

Thoughts on Bill Berry

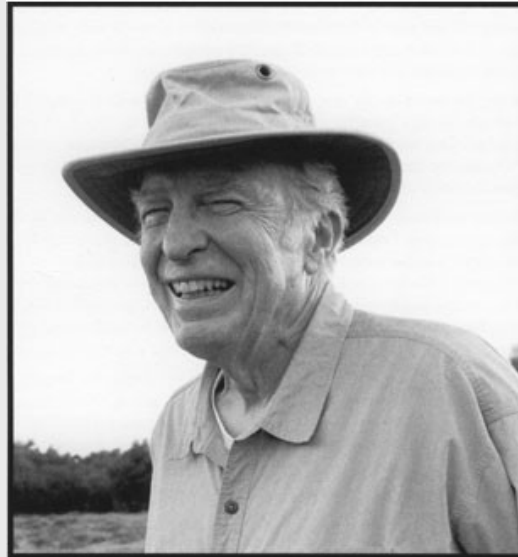
The following was presented at a Celebration of Life for Bill Berry on Nov. 7, 2010, by Warren V. Truitt, SARA President.

Good afternoon, I'm Warren Truitt, president of Save the American River Association, or SARA, as we are affectionately known.

Peggy, I am humbled and honored you asked me to speak today in celebration of my friend and fellow River Guy, Bill Berry.

Those of us here today know what a thoughtful, principled, fair-minded, generous, calmly effective — and kind person Bill Berry was.

Bill readily shared his wisdom, experience and energy, doing extraordinary things for the common good — for humans — as well as



Bill Berry
August 16, 1932 — September 30, 2010

wildlife. Wild trout, for example, must consider Bill to be pretty special — especially after Bill's considerable efforts to restore their habitat

following the famous Southern Pacific derailment and toxic spill at Cantara Loop in Shasta County in 1991.

Continued on Page 3

SARA Annual Meeting December 4th at Effie Yeaw

by Warren V. Truitt

SARA's 2010 Annual Meeting will be held on Saturday, Dec. 4, at the Effie Yeaw Nature Center. SARA members and other Parkway stakeholders are invited to attend what is always an upbeat, informative and fun gathering.

The meeting will begin promptly at 10 am. Doors open at 9:30 am. Arrive early for coffee, rolls and

conversation. Also, arrive early, or stay after, and find some unique holiday gifts at the American River Natural History Association's Annual Holiday Sale in the adjacent building.

SARA President Warren Truitt will recap SARA's 2010 activities plus goals for 2011, SARA's 50th year. President Emeritus Frank Cirill will

conduct the 2011 Board election, and SARA Board member and Grassroots Working Group (GWG) Chair, Bill Davis, will update members and guests on the GWG's effort to Rescue Our Regional Parks and Open Space by creating a stable, long-term funding solution.

Continued on Page 3

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

El Dorado County Wants More Water	2
Sacfit Donates \$10,000	4
Deer Island Party Camp Gets a Cleanup	4
Drilling Rigs in the Parkway	5
Closure of State Game Refuges Sought	6
Cordova Creek to Become "Natural"	7



Mark your calendar for the SARA Annual Meeting

Saturday, December 4, 2010
Effie Yeaw Nature Center
10:00 am

- SARA's 2010 activities plus goals for 2011
- 2011 Board election
- Grassroots Working Group update
- Presentation of the SARA Award to Chris Lewis

El Dorado County Wants More Water

by Clyde MacDonald

The El Dorado Water and Power Authority (Authority) has applied for 40,000 acre-feet of water from the upper American River in order to meet increased growth.

Putting this amount of water in perspective, it could irrigate 26 square miles of agricultural land — a huge block of water.

In the 1920s, the state was considering major water developments in the Central Valley. To help facilitate these potential developments, in 1927 the state made application for water rights in various watersheds, including the upper American River.

The state did not follow through to actually obtain American River water rights, but the law allows the state's applications to be taken over by other water developers.

Putting this amount of water in perspective, it could irrigate 26 square miles of agricultural land — a huge block of water.

The Authority is now asking the State Water Resources Control Board to assign these water applications to the Authority and to grant the associated water rights for 40,000 acre-feet.

If El Dorado is granted this 1927 water right, brand-new homes and businesses in El Dorado County would have water right priority in a drought



American River
Photo courtesy: Mark Rasmussen

over many homes and businesses elsewhere in the American River watershed — some of which have been in existence for over 80 years.

El Dorado will be filling new swimming pools and watering new lawns when Sacramento will be prohibiting outside watering. Clearly, there is a monstrous level of unfairness in this.

