

## Agriculture is a major factor of life

August 21, 2017



### Teamwork

*By Hank Weston, District 4 Supervisor*

Here in District IV, agriculture is a major factor of life, asset to our community and an important economic driver. The Planning Department has prepared a public review draft of a zoning text amendment that would establish a definition of uses allowed as "Agritourism." It would allow those uses as an ancillary use to a farm, ranch or agricultural operation within the primary agricultural zoning districts in the County (AE, AG, FR and RA) subject to building permit issuance and zoning compliance with adherence to basically the same requirements as a Field Retail Stand or Farm Stand in that zoning district. The Planning Department is accepting comments in writing from the public by 5:00 p.m. on August 25, 2017. The recently established Penn Valley Area Municipal Advisory Council (MAC) will be reviewing this draft zoning amendment to identify areas for comment or recommendation.

In other news, I would like to address recent concerns that have been raised regarding the Penn Valley Pipeline project and current road conditions. The patched trench line in recent months on Pleasant Valley Road and Penn Valley Drive was temporary to allow permanent repaving of the trench all at once. By the time this is published, the temporary patch should be removed and replaced after allowed for settling with permanent pavement to provide for a smooth roadway surface. The State has funded the entire Penn Valley Pipeline, a 6 million dollar project, but would not approve a full resurface of the roads. But because it is a high priority for the County, we will be using some of the anticipated revenues from the new State gas tax to do a resurface when we receive the new funding sometime in the summer of 2018. Subsequently, both Penn Valley Drive and Pleasant Valley Road are scheduled for resurfacing. In terms of timeline, the completion of the project has been delayed as workers hit two areas of rock that added about six weeks, plus they have also hit large boulders while borrowing under Highway 20. Workers will have to get a larger bore jack to try and get through. We will be going back to the State to ask for increased funding for these unanticipated costs and time.

Last but not least, I would like to encourage the community to get ready to dust their boots off, roll up their sleeves and volunteer for the 20th Annual Yuba River Cleanup on September 16, 2017. The South Yuba River Citizens League (SYRCL) has organized an annual river cleanup day every year since 1998. The Yuba River is an extremely important and popular asset to Nevada County with over 700,000 people visiting the river every year. Last year, over 850 people volunteered and removed approximately 9,000 pounds of trash and 1,500 pounds of recyclables from nearly 90 miles of river, creek and lake shorelines at 30 sites within the Yuba River and Bear River watersheds. The event is great for families and it is an excellent team building opportunity for youth and school groups, clubs, faith-based organizations, and businesses to build camaraderie and leadership skills. The cleanup will start at 9 a.m. and go until 1 p.m. Please go to <http://yubariver.org/annual-events/yuba-river-cleanup> for more details. But don't worry – no good deed goes unnoticed. SYRCL will also be hosting a volunteer appreciation party at Pioneer Park in Nevada City from 1 to 5 p.m. So I encourage you to get involved and help maintain our beautiful river and watersheds, which we could not do without some teamwork.