

Chico Enterprise Record

1-11-2018

CONCOW

95 dogs seized from alleged 'puppy mill'

Staff Reports

CONCOW » Ninety-five malamute dogs seized from an alleged "puppy mill" in Concow last week by Butte County Animal Control are being housed at the Northwest SPCA in Oroville.

The dogs — 70 puppies and 25 adult dogs, were seized under California's animal cruelty law based on poor living conditions and inappropriate confinement, according to a release from the county.

Most of the dogs will be fostered out to rescue organizations throughout the state.

A few will be held for adoption locally, but those interested are asked to not call. When the dogs are available in about a month, the information will be posted on the SPCA website: www.nwspca.org/home.

The SPCA is in need of puppy food, blankets and monetary donations, which can be dropped off at 2787 S. Fifth Ave. in Oroville. Monetary donations can be made online at www.nwspca.org/donate.html.

Animal control was notified about the situation by a concerned resident. Northern Valley Animal Disaster Group assisted in transporting the dogs to the SPCA.

Butte County Fire Safe Council facing possible bankruptcy



Members of a Butte County sheriff's work crew are seen near Lake Oroville's Saddle Dam day use facility as they work on a Butte County Fire Safe Council fuel reduction project below Kelly Ridge Road in Oroville. - Bill Husa — Enterprise-Record

By PARADISEPOST.COM |

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Paradise >> The Butte County Fire Safe Council is in danger of insolvency because an agency is denying reimbursement for an already completed project.

"The Fire Safe Council has legal counsel reviewing the demands by a pass-through entity which could ultimately lead to the insolvency of our fire safe council," Butte County's 5th District Supervisor Doug Teeter said at a Jan. 9 town hall meeting.

The council, which works on fire safety projects countywide, such as clearing brush, is concerned about \$125,406 in grant funding that was approved but hasn't been reimbursed.

"We are a local, nonprofit, grass-roots organization," Executive Director Cali-Jane DeAnda said. "Our average annual budget is about \$350,000, but that depends on how many grants we have been awarded."

In response to the 2008 fires that destroyed 80,960 acres and 206 structures, the Butte County Fire Safe Council applied for the notoriously competitive Wildland Urban Interface grant in July 2013. The \$260,855 in funding was approved and came from the U.S. Forest Service. The grant passed through an independent, nonprofit entity, the California Fire Safe Council.

According to Teeter, the grant was originally designed to be a partnership with the Yankee Hill Fire Safe Council due to the proximity of the fires and a successful partnership from past projects.

The grant was approved and work on the 18-month project began. Components of the grant, according to the state's website, were to reduce hazard fuels and provide education and monitoring through community and landowner action.

Teeter explained the original state grant was later converted by California Fire Safe Council staff into an electronic online filing system, ZoomGrants. In the conversion process, the partnership language was dropped from the administration narrative. Later correspondence confirmed the pass-through entity determined a series of expenses were disallowed because Yankee Hill was not considered a partner in the project.

At the time, grant components were being carried out with tense communications between the pass-through entity and the two councils.

"Payments were being delayed," Teeter said. "So we spent the money to run the program out of our general fund, in faith."

A secondary issue arose when DeAnda went on maternity leave. In her place, a representative from the Yankee Hill council, Brenda Rightmyer, was appointed as interim director. Eventually that was deemed a "perceived conflict of interest" by the pass-through entity, which contributed further penalties, totalling \$125,406 in disallowed costs.

According to Rightmyer and DeAnda, the key change in the midst of the grant was informally approved in email correspondence initially, and soon after officially with proper paperwork and signatures by the California Fire Safe Council.

Meanwhile, over the life of the grant, the state council went through a series of six grant managers and three executive directors. Through the changes, communications between the organizations became extremely murky.

The California Fire Safe Council could not be reached for comment.

"Our saga has been one of changing people and changing stories," Butte County Fire Safe Council Treasurer Jim Broshears said. "We chased the story over a year and three months because it's been so inconsistent."

Four weeks before the project closed, the Butte County Fire Safe Council was issued formal notice of a desk audit.

"Through the process of grant management we were always sure to ask for guidance, not forgiveness," Rightmyer said. "To have been told this in the last four weeks of closing, it has crippled the organization."

The disallowed costs and the perceived conflict of interest led to a tertiary snag — the denial of another grant Yankee Hill had applied for and been preliminarily approved for. According to Rightmyer, the state council told Yankee Hill it was not equipped to handle the grant.

"The project was still extremely successful," DeAnda said. "We are celebrating our 20-year anniversary of our organization and we are about where we started (financially). We have to build back up now. We are struggling and if people can join us, we would welcome it."

According to DeAnda, the council is looking for creative ways to raise money, keep the chipper program running and continue to protect the community from the destruction of fires.

The next Butte County Fire Safe Council meeting, open to the public, is 9 a.m. Tuesday, Feb. 8 at Town Hall, 5555 Skyway, Paradise.

CHEROKEE

Two rescued from house fire

Staff Reports

CHEROKEE » Two people trapped in a burning residence were rescued in the community of Cherokee Saturday morning.

Just before 9 a.m., Cal Fire-Butte County firefighters responded to a structure fire in the 3500 block of Cherokee Road, according to a Cal Fire press release. The home was about 50 percent engulfed in

flames when units arrived.

Initial reports stated a person was trapped in the structure, and firefighters immediately began searching for victims. Two people were rescued and treated for smoke inhalation.

The flames were contained, and firefighters remained at the scene for several hours to mop up.

The cause of the fire is under investigation.

MECHOOPDA

Tribe wins appeal on casino

Butte County's bid to halt project fails in U.S. Court of Appeal

Staff Reports

WASHINGTON » Butte County has lost an appeal in federal court in its attempt to prevent a new casino from being built near the intersection of highways 149 and 99 by the Mechoopda Indian Tribe of the Chico Rancheria.

The U.S. Court of Appeals ruled Friday that the tribe should be able to proceed.

The county was appealing an earlier ruling by a federal judge who also sided with the Mechoopda.

