

# WOMEN'S MARCH: AMPLIFYING THE VOICES OF STOCKTON WOMEN

JASMINE LEEK  
THIRD CITY COALITION

Feminists across the Central Valley descended upon Sacramento on Saturday, January 20, 2018 for the second annual Women's March. An estimated 400 people travelled north from the Stockton area to California's Capitol, amplifying the voices of those unable to attend.

The Stockton delegation, comprised of more than a half-dozen groups tackling a variety of issues ranging from gun violence, women's rights, and civic activism, took the task of showing up with colorful handmade signs and attention-grabbing attire, to boldly declare in the

streets, "this is what democracy looks like!"

In the weeks leading up to the Women's March, questions about a possible Stockton-based Women's March popped up on social media feeds. Ultimately, a lack of bandwidth led to many groups settling on making the trip to Sacramento, with some heading toward Modesto or the San Francisco Bay Area to join in the movement.

Multiple groups coordinated sign-making parties and a Facebook group was formed for the purpose of opening dialogue about the Sacramento gathering. Inspirational messages, information about carpools, and post-March



Women's March Sacramento 2018. Photo from between the columns of the west-facing steps of the State Capitol. An estimated 36,000 people attended — an increase over the 20,000 in 2017.

BELOW: Leaders from local women's group, The OWL Movement, attended the Sacramento Women's March on Saturday, January 20.



photographs were shared to the page. Anyone can join the group, which can be found by searching: "Stockton Delegation to Sacramento Women's March" on Facebook. A social media hashtag was also created for the group to share images amongst one another; follow along at #209MarchTakeover on Facebook, Instagram, or Twitter.

The Stockton contingent is looking to continue

the conversation about the Women's March movement, and has put the call out for deeper collaboration between intersectional groups.

**Action:** On Monday, January 29, at 7:00 p.m., attendees of Northern California Women's Marches are encouraged to take part in a listening and debriefing session that will be held at Cort Tower in Downtown Stockton (343 E. Main St., Stockton, CA 95202). To confirm your at-

Peace & Justice Network  
Annual Meeting and Potluck

*Coming together,  
moving forward*

**SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 25 4-7PM  
231 BEDFORD RD., STOCKTON**

It's a potluck! Bring something to share  
Meet with old friends and new

Eco-friendly—please bring your own plate and fork.

- 4:00 -4:30 Review the yea and share-introductions
- 4:30 DINNER!
- 5:00–6:30 Speaker and discussion  
"Working together as a community to  
build our local, state and global community."
- 6:30 – 7:00 Election of officers

FOR MORE INFORMATION: 209-559-6279

## When we gather, we get energized

SARAH VAN GELDER

If it feels like you and the people you know have no say over what happens in Washington, D.C., that's not an illusion. Research shows that ordinary people have close to zero influence on policymaking at the federal level while wealthy individuals and business-controlled interest groups hold substantial sway, according to an analysis published in Perspectives on Politics. No wonder Americans are frustrated.

Two-thirds are dissatisfied with the direction of the country, according to Pew Research Center data. Almost as many feel that they are losing more than winning on the issues that matter to them.

We need stricter gun laws, say 62 percent of Americans in a Morning Consult poll, and 78 percent support mandatory licensing. Yet action is stalled.

More needs to be done about climate change, say 64 percent of U.S. voters, according to a recent Quinnipiac

CONTINUED ON BACK PAGE



Stockton marchers in Sacramento to protest and show strength.

### SAVE THE DATES

Feb. 26 P&JN Annual Meeting  
Apr. 22 March for Science at 10 am  
-and- 30th Annual Earth Day from  
11 to 4pm at Victory Park.

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## EDITOR'S LETTER

# Into a kinder new year

### BRUCE GIUDICI

Our only hope is the ability to step out of our comfort zone and to empathize with those who suffer. In every instance, the amount of suffering experienced is directly proportional to the level of existent societal inequality. While a tiny fraction of the world's population controls immense wealth and power, the vast majority of us suffer. The current refugee crisis is most blatant exhibit of this suffering.

The United States is a nation comprised of immigrants - even Native Americans came to this land long ago. Today, as self-serving US foreign policy disasters explode, the US is shamed

by how few refugees are being accepted compared to that of European countries. Immigration, long seen as a source of American pride and greatness, is now used by the selfish few presiding at the top to divide and distract we the people from the true source of conflict in this nation. This conflict - the massive chasm between the haves and have-nots - has warped our common understanding of what makes human interaction most interesting and worthwhile. Massive inequality robs us of what it means to be a feeling, compassionate human being.

To distract us from this gross inequality, there are

a few issues that are used to separate people who have much more in common than not: racism and xenophobia, sexism, religious difference and fear of the other, and various issues including abortion and gun control. The strategic use of these issues by demagogues - along with a complicit media that profits from news that promotes conflict - has gone into overdrive with the election and encouragement of Trump. A country searching for a humane leadership must once again settle for enduring the current bad times, struggling to keep our concept of "normal" from slipping further away.

Noticing where we are requires an understanding of where we have been. History is a great teacher - how people respond to their leaders has changed little over the centuries. What has changed is the amount of information available and the ability of misinformation to be amplified through the speakers of big money and concentrated media. Your support of Connections and KXVS is much appreciated and represents a small counter to the trend that moves us toward the unchallenging shallow end of the pool.

This world of ours could slip away - the past few decades have seen suffering for which there

is no profit in ending. We must demand a meaningful, thoughtful and humane change. The suffering of our fellow world citizen could just as easily be our own - there but for fortune go you or I. Before we judge, we need to walk in the other's shoes and act accordingly. Here's hoping you all have a kinder new year.

And...please come to our annual meeting and potluck on Sunday, February 25, from 4 - 7 pm, next door to the Peace Center on the Miracle Mile. We have lots to discuss and much to do - come help us start again.

## Myth of "chain migration" and importance of family unity

President Trump has renewed calls to toughen immigration laws, including ending so-called "chain migration" after the attack in New York on December 11. FCNL rejects limiting family-based visas and urges Congress to stand strong against such proposals. President Trump's proposal to "end chain migration" is an effort to cut the number of family-based visas. This limits people's opportunity to unify with their family through the U.S. immigration system. Various proposals include excluding immigrants from being able to sponsor their spouses, siblings, adult children, or elderly parents. This is not responsible immigration reform.

