerpt.

"The long-debated proposal for a dam on the American River seemed to formally die two years ago, when the state water board revoked rights for the project estimated to cost upward of \$10 billion.

"McClintock, though, insists the dam could live again given the proper cost-benefit analysis.

"Ultimately, it will be constructed," McClintock said. "The only question is if it's built in time to prevent the (Sacramento flooding) calamity."

**2) Additionally, for the absolute best storage**, increase the raising of Shasta Dam from what is currently planned to what it was originally engineered to be, as noted in a



detailed Wikipedia entry [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shasta\\_Dam](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shasta_Dam) and in this article from the *Los Angeles Times* on the Watershed Portal website [http://www.watershedportal.org/news/news\\_html?ID=165](http://www.watershedportal.org/news/news_html?ID=165)

An excerpt from the *Times* article.

“From an engineering standpoint, it's a piece of cake. The dam, built between 1938 and 1945, was originally planned to be 200 feet taller. At 800 feet, it would have been the highest and biggest in the world....

“If Shasta Dam had been built up to its engineering limit in 1945, it is arguable that Northern and Central California would not be facing a critical water shortage now.

“According to a 1999 Bureau of Reclamation study, a dam 200 feet taller would be able to triple storage to 13.89 million acre-feet of water.

**3) News Release summary here** <http://www.water.ca.gov/news/>  
**from DWR, full PDF release here,**  
<http://www.water.ca.gov/news/newsreleases/2012/050112snow.pdf>

Summary Excerpt

"The fact that we just had a dry winter right after an unusually wet season last year shows that we must be prepared for all types of weather," said DWR Director Mark Cowin. "Reservoir storage will mitigate the impact of dry conditions on water supply this summer, but we have to plan for the possibility of a consecutive dry year in 2013, both by practicing conservation, continuing to develop alternative local water supplies, and working toward improved water storage and conveyance."

**4) Global warming validates the need for additional water storage** to protect from flooding, as this story in the *Sacramento Bee* notes.  
<http://www.sacbee.com/2012/05/06/4469254/flooding-climate-concerns-spur.html>

“Concerns that area rivers will flow high in winter and that extreme weather events will result in floods were on the minds of 50 people who gathered Saturday morning at the Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area levee as part of a worldwide demonstration.

“That event dovetailed with the recent release of a report that predicts that, locally, climate change will result in more rainfall earlier in the winter and less snowpack runoff later in the season, causing rivers to remain fuller for a longer period of time....

"Flood control issues in the Sacramento Valley have always been a significant aspect here ... and as climate patterns change – and there are greater periods of intense rain inundations – those issues will be of great concern," Saylor said.

“That concern was mirrored by hydrologist Robert Shibatani, who recently released the report: "Water – Where and When? Planning for Water Supply and Flood Control." <http://deltacouncil.ca.gov/get-document/3652>

"We have infrastructure and methods from the 20th century that are currently addressing a 21st-century problem," Shibatani said."

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## **American River Parkway Preservation Society**

### **E-Letter #122, July 9, 2012**

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**Note:** ARPPS has a new phone number, (916) 225 - 9087

### **Illegal Camping & Homeless Property**

This issue, reported by the **Sacramento Bee**, <http://www.sacbee.com/2012/06/08/4547108/homeless-file-claims-against-sacramento.html> has festered into a very burdensome financial and legal mess for local government through their past failure to deal effectively with enforcement of the laws against camping in public space, particularly in the American River Parkway; where illegal camping in the Parkway's Lower Reach—from Discovery Park to Cal Expo—has been rampant for decades with only on-again off-again attempts at eradicating.

Maintenance of public order and providing for public safety, while always to be complimented with a strict observance of individual human rights, has to reflect the common good.

So far however, local public leadership has struggled to find that balance in this particular case; instead allowing the buildup of a nexus of homelessness-enabling domestic service providers who do not provide complimentary individual responsibility-inducing services, in close proximity to Parkway camping sites, which has long been attracting the homeless from far and wide.

Two local leaders, *who* are aware of the problem and have been trying to do something about this, addressed it last year:

“I'm very concerned that the stretch of the American River Parkway on both sides, from the confluence all the way into midtown, is pretty much dominated by homeless and

transients.” **Sacramento City Councilman Steve Cohn**, in the *Sacramento Bee*: *American River camp extends Sacramento debate on ‘safe ground’*. (December 20, 2011) <http://www.sacbee.com/2011/12/20/4134401/safe-grounds-campsite-quest-proves.html>

“Let’s also remember that the parkway itself is a “constituent” here. Illegal camping has produced tons of trash and debris, some of which is hazardous biological waste. Illegal campgrounds, large and small, “self-governed” or not, contribute to this problem. Along the American River Parkway, refuse has collected in makeshift dumps, and what doesn’t remain in these derelict collection sites oftentimes is spread by the wind, is scavenged by animals or ends up pooled along the riverbanks.” **Sacramento County Supervisor Phil Serna** in the *Sacramento Bee*; *Viewpoints: Comprehensive view needed to deal with homeless, parkway*. (February 23, 2011) <http://www.sacbee.com/2011/02/23/3422768/comprehensive-view-needed-to-deal.html> (Article is no longer on *Bee* website)

In the latest news, the property of the homeless living in illegal campsites has become the issue, as the *Sacramento Bee* reports last month.

“Nearly 900 homeless men and women have filed claims for reimbursement for bicycles, tents and other items seized by city police during raids of illegal campsites in recent years.

“The claims are part of an unusual process to resolve a federal class-action lawsuit charging that police stomped on the constitutional rights of homeless people by grabbing their belongings and throwing them away without giving the owners a chance to get them back.

“As of Wednesday, 864 people had filed claims for property seized by Sacramento police since 2005, said Mark Merin, a Sacramento attorney representing the homeless. Merin said he expects more claims to be filed before the deadline at the end of the day today.

“Plaintiffs whose claims are approved will receive payments of either \$400 or \$750, depending upon the value of the property.

“The city could be on the hook for hundreds of thousands of dollars in payments to homeless people, depending upon how many claims are deemed valid, plus attorney fees for four years of work and a three-week trial.

“Senior Deputy City Attorney Chance Trimm said, however, that the city will fight any claims that appear to be bogus, and might go to court to fight paying attorney’s fees.

“Some of these claims are missing key information,” such as birth dates and Social Security numbers, and will likely be thrown out, Trimm said. Others list campsite

locations such as “the Snake Pit,” and “the Island,” names familiar only to homeless people and their advocates.

“A professional claims administrator will make a preliminary ruling on the validity of each case.

“If a dispute arises that cannot be resolved between the battling parties, a federal judge who has been appointed as a special master in the case will step in.

“The process follows a federal court trial last year in which a jury found that the city failed to properly notify homeless people about how to retrieve their possessions, and failed to implement policies for handling that property.”

*Sacramento Bee* article, *Homeless file claims against Sacramento for seized property.* (June 8, 2012) <http://www.sacbee.com/2012/06/08/4547108/homeless-file-claims-against-sacramento.html>

The struggle to protect the American River Parkway from the ravages of illegal camping continues in a confused and uncoordinated manner, for which we all, including the Parkway, suffer.

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## **American River Parkway Preservation Society**

### **E-Letter #123, August 6, 2012**

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#### **Update on Illegal Camping In Parkway**

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**Note:** There is a new Facebook page from Woodlake residents regarding illegal camping’s corrosive impact on their neighborhood, including many photos, at <https://www.facebook.com/AmericanRiverParkwayWoodlakeArea> .

An August 3, 2012 report from Bob Slobe, also posted to the Woodlake Parkway Facebook page, notes the continuing failure of public leadership to rectify the deplorable situation.

Our Parkway Advocate Award is named in honor of Bob Slobe and is only given to those who play some role in their Parkway advocacy, by advocating for the most degraded section of the Parkway.