El Dorado's draft EIR (DEIR) claims that because it would get a 1927 water right, El Dorado doesn't have to do any mitigation of damages to those with post-1927 water rights. That is somewhat akin to, "our right will be superior to yours, so tough luck. It's your problem."

The DEIR also claims that the Authority has "no authority, ability, or resources to undertake mitigation" for environmental damages of any kind.

With El Dorado taking so much water high in the watershed, the adverse impacts will occur downstream: fishing and rafting on the South Fork of the American River; Folsom Reservoir

recreation; rafting and fisheries in the lower American River; and fisheries in the Delta.

The Authority's DEIR says that "others" should mitigate the impacts of El Dorado taking more water.

If the "others" do not or cannot mitigate the Authority's adverse environmental impacts, then the adverse environmental impacts will occur, unmitigated.

The DEIR also stated that there would be no significant flow and temperature impacts on the Lower American River. The computer model used by the Sacramento Water Forum, however, concluded that there would be significant adverse impacts.

SARA and other organizations submitted extensive written comments on the DEIR.

The next step in the multi-step process will be for the Authority to respond to the comments in a final EIR.

Visit us online at www.sarariverwatch.org

Continued from page 1

Thoughts on Bill Berry

It is also not hard to imagine wildlife within the American River Parkway sensing the affection, awe and delight Bill experienced while in their presence, and likely feeling very safe while he was there.

Save the American River Association is honored that Bill was an active and valuable member of our Advisory Council — always ready to assist — whenever asked. Bill and Peggy together have been an incredible force for SARA.

“His ready smile and caring words always made a good day even better.”

Warren Truitt
Thoughts on Bill Berry

SARA President Emeritus Frank Cirill recalls that Bill always was available and most helpful to SARA, especially regarding environmental issues. Bill's counsel, for example, was invaluable as SARA worked to prevent an unwelcome takeover of the Carmichael Water District. Frank stated that Bill's involvement was key to the desired outcome.

It was not uncommon to receive a periodic phone call from Bill, asking if I knew about a developing issue of potential concern to SARA, or to offer his knowledge and support regarding an ongoing situation.

Bill had a gentle, unassuming style. Yet, I came to learn that as calm as his delivery seemed, Bill was speaking from knowledge and experience

that deserved respect and attention paid to the matter. On more than one occasion, I came across Bill, right here in Old Fair Oaks Village — where as you may know, Bill maintained an office. His ready smile and caring words always made a good day even better.

The day after Peggy asked me to say some words in celebration of Bill, I was driving north on I-5 on my way to spend some time with our son and his family in Camas, WA.

Passing through Dunsmuir, I thought of Bill and all of the special times he must have enjoyed along the Sacramento River — with his family — and the trout, of course. Stopping in Ashland for lunch, I recalled that Bill & Peggy have family there. As I walked through Lithia Park, it was easy to imagine Bill there, on that same path — thoroughly appreciating the goodness of nature and its importance to wildlife and to all of us — as he did so many times walking in the woods of our beautiful American River Parkway.

Bill spent his adult life building relationships — in Turkey, in Paraguay and right here in Sacramento County. Bill was passionate about certain causes, especially those having to do with the environment. Bill knew how important it was to stand up for the preservation of nature — for now and for the future.

Time with Bill was always a pleasure. Who could possibly not enjoy being in the presence of such a calm, kind and informed man as Bill Berry. Bill was a mentor, a friend and grand example to us all. I miss him — and always will.

Continued from Page 1

SARA Annual Meeting December 4th at Effie Yeaw

This is certainly a time of crisis for the Parkway and the many other elements of our regional parks and open space system — but also a time of opportunity to preserve and grow our legacy.

The highlight of the day will be the presentation of the SARA Award — a fish named Sara — a beautiful ceramic salmon, each uniquely created by local artist Stephanie Taylor and mounted on a beautiful walnut base crafted by Dr. Fred Weiland.

The award is presented to persons who have performed unique and exemplary service on behalf of the American River Parkway.

This year SARA Volunteer Coordinator Betsy Weiland will have the privilege of presenting the SARA Award to Chris Lewis, past president of the California Native Plant Society and founder of the Elderberry Farms Native Plant Nursery.

A delicious lunch will be served immediately following the SARA Award presentation. Please join us to celebrate Chris, become a part of the grassroots solution, share some excellent food and catch up with Parkway friends.

Would you like to see *Riverwatch* in your E-mail?

Tell us if you would prefer to read *Riverwatch* online. Let us know your thoughts at info@sarariverwatch.org.

Sacfit Donates \$10,000

by Betsy Weiland

SARA is blessed with many friends and supporters who make it possible for us to continue our work as guardians of the American River and Parkway.