### CHAIN MIGRATION: AN IMAGINED THREAT.

For many immigrants, it is actually an incredibly difficult and lengthy process to reunite with family members. Adding even more barriers

to family unification is unnecessary and distracts from critical efforts to offer Dreamers a pathway to citizenship and stabilize generations of American families to come.

### FAMILY UNITY: THE BASIS OF A VALUES-DRIVEN IMMIGRATION SYSTEM.

Our immigration system should recognize and support the importance of familial relationship - both immediate and extended - on the individual and community levels. We must cut through the rhetoric and be clear about what "ending chain migration" is actually about - prohibiting immigrants from reuniting with their family members.

Legislative proposals that insert barriers for family unification are not in line with our vision for a compassionate, humane immigration



system that proactively keeps families together. The RAISE Act would cut family visas by upwards of 70% percent, deleting more than four million individuals' applications for eliminated family visas. It would also eliminate the ability of U.S. citizens to sponsor their siblings and make it nearly impossible for them to sponsor their parents. Congress should reject the RAISE Act and similar proposals to limit family unification.

Source: Friends Committee on National Legislation 12/12/17  
<https://www.fcnl.org>

## With 200,000 Salvadorans facing possible deportation, FCNL urges Congress to act

### HANNAH GRAF EVANS

The administration announced on January 8 that approximately 200,000 TPS recipients from El Salvador will lose their work permits and protected status in September 2019. This decision follows the recent TPS terminations for Sudan, Nicaragua, and Haiti. FCNL urges Congress to start working immediately to ensure stability for all current TPS recipients and their families. Hannah Graf Evans, FCNL's legislative representative on

immigration, stated, "This administration has now set up over a million immigrants for expulsion with no guarantee that Congress will pursue long past due legislative reforms. Congress must enact a pathway to citizenship by the end of the month for immigrant youth who grew up in this country and face an unknown future. In response to this most recent TPS cancellation, we once again urge Congress take up the baton and stabilize families and communities home to

TPS recipients as well.

"Any TPS recipient who has roots in this country, would face undue hardship if deported - including family separation - or would otherwise be eligible for status adjustment should have a permanent pathway forward to stabilize their futures and their families. We urge members of Congress to co-sponsor legislation that fulfills these goals and to work in a bipartisan manner to enact it."

FCNL opposes the admin-

istration's decision to cancel Temporary Protected Status (TPS) for Nicaraguans and non-decision resulting in an inadequate automatic 6-month extension for Hondurans. We urge Congress to ensure that the administration is upholding the integrity of the TPS program so that individuals are not returned to harm and to pursue long overdue stability for our immigrant neighbors.

THE FRIENDS COMMITTEE ON NATIONAL LEGISLATION, THE

**OLDEST REGISTERED RELIGIOUS LOBBY IN WASHINGTON, IS A NONPARTISAN QUAKER LOBBY IN THE PUBLIC INTEREST. FCNL WORKS WITH A NATIONWIDE NETWORK OF TENS OF THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE OF MANY DIFFERENT FAITHS FROM EVERY STATE IN THE U.S. TO ADVOCATE FOR SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC JUSTICE, PEACE, AND GOOD GOVERNMENT.**

Source: Friends Committee on National Legislation 1/9/18  
<https://www.fcnl.org>



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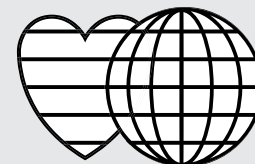
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"The Peace and Justice Network is a nonprofit educational organization committed to the vision of a world in which the equality of all persons is achieved, basic needs are met, conflict is resolved nonviolently, and the earth's resources are shared responsibly for the well-being of all her inhabitants and all future generations."



# Talk to your representatives to stop the tunnels in 2018

We are very grateful for your support that comes to us in many ways throughout the year — from attending events and key government meetings, to writing comments, to making contributions. You are the glue that holds our efforts together. This is why in 2018, we are asking you all to make a concentrated effort to let your local elected officials (at the city, county, state, and federal levels), and candidates running for statewide offices why you oppose the Delta tunnels. It doesn't matter which candidates you sup-

port. What matters is that they understand that the Delta tunnels are an environmental and economic boondoggle and that there are many better solutions for water management in California. Candidates at all levels need to understand that the Delta tunnels need to end with Governor Brown's term, that the people of California do not want the project, and the majority of water districts won't commit to paying for the project. (Visit our website for lots of examples on sustainable water management in California.)

- Make a point of attending candidate events, fundraisers, rallies, and debates. And let candidates know that waffling doesn't work, that you need straight answers about their views of the Delta tunnels.

- If your assembly members or state senators tell you that they have no vote or say over the project, or they have done all they can, remind them that they can provide oversight over the agencies moving the project forward to make sure that they all are following state laws, codes, budgets, contracting rules,

and bonding requirements. Oversight is the job of the California legislature.

- They can weigh in like federal representatives have by insisting that Central Valley Project Contractors should pay back the Federal Bureau of Reclamation the roughly \$84 million of taxpayer money misspent on project planning. They can question why the Department of Water Resources is renewing contracts presently for contractors who, in a recent Delta Caucus hearing, were deemed by representatives from the State Au-

ditor's office as not qualified for running the Delta tunnels project planning process. The Delta Caucus hearing in Walnut Grove was a great follow-up step to the strong, productive, and effective legislative efforts of Assemblymember Susan Eggman that led to the audit of the tunnels.

- Legislators, county supervisors, and federal representatives from throughout the state must have the courage to seek the truth about the backroom deals to advance this woefully underfunded plan, and to consistently let

Governor Brown know he is wrong about the Delta tunnels. You, the voters, can help your elected officials find that courage. That's how you, our members, can help us beat the special interests at Metropolitan Water District, who hold our state agencies captive. Insist on strong legislative oversight.

Source: Restore the Delta 12/21/17  
<http://www.restorethedelta.org>

## Experts speak out on Delta Tunnels – hearings start in January

CHRIS SHUTES

On November 30, the California Sportfishing Protection Alliance (CSPA) filed testimony and exhibits for the State Water Board's hearings on the Delta Tunnels ("WaterFix"). This new testimony is for Part 2 of the hearings: impacts to fish and wildlife, recreation, and other Public Trust values. Some of the highlights are described below.

**CSPA'S BIOLOGIST TOM CANNON** presents thirty pages of testimony on how the state and federal water projects affect fish today and how they would affect fish with the tunnels in place. He supports his testimony with 60 exhibits. Tom describes the conditions that Delta and Central Valley fish need to recover. The tweaks that WaterFix proponents propose to make to existing inadequate protections for fish aren't even close.

