

The

BASS LAKE BULLETIN

Vol. III Issue 4

The Voice of the Bass Lake Community

April 2005

www.basslakeaction.org



Full from recent rains, Bass Lake hosts many forms of wildlife, including these geese

BASS LAKE ROAD IMPROVEMENTS LOOM

Bass Lake Action Committee members Kathy Prevost and John Thomson met recently with Jim Ware of the county Department of Transportation to get an update on the progress of improving Bass Lake Road.

Ware reported that though the road improvements have not proceeded as speedily as he would have wished, progress is being made and residents should see some movement on the road this summer.

The main obstacle seems to be the completion of the intersection at Bass Lake Road and Serrano Parkway. The heavy rains of this winter have prevented the laying of the underground telephone, natural gas, and power utilities where Serrano Parkway crosses Carson Creek. That held up construction of the roadway that will connect with the realigned section of Bass Lake Road between the fire station and Serrano Parkway. However, the contract for the realigned section has been awarded, and construction is slated

to begin on that portion of the road in May or June.

The roadway from the firehouse to Highway 50 will receive some attention, such as having the shoulders improved, but the roadway itself will not be widened until funds are obtained from the builders of Bell Woods (east of what is now called Laurel Oak, which used to be called Hollow Oak), Bell Woods (north of Highway 50 and west of Holy Trinity church), and Hawk View (west of Bass Lake Road). Those developments were recently reviewed by the Area Planning Advisory Committee (APAC) and were favorably approved, subject to some modifications. Those development plans go next to the county Planning Commission.

The status of the new Bass Lake Road that will be built north from Madera Drive (the entrance to Woodridge) up to Green Valley Road is less clear. The development agreement with the builders of Silver Springs does not require them to build the road all the way south to Bass Lake Road, so the county is in negotiations with them to complete that part of the road not included in the agreement.

CAMERON PARK CSD CEDES PARK RIGHTS TO EL DORADO HILLS CSD

After protracted negotiations, El Dorado Hills Community Services District has settled a long-standing disagreement with Cameron Park Community Services District over the cost of maintaining Bass Lake Park, located on the west side of Bass Lake on Eldorado Irrigation District land.

The park was originally set up to serve the needs of both CSDs, and the park's maintenance costs were to be shared equally. However, Cameron Park ceased paying for its share of the maintenance costs some time ago, pleading a shortage of funds. So for some time El Dorado Hills CSD has been paying for all of the cost of maintaining the park.

At the March El Dorado Hills CSD meeting, it was announced that El Dorado Hills has released Cameron Park from the cost-sharing agreement in exchange for payment of the amount owed to El Dorado Hills for the outstanding balance owed, or about \$70,000.

Asked how this settlement affected Cameron Park's ongoing access to the playing fields, CSD General Manager Wayne Lowery told BLAC vice president John Thomson that from now on Cameron Park would be treated like any other outside organization wanting to use the park facilities, rather than having priority as under the old agreement. Thomson remarked that it was strange that Cameron Park was too poor to pay park maintenance, but had \$8 million for a new administration building. ✍



COUNTY EPA'S JON MORGAN: SHOOTING THE MESSENGER?

Jon Morgan, El Dorado County's chief of environmental enforcement, came out shooting on March 29th with a broadside against the US Environmental Protection Agency, accusing the agency of unnecessarily alarming findings in a yet-to-be-released study of naturally occurring asbestos levels in El Dorado Hills.

Morgan, who has consistently downplayed the danger of asbestos in the county, was obviously firing a shot across the bow of the USEPA in the long-standing debate between citizens' groups and the proponents of development over the degree of precautionary measures that are needed to protect residents against asbestos contamination. In his press release, Morgan stated, "Very shortly, [USEPA] will release those preliminary asbestos test results of testing in El Dorado County which may unnecessarily scare the daylights out of every man, woman, and child in El Dorado County."

However, the USEPA claims that Morgan has not seen the study, and has only been briefed on the preliminary results of the study as a normal professional courtesy extended to local officials. Chief Dan Meer of the USEPA characterized Morgan's press release as "unfortunate and ill-advised."

Morgan's move is seen by many residents as an attempt to downplay the EPA's role in El Dorado County and discredit their findings. Others see a more sinister motive, that is to cover up a possible scandal involving local officials and well-heeled developers who want to keep the public in the dark while they continue to stir up asbestos-laden construction dust across the county.

Feeding the mistrust has been a consistent refusal of Morgan's office to impose any objective asbestos mitigation obligations on construction activities. Dust mitigation plans are prepared by builders' consultants, and require compliance only after asbestos is detected by the builder. The results of tests for on-site asbestos do not have to be submitted to the county until after the construction is over. Critics of this method liken it to having the fox guard the hen house. A notable exception has been the efforts of builder Morrison Homes, who voluntarily expended many

thousands of dollars on dust mitigation measures after finding and reporting asbestos in air samples on their construction site in the Promontory.

