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SAVE THE AMERICAN RIVER ASSOCIATION

RiverWatch



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A New Government Entity Would Oversee Homeless Programs

A civil grand jury has issued a scathing assessment of how Sacramento County and local cities have handled the homeless crisis. There's been a serious lack of leadership and a failure to seriously address the mental health and substance abuse issues that inflict more than 16,500 homeless people in the area, they concluded.

The jury recommended establishing a countywide Joint Powers Authority (JPA) to oversee and coordinate assistance to people sleeping outdoors. That would be a more efficient way to handle homeless issues and it would ensure more transparency for how state and federal money is being spent to address the crisis, the jury's report said.

Assemblymembers Kevin McCarty, D-Sacramento, Stephanie Nguyen, D-Elk Grove, and Josh Hoover, R-Folsom

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California's Water Administration System "Just Doesn't Work"

BY STEPHEN GREEN

“Our system for water administration in California just doesn't work,” according to Michael Kiparsky, director of the Wheeler Water Institute at the UC Berkeley School of Law.

Kiparsky and many other critics contend that the bureaucracies administering California's water rely on laws, regulations, policies and implementation tools that are outdated, inadequate and are increasingly irrelevant in an era of climate change.

Since the days of the Gold Rush, people have been claiming rights to water in rivers and streams. Today, thousands of rights are held by farmers and ranchers, irrigation districts, and urban water suppliers. Those water rights allocate much more water than is available in an average year. And state officials have not determined whether many of the rights are valid.

In addition, for decades the state water bureaucracies have been underfunded and are often restrained from taking actions to properly manage and protect our water systems.

The failure of the system was obvious during the drought last August when a water association serving ranchers and farmers in Siskiyou County defied an emergency order and diverted more than half of the Shasta River's flow for eight days, jeopardizing the river's salmon population. State officials couldn't stop the diversion and lacked the authority to impose charges on individuals who caused the diversions.

State officials fined the association \$4,000 for the violation – the maximum amount allowed. That worked out to about \$50 for each of the ranchers.

“Paying the fines was worth it to them to take (the water) they took,” said Assemblymember Rebecca Bauer-Kahan, D-San Ramon. “It was so clear that our law was not working.”

Bauer-Kahan is sponsoring AB 460 which would give state officials authority to move quickly to stop diversions and impose fines for diversion ranging between \$1,500 and \$10,000 per day, plus \$2,500 for every acre-foot of water diverted.

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Water Administration

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Meanwhile, state auditors were trying to determine why the Dept. of Water Resources overestimated the amount of runoff from mountains into rivers and streams during 2021 – in some areas by as much as 68 percent.

Runoff forecasts from the department are used by farmers to determine crop planting patterns, irrigation schedules and whether to pump groundwater. Cities and Counties use the forecasts to evaluate water supplies and the need for conservation. And public utilities depend on the forecasts to schedule hydroelectric generation.

In 2021, the third driest year in recorded California history, many water users didn't receive the amount of water they had expected.

The auditors found that the department had been relying on historical climate data to develop forecasts – unlike federal and many local agencies that use models that account for factors relevant to climate change like temperature and soil moisture.

They also concluded that the department did not have a

Critics contend that the bureaucracies administering California's water rely on laws, regulations, policies and implementation tools that are outdated, inadequate and are increasingly irrelevant in an era of climate change.

“comprehensive, long-term plan” for mitigating or responding to the effects of severe drought when decisions are made on water deliveries to customers. In addition, auditors said the department didn't have sufficient records to explain how decisions were made on the amount of water to be delivered.

In 1913, the California Legislature adopted the Water Commission Act which grandfathered water rights for all those who had established rights prior to 1914. The act also established a permit process for those who sought water rights in subsequent years. State officials claim there are now about 2,600 pre-1914 water rights claims in the San Joaquin River watershed and more than 3,900 claims in the Sacramento River watershed.

During the 2012-16 drought when there were widespread water shortages

in California, the state Water Resources Control Board attempted to limit or “curtail” water diversions by pre-1914 water rights holders. Water agencies went to court and challenged the Water Board's legal authority to curtail diversions. And they eventually won. But in its ruling, the court suggested that the state Legislature should determine whether it's time to update the law.

Assemblymember Buffy Wicks, D-Oakland, is now sponsoring AB 1337 which would clarify that the Water Board has the authority to issue curtailment orders for all water diverters – including those with pre-1914 rights.

