



# Northern News

NORTHERN SECTION, CALIFORNIA CHAPTER, AMERICAN PLANNING ASSOCIATION

MARCH 2004

## Contra Costa County Watershed Atlas *by Abby Fateman*

PUBLIC EDUCATION TOOL  
USES VOLUNTEERS TO COLLECT  
GPS STREAM DATA

### Watershed Forum

**B**ecause creeks are a primary connection between the human and natural environments, communities are increasingly concerned with the health of their watersheds. In Contra Costa County, the Contra Costa Watershed Forum (CCWF), an open committee of some 50 stakeholder organizations, is united by their concern for the County's watersheds. Since the inception of the CCWF in 1999, there has been a marked increase in watershed restoration and preservation activities in Contra Costa County. Earth Day festivals are held at creek restoration sites, new volunteer groups have formed, and programs to educate, restore, research and document the health of creeks and watersheds are more widely available.

The Contra Costa County Watershed Atlas (Atlas) is a product of this heightened interest in watershed environments. Through this cooperative effort, organizations, agencies, and volunteers came together to centralize, create, and share GIS data; consolidate databases; and provide text and graphics. Enthusiastic community volunteer groups surveyed miles of creeks through a Global Positioning System (GPS) data collection program launched by the CCWF. Various governmental agencies fostered relationships to share GIS data. The results of these efforts are compiled in the Atlas.

## REMINDER: 2004 NORTHERN SECTION AWARDS PROGRAM

**Request for Nominations -  
April 2 Deadline Approaching!**

You have worked long and hard on your outstanding planning effort; and now is the time for some positive recognition for you, your elected and appointed officials, your customers and clients. Please submit your application for a 2004 Northern Section award.

**The deadline for application is  
April 2, 2004**

For further information and application materials, please refer to the website at [www.norcalapa.org/](http://www.norcalapa.org/) or immediately contact: **Marta Self**, AICP at 925-988-9188 ext. 117 or [mself@mms-inc.net](mailto:mself@mms-inc.net)

The Atlas is a powerful public education tool providing maps, statistics, and descriptive text about Contra Costa's major watersheds and creeks. The Atlas is a large format, full color, 150-page book of maps, statistics and text about the 28 major watersheds in the County. Though focused on the state of natural ecosystems on the watershed scale, the Atlas also provides information about the human community and the County as an eco-region.

*(continued on page 4)*

## Save the Date!

*The 2004 Northern  
Section Awards*

*Banquet will be held  
May 21, 2004.*

*Holiday Inn Bay Bridge  
1800 Powell Street  
Emeryville. 6:00 PM*

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## DIRECTOR'S NOTE

*From Hing Wong, AICP*

The countdown is on! There are only 55 weeks—or just a little over 1 year—prior to the APA National Conference coming to San Francisco in March 2005. Suffice it to say that we need you! We need your ideas, we need your commitments, and we need you as a volunteer. There are 10 committees that have enthusiastic chairs willing to have you on board! Please contact one of them:

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Steve Noack

(510) 848-3815

steve@dceplanning.com

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(415) 642-8969

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juan.borrelli@sanjoseca.gov

### Mobile Workshops

Wendy Cosin

(510) 981-7402

wcosin@ci.berkeley.ca.us

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(510) 464-7909

laurat@abag.ca.gov

### Orientation

David Lipsetz

(510) 464-7915

davidl@abag.ca.gov

### Portfolio

Jeanette Dinwiddie-Moore

(510) 531-4150

dinwidd@attglobal.net

### Program

Sharon Priest

(415) 882-3062

spriest@smwm.com

### Public Relations

Erin Dando

(510) 981-7429

edando@ci.berkeley.ca.us

### Treasurer

Joanna Gomes

(510) 237-7244

jegomes@pacbell.net

### Volunteers

Phil Trom

(510) 839-1742 x124

ptrom@dowlinginc.com

## NEWSLETTER INFORMATION

### EDITORIAL

Ann Welsh, AICP

editor

Tel: 408/868-1230

Fax: 408/867-8555

e-mail: awelsh@saratoga.ca.us

13777 Fruitvale Avenue

Saratoga, CA 95070

### ADVERTISING/JOB

Joanna Gomes

contact

Tel: 510/237-7244

e-mail: jegomes@pacbell.net

## ADDRESS CHANGES

Membership Department

APA National Hqtrs.

122 South Michigan Ave., Ste.1600

Chicago, IL 60603-6107

312/431-9100

The deadline for submitting materials for inclusion in the **Northern News** is the 16<sup>th</sup> day of the month prior to publication.



