



Comments Regarding: Agenda Item 19-1656, El Dorado County Board of Supervisors December 17, 2019 Meeting.

Members of the Board -

I am Alice Cantelow, the president of the El Dorado Chapter of the California Native Plant Society. Like other nonprofits we have used the Planning Commission Room at Building C for the last several years. We have used the room every other month in the evenings, from 6-9, bringing free educational talks open to the general public. Generally 30-to over 50 people attend. Topics have varied- some examples are: great places in the county to go for hikes, water conserving gardening with native plants, firewise landscaping and defensible space creation, and so on. At our meetings we also let county residents know about upcoming free walks we provide, as well as volunteer service opportunities.

For in addition to the many volunteer hours we spend bringing the joy of native plants to County residents, we also help the county in more concrete ways. For example:

We have helped the main County library in Placerville by revamping the Xeriscape garden there that had fallen into disrepair. To this end our volunteers have spent 100's of hours so far – we have provided professional design, pulled weeds, installed plants, applied soil amendment and mulch, and watered the plants by hand through the hot summer. We have committed to continued maintenance of the garden into the future, and to provide signage, including the water conserving nature of the native plants there. This has saved the county a ton of money. Our chapter has spent \$3,400 on the library garden so far.

Another example is the money we have given to County Schools- some \$12,000 over the last 25 years. We work hard with 1000's of volunteer hours to raise this money that we then pass on-

There are so many other ways we help the county. Last year we organized a clean up day at the Pine Hill Preserve in Cameron Park where 18 dedicated volunteers helped remove trash and debris from about 40 homeless encampments. Up at Caples Creek near Kyburz, we organized some 60 county volunteers, ranging in age from 6 to 85, to help the Forest Service prepare 200 or more huge legacy trees to survive the much needed prescribed burn there. And then there's SOFAR- one of our members is collaborating with others to create fire resilient forest land and communities in El Dorado County. This

member will also be communicating with County staff who are implementing the Vegetation Ordinance as to the flammability of specific plant species. And lets not forget our important weed efforts. Stinkwort is sweeping into the county with the risk of becoming the new star thistle- since there is no funding for the County weed group, we are stepping up, working on a letter to send out at our expense to residents of areas where it is quickly spreading.

Our volunteers are a dedicated bunch, dedicated to native plants, and also to El Dorado County. We've all heard that it takes a village to raise a child. Well I would like to suggest that it takes a team to run a county. You have a lot of competent, hard working county employees, and you yourselves work hard to make the county dollar go as far as possible. The county is also being helped significantly though by the nonprofits like us that are using the Planning Commission Room. We ourselves use it after hours, which means we are not bothering employees. A janitor is there already and is still there when we leave. County taxpayer money has paid for the room, and we are helping those county residents out with our many efforts. Please don't relegate us to the library meeting room. It is too small (the Placerville room), very inconvenient (Cameron Park) and the 7PM closing time at both is a much too early ending time for our meetings, which draw working people. Please support the nonprofits like us that are your County team-mates and let us continue to use the Planning Commission Room as before- Thank you.

Sincerely,



Alice Cartelov

President, El Dorado Chapter CNPS