**CSPA'S EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR BILL JENNINGS** describes what happened to fish and water quality over the last 50 years and the failure to establish enforceable measures to protect them. He discusses the collapse of Central Valley fisheries and the history of disastrous decisions by the State Water Board and the fish agencies during this collapse. The Board must define and implement a methodology to balance the public trust with other uses of water, using information it already has gathered to set the flows necessary to restore Delta fisheries.

**CSPA'S ADVOCATE CHRIS SHUTES** reviews the recommendations that the fish agencies made in the Delta flow criteria proceeding in 2010. Since the fish agencies aren't showing up in the WaterFix hearings, the State Water Board should give great weight to what those agencies said when they did. The Board needs require carryover storage numbers for Trinity, Shasta, Oroville and Folsom reservoirs, so that adequate Delta flows don't take water away from fish upstream.

**LONGTIME ADVISOR TO CSPA DR. G. FRED LEE** discusses how the new WaterFix diversion will reduce the amount of Sacramento River water entering the Central Delta through Turner Cut. This change will reduce the dilution of San Joaquin River water in the Central Delta and thereby adversely impact fisheries, recreation, and aesthetic aspects of water quality in the Central Delta.

**FORMER "ATTORNEY MEMBER" OF THE STATE WATER BOARD MARC DEL PIERO** relates how earlier Boards established a "formula" in water rights proceedings in order to protect public trust resources. The current Board has departed from that formula. He calls WaterFix a "bait and switch" scheme that results in innocent residential customers being unknowingly compelled to pay for and subsidize the infrastructure expenses of future private developers."

**FORMER U.S. FISH & WILDLIFE SERVICE BIOLOGIST AND WHISTLE-BLOWER FELIX SMITH** recalls the history of the public trust doctrine as it has applied to California water law. He concludes "Trustee agencies have an affirmative duty to manage public trust assets." This means that the Water Board can and should impose conditions on the state and federal projects that relate not only to proposed project additions, but to existing facilities and operations.

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**PAST AND PRESENT CHAIR OF DELTA FLY FISHERS JERRY NEUBURGER** provides a personal fifty-year history of striped bass fishing in the Delta. The great fishery of his youth led to a lifelong investment in experience, boats and equipment. In 2006, Jerry took up guiding, even though the fishery was clearly in decline. Jerry tells the story of how over the last few years, much of the striped fishery and the businesses that supported it have faded into the Delta sunset.

**EDITOR OF THE FISH SNIFFER MAGAZINE DAN BACHER** paints the picture of the decline of stores that carried his publication and that advertised in it. Another angler with thousands of days fishing the Delta and its tributaries, Dan describes the fishing opportunities whose loss coincided with increased Delta exports. The testimony includes a personal account of advocacy for protection of winter-run salmon.

**FOURTH-GENERATION COMMERCIAL FISHER DAN HURLEY** talks about his list of businesses and how fish guiding in the Delta has become marginal or simply unsustainable. Most fish are gone. Almost all the big fish are gone. Many of the great spots of the past are buried under water hyacinth.

**FORMER PROFESSOR OF MEDICINAL CHEMISTRY AND LONGTIME ADVISOR TO CSPA DAVE FRIES** has sailed the Delta in a sailboat over decades. He has seen worsening of water quality and wildlife habitat. In particular, Dave speaks of the toxic algae blooms and weed-choked waterways during the 2015 drought. If WaterFix goes forward, construction impacts from barges and dredges will limit boating opportunities, and large areas of wetlands will be filled with tunnel muck.

In addition to CSPA witnesses and exhibits, CSPA's partners AquAlliance and the California Water Impact Network (C-WIN) submitted testimony, and some of their witnesses will appear in the hearing in panels with CSPA witnesses. AquAlliance's witnesses include Kit Custis (hydrogeologist speaking of groundwater effects of Delta tunnels), Barbara Vlamis (also testifying on groundwater), Jim Brobeck (speaking of Chico groundwater loss), Dr. Don Hankins (looking at the Delta and the proposed tunnels from the perspective of the Mikwo culture) and Trina Cunningham (speaking of the Maidu view of the Feather River and points downstream). C-WIN's witnesses are economist Dr. Ed Whitelaw (testifying on how to balance the public trust), and Arne Sjo-vold and Aaron Budgor (joint testimony on both Delta hydrology and how the Santa Barbara extension of the State Water Project was high cost and low benefit). For the detailed testimony of these experts, visit: <http://calsport.org/news/>

Up till now, CSPA has had no financial resources to pay its witnesses. We now enter weeks of hearings that require careful attention, after which CSPA will need to develop further testimony to rebut tunnel proponents. We know we can never compete with the water contractors economically. But in this David and Goliath battle, we can, must, and do hold our own. CSPA desperately needs your check to help us remain effective. Please consider making a generous contribution to CSPA today. <<http://calsport.org/action/donatecspa.php>>

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Source: California-Sportfishing-Protection-Alliance release 12/12/17  
<http://calsport.org/>





## Act now

# If the Delta Smelt goes, so will the Delta

The Delta smelt could be the first fish species to become extinct in the United States since the Endangered Species Act was signed in 1973. The Trump Administration's recent announcement to increase Delta exports to Central Valley farmers poses an imminent threat to the emblematic California fish species under the watch of Governor Brown. With only two Delta smelt identified in the last fish survey, state and federal agencies need to focus time, money, and energy on restoring smelt populations instead of turning up the pumps. The Delta smelt is our small but mighty canary in the coal mine; it is an indicator of the health of the Delta ecosystem. If it goes, the future impacts to the health of humans and to other Delta fish and wildlife would be devastating.

We can't let this happen under our watch. In the wake of this environmental crisis, we need to push our elected officials, regardless of their past or current behaviors, to speak up against the Trump Administration's plan. If we remain silent, we become complicit in the first extinction of a fish species since the enactment of the Endangered Species Act.

**Action: Please contact your elected officials and submit public comments to the US Bureau of Reclamation. When you call your elected officials, let them know that:**

[X] The people of California want state and federal government entities to invest time and money into researching how to improve management of the Delta cross channel and how to create non-physical barriers that direct fish back to Suisun Marsh, instead of the continued pursuit of the costly Delta Tunnels. The tunnels will NOT save the Delta smelt, and if no other solutions are pursued, we will lose this tenacious fish forever.

[X] Taking more water out of the Delta is a direct violation of the Delta Reform Act of 2009 which mandates that all future water solutions MUST reduce reliance on the Delta.