The county has fought the concept for more than a decade and has spent more than \$600,000 in legal fees doing so, though the two Chico-area supervisors, Larry Wahl and Maureen Kirk, voted two years ago against continuing the court battle.

The court's 15-page decision, agreed to unanimously by three judges, dismissed each of Butte County's appeal arguments.

"The U.S. Department of Interior provided Butte County with ample opportunities to submit and rebut material as well as time to develop the reasoning behind its arguments. Ultimately, Butte County failed to do so," Mechoopda Chairman Dennis Ramirez said in a press release. "We thank the District Court and the Department of Justice for recognizing the weaknesses in Butte County's arguments and for acknowledging our historical connection to the land."

Ramirez added: "The Mechoopda Indian Tribe looks forward to advancing our proposed casino project. In doing so, we plan to drive economic development in Butte County for years to come."

If a casino is built, it would be the third in Butte County.

The county had argued that the federal government should not allow the proposed site to be taken into trust by the tribe. The Mechoopda argued the location amounted to a restoration of historic lands. The secretary of the Interior Department sided with the tribe and ruled twice, the last time in 2014, that the property constitutes "restored lands."

The Mechoopda first asked the government in 2002 to consider the 645-acre parcel as restored lands.

In an earlier article, County Counsel Bruce Alpert said the county had concerns about the project's location, which is not near any emergency services; a lack of water supply and sewer system; water quality and recharge issues; and traffic safety issues.

Briefs

MAGALIA

Butte Creek tour to review forest health

A Magalia forest health tour with a focus on Maidu cultural practices will be 9 a.m.-noon Wednesday, beginning at the Paradise Lake parking lot.

The tour of the Little Butte Creek watershed will be hosted by the Butte County Fire Safe Council in partnership with the Mechoopda Indian tribe.

Areas of forest health thinning and watershed protection will be reviewed on both Forest Service and Paradise Irrigation District lands, which have been funded by a grant from the Sierra Nevada Conservancy.

Participants are asked to RSVP by Monday by calling 877-0984.

For more information call the Butte County Fire Safe Council at 877-0984, or go to www.buttefiresafe.net.

Chico Enterprise Record

5-11-2018

LAW AND ORDER

More than 2,000 plants pulled from pot grow

Staff Reports

OREGON CITY » A raid Tuesday on a residence in the 2800 block of Cherokee Road allegedly turned up an elaborate commercial marijuana grow with more than 2,000 plants.

Butte County Sheriff's deputies and agents of the Butte Interagency Narcotics Task Force saw a man run out of the residence and into some brush when they arrived to serve a search warrant.

The man was found hiding in a tree line about a hundred yards away and

he was taken into custody without incident.

He was identified as Yu Zheng, 39, of Pennsylvania.

A search of the property allegedly revealed marijuana growing indoors, outdoors and in a large greenhouse.

A total of 2,165 marijuana plants were reported to be eradicated.

Zheng was arrested at the scene for cultivation of marijuana, possession of marijuana for sale, and felony maintaining a residence for drug sales.

The investigation is ongoing.

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5-28-2018

FIRE

Concow mobile home catches fire, no injuries

By Staff Reports

CONCOW » Just before midnight Saturday, firefighters responded to a structure fire on the 3800 block of Pinkston Canyon Road in Concow, according to a Cal Fire-Butte County press release. Crews arrived to find a

double-wide mobile home 75 percent well involved. Units remained at the scene for a couple of hours extinguishing and overhauling the structure. No injuries were reported and what caused the fire is under investigation.

Chico Enterprise Record

6-1-2018

CONCOW

Fire destroys travel trailer in Concow

By Staff Reports

A travel trailer was destroyed by fire early Thursday morning in Concow, according to Cal Fire-Butte County.

The fire broke out about 3:30 a.m. Thursday in the 1100 block of Aureole Way, according to a press release.

First firefighters on scene reported finding the trailer engulfed in flames, with propane tanks venting.

The possibility of the fire spreading into surrounding vegetation was considered high due to the wind, and additional resources were called in.

The fire was contained to the trailer however.

Thirty firefighters responded including one hand crew, with four engines, two water trucks and a bulldozer.

The cause remains under investigation.

— *Staff Reports*

Chico Enterprise Record
6-16-2018

CONCOW

Reservations required for performance camp

“Unplugged Arts,” a performance arts sleepover camp for children ages 8-13, will be June 18-23 at the Lake Concow Campground, and reservations are required.

There will be water play, art work, costumes, free time in a screen free environment and wholesome vegetarian meals and snacks.

The \$380 fee includes all instruction, food, costumes, production costs and admission.

Jeanne Christopherson is the director for the camp. For information, call 345-6324 or email jkristoffer22@hotmail.com.

Chico Enterprise Record

7-11-2018

FIRE



CAL FIRE-BUTTE COUNTY

Cal Fire-Butte County said a fire Tuesday in Concow had grown to 10 acres, prompting evacuations for some areas.

Evacuation warnings issued, then lifted for Concow area fire

Staff reports

CONCOW » A vegetation fire Tuesday in Concow grew to 10 acres and evacuations were ordered briefly before eventually being rescinded.

According to Cal Fire-Butte County, the fire sparked about 1:30 p.m. off Rich Gulch Road in Concow near Lake Oroville. By 2 p.m. the fire had grown to 10 acres, and firefighters were calling for additional resources to fight the blaze.

The Butte County Sheriff's Office initially issued evacuation warnings for Lower Gulch Road, Rich

Gulch Road, Patton Peak Road, Mortar Rock Road and Hidden Mine Road. Evacuation warnings were also issued for Raulson Road, Via Los Lupes and Red Eye Road. All are just north of the Highway 70 bridge near Lime Saddle.

By about 3:15 p.m., the evacuation orders were lifted but warnings remained in place for the Lower Gulch Road and Dark Gulch Road areas. At 4:30, the Butte County Sheriff's Office said all evacuation warnings were lifted. The fire remained at 10 acres and was 25 percent contained.

DESECRATION

Yolo County files lawsuit over bulldozed Native American burials

By Woodland Daily Democrat

A civil lawsuit has been filed against four companies who allegedly bulldozed Native American burials in West Sacramento.