## Web Pick of the Month

### Placemaking - Tools for Community Action

This 47 page downloadable guide at [activeliving.org](http://www.activeliving.org) provides a starter kit for a community member, city official, planner or design professional to identify currently available planning tools and to assess their applicability and appropriateness to specific projects. It builds upon the work being done at <http://www.placematters.com> and provides a springboard for community action.

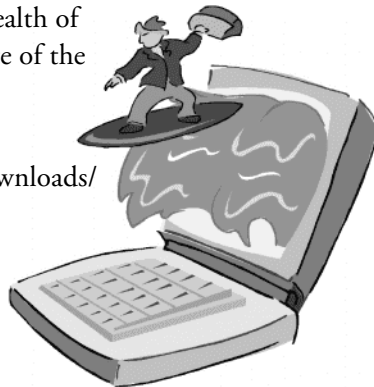
The guide is a sampling of what is currently available and highlights the steps a community might take when exploring how cutting-edge tools might be appropriately integrated into their planning process. Descriptions include tools such as web based tools, impact analysis and economic forecasting, GIS, 3D animation, 3D Real Time, 3D GIS, process tools and predictive modeling.

Providing actual scenarios where these tools were used, the guide shows practical applications of the software. For example, American Forests developed a software package which simulates restoring urban tree canopy known as Citygreen 5.0. The guide describes a study of 12 watersheds in Salem Oregon where the tree cover is 17%. The software calculated that the city could save \$17.5 million in storm water storage costs alone if it augmented the tree cover to 25% (<http://www.americanforests.org>)

This is just one example of a wealth of ideas on how to implement state of the art planning tools.

Web site:

[http://www.activeliving.org/downloads/placemaking\\_v1.pdf](http://www.activeliving.org/downloads/placemaking_v1.pdf)



## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

### Meet and Greet March 19th

In an increasingly budget-tight California, planners face the task of dealing with an incredibly diverse populace. In addition to this, we wear many hats: manager, facilitator, mediator, budget analyst, public speaker, mentor, GIS guru, graphic artist, fortune teller, and oh yeah, what we were actually trained for—planner. As planners, we are increasingly under pressure to keep up with the latest technology in our field and develop professionally while maintaining a professional attitude to those not-so-professional applications.

Case in point: I once received an application for a bar expansion submitted on the back of a beer poster, complete with bikini-clad women. This was a serious application. No matter the technological innovations, there will always be the low-tech application that we need to accept and review professionally and without a trace of a snigger.

Through the year we hope that this column will bring planners together to share ideas, discuss trends in planning, provide an opportunity to learn skills, and generally have a good time. We plan to have gatherings or workshops once every other month. And in the spirit of

inclusive, ground-up planning, your ideas and needs will govern this. Ideas under consideration are:

- Time management
- Managing People
- Public speaking
- How to create killer resumes
- Photo-simulation in the planning process: the use and misuse of a great tool
- Writing for planners
- Dealing with sexism and racism
- Planning in a diverse world

What would be helpful to you in your job? Send your ideas to: [Cratcliffe@pacificmunicipal.com](mailto:Cratcliffe@pacificmunicipal.com) or give me a call 510-272-4491 X 205.

To kick off this venture, please come to a mixer (FREE FOOD, FREE DRINKS) on Friday, March 19th, beginning at 5:30 pm. Location: PMC offices at 1440 Broadway Ave. Suite 1008, corner of Broadway and 14th Streets in Oakland. Conveniently located near the BART 12th Street Station and the Broadway exit off I-80 (parking nearby). Bring your ideas and be prepared to mingle and talk planning for at least an hour before you start your weekend in earnest.

*by Christina Ratcliffe, AICP*

## Volunteers and the Atlas

There are over twenty local community groups focused on creek and watershed issues in Contra Costa County. Friends of Alhambra Creek has been organizing creek clean-ups, restoration projects public outreach and creek monitoring activities for over twenty years. Newer groups have formed and quickly assumed strong stewardship roles in their watersheds. These volunteer groups played an integral role in the development of the Watershed Atlas. The Watershed Forum provided feedback on content and layout, reviewed draft data, and collected important new data on creeks.

## Mapping Creeks

The CCWF, with assistance from the Contra Costa Community Development Department, spearheaded a community-based creek GPS data collection program. The program documents not only the location of small (often unmapped or mis-mapped creeks), but also locations and attributes of other important physical features such as creek bank condition, stands of invasive plants, and creek substrate.

