

April was a soggy month here in Sutter Creek leading to postponements of some planned events at the Gold Rush Ranch property. However, good luck shined upon us with much appreciated dry weather for the first annual Gold Rush Ranch Easter Egg Hunt which took place at the Minnie Provis Park in Sutter Creek on April 15th. It was a fun time for all as children and their parents hunted for candy and special prizes including bikes and Easter baskets. We look forward to continuing this tradition for Sutter Creek residents to share in good cheer together.

We continue our effort to communicate and be responsive to Sutter Creek residents through our outreach activities and this newsletter. The feature article this month is the second in a series about the environmental features of the Gold Rush Ranch, written by members of the project's environmental team. Look for more informational articles in future newsletters.

Our Public Workshops and Discussions offer the opportunity to meet with you on Friday May 12th at 9:30 a.m. at our office in Sutter Creek. Our Workshops will offer updates on the project, a venue to address your comments and questions and extend information about our Site Tours. Refer to our calendar below for specific time and date information. If you would like to attend a workshop, please contact our office with a reservation so we are able to accommodate all interested Sutter Creek residents.

Please contact us if you would like to schedule a Site Tour. Our Site Tours are by reservation only, meeting at the Sutter Creek Coffee Roasting Company at 10 a.m. May Site Tours will be on Saturday May 13th and 27th. Our calendar below lists the upcoming tour dates.

Our office address, phone number and web address are included below. We encourage residents to contact us with questions and comments on subjects of mutual concern.

Sincerely,
John Telischak, Bill Bunce and Troy Claveran
Project Sponsors

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Gold Rush Ranch Oak Trees and Oak Habitat



The following is the second in a series of newsletter articles written by members of the project's environmental consulting team. Look for more informational articles in future newsletters.

The Gold Rush Ranch site supports a mix of oak woodland tree species including blue oak, interior live oak, valley oak, black oak, scrub oak, hybrid oracle oak, as well as non oak species such as foothill pine and California buckeye. When affected by projects, oak tree impacts are generally regulated under state and/or local ordinances. Protection is often afforded to medium sized (5-6" diameter) and larger oak trees. When it becomes necessary to remove oak trees within a project site, tree protection ordinances require mitigation actions designed to lessen the severity or atone for negative impacts to the woodland.

Mitigation will be required for oak tree impacts on the Gold Rush Project. The Environmental Impact Report for the project will provide a full accounting of tree impacts, but we expect oak habitat to be significantly affected by the new golf course and homes. Projects can adopt a variety of actions to fulfill mitigation requirements. Due to site specific characteristics within projects, it is generally best to allow for a variety of options or alternatives to fulfill objectives. Oak tree and woodland impacts can be mitigated by one or more of

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News Update: Public Workshops



The Gold Rush Ranch and Golf Resort project has been designed based on feedback we received from numerous public forums and extensive consultations with the Sutter Creek community. We all agree that if there is going to be growth, it should happen

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Feature continued:
the following acceptable actions: 1) designing projects focused on avoidance of impacts to existing oak trees within the project, 2) protection and long-term preservation of oak woodlands on-site within a conservation easement, 3) tree or acorn replacement requiring the replanting of specific sized trees or acorns at pre-determined densities in protected areas, 4) creation of wildlife habitat within protected woodland areas to enhance habitat quality and biological processes and support a greater density and diversity of wildlife species, and 5) preservation of oak woodlands off-site with a conservation easement.

When planning oak tree mitigation actions, it is important to consider impacts to and mitigation for oak woodland habitat as a whole rather than separate out individual trees. Evaluation of site characteristics is also important including soil fertility, soil moisture, depth of soil, land management activities, understory vegetation; type of oak woodland, age, health, and density of existing trees, wildlife habitat and species that reside in or seasonally use the site, and much more. Oak woodland mitigation is truly a science. If planned and implemented correctly the impacts to native oak woodlands can be significantly reduced by a combination of diverse actions that in total provide short-term and long-term benefit for oak woodlands on a project site.

There are a variety of wildlife habitat features amongst the oaks at Gold Rush Ranch. We will be scheduling wildlife habitat tours as part of the site tour series this season. Please call soon to reserve your place on a tour.

Author Terry Strange is a resident of Calaveras County. He is the principal of Strange Aquatic Resources providing environmental expertise in wildlife biology, fisheries, wetlands, and aquatic ecology. He is a former college professor in Natural Resources and is currently the Watershed Coordinator with the Upper Mokelumne River Watershed Council. Terry has been with the project team since April of 2003.

Would you like to receive future newsletter issues via e-mail? Contact us at: info@goldrushranch.com

**Phone: (209) 267-1441
www.goldrushranch.com**

We are located above the Sutter Creek Coffee Roasting Company on Eureka Street in Sutter Creek

Schedule of Events

<i>Friday May 12th</i>	9:30 a.m. Community Workshop @ Gold Rush Office
<i>Saturday May 13th</i>	10:00 a.m. Gold Rush Site Tour
<i>Saturday May 27th</i>	10:00 a.m. Gold Rush Site Tour

Public Workshops continued:

In the right way – that the land is respected; that the community gains needed services and amenities; and the existing Sutter Creek lifestyle and traditions are protected and enhanced. Our Public Workshops, held monthly in our Sutter Creek office, continue our effort to be responsive to the community.

In a casual atmosphere, we offer updates on the project, address comments and answer questions from community members and offer the opportunity for a site tour of the property after the workshop for those interested. The small, personable workshop format encourages the free flow of conversation between participants.

We hope you'll plan on attending one of our upcoming Public Workshops. We look forward to sharing some light refreshments and an informative visit with you. Please call our office at (209) 267-1441 to reserve a place at a Workshop or a Site Tour.

Refer to our calendar for dates and times.

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