



# Las Virgenes Homeowners Federation, Inc.

Post Office Box 353, Agoura Hills, California 91301

**May, 2007, MEETING ([www.lvhf.org](http://www.lvhf.org))**

**Thursday, May 17th 2007, 7:30 P.M.**

**The Place – Diamond X** – Take Las Virgenes to Mulholland; turn left on Mulholland. For the next 3/4 mile, the King Gillette Ranch will be on your right. After you've passed Stokes Canyon Road, in about 3/4 mile, you will see a sign on your right with "Diamond X" and the National Park Service logo on it. A short distance past the sign a narrow road goes south at a right angle. This is Wickland Road, and, at this point you are entering the recently acquired King Gillette Ranch (Soka) property. Follow Wickland about 300 yards until the road forks; take the left-hand fork; keep bearing left to lighted house. Park; get out of your car; go into the lighted part of the house.

**Call to Order**

**Officers' Reports**

**Roll Call**

**Correspondence/Announcements**

**Agenda Changes/ Approval**

**Approval of Meeting Minutes**

## **Old Business/ Reports**

**Delegates Reports**

**Banquet Report**

**CPO presents their view for Triangle Ranch development**

**Modification of By-laws Action**

## **New Business**

**AB 1470 Discussion and Action**

**Rim of the Valley Trail Corridor Study Act Discussion and Action**

**Proposed Stoplight at intersection of Old Topanga and Mulholland Highway**

**Support for Dave Brown's nomination for California Chapter APA Award Action**

## **INSTALLATION BANQUET — A GRAND NIGHT OUT**

The Federation's 40<sup>th</sup> Annual Installation Banquet was a grand success. We actually entertained our assembled multitude and Julia Brownley, our new representative to the California Assembly gave us an insight into her first 100 days in office in her keynote address. Julia mentioned that this was the first keynote speech of her legislative career and we were thrilled to provide the opportunity. Like Fran, Julia has hit the ground running and is developing legislation related to the environment and education. She pledged to continue to look after the Santa Monica Mountains and invited delegates and guests to bring their concerns and ideas to her. She has retained Fran's staff and office so we won't have to make many changes in our address books. Thanks again to Julia for giving us a thorough report on doings in Sacramento and sharing her enthusiasm for new job.

The other highlight of the evening was to present our Citizen of the Year Award to Jess Thomas. Like last year, our recipient was honored for long and steady service to the community. For years Jess has quietly advocated for the environment, intelligent growth and the interests of Old Agoura and all of the Santa Monica Mountains. What people didn't know about was his career in motorcycle racing and his membership in the 200 mph club at the Bonneville Salt Flats where as a teenager he drove a Triumph streamliner slightly over 214 miles per hour.

The banquet gives delegates an important opportunity to meet the people who represent our region in an informal, social setting and we were pleased to welcome Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky, Calabasas Council members Dennis Washburn, Mary Sue Maurer and Mayor James Bozajian, Agoura Hills Councilmember William Koehler, LVMWD Director Glen Peterson, Las Virgenes School Board member, Dave Moorman and former Assemblymember (and future State Senator) Fran Pavley.

We appreciate the hard work of our steady crew who volunteer their time and effort each year to make this event a success. Thanks once again to Kathy and Alan Berkowitz, Steve Hess, Fern Huddleston, Toby Keeler, Scott Solomon, Jess Thomas, Emma Wilby, Jim Wrigley and Joan Yacovone.

## **LOS ANGELES SECTION OF THE AMERICAN PLANNING ASSOCIATION HONORS DAVE BROWN**

The Los Angeles Section of the American Planning Association has honored our old friend Dave Brown by naming him its Distinguished Leadership—Citizen Planner for 2007. In a letter to Maureen Tamuri, the City's Community Development Director, Jessie Barkley of LA-APA noted that "Many impressive nominations were received as part of this year's awards programs, and the judges had a most difficult task."

We are not surprised that he was selected and are pleased to congratulate Dave and the City of Calabasas for receiving this honor. As most of you know, Dave brings a truly amazing grasp of planning regulations and issues combined with an encyclopedic knowledge of local history and environment to the Calabasas Planning Commission. The City is lucky to have this resource available to them as are all of us who live in the Santa Monica Mountains. Dave is a tireless advocate for the mountains and has been a great help to the Federation for as long as most of us can remember.

Winning this award makes Dave eligible for honors on a statewide level and we have placed an item on this month's agenda to formally support his nomination.

## **“RHNA” vs LOCAL CONTROL OF PLANNING**

You probably think incorporation of Calabasas and Agoura Hills has put future development on the tight leash of local control, held by the people of those cities. Best to look again. While we have been concentrating on establishing our locally drafted General Plans, North Area Plan, and Local Coastal Plan to keep the buildout of Calabasas, Agoura Hills, and unincorporated Las Virgenes in sync with our limited road, school, and sewer capacity, parklands, and our magnificent landscapes, the housing industry has been working Sacramento and SCAG to impose a fair amount of centralized planning for new housing that could modify our local plans.