It is one of our guiding principles: “Regarding illegal camping by the homeless in the North Sacramento area of the Parkway: Social and environmental justice calls upon us to help the poor and distressed person but not at the expense of the adjacent community to visit the Parkway safely.”

We feel that stopping illegal camping is one of the most important strategies that must be taken by public leadership and the content of Bob’s report from last week reveals why, once again.

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### Bob Slobe’s Report

“As most of you already know the City and County of Sacramento have turned the Woodlake Reach of the American River Parkway into a bum camping, fetid garbage pit. In the decades since my family gave over this stretch of the Parkway the destruction has escalated to the point that it is now unusable for recreation. Yes, you can "slip through" this section on your bike. Many bikers are knocked off their bikes while riding through by bums but most get by. In the jungle here it's a small town of sex offenders and wanted felons. The Park Rangers know it and all of you probably do too. The City and the County have actually started to bring food to the bums here in the evenings lest they have to travel to Loaves and Fishes to get food. They exit their camps after a day of stealing and shooting up (also commonly known by rangers) and get their meal at Del Paso and Northgate. With seven murders in as many years in this small reach the County has yet to allocate adequate resources to handle the problem. The previous Parks Director actually ordered her rangers to "stand down" because of danger to themselves. These are folks with badges and guns. Now it appears her successor is following suit. One camp pictured here has been in the same place for three months untouched, right ON the equestrian trail!

“So the working poor population of North Sacramento is denied safe access to recreation, fishing and birding next to their neighborhood while the rich are safe and snug along their reaches of the Parkway. One can walk here all day without seeing a single person not a bum camper. Every day. While this solitude might seem precious for this single hiker, I welcome the day I find a friend that feels safe and walk by my side. No takers.

“The fossilized Parks Commission is, as ever, silent on the issue. The best I ever got at a public forum on the issue was a racist commissioner saying to me somewhat privately that "It would only be used by a bunch of Schwartzers." Unimaginable. The City blames the County, the County blames the City and its social programming and both fund these programs, contributing to the problem each and every day. SARA, ARNHA and ARPF are silent as well. A probation office was recently forced upon us on Del Paso Boulevard with the promise that parolees would be engaged to clean up. From the thousands of pictures we have taken in the time since, that was obviously a lie. Always a broken promise here.

“The signs that tell you where to hike here are torn down, the emergency call boxes are long gone and garbage piles from bum camps grow every day. The only parking lot to this reach has been closed for years. While our City and County wring their hands on how to fix K Street (now at over \$1billion over 30 years) and fret about arenas not built they can't get the very basics right, safety and security. They talk of "tent cities" but only propose them to be right here where the working poor live. Shame on them. No Alcohol signs are in place, many now re-signed by the bums as "now alcohol." The reach is littered with needles, pornography and emptied booze bottles, symbols of the County's unwillingness to engage.

“We would like to sue but poor people don't have that money or access to power. Gordian knot. If there were a way for us to take it back we, of course, would but the County not only won't allow that, they won't even agree to warn potential users of the dangers here. We offer free "danger" signs but they say no. I think daily of Adam Stein, stabbed to death in May of last year right at the bike trail by two bums. His memorial cross stands as a reminder with a flower garden at the base. You might want to come look. I bet you won't. His mother made a beautiful memorial for him to "turn this dangerous, ugly, awful place into something beautiful" right where he died. While we have tried to work with the Parks Department to identify sites of bum camps at their request they have completely stopped enforcement. They, of course, will tell you differently but the Rangers have been redeployed to the toney reaches upstream long ago. Those upstream reaches are "littered" with directional signage, doggie poop bags (maybe human ones needed here), newly planted trees and vegetation and swell benches and par courses. The updated so-called Parkway Plan envisioned NOTHING here. Why? The bums would tear it out.

“Of course, everyone's responsible, everyone thinks everyone else is and nothing is done. Ghetto life.

“Today's walk. Probably about 20 campers in a tiny area of the Leatherman Reach of the Parkway. Rangers and Jeff Leatherman think it's funny now to just not enforce. Ironic. Remember not long ago they were so excited to help us. Oh well. Snake pit. I guess it's good to know the sex offenders here are using protection when they rape women. See pictures.”

<https://picasaweb.google.com/rslobe/AmericanRiverParkway832012?authkey=Gv1sRgCOeZ1eiMqbraKA#>



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## **American River Parkway Preservation Society**

**E-Letter #124, September 7, 2012**

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### **Contracting Out Government Services**

Our organization has long advocated the contracting out of Parkway management and supplemental funding—and with the continued environmental and public safety degradation in the North Sacramento area due to illegal camping, the urgency is even more dramatic—which is addressed in our 2007 report at <http://www.arpps.org/Report3-Governance.pdf>

Much of what government has concluded are services it should be responsible for doing are services that would be much better managed by private or nonprofit organizations, and this article from the **New York Times** [http://www.nytimes.com/2012/06/24/business/a-georgia-town-takes-the-peoples-business-private.html?\\_r=1](http://www.nytimes.com/2012/06/24/business/a-georgia-town-takes-the-peoples-business-private.html?_r=1) about a city, Sandy Springs, Georgia, <http://www.sandyspringsga.org/> that did just that, is very revealing.

An excerpt.

“If your image of a city hall involves a venerable building, some Roman pillars and lots of public employees, the version offered by this Atlanta suburb of 94,000 residents is a bit of a shocker.

“The entire operation is housed in a generic, one-story industrial park, along with a restaurant and a gym. And though the place has a large staff, none are on the public payroll. O.K., seven are, including the city manager. But unless you chance into one of them, the people you meet here work for private companies through a variety of contracts.

“Applying for a business license? Speak to a woman with Severn Trent, a multinational company based in Coventry, England. Want to build a new deck on your house? Chat with an employee of Collaborative Consulting, based in Burlington, Mass. Need a word with people who oversee trash collection? That would be the URS Corporation, based in San Francisco.

“Even the city’s court, which is in session on this May afternoon, next to the revenue division, is handled by a private company, the Jacobs Engineering Group of Pasadena, Calif. The company’s staff is in charge of all administrative work, though the judge, Lawrence Young, is essentially a legal temp, paid a flat rate of \$100 an hour. ...

“Cities have dabbled for years with privatization, but few have taken the idea as far as Sandy Springs. Since the day it incorporated, Dec. 1, 2005, it has handed off to private enterprise just about every service that can be evaluated through metrics and inked into a contract.

“To grasp how unusual this is, consider what Sandy Springs does *not* have. It does not have a fleet of vehicles for road repair, or a yard where the fleet is parked. It does not have long-term debt. It has no pension obligations. It does not have a city hall, for that matter, if your idea of a city hall is a building owned by the city. Sandy Springs rents....

“The town *does* have a conventional police force and fire department, in part because the insurance premiums for a private company providing those services were deemed prohibitively high. But its 911 dispatch center is operated by a private company, iXP, with headquarters in Cranbury, N.J....

“Few have more zeal than Oliver W. Porter, a founding father and architect in chief. ...

“As a fan of Ronald Reagan and the economist Friedrich Hayek, Mr. Porter came naturally to the notion that Sandy Springs could push “the model” to its nth degree. His philosophical inclinations were formed by a life spent in private enterprise, and



cemented by a visit to Weston, Fla., a town that had begun as a series of gated communities.

“Mr. Porter tells this story in “***Creating the New City of Sandy Springs***”  
[http://www.amazon.com/Creating-New-City-Sandy-Springs/dp/1425954367/ref=tmm\\_hrd\\_title\\_0?ie=UTF8&qid=1340552679&sr=8-1](http://www.amazon.com/Creating-New-City-Sandy-Springs/dp/1425954367/ref=tmm_hrd_title_0?ie=UTF8&qid=1340552679&sr=8-1)

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## Appendix II: Newsletters

# American River Parkway Preservation Society Newsletter Issue 32 – Fall 2011

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### ARPPS Letter Published

**Sept 28 2011  
Sacramento Bee**

<http://www.sacbee.com/2011/09/28/3943567/letters-to-the-editor.html>

### Donors can rescue parks

Re "Private donors' role in parks rises" (Capitol & California, Sept. 27): The nationwide trend of nonprofits helping parks is one that needs application in Sacramento, especially with our signature park, the American River Parkway.