Over 120 volunteers have participated in the training and data collection program. These volunteers have spent time training and spent many weekends wading through neighborhood creeks meticulously following data protocol. The project continues to produce scientifically defensible GPS data that is useful to a variety of groups — from resource managers to community groups. Though the pilot program was designed and conducted in Contra Costa County, the program can easily be adapted for use in other areas.

## Refining Creek Data

Not only have volunteers spent hundreds of hours collecting small-scale GPS data on creeks, they also helped edit the countywide Geographic Information Systems database on creeks. Organized “Friends of” groups armed with paper maps that showed aerial photographs with superimposed creek data contacted longtime community members, consulted

historical maps, and field-checked the location, channel condition and names of creeks. The quality of the editing provided by volunteers in the greater creek community refined the creek data for the entire county.

## Content of the Atlas

Though focused on the ecosystems on a watershed scale, the Atlas also provides information about the human community and the county as an eco-region. The Contra Costa County Watersheds Overview (Chapter1) presents data that is pertinent at a countywide scale. The health and character of a watershed is a reflection of the health and character of the communities within it. To help paint a broader picture, information is also presented on political geography, planned land use, demographics, topography and natural hazards. Finally, a series of maps illustrate how different features and forces within the watersheds interact to affect current conditions and indicators of watershed health.

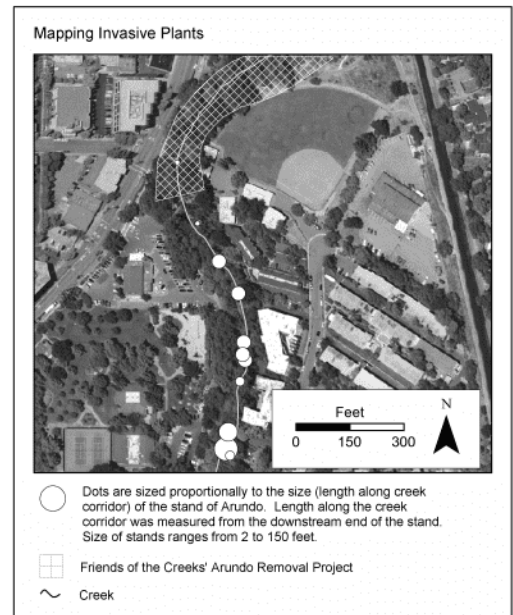
Subsequent chapters document individual watersheds and provide detailed maps that display aerial photographs, current creek conditions, topography, political boundaries, population density, planned land use, and restoration projects.

*Contributed by Abby Fateman. More information about the Contra Costa Watershed Forum can be found at: [http://www.cocowaterweb.org/The Contra Costa County Watershed Atlas](http://www.cocowaterweb.org/The_Contra_Costa_County_Watershed_Atlas) can be purchased from the CCC Community Development Department for \$25 (\$30 shipped). To order an Atlas please contact Abby Fateman at (925) 335-1272 or [afate@cd.cccounty.u](mailto:afate@cd.cccounty.u)*

San Pablo Watershed Neighbors Education and Restoration Society Volunteer wades through San Pablo Creek collecting GPS data, Richmond, CA.



Arundo Donax (Giant Reed) is a non-native invasive plant that is becoming increasingly common in riparian areas in Contra Costa County. The large reed-like plant reproduces quickly and prevents native plants, important to local ecosystem functions, from flourishing.



Friends of the Creeks has an aggressive Arundo removal program in downtown Walnut Creek (in the hatched area of the map). The map illustrates the effectiveness of their program and can be an effective fundraising and education tool.

# Fulbright Summer Institute

## Regional Economic Development

### An Assessment of Emergent Theories, Strategies, and Policies

**When:** June 7-11, 2004

**Where:** University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Chapel Hill, North Carolina

**Sponsors:** The University of North Carolina's University Center for International Studies, Kenan Institute of private enterprise, and the Department of City and Regional Planning, in conjunction with the Vienna University of Economics and Business Administration, through a Fulbright Alumni Initiative Award Grant.

**What:** The intensive summer institute, covering five days, will bring together a distinguished faculty who teach and conduct state-of-the-art-research on economic development and economic development policy professionals, with junior scholars and graduate students in planning, public policy analysis, geography, business, and related fields. The seminar participants will both critically review recent, and discuss emerging, ideas, theoretical frameworks, strategies, and policies in regional economic development. A particular focus will be on economic development strategies and policies for rural and lagging regions.

**Costs:** The Fulbright grant defrays a large portion of the costs. A tuition fee of \$60 will cover two lunches and an excursion. A variety of types and costs of accommodations will be available. Partial travel scholarships are available.

