

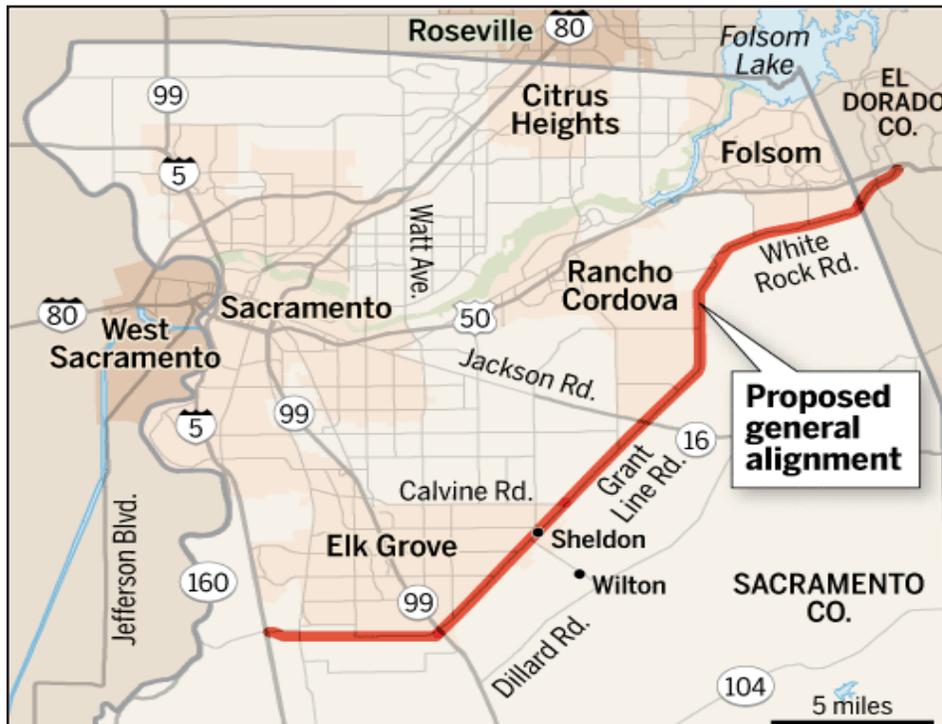
The 
BASS LAKE BULLETIN

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The proposed general alignment of the Elk Grove-El Dorado Hills Connector as recently approved by the Connector Joint Powers Authority (maps courtesy Connector JPA).

CONNECTOR ROUTE APPROVED

For the second time in five months, area elected officials have adopted the general alignment for a 34-mile beltway linking El Dorado County, Rancho Cordova and Elk Grove. The five-member board of the Capital SouthEast Connector Joint Powers Authority (JPA) gave its blessing to the route at its meeting on March 7, moving the project that has undergone years of discussion and reviews into a new phase.

The plan now needs the approval of the five local governments that make up the JPA: El Dorado and Sacramento counties, and the cities of Elk Grove, Folsom and Rancho Cordova. Each of those jurisdictions will be asked to approve the general alignment for their portion of the Connector and to include the project in their general plans.

Then project planners will begin the process of identifying rights of way, seeking needed federal and state permits, scouting funding sources and securing financing.

Toll roads in some areas could be among the fundraising possibilities.

The goal of the JPA is to have significant portions of the facility open and operating by 2020, according to Tom Zlotkowski, JPA executive director. The cost over that eight-year timeline is expected to be about \$510 million in today's dollars, he said. The cost, once projected at hundreds of millions of dollars more, has fallen due to the recession and other factors.

In the near term, 2 to 5 years, Connector improvements are first likely to be segments at each end of the beltway. Near-term improvements could take place where design and planning has advanced, or where funding is expected to become available sooner. Improvements on the Connector alignment in the eastern portion of the Connector, from Kiefer Boulevard to the eastern project terminus at Highway 50 and Silva Valley Park-

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SHINGLE BILLBOARDS ON HWY 50 SHOT DOWN