We advocate forming a Joint Powers Authority of parkway- adjacent communities. The JPA would create a nonprofit organization for daily management and supplemental fundraising for the parkway.

It is a model with increasing resonance, especially in a time of severe public funding difficulty.

– David H. Lukenbill, senior policy director, American River Parkway Preservation Society

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## **ARPPS Press Release: New Guiding Principle**

If you are living in suburban California, you are part of the Dream, the *California Dream*.

A central part of the birthing vision of the *American Dream* was the *California Dream* and all that America promised, as Kevin Starr notes: “In a very real sense, the California dream was the American dream undergoing one of its most significant variations.” *Americans and the California Dream 1850-1915*. (1973). New York: Oxford University Press. (p.443)

The American River Parkway is surrounded by suburbs, which is appropriate being that a central axis of the *California Dream* is suburban single home ownership, and the American River running through it was where gold was first discovered, leading to one of the greatest migrations in history.

The suburban single home ownership aspect of the *California Dream* is under attack, as Joel Kotkin notes in a recent article, *California Wages War on Single Home Ownership*: “In California, the assault on the house has gained official sanction. Once the heartland of the American dream, the Golden State has begun implementing new planning laws designed to combat global warming. These draconian measures could lead to a ban on the construction of private residences, particularly on the suburban fringe.” Retrieved July 26, 2011 from <http://www.newgeography.com/content/002357-california-wages-war-on-single-family-homes>

To help protect that vision, which we all hope to sustain, we have defined a sixth critical issue, shaped our approach, and formulated our sixth guiding principle.

**Critical Issue #6) Continuing encasement of open space, restricting suburban community development upon which a sustainable tax base funding necessary public works is built, is contrary to sound future planning.**

**Our Approach:** Suburban communities are where the overwhelming majority of American families wish to live, and the opportunity in our region for those communities

to be built for the families who hope to live in them, is a shared supportive responsibility for those of us who presently enjoy our life in the suburbs and for those who hope to enjoy the suburban family lifestyle in the future.

***Our Guiding Principle:*** The suburban lifestyle—as surrounds the American River Parkway—which is imbued within the aspirational center of the *California Dream* and whose vision is woven into the heart of the *American Dream*, is a deeply loved way of life whose sustainability we all desire.

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## **ARPPS Annual Report: Executive Summary**

This has been one of the better years for the issues our organization cares about.

Concerning nonprofit management of the Parkway, the county recently entered into an innovative agreement with Doug Ose to manage Gibson Ranch Park as a forprofit organization, exactly the precedent setting model that could eventually lead to our goal of seeing the Parkway under nonprofit management.

Concerning the illegal camping by the homeless in the Parkway, especially in the highly impacted area between Discovery Park and Cal Expo, with a particular and troubling concentration close to the Woodlake residential community; the new county supervisor for that district, Phi Serna, has taken a strong position.

In a February 23, 2011 article in the *Sacramento Bee* about the Parkway and the illegal camping he wrote:

Parkway users deserve a safe, clean environment free from harassment or other personal threat. They should not feel compelled to avoid the parkway for fear of their own safety, which is what a number of constituents have conveyed to my office in recent weeks. They deserve better; we all deserve better.

The American River Parkway offers one of the best recreational opportunities anywhere in the country, but it will be enjoyed only if it is safe. To that end, local law enforcement, including Sacramento County park rangers, have established added presence along the lower reach of the parkway to enhance public safety and to encourage parkway users to return.

Let's also remember that the parkway itself is a "constituent" here. Illegal camping has produced tons of trash and debris, some of which is hazardous biological waste. Illegal campgrounds, large and small, "self-governed" or not, contribute to this problem. Along the American River Parkway, refuse has collected in makeshift dumps, and what doesn't remain in these derelict collection sites oftentimes is spread by the wind, is scavenged by animals or ends up pooled along the riverbanks.

This is exactly the type of advocacy for the Parkway we deeply appreciate and our organization awarded him the Slobe Parkway Advocate Award in 2011, named after long time Parkway advocate, Bob Slobe, noted in the enclosed Press Release, (pp. 13-14).

(The 2011 annual organizational report—all of which are published at the end of our fiscal year, October 1 to September 30—is available on our website, reports page.)

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### **Meeting with the Mayor:** *Notes on Meeting with Sacramento Mayor Kevin Johnson*

In July I was honored to hear from Mayor Kevin Johnson of Sacramento requesting a meeting to talk about the American River Parkway, and on August 1<sup>st</sup> I hosted a private one-on-one meeting with him at my home and was very much heartened by the direction of our discussion.

It is obvious Mayor Johnson has thought a lot about the Parkway and the various issues surrounding its current troubles, from the illegal camping issue, about which he has been hosting a Mayoral Task Force to address, to the larger-picture issue of someday seeing a county encompassing bike trail.

Both of these issues are thorny and have historically been somewhat immovable, but what they also both share is a crying need for executive level leadership and it appears that the start he has taken on the former will possibly now be applied to the latter and this is really great news for the Parkway.

Any county encompassing bike trail will clearly be centered through the Parkway, continue down the Sacramento River Parkway/Greenway, perhaps amble over to the Cosumnes River Preserve and, based on the visionary map from the Sacramento Valley Conservancy, connect up with the Deer Creek Hills Preserve and turn north through the East Sacramento County Woodlands to Folsom and the connection to the Parkway.

ARPPS has envisioned a larger trail system following these same paths but extending further south to Locke and further east to Coloma, connecting with the American River Conservancy's American River South Fork Trail and coming down to Folsom Lake and the connection with the American River bike trail, a project we have called *The Golden Necklace*, and written about in our 2007 report—on our website—*The American River Parkway: Governance, Ecoregionalism, and Heritage, A Vision & Policy Primer*.

As an avid bicyclist himself, Mayor Johnson yearns for a more extensive system of trails to traverse and in that respect he can carry the visions of many of us—bicyclists or not—who hope to see the wonderful and historical natural areas of our community become more accessible to all.

His leadership around this issue is eagerly anticipated.

## Book Notes

*The Dream and the Nightmare: The Sixties Legacy to the Underclass*

Myron Magnet (1993) (2000 Edition)

Encounter Books: San Francisco

269 pages

A perennial thread of thought underlying an ongoing American discussion is the role government plays in our lives in relation to family, church, and business. In a time where calls to blame the wealthy for social ills and look to government for social justice; renewing an acquaintance with traditional American ideas is always a good idea and this wonderful book accomplishes that.

This American discussion—at the micro level—impacts the Parkway through the challenges of maintaining public safety and basic facility operational standards, particularly in the Lower Reach area from Discovery Park to Cal Expo, due to facility degradation and public safety erosion from illegal camping by the homeless.

At the macro level it impacts all of us, and in the Preface to the 2000 paperback edition of his 1993 book, author Myron Magnet writes:

*The Dream and the Nightmare* was the first book to argue that culture, not racism or lack of jobs or the welfare system, was the cause of the underclass. I didn't mean that the culprit was some "culture of poverty" or "ghetto culture." The problem, I contended, lay in the majority culture. Led by its elite institutions—the universities, the judiciary, the press, the great charitable foundations, even the mainstream churches—American culture underwent a revolution in the 1960s, which transformed some of its most basic beliefs and values, including its beliefs about the causes of poverty. When these new attitudes reached the poor, and particularly the urban, minority poor, the result was catastrophic: many of the new culture's beliefs downplayed the personal responsibility, self-control, and deferral of gratification that it takes to succeed. At the same time, the new culture celebrated an "if it feels good, do it" self-indulgence that for the poor, whose lives have less margin for error than the prosperous, too often proved disastrous. The social policy that these ideas engendered compounded the disaster. (p. 1)

The author is the Editor at Large for *City Journal*, one of America's finest magazines and a product of the Manhattan Institute, whose mission is: "*to develop and disseminate new ideas that foster greater economic choice and individual responsibility.*"

Exactly the type of thinking we look for from public leadership in relation to future decisions regarding the Parkway.