Chief among those is Sacfit, the non-profit dedicated to helping the community achieve lifetime health through fun and effective training in running and walking.

Sacfit also is committed to the continued health of the American River Parkway. Each week, as Sacfit participants gather to train at William B. Pond, they recognize the importance of this remarkable resource. And each May, Sacfit sponsors the American River Parkway Half Marathon.

More than 4,500 runners and walkers come to celebrate their hours of training by participating in a half marathon or a 5K. They participate to contribute towards the conservation and preservation of the American River and Parkway.

About 25 SARA members, decked out in white and blue t-shirts, also volunteer that day to make sure all of the very tired but happy runners and walkers get food and water. Participants also stop by our outreach booth to learn more about the challenges facing the American River and Parkway, and SARA's efforts to meet those challenges.

The 2010 American River Parkway Half Marathon was, once again, a huge suc-

cess thanks to the Sacfit team led by Race Director Ken Press and the many volunteers and sponsors.

And thanks to the generosity of the Sacfit Board, and their recognition of the vital work SARA performs on behalf of the River and Parkway, Ken Press presented SARA with a check for \$10,000.00 from the event proceeds. There is no measuring what this kind of contribution means to the success of our advocacy work.

Yes, thank you Sacfit, for your generosity and commitment to SARA's mission. We look forward to many years of a successful partnership on behalf of the American River Parkway.

Deer Island Party Camp Gets a Cleanup

There is a wonderful American River island that serves as a precious habitat for a variety of wildlife including otter, beaver and deer. It is sometimes called Deer Island and is beloved by kayakers, canoers, fishermen and even the occasional skimboarder.

Over the last three years, much to the dismay of the above inhabitants and recreationists, the island has become the



site of a beer drinking, beer-pong, weekend and overnight, party camp. Permanent benches, tables and tent sites were established. Big screen TV's and satellite dishes were permanently bolted into the

trees. Supplies were stashed, awnings were hung. Wildlife was nowhere to be seen.

Each year, beginning in 2008, the illegal camp was removed by cleanup crews on the Great American River Cleanup (GARCU) days.

Each year, it came back with more boats, bigger parties accompanied by roaring party yells, loud guffawing, the clank of horseshoe games, tossed beer cans and party cups. Each year, the structures were rebuilt in greater strength, accompanied by skull-and-crossbone flags and ominously threatening warning signs.

Finally, with this year's 2010 GARCU, the party campers became bold enough to set up lawn chairs at their site and try to belligerently defend their party grounds against the cleanup volunteers. That disturbing behavior was reported to the GARCU leadership and to the American River Parkway rangers.

The overly extended rangers immediately took time out from their wide-ranging Saturday patrols to visit the site



of the belligerent party campers. Because the Parkway lacks a boat of its own, rangers were ferried across the river to the island via a GARCU volunteer's canoe! The emboldened camp defenders were found still sitting in their lawn chairs and were asked for their driver's licenses. As the partiers, still sitting in their chairs, claimed to be signed up and volunteering with the GARCU cleanup, they were kindly

Continued on Page 7

Visit us online at www.sarariverwatch.org

Drilling Rigs in the Parkway

by Clyde MacDonald

The Golden State Water Company, which serves parts of Rancho Cordova and Arden Manor, may soon request permission to obtain water from the American River. The company currently gets its water from both the American River and from wells.

In recent years, 15 of the company's water wells have been shut down because of groundwater contamination caused by the expanding toxic plume from Aerojet.

The company is concerned that the contamination plume could require shutdown of some or all of the remaining seven wells. As a result, the company is in the early stages of evaluating alternative water supplies.

Alternative 1 would be to obtain water from the Freeport Project, which is being constructed by the County of Sacramento and the East Bay Municipal Utility District.

The already-completed water intake for this project is on the Sacramento River near the huge water tower along Interstate 5 in south Sacramento. Water from the intake would be piped eastward and some of the water would be available for areas in Sacramento.

Alternative 2 would be to obtain water from the American River. To evaluate this alternative, the company has been drilling shallow test wells in the river from Sunrise Bridge to below the San Juan Rapids.

If this alternative is approved, perforated pipes would be

drilled horizontally 20-30 feet below the bottom of the river and water would flow by gravity into a collection facility that would be on the landside of the levee. None of the pipes and other facilities would be visible in the Parkway.

