

American River Parkway Preservation Society
Annual Organizational Report
October 1, 2012- September 30, 2013

Mission

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

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**

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American River Parkway & Regional Parks Division

Rob Kerth, President
North Sacramento Chamber of Commerce

Phil Serna, Supervisor, 1st District
Sacramento County Board of Supervisors

Introduction

Continuing the momentum begun last year to resolve one of the most important issues our organization focuses on—illegal camping by the homeless in the North Sacramento area of the Parkway—Sacramento County Park Rangers maintained a daily schedule of rousting campsites to the point that the illegal campers developed strategies to avoid or reduce the impact, as the excerpt from this article “An afternoon with the American River Parkway homeless campers: Our writer joins Sacramento's most notorious homeless community” from the *Sacramento News & Review* reports:

Beneath the rumbling overpass where Highway 160 crosses Northgate Boulevard, some two-dozen homeless men and women rest, shaded from the relentless afternoon sun. Sleepy pit bulls, bicycles and crumpled camping equipment lay among them as the people socialize, read and nap on this dusted plot of land.

Stacy Selmants, lounging beneath a small tree, rises to join two women seated next to the bike trail as they talk about why they've chosen this hardened plot to see out the day.

“We're here to avoid the rangers,” Selmants, 56, says as she takes off her battered 49ers cap. “We're afraid to go back to our camps, because they'll kick [us] out.”

Each afternoon, up to 30 homeless men and women congregate alongside the bike path under Highway 160 to escape not just the harsh summer elements, but also Sacramento authorities. This is one of the few spaces in the region they can rest without police or rangers forcing them to move. As a result, it has turned into a spot for them to socialize and receive donations before the evening, when they can again set up camp along the wooded river...

The average American River Parkway camper's day starts at 5:30 a.m., when he or she packs up and hurries onto the streets before park rangers arrive (usually around 6 a.m.) to hand out citations. The campers then make their twilight exodus to Friendship Park at Sacramento Loaves & Fishes, where they can spend the morning eating and cleaning up, as well as utilizing the center's other services for the homeless.

When Friendship Park closes at 2:45 p.m., its destitute patrons must find a place to rest and wait for the sun to set. Often, they post up under a building's shade in the neighborhood surrounding Loaves & Fishes and Quinn Cottages. Some cool off at the beach or, like Selmants today, set up in the Highway 160 underpass and wait for the rangers to go home around 6 p.m.

Retrieved September 30, 2013 from
<http://www.newsreview.com/sacramento/afternoon-with-the-american/content?oid=10478298>

In the same issue of the *Sacramento News & Review*, an interview with chief ranger Stan Lumsden and County Parks Director Jeff Leatherman notes the efforts being taken:

Last year, you participated in a few warrant sweeps along the trail. How do those come about?

Lumsden: There's really no criteria, if you will. It's a subjective call, really, as to when we do that. Obviously, our rangers are out contacting people on a regular basis, and when they have warrants, they go to jail.

So, is it just like seasonal?

Jeff Leatherman: You're looking for a hard and fast rule on what we do, and there isn't one.

Lumsden: Yeah, there isn't one. I mean, that's the honest answer: There's no formula for when we do this. I don't know what else to tell you.

You're doing daily raids on some of these camps. Is it the size that dictates?

Lumsden: If it exists. We contact people that are breaking the law. If they're camping illegally in the park—whether it's one tent or three tents, one person or 10 people—we have rangers, that's their full-time job, is camp enforcement. They make contact with them and do whatever is appropriate at the time, whether that be to issue a citation ... [or] if it's an unoccupied camp, to post a notice for that camp to move.

Are rangers seeing more of these illegal camps?

Lumsden (to Leatherman): This might be an opportune time to show him [the] Mobile 311 [Citizen Self-Service application].

(Lumsden pulls up a software application on his desktop computer showing a satellite-view map of the parkway. Two areas in particular—along Highway 160 and around Discovery Park—are clustered with icons indicating occupied and unoccupied camps and garbage that were noted in the past 90 days. Rangers in the field use their smartphones to upload photos. Lumsden pulls up one photo showing clothes, wrappers and plastic bags cluttered around a shaded nook of the parkway.)

Lumsden: You can see here what looks like the remnants of a camp. There's just stuff strewn all over the place. That's fairly common.

Retrieved September 30, 2013 from
<http://www.newsreview.com/sacramento/q-and-a-with-sacramentos-chief-park/content?oid=10478410>

And the addition of four new rangers approved by the Board of Supervisors in their new budget this September will help.

With the other critical issues we focus on there has also been some progress:

Concerning our support for maintaining the proper water temperature and flow in the Lower American River for optimal salmon and steelhead spawning, which we have determined can best be arrived at by constructing the Auburn Dam, a regional forum on water was sponsored by the Auburn Dam Council, (see videos of the presentations here, <http://www.youtube.com/channel/UCD1smWcmN5otNwob-AX2LUQ/videos>) which is the first positive movement in the public discussion about the need for the Auburn Dam in some time.

Regarding securing stable funding and management for the Parkway, which we believe can occur by forming a Joint Powers Authority of Parkway adjacent governmental entities which would create a new nonprofit or partner with an existing nonprofit, to manage the Parkway; there has not been much movement, but as it is still the best long range solution for Parkway stability, it is one we will continue to advocate.

The construction of buildings close to the Parkway we identified as a critical issue seems to have been resolved with the completion of the Parkway Plan in 2008, and with a few exceptions, there is currently very little threat of development ruining the sense of nature enjoyed by Parkway users.

We have also advocated for inclusion of responsible Parkway groups who have a legitimate claim on Parkway use, such as local mountain bikers who have offered to build and maintain trails in the Cal Expo area of the Parkway, which was approved in the recent American River Parkway Plan, but has apparently been stymied so far; but we hope to see a policy of inclusion rather than exclusion inform these efforts and will continue to advocate that when the need arises.

Our final guiding principle concerning the support for responsible suburban development within the Sacramento region—which is clearly the type of community most people, especially families, wish to live in, and as our region is highly dependent upon the resulting economic benefits—is doing well as the current county administration appears supportive of suburban development, which is a very good thing.

All in all, a pretty good year, and to top it off, the local economy does seem to be improving.

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.

E-Letters/Newsletters

ARPPS ensures that all public leadership with some form of public participation in Parkway related issues receives our monthly e-letters and quarterly newsletters, as well as press releases, research report and policy briefings and position papers.

Public Advocacy, Support Letters, Press Releases

Public Advocacy

Senior Policy Director & ARPPS Vice President attended the Auburn Dam Council sponsored Regional Water Forum June 25, 2013 in Sacramento.

Senior Policy Director attended a Regional Water Forum follow-up meeting with event organizers at Congressman Tom McClintock's office in Granite Bay.

Senior Policy Director contacted Doug Ose for a one year follow-up to the work being done at Gibson Ranch after his forprofit organization assumed daily management from Sacramento County, and his reply June 28, 2013 was:

Thank you for your inquiry. Btw keep up the good work on the AR Parkway - we've dealt so far successfully with illegal transient residency at the eastern edges of Dry Creek. It takes a sustained effort.

Gibson Ranch (GR) is doing much better. Last year we had over 100,000 visitors. The park is open every day, has clean bathrooms, is regularly maintained, and is a safe place. We have worked effectively with the County Parks Department to refine our program offerings to address consumer demand from the public. We've grown the equestrian operation by 25% since October 1, 2012. We've established a children's entertainment area for birthday parties and pony rides and just plain old fashioned fun. In response to interest in the community we have organized a monthly yard sale (first Saturday of each month). We continue having fun runs, picnics, weddings, barbecues, reunions, corporate annual picnics, Civil War Days (first weekend of May), Girl Scout events, Boy Scout camporees, etc etc. we have rejuvenated the livestock operation (cattle and chickens and sheep) that you see

on a working ranch. We are currently developing a garden area that recycles our horse manure for long term soil enhancement. We created an enclosed dog park. We've been working with Sac Metro Fire to reduce fire fuel and risk that has built up over the last two decades along Dry Creek. We have worked cooperatively with the nearby Cherry Island soccer facility to provide playing fields for regional tournaments. We've done all of the above without using taxpayer funds; not a bad record overall. Our annual revenue now exceeds \$400,000 though we are not yet profitable. We continue to try new things, and we continue to have some successes and some failures. We spend each day trying to make things better

I'd be happy to answer any questions you may have

Support Letter

January 28, 2013

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

Dear Mr. Leatherman:

I am writing to express the support of our organization for the excellent strategy developed and implemented by Sacramento County for making the Parkway's Lower Reach more accessible and safe.

The opposition to one aspect of it—Parkway homeless feedings—as reported in the Sacramento Bee story of today: “Homeless advocates object to Sacramento County's plan for parkway permits” is disappointing.

The American River Parkway is the premier recreational resource in the Sacramento region and controlling the environmentally corrosive and public safety consequences that have resulted from long-term illegal camping by the homeless are long overdue for resolution.

The strategy begun by the County is a superb first step in reclaiming the Lower Reach of the Parkway for enjoyment of all Parkway users, especially the lower income families who live in the adjacent neighborhoods and have been deprived for many years of being able to safely venture into their area of the Parkway.

It is a strategy that needs to be supported rather than opposed.

Thank you for your leadership on this important issue.

Sincerely,

David H. Lukenbill
Senior Policy Director

CC: ARPPS Board, County Board of Supervisors

Press Releases

PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

November 2, 2012

Sacramento, California

AMERICAN RIVER PARKWAY PRESERVATION SOCIETY (ARPPS) ANNOUNCES

2012 SLOBE PARKWAY ADVOCATE AWARD RECIPIENT

Marcos Breton, Columnist

The most serious response by Sacramento County to the long-term and wide-spread illegal camping by the homeless in the North Sacramento area of the American River Parkway was largely generated through the stunning and eloquent series of columns in the *Sacramento Bee* by Marcos Breton.

Here is a sampling:

1) “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.” **Marcos Breton:** Stench of hypocrisy surrounds homeless issue in Sacramento” *Sacramento Bee*, September 9, 2012.

2) “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.” **Marcos Breton:** Homeless Hub is Destroying the American River Parkway” *Sacramento Bee*, September 16, 2012.

3) “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.” **Marcos Breton:** Enforce illegal camping laws to protect the parkway” *Sacramento Bee*, September 19, 2012

Our organization is very pleased to award this level of commitment by Marcos Breton to one of the finest urban/suburban recreational areas in the country.

**Organizational Leadership
American River Parkway Preservation Society
Sacramento, California
November 2, 2012**

Contact Information

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PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release August 27, 2013 Sacramento, California

Open Letter to Sacramento County Board of Supervisors

This letter is to express our strong support for increasing the size of the park ranger force in the American River Parkway.

Over the past year, you have conducted a dedicated response to the long-term and wide-spread illegal camping by the homeless in the North Sacramento area of the American River Parkway, for which you are to be heartily applauded.

However, the work is ponderously ongoing and more needs to be done, and—as you well know—more rangers on the ground are needed to do it, as well as to solidify the gains already made.

Fortunately, there has been some improvement in the local economy and we assume this means there will be more funds available for important local issues.

Other than being known as the state capital of California, the American River Parkway is arguably our next best claim to fame from a tourist's perspective; and should further encourage your action ensuring it is safe and beautiful from the confluence to Folsom Lake.

The most important reason is to finally provide a safe and beautiful Parkway experience to the adjacent and long-suffering communities of North Sacramento.

While our organization still feels the permanent solution for the Parkway is to have an independent nonprofit organization be responsible for daily management and philanthropic supplemental fund raising modeled on the Central Park Conservancy managing the globally renowned Central Park in New York City, we are very gratified by your work improving public safety in the North Sacramento area of the Parkway over the past year.

We respectfully urge you, during your upcoming budget hearings, to provide more funding for park rangers in the American River Parkway to enhance that work.

**Organizational Leadership
American River Parkway Preservation Society
Sacramento, California
August 27, 2013**

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Articles Published

1) Published in Sacramento Press November 25, 2013

http://sacramento.press.com/headline/76214/American_River_Public_Market

American River Public Market: Is it time for a permanent farmer's market in Sacramento?

by **David H. Lukenbill**, published on **November 25, 2012** at **4:21 PM**



There has been some interest expressed in local media lately about establishing a permanent farmers market in Sacramento to concretize the recent proposal by Mayor Kevin Johnson to promote one of the historic strengths of Sacramento as “America’s Farm-to-Fork Capital.”

Establishing a permanent farmer's market is a wonderful idea and the seminal model exists in Seattle, Pike Place Market.

For those of you who have shopped there—I lived in Seattle for a year and shopped there often—you know it is a truly world class public market taking advantage of the setting next to the ocean and local produce, which in Seattle's case is, among other things, fish, flying fish.

Wikipedia has a great entry about Pike Place and Yelp has some great reviews.

Given the availability of open space and the advantage of placing it alongside one of our rivers, would seem to indicate looking at the south side of the American River, in the area bounded by I-5 on the west, Richards Blvd on the south, North 7th Street on the East and the American River Parkway on the north.

The other advantage of siting in this general area is its closeness to existing lower income housing communities—who benefit most from the low price and high quality of farmers market produce—such as Alkali Flats, Dos Rios, North Sacramento and on the planning board, the low income residences planned for Township 9 and the Railyards area.