[X] We refuse to be complacent in the extinction of Delta smelt which could be the beginning of a collapsing food chain for the Delta, the San Francisco Bay-Delta estuary, and coastal fisheries at large. Protecting the Delta smelt does not mean sacrificing the needs of humans—it is a necessary act to maintain the ecosystems that shape our livelihoods.

[X] If the Delta smelt are gone, it will be that much easier for tunnels proponents to build CA WaterFix—a system that when operated will usher in the extinction of Delta smelt if they are not completely wiped out during the project's construction.

Governor Jerry Brown  
(916) 445-2841  
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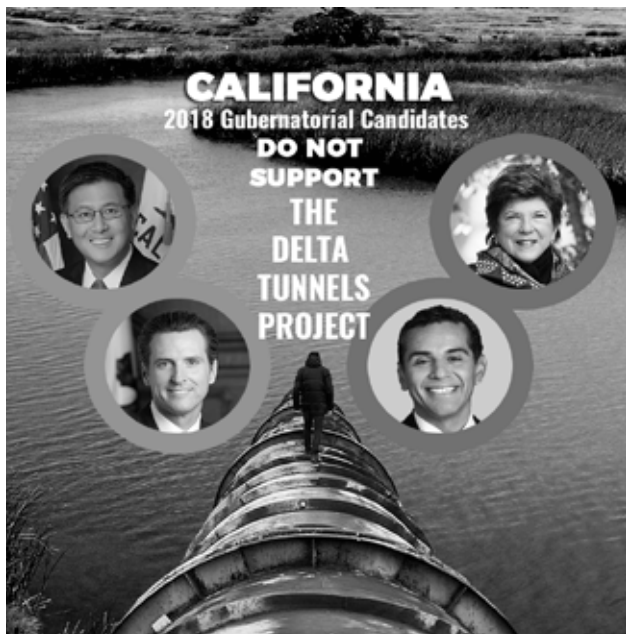
### WHAT ELSE CAN YOU DO TO STOP THE TRUMP'S ADMINISTRATION PLAN?

The US Bureau of Reclamation is seeking your comment. Here's how to submit a public comment  
<<http://www.restorethedelta.org/wp-content/uploads/Public-Comment-USB-R-2-1-2018.pdf>>.

### SOME BACKGROUND ON THE DELTA SMELT

Before the 1980s, this silvery blue 2-2.8 inch fish species, endemic to the SF Bay-Delta estuary, was hugely abundant, numbering in nearly a million individuals. Unfortunately for the Delta smelt, this tiny and secretive fish prefers the upstream, fresher waters of the Delta part of the Estuary, putting them in the direct pathway of the 1% of special water interests and exporters. According to Tom Cannon, what the Delta smelt needs is sufficient numbers with which to court and mate. However, they are so few and scarce, it's hard for them to find each other in open waters of the Delta. Interestingly, due to their introverted nature, no scientist has ever witnessed Delta smelt spawning in the wild. Despite the massive amount of damage that human activity has inflicted onto the Delta, a dwindling number of small but mighty smelt have persisted and are fighting to reach the Sacramento River in time for spawning season (March-May). To give their eggs and offspring a fighting chance, pumping cannot and should not be increased.

Source: Restore the Delta release 1/9/18  
<http://www.restorethedelta.org>



## Restore the Delta responds to one tunnel project proposal

Environmental reporter Paul Rogers of the San Jose Mercury News published a story declaring that the Brown Administration is revising their plan for CA WaterFix—a \$17 billion water conveyance system that would move freshwater flows in the Northern Delta to the south—opting for a smaller single tunnel instead. The original plan for CA WaterFix featured two 40 foot high, 35 mile long tunnels with a capacity of 9,000 cubic feet per second, while the single tunnel could carry anywhere from 3,000-6,000 cubic feet per second. Paul Rogers reported that the reasons for scaling back to one tunnel include a lack of funding and political support.

Executive Director of environmental watchdog group Restore the Delta, Barbara Barrigan-Parrila said, "The Brown Administration's effort to scale back to a single tunnel project—a project that has not been evaluated, scoped, or discussed with Delta stakeholders—smacks of desperation. What are the impacts? How will it be operated? And considering past statements made by Metropolitan Water District's Jeff Kightlinger, why would we believe that a second tunnel wouldn't be added later? If this is the project, then we believe there must be a redo for the permit application at the State Water Resources Control Board because to date, nothing has been presented regarding the operation and construction of a single tunnel. If a single tunnel is running regularly in the North Delta, there must be a re-examination of the impacts on the salmon and Delta smelt fisheries by state and federal fishery agencies."

Source: Restore the Delta release 1/12/18  
<http://www.restorethedelta.org/>

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Please consider giving to PJN month by month. It will give us stable, predictable funding to continue providing our services. It's easy for you and cost-effective for us. Our website online donation is recommended for ease and convenience. Your monthly donation can be automatically withdrawn from your bank account.

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☐ Automatic Bank Transfer

☐ I've enclosed a check for my first contribution. Arrangements will be made by me with my bank for future pledges.

Mail checks to:

**Peace and Justice Network,  
P.O. Box 4123, Stockton CA 95204**

*The Peace and Justice Network is a 501(c)3 non-profit educational corporation. Contributions are tax-deductible to the full extent allowed by law.*



# Corporate mergers of health care giants: CEOs and Wall Street win, patients lose

The days of having your own doctor and a stable way to access care are rapidly disappearing as the drive to increase corporate mergers of health care giants gains further momentum. Under the guise of bringing patients more convenience in accessing care, we are seeing instead increasing fragmentation of health care as merging giants get even bigger and more profitable. Here are some recent examples of this fast-moving trend:

## UNITEDHEALTH GROUP

As the largest health insurer in the U. S. by market share and the largest health care company in the world by revenue, UnitedHealth Group has been moving aggressively into the direct delivery of health care by buying up doctors' groups and clinics across the country. UnitedHealth already had a roster of some 30,000 physicians across more than 230 urgent care centers and 200 surgery centers as well as its pharmacy benefit manager serving 65 million people. Within its broader goal of building a larger ambulatory care business, it recently bought the DaVita Medical Group for about \$4.9 billion. That purchase added about 280 clinics offering primary and specialist care, together with 35 urgent care centers and 6 outpatient surgery centers. Its longer-term goal is to provide primary care and ambulatory services in 75 markets, representing about two-thirds of the U. S. population.