## **Society Information**

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*The American River Parkway Preservation Society is a 501 (c) (3) nonprofit organization. Donations are tax deductible to the fullest extent of the law. As a member, you will receive a monthly e-letter, quarterly newsletter, and periodic planning position papers.*

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### **Our Mission**

Preserve, Protect, & Strengthen the American River Parkway, Our Community's Natural Heart.

### **Our Vision**

We want our Parkway, seven generations from now, to be a vibrant, accessible, and serene sanctuary, nourishing and refreshing the spirit of all who enter it.

### **Our Guiding Principles**

- (1) Preserving the Parkway is not an option, it's a necessity.
- (2) What's good for the salmon is good for the river.
- (3) Regarding illegal camping by the homeless in the North Sacramento area of the Parkway, social and environmental justice call upon us to help the poor and distressed person but not at the expense of the adjacent community to visit the Parkway safely.
- (4) If it can be seen from the Parkway, it shouldn't be built along the Parkway.
- (5) Regarding new Parkway usages, inclusion should be the operating principle rather than exclusion.

*The Society depends solely on its membership to continue our advocacy to preserve the Parkway in perpetuity, and we deeply appreciate any additional financial support you can provide, or by encouraging others to become members. Thank You!*

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American River Parkway Preservation Society**

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# American River Parkway Preservation Society Newsletter Issue 33– Winter 2011

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## Contents

**Essay: *The Golden Necklace Trail & the Rivers of Gold National Page 1*  
*Heritage Area Concept***

**Society Information**

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**Essay: *The Golden Necklace Trail & Rivers of Gold National Heritage Area Concept***  
(Adapted from ARPPS 2007 research report, available on our website)

California has always been a magnet for residents and tourists and our region, specifically the American River Watershed, has played a major role in history, for it was here that gold was discovered at Coloma in 1848, and as Brand (2002) wrote, it changed everything.

The discovery at Coloma commenced a revolution that rumbled across the oceans and continents to the ends of the earth, and echoed down the decades to the dawn of the third millennium. The revolution manifested itself demographically, in drawing hundreds of thousands of people to California; politically, in propelling America along the path to the Civil War; economically, in spurring the construction of the transcontinental railroad. But beyond everything else, the Gold Rush established a new template for the American dream. America had always been the land of promise, but never had the promise been so decidedly—so gloriously—material. The new dream held out the hope that anyone could have what everyone wants: respite from toil, security in old age, a better life for one's children...

To be sure, the new dream had a dark side; it destroyed even as it created. The Argonauts dismantled John Sutter's handiwork all at once; the lawyers took longer to dispossess Mariano Vallejo. The Indians of California lost far more. Considering the grim fate of aboriginal people almost everywhere the American flag was raised, the destruction of the tribes of California may not have depended on the discovery of gold there, but the gold certainly hastened the process—as it hastened the demise of the plains tribes corralled onto reservations to allow the Pacific railroad to go through. Of a different nature was the damage mining operations did to the ecology of California, from the modest excavations of the placer men to the mountain-moving of the hydraulic miners...



In this lay the ultimate meaning of the Gold Rush. The Gold Rush shaped history so profoundly because it harnessed the most basic of human desires, the desire for happiness. None of the gold-seekers went to California to build a new state, to force a resolution of the sectional conflict, to construct a transcontinental railroad, to reconstruct the American dream. They went to California to seek individual happiness. Some found it; some didn't. But the side effect of their pursuit—the cumulative outcome of their individual quests—was a transformation of American history. The men and women of the Gold Rush hoped to change their lives by going to California; in the bargain they changed their world.

H. W. Brand (2002) *The Age of Gold: The California Gold Rush and the New American Dream* (pp. 489 – 491)

Map of the American River watershed. It includes the North, Middle, and South forks of the river as well as Rubicon River, a tributary of the Middle Fork.

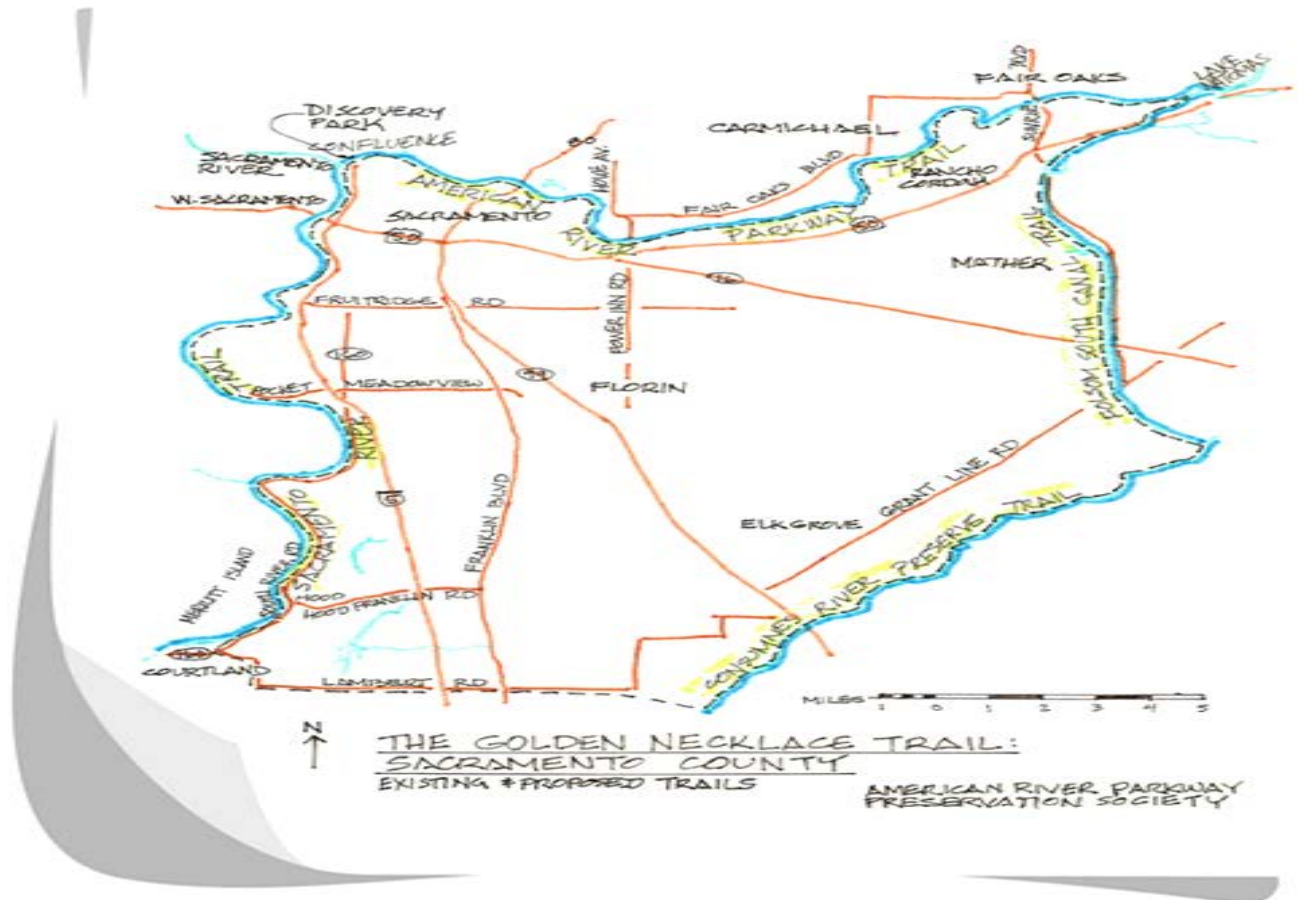


Map from Wikipedia at [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/American\\_River](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/American_River)

Detailed maps of the American River Watershed:

- North & Middle Fork [http://www.watershedportal.net/ar/map\\_nmf.pdf](http://www.watershedportal.net/ar/map_nmf.pdf)
- South Fork [http://www.watershedportal.net/ar/map\\_sf.pdf](http://www.watershedportal.net/ar/map_sf.pdf)

The map on the next page is of the Sacramento County part of the envisioned *Golden Necklace Trail*, a central part of the *Rivers of Gold* National Heritage Area we would like to see come into being.