Other areas that have been mentioned include the Railyards area and K Street, both of which would be good, but getting close to the blue water American River and the green beauty of the American River Parkway would be priceless.

There is a lot of history connected to this part of the American River.

For centuries the dominant village of the local native Indian tribe, the Nisenan, was Pujune, which stretched for miles along the Sacramento River from just south of the confluence with the American River north to the Feather River.

There is a historical marker—listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1971—in Discovery Park by the archery range on the east side of the park, marking the location of the Nisipowinan Village Site, which is also known as “Joe's Mound” and ethnographically as Pujune.

When the new Sacramento City Hall was being built many Indian artifacts and human remains were unearthed, some 4,500 years old.

A 19th century fur trapper and trader, for whom the American River Bicycle Trail is named—American River Parkway Jedediah Smith Memorial Trail—reached the American River in April 1827 and explored the area around the confluence of the two rivers.

And, of course, in 1839 Captain John Sutter established his fort—he had a dream of creating an agricultural utopia at Sutter's Fort—close to the confluence of the American

and Sacramento Rivers which ultimately led to Sacramento being born as a city and the capital of California after the gold discovered at Sutter's Mill in Coloma in 1848.

History, setting, natural resources, and agricultural heritage can come together in a truly significant way if this project now being discussed comes together, and if it can happen along the American River, that would be wonderful.

2) Published in Sacramento Press January 30, 2013

http://www.sacramento.press.com/headline/78991/Cordova_Hills_Suburban_Living

Opinion: Cordova Hills & Suburban Living

by **David H. Lukenbill**, published on January 30, 2013 at 1:01 PM

Last night, the County Board of Supervisors approved the Cordova Hills project to create a new suburb in the eastern end of the County.

I watched some of the session on the project on television and was struck by a couple significant misrepresentations being oft quoted by the opposition which were fortunately corrected during the session.

One was that approving the project would threaten federal transportation funds, which was corrected by a former federal transportation official who found nothing in the project warranting such a claim.

Another was that the project should not be approved because it was so far away from everything else, which was corrected by the board chair reminding people that it was only far away if you live in the city of Sacramento, but for those people who live in Rancho Cordova and Folsom, it's right next door.

Our organization doesn't have any particular feeling about the Cordova Hills project as it is not adjacent to or even close to the American River Parkway, but we are concerned about suburban development in general.

The Parkway is surrounded by suburbs and the Sacramento region is largely a suburban region so the health of the suburbs is important to all of us and the approval of good suburban projects—which Cordova Hills appears to be—is good for the region.

The suburban home, lifestyle, and residents have been the recipients of criticism ever since people began moving from the congested, polluted, and dangerous cities out to the nice house in the country, and the call for the end of suburban living as if it is just-around-the-corner, is as much a fantasy as the validity of much of the criticism.

The typical urban planner in Sacramento probably looks out over the sea of suburban housing surrounding the American River Parkway and sees a lot of wasted space, but

the people fortunate enough to live here—your author included—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.

To the urban advocate, being a suburbanite is virtually always suspect, and it's reflected in our language. The *Oxford Dictionary* has as one of its definitions of suburban: “**2.** Having characteristics regarded as typical of residents or life in the suburbs of a city; *esp.* provincial, narrow-minded, uncultured, naïve.”

However, being urbane, from urban, fares much better. “**2.** Having the qualities or characteristics associated with town or city life; *esp.* elegant and refined in manners, courteous, suave, sophisticated.”

Prejudice against suburban living as somehow living an inauthentic life is widespread and repeated regularly.

It was a stance I also held—though I was raised in the suburbs—when I was young and single, living in downtown or midtown Sacramento, when I was sometimes able to even forgo owning a car and during that period of my life, I truly enjoyed urban living.

However, once I was married and we had a child, the importance of more space, a back yard, and easy access to entertainment and shopping with free parking, and the relatively low crime rate in the suburbs, led to us living and remaining there.

While the car, among many members of the urban planning community, is largely tainted by the negative narrative of suburban living—and correctly the cause of some air 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.

It is also the only way you can really shop at Costco.

There is value in all types of living arrangements and the many arguments about why one is better than the other are generally more based on sincerely held ideological zeal rather than logical thought.

The two major environmental reasons given for the evil of the suburbs, air and water pollution—though urban environments have also long contributed to each—have largely been addressed by better technology.

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; or take the short walk to the river; it is all wonderful, all part and parcel of suburban life in the suburban communities surrounding the American River Parkway and the river flowing through it.

But, as much as I now love living in the suburbs, I will never forget how much I once loved living in the city, and for that reason, Sacramentans can be thankful we are blessed with an abundance of many ways of living our lives.

Disclosure: The author is the founder of the American River Parkway Preservation Society.

3) Published in Sacramento Press September 30, 2013

http://www.sacramento.press.com/headline/86919/Permanent_Farmers_Market_Coming_Soon

Permanent Farmer's Market Coming Soon?

by **David H. Lukenbill**, published on September 30, 2013

It may very well be.

A recent story in local media reported that some folks are planning a campaign to create a permanent farmers market in Sacramento and they have followed through with their vision by creating a website under the domain name, Sacramento Public Market.

Members of the team have experience with public markets, law, real estate, and politics; all good skill sets to help bring about the fulfillment of the obvious need and logical next step in the Farm to Fork movement.

I am still enamored with the idea of a site along the American River, as I wrote in a Sacramento Press article published last November 25th, but a Sacramento River siting would also work, either bringing the water element and our historic fresh water fisheries into immediate context.

In respect to the preferred location along the American River, I would suggest the folks behind this effort get in touch with the folks behind the visionary Gold Rush Park, which would occupy 900 plus acres along the American River north of Richards Blvd.

The vision for Gold Rush Park, which was formulated several years ago and is beginning to get some current traction through recent articles in local media and its own Facebook page, is financially feasible, beginning to be embraced by local public leadership, and possible to accomplish. The assemblage of supporters is broad, with deep roots in the history, commerce and public service of our region. This visionary marriage of land, water, commerce, history, and people can happen here as it has happened elsewhere.

Portland, with its award winning Eastbank Esplanade and the River Renaissance project, continues to have success creating its river-front as a vibrant front porch for the city; Boston's Emerald Necklace and San Antonio's Riverwalk are legendary; and White River State Park in Indianapolis 27 years ago began replacing an urban industrial area, and now is home to the Indianapolis Zoo, a baseball stadium, IMAX theater, the Indiana State Museum, and the Eiteljorg Museum of American Indians and Western Art, the Congressional Medal of Honor Memorial, the NCAA Hall of Champions and The Lawn, an outdoor performance venue overlooking the White River with seating for 5,000.

Adding a permanent farmers market nestled within this park setting could be transformative, especially in conjunction with the downtown redevelopment that will be generated by the new Sacramento Kings arena.

Disclosure: Author is founder of the American River Parkway Preservation Society

Letters Published

#1) Published Sactown magazine August/September Issue 2013

Your idea of having gourmet meals served along the river by local food purveyors, as expressed in the April/May 2013 article, "A Fork in the River", <http://www.sactownmag.com/April-May-2013/A-Fork-in-the-River/> is a fabulous idea, and it caused me to resubscribe. It would open up our rivers, especially the American, to the type of innovative activity our organization deeply believes in to create more visitors to the American River Parkway, which only adds to public safety and helps create additional resources.

Thank you.

David H. Lukenbill, CFO & Senior Policy Director
American River Parkway Preservation Society (ARPPS)

#2) Rejuvenating downtown would help the River Parkway

Published Sacramento Bee Thursday, Apr. 04, 2013

Re "Keeping Kings in Sacramento is in the best interest of NBA" (Editorial, April 3): The editorial saying that keeping the Kings in Sacramento is in the best interest of the NBA to was right on the money.

Another consequence of the downtown development connected to keeping the Kings in town could be the rejuvenation of the adjacent area of the American River Parkway.

As a redeveloped downtown plays host to more conferences and tourists, many of whom like to run or bike in the morning, the allure of a safe and clean running trail ranked as one of the best in the country, close to the downtown hotels, is a very nice perk.

Sacramento's current strategy of stopping the large-scale and long-term illegal camping, which has made that area of the Parkway unsafe, is so far working. A redeveloped downtown will help maintain the momentum to keep it safe and clean.

-- David H. Lukenbill, Sacramento

<http://www.sacbee.com/2013/04/04/5316267/rejuvenating-downtown-helps-the.html>

#3) Separate different users on American River Parkway

Published: Sacramento Bee, Friday, Jun. 7, 2013 - 10:06 am

Re "Pedal slower or risk ticket" (Page A1, June 7): Your article examining the continuing problem of speeding bicyclists on the multi-use trail on the American River Parkway is a good presentation of the issue.

This is an issue we believe can best be addressed by separating the uses so that each of the various Parkway users -- runners/walkers, bicyclists and equestrians -- can more safely enjoy the beauty of meandering, or racing, along the river.

The best model we have seen is that developed by the Central Valley Rails to Trails Foundation, which has designed a conceptual trail space approximately 40 feet wide, with 12 feet for bikes, 3 feet of plantings, 10 feet for walkers, 3 feet of plantings, and 12 feet for horses.

-- David H. Lukenbill, Sacramento

#4) Published Sacramento Bee

<http://www.sacbee.com/2013/07/15/5566261/banning-of-alcohol-on-parkway.html>

Alcohol ban on parkway goes too far, discourages business

Published: Monday, Jul. 15, 2013 - 1:07 pm Online

Re "Booze ban, crackdown at 'Rafting Gone Wild' " (Page B3, July 12): Our organization, the American River Parkway Preservation Society, does not support alcohol bans on the parkway, preferring the maintenance of ongoing law enforcement presence and increasing it when needed.

The Lower American River through the parkway is a major recreational rafting location, and discouraging people from using it is discouraging business and recreation to an area always needing infusions of cash and people.

Instead, Sacramento should embrace the party-goers, just as other areas embrace seasonal infusions of people and the business they generate, like spring break in Florida. Bottom line, our parkway and the river running through it is special and we should extend the invitation to all to enjoy it, while providing enough law enforcement so that all who come to enjoy it feel safe and have a good time.

-- David H. Lukenbill, Sacramento

#5) Published Sacramento Bee

<http://www.sacbee.com/2013/09/24/5761011/park-rangers.html>

More park rangers will help American River Parkway

Published: Tuesday, Sep. 24, 2013 - 9:09 am

Re "Q&A: Rangers on the lookout in parks" (Our Region, Sept. 23): As the article noted, parkway rangers have a tough job which sometimes requires sudden shifts in perspective in any given day; from explaining the growth cycles of salmon to inquisitive school children to rousting potentially dangerous illegal campers from the American River Parkway, any one of whom might be an armed and wanted parole violator.

I'm sure most of them would much prefer a focus on the former duties rather than the latter and I would think many of them signed up to be rangers with that kind of educational help in mind.

Public safety on the parkway does require that there be a heavy focus on removing illegal campers, especially in the North Sacramento area of the parkway where illegal camping is most heavily concentrated.

With four new rangers, that work will be more effective.

-- David H. Lukenbill, Sacramento

AMERICAN RIVER PARKWAY PRESERVATION SOCIETY FINANCIAL STATEMENT

October 1 2012 to September 30, 2013

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

Revenue

- 1. Contributions, gifts, grants, and similar amounts received \$1,950.00
- 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: cots of goods sold \$0
 - c. Gross profit or (loss) from sales of inventory \$0
- 8. Other revenue (describe).....\$0
- 9. **Total Revenue (Add 1, 2, 3, 4, 5c, 6c, 7c and 8).....\$1,950.92**

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.....\$975.00 (\$750.00,Capacity Building Consultant) (\$225.00 Web Services)
- 14. Occupancy [web], rent, utilities, and [web] maintenance \$0
- 15. Printing, publications, postage, and shipping \$481.79 (\$481.79 Postage)
- 16. Other expenses (describe) [Supplies, Meetings, Awards, Dues] \$422.59 (Envelopes \$29.88) (Ink Toner \$51.98) Award \$186.73) (Meetings \$122.00) (Bank Fees \$12.00) (Secretary of State Fees \$20.00)
- 17. **Total Expenses (Add 10-16).....\$1,880.28**
- 18. Excess or (deficit) for the year (Subtract 17 from 9) \$70.64
- 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) \$23.98
- 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 \$94.62

PART II Balance Sheets

- 22. Cash, savings, and investments \$94.62
- 23. Land and buildings \$0
- 24. Other assets (describe) \$0
- 25. **Total Assets.....\$94.62**
- 26. **Total Liabilities** (describe) \$0
- 27. **Net assets or fund balances** (line 27 of column B must agree with line 21) \$94.62

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 **329 Members**

Retention Rate **64%**

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: **50 Members**

HONORARY LEADERSHIP MEMBERS

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

Subtotal: **247 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: **35 Members**

TOTAL MEMBERSHIP **661 Members**

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.

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, and the Regional Water Forum sponsored by the Auburn Dam Council in June of 2012 was a welcome addition to the public discussion for the need for Auburn Dam.

- 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: Sacramento County has embarked upon a vigorous effort to reduce illegal camping, conducting daily searches, and with the addition of four new rangers in the budget passed in September of 2013, this effort should intensify.

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 suburban communities are where the majority of people wish to live, and that planning decisions need to reflect this.