## CVS-AETNA MERGER

CVS Health, the second-largest U. S. drugstore chain with some 9,700 drugstores, recently bought Aetna, the nation's third largest health insurer, in a \$69 billion deal. This merger will combine Aetna's insurance products with CVS drugstores, walk-in clinics, and drug-distribution operation. Consumers are being told that this will

make health care more convenient and accessible at CVS locations, and that costs can be cut with improved quality of care.

## DIGNITY HEALTH/CATHOLIC HEALTH INITIATIVES

As patients increasingly go to walk-in clinics or urgent care centers, or use an app on their cellphones to check out a skin rash or monitor their diabetes, they are bypassing more expensive sites of care such as physicians' offices and hospital emergency rooms. In another response to this general trend, Dignity Health and Catholic Health Initiatives have recently announced their plan to become a national chain of Catholic hospitals and clinics that span 28 states. This merger is expected to include 139 hospitals, more than 700 sites of care, employing more than 25,000 physicians and other clinicians.

These mega-deals are likely accelerating as the specter of Amazon looms over the health care industry. Although that Internet behemoth hasn't yet made moves into health care, many observers speculate that it may enter some part of the prescription drug business, such as distribution or retail, and use technology to deliver virtual medical care through cell phones and computers. This prospect may well have played a role in the CVS-Aetna merger.

## CONSEQUENCES

These mergers will have a number of adverse impacts for patients. They will find that their choice of providers, clinics, pharmacies, and hospitals will be sharply limited within merged systems. Limited health services, mainly first contact care, will be provided, but way short of primary care, with little or no continuity of care. Patients will see nurses instead of physicians in many of these walk-in

clinics, without primary care responsibility that by definition includes comprehensive care, coordination and monitoring of all of the patient's clinical conditions, with continuity of care over years. Instead, what is already a frayed primary care system will become even more fragmented and inadequate. We cannot expect that increased convenience of "care" will result in improved quality or outcomes of care.

While the CEOs of corporate giants pocket big profits with these mergers, shareholders whistle to the bank. As one example, CEO Mark Bertolini of Aetna is expected to receive a payout of about \$500 million, including increased valuation of his stock shares, when operational control of the combined company is transferred to the new CEO.

We know from long experience that larger market share in our mostly for-profit system does not contain costs for patients. It just gives larger hospital or other systems more latitude to charge what the traffic will bear. Despite the Affordable Care Act, enacted in 2010, health care costs keep going up at uncontrolled rates for Americans in our system with no significant price controls. Individuals and families face increasing costs of insurance, higher deductibles, copayments, coinsurance, and out-of-pocket expenses. The average family of four now pays about \$26,000 a year for insurance and care. A new poll has found that 48 percent of Americans name health care as their top problem for the government to focus on, up by 17 percent in the last two years and higher than any other expense.

Steven Brill, attorney, journalist, and author, has this to say about the failure of our system to control health care costs: "It's about money: Healthcare is America's largest industry by far, employing a sixth of the country's workforce. And it is the average American family's largest single expense, whether paid out of their pockets or through taxes and insurance premiums."

Bottom line on this merger frenzy -- it's all about giving health care organizations and facilities even more ability to grow their patient base and increase their profits. We have no reason to believe that health care costs will be reined in or that quality of care will improve.

## ANY HOPE?

One promising development that could counter the adverse consequences of mega-mergers is a bill being brought forward by the new Congressional Antitrust Caucus. If enacted, it would force such regulators as the Federal Trade Commission and Department of Justice to examine evidence that monopolies and massive companies bring higher prices, lower wages, job losses and environmental damage, not the jobs and higher wages that they promise. We can hope that this effort will be productive in reining in the concentrated economic and political power of massive corporations. (Or we could discuss a single payer system. - editor's note)

**JOHN GEYMAN, M.D. IS THE AUTHOR OF COMMON SENSE ABOUT HEALTH CARE REFORM IN AMERICA, AND CRISIS IN U.S. HEALTH CARE: CORPORATE POWER VS. THE COMMON GOOD, AND THE HUMAN FACE OF OBAMACARE: PROMISES VS. REALITY AND WHAT COMES NEXT.**

Source: BuzzFlash via Truthout 1/9/18  
<https://www.truth-out.org>

# Economic analysis of the Healthy California Single-Payer Health Care Proposal (SB-562)

## ROBERT POLLIN

The State of California is now considering a bill to create a statewide single-payer health care system. This study by Robert Pollin, James Heintz, Peter Arno and Jeannette Wicks-Lim provides an economic analysis of the proposed measure, The Healthy California Act (SB-562). The study finds that the proposed single-payer system could provide decent health care for all California residents while still reducing net overall

health care costs by about 8 percent relative to the existing system. The single-payer system will generate financial benefits for both families and businesses at all levels of the California economy. For families at most income levels and for businesses of most sizes, these financial benefits will be substantial.

The State of California is considering a bill to create a statewide single-payer health care system. This study provides an economic analysis of the proposed measure, The Healthy California Act (SB-562).

The study includes four major sections: 1) Cost Estimate of Universal Health Care Coverage in California; 2) Cost Saving Potential under Healthy California; 3) Financing Healthy California; and 4) Impact on Individual California Families and Businesses. The primary goal of Healthy California is to provide high-quality health care to all California residents, including those who are presently either uninsured or underinsured. The study finds that the providing full universal coverage would increase overall system costs by about 10 percent, but that the single payer system could produce savings of about 18 percent.

The study thus finds that the proposed single-payer system could provide decent health care for all California residents while still reducing net overall costs by about 8

percent relative to the existing system. We propose two new taxes to generate the revenue required to offset the loss of private insurance spending: a gross receipts tax of 2.3 percent and a sales tax of 2.3 percent, along with exemptions and tax credits for small business owners and low-income families to promote tax-burden equity.

Within this proposed tax framework, Healthy California can achieve both lower costs and greater equity in the provision of health care in California for both families and businesses of all sizes. Thus, net health care spending for middle-income families will fall by between 2.6 – 9.1 percent of income.

Small firms that have been providing private health care coverage for their workers will experience a 22 percent decline in their health-care costs as a share of payroll. The small firms that have not provided coverage will still make zero payments for health care under Healthy California through their gross receipts tax exemption.

Medium-sized firms will see their health care costs fall by between 6.8 and 13.4 percent as a share of payroll relative to the existing system. Firms with up to 500 employees will experience a 5.7 percent fall, and the largest firms, with over 500 employees, will experience a 0.6 percent fall as a share of payroll relative to the existing system.

