

TO ALL OF OUR NEIGHBORS AND FRIENDS LIVING ON SMITH CANAL**SPRING GREETINGS FROM THE STEERING COMMITTEE**

Hello, residents and friends of Smith Canal! Time to come out of the long winter hibernation, and refocus on our Canal events and issues. The Steering Committee has been busy over the winter months in planning the year's activities and in meeting with various officials in regard to the Friends of Smith Canal (FoSC) goals. You can read more about these activities and plans below.

GENERAL MEETING SITE OPTIONS NEEDED

Can you help us find a meeting place for our general meetings? We are looking for facilities that will hold 50 or 60 people for our quarterly meetings. Perhaps you know of a facility, like a church, community center, school, or clubhouse that would allow FoSC to meet, free of charge or at a nominal fee. Perhaps you are a member of an organization that would allow you to host their building or facility for our meetings. Please call any of the FoSC contacts with your suggestions or ideas.

STORMWATER POLLUTION PREVENTION

On March 1, the Steering Committee met with several City of Stockton and San Joaquin County officials regarding their various responsibilities concerning stormwater pollution prevention. The major guest speaker was Robert (Bob) Murdoch, P. E., Program Manager, Stormwater Management Program. Susan Mora Loyko, City Stormwater Outreach Coordinator accompanied him. Also in attendance and participating were Charles Kelley, P. E., Associate Civil Engineer, San Joaquin County Department of Public Works, and Denise Thomas, Management Analyst, San Joaquin County Department of Public works.

Murdoch outlined the responsibilities of the City Stormwater Management Program for the group. The City of Stockton and County received a permit to discharge water in 1995, as mandated by of the Federal Clean Water Act, which established the National Pollution Discharge

elimination System (NPDES). A component of this Federal law requires the collection of data, including water quality. Data has been collected since 1992. The City Stormwater Program serves three overall responsibilities:

- Education
- Monitoring of new construction
- Industrial inspection and permitting.

The City program is required to sample two storms per year; five automated samples are taken from residential, commercial, and industrial sites. These sampling and data analysis activities cost from \$50,000 to \$100,000 per year. The experts said local officials focus on changing the behavior of people through educational efforts to prevent stormwater pollutants.

Stormwater runoff is the number one cause of water pollution. It is caused by automotive fluids (including anti-freeze, gas, and oil), paints, fertilizers, pesticides, trash, and chemicals that are washed or poured down storm drains. These products do not go into the sewer plant for treatment, but flow directly into the canals, rivers, and creeks in the delta waterways. For more information on pollution, review the attached flyer or contact Susan at the City 937-8791, or Chuck at San Joaquin County 468-3055.

The City and County must renew their NPDES permit every five years; the renewal for the year 2000 has been submitted to the regional water board, operated by the State Water Resources Control Board, that has nine regions. **THE LOCAL REAPPLICATION TARGETS SMITH CANAL.** The FoSC Steering Committee will keep everyone informed regarding the decision of the regional board. Both representatives of the City and San Joaquin County indicated their willingness to work with the clean-up and prevention efforts of FoSC.

WE LOOK FORWARD TO WORKING TOGETHER AS NEIGHBORS AND *FRIENDS OF SMITH CANAL!*

MEETING WITH THE RECLAMATION DISTRICT #1614

For more than a year, efforts have been made to have a representative of Reclamation District #1614 attend a Steering Committee or general meeting with FoSC. Peg Keranen, Chair, called the district's attorney to ask that a FoSC presentation be placed on the agenda of the district's next public meeting (March 7). Peg, along with Alan Tufft and Kristen Rinaker, attended the Reclamation District #1614 meeting. Two of the three board members were at the meeting. They declined to decide, while FoSC was there, whether or not someone would be authorized to attend one of the FoSC meetings. Two of the three members were just reappointed to four-year terms by the Board of Supervisors, since no one else applied. The district members were asked about their current and future plans. FoSC representatives were advised that district activities, if any, could be found in legal texts, or their engineer could be contacted. The board advised the FoSC group that they did not have need of any public outreach. When asked about their budget, their attorney said they did not have a written budget and that the County Auditor probably had their financial records, since that office does their annual audit. This was a disappointing and uninformative meeting.

Kristen Rinaker, an attorney and member of the FoSC Steering Committee, sent a letter on behalf of FoSC that says, in part: *"We believe that because of our common interests and overlapping constituents, both groups could possibly benefit by communicating in more significant ways. We believe our two groups share common goals, yet we feel stonewalled by the Trustees' unresponsiveness."* Other attempts will be made to effect an improved relationship with Reclamation District #1614. The Trustees of District #1614 meet every first Wednesday of the month, at 6 El Dorado South, in the offices of their attorney, Harold J. Willis.

FIRST 2001 SMITH CANAL CLEAN-UP DATE TO BE ANNOUNCED

FoSC has yet to set its first canal clean-up, due to the illness of the Clean-up chairman. The Steering Committee is working toward the prospect of having public and private agencies participate in the clean-up activities. Look for a special edition of the FoSC newsletter that will be issued to provide information about the particulars of the first clean up.

It may be of interest to note the new *SAFEWAY* opened several months ago, and have all carts equipped with wheel-locking devices at the outer perimeter of the parking lot. Hopefully, this feature will help to keep grocery carts out of the canal.

PLANNING FOR THE MONTHS AHEAD

The Steering Committee has developed a draft calendar year work plan, which will be revised and refined during the Committee meeting on March 21. The work items are essentially focused around the seven following topics:

- Clean-up/Debris
- Water Quality
- Levees
- Safety
- Agencies
- Public Relations/Newsletter
- Revenue.

This plan will be distributed during the first General Meeting. The date will be announced when a meeting site has been selected.

AN IMPORTANT QUESTIONNAIRE IS ATTACHED

A questionnaire was developed to assess the chief areas of interest and concern of all residents and friends of Smith Canal. All are asked to please take a minute to complete the questionnaire, which is stamped, fold and return it. If you have any questions, or want to talk with someone about it, please call any of the contacts listed below. Each person will be asked to respond on a checklist and return responses to the Steering Committee with his/her concerns and comments. Your responses will assist the Committee in speaking with local leaders and members of various regulatory agencies about your concerns.

FoSC CONTACTS

For information, questions, or assistance, please contact any of the following steering committee members:

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| Peg Keranen, chair | |
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