



BASS LAKE BULLETIN

Vol. XIII No. 6

The Voice of the Bass Lake Community

June 2015

www.basslakeaction.org



LOCAL BASS LAKE ROAD PARK STALLED

What seemed like a sure plan to construct a public 11.5-acre sports park is tied up until the future of another Parker Development property is made certain.

At its April monthly meeting, Area Planning Advisory Committee (APAC) members favored plans for a multi-use park to be located on Village J5, a parcel of Parker Development-owned land at Sienna Ridge Drive and Bass Lake Road. That land would be given to the El Dorado Hills Community Services District (CSD) as part of Parker's obligation to provide parks and playing fields.

However, the question of what would happen to the access road to Sellwood Park complicated the matter.

The access road runs across a portion of Village J5-Lot H that was earlier proposed to be the site of a joint use by the Rescue Union School District (RUSD) and the CSD, for a combination school and park.

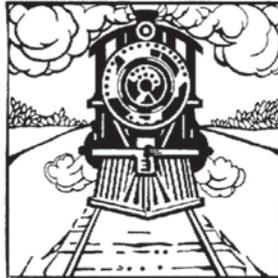
However, RUSD instead purchased most of the Bass Lake property previously owned by El Dorado Irrigation District (EID), and the CSD accepted the park site in Village J5 across Bass Lake Road.

Sellwood Park sits on the Bass Lake property now owned by RUSD. Historically, the CSD leased Sellwood Park from the EID, and maintained the park.

RUSD superintendent David Swart said it would be years before a school site is built, and he has no intention of disrupting Sellwood Park's use in the meantime.

Access to Sellwood Park now crosses the portions of Lot H which were proposed to

(continued on page 2)



SUPERVISORS HEAR RAIL CORRIDOR ALTERNATIVES

It's 31 miles of bad road from Missouri Flat to East Bidwell Street in Folsom. Actually, it's 31 miles of some good and some bad road, but it's been 20 years of bad blood between the "trail people and the train guys." That's how El Dorado County Transportation Commission's Dan Bolster described the "rails-versus-trails paralysis" that has kept much of the Sacramento-Placerville Transportation Corridor undeveloped or underdeveloped for two decades. Over the years and throughout many often rancorous public meetings, "trail people and train guys" has become a common descriptor and no longer used with a sneer by each side.

Bolster introduced a slide presentation on May 12 to the El Dorado County Board of Supervisors, showing a number of alternatives for improving and increasing the public's use of the corridor. He described the land which features the El Dorado Trail and historic railroading infrastructure as a "31-mile linear park."

Citing "a lot of angst" associated with the past, present and future of the corridor, Bolster characterized how the differing views have persisted. "People feel that if they don't hold on really tight, they're going to lose something really valuable," he said.

Adrian Engel, a consultant and engineer with the Echelon Transportation Group, led the presentation and clarified early on, "I'm not proposing segments or projects, but a high-level look at alternatives" for the county to consider for the corridor. The project's goal is basically the greatest good for

(continued on page 3)



MAILBOX VANDALS HIT CAMERON PARK

The El Dorado County Sheriff's Office responded to four reports of vandalized mailboxes with possible mail theft last month.

Deputies responded to the first call at 7:20 a.m. near Tourmaline Way and Spinal Circle in Cameron Park, a press release stated. There, they found the rear doors pried off of a dozen mailboxes. On Tourmaline and Hastings Way, a second cluster mailbox was found in similar condition.

They then responded to the 2800 block of Aquamarine Circle. The rear doors of a third cluster mailbox were pried open; another dozen mailboxes affected.

A fourth report led deputies to Buckhorn and Starbuck Road. Dispatch was notified at 8:46 a.m. that the rear panel of a cluster mailbox was found pried or peeled off.

With no information on what was in the mailboxes at the time, deputies have been unable to determine the extent of the theft — if anything was taken at all.

EDSO is asking anyone who may see a person or vehicle near any mailboxes that seems out of place to contact the Sheriff's Office at 530-621-5655 or send it a message at edso.org by selecting the Anonymous Crime Tip tab on the left side of the page. EDSO also warned that citizens should be diligent about mail and report any suspicious activity.

The mailbox incidents were similar to those perpetrated in El Dorado Hills earlier this year. Then several mailboxes were vandalized in Woodridge and the Hills of El Dorado, and an unknown quantity of mail may have been stolen. ~

Credit: Cole Mayer, Mountain Democrat



PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Hello All,

Road projects are again on the move, and I suspect that they will impact those of us who live along Bass Lake Road.