Yolo County District Attorney Jeff Reisig announced the filing of a civil suit on Friday.

The four defendants — Albert D. Seeno Construction Co., Discovery Builders, Inc., Seecon Financial & Construction Co., Inc., and A-S Pipelines, Inc. — are reputed to have disturbed the First Nation cemeteries during the construction of a large residential development.

According to the complaint, the defendants had

known for nearly two decades that the lands underlying their proposed residential development were suspected to hold human remains as well as other archaeological resources.

“Materials prepared for the proposed development in 1998, for example, informed the defendants that there ‘are significant cultural or archaeological sites identified in ... the project area,’” stated David Irej, assistant chief deputy district attorney. “And the defendants’ early development of the project confirmed the presence of Native American remains on the property, when the defendants found a Native American burial in 2001.”

Despite having this information, the companies, Irej claims, declined to inform those performing earthmoving work for the project that archaeological resources could be present on site.

“And when one of defendants’ subcontractors found human remains in 2015, the defendants instructed the subcontractor not to contact the police and to hide the remains,” Irej asserts.

“In the end, City of West Sacramento staff learned of the remains through other avenues and then promptly requested an archaeological review of the site. When archaeologists finally surveyed the site in late 2015, they saw the result of the

defendants’ previous misconduct: multiple human remains had been unearthed by prior construction and scattered across a widespread area.”

“The defendants’ unlawful conduct has resulted in the destruction and damage of countless Native American remains,” said Reisig. “The flagrant disregard of the sanctity of the burial site is indefensible and deeply offensive.”

The suit seeks civil penalties against the defendants and a court order that ensures that disturbed remains are properly re-interred and that bars the defendants from further unlawfully disturbing First Nation remains.

TEHAMA COUNTY

Signs marking tribal lands dedicated

By Jake Hutchison

*jhutchison@redbluffdaily-
news.com*

CORNING » Members of the Paskenta Band of Nomlaki Indians, Caltrans and California Highway Patrol gathered Wednesday morning near the fountain in front of Rolling Hills Casino to celebrate the creation of two new road signs that will mark tribal lands on Interstate 5.

As a Caltrans truck drove into the casino driveway, the 8- by 19-foot sign was hoisted up by the truck's built-in crane and slowly placed to the side of the bed for viewing.

This was the northbound sign that was placed on I-5 shortly after the ceremony near the Liberal Avenue exit. The southbound sign is expected to go up sometime over the course of the next few weeks. Both signs have been in the works for roughly a year and were made in partnership between the tribe and Caltrans District 2.

Tribal Chairman Dru Alejandre recalled the moment the tribe decided to pursue the signs during a trip south about a year ago.

"We were traveling to

"It's a way to represent who we are. The reservation is our homeland. We want to be able to share that with everyone."

— Tribal Chairman
Dru Alejandre

Southern California visiting tribes when one of our council members saw a sign with the tribe's name," Alejandre said. "We reached out to Kendee (Vance, of Caltrans) for help."

Alejandre said the signs are an important milestone in recognition for the tribe.

"It's a way to represent who we are," he said. "The reservation is our homeland. We want to be able to share that with everyone."

Vance, the tribal liaison for Caltrans District 2, said Caltrans tries to work with California tribes to help moments like Wednesday's happen.

"This is just one of the signing to tribal lands we've done," Vance said. "It's one of many ways Cal-

trans works collaboratively to create partnerships. We sign to tribal land just as we would cities and counties."

Tribal Member at Large Natasha Magana said she was proud of the signs and what they represent for the tribe as well as the community.

"It's an honor to have our sign here," she said. "It's a way for everyone in the community to know where we are, who we are and where we are from. It means so much to let people know we are a family and part of the community."

Tribal Secretary Luis Delara shared Magana's sentiment over the interstate's new markers.

"This is a big milestone for our tribe," Delara said. "It puts us on the map. We've been working hard to establish ourselves in the community."

CHP Lt. Commander Lou Aviles attended the ceremony with many of his officers.

"This is a great opportunity for the tribe to get recognition and for people to recognize that this is historically tribal land," Aviles said.



Southwest of Lake Almanor, Yellow Creek winds through Humbug Valley, now owned and managed by the Maidu Summit Consortium to conserve traditional Native American natural resources. Bud Turner - Feather River Land Trust

CALIFORNIA FORUM

Sierra stewards listen to the trees, and a California tribe regains an ancestral land



BY JANE BRAXTON LITTLE
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In 2004 Lorena Gorbet stood and delivered a simple message: “We want our land back.”

Since then Gorbet, a Maidu Indian, has repeated her request at least twice a year to a council tasked with recommending new owners for 140,000 acres of Pacific Gas & Electric Co. land, designated for conservation under a 2003 bankruptcy agreement. Some of it once belonged to the Maidu.

Sacramento Bee

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WHAT STARTED AS A LAND OWNERSHIP ISSUE TOOK ON THE SUBTLE TONES OF SOCIAL JUSTICE. GORBET TOLD THE COUNCIL RETURNING TASMAM KOYAM TO THE MAIDU WAS AN OPPORTUNITY 'TO RIGHT SOME PAST WRONG.'

Last month it was the council that delivered: Five years after an initial recommendation, it named Gorbet and other members of the Maidu Summit Consortium owners of Humbug Valley, a 2,325-acre grassy meadow laced by Yellow Creek and rimmed by the granite peaks of the northern Sierra Nevada. The Maidu call this remnant of their homeland

Tasmam Koyom.

The unanimous recommendation by the Pacific Forest and Watershed Lands Stewardship Council marks the first time ancestral lands in California have been returned to a Native American tribe not recognized by the federal government. It also marks the launch of a land management plan that combines burning, pruning and other time-honored Maidu practices with the latest scientific technology.

For the Maidu, ownership of Humbug Valley culminates a process that has united nine diverse Maidu groups often historically at odds.