For the full analysis of SB562, visit <https://www.peri.umass.edu/publication/item/996-economic-analysis-of-the-healthy-california-single-payer-health-care-proposal-sb-562>

Source: Political Economy Research Institute  
University of Massachusetts Amherst release 5/31/17  
<http://www.umass.edu>





# 2018 looks like an arms bonanza

WILLIAM HARTUNG

As Donald Trump might put it, major weapons contractors like Boeing, Raytheon, and Lockheed Martin cashed in "bigly" in his first year in office. They raked in tens of billions of dollars in Pentagon contracts, while posting sharp stock price increases and healthy profits driven by the continuation and expansion of Washington's post-9/11 wars. But last year's bonanza is likely to be no more than a down payment on even better days to come for the military-industrial complex.

President Trump moved boldly in his first budget, seeking an additional \$54 billion in Pentagon funding for fiscal year 2018. That figure, by the way, equals the entire military budgets of allies like Germany, France, the United Kingdom, and Japan. Then, in a bipartisan stampede, Congress egged on Trump to go even higher, putting forward a defense authorization bill that would raise the Pentagon's budget by an astonishing \$85 billion. (And don't forget that, last spring, the president and Congress had already tacked an extra \$15 billion onto the 2017 Pentagon budget.) The authorization bill for 2018 is essentially just a suggestion, however -- the final figure for this year will be determined later this month, if Congress can come to an agreement on how to boost the caps on domestic and defense spending imposed by the Budget Control Act of 2011. The final number is likely to go far higher than the staggering figure Trump requested last spring.

And that's only the beginning of the good news for the big weapons companies. Industry officials and Beltway defense analysts aren't expecting the real increase in Pentagon spending to come until the 2019 budget. It's a subject sure to make it into the mid-term elections. Dangling potential infusions of Pentagon funds in swing states and swing districts is a tried and true way to influence voters in tight races and so will tempt candidates in both parties.

## JOBS?

President Trump has long emphasized job creation above much else, but if he has an actual jobs program, it mainly seems to involve pumping more money into the Pentagon and increasing overseas arms sales. That such spending is one of the least effective ways to create new jobs evidently matters little. It is, after all, an easy and popular way for a president to give himself the look of stimulating economic activity, especially in an era of steep tax cuts favoring the plutocratic class and attacks on domestic spending.

Trump's much-touted \$1 trillion infrastructure plan may never materialize, but the Pentagon is already on course to spend \$6 trillion to \$7 trillion of your taxes over the next decade. As it happens though, a surprising percentage of those dollars won't even go into the military equivalent of infrastructure. Based on what we know of Pentagon expenditures in 2016, up to half of such funds are likely to go directly into the coffers of defense contractors rather than to the troops or to basic military tasks like training and maintenance.

While the full impact of Trump's proposed Pentagon spending increases won't be felt until later this year and in 2019, he did make a significant impact last year in his role as arms-dealer-in-chief. Early estimates for 2017 suggest that arms sales approvals in the first year of his administration exceeded the Obama administration's record in its last year in office -- no mean feat given that President Obama set a record for overseas arms deals during his eight-year tenure.

You undoubtedly won't be surprised to learn that President Trump greatly exaggerated the size of his administration's arms deals. Typically enough, he touted "\$110 billion" in proposed sales to Saudi Arabia, a figure that included deals already struck under Obama and highly speculative offers that may never come to fruition. While visiting Japan in November, he similarly took credit

for sales of the staggeringly expensive, highly overrated F-35 combat aircraft, a deal that was actually concluded in 2012. To add insult to injury, those F-35s that the U.S. is selling Japan will be assembled there, not in the good old U.S.A. (So much for the jobs benefits of global weapons trading.)

## EXPORTS

Nonetheless, when you peel away the layers of Trumpian bombast and exaggeration, his administration still posted one of the highest arms sales figures of the last decade and there's clearly much more to come. In all of this, the president may not have done major favors for America's workers, but he's been a genuine godsend for the country's arms manufacturers. After all, such firms extract significantly greater profits on foreign deals than on sales to the Pentagon. When selling to other countries, they normally charge higher prices for weapons systems, while including costly follow-on agreements for maintenance, training, and things like additional bombs, missiles, or ammunition that can continue for decades.

In fact, Trump's biggest challenge in accelerating U.S. arms exports may not be foreign competition, but the fact that the Obama administration made so many high-value arms deals. Some countries are still busy trying to integrate the weapons systems or other merchandise they've already purchased and may not be ready to conclude new arms agreements.

## THE GOOD NEWS FOR ARMS MAKERS: MORE WAR

There are, however, a number of reasons to think that the major weapons makers will do even better in the coming years than they did in the banner year of 2017. Start with America's wars. As defense expert Micah Zenko of Chatham House explained recently at /Foreign Policy/, President Trump has been doubling down on many of the wars he inherited from Obama.

The moves of his administration (peopled, of course, by generals from those very wars) include the increasing use of Special Operations forces, a dramatic rise in air strikes, and an increase in troop levels in conflicts ranging from Afghanistan and Yemen to Syria and Somalia. It remains to be seen whether the president's favorite Middle Eastern ally, Saudi Arabia, will be successful in goading his administration—replete with Iranophobes, including Secretary of Defense James Mattis and CIA Director Mike Pompeo—into taking military action against Tehran. Such calculations have been complicated by recent anti-government protests there, which the president and his inner circle hope will lead to regime change from within. (Trump's crowing about unrest in Iran has, however, been decidedly unhelpful to genuine advocates of democracy in that country, given the low esteem in which he's held throughout Iranian society.)

Such far-flung military operations will naturally cost money. Lots of it. Minimally, tens of billions of dollars; hundreds of billions if one or more of those wars escalates in an unexpected way -- as happened in Afghanistan and Iraq in the Bush years. As a study by the Costs of War Project at Brown University's Watson Institute recently noted, our post-9/11 wars have already cost at least \$5.6 trillion when one takes into account both direct budgetary commitments and long-term obligations, including lifetime care for the hundreds of thousands of American veterans who suffered severe physical and psychological damage in those conflicts. It's important to remember that such immense costs emerged from what was supposed to be a quick, triumphant war in Afghanistan and what top Bush administration officials were convinced would be a relatively inexpensive regime change operation in Iraq and the garrisoning of that country. (That invasion and occupation was then projected to cost just a cut-rate \$50 billion to \$200 billion.)