**How to Apply:** Send a letter of interest and a short curriculum vitae. If you are graduate student include the name and contact information of your faculty adviser. You will be notified of your acceptance within two weeks of submitting your application. Send the letter and CV to: Professor Harvey A. Goldstein, Department of City and Regional Planning, CB# 3140, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, NC 27599-3140.

Further information: Email [hgold@email.unc.edu](mailto:hgold@email.unc.edu)

Phone:; 919 962-4767

## City Parks Forum Publishes Series about Creating Healthier, Safer Communities

Chicago, IL - The City Parks Forum, a special initiative of the APA, has published a second series of briefing papers that show mayors, city managers, planners and others how to use healthy parks to create safer neighborhoods, protect and enhance urban environments, improve learning among children, and improve public health.

"The benefits that urban parks provide to communities are like the compounding interest that accrues from a savings account," said City Parks Forum Director Mary Eysenbach, "they just keep adding up. These briefing papers provide examples how cities across the country are using parks to help solve difficult urban issues."

For example, the paper on using parks to create safer neighborhoods describes how Macon, Ga., Mayor C. Jack Ellis led an effort that used the renovation of the Village Green Park to help reduce crime in the adjoining neighborhood. Another paper describes how Atlanta, New York and Philadelphia have used park resources to reduce the health impacts of air and water pollution.

Other briefing papers published by the City Parks Forum show how parks can be used to promote community revitalization, enrich community engagement and spur economic development. Copies of the briefing papers are available through APA's website at [www.planning.org/cpf/briefingpapers.htm](http://www.planning.org/cpf/briefingpapers.htm).

APA launched The City Parks Forum in 1999 with two grants totaling \$2.55 million from the Wallace Foundation and the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation. The program has helped mayors and park officials in mid-sized cities across the country use urban parks to improve the quality of life in their communities. Other park resources available include technical reports, case studies and proceedings from six Forum-organized conferences involving mayors from 25 cities.

For more information, visit APA's website at [www.planning.org](http://www.planning.org)

## Zoning to Reduce Terrorist Threats and Liability

*From APA National* — In the November 2003 issue of *Land Use Law & Zoning Digest*, Rufus Young and Dwight Merriam present a comprehensive outline of Homeland Security factors that merit consideration in the land use review and approval process, as well as numerous references for further information. The events of 9/11 made real the threat of terrorist attacks in the U.S. Whether that threat is large or small, it potentially increases the liability of those who approve, build, or manage potential terrorist targets. This outline serves as a preliminary checklist of factors and actions local governments, developers, and property owners and managers should consider to avoid or reduce such threats and liability risks. To read or download the outline, go to [www.planning.org/PEL/articleIndex.htm](http://www.planning.org/PEL/articleIndex.htm).

## Planner's Day on Capitol Hill

### Talk to Your Member of Congress

Meet with your elected representatives in Congress during APA's 2004 National Planning Conference in Washington, DC! Planner's Day on Capitol Hill is a special program that gives you an opportunity to talk to your member of Congress about many issues of importance to the planning community. Transportation, affordable housing, conservation, and environmental protection are some of the planning-related issues before Congress this year, so it is an opportune time to advocate for the policies that make great communities happen!

Experts on grassroots advocacy will prepare you for Congressional meetings with a customized itinerary, special training on APA's legislative priorities, key messages and talking points. Making your voice heard on Capitol Hill couldn't be easier. It's easy, and it's important. What's more, participation in Planner's Day on Capitol Hill is FREE with your conference registration! Sign up now by filling out the conference registration form in the 2004 National Planning Conference brochure or contact APA's government affairs office today at [govtaffairs@planning.org](mailto:govtaffairs@planning.org).

For more information: <http://www.planning.org/legislation/04plannersday.htm>

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# NORTHERN SECTION CALENDAR

## March

- 4 Northern Section Board meeting: 6:00 PM. Visit [www.norcalapa.org](http://www.norcalapa.org) for location.
- 10 2005 Conference Steering Committee meeting: 6pm at SMWM in San Francisco
- 15 Deadline to submit mobile workshop proposals to Mobile Workshop Subcommittee, special event proposals to Hospitality Subcommittee, and program session proposals to Program Subcommittee for the 2005 National Conference
- 16 2005 Conference Hospitality Subcommittee meeting at 6pm at Faz Restaurant, San Francisco
- 19 Professional Development: Meet and Greet. See page 3.
- 20 2005 Conference Local Host Committee meeting at 10am at ABAG, Oakland

## April

- 1 International Section meeting. Contact Jennifer at 510-750-6510 or [anderjenn@comcast.net](mailto:anderjenn@comcast.net)
- 2 Deadline for submissions for Northern Section Awards Program. See page 1.
- 6 Registration and Payment Deadline for May AICP Exam
- 24-28 APA's 2004 National Planning Conference: Washington, D.C.