Appendix I: E-Letters

American River Parkway Preservation Society

E-Letter #125, October 5, 2012

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, albeit sometimes slowly, and we are fortunate to live in a country and a region where it does.



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Website: <http://www.arpps.org/>

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American River Parkway Preservation Society

Special E Letter #4 October 24, 2012

Hello Everyone:

Considering Bob Slobe saw 100 illegal campers in the North Sacramento area of the Parkway, (see photo below) in a short walk this morning, one has to ask how is the serious effort to remove illegal campers, promised by the County to begin on September 19, 2012, working out?

Here is what the County promised, as published in Marcos Breton's column of September 19, 2012:

"Marcos Breton: Enforce illegal camping laws to protect the parkway"
Sacramento Bee, September 19, 2012

"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."

Retrieved September 19, 2012 from

<http://www.sacbee.com/2012/09/19/4832888/marcos-breton-enforce-illegal.html>

----- Original Message -----

From: [Robert Slobe](#)

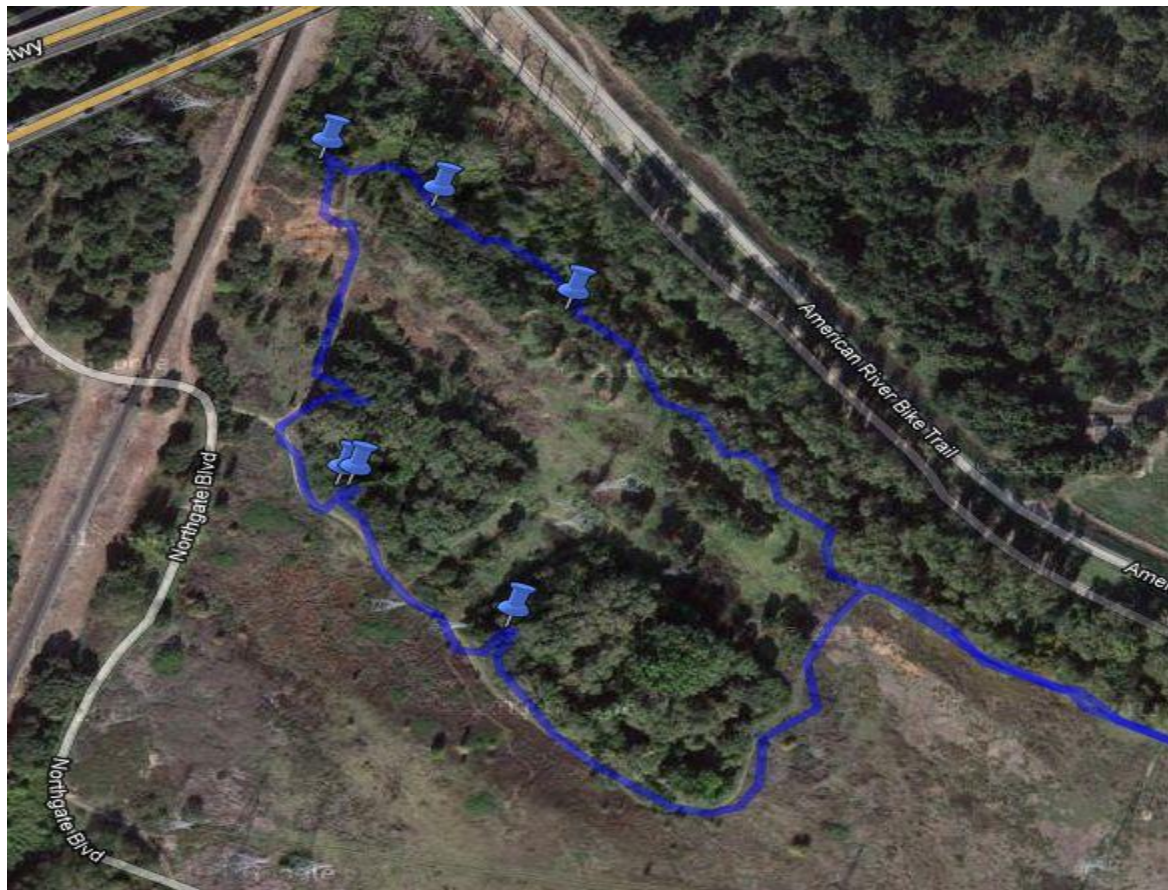
To: [David Hewitt Lukenbill \(DLukenbill@msn.com\)](mailto:DLukenbill@msn.com) ;

Sent: Wednesday, October 24, 2012 11:15 AM

Subject: American River Parkway Bum Camps October 24, 2012

About 100 bums camping in a short walk.

<https://picasaweb.google.com/rslobe/AmericanRiverParkway10232012?authkey=Gv1sRgCM-81PLp09bZaA#>



American River Parkway Preservation Society

E-Letter #126, November 8, 2012

Nonprofit Management & Philanthropy

The impact the just concluded election season will have on the Parkway or the many issues impacting it are not clear, but as the economy continues to improve and as more parks are turned over to nonprofits to manage—as we advocate for the Parkway—the impact of philanthropy on parks will continue to be studied.

Recently, a major donation of \$100 million has been made to the model we use for successful nonprofit parks management, the Central Park Conservancy in New York, <http://www.centralparknyc.org/about/> as reported by the *New York Times*.

While our region clearly does not have the concentration of wealth that would generate a gift of this magnitude to a future nonprofit managing the American River Parkway, billionaires do live here and some live along the American River.

Here is an excerpt from the article in the *New York Times*.

“At a news conference at Bethesda Fountain in Central Park on Tuesday morning, Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg and the Central Park Conservancy announced that John A. Paulson, the hedge fund billionaire, along with the Paulson Family Foundation were giving \$100 million to the Central Park Conservancy. It is believed to be the largest gift ever to a public park, more than doubling the \$40 million given this year to build a cycling track in Brooklyn Bridge Park.

“Mr. Paulson, a lifelong New Yorker, said that as an infant he was pushed around in a baby carriage in the park and that he later remembered going to Bethesda Fountain as a teenager and seeing it covered in graffiti, with no water flowing.

“When asked at the news conference what prompted the gift, Mr. Paulson said: “Walking through the park in different seasons, it kept coming back that in my mind Central Park is the most deserving of all of New York’s cultural institutions. And I wanted the amount to make a difference. The park is very large, and its endowment is relatively small.”

“The park’s current endowment stands at \$144 million. Half of Mr. Paulson’s gift will go to the endowment, while the other half will be used for capital improvements. Mr. Paulson mentioned two that he considered important: Restoring the park’s North Woods, and sprucing up the Merchant’s Gate entrance at the park’s southwest corner, the most heavily used entrance.

“Mr. Paulson, who was born in Queens and graduated from the Harvard Business School, gained prominence and earned billions by betting on the collapse of the real estate market long before many other investors did. He set up two funds as early as 2006 specifically designed to take advantage of a decline in subprime mortgages.

“Mr. Paulson has been a supporter of the Central Park Conservancy for 20 years, but this is his first major gift to the park. He joined the conservancy’s board in June.

“Two former parks commissioners, Henry Stern and Adrian Benepe, were at the news conference Tuesday. It was also attended by Elizabeth Barlow Rogers and Richard Gilder, key figures in the conservancy’s founding.

“The announcement was made under cloudy skies in a ceremony attended by hundreds of employees of the Central Park Conservancy in their gray sweatshirts, as well as the conservancy’s board. Doug Blonsky, the president and chief executive officer of the conservancy, which operates Central Park for the city, hailed the gift as “transformational,” saying that it would break the cycle of restoration and decline that has marked the park throughout its 153-year history.

“Central Park was created by two individuals -- Olmsted and Vaux -- in 1858,” Mr. Blonsky said, referring to Frederick Law Olmsted and Calvert Vaux, the landscape architects responsible for the park’s design. “In 1980, a group of individuals banded together to restore it to its long-forgotten glory. Today, John joins these visionaries to sustain Central Park well into the future.”

Retrieved November 8, 2012 from

http://www.nytimes.com/2012/10/24/nyregion/billionaire-donates-100-million-to-central-park.html?_r=0

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American River Parkway Preservation Society

Special E Letter #5

November 27, 2012

Farm to Fork Capital & A Permanent Farmers Market

Recently a visionary idea has surfaced, first by Mayor Kevin Johnson, mentioned in this article <http://www.breakingtravelnews.com/news/article/sacramento-named-americas-farm-to-fork-capital/>

It was then extended with this editorial

<http://www.sacbee.com/2012/11/25/5007214/farm-to-fork-needs-meat-on-bone.html>

And further enhanced with our article in the *Sacramento Press*

http://www.sacramento.com/headline/76214/American_River_Public_Market_Is_it_time_for_a_permanent_farmers_market_in_Sacramento

Here's an excerpt from our article.

There has been some interest expressed in local media lately about establishing a permanent farmers market in Sacramento to concretize the recent proposal by Mayor Kevin Johnson to promote one of the historic strengths of Sacramento as “America’s Farm-to-Fork Capital.

Establishing a permanent farmer’s market is a wonderful idea and the seminal model exists in Seattle, Pike Place Market <http://www.pikeplacemarket.org/>

For those of you who have shopped there—I lived in Seattle for a year and shopped there often—you know it is a truly world class public market taking advantage of the setting next to the ocean and local produce, which in Seattle’s case is, among other things, fish, flying fish.

Wikipedia has a great entry about Pike Place

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pike_Place_Market and Yelp has some great reviews <http://www.yelp.com/biz/pike-place-market-seattle>

Given the availability of open space and the advantage of placing it alongside one of our rivers, would seem to indicate looking at the south side of the American River, in the area bounded by I-5 on the west, Richards Blvd on the south, North 7th Street on the East and the American River Parkway on the north.

The other advantage of siting in this general area is its closeness to existing lower income housing communities—who benefit most from the low price and high quality of farmers market produce—such as Alkali Flats, Dos Rios, North Sacramento and on the planning board, the low income residences planned for Township 9 and the Railyards area.

Other areas that have been mentioned include the Railyards area and K Street, both of which would be good, but getting close to the blue water American River and the green beauty of the American River Parkway would be priceless.

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American River Parkway Preservation Society

E-Letter #127, December 6, 2012

Nature Center in the Lower Reach

The realization of a strategy we've advocated since the early days of our organization, the establishment of a nature center in the Lower Reach of the American River Parkway is finally occurring, as reported in the *Sacramento Bee*.

We wrote in our first research report in 2005, ***The American River Parkway Lower Reach Area: A Corroded Crown Jewel; Restoring the Luster, A Conceptual and Policy Primer:***

“Among the many community resources that could be created in the Lower Reach are:

- **A Lower Reach Nature Center:**

As much good as the Indian Heritage Center will do for the Lower Reach, there is a strong need for a local community oriented nature center, modeled after the Effie Yeaw Nature Center, serving the Lower Reach community as Effie Yeaw serves the upriver community.

The organized support that will develop around the Lower Reach Nature Center will act as the organized support for the Effie Yeaw Nature Center, the American River Natural History Association (ARNHA), does for the upriver community; as a focal point for volunteers and donations to support the nature center and the Parkway.” (pp. 48-49)

Retrieved December 6, 2012 from <http://www.arpps.org/report.pdf>

Having served a term as the president of ARNHA I had witnessed the great public safety value of having a busy nature center staffed full-time and serving as a base for Parkway Rangers and I knew that in the historically beautiful Lower Reach, a nature center could serve as the beginning of a renewal for that long-troubled area.

Additionally, the involvement of the local nonprofit, Sacramento Valley Conservancy is very positive, as they are one of the organizations we have always felt had the experience and wherewithal to become a viable manager for the Parkway.

An excerpt from the *Bee* article.

“In what could mark a turnaround for a troubled section of the American River Parkway, a nonprofit group is poised to take over a former Boy Scout camp across the river from downtown – with plans to transform it into a major recreation spot.

“The Sacramento Valley Conservancy is expected to get the state's go-ahead this month to begin what could be a half-million-dollar upgrade of Camp Pollock, a rustic campground established by the Boy Scouts in 1923.

“The State Lands Commission agreed Wednesday to buy the property from the Scouts. It will lease the land to the conservancy, which plans to open it to the public as a nature and recreation center.

“Conservancy Executive Director Aimee Rutledge said her group hopes to have the site open for public visits soon after it takes control in January. "This is the first step in a long-term project we are really looking forward to," she said.

“The 11-acre property, nestled among cottonwoods and willows just west of Highway 160, is relatively small. But the effect of Wednesday's state agreement is potentially large.

“Camp Pollock sits near a forbidding section of the 23-mile-long parkway. Known as an illegal camping area for several hundred homeless people, the area has gained a reputation among some parkway users as a place to avoid.

“Sacramento County officials, including Supervisor Phil Serna, say they hope the conservancy can kick-start a recreation renaissance in the lower parkway, and, as a side benefit, help their efforts to discourage homeless camping.

"We're excited," said Jeff Leatherman, head of county parks, which owns and manages most of the parkway. "It's about (making) the lower parkway a destination."

Retrieved December 6, 2012 from

<http://www.sacbee.com/2012/12/06/5034726/conservancy-deal-would-add-camp.html>

P.S. Our latest annual organizational report has also been posted to our website at [http://www.arpps.org/ARPPS Annual Report 2012.pdf](http://www.arpps.org/ARPPS%20Annual%20Report%202012.pdf)

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American River Parkway Preservation Society

E-Letter #128, January 7, 2013

Suburbs, Homelessness & Public Space

One of the reasons a majority of people have historically chosen to live, recreate, and shop in suburban areas is the sense that public safety seems more assured than in urban ones.