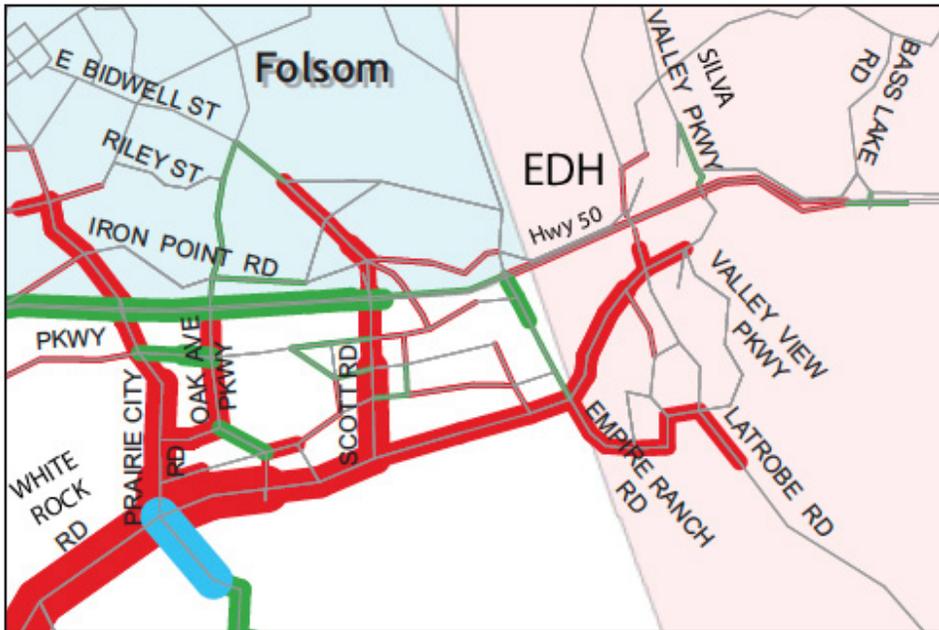
After a lengthy hearing on three new billboard signs proposed along Highway 50, the El Dorado County Planning Commission voted two of them down and will bring back the third for another hearing. The two signs voted down were proposed for Shingle Springs. Consideration of the third sign, proposed for Cameron Park, will be taken up at a later meeting.

The illuminated signs, each 14 by 48 feet, would have been visible from Highway 50 and were proposed by John D. Pereira. Two were slated for Shingle Springs and the other in Cameron Park. In Shingle Springs, one sign was planned to be on the north side of Sunset Lane and the other on the north side of Mother Lode Drive. The one in Cameron Park would have been located on the north side of Coach Lane.

The hearing on the signs was heated at times and interrupted twice by closed sessions to discuss legal issues associated with the project.

Residents Dyana Anderly and Don Ricketts filed appeals to the sign permits. Anderly, a former city planner, testified that the negative declaration didn't address the impact of the three signs and the applicant was not exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act. She and Ricketts also appealed the claim by the applicant that the sign permit was deemed approved on Dec. 30, 2011, due to the alleged failure of the county to meet statutory time limits. She asked that permits for all three signs be denied.

(continued on page 2)



Map showing the eastern terminus of the proposed Elk-Grove - EDH Connector in Folsom and El Dorado Hills. The widths of the road lines generally indicate the level of anticipated traffic per the JPA environmental report.

ELK GROVE-EDH CONNECTOR *(continued)*

way, have been identified as priority near-term improvements by local jurisdictions, regional agencies, and private developers. These improvements include widening of Grant Line Road, widening and realigning White Rock Road between Sunrise Boulevard and El Dorado Hills, and construction of a new Highway 50 interchange at Silva Valley Parkway. These improvements would relieve existing congestion on the roadway and divert traffic from congested segments of US Highway 50.

As the traffic analysis for the Program EIR was developed, El Dorado County and citizen's groups in the El Dorado Hills area expressed concern over how traffic will flow to and from the easternmost segment of the Connector project. The Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP), as well as the El Dorado County General Plan, and the proposed Folsom Sphere of Influence (SOI) Specific Plan, include assumptions that several transportation improvements will be implemented over the next 25 years to increase both the number and capacity of the roadway connections between US 50 and White Rock Road as this region develops. The Connector Program EIR analysis assumes that these roadway improvements are part of the future transportation system (without project conditions) and will be implemented in the year identified in the MTP.

However, El Dorado County expressed concern that some of these roadway improvements may not occur in a timely manner and thus could adversely affect traffic

volumes on White Rock Road and Latrobe Road through El Dorado Hills. Specifically, El Dorado County requested more information on how the planned connections through the Folsom SOI, as well as the proposed West Access to the El Dorado Hills Business Park, will feed traffic to and from the Connector.

To address these issues, the JPA coordinated with El Dorado County Department of Transportation and the City of Folsom to evaluate future traffic conditions in the El Dorado Hills and Folsom SOI area. The JPA conducted an analysis to (1) provide more information on future travel patterns on travel to and from the eastern portion of the Connector and (2) to determine how the timing of roadway improvements will impact traffic patterns and volumes.

It is important to note that the proposed Connector project would upgrade White Rock Road between Grant Line Road and the El Dorado County line from a "thoroughfare" to an "expressway" facility but it would not change the planned improvements to White Rock Road in El Dorado County from those anticipated in the County's General Plan.