Don't be surprised if the conflicts that Trump has

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inherited and is now escalating follow a similar pattern in which actual costs far outstrip initial estimates, even if not at the stratospheric levels of the Afghan and Iraq wars, which involved the commitment of hundreds of thousands of “boots on the ground.” All of this spending will again be good financial news for the producers of combat aircraft, munitions, armored vehicles, drones, and attack helicopters, among other goods and services needed to sustain a policy of endless war across significant parts of the planet.

Beyond the hot wars that have involved U.S. troops and air strikes in Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya, Pakistan, Somalia, Syria, and Yemen, there are scores of other places where this country’s Special Operations forces are on the ground training local militaries and in many cases accompanying them on missions that could quickly turn deadly, as happened to four Green Berets operating in Niger in October 2017.

With Special Ops personnel engaged in a staggering 149 countries last year and a pledge to step up U.S. activities yet more in Africa—there are already 6,000 U.S. troops and scores of “train and equip” missions on that continent—spending is essentially guaranteed to go up, whatever the specifics of any given conflict. There are already calls by leading members of Congress to increase the size of U.S. Special Operations forces, which, as *TomDispatch*’s Nick Turse notes, already number nearly 70,000 personnel.

**BOONDOGGLES, INC.**

Rest assured, however, that so far we’ve only taken a dip in the shallow end of the deep, deep pool of military spending. Equally important to the bottom lines of Lockheed Martin, Boeing, Northrop Grumman, Raytheon, General Dynamics, and their cohorts is the Trump administration’s commitment to continue funding weapons systems the Pentagon doesn’t need at prices we can’t af-

and now capable of doing none of them well.

In fact, as the Project on Government Oversight has pointed out, it’s an aircraft that may never be fully ready for combat. To add insult to injury, billions more will be spent to fix defects in planes that were rushed through production before they had been fully tested. The cost of this “too big to fail” program is currently projected at \$1.5 trillion over the lifetimes of the 2,400-plus aircraft currently planned for. This means it is likely to become the most expensive weapons program in the history of Pentagon procurement.

Unfortunately, the F-35 is hardly the only boondoggle that will continue to pad the coffers of defense contractors while offering little in the way of defense (no less the usual offense). A recent estimate from the Congressional Budget Office, for example, suggests that a projected three-decade Pentagon plan to build a new generation of nuclear-armed missiles, bombers, and submarines, initiated under President Obama and

close to the heart of Donald Trump, will cost up to \$1.7 trillion dollars. This stunning figure includes spending on new nuclear warheads under development at the Department of Energy’s National Nuclear Security Administration, one of many channels for military spending that are outside the Pentagon’s already bloated budget. And given the history of such weapons systems and the cost overruns that regularly accompany them, keep in mind that \$1.7 trillion will probably prove a gross underestimate. The Government Accountability Office, for instance, has released a report suggesting that the program to build a new generation of ballistic missile submarines, now priced at \$128 billion, is going to blow past that figure.

In recent years, hawks in Congress have been pressing for more funding for missile defense and Donald Trump (with the help of “Little Rocket Man”) is their guy. David Willman of the */Los Angeles Times* /reports that the Trump administration wants to spend more than \$10 billion over the next five years beefing up a deeply flawed project for placing ground-based missile interceptors in

In 2018, Lockheed, Boeing, and General Atomics are also scheduled to test drones that will reportedly use lasers to shoot down intercontinental ballistic missiles like those being developed by North Korea. It’s a program that will undoubtedly garner tens of billions of dollars more in taxpayer funding in the years to come. And Congress isn’t waiting until a final Pentagon budget for 2018 is wrapped up to lavish more money on missile defense contractors. A stopgap spending bill passed in late December 2017 kept most programs at current levels, but offered a special gift of nearly \$5 billion extra for anti-missile initiatives.

In addition, a congressionally financed study of the best place to base an East Coast missile defense system—a favorite hobbyhorse of Republicans on the House Armed Services Committee that even the Pentagon has little interest in pursuing—is scheduled to be released later this year. The Congressional Budget Office already suggests that the price tag for that proposed system would be at least \$3.6 billion in its first five years of development. Yet deploying it, as the Union of Concerned Scientists has pointed out, would have little or no value when it comes to protecting the United States from a missile attack. If the project moves ahead, it won’t be the first time Congress has launched a costly, unnecessary spending program that the Pentagon didn’t even request.

Cybersecurity has been another expanding focus of concern—and funding—in recent years, as groups ranging from the Democratic National Committee to the National Security Agency have been hit by determined hackers. The concern may be justified, but the solution—throwing billions at the Pentagon and starting a new Cyber Command to press for yet more funding—is misguided at best. One of the biggest bottlenecks to crafting effective cyber defenses is the lack of personnel with useful and appropriate skills, a long-term problem that short-term infusions of cash will not resolve. In any case, some of the most vulnerable places -- from the power grid to the banking system—will have to be dealt with by private firms that should be prodded by stricter government regulations, a concept to which Donald Trump seems to be allergic. As it happens, though, creating enforceable government standards turns out to be one of the most important ways of addressing cybersecurity challenges.

Despite the likely spending spree to come, don’t expect the Pentagon, the arms makers, their lobbyists, or their allies in Congress, to stop crying out for more. There’s always a new weapons scheme or a new threat to hype or another ill-conceived proposal for a military “solution” to a complicated security problem. Trillions of dollars and hundreds of thousands of lives later, the primary lesson from the perpetual wars and profligate weapons spending of this century should be that throwing more money at the Pentagon isn’t making us any safer. But translating that lesson into a change in Washington’s spending patterns would take major public pushback at a level that has yet to materialize.

Genuine opposition to runaway Pentagon spending may yet emerge, if, as expected, President Trump, Paul Ryan, and the Republican Congress follow up their trillion-dollar tax giveaway with an assault on Medicare and Social Security. At that point, the devastating domestic costs of overspending on the Pentagon should become far more difficult to ignore.

This year will undoubtedly be a banner year for arms companies. The only question is: Might it also mark the beginning of a future movement to roll back unconstrained weapons expenditures?

**WILLIAM D. HARTUNG IS THE DIRECTOR OF THE ARMS AND SECURITY PROJECT AT THE CENTER FOR INTERNATIONAL POLICY. HE IS THE AUTHOR OF *PROPHETS OF WAR: LOCKHEED MARTIN AND THE MAKING OF THE MILITARY-INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX* (NATION BOOKS, 2011). HE IS THE CO-EDITOR OF *LESSONS FROM IRAQ: AVOIDING THE NEXT WAR* (PARADIGM PRESS, 2008).**



ford. Take the F-35 combat plane, a Rube Goldberg contraption once designed to carry out multiple missions

Alaska and California. This is just one of a number of missile defense initiatives under way.