MARCH						
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## May 21

The Northern Section Awards Banquet will be held May 21, 2004.

Check April issue for details.

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 EDITORIAL OFFICE  
 Ann Welsh,  
 13777 Fruitvale Avenue  
 Saratoga, CA 95070

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# CCAPA 2004 Conference — Wyndham Palm Springs

## October 17—20, 2004

# Choose your own adventure Magnificent Mobile Workshops

### QUESTIONS

Questions about your registration should be made to the CCAPA 2004 Conference office:

**Lynne C. Bynder, CMP**  
760.799.2740  
Fax: 760.674.2479  
lbynder@dc.rr.com

**T**his October, catch the glimpse of fall at the Palm Springs Desert Resorts. The Inland Empire Section of the American Planning Association will host the statewide APA conference from October 17 to 20, 2004. Come and experience the Golf Capitol of the World, because this year, Palm Springs is the place to relax, catch some rays and learn the soothing methods and practices of planning.

Indian Canyon

Photo: Jack Sullivan



The weather is fabulous in Palm Springs because of one reason—the San Jacinto Mountains. Rising nearly 9,000 feet beside Palm Springs, it prevents the rain (and pollution) in Los Angeles from ruining your vacation. This type of weather will setup a perfect environment for an array of exhilarating mobile workshops:

It will be an amazing opportunity to learn the nuts and bolts of planning and hear from exclusive keynote speakers!

**Don't forget to check-out the Exhibitor and Sponsorship advertisements on the Web at [www.calapa.org](http://www.calapa.org).**

**Early Registration Deadline: July 1, 2004**

Conference information online at [www.calapa.org](http://www.calapa.org)

- Salton Sea Tour**
- Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan/Living Desert**
- Archeological/Historic**
- Tribal Revenue Gaming (Visit to tribal land & Casino)**
- Walking Tour of Downtown Palm Springs**
- Affordable Housing**
- Resort Development (Gated Golf Course Communities)**
- Alternative Energy Solutions (Wind Farm)**
- Seismic Safety (San Andreas Fault)**
- Desert Landscaping/Water Conservation**
- Indian Canyon Hike**
- Modern Achitecture / Palm Springs vicinity**

Photo: Jack Hollingsworth



### Cancellation Policy:

If written cancellation of ad space is received by August 1, 2004, a full refund will be made. If written cancellation of ad space is received by September 1, 2004 and 80% refund will be made. No refunds or cancellations accepted after September 1, 2004.





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## Cerdà: The Barcelona Extension

The Department of Urban and Regional Planning at San José State University is pleased to present an international traveling exhibition on the work of the renowned nineteenth-century Barcelona planner Ildefons Cerdà. Cerdà is best known for his elaborate 1859 plan to expand the city of Barcelona beyond its old city walls (the Projecte d'Eixample), and his Teoria General de la Urbanizació (General Theory of Urban Planning), an 1863 treatise that laid out his philosophy of desirable urbanization. Despite being nearly 150 years old, Cerdà's work has great relevance to communities today striving to create livable neighborhoods.

The exhibition will be shown from March 15 to April 18 on the second floor of Washington Square Hall at San José State University. It is open Monday - Thursday from 8 a.m. to 9 p.m. and Friday 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

On Thursday, March 25, there will be a reception from 5:30 - 7:00 p.m., followed by a public lecture at 7:00 p.m. by Professor Nico Calavita from San Diego State University. His talk will discuss Cerdà's work and legacy, as well as the planning that has led to the city's renaissance over the last two decades.

For information, please contact Asha Weinstein at 408-924-5853 or [asha.weinstein@sjsu.edu](mailto:asha.weinstein@sjsu.edu).

## San Jose State 2004 Student Conference

The Urban Planning Program at San Jose State University (SJSU) is pleased to announce the 2nd Annual 2004 Student Conference. This will be an all-day Saturday event occurring in mid-April on the SJSU campus.

Several sessions in three subject tracks will address issues important to planners in each of the three realms of sustainability: Environment, Equity and Economy.

Last year, over 60 urban planning students came together from universities throughout California to create a dynamic and fun event.

Please see the next edition of this newsletter for more information.