The beltway is to be at least six lanes wide in some locations, such as the Highway 99 interchange at Grant Line Road. Much of the beltway, however, is expected to be four lanes wide. There will be some stoplights along the 34-mile route, and there will be stretches of expressway. ~

BILLBOARDS *(continued)*

Anderly's testimony was followed by a stream of residents who opposed the signs in Shingle Springs. Most of those protesting did so because of their visual impact. They pointed out that the signs would be located in a scenic corridor and they didn't want more signs that distract from the views of the foothills. Some were also concerned that if these signs were approved, more would follow. The commission also received a petition signed by over 200 people in opposition to the signs.

A spokesperson for the El Dorado County Art Council testified that the billboards are contrary to the visual and aesthetic values that the Art Council and other entities are promoting in the county. She said the signs would damage the viewshed and the council wanted to keep the rural integrity of the county intact.

In response, the applicant, John David Pereira, claimed that the Planning Commission did not have jurisdiction to hear an appeal, and he was not waiving his right to put up the signs regardless of the decision by the Planning Commission.

Pereira also said he was opposed to the conditions imposed on the special-use permit by staff. Staff had recommended that the signs be reduced in size from 672 to 480 square feet and that the permit only be granted for seven years and then come up for renewal.

In the end, members of the Planning Commission voted against the Shingle Springs signs. Commissioner Alan Tolhurst said he couldn't support the signs because of their visual impact and because of the objections from the community. The rest of the commissioners indicated that an EIR was needed before the signs could be considered further.

The final motion by the commission was to conceptually deny the special-use permits for the Shingle Springs signs and uphold the appeal filed by Dyana Anderly and Don Ricketts. In a separate decision, the commission voted to continue consideration of the sign proposed for Cameron Park. The applicant was asked to prepare a visual simulation that would show how the sign would look and to return for a hearing. ~





PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Hello Everyone,

I am happy to say that the Bulletin has gotten a few brickbats from both camps about the EID rate increase. I figure that if both sides are upset with us, then we must be doing a good job of being fair. In the long run, it is the ratepayers who must decide whether the rates go up or not. In lieu of an article this month, see page 3 for links to the arguments for and against, and a form letter to use if you wish to protest the rate increase.

You may also notice the absence of the propane report in this month's issue. A combination of things has conspired to keep propane prices low, including weak demand due to the mild winter, and a low price for natural gas (from which propane is a byproduct) because of increased production. So it seemed redundant to report continuing low prices. By the way, did you know that California is second in the nation (behind Michigan) in the consumption of residential propane?

Plans are in the making for this year's Clarksville Day, presented by the Clarksville Region Historical Society, which will be held on May 5th. The society is dedicated to preservation and education about old Clarksville, the forerunner of El Dorado Hills. This year may be the last year that Clarksville Day is celebrated in the old ghost town for some time. Construction of the Silva Valley interchange this summer will block the entrance to old Clarksville for a couple of years.

Sincerely,
John Thomson
 President

TRADITIONAL SYMBOLS OF ST. PATRICK'S DAY

St. Patrick's Day is a holiday known for parades, shamrocks and all things Irish. From Shamrocks to the Irish music, let's see how symbols we now associate with St. Patrick's Day came to be, and learn about those that are purely an American invention.

Shamrock

According to Christian legend, St. Patrick used the three-leafed clover to illustrate the doctrine of the Trinity to his pagan audience in Ireland. However, this story did not appear until more than 1,000 years after St. Patrick's death.



In ancient Ireland, the Celtic people revered the shamrock as a sacred plant because it symbolized the rebirth of spring. By the 17th century, when the English began to seize Irish land and suppress Irish language and religion, the shamrock became a symbol of Irish nationalism.

Leprechauns

The diminutive creatures we know as leprechauns were known in ancient Irish as "lobaircin," meaning "small-bodied fellow." Belief in leprechauns probably stems from Celtic belief in fairies, tiny creatures who could use their magical powers for good or evil. In Celtic folklore, the lobaircin were cranky fairies who mended the shoes of the other fairies. They were also mischievous and delighted in trickery, which they used to guard their fabled treasure.



The cheerful friendly version of the leprechaun known to us today is based in large part on Walt Disney's 1959 film *Darby O'Gill and the Little People*. It quickly evolved into a symbol of St. Patrick's Day and Ireland in general.

The Snake

It has long been recounted that, during his mission in Ireland, St. Patrick once stood on a hilltop (which is now called Croagh Patrick), and with only a wooden staff by his side, banished all the snakes from Ireland.