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“At first it was just getting everybody to work together,” Gorbet told me. They were driven by the potential of owning the land of their ancestors as well as a vision of managing it to heal and nourish the places they had lost: restoring angelica to meadows; returning oak savannahs to hillsides; even bringing back the snapping turtles and salmon that frequent their songs and stories. They believed restoring the land would restore their culture and their people.

To achieve any of this they had to produce a management plan, baseline surveys, deeds – bureaucratic documents as alien to them as the concept of retaining natural fire on the landscape was, until very recently, to the mostly Anglo agency officials on the council. Meeting the demands of the Stewardship Council was sometimes tedious, and it involved working with groups with whom the Maidu had once had “not necessarily an equitable role,” said Ken Holbrook, Maidu Summit director.

What emerged is a plan for Humbug Valley and lands around Lake Almanor that total 3,000 acres. Along with cultural and visitor centers, they are designing a Maidu Cultural Park, modeled after national parks, with a system of trails featuring traditional ecological management.

The experience that has united and strengthened the Mountain Maidu has been a learning process for members of the Stewardship Council, too. When Gorbet first spoke up asking for land, many envisioned a casino in the relatively pristine Humbug Valley. When she and others mentioned listening to the trees to determine best management practices, some scoffed.

But when Gorbet asked the council to include a member representing Native Americans, they agreed. And when she showed up again and again with the same request, they pursued it. Conveying ownership of Humbug Valley to the Maidu Summit Consortium is one of the largest transactions approved by the Stewardship Council. By the time they finalized it, council members were referring to the valley as “Tasmam Koyom.”

What started as a land ownership issue for the Stewardship Council took on the subtle tones of social justice. At that initial meeting in 2004, Gorbet told the council returning Tasmam Koyom to the Maidu was an opportunity “to right some past wrong.” Council members insisted their task was simply a matter of finding an owner who could best manage the land for conservation. They were leaning toward the California Department of Fish and Wildlife.

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But when they gave the valley to the Maidu Summit, Stewardship Council Executive Director Heidi Krolick noted that more than land was being returned. “Thank you for the honor of letting us be a part of this recovery. We will continue to rally from the sidelines,” she said.

The Maidus’ formal partners in managing Tasmam Koyam are Feather River Land Trust and the Fish and Wildlife Department, once its rival for ownership. They will jointly hold the conservation easement that limits development on the land, and most certainly precludes casinos.

The return of Humbug Valley to the Mountain Maidu took too long and represents too little. Still, using patience and quiet persistence, these Native Americans have accomplished what confrontation has so often failed to achieve. Their challenge now is to demonstrate that traditional land management techniques can restore natural resources at a landscape scale. Ours is to learn from this grand endeavor.

Jane Braxton Little, a freelance writer, covers science, natural resources and rural Northern California from Plumas County.

Professor who denied Mechoopda existence casts doubt on another tribe

By Will Houston
Butte Area News Group

Siskiyou County — A northern California congressman says his bill to restore the Ruffey Rancheria tribal nation would right a historic wrong, but a recent study of federal archives concluded there is nothing to restore because the tribe never existed.

Lewis & Clark College history professor emeritus Stephen Beckham concluded in his study that Congressman Doug LaMalfa's bill, known as the Ruffey Rancheria Restoration Act, is "intellectually dishonest."

Beckham questioned why the bill would seek to provide individuals claiming to be descendants of the Ruffey Rancheria tribal nation with the ability to exercise water and other resource rights, the ability to construct a casino and rights to federal resources when there is no evidence the Rancheria ever existed as a functioning tribal nation.

"What LaMalfa's bill is asking the federal government to do is restore a federal relationship with a piece of real estate, not with a tribe," Beckham said to the Eureka Times-Standard on Saturday. "There is no tribe. He hasn't documented a tribe."

Beckham is the same professor who was hired by Butte County in 2014 and came up with a report that Chico's Mechoopda Indians were not a real tribe. It was part of the county's failed \$850,000 battle to keep the tribe from building a casino off Highway 149.

The report had no impact on the dispute, which the county finally dropped earlier this year.

For his latest report, Beckham said documents dating from 1907 to 1960 that he reviewed at the Bureau of Indian Affairs' national archives in San Bruno showed there was no record of the Ruffey Rancheria being anything more than an unoccupied piece of brushy, forested hillside south of the Siskiyou County town of Etna.

Both LaMalfa (R-Richvale) and Tahj Gomes, a Chico-based attorney who represents himself as the Ruffey Rancheria chairman, are firing back against the report, calling it inaccurate, claiming it left out key documents proving the tribal nation's existence and calling Beckham biased. Both Gomes and LaMalfa said they have provided information to address the concerns of members of Congress and of more than 70 federally recognized tribes that have been raised about the bill.

Beckham and other concerned parties said they have yet to see any such documentation provided by either Gomes or LaMalfa.

LaMalfa's communications director Parker Williams said in a statement to the Times-Standard earlier this month that the study's conclusion that the Ruffey Rancheria is unknown is "inaccurate and disingen-



A U.S. Bureau of Indian Affairs type map of Ruffey's Rancheria in 1958 located outside of the Siskiyou County town of Etna.

uous," but did not specify what the inaccuracies were.

"Because Congress terminated the tribe, only Congress can reinstate it," Williams wrote. "This is simply what his bill aims to do — and is consistent with the other California Rancheria restoration language."

Gomes called Beckham a "hired gun who is willing to draw whatever conclusion best suits his current employer."

"The Beckham Report is factually wrong," Gomes told the Times-Standard on Friday. "There is a list of members, the Tribe's members were resident on or near the original reservation lands or on other lands purchased or leased for the Ruffey Rancheria's members, and the correspondence between the Ruffey Rancheria and the Bureau of Indian Affairs is evidence of the government-to-government relationship."

"Beckham simply did not include the evidence that undermined the favored conclusion by his employer, the Karuk Tribe," Gomes continued.

Beckham's report concludes otherwise, finding that there was no documentation or evidence of there ever being a government-to-government relationship between the United States and any person or entity identifying as the Ruffey Rancheria and no tribal activity associated with the Rancheria from 1907 to 1960.