We're referring to a thing called RHNA (acronym for "Regional Housing Needs Allocation") that can require cities to adjust their local plans and zoning to provide what bureaucrats in Sacramento believe to be our future statewide, regional, and local housing needs.

The California Department Of Housing And Community Development (HCD) has determined that there is a "statewide housing need" of 2,000,000 new housing units between now and 2014, and has allocated 707,219 of those units to the area covered by the Southern California Association Of Governments (SCAG).

SCAG, in turn has allocated those 707, 219 units among counties and cities in the area covered by SCAG, using formulas that encourage more "affordable" housing in affluent communities. Recent buildout and permit activity is apparently also factored in to the allotments for each city.

As a result of these artificial formulas developed, presumably, by downtown officials unfamiliar with local topography and planning issues, SCAG initially allocated 870 new housing units to CALABASAS, 437 to MALIBU, 109 to AGOURA HILLS, and 227 to the unincorporated Los Angeles County. CALABASAS appealed its allocation, asked for a RHNA of 250, and got its RHNA reduced to 516, where it's likely to stay.

Why is the Calabasas allocation so high? Possibly because of the huge amount of permit activity at New Millenium in the last couple of years.

The RHNA numbers are broken down into affordability categories. For CALABASAS these are,

Very Low Income (-50% of L.A County median income)	136
Low Income (50% to 80% of County median)	85
Moderate Income (80% to 120% of County Median)	92
Above Moderate Income	203

Counting the 67 housing permits issued in the last 15 months, Calabasas must plan for a total RHNA of 449 housing units between now and 2014.

The houses don't actually have to be built, but the City must show they can be accommodated in the new General Plan, that programs exist to maintain affordability and the City will not put unreasonable obstacles in the path of construction of the homes by builders or individual homeowners.

The City believes the RHNA numbers can be met by showing the 449 units can be accommodated by,

- Buildout of existing residentially zoned properties, including small lots in Calabasas Highlands and Old Topanga.
- Re-zoning of commercially zoned properties.
- Development of mixed use properties.
- Possible up-zoning of certain properties in the new General Plan.

So, what happens if a city fails to meet its RHNA quota? It will risk loss of eligibility for state grant monies. Will that really happen? Who knows?

## **FIRE SEASON IS HERE – ALREADY!**

This is the time of year when masses of pink “farewell to spring” flowers normally cover roadside banks – but not this year. What is sometimes called the rainy season is over, the grass and brush is drying out rapidly, and the message should be clear after Griffith Park and Catalina – we face the driest year on record with our hillsides covered with exceptional amounts of dry fuel from past years. This will not be a normal fire year.

Don’t let those green oaks and fading grasses fool you. The ground is incredibly dry this year, and so is the vegetation, whether planted landscaping or native shrubs. Don’t be caught unprepared.

If you have a new neighbor who spends all his time on his patio or his swimming pool and never pays any attention to what’s growing just over his block wall, please fill him in. According to a former Los Angeles City Fire Chief, 40 to 100 acres of mature coastal chaparral generates the heat of a Hiroshima Bomb – and that’s what’s going to be racing up the slope toward our hillside homes come summer or fall – if not before. BE READY!

## **GPAC PLANS VISIONING CHARETTE**

The Calabasas General Plan Advisory Committee is planning a “Visioning Charette” this Friday and Saturday.

For times and other particulars, log on to the City’s website at

[www.cityofcalabasas.com](http://www.cityofcalabasas.com) or call Tom Bartlett at the Department of Community Development, 878-4225 x234.

## **AB 1470**

Don Wallace has asked that the Federation act to support Assembly Bill 1470 (The Solar Water Heating and Efficiency Act) that is making its way through the legislature. This item has been placed on the agenda for this month’s meeting and here is a letter sent to Don by Dan Jacobson, environment California Legislative Director that provides some background on this issue.

Hi Donald,

Over the past few weeks, more than 8,500 of you emailed your assembly member in support of AB 1470, the Solar Water Heating and Efficiency

Act of 2007 (Huffman). Thank you! With your help, we have passed this important clean energy bill through two committees. Of course, our work is far from done. To put this bill on the governor's desk by summer's end, we need to demonstrate broad support across the state.

You can help by having your business, neighborhood group, organization, or church endorse AB 1470. To find out how you can help us build support for solar power, click on the link below or paste it into your Web browser:

<https://www.environmentcalifornia.org/action/energy/support?id4=ES>

#### BACKGROUND

The Solar Water Heating and Efficiency Act of 2007 (AB 1470), authored by Assemblymember Jared Huffman (Marin), has passed two committees in the state Assembly over the past few weeks. The bill would create the nation's largest rebate program for solar water heating technologies, helping cut California's dependence on natural gas, lower energy bills, reduce global warming pollution and expand California's solar power market.