*The Golden Necklace Trail* is envisioned as beginning in Coloma, running southwest along the South Fork of the American River over the Salmon Falls Bridge, southwest along Folsom Lake to connect with the American River Parkway, continuing southwest along the Parkway Trail to the confluence with the Sacramento River, turning south along the Sacramento River to the historic Chinese town of Locke, and then turning northeast up the Cosumnes River Preserve, to—either the Folsom South Canal Trail or the Deer Creek Hills Preserve Oak Woodland—both of which would then turn northeast to connect back to the American River Parkway at Lake Natoma.

The National Heritage Area (NHA) program is a program of the National Park Service, and was established to ensure areas of significant heritage value to the entire nation are provided funds and technical support to preserve and enhance their heritage for future generations.

Here is an introduction to the National Heritage Area from their website at <http://www.nps.gov/history/heritageareas/FAQ/>

### **What is a National Heritage Area?**

National Heritage Areas (NHAs) are designated by Congress as places where natural, cultural, and historic resources combine to form a cohesive, nationally

important landscape. Through their resources, NHAs tell nationally important stories that celebrate our nation's diverse heritage. NHAs are lived-in landscapes. Consequently, NHA entities collaborate with communities to determine how to make heritage relevant to local interests and needs.

NHAs are a grassroots, community-driven approach to heritage conservation and economic development. Through public-private partnerships, NHA entities support historic preservation, natural resource conservation, recreation, heritage tourism, and educational projects. Leveraging funds and long-term support for projects, NHA partnerships foster pride of place and an enduring stewardship ethic.

### ***The National Heritage Area Program***

NHAs further the mission of the National Park Service (NPS) by fostering community stewardship of our nation's heritage. The NHA program, which currently includes 49 heritage areas, is administered by NPS coordinators in Washington DC and seven regional offices - Anchorage, Seattle, Oakland, Denver, Omaha, Philadelphia and Atlanta - as well as park unit staff.

NHAs are not national park units. Rather, NPS partners with, provides technical assistance, and distributes matching federal funds from Congress to NHA entities. NPS does not assume ownership of land inside heritage areas or impose land use controls.

We can see from this information that the gold rush, the watershed and the Parkway are truly within the parameters deserving consideration of this national designation.

There are several models for what we would like to see become the *Rivers of Gold National Heritage Area* encompassing the American River Watershed, the gold discovery site at Coloma and the American River Parkway, but the one with another metal very important to the nation, central to it, would be the *Rivers of Steel National Heritage Area* in Pennsylvania.

The Rivers of Steel area is 5,065 square miles, with a population of 2,297,676 (2000 census), embraces 6 congressional districts and 893 local government units, and was authorized in 1996. It is managed by a private nonprofit corporation, and here is some information about it from their website: <http://www.riversofsteel.com/>

From 1875 to 1980, southwestern Pennsylvania was the Steel Making Capital of the World, producing the steel for some of America's greatest icons such as the Brooklyn Bridge and the Empire State Building. During World War I and II, our steel workers carried a nation's defense on their backs, producing more steel, armor and armaments in a single year than entire countries. While many of the region's legendary mill sites have been dismantled, and it has been decades since the mills belched fire and smoke over Pittsburgh's skyline, the enormity of the

region's steel-making contributions and its historical significance to the nation demand its story be told and its sites be preserved.

Created by Congress in 1996, the Rivers of Steel National Heritage Area is committed to preserving, interpreting, and managing the historic, cultural, and natural resources related to Big Steel and its related industries. Encompassing over 5,000 square miles in the eight counties of Allegheny, Armstrong, Beaver, Butler, Greene, Fayette, Washington, and Westmoreland, Rivers of Steel is building on this area's remarkable transition from heavy industry to high technology and diversified services as well as bolstering the new regional economy by promoting tourism and economic development based on this region's historic industrial saga.

Retrieved November 8, 2011 from <http://www.riversofsteel.com/about/>

The gold rush and all that came from it, even the dark side, is our heritage, woven into the genetic framework of California and America, perhaps for all time—though the current wonderfully balanced diversity of our city is a more accurate vision of our reality than that of our past—and regardless of whether it is from pride, regret, or a wonderful mixture of both and a strong hope for the future, it is a heritage that deserves a wider, deeper protection than it now has.

These ideas and projects are part of the fabric of the kind of strategic thinking that we feel has great value for the preservation, protection and strengthening of the Parkway and we will continue to provide policy ideas and organizational information to those public leaders and organizations that are involved in strategic visionary thinking around these issues.

Several years ago then State Parks Ranger Sugarman related a story which resonated with me, and has always put the discovery of gold into the context I think it fully deserves.

He was guiding a group of Japanese tourists around the park, and while talking to them, a small group broke off and went to the specific site, on the American River South Fork, where gold was first taken out by James Marshall. They stood there for awhile, quietly talking among themselves, and then, while standing there, bowed very formally towards the river. Later, he asked them why they were bowing, and they told him that they were honoring, “the place where America found her power.”

What we have in our hands in the American River Watershed is the power of place, a truly magnificent place through a truly remarkable history.

## Society Information

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*The American River Parkway Preservation Society is a 501 (c) (3) nonprofit organization. Donations are tax deductible to the fullest extent of the law. As a member, you will receive a monthly e-letter, quarterly newsletter, and periodic planning position papers.*

**Federal ID # 20-0238035**

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### Our Mission

Preserve, Protect, & Strengthen the American River Parkway, Our Community's Natural Heart.

### Our Vision

We want our Parkway, seven generations from now, to be a vibrant, accessible, and serene sanctuary, nourishing and refreshing the spirit of all who enter it.

### Our Guiding Principles

- (1) Preserving the Parkway is not an option, it's a necessity.
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*The Society depends solely on its membership to continue our advocacy to preserve the Parkway in perpetuity, and we deeply appreciate any additional financial support you can provide, or by encouraging others to become members. Thank You!*

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# American River Parkway Preservation Society

## Newsletter: Issue 34– Spring 2012

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**Our New Research Report:** *The American River Parkway's Suburban Setting: The Sacramento Dream*, has been posted to our website, Reports page.