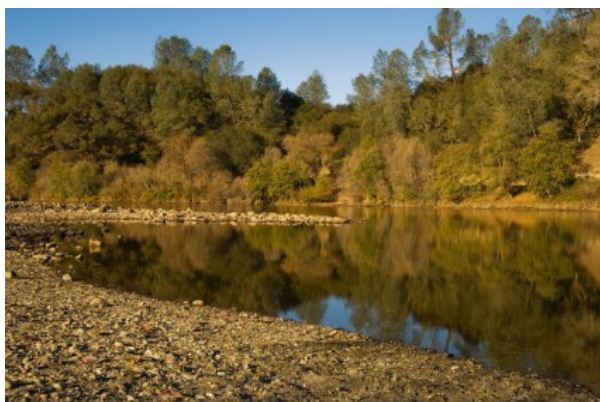
This alternative may not work because the river bottom has dense clay layers that would restrict the flow of river water down to the perforated pipes.

In either case, the legal source of the water supply would be contaminated well water that is pumped from the Aerojet plume, treated, then discharged to the American River via Buffalo Creek, which flows into the American River near Sunrise Boulevard.

This water would flow down the river to either the Freeport Project or to the perforated pipes under the river.

The water was offered to the company by Aerojet to replace the water supply the company previously obtained from the wells that are now contaminated.

SARA has not yet taken a position on either alternative.



American River
Photo courtesy: Jerry Moorman

In Memoriam

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

Bill Berry

Elmer C. Aldrich

Bob Claremon

Claire and Bob Ingles

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 and those people are always very appreciative.

The money is used to further SARA's advocacy work on behalf of the Parkway.

Contributions may be made by check, Visa or Master Card. A form for contributions appears on the last page of this newsletter.

SARA also has a Legacy program. For information on the program, please call the SARA office (916) 482-2551.

Closure of State Game Refuges Sought

by Stephen Green

The State Dept. of Fish & Game is seeking legislation to close its 16 game refuges.

If the Legislature doesn't go along, then state officials want the state Fish & Game Commission to open the refuges to hunting.

In an article posted on Fish & Game's website, employees Eric Loft and Sanke Mastrup call the refuges "a tragic mistake." Deer, in particular, ignore the refuge boundaries so the refuges aren't helping to maintain California wildlife population, they contend.

Others don't see it that way.

"We should have more game refuges, not less of them," said Marilyn Jasper of Loomis, head of the Sierra Club's Placer Group.

Fish & Game has not produced studies or data to prove the refuges are a failure, she added. "Where is the proof?" she said. "I don't see it on their website. The department is shooting from the hip."

Eric Mills of Oakland-based Animals for Action sees a more sinister motivation from Fish & Game officials who are being forced to contend with severe budget reductions.

"I think Fish & Game is out to improve access to hunters because it wants all the fishing and hunting license income that it can get to rescue their struggling budget," he said.

The refuges cover some 1,100 square miles and most are privately or



Mule deer
Photo courtesy: Stephen Goodwin

federally owned. The two state-owned refuges are Gray Lodge and the Grizzly Island Wildlife Area. Most were established in the teens of the last century, primarily to protect deer populations from over-hunting.

The Fish & Game website contends that "DFG has developed significant regulatory process to protect and enhance wildlife populations. Elimina-

**"We should have
more game refuges,
not less of them,"**

Marilyn Jasper
Head of Sierra Club's Placer Group

tion of the 'State Game Refuge' designation will have no significant impact on wildlife and ecosystems of these lands."

The department's web site, however, reports that California deer population has been in decline since the 1960s. For Jasper and others, that speaks volumes about the effectiveness of regulatory efforts to "protect and enhance wildlife populations."

A map on the same web site also shows where in California deer tend to hang out. It shows that Sacramento County has an insignificant deer population.

Producers of the map apparently haven't been on the American River Parkway recently, or at Deer Creek Hills or other sites favored by Mule Deer.

The fate of the refuges promises to be an issue when the new Legislature convenes in January.

Visit us online at www.sarariverwatch.org

Support County Parks - Buy An Annual Pass

The Pass pays for itself in 10 visits and all funds go directly towards maintaining and operating the 15,000-acre system. For as little as \$50 per year, you can have unlimited access and parking in the parks.

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	\$50
Vehicle + Trailer or oversized vehicle (over 22 feet):	\$100
Vehicle + Horse trailer	\$75
Vehicle and small watercraft:	\$75
Parks supporter pass*	\$50

* This pass is for those who want to support Parks but do not drive to Parks facilities

Where to Purchase your Parks Pass

- Online through the Sacramento County website www.co.sacramento.ca.us
- 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

Cordova Creek to become "Natural"

by Mary Maret, Sacramento County Regional Parks Department

Cordova Creek, also known as "Clifton's Drain," runs through fallow fields near River Bend Park in Rancho Cordova. It exists as an ugly, graffiti-lined concrete channel, built to move storm water as quickly as possible to the American River.

