

**CALENDAR ITEM
140**

A	Statewide	06/23/11
S	Statewide	S. Haaf

**CONSIDER A RESOLUTION TO ACKNOWLEDGE
THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE SAVE THE AMERICAN RIVER ASSOCIATION
AND TO COMMEND THEIR SERVICE AND COMMITMENT TO
PROTECTING AND ENHANCING THE RESOURCES OF
THE AMERICAN RIVER AND THE AMERICAN RIVER PARKWAY**

Since 1961, the Save the American River Association (SARA) has played an important role in the preservation of the American River and the establishment of the American River Parkway. This month, SARA celebrated its 50th Anniversary at a rally to support the Sacramento County Regional Park System and to dedicate a plaque honoring the Father of the Parkway, William B. Pond, in celebrating 50 years of accomplishments.

Early on SARA acquired one of the first parcels of land that ultimately help create the nearly 4700 acre Parkway of today. At the urging of SARA, in 1962 the American River Parkway Plan was adopted in concept by Sacramento County and incorporated into the Recreation Element of the County General Plan.

The American River Parkway is an open space greenbelt approximately 23-miles in length located along the American River and has been designated both a State and National *Wild and Scenic River*. The River and its Parkway serve as a magnet for public recreation with nearly 6 million visitors a year, who enjoy the unique wildlife and recreational opportunities by swimming, fishing, boating, kayaking, rafting, birding, picnicking, walking, running, bike and horseback riding and just relaxing and is considered the "Jewel of the Sacramento Region". The river is also an important waterway for both steelhead and salmon.

One of SARA's major accomplishments was serving as co-plaintiff in a lawsuit concerning the proposed diversion of water flows from the lower American River. The lawsuit (*EDF v. EBMUD*, Superior Court of Alameda County, Case No. 425955) filed in 1972 by the Environmental Defense Fund (EDF), and intervened by SARA, the California State Lands Commission and Sacramento County, sought to prevent the East Bay Municipal Utility District (EBMUD) from taking American River water except under stipulated limited conditions. Through

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SARA's leadership and advocacy, the 17-year legal battle resulted in a landmark decision setting minimum flow standards acceptable for fishery and recreational needs in the American River. The case helped preserve flows in the lower American River between Nimbus Dam and its confluence with the Sacramento River, which EBMUD had proposed to divert through the Folsom South Canal.

SARA's primary mission is the protection of the public's interest in land and water issues concerning the lower American River and the Parkway. Local civic organizations, such as SARA, are essential for the protection and promotion of public trust resources and their uses, such as those in American River and its related public uses within the Parkway, for the benefit of the public and future generations. Throughout the years, SARA's tireless efforts have made countless contributions to the preservation of the public trust resources of the American River and the Parkway. The staff of the Commission recommends acknowledging SARA on its 50th Anniversary for its contributions in preserving the lower American River and American River Parkway.

OTHER PERTINENT INFORMATION:

1. The American River and the American River Parkway includes sovereign lands subject to the Public Trust and under the jurisdiction of the Commission.
2. Pursuant to the Commission's delegation of authority and the State CEQA Guidelines [Title 14, California Code of Regulations, section 15060(c)(3)], the staff has determined that this activity is not subject to the provisions of CEQA because it is not a "project" as defined by CEQA and the State CEQA Guidelines.

Authority: Public Resources Code Section 21065 and Title 14, California Code of Regulations, sections 15060(c)(3) and 15378.

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT THE COMMISSION:

1. Find that the activity is exempt from the requirements of CEQA pursuant to Title 14, California Code of Regulations, section 15060(c)(3) because the activity is not a project as defined by Public Resources Code section 21065 and Title 14, California Code of Regulations, section 15378.
2. Adopt the resolution attached hereto as Exhibit A.