Reports are that the Silva Valley Interchange is expected to open early in 2016. When it opens, county road engineers have predicted a shift in traffic flow, with traffic increasing dramatically on Silva Valley Parkway and decreasing on El Dorado Hills Boulevard, as drivers seek easier access to Highway 50.

Less evident is the impact on Bass Lake Road. Having seen the string of cars coming out of Serrano Parkway to use Bass Lake Road to get to the freeway, I would expect that a number of those would choose to use Silva Valley instead. So we may see a diminution of traffic on Bass Lake Road after the interchange opens. In any case, the new auxiliary lane from Bass Lake Road to the interchange will facilitate our getting on west-bound Highway 50.

Perhaps less noticed is the project to improve White Rock Road between Latrobe Road and Prairie City Road. The Southeast Connector Joint Powers Authority has hired a firm to do the \$1.4 million preliminary engineering and environmental work on that 5.5-mile segment.

The outlook for improving the southern portion of Bass Lake Road is unclear. The folks who want to develop Bell Ranch may be made responsible for fixing the road, but we shall see. Hopefully I will have more news about that next month.

Independence Day will be here before the next Bulletin, so let me wish you a Happy Fourth of July in advance!

Regards,

John E. Thomson

President

PARK *(continued)*

be used by RUSD and the CSD. Access to Sellwood Park was to be across the RUSD school grounds and CSD park site. However, the school and the park are now located elsewhere.

As the developer of Serrano, Parker has an obligation to provide for a school site and a park site in the area. The RUSD now has a school site, and the CSD has a park site.

Parker's Director of Government Relations Kirk Bone said at the APAC meeting they believe Parker's former obligations to furnish both park land and a school site have been met.

Serrano Associates, Bone and engineer Don McCormick have applied to the county planning division to revise an approved tentative map and development plan at Lot H from 83 clustered half-plex housing units to 75 detached lots ranging in size from 7,200 square feet to 17,077 square feet.

The sticky question remains as to how to access Sellwood Park when Lot H is developed.

APAC chairman Jeff Haberman wrote in a letter to county planner Mel Pabalinas which explained the matter: "APAC was shown three alternative routings to Sellwood Park that could allow a suitable paved access to the park site consistent with development of Lot H. Two of these appeared to require access through the EID retained maintenance facility at Bass Lake. County planning and DOT must evaluate the proposed alternatives and any others deemed necessary to provide permanent suitable and safe access to Sellwood Park. Until such time as the permanent access to Sellwood Park is defined, the subcommittee cannot submit a recommendation on the Lot H project."

"Based upon discussions to date, it appears that RUSD has not defined any specific ingress-egress plans for the future Bass Lake School site," Haberman continued. "It appears that the most advantageous access points are probably off of Bass Lake Road, in the vicinity of where the Silver Springs intersection with Bass Lake Road will be (Eastern entry) and somewhere off of Serrano Parkway (Western entry would require a roadway somewhere in Lot H) or Bass Lake Road near Sienna Ridge Road (Southern entry).

"APAC believes that while it is not part of this project review, County Planning and DOT must play an active role in defining the safest and most suitable access points to the future RUSD school site as part of the Bass Lake Area traffic circulation element of the

General Plan. Historically, traffic circulation planning adjacent to schools in El Dorado County has been haphazard, with many subsequent issues, which DOT is forced to address at great cost and consumption of staff time."

APAC member John Hidahl said next steps would most likely involve county counsel to resolve the issue. ~

Credit: EDH Telegraph



NEW PLACERVILLE COUNTY SHERIFF'S STATION ON TRACK

The county has announced its intention to prepare an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the new El Dorado County Sheriff's station, designated as a Public Safety Facility, to be built in Placerville. The 30-acre site was purchased by the county in July of 2014, and is located near the intersection of Industrial Drive and Missouri Flat Road.

The project includes four buildings, totaling approximately 106,331 square feet, more or less, depending on the final design. The several buildings are anticipated to be a one-story training building with indoor firing range, a two-story administration building, a one-story county morgue, and a one-story combination SWAT, search and rescue, and radio shop building. The facility will be completely fenced, with the exception of the public parking area. Site security measures are expected to include security cameras and lighting.

The project would have two entrances. Primary vehicle access and public parking would be provided off of Industrial Drive on the north side of the facility, with a public parking lot of approximately 170 spaces. A second gated access and secured parking would be off of Merchandise Way to the south, which would be available only to Public Safety staff, with a parking lot of approximately 200 spaces.

The facility would be open to the public Monday through Friday from 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM, but closed on holidays. Patrols would operate 24 hours a day, seven days

(continued on page 3)

CORRIDOR *(continued)*

the greatest number providing for informed decisions based on technical analysis for “prioritizing, funding and implementing improvements to the SPTC that will provide the public with the greatest benefit.”