AB 1470 would create a statewide rebate program to grow a mainstream market for solar hot water systems, building 200,000 rooftop systems within 10 years. The typical cost of a solar hot water system is between \$4,000 and \$6,000. With a rebate from the state, and continuation of a federal tax credit, such systems could be cost effective if financed through a home loan and could pay for themselves within 8 to 10 years.

Despite opposition from Sempra, one of California's largest natural gas corporations, a majority of two key committees in the state assembly voted in favor of AB 1470. However, we still have a long way to go to make sure AB 1470 is put on the governor's desk by the end of the legislative year this September. You can help by broadening the level of support for bringing more solar power to California.

So far, more than 30 groups and businesses have officially endorsed AB 1470 including:

AFSCME

American Institute of Architects

Americans for Solar Power

Arise Solar

Association of California Community and Energy Services (ACCES)

California Coastal Protection Network

California Solar Energy Industry Association

Center for Biological Diversity

Central Coast Energy Services, Inc.

Clean Power Campaign  
Coalition for Clean Air  
Davis Energy Group  
Environment California  
Lee, Burkhart, Liu, Inc.  
LIHEAP Service Providers Committee  
National Wildlife Federation  
Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC)  
No LNG Community Alliance  
Northern California Solar Energy Association (NorCal Solar)  
Pacific Environment  
Planning and Conservation League  
Real Goods  
Sierra Club of California  
Sierra Pacific Home & Comfort Inc.  
Solar Electric  
Solarcraft  
Southern California Forum  
SPG Solar, Inc.  
TMAD Taylor & Gaines  
Working Assets  
World Council for Renewable Energy  
Vote Solar  
PV Now

With your help, we can more than double this list, demonstrating broad and diverse support for bringing more solar power to California via AB 1470.

To find out how you can help us build support for solar power, click on the link below or paste it into your Web browser:

<https://www.environmentcalifornia.org/action/energy/support?id4=ES>

Then ask your friends and family to help by forwarding this e-mail to them.

Sincerely,

Dan Jacobson

Environment California Legislative Director

DanJ@environmentcalifornia.org

<http://www.environmentcalifornia.org>

## Triangle Ranch Update

The Los Angeles Board of Supervisors sent the Triangle Ranch Developers back to the drawing board last month asking that they make some major modifications to the plan; remove retaining walls, preserve 100% of the endangered species, stay out of the creek, and more. It appears that the developers either did not hear the Supervisor or chose not to adhere to the recommendations. The new plan put forth by the developers contains 61 homes (on par with the last plan) and still contains retaining walls and encroaches on the SEA (Significant Ecological Area) amongst other things. The Los Angeles Board of Supervisors will take up the issue again on June 26, 2007. The community desperately needs your comments on the current plan. Please send your emails asking that the project be denied as proposed to [zev@bos.co.la.ca.us](mailto:zev@bos.co.la.ca.us).

## Topanga & others asking for full time “Supertanker”

Please see the following email form a local Arson Watch member ---

### **Ask your legislators and the governor to keep the firefighting Supertanker in Southern California**

A local nonprofit based in the Santa Monica Mountains, the Wildfire Research Network, is pressing the state to make the Supertanker water-dropping jet available for firefighting in Southern California this year. Residents in high fire danger areas are urged to contact their legislators and the governor to push for a contract.

The Supertanker is a DC-10 that has been adapted to be able to drop 12,000 gallons of water or fire retardant in a single pass over a fire—ten times the capacity of California’s other air tankers. It is based in Victorville. Last year it was used for 14 days on a limited evaluation contract, and drew praise from California fire officials for its efficiency in creating fire lines.

The Wildfire Research Network wants the state to fund a \$5 million contract to make the plane available in this area full-time during the coming fire season. In addition to the contract, another \$2-\$5 million would be needed to cover costs of fuel and fire retardant. Tanker Air Carrier, the company that operates the jet, will send it wherever it finds a customer, so it’s important to try to keep it in the Southland.

#### **What you can do**

- Contact Governor Schwarzenegger at (916) 445-2841
- Contact State Senator Sheila Kuehl at (916) 651-4023, [senator.kuehl@sen.ca.gov](mailto:senator.kuehl@sen.ca.gov)

- Contact State Assembly Member Julia Brownley at (916) 319-2041, [brownley@assembly.ca.gov](mailto:brownley@assembly.ca.gov)

**For more information**

- Visit the Wildfire Research Network's Web site -- [www.wildfireresearch.org](http://www.wildfireresearch.org) — for more details on firefighting resources in Southern California
- Read the Google News Alert at  
<[http://www.pe.com/localnews/inland/stories/PE\\_News\\_Local\\_D\\_jetlobby29.3ed4464.html](http://www.pe.com/localnews/inland/stories/PE_News_Local_D_jetlobby29.3ed4464.html)> for more information about the Supertanker jet.