The Parkway is an excellent microcosm of this as we hear very few reports of Parkway users public safety being threatened in the suburban regions of the Parkway, while there are many of users being threatened in the urban areas.

The suburban part of the Parkway from Paradise Beach up to Folsom Lake is largely worthy of the title “Crown Jewel of Sacramento”; but in the more urban area from Paradise down is another story completely.

Most observers attribute this to the long-term and large-scale illegal camping by the homeless—many of whom are felons, sex-offenders, and the mentally ill—in the Lower Parkway.

Now a bill is being proposed, as reported in the *Sacramento Bee* that is attempting to legalize camping in public space, perhaps—depending on the reactions of local governments and the court cases they would certainly bring should it pass—even including the Parkway.

An excerpt from the *Bee* article.

“California law protects its residents from discrimination based on sex, race, religion and sexual orientation.

“Now a state lawmaker is pushing to add another category to the list: homelessness.

“New legislation titled the "Homeless Bill of Rights" by Democratic Assemblyman Tom Ammiano of San Francisco is meant to keep communities from rousting people who have nowhere to turn.

“The measure is sure to be controversial in cities such as Sacramento, which has battled for years over "tent cities" for homeless people, and San Francisco, where voters passed an ordinance barring sitting or lying on sidewalks.

“The heart of Assembly Bill 5 would give legal protection to people engaging in life-sustaining activities on public property. Among other activities, it specifically mentions sleeping, congregating, panhandling, urinating and "collecting and possessing goods for recycling, even if those goods contain alcoholic residue."

“Ammiano declined to comment to The Bee on Thursday about the bill. His measure also would give homeless residents the right to sleep in cars that are legally parked, to receive funds through public welfare programs, to receive legal counsel when cited – even for infractions – and to possess personal property on public lands. Local officials could not force the homeless into shelters or social service programs.

“If the bill passes and is signed into law, courts would be left to sort out the extent to which communities could limit the legal rights it conveys – for example, whether local ordinances could close parks during late-night hours for public safety reasons.”

Retrieved January 4, 2013 from

<http://www.sacbee.com/2013/01/04/5091499/california-lawmaker-proposes-homeless.html>

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American River Parkway Preservation Society

E-Letter #129, February 6, 2013

ARPPS Article published in the *Sacramento Press*, January 30, 2013.

Cordova Hills & Suburban Living

Last night [January 29, 2013], the County Board of Supervisors approved the Cordova Hills project to create a new suburb in the eastern end of the County.

I watched some of the session on the project on television and was struck by a couple significant misrepresentations being oft quoted by the opposition which were fortunately corrected during the session.

One was that approving the project would threaten federal transportation funds, which was corrected by a former federal transportation official who found nothing in the project warranting such a claim.

Another was that the project should not be approved because it was so far away from everything else, which was corrected by the board chair reminding people that it was only far away if you live in the city of Sacramento, but for those people who live in Rancho Cordova and Folsom, it's right next door.

Our organization doesn't have any particular feeling about the Cordova Hills project as it is not adjacent to or even close to the American River Parkway, but we are concerned about suburban development in general.

The Parkway is surrounded by suburbs and the Sacramento region is largely a suburban region so the health of the suburbs is important to all of us and the approval of good suburban projects—which Cordova Hills appears to be—is good for the region.

The suburban home, lifestyle, and residents have been the recipients of criticism ever since people began moving from the congested, polluted, and dangerous cities out to the nice house in the country, and the call for the end of suburban living as if it is just-around-the-corner, is as much a fantasy as the validity of much of the criticism.

The typical urban planner in Sacramento probably looks out over the sea of suburban housing surrounding the American River Parkway and sees a lot of wasted space, but the people fortunate enough to live here—your author included—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.

To the urban advocate, being a suburbanite is virtually always suspect, and it's reflected in our language. The *Oxford Dictionary* has as one of its definitions of suburban: “**2.** Having characteristics regarded as typical of residents or life in the suburbs of a city; *esp.* provincial, narrow-minded, uncultured, naïve.”

However, being urbane, from urban, fares much better. “**2.** Having the qualities or characteristics associated with town or city life; *esp.* elegant and refined in manners, courteous, suave, sophisticated.”

Prejudice against suburban living as somehow living an inauthentic life is widespread and repeated regularly.

It was a stance I also held—though I was raised in the suburbs—when I was young and single, living in downtown or midtown Sacramento, when I was sometimes able to even forgo owning a car and during that period of my life, I truly enjoyed urban living.

However, once I was married and we had a child, the importance of more space, a back yard, and easy access to entertainment and shopping with free parking, and the relatively low crime rate in the suburbs, led to us living and remaining there.

While the car, among many members of the urban planning community, is largely tainted by the negative narrative of suburban living—and correctly the cause of some air 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.

It is also the only way you can really shop at Costco.

There is value in all types of living arrangements and the many arguments about why one is better than the other are generally more based on sincerely held ideological zeal rather than logical thought.

The two major environmental reasons given for the evil of the suburbs, air and water pollution—though urban environments have also long contributed to each—have largely been addressed by better technology.

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; or take the short walk to the river; it is all wonderful, all part and parcel of suburban life in the suburban communities surrounding the American River Parkway and the river flowing through it.

But, as much as I now love living in the suburbs, I will never forget how much I once loved living in the city, and for that reason, Sacramentans can be thankful we are blessed with an abundance of many ways of living our lives.

Disclosure: The author is the founder of the American River Parkway Preservation Society.

Retrieved January 30, 2013 from

http://www.sacramentoexpress.com/headline/78991/Cordova_Hills_Suburban_Living

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American River Parkway Preservation Society

E-Letter #130, March 4, 2013

Note: Very Important Meeting:

Camp Pollack, the former Boy Scout Camp in the North Sacramento area of the Parkway, was recently acquired by the nonprofit Sacramento Valley Conservancy, whose plans include—among other things— developing a nature center.

They'll be hosting a North Sacramento Chamber of Commerce luncheon Thursday, March 21st, to talk about their upcoming plans, which ARPPS President Mike Rushford and I will attend.

If you would like to attend, you can reserve a spot via this link,
<http://events.r2o.constantcontact.com/register/event?llr=fl8cirm6&oeidk=a07e73y88j5e2ef6c71>

Dams, Tunnels, & Water

The governor's pitch to farmers, as reported in this *Sacramento Bee* article, <http://www.sacbee.com/2013/02/07/5171621/brown-enters-hostile-territory.html> to support his tunnels, might be strengthened if he would support increasing Northern California's water storage to compensate for more conveyance of Northern California

water to Southern California by increasing the height of Shasta Dam and building Auburn Dam.

The bottom line, as always, is having enough water to satisfy agricultural, environmental, recreational, and residential needs, and increasing dam capacity, as we noted in a previous post, <http://riverparkwayblog.wordpress.com/2012/05/04/water-storage-auburn-dam-raising-shasta-dam/> could satisfy those public interests.

And, as this recent story from the *Sacramento Bee* about our so far very dry year indicates, <http://www.sacbee.com/2013/02/27/5220561/california-starts-year-with-record.html> there is an even deeper reason to increase water storage.

An excerpt from the first Bee article.

“COLUSA – Gov. Jerry Brown knew the room was against him when he showed up for a farm show here Wednesday.

“But Brown has a controversial water project to promote and is trying to make inroads in rural California. He put on a flannel shirt and opened with a joke.

"I checked out the voting history of Colusa County," Brown said.

“Not only has the county opposed the Democratic governor every time he has been on a ballot, Brown said, but it overwhelmingly voted against a similar, unsuccessful, water plan Brown championed when he was governor before, in 1982.

"The vote in Colusa County was 3.6 percent 'yes,' Brown said in a breakfast address. "So, guys, I've got some work to do."

“Later – after Brown had toured the farm show, sat on a tractor and announced that he will build a house on family land nearby – even his second cousin's reaction suggested how difficult it may be for Brown to find support among area farmers for his \$14 billion plan. Brown is proposing to build two tunnels to divert water around the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta to the south.

"The tunnels, I don't know," said the relative, Walt Seaver, a Brown appointee to the local fair board. "I think everybody's waiting to see what the final version's really going to be."

“Brown's effort is a massive and uncertain undertaking. Yet the Democratic governor is in a politically favorable position following passage of his November ballot initiative to raise taxes. Jack Citrin, director of the Institute of Governmental Studies at UC Berkeley, said he appears to have "a lot of confidence in his persuasive powers right now."

“Appearing at a farm show in a rural, relatively tiny county is indicative of how significant the project is to the governor.

“Brown said there are deep divisions "between north and south, between farmers and environmentalists, between people living in the Delta and people living ... further down south. But I intend to meet with all the groups, conduct a very intensive, prolonged and complete effort of involvement and listening and taking into account what people suggest.”

An excerpt from the second Bee article.

“California is poised to shatter an all-time weather record by notching the driest January-February period in recorded history across the northern Sierra Nevada.

“The northern Sierra is crucial to statewide water supplies because it is where snowmelt accumulates to fill Shasta and Oroville reservoirs. These are the largest reservoirs in California and the primary storage points for state and federal water supply systems.

“If February concludes without additional storms – and none are expected – the northern Sierra will have seen 2.2 inches of precipitation in January and February, the least since record-keeping began in the region in 1921.”

P.S. Read about the Sacramento County Park Ranger awarded the highest state award, the Medal of Valor, for stopping a murder while off duty.

We are fortunate to have a ranger of such character and bravery patrolling the American River Parkway.

Read the Press Release here.

http://www.pio.saccounty.net/Press%20Releases/SAC_033517.pdf

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E-Letter #131, April 5, 2013

Affordable housing

As reported in the *Sacramento Bee* recently,
<http://www.sacbee.com/2013/03/27/5295473/sacramento-county-alters-housing.html>
Sacramento County may alter its requirement that developers provide 15% of their housing stock for affordable housing.

Hopefully, they will drop the requirement completely as it is a sure method of restricting the development of suburban communities.

The development of new housing or the revitalization of existing housing stock should be primarily governed by market forces, an idea supported by Jane Jacobs, the “journalist, author, and activist best known for her influence on urban studies”. (Retrieved March 28, 2013 from http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jane_Jacobs)

In her seminal book, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*, which Wikipedia describes as “one of the most influential books in the history of American city planning” (*Ibid.*), Jacobs wrote about subsidized housing.

“The thicket of confusion about the workings of cities which has grown around and upon the subsidized housing project notion is no longer just in our minds. By now it is also a thicket of legislative, financial, architectural and analytical devices applied to cities.

“Our cities contain people too poor to pay for the quality of shelter that our public conscience (quite rightly, I think) tells us they should have. Furthermore, in many cities the sheer supply of dwellings is too small to accommodate the population without overcrowding, and the quantity of additional dwellings needed does not necessarily match up with the direct ability of the people concerned to pay for them. Because of these reasons, we need subsidies for at least some portion of city dwellings.

“These seem like simple and straightforward reasons for dwelling subsidies. They also leave a large leeway as to how subsidies might be applied, both financially and physically.

“But let us see how involuted and rigid these reasons can become—have become—by giving another seemingly simple but slightly different answer to the question: What is the reason for subsidizing dwellings in cities?

“The answer we long ago accepted went like this: The reason we need dwelling subsidies is to provide for that part of the population which cannot be housed by private enterprise.

“And, the answer went on, so long as this is necessary anyway, the subsidized dwellings should embody and demonstrate the principles of good housing and planning.

“This is a terrible answer, with terrible consequences. A twist of semantics suddenly presents us with *people who cannot be housed by private enterprise*, and hence must presumably be housed by someone else. Yet in real life, these are people whose housing needs are not in themselves peculiar and thus outside the ordinary province and capability of private enterprise, like the housing needs of prisoners, sailors at sea or the insane. Perfectly ordinary housing needs can be provided for almost anybody by private enterprise. What is peculiar about these people is merely that *they cannot pay for it*.

“Quicker than the eye can see however, “people who cannot be housed by private enterprise” have been turned into a statistical group with peculiar shelter requirements, like prisoners, on the basis of one statistic: their income. To carry out the rest of the answer, this statistical group becomes a special collection of guinea pigs for Utopians to mess around with.

“Even if the Utopians had had schemes that made sense socially in cities, it is wrong to set one part of the population segregated by income, apart in its own neighborhoods with its own different scheme of community. Separate but equal makes nothing but trouble in a society where people are not taught that caste is a part of the divine order. Separate but better is an innate contradiction whenever the separateness is enforced by one form of interiority.

“The notion that the fact of a subsidy required that these people be housed by someone other than private enterprise and normal landlords was an aberration in itself. The government does not take over the landlordship or ownership or management of subsidized farms or of subsidized airlines. Government does not, as a rule, take over the running of museums that receive subsidies from public funds. It does not take over the ownership or management of voluntary community hospitals whose construction is today frequently made possible by government subsidies.

“Public housing stands apart from other, logically analogous forms of capitalism and of government partnership which we have evolved; it incorporates the belief that government must take over a facility *purely* because government contributes subsidy funds.