Engel compared the SPTC with four somewhat comparable developments in Pennsylvania, Virginia, New Jersey and Jamestown in Sonora County. The east coast projects include both rail and trail use, while the Jamestown one is a rail only. Alternatives run the gamut from paving a trail parallel to the existing rail bed with asphalt, to making a gravel path on the rail bed, to developing the rail structure to handle Class 1 excursion trains on part of the corridor. Currently, excursion motorcars and “speeders” are permitted between Folsom and Latrobe. The infrastructure in place could not handle a Class 1 locomotive safely.

Showing the various alternatives and their respective costs, Engel said the full paving of a trail parallel to the rails would run about \$45 million. Laying crushed gravel on the rail bed would cost about \$18 million. Both projects would involve repair or reconstruction of several bridges and dealing with more than 30 roads that intersect the corridor.

Like the systems in the east, the SPTC is a participant in the Federal Rails to Trails program, which involves conversion of former commercial railway infrastructure to multi-use trails for hiking, biking, equestrian and limited rail use. Under the program, tracks and land are said to be “railbanked” in the event that future heavy, commercial railroading becomes viable once again. Unlikely as that might be, rail companies hold the right to reoccupy the right-of-way under the program. Meanwhile the trails are built and maintained for public use, and Engel gave a shout-out to all the volunteers, both rail and trail who have provided significant material and labor to develop the corridor as it is today.

Engel noted that “new technology” has created a “major shift in transportation” and explained that converting the corridor to commuter or light rail use is not realistic, because to be of value, it would need to parallel Highway 50.

Determining the economic value of rails and trails or rails versus trails is sketchy at best. Engel said there is “no set way to gauge how many people would use the trail.” The comparison projects range from annual spending rates by users of about \$100,000 to approximately \$2 million. Spending categories include “hard goods, soft goods and lodging.”

The El Dorado Trail with excursion or other rail use could generate up to nearly \$13 million based on projections of 821,500 trail users and 50,000 rail riders per year, according to Engel’s presentation. Calculations include the three categories above plus the addition of almost \$400,000 for rail rider fees. The projection is also based on a 31-mile extension of rails and asphalt path creating the equivalent of a Class I bike trail.

Although the board took no formal action following the presentation, audience members provided significant input to the discussion. Split between “rail guys and trail people,” there were multiple opinions and views on what the corridor should look like and how it could serve the greatest number of residents and visitors.

Because of its partnership in the Joint Powers Authority that governs much of the corridor, El Dorado County can authorize what and how use of the facility occurs within its jurisdiction. The county, however, cannot take unilateral action to remove the rails.

Receiving and filing the presentation, Board Chairman Brian Veerkamp praised the effort for “a lot of good information, but any alternative takes a lot of money.” ~

Credit: Chris Daley, Mountain Democrat

SHERIFF *(continued)*

a week.

The project includes a bicycle/pedestrian path, which would connect the El Dorado Trail, along the Sacramento-Placerville Transportation Corridor west of the site, to the industrial area south of the site. The path would meander around the site in and through the oak trees in the southwestern corner of the property.

The County will conduct a public scoping meeting to receive input and comments from public agencies and the general public on the proposed EIR on Wednesday, July 9th, 2015, at 6:00 PM, at the County Community Development Agency Development Services Division building, located at 2850 Fairlane Court, Placerville, CA 95667, in the Building C Hearing Room.

The scoping meeting will be an open house format, and interested parties may drop in to review the proposed project exhibits and submit written comments at any time between 6:00 PM and 7:30 PM. Representatives from El Dorado County Facilities, the EIR consultant, and the Sheriff’s Office will be available to address questions regarding the basic project components and EIR process. Members of the public may pro-

vide written comments at the meeting. The meeting space is accessible to persons with disabilities, and individuals needing special assistive devices will be accommodated to the County’s best ability. A copy of an [expanded version of this Notice of Preparation](#) can be found online at the county website. For more information, please contact Brent Collins at brent.collins@edcgov.us at least 48 hours before the meeting.

Written comments may be addressed to Brent Collins, Senior Project Manager, County of El Dorado Chief Administrative Office - Facilities, 3000 Fairlane Court, Suite 1, Placerville, CA 95667. Comments must be received no later than 5:00 PM, Wednesday, July 14th, 2015. ~



BLR CULVERT UPGRADE SNARLS TRAFFIC

El Dorado County Department of Transportation (DOT) crews installing an upgrade to a drainage culvert under Bass Lake Road near the sharp curve required one-way traffic control all day on Tuesday, June 9th. The need to complete the work in one day caused the work, and the traffic control, to extend through the commute hours.