Still another bill, SB 389 by Senator Ben Allen, D-Santa Monica, would give the state Water Board to investigate and verify whether claims of pre-1914 water rights holders are valid and accurate.

Many advocates who've been working for years to reform and improve California's water administration system are supporting those three bills. But there's wide agreement that much more needs to be done to make the system accountable and to gear it up to work through increasingly intense droughts. ■

Make Every Day Earth Day!

SARA is grateful to have been chosen as a beneficiary of the **Sacramento Natural Food Co-op's** “Make Everyday Earth Day” Bag Token Program once again. Not only is this an honor, but it has also enhanced our visibility locally and provided significant financial support for our program.

You can participate in the program by bringing in your own bags, bottles, or jars when you shop. At checkout, grab a wooden coin at the register for each bag, bottle, or jar you are reusing and deposit it in SARA's bin at the Community Giving space on your way out. The Sacramento Natural Foods Co-op is open daily to everyone from 7 am to 10 pm at 2820 R St. Sacramento, CA 95816. ■



Homeless

Continued from Page 1

responded by introducing legislation, AB 1086, which would establish a JPA in the county.

"It's the biggest issue we're facing and we need joint cooperation," McCarty said.

The JPA would be overseen by six elected officials – one each from Sacramento County and the cities of Sacramento, Elk Grove, Rancho Cordova, Citrus Heights and Folsom. Elected officials in each of those jurisdictions would have to agree to participate.

Legislators are working with them to refine and enhance the JPA bill to meet the needs of the communities. If approved by the legislature, then each area government would have to vote on whether to participate. It could be well into 2004 before the JPA would be up and running.

Sacramento Mayor Darrell Steinberg and Councilmember Caity Maple issued a statement in support of creating a JPA.

"We have a moral imperative to do everything in our power to end this suffering and ensure that every

person can live with dignity in our region," they said. "Creating a governing body with all the cities and the county to address homelessness gives us the best chance to make the difference that the public rightfully expects."

Funding for the JPA could be available if voters statewide approve a measure that Gov. Gavin Newsom hopes to put on the March 2024 ballot. If approved, the state could borrow \$4.68 billion for 10,000 new treatment beds and community-based housing for people with severe mental health and substance use disorders.

A recent study by the University of California, San Francisco, estimated that California has more than 171,000 homeless people – or 30 percent of the homeless people in the U.S. And about 90 percent of California's homeless people were living in the state when they became homeless.

Of the homeless people surveyed, 45 percent reported current, regular use of cocaine, amphetamines and opioids, or heavy episodic drinking.

■

Support County Parks — Buy An Annual Pass

For as little as \$60 per year, you can have unlimited access and parking in the parks. All funds go directly towards maintaining and operating the 15,000-acre system.

Pass holders receive free daily entry into Regional Parks and annual passes are valid for one year from date of purchase.

Pass Fees Are Based On Use:

Vehicle:	\$60
Vehicle + Trailer/Boat/RV:	\$120
Senior Citizen Vehicle*:	\$30
Senior Citizen Vehicle + Trailer/Boat/RV*:	\$60

** Senior discount applies to ages 65 or older and must have proof of age at time of purchase.*

Where to Purchase Your Parks Pass

- Online through the American River Parkway Foundation Web site arpf.org/visit
- At REI stores in Sacramento, Roseville and Folsom
- Patriot Cycles in Fair Oaks
- Effie Yeaw Nature Center at Ancil Hoffman Park
- Regional Park offices and park kiosks
- American River Parkway Foundation office at the William B. Pond Recreation Area ■

Thank You for a Successful Big Day of Giving

Together with a generous \$5,000 match from the David and Maxine Clark Family Fund, SARA supporters and community members raised \$17,113 for Save the American River Association programs. SARA had set of goal of raising \$15,000. This is the ninth year that SARA has participated in Big Day of Giving and it was the most successful day. To all who contributed – Thank you! Your contributions are essential to SARA's programs supporting the Lower American River and Parkway. ■



Jane Dallen Hagedorn

July 28, 1943 – March 14, 2023

Jane Hagedorn has honored by the Sacramento Bee as one of the “Most Influential Women in Sacramento County” for her outstanding work as a mentor, health care reformer and environmental activist.

For 32 years, she was chief executive officer of Sacramento-Emigrant Trails Lung Association (now Breathe California) which became the region’s chief advocate for all things related to clean air.

In that capacity, she led the campaign to pass Proposition 99 which promoted programs to reduce smoking, provide health care services to indigents, tobacco-related research and to fund resources programs for the environment.