### Executive Summary

- 1)** One of the primary reasons the suburbs have historically been an important refuge for city dwellers wishing to escape the city, is safety; most particularly when they are out and about in the city's public space, the city sidewalk, about which Jane Jacobs writes. "When people say that a city, or a part of it, is dangerous or is a jungle what they mean primarily is that they do not feel safe on the sidewalks." (pp. 9-10)
- 2)** The smart growth oriented urban planner in Sacramento looks out over the sea of suburban housing surrounding the American River Parkway and sees wasted space, but the people fortunate enough to live here, see sacred space, space devoted exclusively to their families and their private lives, space where their children are relatively safe and can grow to maturity within the most defining aspect of the American Dream, the California suburban lifestyle, the Sacramento Dream. (p. 12)
- 3)** While the car, among the urban planning community, is largely tainted by the negative narrative of suburban living—and correctly the cause of some pollution—much of the value of being in our own car as we tool around the community to work, play and shop, is the way in which it provides an extension of our personal space and comfort, as a buffer against the often chaotic and hard-edged nature of the public space we all have to traverse daily. (p. 15)
- 4)** The suburban lifestyle we enjoy today—the "mass phenomenon"—is one sought from ancient times. "Outside the walls of Rome was what citizens called *suburbium*, meaning what was literally below or outside the walls. Here were land uses that couldn't be accommodated in the city..." (p. 19)
- 5)** In California the war against the suburbs is full-throated, as Kotkin (2011, July 26) writes: "In recent years, homeowners have been made to feel a bit like villains rather than the victims of hard times, Wall Street shenanigans and inept regulators. Instead of being praised for braving the elements, suburban homeowners have been made to feel responsible for everything from the Great Recession to obesity to global warming. In California, the assault on the house has gained official sanction. Once the heartland of the American dream, the Golden State has begun implementing new planning laws designed to combat global warming. These draconian measures could lead to a ban on the construction of private residences, particularly on the suburban fringe." (p. 23)
- 6)** Living in the suburbs is at the heart of the American Dream and virtually every day, I am reminded in some way of the great joy that is part of our family life largely resulting from our life

in the suburbs, whether it is the busy chirping of the flocks of birds eating from our bird feeders or bathing in our bird baths, or the squirrels eating up the sunflower seeds sprinkled on the patio each morning, or the occasional hawk finding our back yard to keep the dove and squirrel population in check; or the warmth of the winter and early spring sun when sitting in the back yard, and the refreshing cool of the pool under the blazing Sacramento summer sun; and the peace and quiet largely surrounding us broken occasionally by a barking dog or the playing of the neighbors children or the murmur of a barbeque party; being able to jump in the car and within a couple minutes to be shopping in the grocery store or ordering in a restaurant for a spontaneous meal; it is all wonderful, all part and parcel of suburban life in the suburban communities surrounding the American River Parkway. (p. 26)

7) There is so much that has been learned over the past several decades about city planning and so much still needing to be learned, and for one fundamental idea—the actual structure of our cities—we can look to Bogart (2006) who wrote. “Even by 1960 observers such as Jane Jacobs and Jean Gottman has discerned a new structure for metropolitan areas, although popular interpreters of their work have neglected this insight. This new structure was called the *polycentric city*, in recognition of the multiple centers of economic activity that now comprised the metropolitan area. While some people have recognized this change for more than forty years, it still has surprisingly little impact on the design of public policy. (pp. 27-28)

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### **Essay:** *The Downtown Arena, Our Two Rivers & the Parkway*

Though it now appears that the arena deal for the Sacramento Kings may be dead, it remains that on March 6, 2012, a historic and visionary step was taken by the Sacramento City Council that—if ever brought to fruition—has the potential to change the way in which the downtown portions of the riverfronts of our two major rivers are used far into the future, and the vision could not be more compelling, a National Basketball Association (NBA) arena for the Sacramento Kings in the old railyards area, putting the games—and all other events held there—within walking distance of thousands of people who work downtown.

The *Sacramento Bee* reports the vote:

In a historic vote, the Sacramento City Council approved the financing plan Tuesday night for a \$391 million sports arena in the downtown railyard.

By a 7-2 vote, the council accepted a nonbinding "term sheet" agreed to by city officials, the Sacramento Kings, arena operator AEG and the development firm slated to build the project. Retrieved March 26, 2012 from:

<http://www.sacbee.com/2012/03/06/4317430/sacramento-city-council-approves.html#storylink=cpy>

Regardless of the current status of the deal, the benefits for Sacramento are substantial enough that it will, hopefully, finalize at some point, for it is surely worth pursuing.

Our organization has not been too keen on most of the downtown development efforts over the years, but the downtown NBA arena effort looks like a winner; especially for the urban areas bordering the Sacramento and American Rivers.

The key to the urban use of the riverbanks in the downtown area of our two major rivers as a destination area, is the development of downtown itself, especially the long-troubled J. K & L, 7<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> Street grid that, with some notable exceptions, has been squalid for decades; but which the bustling evening/nightlife a downtown arena will stimulate, will almost certainly change.

While the upper parts of J, K & L Streets benefit from the nightlife generated by the state capitol building and related activity, the lower needs the arena.

The current Sacramento arena strategy evolved with some interesting tactics already used successfully by government; such as the use of a nonprofit corporation to handle the parking revenue, noted in the *Sacramento Bee*:

One possibility that seems to be gaining support among members of the City Council would involve creation of a nonprofit corporation to borrow against future parking revenue.... Sacramento set up a nonprofit organization to borrow millions toward construction of the Sheraton Grand Hotel in the late 1990s. The city wound up selling the hotel at a tidy profit, and Dangberg told council members "we want to see if we can replicate that model. Retrieved March 9, 2012 from <http://www.sacbee.com/2012/03/09/4323469/sacramento-explores-parking-revenue.html>

Former Indianapolis mayor, Stephen Goldsmith—who developed many innovative strategies to help grow his city—added to the discussion.

The still-evolving arrangement could be structured any number of ways, and the city will have to decide how much of a gamble it's willing to take in hopes of maximizing its income.

It's a trade-off; there's no right answer," said Stephen Goldsmith, a former mayor of Indianapolis who teaches public policy at Harvard University. "The more risk you take, the more reward you get." (*Ibid.*)

Explore the history page of the White River State Park in Indianapolis, <http://inwhiteriver.wrsp.in.gov/ABOUTthePARK/ParkHistory> another downtown riverfront park that has become a destination and see if it doesn't stimulate thinking about what we can do here.

Here is an excerpt from their website about the various park attractions:



The Eiteljorg Museum of American Indians and Western Art is the only museum of its kind in the Midwest, featuring one of the best Native American and Western art collections in the world!

The Indiana State Museum is Indiana's museum for science, art, and culture, offering a place where you can celebrate, investigate, remember, learn, and take pride in Indiana's story in the context of a global society, and it includes an IMAX Theater.

Indianapolis Indians Baseball at Victory Field, The 14,500-seat ballpark has received numerous local and national accolades including being named "Best Minor League Ballpark in America" by Sports Illustrated and Baseball America!

Travel the Indianapolis Zoo and White River Gardens and move from one fascinating ecological system (biomes) to another. From Arctic lands to the African plains, a visit to the Indianapolis Zoo is literally a trip around the world!

Celebrating its 9th year in 2012, The Lawn at White River State Park continues to offer a mix of the best music in the Circle City (Indianapolis, IN) ... Most conveniently located in the Park's world-class picturesque setting.

NCAA Hall of Champions Museum, Experience all 23 sports of the NCAA® in White River State Park with hands-on displays, a retro gym, and sports simulators that give you an opportunity to engage in the life of the student-athlete!

Retrieved April 4, 2012 from <http://inwhiteriver.wrsp.in.gov/ATTRACTIONS>

Developed and active riverfronts would be an outgrowth of downtown development and they would in turn become a terrific boon to downtown hotels and the convention center, offering visitors a short walk or bike ride—bikes provided gratis by the hotels—to the rivers and the history, recreation and sanctuary they offer.

Bogart (2006) writing about downtown stadium benefits and public versus private financing, notes:

Even if we are convinced that the right way to think of the stadium is as a massive office development, it does not immediately follow that it should be publically financed. The argument for public financing in this analysis proceeds with some slight changes from the traditional economic impact story, though. The crux of the argument is that there are positive externalities that result from stadium development that the developer of the stadium is unable to capture. As a result, stadiums will be underprovided in the absence of subsidies.

There are externalities of two types that result from stadium construction. The first are what I call "direct" externalities. For example, there is the increased patronage of restaurants that surround the stadium, the increased public safety

resulting from the presence of people on downtown streets after working hours and on weekends, and the increased congestion (a negative externality) as people travel to and from the stadium. These externalities are familiar to connoisseurs of economic impact studies.