Beckham found that "Old Man" Ruffey, the tribal elder whom the Rancheria land was originally purchased for and named after in the early 20th century, never lived on the property, opting instead to live in a house outside the Rancheria boundaries.

Beckham was hired by the Karuk Tribe to produce the study. The tribe has questioned historical evidence of the Ruffey Rancheria's existence and the water, land and other rights it seeks to claim. The tribe has also accused LaMalfa of introducing the bill to disrupt an ongoing plan to remove four Klamath River hydroelectric dams, which La-

Malfa has publicly opposed.

The Karuk Tribe and about 70 other tribes have called for further hearings on the bill to address their concerns, but now Karuk Tribe officials say they have changed to their stance to staunch opposition to the bill.

"LaMalfa and Gomes are inventing a Tribe from scratch and offering virtually no information on who these people are or what their ancestral ties are to this place," Karuk Tribal Council Chairman Russell Attebery said in a statement earlier this month. "This effort diminishes what it means to be a Tribe and dishonors the concept of Tribal sovereignty for all Indians."

LaMalfa's bill narrowly passed through the House Natural Resources Committee earlier this year in a 19-18 vote.

The bill is next set to be heard by the House Rules Committee.

An agent and 'Old Man Ruffey'

Beckham said Bureau of Indian Affairs agent Charles Kelsey worked for the bureau for about 20 years, particularly focusing on non-reservation Native Americans of northern California in the early 20th century — a time when only two tribal reservations existed in the region. Traveling in 1905-1906, Kelsey estimated there were about 11,800 landless, homeless Native Americans in northern California who had been driven out by white settlers and Gold Rush miners, according to Beckham's report.

"Kelsey did a year of field travel in 1905 and 1906 to do a general population census of Indians and Congress appropriated money to purchase Rancherias," Beckham said.

One of the Rancherias that was bought was the 441-acre Ruffey Rancheria in 1907 for two bands of "Indians of Etna," according to letters penned by Kelsey. One of these "Indians of Etna" was "Old Man" Ruffey, a man in his 70s who had disputes with neighbors who had bullied his family, according to

Kelsey's letters. A land title dispute ended with a neighbor tying a chain around Ruffey's home and hauling it from the ground, prompting Ruffey to attempt to shoot one of his neighbors; Ruffey was prevented from doing so, according to Kelsey's account.

The Rancheria was meant to establish a new home for Ruffey and his relatives, but Beckham found no evidence of any Native American using the land.

A 1913 letter from Kelsey to the commissioner of Indian Affairs has proven a central and contentious document in determining which Native Americans the Ruffey Rancheria property was purchased for. The letter identified 57 individuals in the Etna area, which Gomes said establishes who the original members of the Rancheria were and whom their descendants are.

Gomes previously estimated there are about 350 people eligible for enrollment for the Ruffey Rancheria under LaMalfa's bill.

Congress eventually voted to terminate several rancherias in California, including the Ruffey Rancheria, in the late 1950s, with the former rancheria eventually being sold by Ruffey's descendants to the International Paper Company in 1960, Beckham said.

Gomes said there is no controversy in Beckham's findings that the Ruffey Rancheria land was not particularly suited for human habitation, ranching or farming. But Gomes said the report failed to locate or discuss "extensive archival correspondence" between tribal members and the Bureau of Indian Affairs detailing site visits by federal officials to the Rancheria, attempts "to relocate the Rancheria, subsequent land purchases and leases that provided land for its members, and efforts by the tribe to prevent trespass on the 1907 land up through the time of Termination."

The Bureau of Indian Affairs has also identified the Ruffey Rancheria as a tribe that had been terminated in a 1972 guidance document titled "American Indians and Their Federal Relationship."

The administration's position on the bill in September 2017 — about two months after the bill was introduced into Congress — was "unknown at this time," according to a congressional committee memorandum about the bill.

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Chico Enterprise Record

7-28-2018

Deputies raid two pot grows this week

Two illegal marijuana grows were raided this week by the Butte County Sheriff's Office Special Enforcement Unit.

Wednesday a grow on national forest land in the Feather River Canyon near Rim Road in Concow yielded 533 plants.

Reaching the grow required an hour-long hike to the grow site. Two men were seen running off and escaped. A large camp was located; pesticides and fertilizers were found hidden in the brush.

On Friday, a grow of 799 plants was raided on the Musty Buck Preserve, south of Limpach Road in Cohasset.

Again, two garden tenders ran off into the brush and escaped. Maple Branch Creek, which had been diverted to provide water to the plants, was returned to its natural state. More than 1,200 pounds of trash, food, camping gear, fertilizers, and pesticides were removed.

Nearly \$5 million will be coming to Butte County for fire prevention projects, Cal Fire has announced.

A list of 142 fire prevention grants totaling \$79.7 million statewide was released Wednesday, and it includes 11 projects within the county.

Six of the grants will go to the Butte County Fire Safe Council. They include fuel reduction projects around Berry Creek (\$836,365), on the Paradise ridge (\$636,262), Forbestown (\$599,642) and Forest Ranch (\$423,519).

The Fire Safe Council will also get \$258,188 for its brush chipper program, and \$143,195 for the Firewise education program to teach people living in the wildland-urban interface how to be safer.

The Yankee Hill Fire Safe Council is in line for two fuel reduction grants in Concow: \$498,215 along Crain Ridge and \$548,195 on Granite Ridge.

Another \$304,406 is going to the Terra Fuego Resource Foundation to reduce fuels in the Big Chico Creek Ecological Reserve, and the county Public Works Department is getting \$166,630 for reducing brush countywide.

Lastly, the Sacramento River Watershed Pro-

gram has been granted \$475,206 to implement community wildfire protection plans.

The money comes from the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund for California Climate Investments, funded by the cap-and-trade program to combat climate change.

Cal Fire also awarded 23 forest health projects totaling \$91.5 million, including one that covers a swath of the eastern mountains including Butte County.

The American Forest Foundation will be contacting up to 10,000 private, non-commercial timberland owners to engage them in forest restoration

for carbon benefits. It envisions more than 720 projects covering more than 42,000 acres in the area running from Shasta County to Placer County.