“Because we lack any ideology that puts government as the landlord and owner of public housing in context with the rest of our national life, we have no sense about how to contend with such a thing. The bureaucracies that build and run these places—always in terror lest their capricious masters, the taxpayers, find fault with the tenants’ housekeeping, morals or standards of amenity and blame the bureaucrats—are in some things impossibly arrogant and in others impossibly timid.

“Because the government is a landlord, it is in potential competition with private landlords, and to prevent the competition from being unfair, cartel arrangements are necessary. The population itself must be cartelized, with people moved from the province of one cartel to another on the basis of the money they make.

“The answer that these are people “who cannot be housed by private enterprise” was absolutely disastrous for cities too. Quicker than the eye can see, the city as an organism has disappeared. It becomes, in theory, a static collection of sites for planting these sorted-out sets of statistics.

“From the beginning, the whole conception was irrelevant to the nature of the problem, irrelevant to the plain financial need of the people concerned, irrelevant to the needs and workings of cities, irrelevant to the rest of our economic system, and even irrelevant to the meaning of home as it has evolved otherwise in our tradition.

“The best that can be said of the conception is that it did afford a chance to experiment with some physical and social planning theories which did not pan out.” (pp. 419-422)

Jacobs, J. (1961). *The death and life of great American cities*. (50th Anniversary Edition, 2011) New York: Modern Library.

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American River Parkway Preservation Society

E-Letter #132, May 6, 2013

Farm to Fork

Recent interest in city branding promoted by Mayor Johnson is expected with the slogan—Farm to Fork—that captures Sacramento’s central siting to much of the nation’s agriculture.

Connecting this to the Sacramento region, the article in *SacTown Magazine* affirms the natural beauty and bounty of our rivers:

An excerpt.

“The beauty of Sacramento pursuing a higher profile as America’s Farm-to-Fork Capital is that it embraces who we are already are. Agriculture is an intrinsic part of our historical identity. But there’s also a strong argument to be made for us declaring ourselves the Outdoor Adventure Capital of America. People have moved here from all over the country for our rivers, bike trails, stunning hikes, nearby mountains and more. So why not combine the best of both worlds?”

“In Oregon, a group called Farm to Fork Event Co. partners with Momentum River Expeditions, as well as top regional chefs, farms and wineries, to create an immersive celebration of all things scenic and culinary with two multiday rafting trips down the Rogue River in Oregon and Idaho’s Salmon River. Each day, rafters come ashore and are wined and dined with local bounty. And a portion of the proceeds go to river conservancy groups and a nonprofit that supports small family farms.”

Retrieved April 28, 2013 from <http://www.sactownmag.com/April-May-2013/A-Fork-in-the-River/>

And last year, we published an article in *Sacramento Press* suggesting a public market along the American River.

An excerpt.

“There has been some interest expressed in local media lately about establishing a permanent farmers market in Sacramento to concretize the recent proposal by Mayor Kevin Johnson to promote one of the historic strengths of Sacramento as “America’s Farm-to-Fork Capital.”

“Establishing a permanent farmer’s market is a wonderful idea and the seminal model exists in Seattle’s Pike Place Market.

“For those of you who have shopped there—I lived in Seattle for a year and shopped there often—you know it is a truly world class public market taking advantage of the setting next to the ocean and local produce, which in Seattle’s case is, among other things, fish, flying fish.

“Wikipedia has a great entry about Pike Place and Yelp has some great reviews.

“Given the availability of open space and the advantage of placing it alongside one of our rivers, would seem to indicate looking at the south side of the American River, in the area bounded by I-5 on the west, Richards Blvd on the south, North 7th Street on the East and the American River Parkway on the north.”

Retrieved April 28, 2013 from

http://sacramento.press.com/headline/76214/American_River_Public_Market

The bottom line is that this idea really resonates and connecting it to our rivers just magnifies an already great idea into an absolutely wonderful idea to enhance the experience of people visiting the Parkway.

I can envision outdoor special event dining featuring locally grown food overlooking the American River at many places along the river, from Camp Pollack to Ancil Hoffman Park and this will add yet another reason to visit the Parkway.

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E-Letter #133, June 10, 2013

Auburn Dam Council: Regional Water Forum

The Auburn Dam Council sponsored the Forum, held Friday, June 7, and the event was a reminder that the best way, still, to provide water storage during Sacramento's periodic dry spells, and protect us from flooding at the 400 yr. level—the levee improvements currently underway will only get us to 200 year level—is to build the Auburn Dam.

When a flood control system provides 100 year flood protection, it means there is a one in 100 chance that a storm will occur that is beyond the capacity of levees and reservoirs to contain, and 500 year protection—the gold standard for the United States, though Holland and Japan use a 1,000 year level—means there is only a one in 500 chance that a storm will overwhelm a system.

Congressman Tom McClintock was the keynote speaker and his talk covered many of the points he outlined in another recent talk, on his website, at <http://mcclintock.house.gov/2013/02/self-evident-water-truths.shtml> , and all of the following quotes are retrieved from there.

In general, he noted that nature produces an abundance of water needed by human beings, so our planning needs to revolve around this abundance of water, rather than the scarcity of water narrative from the environmentalists; and in particular, he outlined 5 self-evident truths about water:

“Self-Evident Truth #1: More water is better than less water. Can we agree on this first point? I know I’m stating the obvious – but I keep hearing, that, “no, conservation is the key to the future because conservation lessens demand.” That may be true, but ultimately conservation is the management of shortage and abundance is better.

“Some say that in many cases conservation is the least expensive way of adding supply. But that’s the point: it doesn’t ADD supply. And IF conservation is the least expensive way of managing shortage, it doesn’t need to be mandated, does it?

“The point at which conservation becomes economically preferable is the point when a water user decides he can save money doing it. The more expensive the water, the more expensive is the alternative he’s willing to employ.

“Which brings us to Self-Evident Truth #2: Cheaper water is better than more expensive water. If we agree on this, then it naturally follows that before we employ more expensive sources of water like desalination and recycling, we should first be sure we’ve exhausted the less expensive alternatives, like surface water storage.

“Self-Evident Truth #3: Water is unevenly distributed over both time and distance. So if we want to have plenty of water in dry periods we have to store it in wet ones, and if we want to have plenty of water in dry regions we have to move it from wet ones. That is why we build dams and aqueducts and canals.

“Which brings us to Self-Evident Truth #4: that we don’t need to build dams, aqueducts and reservoirs if our goal is to let our water run into the ocean. Water tends to run downhill very well on its own and doesn’t need our help to do so. The reason that we build dams, aqueducts, and reservoirs is so that the water DOESN’T run into the ocean, but rather is retained and distributed where it will do the most good.

“We can tell where it does the most good by its relative value, which brings us to Self-Evident Truth #5: Water is valuable, which allows the market to assign a price to it that

can account for its scarcity, availability, storage, transportation, demand and substitution costs, including conservation.

“Do I have everybody so far?”

“If so, then an important question arises: if these truths are valid and self-evident, then why aren’t we proceeding with a water policy that is in concert with them?”

Congressman McClintock also made a very good point about the salmon population in relation to wild salmon versus hatchery salmon.

This is a very important point as hatchery salmon are not included in the salmon counts when environmentalists warn of the shrinkage of the salmon runs as a reason not to build new dams or tear down existing ones.

“We’re told that hatchery fish aren’t the same as fish born in the wild.

“Really? The only difference between a fish born in a hatchery and a fish born in the wild is the difference between a baby born in a hospital and a baby born at home. The same genetic variables are at work in the breeding and the same laws of natural selection are at work when they are released to the wild. And except for the markings on the hatchery fish, there is no way to tell them apart genetically or any other way.”

This was an excellent event, and the most significant local forum devoted to issues related to the need for upstream water storage, the Auburn Dam, in quite some time, for which all the credit goes to the event leadership group of Ken Payne, Pete Bontadelli, Robert Shibatani, and Roger Canfield; and the rest of the folks at the Auburn Dam Council.

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American River Parkway Preservation Society

E-Letter #134, July 8, 2013

Parkway Trail is Crowded, But We Can Fix It

Since first researching the issue in our 2008 research report *The American River Parkway: Recreation, Education & Sanctuary, A Vision & Policy Primer*, it is one we have kept track of and regularly written about on our blog, with the most recent postings coming last month.

The first was June 10th <http://riverparkwayblog.wordpress.com/2013/06/10/slowing-down/> in response to a *Sacramento Bee* article **Slow down or risk ticket, Sacramento County tells parkway bicyclists** <http://www.sacbee.com/2013/06/07/5478327/slow-down-or-risk-ticket-sacramento.html>

Our response was:

This article from the *Sacramento Bee* examining the continuing problem of speeding bicyclists on the multi-use trail through the Parkway, is a good presentation of the issue.

This is an issue we believe can best be addressed by separating the multi-uses so that each of the various Parkway users—runners/walkers, bicyclists, and equestrians, can more safely enjoy the beauty of meandering, or racing, along the river.

The best model we have seen is that developed by the Central Valley Rails to Trails Foundation <http://www.cvrta.org/rail-corridor/map/> who have designed a conceptual trail space approximately 40 feet wide, with 12 feet for bikes, 3 feet of plantings, 10 feet for walkers, 3 feet of plantings, and 12 feet for horses.

The second was June 13th <http://riverparkwayblog.wordpress.com/2013/06/13/getting-along-on-the-parkway/> responding to an editorial in the *Sacramento Bee*, **Can't we all just get along on parkway?** <http://www.sacbee.com/2013/06/12/5489658/cant-we-all-just-get-along-on.html>

Our response was:

Though that is the commendable, and very unrealistic, plea from the *Sacramento Bee* editorial, it misses the very obvious need for separate trails for separate uses, as we noted in an earlier post.

The third was June 26th

<http://riverparkwayblog.wordpress.com/2013/06/26/parkway-traffic-jam/>
in response to a *Sacramento Bee* article **Conflicts increase on busy parkway**
<http://www.sacbee.com/2013/06/23/5517176/conflicts-increase-on-busy-parkway.html>

Our response was:

As this article from the *Sacramento Bee* indicates, it just keeps getting worse, a testament to the Parkway itself and also, a clear call for expanding the trail—which we posted on earlier—in addition to enforcing the traffic rules.

The overcrowding is certainly a serious issue, but, we can fix it by looking to the relatively simple—though, yes, it will cost money—plan offered by the rails to trails folks.

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American River Parkway Preservation Society

E-Letter #135, August 5, 2013

More Water Storage Needed

The title to a Viewpoints article by Sacramento Mayor Kevin Johnson in the *Sacramento Bee* on Sunday August 4, 2013 was: **“State needs more water, not just improved sharing”** voices a truth virtually everyone understands.

Mayor Johnson opens his article by writing:

“California has a water problem. The water is in the north while the majority of Californians are in the south. Although we have made great strides in conservation, our demand for water is still greater than our supply.”

Retrieved August 4, 2013 from <http://www.sacbee.com/2013/08/04/5620461/state-needs-more-water-not-just.html>

This is an issue directly impacting the Parkway and the river running through it, which we have addressed by supporting the building of Auburn Dam to increase water storage in the American River Watershed thereby increasing the ability of dam operators to maintain the proper river flow for recreation, and maintain flow and water temperature in the Lower American River for salmon spawning specifically and general aquatic health generally.

As the Mayor goes on to say, the issue becomes magnified with climate change, which California Senator Dianne Feinstein, also supporting additional water storage, wrote about in 2007:

“We've got a melting Sierra Nevada due to global warming, which will only reduce our water supplies. As a result of global warming, two-thirds of the Sierra Nevada snowpack may disappear. That's an amount sufficient for 16 million people. Where, in the future, will this water come from if we can't store water from wet years to use in dry years?...

“So we must have a plan that includes conservation, recycling, desalination, groundwater recharge and, yes, surface storage. There is no one silver bullet. All must be done to ensure that California is not left scrambling for water.”

Retrieved Sunday, August 4, 2013 from <http://www.feinstein.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/op-eds?ID=c7eae833-95e5-dd76-9da5-313028828a7f>

The fact that a small but influential consensus appears to be slowly building among a political party generally resistant to building new dams, is very heartening.

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The best things are nearest: breath in your nostrils, light in your eyes, flowers at your feet, duties at your hand, the path of God just before you. Robert Louis Stevenson

American River Parkway Preservation Society

E-Letter #136, August 14, 2013

Parkway Fires

Over the past several weeks there have been some very destructive fires in the Parkway, and though we all hope there will not be any more, it is too early to relax yet.

According to this August 1, 2013 report from KCRA, the opinion of the firefighters concerning the recent Parkway fires near North Sacramento is that they were started by the homeless illegally camping in the Parkway.

An excerpt.

SACRAMENTO, Calif. (KCRA) —On Monday, Sacramento city firefighters told KCRA 3 they know who likely started the grass fire that burned 100 acres last Thursday along the American River Parkway, near Cal Expo.

And Sacramento County park rangers have discovered what they believe is the point of origin on that blaze, but concede that preventing future fires there is difficult.

Park ranger Tim McElheney took KCRA 3 deep inside the underbrush, showing a trail of evidence leading to the starting point of that fire.

“On the left is your burn area,” McElheney said. “On the right is an area where I’ve had illegal camps in the past.”...

Park rangers told KCRA 3 they are actively enforcing the city’s no-camping rule, but need more resources to combat the problem.

