

EDITORIALS

Manufacturing of Mistruths



By Brian Bonfiglio
Director of DoS programs
at Blackwater

This is my first of many to come articles with the Back Country Messenger (BCM), and it's with great enthusiasm I look forward to providing another outlet for providing factual information concerning the Blackwater West project.

I've read the articles written about Blackwater West by members of the community and it's troubling when I see so much information that has not only been distorted, but that it has purposely been "manufactured" to provide Potrero community member's blatant untruths.

I can't address all the misinformation in this article, but I want to clear-up some points to provide a more responsible venue for discussing Blackwater West.

Chemically Sensitive Residents: A huge interest for Blackwater. I can assure you that the air quality tests and requirements placed on all applicants under CEQA and the County/DPLU address a wide spectrum of air, water, and the like, quality issues. Blackwater would not purposely endanger the health of any of the residents of Potrero and once the air quality (and like) studies have been approved by the County I will be personally looking forward to meeting with all who are concerned about this subject and would be more than happy to do so at your residences. I have been well briefed on the Chemically Sensitive Community and have spoken to one family in particular as well. Blackwater is a strong proponent of clean air and water, and I am certain that all concur, that 350,000 chick-

ens, and hundreds of cattle, with manure trucks driving up and down Potrero community streets, is by far the unhealthy choice, as had been the scope of the operation on the Ranch in the past, and potentially for the future.

Endangered Species: The May 2007 article written by Jan Hedlun speaks to a wide variety of plant and wildlife that; {quote} "has been documented." What needs to be stated is that the list provided does not speak to the specifics of the proposed site and that all references made to Endangered Species should be limited to "regional mapping shows" at best. The spring surveys are just now complete and are being drafted for submittal to the County/DPLU. Responsible reporting of Endangered Species is being documented at the proposed site and will be reviewed by a County Biologist and accredited and credentialed Subject Matter Experts.

Forty-acre ranchettes: It was said that this option for the Ranch, instead of Blackwater West, would generate a known economy and predictable traffic. The majority of Potrero residents don't work in Potrero and have to travel, some an hour each way, to their employment. That means economic support goes to other towns and businesses. Blackwater will provide good paying jobs "in" the community on a full-time and part-time basis. We would like to keep the economic and quality of life benefits to the community - "in" the community. There would be no predictability or standard to the residents of a 40-acre ranchette development. Blackwater is a responsible and professional company who will remain linked to the community. We will always be responsible and accessible to the community leaders and our neighbors, its organizations, schools, charities, church, ETC. We will always be open and

available to discuss traffic concerns, potential speeding issues, concern over strain on community infrastructure, control fire potential, as well other community standards, all being agreed upon by community leaders and members and Blackwater. Most important is that these standards will be adhered to by professional men and women of our Law Enforcement and Military community... Note: The subject of employment and community support will be discussed more in-depth in a future article.

Noise test: The statement made in the May 2007 issue of the BCM that a preliminary noise test was held, without community notification or participation, on March 17, 2007 is testament to the "Manufacturing of Mistruths." I, as the Blackwater representative responsible to the Planning Board and community members in coordinating the required live-fire noise test, was not even present in the State of California on March 17, 2007. In speaking with the property owner about this very subject he was outraged that such a comment was made being that he and an employee were present on Round Potrero Ranch almost all day. Not only did he convey that there was no live-fire noise test conducted on the Ranch, but that he did not witness or hear any firearms discharge at all.

Folks, it's my intent to provide you the facts; unemotional, non-political, facts concerning the Blackwater West project. I'm certain that more discussion will occur after the EIR is available to the public, at which time I will hold an open house on the Ranch to discuss this Land Use Project to those responsible parties in the Potrero Community who have a sincere interest in choosing the best neighbor possible and finding out more about the truth behind Blackwater West.

Recycle to Save Money and Reduce Green House Gas



by Donna Tisdale, Rural Advocate

Basic recycling at home and at work really can make a difference locally, and regionally. By developing and practicing good recycling habits you can save money on disposal fees, preserve energy and natural resources, help to create new jobs, and reduce the need for new landfills.

According to Californians Against Waste (www.cawrecycles.org), a non-profit group focused on the benefits of waste reduction, solid waste landfills are the largest source of manmade methane emissions in California, a major green house gas contributor. Modern landfills do try to capture the methane gases generated by decomposing garbage, sewage sludge, organics, and other obnoxious wastes. However, in the same way that landfill liner systems notoriously fail and contaminate groundwater, methane control systems also fail and spew tons of emissions into the air we breathe and the atmosphere in general.

While most media attention has been focused on the negative impacts of carbon dioxide on climate change, methane is reportedly 23 times more damaging at trapping heat in the atmosphere. The California Energy Commission projects that climate change will impact weather patterns and water supplies, and will bring about more extended heat waves. Dramatically increased strains on energy supplies are also projected if we don't make changes. Sixty percent of "garbage" that makes its way to a landfill is actually recyclable. Besides bottles, cans, paper and cardboard, many other items can and should be recycled one way or another. Recycling used motor oil reduces the need for more oil wells and refineries. The County of San Diego is now phasing in required recycling of Con-

struction and Demolition Debris which makes up 22% of what is landfilled. Deconstruction of old buildings results in reuse of much of its wood, metal, fixtures, cabinets, etc.

