



Save the American River Association

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June 24, 2016

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Sacramento County Board of Supervisors

700 H Street

Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Discovery Park and Gibson Ranch are not appropriate locations for large concert events.

Save the American River Association has consistently been opposed to large concert special events in the American River Parkway, specifically Discovery Park. The Parkway was saved for preservation as a park where visitors can find a peaceful environment that touches the whole person with a sense of something real. Not an amusement park that focuses on revenue and brings an escape experience totally separate from the park.

Concert events at Discovery Park have no place in the Parkway, but with economic benefits holding a trump card, they continue with rapid expansion and little control. An event held May 15 experienced a propane tank fire and subsequent stampede with people trampled and hospitalized. Thomas Noble was killed during a fist fight. A 17,000-person concert has no place in a park setting and should be held at facilities designed and staffed for major special events.

The County has apparently learned nothing from the May 15 event and plans to go ahead with even larger concert events at Discovery Park.

Guardians of the American River and Parkway since 1961

The Monster Energy Aftershock Festival is scheduled for Oct. 22-23 in Discovery Park. Previously, it had been held there from 2012-14. Vendors had tree branches cut off so that their booths could be placed directly under trees to receive more shade. Deep ruts were left in the turf where large freight containers used as dressing room had been, and participants left mountains of trash behind. There were numerous complaints from nearby residents about noise and drunken drivers who clogged nearby streets after the concerts.

In 2015, Aftershock moved to Gibson Ranch where it attracted a crowd of 45,000 during the two-day festival. There were massive traffic jams in and out of the park with some concertgoers stuck in the parking lot for up to three hours. There were not enough restroom facilities. People relieved themselves in the park. And trash continued to pile up.

Aftershock is the second music festival to leave Gibson Ranch after one year. City of Trees, a rock festival sponsored by Radio 94.7, is moving to Cal Expo. It is clear that Gibson Ranch cannot not handle large events.

Supervisor Phil Serna has advised that the 2016 Aftershock festival will attract 22,000 people. The combined crowd at the two-day festival at Gibson Ranch attracted 45,000 people. Aftershock organizers hope to allow their event to become a three-day festival with a daily crowd of 40,000 at Discovery Park.



Parking for the event will be directed to Sleep Train area and busses will transport concert goers to and from Discovery Park. There are several immediate concerns about that plan. Busses will bring people to the event all day. Once it is over, thousands of tired, some inebriated, attendees will likely be frustrated by long lines to board a bus. That often leads to line cutting and fights. Such behavior is consistent with similar outcomes at other concert venues where alcohol is involved. Such a scenario is just one possible result of large event participation. The county and the City of Sacramento are

not able to provide enough law enforcement officers to monitor these events and the public is left unprotected.

The American River Parkway Plan, which has been codified in state law, states: "It is anticipated that occasional large group and special events will occur (in developed recreation areas), but facilities to accommodate large groups should not be provided unless thorough study and public hearings have been conducted to determine the impacts and needs." No studies or public hearings are scheduled in advance of the Aftershock concerts.

Save the American River Association expects that the Sacramento County Parks and Recreation Department will not allow special events at Discovery Park that have potential for harm to the park and the public. The mission of the Department must be to protect.

Sincerely,

Daniel Winkelman
SARA Board Member, retired State Park Ranger

Cc: News Media
SARA Board of Directors