The second type of externalities resulting from stadium construction is “indirect” externalities. These include the familiar list: positive images of the city generated by television coverage, the civic unity and pride provided by professional sports, the benefit to local nonprofit organizations of athletes’ involvement in fundraising and other intangible benefits. However, there is a less familiar type of externality that is implied by the analysis here, the benefits to downtown commercial office space users from the presence of a stadium. If the service-producing firms that are located downtown find it easier to attract and retain employees or to entertain clients as a result of a downtown stadium, then their costs of doing business fall. This is a classic agglomeration economy of scale. The strength of the argument is bolstered by the willingness of firms to pay large sums of money for corporate suites, even in a time of expense reductions and less favorable income tax treatment of entertainment expenses. (p. 105)

Bogart, W. T. (2006) *Don't call it sprawl: Metropolitan structure in the Twenty-First Century*. New York: Cambridge University

The story and reality of Old Sacramento is very much deepened with a more historically developed American River, from which the gold came that led to the incredible growth of Sacramento during the Gold Rush, and once the envisioned bike trail linking Old Sacramento to the site of the gold discovery in Coloma is completed, well, that will be a truly momentous trail.

For those of us who have been here since the days of a bustling K Street and vital downtown, watching as one after another plan to revitalize it after the bustle left, failed; it is difficult to envision final success, but success can come, and as always, it will come when the political will is there—relentless and indomitable—to lead and channel the public desire.

We may have finally approached the day when the political will is there and growing stronger, and the public’s desire, long muted and somewhat somnambulistic, will arise to help fulfill the challenges ahead.

Sacramento can become a much more beautiful, vibrant city by opening more of our downtown life to our historic and majestic rivers by improving access to more user-friendly development of the riverfronts; which the building of a downtown arena will surely stimulate, and will be a large step towards fulfilling the vision many of us share of a thriving, bustling downtown anchoring our fair city.

Steven Avella titled his marvelous 2003 book, *Sacramento, Indomitable City*, because we survived and prospered when all the other Gold Rush towns didn’t, and we will still.

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# American River Parkway Preservation Society Newsletter

## Issue 35 – Summer 2012

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<b>July Roundup:</b> <i>Various Blog Postings (To access the primary sources via links, go to the date listed, on our blogsite, address on page 6.)</i>	<b>Page 1</b>
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#### 1) Nature Girl (July 12, 2012)

A wonderful column from the *Exurbia Chronicles* Blog examining the internal struggles exhibited in an article written by a devotee of eco theology, which would be humorous if it was not so tragic.

An excerpt.

“This month’s edition of *Whole Living Magazine* features an essay written by Elizabeth Royte called *Talk about an Energy Crisis*. Ms. Royte has authored several books and her articles have been published by numerous niche publications. She describes herself as a “self-professed ‘nature girl’ who writes about the environment.”

“In *Talk about an Energy Crisis*, Royte genuinely articulates the struggle she has with her ecological footprint and the compromises she had to face while on summer vacation with her family in upstate New York because of the “internal combustion engine.” Ultimately, Royte’s final message in this article describes how a champion of the ‘green’ movement can find moderation in an era of global warming.

“Through her dialectical journey, Royte frequently praises her own behavior; a behavior guided by her presuppositions about the state of the planet. While she admits that she is personally conflicted by being a responsible environmentalist versus being a girl who wants to enjoy nature, she fails to realize that the real crisis is not about her energy consumption but a crisis in her in secular, ‘nature-theism’ or Eco theology.

“Royte begins her story by highlighting the benefits of living in New York City.

*“...I find the city exciting. But what surprises many of the rural folks I interview is that I live in the city mostly because it’s easier to minimize my environmental impact here. In the city, I don’t drive. In the city, I can buy locally sourced, organic food (at a co-op) for less than the price of conventional food almost anywhere. I buy much of that food in bulk, cutting down on packaging waste. The city has a fairly comprehensive*

*recycling system, unlike many rural areas, and beneficial outlets for unwanted textiles, electronics, and even food waste. I share my apartment walls with my immediate neighbors, cutting my oil consumption, and I don't have a lawn, which reduces my water use."*

"She goes on to say that living in the city is not a hardship and that it saves her money. Then Royte lays out the hypothesis of her Eco theology.

*"So even if I didn't think that the climate crisis was one of the greatest challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, or that it was physically impossible to sustain infinite growth on a planet of finite resources, I'd still try to lower my carbon profile."*

"Fortunately, Royte does get out of the city from time to time for work and also to satiate her "itch for nature." Apparently, the author and her family enjoy a month long "stint" each summer in upstate New York (Why doesn't she call it a vacation?).

*"There, forests and fields surround my rented house. Deer, turkeys, and the daily aerial loop of a great blue heron sometimes make it hard to concentrate when I'm working on the deck. (Poor me.) You'd think all this would make me—nature girl—happy. But I'm actually miserable in the country on account of the internal combustion engine."*

## **2) Think Big About Riverfronts (July 5, 2012)**

Sacramento has many wonderful natural assets, including its relatively moderate weather patterns—as we are so reminded of witnessing the weather tragedies in other parts of the country—and chief among those assets is the two major rivers bordering our community. Given their centrality, it is very heartening to read that Mayor Johnson continues to focus on developing our riverfronts, as reported by the *Sacramento Bee*, including a major league baseball stadium, especially given the troubles the A's are having in Oakland, reported by the *San Francisco Chronicle*.

The *Chronicle* article also describes some very creative entertainment/stadium/arena type plans that are also applicable to Sacramento, noting Oakland's plans: "That plan is called Coliseum City. The mayor calls it "Staples on Steroids," a reference to Los Angeles' entertainment mecca, Staples Center. Coliseum City would feature venues for one, two or three of the teams, as well as a convention center, hotels, restaurants and stores."

An excerpt from the *Bee* article.

"His quest to construct a new sports arena in Sacramento now on hold, Mayor Kevin Johnson said Tuesday he was broadening the focus of his Think Big arena task force to explore other large projects throughout the city's downtown.

“That committee – which raised roughly \$500,000 over the past year in its effort to build a new arena for the Sacramento Kings – will begin by focusing on development ideas for the downtown railyard. While an indoor sports arena remains a possibility, Think Big will also examine the feasibility of a long list of concepts that includes a major league baseball stadium, corporate headquarters and an entertainment district.

“Think Big will also explore how best to redevelop the city’s riverfront, continue the revitalization of K Street and work on a plan to revamp the Westfield Downtown Plaza. Johnson said the committee – made up of local elected officials, business representatives and union leaders – would continue to operate with private funds.”

### **3) Optimal Salmon Conditions (May 10, 2012)**

Maintaining these conditions in the Lower American River running through the Parkway is the second of our six Guiding Principles: “What’s good for the salmon is good for the river.”

A crucial element in the health of the salmon is the river water temperature—one of the reasons we advocate for the Auburn Dam to supplement Folsom Dam, which could hold much more cold water for the salmon runs.

A comprehensive report about temperature is: *The Effects of Temperature on Steelhead Trout, Coho Salmon, and Chinook Salmon Biology and Function by Life Stage*, by Katherine Carter.

An excerpt.

“Temperature is one of the most important environmental influences on salmonid biology. Most aquatic organisms, including salmon and steelhead, are poikilotherms, meaning their temperature and metabolism is determined by the ambient temperature of water. Temperature therefore influences growth and feeding rates, metabolism, development of embryos and alevins, timing of life history events such as upstream migration, spawning, freshwater rearing, and seaward migration, and the availability of food. Temperature changes can also cause stress and lethality (Ligon et al. 1999). Temperatures at sub-lethal levels can effectively block migration, lead to reduced growth, stress fish, affect reproduction, inhibit smoltification, create disease problems, and alter competitive dominance (Elliott 1981, USEPA 1999). Further, the stressful impacts of water temperatures on salmonids are cumulative and positively correlated to the duration and severity of exposure. The longer the salmonid is exposed to thermal stress, the less chance it has for long-term survival (Ligon et al. 1999).” (p. 1)

### **4) Biking Heaven & Heritage (May 7, 2012)**

Sacramento is already a biking heaven in many ways, but some major improvements could really take us into the stratosphere and this *Sacramento Bee* article notes many of them.