In his press release, Morgan seems first to complain that the asbestos question should be addressed locally by his office, but then he suggests that the matter be delegated to the state and federal level. His arguments echo those put forth by those who would suffer most from the establishment and enforcement of regulations limiting asbestos exposure: Developers (who fear more mitigation will cost them a lot), school district management (who fear litigation and liability), and county officials, who fear being accused of ignoring the threat).

Residents of El Dorado Hills are no doubt concerned about naturally occurring asbestos. Those who live east of Bass Lake are aware that the proposed regional park site at Bass Lake lies on land that the State of California has designated as likely to contain naturally-occurring asbestos. They also know that the land in the eastern part of Serrano may also have asbestos deposits. Any asbestos dust uncovered by construction would be spread over their neighborhood by the prevailing winds. So naturally the residents have a stake in the ongoing asbestos debate.

Some residents see the Morgan response to the EPA as a preliminary strike to discredit the EPA, confuse the public, and result in nothing being done. ☺

BLAC ASSISTS COUNTY SURVEYOR

Last month Bass Lake Action Committee was called upon by the county surveyor's office to help resolve an oversight when Hollow Oak (formerly Stone Hill) Road was improved.

The surveyor's office is responsible for verifying the position of new roads and communicating any changes to the health and safety agencies (such as fire protection and law enforcement) of the street names so emergency responders may find an address.

It seems that the realignment of Hollow Oak Road near the top of the hill left a short stretch of road that used to connect Angels View and Crystal View Drives an "orphan" road with no name, so emergency vehicles had no named

street route with street signs to direct them from Angels View to Crystal View Drive and the residences whose address was there.

At the request of the Surveyor's office, BLAC vice-president John Thomson visited the area and recommended that the unnamed portion be named as an extension of Crystal View Drive to where it connects with Angels View Drive.

The surveyor's office is now in talks with the party that realigned the road to erect a new street sign that will reflect the renaming of the orphan stretch of road.

BLAC ENDORSES CITYHOOD BALLOT

At their latest board meeting on April 4, the board of directors of Bass Lake Action Committee voted unanimously to endorse the principle that the citizens of El Dorado Hills should have the opportunity to vote on the question of cityhood this fall.

While not endorsing cityhood for El Dorado Hills per se, the board members expressed a widely-held wish that the question of cityhood be finally decided one way or the other.

"Taking a stand one way or the other would erode our position as an independent source of information for the folks in Bass Lake," said BLAC president Kathy Prevost. "But we agree that the issue should be put to a vote."

BLAC treasurer Peggy Glazier echoed Prevost's thought. "The citizens of El Dorado Hills should have an opportunity to vote up or down on cityhood," Glazier said.

The Board also decided to study both sides of the cityhood issue, and to work to present an even-handed fund of information to their members, and to the Bass Lake community, which is located along Bass Lake Road within the proposed boundary of the city.

In a related move, the board also recommended that Bass Lake residents attend the upcoming Local Agency Formation Commission meeting on April 18 at the El Dorado Community Services District headquarters on Harvard Way, where the cityhood issues will be discussed. ☺



THE PRESIDENT'S LETTER

The flowers on the arching branches of our two-year old Mt. Fuji Cherry trees are packed with beautiful pink flowers this year. They bring fond memories to mind of our stay in Japan where the changing seasons of the year are celebrated with wonderful festivals. Each Spring would bring the Sakura Matsuri (Cherry Blossom Festival) and O-hanami (flower viewing).

Since we lived near and frequently walked our dogs in an old cemetery with a brick street lined with ancient cherry trees spanning the road, we would trek over each evening to enjoy the festivities. Revelers picnicked under the blossoms each evening having marked out their party spot during the day. Food vendors were set up on the street serving up delicious stick food and once the blossoms began to fall, it was as if it had snowed pink petals!

“Out of the Woods”, a movie filmed entirely in El Dorado County for the Hallmark Network premiered April 2 at the Sequoia Restaurant in the historic Bee-Bennett Mansion in Placerville and on the Hallmark Network channel. Starring Mel Harris, Jason London, and Ed Asner, the movie was filmed last year and is the third film shot in and around Placerville by the Hallmark Network.

Whole Foods Grocery Store chain is planning a new store in Roseville near the Galleria and rumor has it that El Dorado Hills might have a Johnny Rockets restaurant one day soon. Islands Fine Burgers and Drinks (a Southern California chain) is expected to open a tropical theme restaurant in Folsom this year. Also Chicago Fire Pizza has submitted plans to convert the former Jitters Coffee Shop into an expansion of the pizza dinner house.



One of the new New Neighborhood Watch Signs recently put up in Woodridge

WoodRidge has gone Neighborhood Watch with signs now posted in obvious locations throughout the neighborhood!