She also was the first president of the Sacramento Tree Foundation, a founder of the California Oaks Fund, a founder of the Sacramento Tomorrow Foundation, a member of the Sacramento County Planning Commission, a volunteer at the Arden-Dimick Public Library, and was a long-time member of the Save the American River Association’s Advisory Council.

In addition to those organizations, she found time to serve on the boards of the Tahoe Regional Planning Authority, Arden Park Recreation District, California Planning and Conservation League, Sacramento Symphony, Friends of Light Rail and Valley Vision. She also was a fellow at the American Leadership Foundation.

At the UC Davis Graduate School of Management, she taught classes in non-profit management.

In addition to being an avid reader, she co-authored publications titled “Sacramento Vanishing Victorians” and “Native Oaks of California.”

Jane Dallen was born in Marion, Virginia, and grew up in Port Clinton, Ohio. She attended Lake Erie College and then transferred to the University of North Carolina where she completed her bachelor’s degree. She earned a master’s degree in advanced international studies while on a Woodrow Wilson fellowship at Johns Hopkins University.



Jim Streng

May 16, 1930 – June 1, 2023

The American River Parkway has had many strong supporters among elected officials over the years. But few were as dedicated as Jim Streng.

Over decades, Streng supported efforts to enhance the Parkway, make it accessible to people with disabilities and stop intrusive development adjacent to it.

He bought a home on a bluff in Fair Oaks with a magnificent view of the Parkway. In his 90s, he was still riding his bike on the Parkway and he lobbied state Parks and Recreation officials to restore the oak woodlands near Lake Natoma.

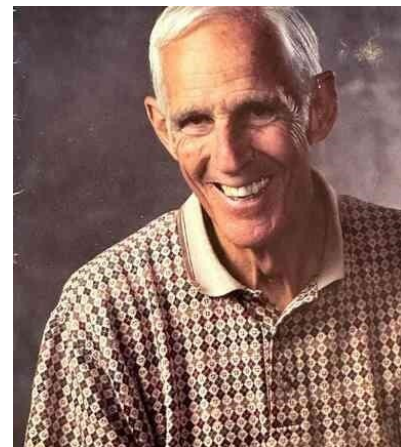
Streng was born in Scranton, Pennsylvania. He served in the U.S. Army in South Korea during the Korean War. Upon returning home, he finished his education at Dartmouth College.

During his youth, Jim and his brother Bill spent their summer vacations working for an uncle who was a home builder. It was an introduction to a career that Jim and Bill launched in 1958 when they established Streng Brothers Homes in Sacramento. They would eventually build more than 3,800 homes in Sacramento and Yolo Counties.

While still building homes, Jim Streng served as the Sacramento County Zoning Administrator and as a planning commissioner. In 1986, he took a leave of absence from home building and was elected to the Sacramento County Board of Supervisors. On the board, he established a reputation for doing what was best for the community. At times, he disappointed fellow developers when he voted against approving their projects.

Streng also served as president of the Sacramento chapter of the American Lung Association and on the Board of Directors of the American River Parkway Foundation. He was named Superior California Builder of the Year in 1980 and was inducted into the Builders Hall of Fame in 1996. He was also named Sacramento’s Citizen of the Year in 1996.

In 2021, the Fair Oaks Recreation and Park District



SARA Membership Donations

February 2023 — June 2023

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SARA appreciates the support of our generous members. Without your support, SARA would not be able to continue our role as *Guardians of the American River and Parkway since 1961*. New and renewing members are listed in *RiverWatch* according to their preference (indicated on the SARA membership/renewal form).

In Memoriam

Save the American River Association has received donations honoring the memory of the following friends:

Gary Amundson

Ernest Carboni

Richard Fiellen

Eugene T. Gualco

Dan O'Neil

Bill Pond

Wendy T. Snyder

Jim Streng

Save the American River Association frequently receives donations in memory of lost loved ones, many of whom were users and supporters of the American River Parkway. Some donors give names. Others prefer to remain anonymous. SARA notifies family members when donations are made. The money is used to further SARA's advocacy work on behalf of the Parkway.

Contributions may be made by check or online via SARA's website. **SARA also has a Legacy program. For information on the program, please contact the SARA office.** ■

Project to Improve Fish Habitat Planned for Lower American

The Sacramento Water Forum will launch a project in August to enhance critical habitat for native fall-run Chinook Salmon and Steelhead Trout on the Lower American River next to Ancil Hoffman Park.