"California continues to invest millions of dollars into creating healthier, more resilient forests that benefit all of us," said Cal Fire Director Ken Pimlott in a press release. "Already this year more than

700,000 acres have burned across the state creating significant carbon releases that counter our efforts at reducing greenhouse gases.

"Local projects funded by this money will prevent wildfires before they start, and when combined with our fire prevention activities, will help move us toward our greenhouse gas reduction goals."

ENVIRONMENT

\$5M coming in fire grants

INDIAN GAMING

SUPERVISORS' SUPPORT SOUGHT FOR MECHOOPDA CASINO PROJECT



STEVE SCHOONOVER — ENTERPRISE-RECORD

A metal gate that has posts tipped with arrowheads, blocks access to the property off Highway 149 in central Butte County where the Mechoopda tribe has indicated it wants to build a casino. After years of resistance, the Board of Supervisors is being asked Tuesday to write a letter in support of the proposal.

By Steve Schoonover

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OROVILLE » After spending 16 years and \$850,000 fighting the efforts of the Mechoopda tribe to build a casino in Butte County, the Board of Supervisors Tuesday is being asked to approve a letter in support of the project.

Gov. Jerry Brown Wednesday signed the compact with the tribe — formally the Mechoopda Indian Tribe of the Chico Rancheria — that will allow construction of a Class III casino on

627 acres off Highway 149 near Highway 99 that the federal government is holding in trust.

The compact still needs to be approved by the Legislature. That is what the supervisors are being asked to support.

The county has battled the project in court since 2002, arguing among other things that the project violates the general plan. The county has lost repeatedly, most recently in April. Shortly after that the supervisors decided informally to drop the fight.

A Class III casino would include slot machines and table

games. The signed compact allows for up to 2,000 slot machines. There would also have to be a non-smoking area within the gaming area. The minimum age for gambling would be 21.

The Mechoopda did not return a call Friday seeking comment.

The compact requires a study off off-site environmental impacts, but specifies they would not prevent the casino from being built.

“Once the compact is ratified, the County is committed to working in good faith with the Mechoopda Tribe to enter

into a Memorandum of Understanding, for the purpose of fairly and adequately mitigating off-reservation impacts of the Tribe’s construction and ongoing operation of a contemplated Class III gaming facility,” reads the letter before the supervisors Tuesday.

The meeting starts at 9 a.m. Tuesday in the Board of Supervisors Chambers in the County Administration Building, 25 County Center Driver in Oroville.

Contact reporter Steve Schoonover at 530-896-7750.

MECHOOPDA

Supervisors back tribe's casino

By Steve Schoonover

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OROVILLE » The Board of Supervisors voted unanimously Tuesday to send a letter of support for the Mechoopda Tribe's plans to build a casino off Highway 149 in central Butte County.

The county has opposed the proposal in court since 2002, racking up \$850,000 in legal expenses, according to Supervisor Larry Wahl. It has lost cases repeatedly, most recently in April. After that the board informally dropped its opposition.

On Tuesday, County Counsel Bruce Alpert advised the board to actively support the proposal by approving the letter to the Legislature and beginning negotiations with the tribe to mitigate the impacts of the casino.

"It's to our benefit ... that we show our willingness to proceed," Alpert said.

The vote was unanimous, on a motion by Oroville Supervisor Bill Connelly. There was no discussion on the issue by the board.

The county's goal now is to negotiate a full "memorandum of understanding" that will lay out how the county and tribal governments will work together and

address the environmental and other impacts of the casino.

The federal government holds 627 acres off Highway 149 near Highway 99 in trust for the the tribe, formally the Mechoopda Indian Tribe of the Chico Rancheria.

Last Wednesday, Gov. Jerry Brown signed the legal compact that will allow the casino, but that still needs to be approved by the Legislature.

The compact is for a Class III casino that could include slot machines and table games. The signed compact allows for up to 2,000 slot machines.

There would also have to be a non-smoking area within the gaming area. The minimum age for gambling would be 21.

The compact requires a study of off-site environmental impacts but specifies they would not prevent the casino from being built.

If the casino gets built, it would be the third one in Butte County. The Oroville area has Feather Falls Casino and Gold Country Casino.



A metal gate that has posts tipped with arrowheads blocks access to the property off Highway 149 in central Butte County where the Mechoopda tribe has indicated it wants to build a casino.

STEVE SCHOONOVER —
ENTERPRISE-RECORD

Contact reporter Steve Schoonover at 530-896-7750.

A garden with no added water



By Laura Lukes

Sideritis. It sounds like a medical condition, but it is actually the name of a plant genus known for its medicinal properties. And it is one of the latest additions to the UC Master Gardeners Demonstration Garden at the Patrick Ranch, 10381 Midway, between Chico and Durham.

This spring, Master Gardener David Walther, an expert on unique and fascinating plants and owner of Spring Fever Nursery in Yankee Hill, added a Dry Garden to our Demonstration Garden with the help of a hard-working team of fellow Master Gardeners.

This new garden is located between the heritage almond orchard and the roundabout in front of the Patrick Ranch Museum Gift Shop. The Dry Garden features plants that, once established, need no supplemental water during our hot, dry summers. Yes, you read that right.

Ideally, Walther and his crew would have planted the varieties showcased in the Dry Garden in mid- to late-October 2017. Fall and winter rains alone would establish the plants and no further supplemental irrigation would be required. But due to the delayed planting schedule, the Dry Garden is receiving some supplemental water this season. Once the rains come (usually just after Halloween), the array of plants in the Dry Garden will be left to their own devices to survive our valley summers.

Plant selection is the key to a successful dry garden. Many Mediterranean and native California species evolved specific strategies to weather the long, hot, dry summers that characterize this special climate niche. Some of these species are actually averse to summer irrigation, and will not survive without well-drained soils. (Watch this space for a future article on the qualities that make a plant



The Master Gardeners' new Dry Garden at the Patrick Ranch is in its infancy, and needs water to get through this summer. The tubing will be removed once the rains start, and the garden will never need to be watered again.



Teucrium chamaedrys is another plant in the Master Gardeners' new Dry Garden at the Patrick Ranch.