“I’m out here to get them to move,” McElheney said.

He then pointed to the charred terrain and said, “This is some of the consequences of their behavior.”

Firefighters told KCRA 3 they believe homeless campers started the fire.

Retrieved August 1, 2013 from <http://www.kcra.com/news/local-news/news-sacramento/firefighters-know-who-started-american-river-parkway-grass-fire/-/12969376/21237088/-/delljaz/-/index.html>

The fire was very destructive, as reported by the Sacramento Bee:

An excerpt.

A large grass fire blazed along the American River Parkway north of downtown Thursday but caused no injuries and threatened no homes.

As of 9 p.m., firefighters from agencies throughout the Sacramento area had the 100-acre fire fully contained.

They stopped the forward progress of the fire, and expected to mop up troublesome hot spots into this morning.

The cause of the fire is still under investigation....

Sacramento-area firefighters respond to the parkway occasionally when a spark from homeless encampments, train tracks, arsonists or heavy machinery ignites vegetation, he said.

Retrieved July 26, 2013 from <http://www.sacbee.com/2013/07/26/5597757/fire-along-american-river-parkway.html>

There was an arrest in another Parkway fire a few days later, as reported by the Sacramento Bee.

An excerpt.

A 42-year-old woman was arrested this afternoon on suspicion of arson in connection with a brush fire in the 500 block of North 16th Street.

Police said the woman, identified as Evangeline Deutsch (pictured), is homeless and was known to officers. She was booked into Sacramento County Jail.

Although today's fire, which began about 2:30 p.m., burned approximately an acre, a second alarm was issued because it was near businesses and an area of the American River Parkway where a fire last week burned 100 acres, fire officials said.

Assistant Chief Niko King of the Sacramento Fire Department said investigators have questioned Deutsch and are trying to determine whether she is linked to last week's fire. Sacramento Metropolitan Fire District officials also have been notified of the arrest, he

said, in light of a string of grass fires that burned a total of 46 acres along the American River Parkway in Rancho Cordova last week.

Retrieved August 9, 2013 from

<http://blogs.sacbee.com/crime/archives/2013/08/woman-arrested-following-1-acre-fire-investigators-explore-links-to-earlier.html>

Fortunately, the County continues its work moving the illegal campers out of the Parkway, and though there is still a lot of evidence that many homeless are still illegally camping in the Parkway, there has been improvement.

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American River Parkway Preservation Society

E-Letter #137, September 6, 2013

Parkway Rangers

The Parkway Rangers had not been much in my thought over the years, until I served a term as president of the board of directors of the American River Natural History Association (ARNHA) several years ago.

ARNHA had its board meetings in the Effie Yeaw Nature Center and the Rangers also had a station there and one of them would always attend our board meetings.

That is also when I learned about the serious problem of illegal camping by the homeless in the North Sacramento area of the Parkway and began thinking about forming a nonprofit a couple years later we incorporated ARPPS to help focus on this issue which none of the other Parkway organizations were then doing.

Parkway Rangers have a tough job which sometimes requires sudden shifts in perspective in any given day; from explaining the growth cycles of salmon to inquisitive school children to rousting potentially dangerous illegal campers from the Parkway, any one of whom might be an armed and wanted parole violator.

I'm sure most of them would much prefer a focus on the former duties rather than the latter and I would think many of them signed up to be Rangers with that kind of educational help in mind.

However, the public safety needs of the many users of the Parkway do require that there be a heavy focus on rousting illegal campers, especially in the North Sacramento area of the Parkway where illegal camping is most heavily concentrated.

Over the past year the Parkway Rangers have been conducting daily patrols there and their work has become so effective that illegal campers are leaving notes nailed to trees warning the unwary campers of the daily patrols.

We need to support the Parkway Rangers in this perilous duty and the best way we can do that is to help get more money to County Parks to hire more of them, as the Ranger force is deeply understaffed as a result of the past few years' budget struggles.

The County Board of Supervisors are beginning their budget hearings this month and all of us need to encourage them to please try and allocate more money for more Rangers.

The Parkway Rangers need our help to get more back-up because it is often very dangerous out there, and, those kids really need and enjoy the natural world educational help.

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Appendix II: Newsletters

American River Parkway Preservation Society Newsletter: Issue 36 – Fall 2012

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News Update: Illegal Camping in Parkway Seriously Addressed

The past several weeks have 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—though illegal campers were still evident as late as October 13th—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.

American River Parkway Preservation Society

E-Letter #125, October 5, 2012

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, albeit sometimes slowly, and we are fortunate to live in a country and a region where it does.

Society Information

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

Board of Directors: **President**, Michael Rushford, President, Criminal Justice Legal Foundation; **Vice President**, Kristine Lea, Training Developer, Scientific Applications International Incorporated; **Chief Financial Officer/Founder**, David H. Lukenbill, President, Lukenbill & Associates

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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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American River Parkway Preservation Society

American River Parkway Preservation Society Newsletter: Issue 37 – Winter 2012

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Essay: Parkway Related Developments

The most troublesome areas surrounding the Parkway in terms of public safety, environmental degradation and habitat threats, are in Downtown/K Street Mall, Richards Blvd/12th Street, and North Sacramento, all of which can be somewhat rectified through targeted development.

The Parkway from Paradise Beach up is pretty much congruent with the appellation “Crown Jewel of Sacramento” beloved by those Parkway advocacy organizations focusing on that area, while below Paradise is something else.

The problems below Paradise Beach are connected to one another, beginning with one of the most desirable, from the homeless viewpoint, free—though illegal—homeless camping sites in the country in the American River Parkway only a short walk to the proliferation of homeless services in the Richards Blvd/12th Street area.

With its deeply canopied and overgrown thickets, moderate climate, access to clean river water and the copious homeless services, along with the proximity of prime panhandling areas in the Downtown/K Street Mall area, illegal camping sites in the American River Parkway have been a well-populated—estimates range from 400-800 people at any given time—homeless camping destination attracting people from all over the country.

Sacramento County began a serious effort to stop the illegal camping in September of 2012, which we ardently support, and we are monitoring it for one year—which should be adequate time to see substantial improvement—before reaching any judgment about the effectiveness of the County’s new strategy.

In the downtown area, the major new development will be the downtown arena, which is back in play, as this article from the *Sacramento Bee* reports.

Sacramento's drive to keep the Kings took a dramatic turn Saturday when a new group, aligned with the owner of Downtown Plaza, proposed to buy the team and build a \$400 million arena on the shopping center site.

A source close to the situation said the group was lining up deep-pocket investors to work with the mall's new owner, JMA Ventures, and present a credible alternative to the Maloof family's efforts to sell the Kings to a group planning to move the team to Seattle.

"We want to make a run at the Kings if we can afford the price," said the source, who insisted on anonymity because the plan remains in its early stages.

JMA spokesman Jeff Nead confirmed the mall owner is interested in the arena project – and has been contacted by more than one investor group considering a bid for the Kings. He declined to identify any of the investors.

"They want to work toward saving the team," Nead said. "JMA has been getting calls from a number of people."

Downtown Plaza has been mentioned at least twice before as an arena site, with City Hall staff members concluding in 2004 that it was likely too expensive. But Nead said a feasibility study performed recently by AECOM – an architectural-engineering firm that has designed several NBA arenas – showed considerable promise.

Retrieved January 13, 2013 from <http://www.sacbee.com/2013/01/13/5110837/sacramento-arena-at-downtown-plaza.html>

A downtown arena has long been our preferred arena plan as it would dramatically increase evening foot traffic in K Street and the Downtown Mall on game days. The increase in legitimate use will slowly reduce the prevalence of illegitimate use—primarily aggressive panhandling—now troubling those areas.

The other major project in downtown is the railyards and a September 2012 article in the *Sacramento Bee* notes the ongoing difficulty with the site's toxic cleanup.

It is promoted as the largest existing infill development site in the country, and is drawing interest from some of the nation's main urban developers. But it is also one of the nation's biggest "brownfield," or unclean, urban development sites and does not yet have a final remediation plan.

Until that plan and follow-up agreements are in place, city officials say developers will steer clear of the railyard, which could stall its transformation into an urban village that extends downtown Sacramento.

Retrieved January 1, 2013 from <http://www.sacbee.com/2012/09/30/4866721/toxics-cleanup-dispute-at-former.html>

Another project is the Township 9 housing project situated close to the Parkway, which, while an attractive development, may be problematic due to its focus on low-income

housing, which will add to the existing narrative of the Richards Blvd/12th Street already over-burdened with homeless and related social services.

Construction will begin next month on the first apartment complex in Township 9, which one developer called a signature project of the River District. After years of preparation, developers of Township 9 north of downtown Sacramento expect to break ground next month on their first building: a 180-unit, five-story affordable-housing apartment complex built with tax-exempt financing.

This follows \$30 million worth of infrastructure at the 65-acre site, financed by state infill funds. The work connected roads, sewers and other crucial components on the site near Richards Boulevard and 7th Street. Also in place is the footprint of the 7th Street Promenade, a linear park that ends at the American River — and at the site of a proposed amphitheater.

The apartment complex is the first of what could be 2,500 housing units and 150,000 square feet of commercial uses on the former cannery property.

Township 9, which is the historic designation for the area, is a unique spot. From the river levee, one can scan the skyline of the capital to the south, and future residents will be only steps from the river bike trail. A new light-rail station is in place, and Old Sacramento and Interstate 5 are close. (November 16, 2012, *Sacramento Business Journal*)

Retrieved January 1, 2013 from <http://riverdistrict.net/pdf/township-9-construction-to-begin-next-month.pdf>

K Street/Downtown Mall

Downtown's problems, as a board member of the Downtown Partnership so concisely explains in a December 2012 interview in *Comstock's Magazine*, are related.

An excerpt.

Downtowns have to have a distinctly different value proposition than the suburbs. Downtown Sacramento is not going to be the next great neighborhood; it needs to be the next great destination. If we try to be the next midtown or the next Roseville shopping center, it's not going to work. It needs to be distinctly urban with civic and cultural amenities that are not available elsewhere. We can go in the other direction with big box discount stores, but we'll all have to lower our aspirations for the city."

RT must address fare-jumping. In New York City, it's called turnstile jumping, and they did curtail it. If we allow people to break the law to come downtown it sends the wrong message. These fare jumpers are the people hanging out on the 700 and 800 blocks and Downtown Plaza. Why would private capital invest there when we have people urinating at the front door?"

The Marshall Hotel is probably the biggest contributor to the negative economy downtown. It is 100-percent occupied by felons, and something like 75 percent of those are sex offenders. These are not low-income housing people that we are protecting or finding homes for. These are undesirables that are only a couple blocks from the holiday skating rink. No outside capital will come to town unless this situation is dealt with.

Retrieved January 1, 2013 from

http://www.comstocksmag.com/Articles/1212_D_Acuity_Kipp_Blewett.aspx

While the idea of making downtown a destination for suburbanites means competing successfully with some pretty nice suburban amenities, with free parking and minimal—in comparison to downtown—traffic, and no aggressive panhandling; the building of the arena as the key element of the Downtown Mall would substantially reduce the problem with the huge influx of arena attendees on a regular basis.

We assume developers understand the importance of seeking strategies to deal with the deadly business-killing triad of an over-abundance of homeless services in the Richards/12th Street area, the resulting large-scale illegal camping in the North Sacramento area of the American River Parkway, and the Downtown Plaza/K Street Mall area where the homeless congregate, a congregation rising with the building of new SRO housing.

North Sacramento Farmer's Market

In this article from the *Sacramento Bee*, a move is afoot to establish a permanent farmer's market on Del Paso Blvd to help in the long term efforts at revitalization.

This is a concept we recently wrote an article about in the Sacramento Press, http://sacramentoexpress.com/headline/76214/American_River_Public_Market though our preference was locating it near the American River Parkway, still, the general concept is a very good one and could do much to continue the revitalization of North Sacramento.

An excerpt from the *Bee* article.

San Francisco designer Dan Friedlander has championed North Sacramento for more than a dozen years, investing his time and money in the devitalized area around Del Paso Boulevard with projects like the high-end LIMN furniture store and the overhaul of the rundown Arden Motel into über-modern boutique lodging...

Friedlander closed escrow earlier this month on a key parcel of what he envisions as the 2.5-acre Arden Garden Market, a seven-day-a-week European-style venue where customers can buy fresh meats, bread, produce and other staples from full-time vendors, as well as eat from food trucks and pop-up cafes. A separate

building closer to Arden Way is slated to house an international market of sorts, with booths operated by Indo-Pakistani, Hmong, Filipino and other area merchants.

The just-acquired parcel, at the corner of Del Paso Boulevard and Edgewater Street, is intended to house smaller covered stalls hawking clothing, jewelry and other goods, and will be open Tuesdays and Saturdays, Friedlander said.

A 4,000-square-foot commercial "food hub," a storage and distribution center for regionally farmed produce and dry goods, is the final piece of the ambitious plan. It is penciled in across the street from the main market building on real estate that's in limbo until the Sacramento redevelopment agency – like its counterparts throughout California – completes its state mandate to close down and sell its properties.

It will take a year or more for all elements of the Arden Garden Market to be up and running, said Friedlander, who hopes to start with a Saturday presence by late spring. In the meantime, he is seeking designation for the market as a nonprofit community development corporation, and applying for state and federal grants to offset the project's \$2 million to \$2.5 million price tag.