This project, called the Upper River Bend Phase I, will be the 13th habitat enhancement that the Water Forum has undertaken on the Lower American since 2008.

Each year, adult salmon and trout use the Delta and Sacramento River like a highway to move to their native spawning areas on the Lower American. Salmon generally spawn in the river from October through December and trout spawning tends to occur in January through March. Once hatched, young fish move to the river's slower moving floodplain and side channel areas to find protection from predators and grow before swimming out to the ocean.

Historically, the fish utilized over 100 miles of mainstem and upper watershed

Historically, the fish utilized over 100 miles of mainstem and upper watershed habitat before Folsom and Nimbus Dams blocked their passage. Dams also trap vital sediment needed to replenish spawning areas that naturally erode over time in the river.

habitat before Folsom and Nimbus Dams blocked their passage. Dams also trap vital sediment needed to replenish spawning areas that naturally erode over time in the river. The Water Forum has been replenishing gravel in habitats to stay ahead of the erosion process.

The Upper River Bend project will provide:

- Nearly five acres of spawning habitat for salmon and steelhead to

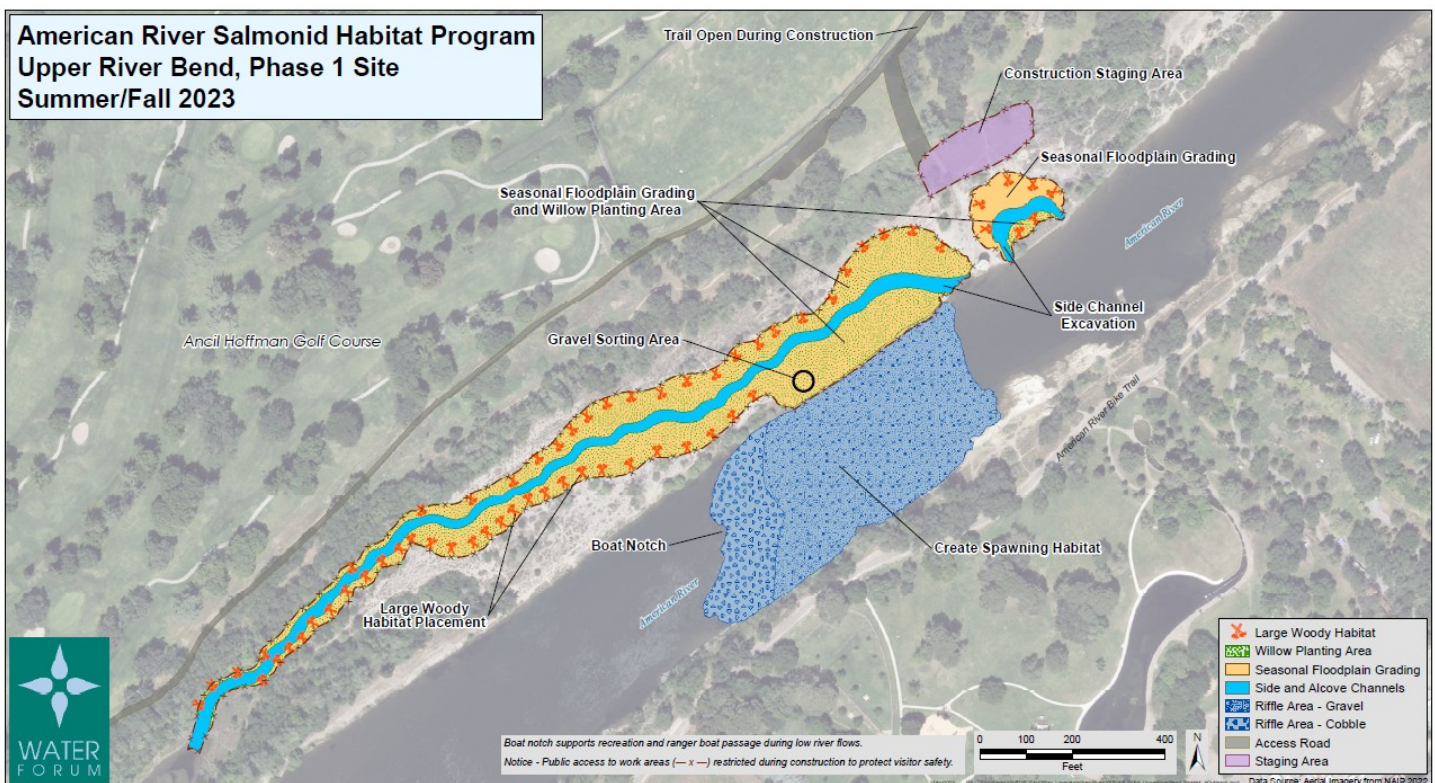
create redds by placing 30,000 cubic yards of clean gravel into the flowing river.