“drought-tolerant.”)

Walther chose about 20 species of plants for their beauty and their hardiness. Among the usual Mediterranean suspects such as Santolina, several species of Phlomis, and Teucrium chamaedrys, there's a new kid in town: Sideritis cypria.

Sideritis is a little toughie that exhibits a number of desirable qualities. It is strikingly beautiful; wind and deer resistant; evergreen (with interesting fo-

liage year-round and contrasting flower spikes in summer); can take full sun and heat; and prefers to be dry all through the summer.

The particular Sideritis species Walther chose for this Dry Garden is Sideritis cypria, whose common name is Cyprus ironwort or Cyprus woundwort.

The literal translation of Sideritis from the original Greek is “he who is made of iron.”

As its species name indicates,

Cyprus ironwort is endemic to the eastern Mediterranean island of Cyprus; specifically, it grows on rocky cliffs and outcrops along the slopes of the Pentadaktylos Range in the Kyrenia Mountains, which run along the northern coast of the island. (More fun with words: Pentadaktylos translates as “five fingers” — the shape which the range is said to resemble.)

The suffix “wort” comes from



SUBMITTED PHOTOS

Sideritis cypria is one of the plants in the Master Gardeners' new Dry Garden at the Patrick Ranch. A number of medicinal qualities are attributed to the plant, also known as Cyprus ironwort.

Garden

FROM PAGE 1

a Middle English word (*wyrt*) for root, and nowadays indicates a plant that has been historically used for food or medicinal purposes.

According to Oliveology, an online resource devoted to "sharing and enjoying the culinary treasures and gastronomic traditions of Greece," *Sideritis* was well known to ancient Greeks, particularly to the pharmacologist/botanist Dioscorides, the philosopher Theophrastus, and to Hippocrates. A number of sources note that in ancient Greece it was commonly used to treat wounds, especially those inflicted with iron swords or arrows.

A few moments on the internet reveal that a wide range of medicinal and health properties are assigned to the genus, including as a remedy for colds, aches, allergies, indigestion, and respiratory issues.



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Helianthus maximiliani is one of the plants in the Master Gardeners' new Dry Garden at the Patrick Ranch.

There are claims that it can boost the immune system. Some studies suggest that not only does *Sideritis* prevent and treat Alzheimer's disease but it also can forestall osteoporosis.

In 2011, the *Journal of Ethnopharmacology* published findings that *Sideritis* species were shown to have anti-microbial, anti-inflammatory, antioxidant, and antispasmodic properties. A 2012 publication of the *Journal of Physiology and Pharmacology* noted that extracts made from *Sideritis* helped lower blood

pressure levels while helping blood vessels relax.

You may have heard of *Sideritis* in one of its common medicinal forms: Greek Mountain Tea, Shephard's Tea, or just plain old Mountain Tea.

Miraculous medicinal claims aside, the Cyprus ironwort is a spectacular-looking plant. When not flowering, it is a mound of soft furry gray green leaves that grows to about one foot tall and wide, and looks very similar to lamb's ear (*Stachys*).

It blooms in the summer

by putting out contrasting chartreuse flower stems which rise another 12-18 inches above the leaves, and carry cuplike yellow flowers.

Unfortunately, this hardy beauty is listed as "vulnerable" in its native habitat under the International Union for Conservation of Nature, due to development, wildfires, mining, and other environmental stressors.

You can find Cyprus ironwort and many of the plants featured in the Dry Garden at local nurseries which specialize in California and Mediterranean natives. These plants epitomize the premise upon which the Master Gardener Demonstration Garden is based: The New California Garden: Beautiful; Sustainable; Functional. And no additional water required!

Note: For more information about the Master Gardener Program and the Demonstration Garden, please visit <http://ucanr.edu/sites/bcmg/>. Garden questions can be directed to the Hotline at 530-538-7201.

Paradise Post

9-16-2018

PUBLIC SAFETY

Three arrested in Butte Valley pot raid

Staff reports

BUTTE VALLEY » Three men were arrested Tuesday when the Sheriff's Office raided an alleged marijuana growing and refining operation in eastern Butte Valley.

The Sheriff's Office Special Enforcement Unit served a search warrant in the 3000 block of Dry Creek Road, off Messilla Valley Road, and found 148 marijuana plants, 45

pounds of processed marijuana, a butane honey oil lab and six firearms, according to a press release.

Environmental crimes involving diversion and pollution of a waterway also were allegedly found.

Four people were detained during the search, including residents Donald Greslie, 43, and Elissa Dutro, 44, and two men from Michoacán, Mexico: Andres Alvarado Espino, 25, and Alfredo Alvarez

Soto, 49.

Dutro was cited and released.

Greslie was arrested on suspicion of misdemeanor possession of marijuana for sale, unlawful diversion/obstruction of a streambed, polluting waters with a petroleum product, and several felonies: cultivation of marijuana, being armed in the commission of a felony, manufacturing a controlled substance, and

maintaining a residence for the unlawful manufacture, storage or distribution of a controlled substance. Bail was set at \$165,000.

Espino and Soto face misdemeanor charges of possession of marijuana for sale, unlawful diversion/obstruction of a streambed, polluting waters with a petroleum product and felony cultivation of marijuana. Their bail was set at \$35,000.

Chico Enterprise Record

10-10-2018

INVESTIGATION

Autopsy set this week for Chico man found dead in Concow

By **Andre Byik**

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CHICO » Many details have remained scarce in the case of a Chico man who had been reported missing but was found dead Monday in a rugged canyon near Concow.

The Butte County Sheriff's Office, which found the body of 53-year-old Robert Gonzales Monday afternoon following an aerial search in the Concow and Big Bend areas, said Tuesday that the case remained under investigation.

Miranda Bowersox, a spokesperson for the Sheriff's Office, said an autopsy

has been scheduled for sometime this week, and detectives would learn more about Gonzales' cause of death following the examination.

Bowersox said detectives are still treating Gonzales' initial disappearance and death as suspicious, but details about the case are being withheld to protect the integrity of the investigation.