Our contribution, building on our heritage, is the Golden Necklace Trail concept, tied to the creation of a National Heritage Area within which a multi-use trail from Sacramento to Coloma could connect much of the historical legacy of the Gold Rush, which is contained in our 2007 research report *The American River Parkway: Governance, Ecoregionalism, & Heritage, A Vision & Policy Primer*, and the concept map of the Sacramento County part of the trail is on our News Page (second item).

An excerpt from the Report.

“As we look at the work already being done along the rivers of the Capitol region including the American River Watershed, what we see emerging is a still unlinked *Golden Necklace* of parkways, lakeside trailways, and greenbelts potentially linking the region’s historic and new treasures into a seamless, ecoregional strand.

“Let’s begin at the clasp, the gold discovery site at Sutter’s Mill where modern California really began, along the south fork of the American River, in Coloma....

“The American River Conservancy is working on a trail project eventually linking the discovery site at Coloma to downtown Sacramento—which would wind its way alongside the mountain lake created by the Auburn Dam on the American River whenever it is built—on its way downtown.... (p. 18)

“Visioning this as one long linked entity, allowing people to travel, by bike, by foot, by horse-drawn carriage, by historic steam engine, and by car, along the historic and beautiful golden trails that can become the *Rivers of Gold National Heritage Area*, easily outshining many of the already established sites listed at the National Park Service National Heritage Areas website.” (p. 26)

## **5) Expanding Sacramento’s Suburban Communities II (April 24, 2012)**

*Sacramento News & Review* reports the very good news of the continued growth of suburban communities that the overwhelming majority of Americans prefer to live in, as noted in our recent research report about Sacramento Suburban Communities, quoting Joel Kotkin, writing in 2012: “Homeownership and the single-family house, Rybczynski notes, rests on many fairly mundane things — desire for privacy, need to accommodate children and increasingly the needs of aging parents and underemployed adult children. Such considerations rarely enter the consciousness of urban planning professors, “smart growth” advocates and architectural aesthetes swooning over a high-density rental future. Just look at the numbers. Over the last decade— even as urban density has been embraced breathlessly by a largely uncritical media — close to 80% of all new

households, according to the American Community Survey, chose to settle in single-family houses.” (p. 11)

The *News & Review* doesn't see this as the good news we do, as they write in this excerpt.

“True, there's not a lot of demand right now for new subdivisions and malls. Nobody's talking about sprawl these days; it's all about recession, foreclosures, stagnation.

“So it might seem counterintuitive—maybe even a little crazy—to put so much land in play for new development.

“And yet ...

- The city of Folsom has almost successfully annexed a 3,500-acre swath of oak woodlands and farmland on its southern border, instantly adding 25 percent to that city's area.

- Both cities' development plans would break Sacramento County's long standing urban-growth boundary. “This was considered to be the very long-term edge of growth,” says Rob Burness, a former urban planner with the county.

- And Sacramento County itself is considering approval of a massive new development called Cordova Hills—in an area previously considered off-limits to development.

“Linking all of these hot spots: Local officials, business groups and developers are pushing forward on a plan to build a \$500 million “connector” from Elk Grove to Folsom and on to the suburban El Dorado Hills in the next county.

“This will undoubtedly relieve congestion—for a while. But critics say the roadway will just open up the rural east county to even more development.

“Add it all up, and it's not hard to imagine a whole new ring of sprawling suburbs, far away from the urban core.

“Overbuilding the suburbs is precisely how we got into the real-estate crash we're in now,” says Alex Kelter, former president of the Environmental Council of Sacramento, or ECOS. “You step out of rehab, and the first thing you do is head for the bar? That's not the way out of this mess.”

## **6) Expanding Sacramento's Suburban Communities I (April 19, 2012)**



As reported in our recent research report, *The American River Parkway's Suburban Setting, The Sacramento Dream*, suburban living is at the very epicenter of the American Dream:

“As most environmentalists and urban planners keep trying to sell the case that the “great urban evil” is suburban sprawl, Americans—and others virtually everywhere around the globe—yearned for a life in the suburbs, a life they clearly believed was the fulfillment of the American Dream desired by all, as noted by Kotkin (2005, November). “Once a nation of farms and cities, America was being transformed into a primarily suburban country. No longer confined to old towns or “streetcar suburbs” near the urban core, suburbanites increasingly lived in new, ever-more spread-out developments such as Levittown, which arose on the Long Island flatlands in the late 1940s and early 1950s. Behind this drive lay a fundamental reality that often escapes urban theorists: Compared to the option of living closely packed in apartment blocks, most human beings will opt for more space and privacy, and perhaps even a spot of lawn. Noted the prominent Los Angeles urbanist, the Italian immigrant Edgardo Contini: *The suburban house is the idealization of every immigrant’s dream—the vassal’s dream of his own castle. Europeans who come here are delighted by our suburbs. Not to live in an apartment! It is a universal aspiration to own your own home.* (p. 6)” (ARPPS Report pp. 19-20)

With that as backdrop, the recent news that Sacramento suburbs will probably be expanding some more, as reported by the *Sacramento Bee*, is welcome news, bringing more homes for more families to live and enjoy life in our regional community.

An excerpt.

“Sacramento County supervisors decided Tuesday to start a process that is expected to make 5,500 rural acres eligible for urban development.

“Two companies own most of the property along west Jackson Road/state Highway 16 south of Rosemont and Mather, and have yet to settle on specific development plans, except to say they expect a mix of commercial, residential and other types of construction.

“The decision by supervisors comes five months after they updated their general plan and opened up about 20,000 acres to development – roughly the size of Rancho Cordova. Most of that land, including what was approved Tuesday, is in the eastern part of the county.

“Environmentalists criticized the changes to the general plan, saying it showed the county is continuing to promote suburban sprawl despite a weak housing market and laws requiring more compact development. County officials said they balanced the interests of developers and environmentalists.

“On Tuesday, the board voted unanimously in favor of the plan by Stonebridge Properties and Granite Construction Co. Supervisors were quick to point out that the approval merely starts a planning process, and it could take a couple of years before construction starts.”

## Society Information

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*The American River Parkway Preservation Society is a 501 (c) (3) nonprofit organization. Donations are tax deductible to the fullest extent of the law. As a member, you will receive a monthly e-letter, quarterly newsletter, and periodic planning position papers.*

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### Our Mission

Preserve, Protect, & Strengthen the American River Parkway, Our Community's Natural Heart.

### Our Vision

We want our Parkway, seven generations from now, to be a vibrant, accessible, and serene sanctuary, nourishing and refreshing the spirit of all who enter it.

### Our Guiding Principles

- (1) Preserving the Parkway is not an option, it's a necessity.
- (2) What's good for the salmon is good for the river.
- (3) Regarding illegal camping by the homeless in the North Sacramento area of the Parkway, social and environmental justice call upon us to help the poor and distressed person but not at the expense of the adjacent community to visit the Parkway safely.
- (4) If it can be seen from the Parkway, it shouldn't be built along the Parkway.
- (5) Regarding new Parkway usages, inclusion should be the operating principle rather than exclusion.
- (6) The suburban lifestyle—as surrounds the American River Parkway—which is imbued within the aspirational center of the *California Dream* and whose vision is woven into the heart of the *American Dream*, is a deeply loved way of life whose sustainability we all desire.

*The Society depends solely on its membership to continue our advocacy to preserve the Parkway in perpetuity, and we deeply appreciate any additional financial support you can provide, or by encouraging others to become members. Thank You!*

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