The work replaced the old small-diameter culvert pipe with a larger diameter pipe so as to facilitate water flow out of Woodridge and under Bass Lake Road. In the past, heavy rains debris easily clogged the pipe, which caused water to back up behind the roadbed, eventually flooding the road.

DOT representatives told Bass Lake Action Committee (BLAC) several years ago that the original pipe was too small to allow debris passage, and should never have been installed there. BLAC at that time requested that a larger pipe be installed so as to avoid future flooding.

“I’m glad that the culvert has finally been enlarged,” said BLAC vice president and political affairs officer Kathy Prevost. “The next time we get a heavy rain we won’t have to worry about the road flooding.”

The temporary patch over the excavation site is expected to be permanently patched when the northern portion of Bass Lake Road receives the asphalt pavement overlay that is planned in the next year or so. ~



EID WATER SALE: A SHORT EXPLANATION

EID's proposed transfer of water to the Westlands Water District has generated a lot of talk. Why is EID selling its water when we are being asked to cut back?

In January, the EID obtained the right to take up to 8,500 acre-feet of water from Folsom Reservoir for consumptive use. This is about half the amount of Folsom Lake water to which EID believes it is entitled. That is because the water originates in the South Fork American River watershed, including releases of stored water from EID's high Sierra reservoirs. It passes through EID's water conveyance system and ultimately ends up in Folsom Reservoir.



Summer Sun

Great is the sun, and wide he goes
Through empty heaven with repose;
And in the blue and glowing days
More thick than rain he showers his rays.

Though closer still the blinds we pull
To keep the shady parlour cool,
Yet he will find a chink or two
To slip his golden fingers through.

The dusty attic spider-clad
He, through the keyhole, maketh glad;
And through the broken edge of tiles
Into the laddered hay-loft smiles.

Meantime his golden face around
He bares to all the garden ground,
And sheds a warm and glittering look
Among the ivy's inmost nook.

Above the hills, along the blue,
Round the bright air with footing true,
To please the child, to paint the rose,
The gardener of the World, he goes.

— Robert Louis Stevenson

With this new supply, EID now has water rights out of Folsom Reservoir to supply our customers in the El Dorado Hills area that greatly exceed the water demands in the area.

However, the water comes with a condition: use it or lose it. Under state law, any entity who receives a water right must "perfect" it by putting it to some beneficial use. If they don't use the water, the entity loses it. So if EID does not put the surplus water to beneficial use (such as delivering it to customers or marketing it to downstream entities), it risks losing the benefit.

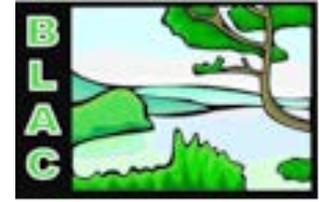
So why doesn't EID use the water to supply its customers in El Dorado Hills? The short answer is that EID can't use the water for us because it does not have the facilities to pump the water out of the lake. But if EID does not take and use the water, it will be taken and used by someone else. On the other hand, by taking and selling the water EID will generate revenue that will help offset its drought-related revenue shortfalls.

Remember that water companies are caught in the middle when water is scarce. When people must conserve water, their consumption drops, so revenue from the sale of water drops, but operating expenses remain the same, so the water company has to raise rates to break even. The result is angry and unhappy customers. EID is trying to avoid this dilemma.

Of course the water deal is subject to regulatory approvals and other uncertainties, but EID hopes to put a deal in place by the end of July. In a best-case scenario, the water transfer could generate up to \$4.6 million of additional revenue for EID

There is also a provision that allows EID to cancel, without penalty, the transfer of any water that EID determines is needed to serve its customers in 2015. It's an important bit of insurance for EID customers in a historically dry year. ~

Bass Lake Action Committee
501 Kirkwood Court
El Dorado Hills, CA 95762



BLAC BOARD TO MEET IN AUGUST

The next regular board of directors meeting of the Bass Lake Action Committee will be held on August 3 at 7:00 PM at the home of John and Fran Thomson, 501 Kirkwood Court in Woodridge, El Dorado Hills, 530-677-3039.

As always, all BLAC members are cordially invited to attend all meetings. For further information about BLAC meetings and membership, please contact Vice President Kathy Prevost at 530-672-6836. ~



The Bass Lake Bulletin is published monthly by the Bass Lake Action Committee, El Dorado Hills, California.

Copyright © 2015. Permission to reproduce unabridged articles is granted if appropriate attribution is given to the Bass Lake Bulletin.

John E. Thomson, Ph.D.
President and Editor
doctorjet@aol.com
530-677-3039

For additional information see our website, basslakeaction.org or contact

Vice President Kathy Prevost
blacinfo@aol.com
530-672-6836