The core ideal for the market is bringing healthy food to the table at the best price, with the farmer getting the reward alongside the customers," said Friedlander, who sees his role as the project's facilitator and not its operations manager.

Retrieved January 13, 2013 from <http://www.sacbee.com/2012/12/23/5071244/areas-champion-still-committed.html>

The sum of all these developments is that, ultimately, the long neglected north end of the city of Sacramento will be eventually revitalized.

Whether the revitalization results in creating a destination and/or the increase of downtown residency needed to support downtown business will depend on public leadership.

As long as they continue their apparent infatuation with low-income housing in downtown and Richards Blvd, a majority of people, especially the elderly—one cohort who appreciate living within walking distance to shopping and entertainment—who rely on a high level of public safety, and those with disposable income, will largely continue to prefer living in the suburbs.

Yet, the great resource of our two rivers, if they can become as beautiful as their setting promises, and if public safety can be increased so that visitors feel as safe there as they now do upriver on the American, and if the wide array of recreational elements possible within a river environment are pursued, then downtown Sacramento could become a

lovely, and enjoyable prime destination for the region, while attracting national conferences and events.

Within the marketing narrative for these developments lies the imperative to embrace reality before the reality engulfs the vision in not trying to paint a picture so rosy that native Sacramentans and even newcomers, soon realize is only that, marketing.

Taking that into account, this is a dream of the future for our fair city all of us treasure and with vision, leadership, and work, it can be attained.

Society Information

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

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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

American River Parkway Preservation Society Newsletter: Issue 38 – April 2013

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Essay: *How Business Created and is Saving the Parkway*

One narrative about the founding of the American River Parkway is that it was founded by enlightened government and a local nonprofit who claims credit for leading the effort to establish the Parkway in the 1960s.

The truth is a little more complicated and began over a hundred years ago, revolving primarily around the philanthropy of local business people *pushing* local government.

In September of 1911, the Committee on Parks of the Sacramento Chamber of Commerce contracted with John Nolen's Cambridge, Massachusetts firm for a plan for Del Paso Park, and then in 1913, the Board of Park Directors contracted with him for a plan for a Park System—which was the Parkway—and that map, dated 1915, which I have seen, is housed in the Center for Sacramento History. Those contracts were followed by one in June of 1914 with the City Commission in Sacramento for City Plans.

(Nolen, J. (2005). [1927]. *New towns for old: Achievements in civic improvement in some American small towns and neighborhoods*. Amherst & Boston: University of Massachusetts Press. (pp. 184/186)

Dangermond (2006) noted:

Local residents pushed for a park system along the River, and in 1949 the City of Sacramento used \$200,000 of State funds to purchase 89 acres of parkland bordering Paradise Beach. These funds were combined with a private donation of 75 acres to purchase the land for Glenn Hall Park....

In the late 1960's, land for Goethe, Ancil Hoffman, and Discovery Parks was purchased using Federal, State, and private funds. County bond funds were then used to acquire William Pond Park and to build a pedestrian and bicycle bridge and the Effie Yeaw Nature Center. In 1980, completion of the Jedediah Smith Memorial Bridge linked existing portions of the bicycle trail."

(2006 American River Parkway Financial Need Study Update, (pp. 1-2)

Yes, it is more complicated, but we can illuminate some beginnings in relation to the first planning efforts and establishing the Parkway's anchor at the confluence of the American and Sacramento Rivers; and many of them point back to the North Sacramento Land Company (NSLC), the storied firm that celebrated its one hundred year anniversary in 2010, reported by *Sacramento Press*.

The North Sacramento Land Company celebrated 100 years in business Thursday, reflecting on its humble roots in 1910 before North Sacramento was even incorporated.

"We've survived the Wall Street crash and a few other recessions and a couple of wars, so that's a feat in itself," said Bob Slobe, the company's president. "We've always been a reasonably small company, and some of that has to do with our involvement and giving back to the community." Retrieved March 27, 2013 from http://www.sacramentoexpress.com/headline/37282/North_Sacramento_Land_Company_celebrates_100_years

As is well known by those familiar with local history, local business' "involvement and giving back to the community" anchors Sacramento from John Sutter onward, creating capital for their business and community for the public.

And so it is with the NSLC, whose donation of Camp Pollack to the Boy Scouts in the 1920s began the realization of the 1913 vision— a vision which the founder of the NSLC, Carl Johnston, was surely involved in—later enriched by NSLC's 1965 sale of 400 acres to the County, which anchored the Parkway.

Other local business people have been and are still involved, donating or selling land to build the Parkway, familiar Sacramento names like Goethe, Tiscornia, Ancil Hoffman, Deterding, but none has established the century plus continuing legacy of NSLC; and the

recent acquisition of Camp Pollack by the Sacramento Valley Conservancy—a nonprofit land trust founded by Bob Slobe—is a stunning example of, as Bob noted in comments made March 21, 2013 at the North Sacramento Chamber of Commerce event at Camp Pollack, a matter of “coming full circle.”

Over many years we have noted the involvement of the NSLC and Bob Slobe in the history of the Parkway, and here is a review of some of what we’ve wrote:

1) In our first research report in 2005 we outlined early Parkway developments.

- 1915** Parkway planning efforts begin, as noted by Dangermond (2000);
The American River Parkway was first envisioned by [Sacramento] city planners in 1915 who proposed an extensive parkway along the river. Later, in 1929 after the passage of the first state park bond act, Fredrick Law Olmstead, Jr. visited Sacramento and urged cooperative efforts towards this end among the many agencies with jurisdiction over the river area. In 1947 he updated his concept for the parkway by emphasizing the development of recreational facilities including picnic sites, and docks for pleasure craft along the river course.” (p. 1)
- 1950** “The state of California purchased 1,000 acres for the Cal Expo site and the city of Sacramento began acquiring parklands along the American River.” (ibid. pg. 1)
- 1955** Folsom and Nimbus Dams are completed.
- 1959** Sacramento County Department of Parks and Recreation created and a master plan for the Parkway is adopted.
- 1962** The first American River Parkway Plan is adopted by Sacramento County.

The American River Parkway Lower Reach Area; A Corroded Crown Jewel, Restoring the Luster, A Conceptual & Policy Primer, A Public Report from the American River Parkway Preservation Society: September 25, 2005 (p. 17)
Retrieved March 15, 2013 from <http://arpps.org/report.pdf>

A leading advocate for the Lower Reach and the 2004 recipient of our Parkway Advocate Award is Robert J. Slobe, who noted in an e-mail, that the American River Parkway began in the Lower Reach:

Our company [North Sacramento Land Company] owned 440 acres of the American River Parkway in the North Sacramento area from 1910 to 1986. We supported the effort to form the Parkway and embraced the principles of permanent protection along the River. Its very dedication took place on our property. We provided no-fee access across our land (approximately 10% of the Parkway trail) from 1965 on. Unfortunately, from the day the County of Sacramento took control of the property, it turned into a cesspool of camping, dumping, crime and destruction of habitat on an unprecedented scale. Despite protests from our company AND the

impoverished community of North Sacramento, the County did virtually nothing to stop this disaster of international proportions and it continues to this day. It is filthy, unsafe and unusable.” (July 26, 2004)

A recent interview by Wiley (2005), with founding County Park’s Chief, William Pond, acknowledged “Father of the Parkway”, who also noted the Parkway’s beginning in the Lower Reach:

Discovery Park was the anchor for the parkway, first with 40 acres owned by the Corey family and then a similar piece owned by the Tiscornia family at the river's mouth.

The rest of the land was held in relatively large blocks by people who favored the idea of a parkway. The owners of the North Sacramento Land Company, for instance, gave the county a moveable easement across their land while the rest of the project was assembled.” (n.p.) Wiley, W. (July 22, 2005). Force behind river parkway still proud after all these years. *Sacramento Bee*. Retrieved July 22, 2005, from www.sacbee.com

(*Ibid.* p. 25)

2) In a 2007 E-Letter we noted the efforts of early Parkway visionaries.

The first map of the area that contained an outline of the Parkway that I’m aware of—and preserved in the local city/county archive—was done by John Nolen (1869-1937, the first American to identify himself exclusively as a town and city planner) in 1915 under a contract with the Sacramento Board of Park Directors....”

Carl & Myrtle Johnston, who founded the North Sacramento Land Company, often drove Sacramento County Park’s first Director William Pond, ‘Father of the Parkway’, around their land in their red Cadillac convertible while discussing their shared vision of what the Parkway could become, and it was on their land where the Parkway’s original dedication occurred.

William Pond, whose primary role in the formation of the Parkway is very well-known, made the observation during a lengthy discussion with one of our board members last year about the Parkway’s early history, that he felt the Johnston family’s help in obtaining the initial easements through privately-owned land along the river were a major factor that made the Parkway a reality.

Carl and Myrtle Johnston were the grandparents of Bob Slobe, whose passionate Parkway advocacy is honored through our annual award, the Slobe Parkway Advocate Award.

Bob's family agreed to sell Sacramento County the first 400 acres that began the American River Parkway, with the understanding that the county would provide the kind of stewardship that marked his family's ownership of the land."

(American River Parkway Preservation Society, E-Letter #61: August 10, 2007, Early Parkway Visionaries) Retrieved March 20, 2013 from http://arpps.org/ARPPS_Annual_Report_2007.pdf (p. 58-59)

While government clearly played an implementing role managing donated property—and in some cases purchasing property—from philanthropic Sacramento business families; the stewardship has been spotty, and in the North Sacramento area, abysmal; and while we continue to hope that the new County strategy regarding illegal camping, will result in a safe and clean Parkway in North Sacramento, there is really no guarantee, given past performance, that it will be maintained for the long term.

That is why we will continue to call for nonprofit management of the Parkway through the formation of a Joint Powers Authority of the Parkway adjacent local governments and the creation of a new nonprofit, or contract with an existing one, to provide daily management and supplementary fundraising.

The efforts of the Sacramento Valley Conservancy (SVC) may well be the vital engine that saves the Parkway by revitalizing its most threatened part while modeling what can be done throughout the Parkway, as noted on their website:

SVC facilitated the acquisition of Camp Pollock by the State Lands Commission in January 2013 and is managing the site in accordance with the American River Parkway Plan.



A glorious feature to Camp Pollock is the historic 1924 lodge that can be rented by the general public for special events, office retreats or other private occasions. The Lodge can hold up to 250 guests. Only pre-prepared food and cold food can be served from the kitchen at this time. Outdoor barbeque pit and lawn area available when renting the historic Lodge.

Unique to Sacramento, one of the few locations to camp along the American River Parkway is the Youth Group Camp Ground for Scout Troops, youth clubs and other youth groups. Camp Pollock offers primitive group camping for youth only, hosting up to 200 campers on its vast property. Yes, both youth group camping and the Lodge can be rented simultaneously for an unforgettable experience!

Found very close to Camp Pollock is the Jedediah Smith Trail, also known as the American River Parkway, stretching 32 miles upstream to Nimbus and Folsom Dam. The trail is considered one of the longest paved purpose-built bike trails in the country. Cyclist, joggers, walkers, bird watchers, plein air artists, hikers, photographers and equestrians use the multipurpose trails. The American River Parkway can lead you to the Fish Hatchery, Sacramento State University, State Fairgrounds, Effie Yeaw Nature Center and many public recreational areas. Wildlife is abundant and can be spotted when traveling through the major metropolitan area. How will you use the trails near Camp Pollock?

Less than 10 minutes from downtown Sacramento, Camp Pollock is nearby many attractions including the State Capitol, underground tours of Sacramento, historic Old Town, the Crocker Art Museum, Discovery Park, Sutter's Landing Park, the Railroad Museum and the California Auto Museum. The Gold Rush history influences much of Sacramento's history. Gold was discovered along the American River in 1849, just 50 miles up-river from Camp Pollock!

The American River supplies a watery migration almost year round. Steelhead (Nov-May), Shad (May) Striped Bass (Jun-Jul) Chinook Salmon (Oct). Camp Pollock fish trail will take you to the water's edge. Depending upon the fish species, a fish can weigh 16-59 pounds! Try your luck at landing a big fish at Camp Pollock!

Camp Pollock will soon offer an interpretive Native Plant Garden in front of the Historic Lodge, educating visitors to the Riparian forest that surrounds Camp Pollock. On the 11 acres of Camp Pollock, oaks, willows, California Buckeyes, Alders, Firs, Pines and Cottonwoods enclose the group campgrounds, creating a shading environment. Blackberry bushes can be found in riparian areas too. Ripe berries are ready for picking in mid-Summer!

Retrieved March 26, 2013 from
<http://www.sacramentovalleyconservancy.org/camp-pollock.asp>

The effort of private business acting with social responsibility while making a profit, an example of social enterprise at its finest—whether it is the creation of the beautiful suburban communities bordering the Parkway, or the recent assumption of daily management of Gibson Ranch Park by a forprofit organization—is why it is important that private business continue to play a leading role in Parkway preservation, protection, and strengthening.

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Gibson Ranch Park Update

I asked Doug Ose for an update on Gibson Ranch Park last month and here is his reply, and so true about dealing with the illegal transient issue, you have to keep after it.

We've dealt so far successfully with illegal transient residency at the eastern edges of Dry Creek. It takes a sustained effort.