For more information about starting a Neighborhood Watch on your block, contact Theresa Storlie at 916-343-1173 or tstorlie@erarealtycenter.com.

Not surprisingly, it appears that Folsom’s annexation of 3,584 acres south of Highway 50 is on the fast track. With its developable land nearly sold out and very few sites left to build on, the city is becoming more aggressive in their annexation efforts. The City Council is expected to provide direction on whether the property should be annexed this summer after which an application would be filed with the Sacramento County Local Agency Formation Committee.

Annexation could take two years with development a possibility in three years. There are several development scenarios for this area with one “smart growth” version from Valley Vision and the Sacramento Area Council of Governments, which anticipates 12,000 homes and 3 to 4 million square feet of offices, stores and non-residential development. Other plans for the area include some with greater than 30 percent in open space. However, all will affect traffic on Highway 50 in a negative fashion.

Chicago natives say they have just two seasons: winter and road construction, because of the potholes that could swallow a car, or at the very least a wheel. I think we will soon be able to identify with them as a result of the road improvement and realignment projects to

take place over the next couple of years on Bass Lake Road.

Three projects which are part of the Bass Lake Hills Specific Plan are in the process of being reviewed by the County Planning Commission for rezoning from R-10 to R-1PD, and were recently reviewed by the Area Planning Advisory Committee. Bell Woods, Bell Ranch, and the Hawk View projects are all part of Phase 1A of the Public Facilities Financing Plan (PFFP) that requires builders to finance or construct local amenities such as roads, parks, and school sites. These three developments are responsible for final improvements to Bass Lake Road from Hollow Oak to Highway 50 including bike and walking paths, northerly median improvements, purchasing land for a park and ride, and sports park design and construction. They are also responsible for the planned improvements to the Bass Lake Road-Highway 50 interchange .

Bell Woods consists of 34.28 acres and will have 54 single-family homes built in a densely wooded area that will adjoin Laurel Oaks, Bridlewood Canyon and Camerado Oaks. Bell Ranch has 112 acres of rolling countryside behind the Holy Trinity Catholic Church on Tierra del Dios off Country Club Drive, and the plans include 113 single-family homes with some homes more densely clustered near the center of the project and larger properties towards the outer edges. Hawk View is west of Bass Lake Road and will have 114 single family homes on 40 acres.

Currently, Bell Ranch and Hawk View are included in the El Dorado Hills Community Services District. Bell Woods is not in any jurisdiction, and where it ends up depends on a decision by LAFCO.

Enjoy your spring!

Kathy Prevost

President
Bass Lake Action Committee



“Reflect upon your present blessings – of which every man has many – not on your past misfortunes, of which all men have some.”

- Charles Dickens



Here is a recent photo of a stretch of old Highway 50 that is located somewhere in the Bass Lake area. Do you know what it is called now, and where this picture was taken?

BLAC ASKS FOR MORE BASS LAKE ROAD MAINTENANCE

Representatives from the Bass Lake Action Committee met with the county Department of Transportation last month in an effort to obtain a higher level of maintenance for Bass Lake Road until the scheduled road improvements are completed.

Residents have expressed concern that increased traffic, and what appear to be numerous tandem-truck trips, are unduly punishing the roadway, creating hazardous subsidence that results in large potholes. This phenomenon has been particularly noticeable along the narrow parts of Bass Lake Road, where the weight of the big trucks, combined with the lack of road shoulders, has caused the road to cave away into the ditch. The heavy winter rains have contributed to the deterioration of the road.

Also discussed were limiting the weight of vehicles on the road by placing a load limit on the road, and requiring a permit for excess truck trips on Bass Lake Road, but no conclusions were reached.

Everyone agreed that if the traffic burden became great enough, the county would have to look at increasing their maintenance of the road. ✍

COUNTY SURVEYS BASS LAKE ROAD ROUTE BY BRIDLEWOOD CANYON

Local Bass Lake residents of Bridlewood Canyon were recently wondering about the purpose of the survey stakes placed along the front of the entrances to the villages of Bridlewood Canyon and Woodridge.

The questions were answered recently by Jim Ware of the county Department of Transportation, who revealed that the area was surveyed to determine exactly where the Bass Lake Road right-of-way was located when it passed in front of the two communities.

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Bridlewood Canyon residents were shocked to see how close to their front entry gate the right-of-way runs. Bridlewood Canyon HOA President Jim Pickett was upset. "We have always maintained that landscaped area in front of the gate and down to the road, thinking all the time it was ours," said Pickett.

The right-of-way includes most of the Bridlewood driveway and the area in front of Woodridge where signs were recently erected to discourage cluttering up the space with parked cars for sale.

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"Never believe that a few caring people can't change the world. For, indeed, that's all who ever have."

— Margaret Mead

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