There is also movement to ban organics, like food and yard clippings, from landfills to reduce methane production. Batteries and electronic devices contain hazardous materials which can lead to neurological damage and cancer. In 2003, approximately 450,000 tons of toxic-laden electronics, that should have been recycled, were instead disposed of in California landfills posing a growing threat to public health and the environment.

Locally, the Campo tribe is finalizing their plans for a 400-600 acre landfill at the headwaters of Lower Campo Creek. They plan to long-haul waste by truck or train, creating more green house gas emissions, from an undisclosed urban source to their reservation where it will be buried over our shared aquifer which feeds local wells. A recent press release (5-8-07) advertises their involvement in a thirty state effort to address climate change. The Tribal Chairman stated, "We can only manage what we can effectively measure. Getting accurate data on GHG emissions is a vital step towards addressing the impacts of climate change on our reservation...". The statement also noted they are laying the foundation for climate actions that will benefit generations to come. If you were unaware of their landfill plans this would sound very positive.

However, a limited internet search shows that the Campo tribe alone has received over \$400,000 in federal grants for various air programs for their reservation. The actual amount is probably much more than that. Personally, I find it incredibly ironic that the same tribal government that, on one hand, has aggressively fought to build a major methane generating landfill, will get paid to monitor their own air pollution, and on the other hand, boastfully promotes themselves as being good stewards whose actions will benefit future generations. It seems so in-

credibly disingenuous.

Californians Against Waste and others, recognize that by diverting an additional 20% of currently disposed aluminum cans, cardboard, food waste, paper, and water bottles, we can cut green house gas emissions from solid waste in half. Unless you are hopelessly lazy and apathetic, a little effort can go a long way in saving energy and reducing those emissions. We all need to increase our rate of recycling, at home and at work, continue to buy products with less packaging, and make a real effort to purchase products made with recycled materials. To their credit, the Campo tribe's Golden Acorn Casino did get recognition from the California Integrated Waste Management Board for recycling over 600 tons of waste in 2006, saving \$21,000 in disposal fees. It takes less energy to clean and convert materials than it does to make products from virgin materials. You also save money on disposal fees and actually make money on specified recyclables at buy-back

See **Recycle** on page 15 centers. By teaching our kids to conserve and recycle, we instill good habits that will benefit society and nature as a whole.

It is up to you to decide if you want to be part of the problem or part of the solution. Please take advantage of our local recycling centers.

The Boulevard/Jacumba Recycling buy-back center is located at the Jacumba Garage/Towing yard, 42748 Old Hwy 80.

The M.E.R.I.T. Recycling Center is located in Campo across from the Motor Transport Museum at 32102 Hwy 94. The M.E.R.I.T. site accepts a wider variety of material. For more resources you can call the County Recycling and Household Hazardous Waste Toll-Free Hotline at 1-877-713-2784. Based on your zip-code, they can tell you the closest place to recycle a wide variety of items. Recycling is the right thing to do, you can make a difference, so let's get to it.

Nature's Big Bud Continued from page 12

"NATURAL AS CAN BE!"
NATURE'S MIRACLE
FOR GROWING
BEAUTIFUL FLOWERS,
PLANTS, SHRUBS,
TREES AND LAWNS
SAFELY - WITHOUT
TOXIC
CHEMICALS
LOCALLY PRODUCED

cation fertilizer or wet the potting soil after planting to ensure vigorous, healthy root development and robust blooming.

Uses

Use in liquid form by applying directly on leaves. Nutrients will be absorbed quickly. Plants respond in

days. Repeat treatment on leaves every week or ten days. Liquid worm castings may be used to water plants by diluting with tap water and applying directly to the soil.

Slow Release

Liquid worm castings supply a sustained, slow release of multiple nutrients to all your plants and will provide for gradual, effective feeding for a prolonged period. For best results, use regularly on all your flowers, plants, shrubs, and trees. Excellent for use on lawns.

No Offensive Odors

Our liquid worm castings are a totally odor free product that can be safely

used on all indoor as well as outdoor plants without fear of offensive odors or attracting pesky unwanted insects.

Superior Quality

Our liquid worm castings are produced using 100% organic India Blue worm castings and pure, natural, non-filtered mountain spring water for the highest quality product ensuring satisfaction. Natural yucca extract is added to maximize plant absorption. None better is sold!

Nature's Big Bud will soon be sold at local stores carrying plant and garden supplies. If you don't see it where you shop please call us: (619) 933-3756.



MERIT Recycling Center

32102 Highway 94 in Campo

Hours of Operation:
Sunday: 10 AM to 1 PM
Monday: 9 AM to 2 PM

There is no charge for recycling

www.merit-campo.org

MERIT Recycling is staffed by volunteers

Proceeds from recycling are used for distribution of the MERIT Newsletter and for contributions to community organizations.