Gibson Ranch (GR) is doing much better. Last year we had over 100,000 visitors. The park is open every day, has clean bathrooms, is regularly maintained, and is a safe place. We have worked effectively with the County Parks Department to refine our program offerings to address consumer demand from the public. We've grown the equestrian operation by 25% since October 1, 2012. We've established a children's entertainment area for birthday parties and pony rides and just plain old fashioned fun. In response to interest in the community we have organized a monthly yard sale (first Saturday of each month). We continue having fun runs, picnics, weddings, barbecues, reunions, corporate annual picnics, Civil War Days (first weekend of May), Girl Scout events, Boy Scout camporees, etc etc. We have rejuvenated the livestock operation (cattle and chickens and sheep) that you see on a working ranch. We are currently developing a garden area that recycles our horse manure for long term soil enhancement. We created an enclosed dog park. We've been working with Sac Metro Fire to reduce fire fuel and risk that has built up over the last two decades along Dry Creek. We have worked cooperatively with the nearby Cherry Island soccer facility to provide playing fields for regional tournaments. We've done all of the above without using taxpayer funds; not a bad record overall. Our annual revenue now exceeds \$400,000 though we are not yet profitable. We continue to try new things, and we continue to have some successes and

some failures. We spend each day trying to make things better. (Doug Ose, Email 6/28/13)

Essay: Sacramento Subsidized Housing & Entrepreneurial Government

As noted in this article from *Multihousing News*, housing for low income people needing subsidies in Sacramento County is threatened.

Sacramento, Calif.—According to “Out of Reach 2012,” a National Low Income Housing Coalition report, 54 percent of renters in California’s Sacramento County can’t afford to rent a typical two-bedroom apartment. Only 46 percent of county renters earn at least the \$19.63 an hour, or \$40,840 annually, required for such an apartment.

Affordable housing advocates say the lack of available affordable housing in the county has profoundly impacted quality of life. “It puts pressure on our neighborhoods, because people are doubling and tripling up in apartments,” Sacramento|Yolo Mutual Housing Association CEO Rachel Iskow tells *MHN*.

Retrieved April 15, 2012 from <http://www.multihousingnews.com/news/sacramento-county-facing-affordable-housing-crisis/1004052178.html>

Mercy Housing, however, just completed a new subsidized housing facility in Sacramento providing 150 units. <https://www.mercyhousing.org/page.aspx?pid=677>

Jane Jacobs, in her seminal book, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*, which Wikipedia describes as “one of the most influential books in the history of American city planning” Retrieved March 28, 2013 from http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jane_Jacobs , wrote about subsidized housing.

The thicket of confusion about the workings of cities which has grown around and upon the subsidized housing project notion is no longer just in our minds. By now it is also a thicket of legislative, financial, architectural and analytical devices applied to cities.

Our cities contain people too poor to pay for the quality of shelter that our public conscience (quite rightly, I think) tells us they should have. Furthermore, in many cities the sheer supply of dwellings is too small to accommodate the population without overcrowding, and the quantity of additional dwellings needed does not necessarily match up with the direct ability of the people concerned to pay for them. Because of these reasons, we need subsidies for at least some portion of city dwellings.

These seem like simple and straightforward reasons for dwelling subsidies. They also leave a large leeway as to how subsidies might be applied, both financially and physically.

But let us see how involuted and rigid these reasons can become—have become—by giving another seemingly simple but slightly different answer to the question: What is the reason for subsidizing dwellings in cities?

The answer we long ago accepted went like this: The reason we need dwelling subsidies is to provide for that part of the population which cannot be housed by private enterprise.

And, the answer went on, so long as this is necessary anyway, the subsidized dwellings should embody and demonstrate the principles of good housing and planning.

This is a terrible answer, with terrible consequences. A twist of semantics suddenly presents us with *people who cannot be housed by private enterprise*, and hence must presumably be housed by someone else. Yet in real life, these are people whose housing needs are not in themselves peculiar and thus outside the ordinary province and capability of private enterprise, like the housing needs of prisoners, sailors at sea or the insane. Perfectly ordinary housing needs can be provided for almost anybody by private enterprise. What is peculiar about these people is merely that *they cannot pay for it*.

Quicker than the eye can see however, “people who cannot be housed by private enterprise” have been turned into a statistical group with peculiar shelter requirements, like prisoners, on the basis of one statistic: their income. To carry out the rest of the answer, this statistical group becomes a special collection of guinea pigs for Utopians to mess around with.

Even if the Utopians had had schemes that made sense socially in cities, it is wrong to set one part of the population segregated by income, apart in its own neighborhoods with its own different scheme of community. Separate but equal makes nothing but trouble in a society where people are not taught that caste is a part of the divine order. Separate but better is an innate contradiction whenever the separateness is enforced by one form of interiority.

The notion that the fact of a subsidy required that these people be housed by someone other than private enterprise and normal landlords was an aberration in itself. The government does not take over the landlordship or ownership or management of subsidized farms or of subsidized airlines. Government does not, as a rule, take over the running of museums that receive subsidies from public funds. It does not take over the ownership or management of voluntary community hospitals whose construction is today frequently made possible by government subsidies.

Public housing stands apart from other, logically analogous forms of capitalism and of government partnership which we have evolved; it incorporates the belief that government must take over a facility *purely* because government contributes subsidy funds.

Because we lack any ideology that puts government as the landlord and owner of public housing in context with the rest of our national life, we have no sense about how to contend with such a thing. The bureaucracies that build and run these places—always in terror lest their capricious masters, the taxpayers, find fault with the tenants’ housekeeping, morals or standards of amenity and blame the bureaucrats—are in some things impossibly arrogant and in others impossibly timid.

Because the government is a landlord, it is in potential competition with private landlords, and to prevent the competition from being unfair, cartel arrangements are

necessary. The population itself must be cartelized, with people moved from the province of one cartel to another on the basis of the money they make.

The answer that these are people “who cannot be housed by private enterprise” was absolutely disastrous for cities too. Quicker than the eye can see, the city as an organism has disappeared. It becomes, in theory, a static collection of sites for planting these sorted-out sets of statistics.

From the beginning, the whole conception was irrelevant to the nature of the problem, irrelevant to the plain financial need of the people concerned, irrelevant to the needs and workings of cities, irrelevant to the rest of our economic system, and even irrelevant to the meaning of home as it has evolved otherwise in our tradition.

The best that can be said of the conception is that it did afford a chance to experiment with some physical and social planning theories which did not pan out. (pp. 419-422)

Jacobs, J. (1961). *The death and life of great American cities*. (50th Anniversary Edition, 2011) New York: Modern Library.

An article from 2009, *Public Housing and Rental Subsidies*, by Howard Husock of the Manhattan Institute provides updated information about the issue, including this paragraph:

Taken together, both housing vouchers and public housing contribute to the creation of what might be called "frozen cities." Subsidized tenants remain stuck in public housing projects and Section 8 buildings for years, even decades. In addition, the actual buildings that subsidized tenants inhabit remain tied to one particular low-value use, which prevents the affected areas of cities from enjoying the natural changes and upgrading over time that other neighborhoods experience. Neighborhoods with subsidized housing do not get renewed, and they offer fewer opportunities for individuals to improve their lives and their surroundings.

Retrieved April 17, 2012 from <http://www.manhattaninstitute.org/html/miarticle.htm?id=5742>

An article from the July 2012 issue of *City Journal* notes a New York innovation in subsidized housing.

Many will doubtless regard with skepticism the Bloomberg administration’s newly announced “micro-unit” pilot program. The administration is asking developers to submit proposals for the design and construction of an apartment building on a city-owned site in Manhattan; the city will adjust zoning restrictions there, allowing the winning developer to construct a building full of tiny, 275-square-foot apartments. In a country where plenty of homeowners have *garages* far larger than the proposed apartments—which would be not much bigger than an ATM lobby—there will be a tendency to see the micro-units as novelties similar to gourmet food carts, Central Park bike-rental wars, \$500 Broadway tickets, and other aspects of life unique to the Big Apple. Instead, we should view these little apartments as a serious and significant step forward in the city’s housing policy. The Bloomberg administration is reinventing affordable housing in terms that make sense: denser and cheaper, instead of expensive and subsidized. And in doing so, the city is mapping the way toward ensuring that it continues to be a magnet for the talented young newcomers it needs.

Retrieved July 18, 2012 from <http://www.city-journal.org/2012/eon0711hh.html>

In a *Wall Street Journal* article, “Look Who’s Embracing Privatization—Big City Democrats”, Saturday, July 7, 2012, page A-11, it’s noted that:

Heavyweights like Chicago’s [Mayor] Rahm Emanuel are going around public agencies and unions to improve schools, roads, parks and more...

Other prominent Democrats are joining Mr. Emanuel in embracing privatization or nonprofit funding for the countless nonessential services that drain city coffers.

Los Angeles Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa...last year handed over the Northeast Valley Animal Care Center, which would have cost taxpayers \$3 million per year to operate, to a nonprofit animal-rescue group. Mr. Villaraigosa is now in negotiations with the nonprofit Greater Los Angeles Zoo Association and Botanical Gardens, which received over \$14 million from the city last year.

As is becoming more evident each year, we have reached that point in our development as a society in America—and perhaps even in the rest of the industrialized world—where the ability of government to implement public policy for the common good is being overshadowed by the effectiveness of private enterprise to provide the same.

Whether it is the national example of the burgeoning private sector space program to local programs like the nonprofit management of the Sacramento Zoo and the forprofit management of the formerly County Parks Department operated Gibson Ranch, the trend towards nongovernmental management to increase efficiency and ease the strain on the currently overburdened public funding is growing.

This is an advance for efficiency and equity, and many public administration thinkers are welcoming the emergence of a trend they’ve long advocated. Significant among them is the seminal and visionary 1992 book co-authored by a local city manager, *Reinventing Government: How the Entrepreneurial Spirit is Transforming the Public Sector*, by David Osborne & Ted Gaebler. Mr. Gaebler is the city manager of Rancho Cordova, a city, by the way, that still retains its A+ financial rating; and as Mayor Linda Budge noted this month:

"To my knowledge, Rancho Cordova and Citrus Heights are the only two communities around (here) that have always had a balanced budget and a small reserve,"

Retrieved July 1, 2013 from <http://www.sacbee.com/2013/07/01/5536128/this-week-rancho-cordova-turns.html#storylink=cpy>

An important book which addresses the issue is *Bureaucracy: What Government Agencies Do and Why They Do It*, by James Q. Wilson (1989).

If the preceding chapters have made nothing else clear, they should have persuaded the reader that government bureaus are less likely than private agencies to operate efficiently, at least with respect to the main goal of the organization. There are three reasons for this. First, government executives are less able than their private counterparts to *define* an efficient course of action. The public officials must serve a variety of contextual goals as well as their main or active goal and they are given little

guidance as to what might constitute an acceptable tradeoff among these goals. Second, public executives have weaker incentives than do private executives to *find* an efficient course of action. The former have no property rights in the agency; they are not, in the language of economists, “residual claimants” who can put into their own pockets the savings achieved by greater efficiency. Third, public executives have less authority than private ones to *impose* an efficient course of action. Legislatures usually refuse to give to agency managers the power to hire and fire or to raise and allocate funds. Therefore, when it is important that executives have the ability, authority, and incentive to act efficiently, government agencies will not perform as well as their private counterparts. (pp. 349-350)

Contracting out, as we advocate for the Parkway, is growing—especially at the federal level—as evident from Starling (2011).

Scope: Today all sorts of governments are contracting for all sorts of goods and services. The public sector contracts with the private and nonprofit sectors for the design, construction, and maintenance of roads and bridges; for the production of nuclear weapons; for the management of prisons and the delivery of services within prisons; for information technology; for the management of public schools; for educating, training, and placing welfare recipients and displaced workers in jobs; for child support enforcement; and for a host of other social services. Eighty percent of the largest cities in the United States contract out vehicle towing, and half contract out solid-waste collection. Over the past several decades, as society has debated government’s make-or-buy decision, public agencies have shifted more toward the *buy* alternative. Consider:

- Federal contractors outnumbered federal employees by more than 2 to 1. Between 1990 and 2001, federal-level contracting of services rose 24 percent in real terms.
- Today probably between 15 and 20 percent of all spending at the state level is contracted out. Between 1996 and 2001, state contracts to private firms rose 65 percent.

The first advantage of contracting is greater efficiency. This is not always the case, but when it is the reasons are not hard to find. Marketplace competition produces goods and services efficiently, whereas nonmonopolies (like government bureaucracies) don’t face the same competitive pressures to decrease costs and increase consumer value.

A second advantage is that contracting frees public administrators from routine details. As government begins to get out of the “doing,” it becomes freer to concentrate its efforts on differentiating public needs from public wants; to sort out who can do what most effectively in society; to consider new approaches to long-standing problems; and to discover and disclose inconsistencies or overlapping among a program’s interacting parts.

A third advantage is that contracts may increase flexibility. In some circumstances, it is easier for a contractor to start up new programs than it is for a government bureaucracy. (G. Starling, (2011). *Managing the Public Sector* (9th Edition). Boston: Wadsworth. pp. 388-389)

In the Sacramento region, some governmental privatization is happening and we can be reassured that those participating entrepreneurial governments—contrasted with those in chaotic freefall—are becoming more efficient and equitable.

Society Information

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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