In fact, the island nation was never home to any snakes. The "banishing of the snakes" was really a metaphor for the eradication of pagan ideology from Ireland and the triumph of Christianity. Within 200 years

of Patrick's arrival, Ireland was completely Christianized.

Corned Beef and Cabbage

Corned beef and cabbage is the traditional meal enjoyed by many on St. Patrick's Day, but only half of it is truly Irish. Cabbage has long been a staple of the Irish diet, but it was



traditionally served with Irish bacon, not corned beef. The

corned beef was substituted for bacon by Irish immigrants to the Americas around the turn of the century who could not afford the real thing. They learned about the cheaper alternative from their Jewish neighbors.

Irish Music

Music is often associated with St. Patrick's Day, and Irish culture in general. From ancient days of the Celts, music has always been an important part of Irish life. The Celts had an oral culture, where religion, legend and history were passed from one generation to the next by way of stories and songs. After being conquered by the English, and forbidden to speak their own language, the Irish, like other oppressed peoples, turned to music to help them remember important events and hold on to their heritage and history. As it often stirred emotion and helped to galvanize people, Irish music was outlawed by the English. ~



EID RATE INCREASE INFORMATION LINKS

Here are some links to websites where you may obtain information about the pending El Dorado Irrigation rate increases, and a copy of the rate protest letter. The final hearing on the rate increases will be held on March 26, 2012. Click on the link.

- El Dorado Irrigation District
- Fix EID
- Paul Raveling
- Protest letter form



FURNACE REPAIR SCAMS ALLEGED

Bass Lake Action Committee has received several complaints about furnace repair companies recommending allegedly bogus furnace repairs. The furnace repair industry has its fair share of fraudsters just like any other, but when homeowners know how to protect themselves from scams, they lose their ability to turn a profit. That is why we should all take note of these three common furnace repair scams before we have our furnaces serviced this winter season.

Scam #1: Demanding Upfront Payment. A common scam that many illegitimate contractors will use involves convincing the homeowner to pay in full for services before they are performed. The serviceman may tell you that he needs a certain amount of money right when he walks in the door, and then after tinkering around with the furnace, demand payment for repairs before actually fixing anything. Once payment is received, the serviceman will pretend that they have to order a part or come back later to finish the work. After the serviceman leaves, he is never heard from again.



Scam #2: Diagnosing Several Failed Components. When a furnace breaks, there is usually one, maybe two, problems wrong with the system. Not six or seven! Some scam artists will try to convince you that the furnace has thousands and thousands of dollars worth of damage, but in reality it doesn't. The scammer is just trying to get as much money out of you as possible or trying to convince you that you are in need of a new furnace.

Scam #3: Non-existent Heat Exchanger Crack. A cracked heat exchanger is usually a death sentence for a furnace. The heat exchanger is the barrier between noxious combustion gases like carbon monoxide and the air that circulates through the home. When the integrity of this part becomes compromised by a crack, the costly heat exchanger must be replaced or the entire unit will be swapped out. When a scam artist says a heat exchanger is cracked, they know it is almost a guaranteed sale. They take advantage of the fact that no person in their right mind would operate a unit that could be leaking carbon monoxide into the home.

The serviceman may show you a prerecorded video of a cracked heat exchanger, and tell you that it is a recording from your furnace. He may even just try to get you to take his word for it that there is indeed a crack, but what you should do is get a second opinion. Find another company that comes highly recommended and have them take a look. You may have to suffer a little while longer without heat, but if the crack doesn't exist it will be well worth it!

Keep an eye out for these fraudulent tactics, and you will be better protected from scams this winter season. Always remember that if something sounds fishy, it probably is, and when in doubt always get a second opinion. Stay warm this winter, and keep your money where it belongs: in your pocket! ~

Bass Lake Action Committee
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BLAC SETS APRIL, MAY 2012 BOARD MEETING DATES

The April BLAC Board meeting will be held at the home of Tasha and Louis Camacho, 2076 Summer Drive (Woodridge), El Dorado Hills, on April 2, 2012, at 7:00 PM. No speaker is scheduled.

The May BLAC Board meeting will be held at the home of Dee and Denny Olberding 4068 Kirkwood Drive (Woodridge), El Dorado Hills, on May 7, 2012, at 7:00 PM. No speaker is scheduled.

All BLAC members are cordially invited to attend all BLAC meetings. For further information regarding our meetings, please contact John Thomson, 530-677-3039. ~

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St. Patrick's Day is here, you see.
We'll pick some shamrocks, one, two, three.
We'll count the leaves and look them over,
And maybe find a four-leafed clover.

I'll sew green buttons on my vest,
Green for St. Patrick is the best.

I'll wear a green hat, very high,
And dance a jig—at least I'll try!

- Author Unknown