But a Cordova Creek Naturalization Project has long loomed as a project with the potential for being so much more than just a storm drain.

Break up the concrete, add a few curves, soften the steep slopes, and establish native plants – and it starts to resemble a natural creek. Add trails and interpretive signage, and it transforms into a desirable Parkway destination, for walkers, nature lovers and wildlife.

Now after years of imagining (and much hard work by many dedicated people), the California Natural Resources Agency

has awarded \$1.7 million in Proposition 84 Funds to restore Cordova Creek.

This project will remove the ditch, add creek meanders, and create 15 acres of natural riparian and wetland habitat. It also adds more than a mile of walking trails through the area to connect with the Parkway bike trail, Soil Born Farms, and the Rancho Cordova neighborhoods at Dedo Way.

Next steps for the County include finalizing the project design, and obtaining necessary permits.

Construction of the new creek channel is expected to begin in summer 2012, followed by planting and trail construction. Securing funding to build this worthy project is an exciting windfall for the American River Parkway and the surrounding community.

Continued from page 4

Deer Island Party Camp Gets a Cleanup

asked to help remove the illegal camp and told that it would be removed after a few days time.

The following weekend, ten volunteers in five canoes, including men, women, children and two Parkway rangers, dismantled two heavy, permanent, wooden benches, a large square table, a long beer-pong table, and an elaborate tree-house platform.

The big-screen TV mounts and the satellite dish were unbolted from the trees and removed. Dozens of large bags of junk and boatloads of wood debris, carpet, camp chairs and other material were hauled out for disposal. A notice was posted by the rangers informing the illegal campers where they could obtain their confiscated material.

This incident is both disturbing and heartwarming. It is disturbing to see

how little respect some individuals have for the Parkway, its wildlife, and peaceful recreationists.

But it was heartwarming to see the power of volunteerism and the willingness of the already overextended and underfunded rangers to go the extra mile to help protect this precious resource.

The day after the camp was removed, a Great Egret established itself at the river access point below the campsite - fishing once again at a place from which it had been denied.

Beaver, otter and deer, noticeably scarce when the camp was in place, are again being seen in abundance near the cleaned up site. A sense of wildness and peace has returned to one important island in the Lower American River.



Save the
American River
Association

Guardians of the American
River and Parkway
since 1961.

We're on the Web!
www.SARAriverwatch.org

SARA Officers 2010

Warren Truitt	President
Clyde MacDonald	Vice President
Elke Guenter	Secretary
Pamela Maybury	Treasurer
Alan Wade	Immed. Past Pres.

SARA Directors

Frank Cirill	<i>President Emeritus</i>
Bill Davis	Stephen Green
Elke Guenter	Burt Hodges
Jim Jones	Jim Morgan
Mary Beth Metcalf	George Nyberg
	Felix Smith

SARA Advisory Council

Mike Arnold	Dan Bacher
Deb Baron	Katie Baygell
Wayne Chubb	Rick Bettis
Illa Collin	Maxine Clark
Guy Galante	Al Freitas
Bill Griffith	Jane Hagedorn
Bob Hanna	Tim Keenan
Gary Kukkola	Pam Lapinski
Dave Lydick	Ken Press
Randy Smith	Ron Stork
Ron Suter	Stephanie Taylor
Linda Villatore	Leo Winternitz

Volunteers & Staff

Betsy Weiland	Vol. Coordinator
Sara Stephens	Office Manager

4441 Auburn Blvd., Suite H
Sacramento, CA 95841-2551

Phone: (916) 482-2551
E-mail: info@SARAriverwatch.org

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Non Profit
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit 0922
Sacramento, CA

Membership and Contributions

My gift to SARA is a: (Please indicate with an "X" or name, one of the following)

Renewal or New Membership: _____ Non Membership Donation: _____

In Memory of: Name: _____

Riverwatch Advertisement: (\$250 or more)

Name/ message : _____

\$ _____ (Please indicate your TOTAL \$ contribution) Check _____ Visa _____ MC _____

Check, Visa or M/C welcome. Insert credit card info below or go to our secure website to donate.

The following membership categories are suggested: (Please circle your choice)

\$10—\$24	Student Membership	\$25—\$49	Regular Membership
\$50 +	Supporting Membership	\$100 +	Family Membership
\$250 +	Business Membership	\$1,000 +	Sustaining Membership

Name : _____

Address: _____

City, State & Zip: _____

Visa/MC #: _____ Security Code: _____

Expires: _____ Phone: _____ E-mail: _____