The Sheriff's Office has said Gonzales was reported missing to the Chico Police Department on Oct. 3. Gonzales had been out of contact with his family since Oct. 1.

Gonzales' family reported that he was going to a friend's property in the

Big Bend area of Concow and planned to stay there for a few days, according to the Sheriff's Office.

Chico police referred to the case to the Sheriff's Office on Thursday, and deputies contacted the owner of the Big Bend property, according to the Sheriff's Office. The owner said Gonzales was not there.

The case was then assigned to sheriff's detectives Friday, according to the sheriff's office. Detectives went to the Concow area to look for Gonzales and interview potential witnesses, and deputies followed up on leads in the area Saturday and Sunday.

The search for Gonzales spilled into Monday, when the California Highway Patrol assisted with aerial support.

Gonzales' body was found about 3:30 p.m. in a canyon in the search area whose terrain was described as rugged, the Sheriff's office said. Sheriff's search and rescue members responded to help recover Gonzales' body.

The circumstances surrounding Gonzales' death remained unclear Tuesday. It also was not clear whether any signs of trauma were found on Gonzales' body.

Contact reporter *Andre Byik* at 530-896-7760.

Chico Enterprise Record
10-11-2018

YANKEE HILL

**Swap meet to benefit
fire recovery fund**

The Yankee Hill Fire Safe Council will host its ninth annual Community Swap-meet from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday at the Old Schoolhouse, 11666 Concow Road, to educate the public about fire prevention and raise money for the Fire Recovery Fund.

Breakfast goodies and coffee will be served to early birds and visitors may purchase lunches of barbecued Costco hot

dogs, water or soda and chips for \$6 each. Raffle tickets are \$1 and drawings for prizes will start at 1:30 p.m.

Those who cannot attend but wish to donate to the fund may send checks to Yankee Hill Fire Safe Council, P.O. Box 4242, Yankee Hill, CA 95965. For information, call Suzie Casper, 533-6646; Marjorie Corey, 534-3045; or Brenda Rightmyer, 534-4179.

Chico Enterprise Record

10-13-2018

CRIME

Butte deputies close down pot grows, refining labs

Staff reports

OROVILLE » In actions in Paradise, Concow and Oroville, Butte County sheriff's deputies closed down marijuana grows, processing operations and two marijuana refining labs.

On Oct. 4, deputies served a search warrant on properties on Chalair Drive in Concow and Warren Road in Paradise, seizing 371 marijuana plants, 27.24 pounds of processed marijuana and a refining lab. Mark Hatch, 47, of Concow was arrested and booked into Butte County Jail on charges of cultivation of marijuana with environmental damage, possession of marijuana for sale and dumping a hazardous material near a waterway.

A second suspect is being sought in connection



Hatch



Vaughan

to the refining lab

On Wednesday, sheriff's deputies arrested Jonathan Vaughan, 34, on the 100 block of Acacia Drive in Oroville after finding 22 marijuana plants, 216.07 pounds of processed marijuana, a refining lab and several pounds of marijuana concentrate.

Vaughan was booked into Butte County Jail on charges of manufacturing a controlled substance, cultivation of more than six marijuana plants and possession of marijuana for sale.

Chico man's death leads to pot grow raid

Chico Enterprise Record
10-13-2018
page 1 of 2

Staff reports

CONCOW » The Butte County Sheriff's Office said Friday that it raided an illegal marijuana cultivation site near Concow in connection with the disappearance and death of Chico resident Robert Gonzales, seizing hundreds of pounds of pot and multiple firearms.



Gonzales

The Sheriff's Office said it served two search warrants Tuesday on Paiute Drive south of Highway 70, where law enforcement officers seized 381 marijuana plants, 522 pounds of processed marijuana and 39 firearms.

The firearms seized in the service of the warrants included two AR-style assault rifles with high-capacity magazines, three AK-style assault rifles with high-capacity magazines and a pistol with a threaded barrel, which made it capable of being used with a silencer.

Detectives also interviewed several people in connection to Gonzales' case, the Sheriff's Of-

Chico Enterprise Record

10-13-2018

page 2 of 2

face said. Gonzales was found dead Monday in a canyon near Concow after he was reported missing Oct. 3.

Family members said they hadn't heard from Gonzales, 53, since Oct. 1, around the same time Gonzales said he was going to a friend's property in the Big Bend area near Concow.

Many details regarding Gonzales' death remained unclear, including whether any signs of trauma were found on his body and the circumstances surrounding his disappearance.

During the service of the Sheriff's Office search warrants, more than a dozen people were detained without incident.

Garretson Murphy, 34, of Oroville was arrested on suspicion of maintaining a residence for the storage or sale of a controlled substance, being armed with an assault weapon, cultivation of marijuana, possession of marijuana for sale, possession of an illegal assault weapon and being armed in the commission of a felony, according to the Sheriff's Office.



PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED BY BUTTE COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

The Butte County Sheriff's Office said it raided a marijuana cultivation site in connection with the disappearance of a Chico man who was later found dead in the Concow area.

Murphy was booked into Butte County Jail in Oroville.

Ruben Verdugo, 31, of Chico was cited on suspicion of cultivation of more than six marijuana plants and released at the scene.

The Sheriff's Office said the case is ongoing, and more information would be released when it becomes available.



The Butte County Sheriff's Office said it seized more than 30 firearms in the marijuana site raid, including AR- and AK-style assault rifles.

ENTERPRISE-RECORD

Chico Enterprise Record

10-14-2018

CONCOW

Mobile home destroyed in morning fire

Staff Reports

CONCOW » A mobile residence was destroyed after it caught fire Saturday morning, Cal Fire-Butte County officials said.

At around 4:15 a.m., a Concow resident reported

that a neighboring double-wide mobile home in the 3000 block of Windermere Lane was on fire.

Firefighters arrived 15 minutes later and saw that the fire had spread from the home to nearby vegetation. It was quickly con-

tained, Cal Fire officials said in a press release, and burned less than 1/10 of an acre.

The fire was put out by 4:50 a.m. No injuries were reported and the cause of the fire is under investigation.