



4555 Pershing Avenue #33-373
Stockton, CA 95207

September 17, 2010

Calaveras County Board of Supervisors
891 Mountain Ranch Road
San Andreas, CA 95249-9709

Re: Comments on the Draft Valley Springs Community Plan

Dear Sirs:

On behalf of the Friends of the Lower Calaveras River (FLCR), which is a community organization with more than 400 members throughout San Joaquin and Calaveras Counties and includes the membership of more than 11 government and non-government agencies, I am pleased to submit comments on the Draft Valley Springs Community Plan. The mission of FLCR is to advocate for the sustainable management of the resources and the conditions in the watershed of the Lower Calaveras River.

The Calaveras River is a vital resource to farmers, and residential and recreational water users, and runs through underserved neighborhoods in Stockton. FLCR represents an important part of the overall effort to restore the Lower Calaveras River for the benefit of all – people, fish, and wildlife – who use the river, and to connect the communities in Stockton to this natural area.

FLCR strongly supports the Council of Government's ("CCOG") proposed Valley Springs Community Plan. CCOG's plan was the result of a data driven, democratic process, and as a result it better aligns with the County Board of Supervisors recent decision to encourage future growth in existing community centers. In addition, the CCOG's plan identifies a far superior area for mixed-use development by identifying 106 acres of land located in the existing town center of Valley Springs instead of calling for urban sprawl on important farmland.

In stark contrast to the CCOG proposed Community Plan, the draft plan offered by Supervisor Gary Tofanelli suffers from two significant flaws. First, this plan directs the rezoning of the Spring Valley watershed (located adjacent to New Hogan Lake and stretches to Lime Creek Road and new Hogan Dam Road area) from Agricultural Use to Commercial Use. We oppose this re-zoning from agricultural to commercial use because the proposed conversion of agricultural lands to commercial lands represents a significant area within the Spring Valley watershed, which contains the head waters of Cosgrove Creek – an important tributary to the Calaveras River.

The preservation of the Cosgrove Creek drainage is very important to us because it is the largest unregulated tributary to the Calaveras River below New Hogan Dam. Cosgrove Creek provides important seasonal runoff to the Calaveras system which attracts Federally Threatened central-valley steelhead (*Oncorhynchus mykiss*) and Chinook salmon (*O. tshawytscha*) back to their natal river and assists them in passing the multiple man-made migration barriers found downstream. Alterations of the runoff

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patterns and potential increases in sedimentation associated with development within this important watershed will undoubtedly have negative impacts to the nearby spawning beds of these important fish.

In addition, the Tofanelli Plan **did not** follow the same democratic, community-based process used by CCOG in the development of its proposed plan. Instead, this plan was developed by a mostly anonymous handpicked group of people working behind closed doors, whose identity is not available in the public record.

Thank you, again, for the opportunity to express our support for the CCOG's draft Valley Springs Community Plan option as the better alternative for the Valley Spring Community Plan. If you have any questions or comments, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Terhune', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Jeremy Terhune, FLCR Coordinator

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