- Nearly six acres of rearing habitat for young fish to hide from predators, find food and grow, created by carving a 2,000-foot side channel into the existing gravel bar and shaping 3.7 acres of seasonal floodplain.
- Enhancement of hiding and resting places for young fish by placing about 60 large woody tree structures into the side channel.
- Enhance more than three acres of riparian landscape by planting or seeding the project area with willows or native flowers and grasses after construction.

The in-river work is expected to take about eight weeks. Crews may be on site Monday through Saturday from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. No in-river work will be done on weekends or Labor Day.

The project is being financed by grants from the California Natural Resources Agency (Prop. 68) and the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (Central Valley Project Improvement Act).

More information on the project is available at waterforum.org/habitat2023.





The Dueling Great Egrets photo was taken by Michele Dodge in the winter on the American River Parkway. It was one of the winners of the 2002 wildlife photo contest sponsored by Outdoor California magazine.

"I had never seen a crazy-out fight like this," Dodge said. "Blood was flying. The new one shoved the other one under water and I'm shooting 'snap, snap, snap' with the camera. They go back together and then pull apart. The moment you see in the photo is the pull apart. I've never seen anything like it before or since."

Dodge is a wildlife photographer who has traveled the world. When home in Fair Oaks, she's out on the Parkway most days. She's also involved in volunteer wildlife rescue.

"I specialize in things difficult to handle," she said. "Foxes, birds, bats and I once wrangled an otter stuck under a walkway."

Great Egrets (*Ardea alba*) are found worldwide, most often in temperate or tropical habitats. An estimated 9.5 million breeding pairs live in North America. But many migrate to Central or South America during the cold seasons. They fly slowly but powerfully: with just two wingbeats per second their cruising speed is around 25 miles an hour.

The Great Egret is a large heron with all-white plumage, a yellow beak and black legs. It stands up to 3.3 feet tall with a wingspan of 52-to-67 inches. The body

mass can be 1.5-to-3.3 pounds, with an average around 2.2 pounds.

Males choose the display areas where nests are later constructed. Nests are near water where the birds hunt for small fish and amphibians. The nest can be up to 100 feet off the ground near the top of a tree. They often nest in community groups called "rookeries."

The male builds the nest platform from long sticks and twigs before paring with a female. Both birds may collaborate to complete the nest, which can be up to three feet across, one foot deep, and lined with pliable plant material. The birds usually don't reuse nests from year to year.

The female will lay one-to-six eggs. But in larger broods, not all will survive. The larger chicks often attack smaller ones. The incubation period is 23-to-27 days.

More than 95 percent of North America's Great Egrets were killed for their plumes to decorate hats during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Plume hunting was banned about 1910 and the Great Egret populations quickly began to recover. The birds don't seem to be imperiled by habitat losses and quickly adapt to new environments.

The Great Egrets are thriving in California watersheds. The oldest known egret was 22 years and 10 months and had been banded in Ohio. ■

Jim Streng

Continued from Page 4

established a new park on Swallow Way off Hazel Avenue and named it Jim Streng Park.

"Jim Streng has been an advocate and activist for bicycling, sports for persons with disabilities, clean air, anti-smoking, local transportation improvements, the American River Parkway Foundation, and the UC Davis health system," said Ralph Carhart, chair of the park district's board of directors. "Moreover, Jim is highly respected as a kind, honest, and compassionate gentleman. When we built this park, it was clear that naming it for Jim Streng was just the thing to do."

He is survived by his wife of 65 years, Mary Jo Streng, sons Steve, Phil and Blake, three grandsons and one great grandson. ■

Jane Hagedorn

Continued from Page 4

It was there that she met her future husband, James Hagedorn.

The Hagedorns moved to Sacramento in 1971 where Jane launched her long tenure of community activism and inspired countless others to do the same.

The Hagedorns were married for 56 years. She is survived by husband James, daughter Jennifer, son James and five grandchildren.

Jane's family said you may honor her by reading a book, planting a tree, volunteering for a cause, go on a walk, and take your kids on a trip and be generous. ■



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