Source: *TomDispatch* 1/11/18  
<http://www.tomdispatch.com/>





# A dangerous proposal in San Joaquin County

MARYLIA KELLEY, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,  
TRI-VALLEY CARES

In the last edition of Connections, Tri-Valley CARES provided insight into the Superfund cleanup of toxic and radioactive pollutants found in soils, surface waters and groundwater aquifers at the Site 300 high explosives testing range, located near Tracy. More recently, the federal government published a plan to increase the size and toxicity of outdoor detonations at Site 300. Here is that story.

The Livermore Lab's 11-square mile Site 300 high explosives testing range is about to become more dangerous, if the nuclear weapons designers get their way.

In late 2017, the government quietly released a shocking proposal to increase the amount of high explosives used in open-air tests at Site 300 from 100 pounds per day to 1,000 pounds per day, a 10-fold increase. Similarly, the proposal increases the annual amount of high explosives used in open-air detonations from 1,000 pounds per year to 7,500 pounds per year, a more than 7-fold increase. The detonations would occur on a flat, outdoor "firing table" measuring more than 7,000 square feet. The huge open-air tests employ no air pollution control technology.

The document containing the proposal, called an "Environmental Assessment" (EA), is often hyper-technical and runs 117-pages long, including a permit application to begin the tests. The reason for the tests is nuclear weapons, according to the EA. And, although the large open-air explosions could pose serious threats to workers, the public and the environment, the government limited public comment to a 45-day period during the major holiday season and ending December 22.

More than 120 hazardous poisons will become airborne in these tests, according to tables in the EA. Many of the listed pollutants are known to damage organs, cause cancer and other diseases and may lead to prompt or premature death, including beryllium, vinyl chloride, phosphine, hydrogen cyanide and dioxin. The proposal does not include radioactive materials, which are currently used in high explosives tests conducted at Site 300's Contained Firing Facility. However, the tests will occur in an area with radioactive contamination already in soils there – and so re-suspension of radioactive particles is a major issue.

In addition to toxic – and possibly radioactive – airborne releases, the open-air detonations will result in extraordinarily sharp, loud noises and other problems. Site 300's nearby neighbors include Tracy Hills, a new development consisting of 5,500 homes, and a State Park (the Carnegie State Vehicular Recreation Area and Campground). The EA refers to Site 300's neighbors as "receptors."

As noted above, the EA fails to adequately consider that these new tests will occur on a firing table already heavily contaminated by past explosions, in-

cluding many that involved radioactive material. Indeed, this firing table is at the precise location where Site 300 personnel inadvertently found 80-pounds of uranium-238 a few years ago. The radioactive metal was found in chunks measuring 3-inches or more in diameter and scattered in the topsoil. Additional soil tests found more areas of elevated radioactivity in the area.

The proposed blasts will also complicate cleanup. Site 300 policy states that any cleanup will be delayed for as long as the firing table remains active. The Environmental Protection Agency placed Site 300 on its "Superfund" list of most contaminated locations in the country in 1990. Due to already-extensive contamination of soils, surface waters and springs, and multiple groundwater aquifers the cleanup is expected to be multi-generational, lasting up to 80 more years.

Tri-Valley CAREs and its San Joaquin County members, friends and colleague groups aim to stop these huge, open-air explosions from happening. In fact, this proposal is similar to the plan for bigger blasts that we did stop ten years ago. (Livermore Lab proposals are like zombies, they often come back from the dead.)

We are thrilled to report that approximately 2,000 people submitted comments opposing the proposal, some after the deadline but most did submit their comments on or before December 22. We received a score of petitions to close the op-air firing tables from Connections readers, and we submitted them as comments on the EA. Thank you, readers!

Tri-Valley CAREs submitted a lengthy technical comment, which is available on our website at [www.trivalleycares.org](http://www.trivalleycares.org). We can report as well that the City of Tracy submitted a letter opposing the plan, and the Tracy Hills developers submitted comments outlining their concerns as well. Those letters as well as a copy of the 117-page Environmental Assessment and permit application (DOE/EA-2076) is also up on our website.

We are still collecting signatures on our paper and electronic petitions to oppose this project and to instead permanently close the Site 300 open-air firing tables. While the public comment period on the EA has closed, the government has yet to publish a final document. Moreover, the proposal to increase open-air blasts at Site 300 cannot go forward without a permit from the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District – and we will demand additional public comment opportunities and public hearings.

**Action: Tri-Valley CAREs will host a community meeting in Tracy at 6:30 PM on Wednesday, February 7, 2018 to update the public and develop a long-range strategic plan to stop these tests. The meeting will take place at the Opera House Building at 902 Central Ave., Suite 201, Tracy. Stay tuned! Get involved!**



## League of Women Voters of SJ County

### On opposing increased weapons testing at Lawrence Livermore Lab

CATE WHITE,  
LWVSJC BOARD MEMBER

The League of Women Voters of San Joaquin County (LWVSJC) recently joined the Tracy City Council in opposing the U.S. Department of Energy's (DOE) plan to increase weapons testing at Site 300 at the Lawrence Livermore Laboratory. The LWVSJC's opposition letter has been sent to the Livermore Field Office. The LWVSJC has joined the Tracy City Council's opposition to the expansion of weapons testing at Site 300 citing two National League policies:

- 1) The quality of the earth's environment should be protected from the effects of weapons testing; and
- 2) The League supports efforts to inhibit the development and improvement of weapons through qualitative limits, including testing of weapons.

The League claims the excess noise

is a type of environmental pollution and contends that the DOE has not adequately addressed this problem. Since Site 300 is in close proximity to the Tracy city limits, the LWVSJC argues that the proposed ten-fold increase in the detonation of explosives will most certainly generate noise at a disturbing level to current and future Tracy residents. The League contends that a more thorough assessment and greater transparency regarding these impacts are needed. The LWVSJC supports Tracy's request for a public hearing on the matter and agrees that such a hearing is necessary. "The LWVSJC supports quick action on this matter," said LWVSJC Board President, Christeen Ferree. "We hope that this will be done in a timely manner, and that the proposal will be rescinded as it becomes clear that expanded testing will result in negative impacts on the health and well being of residents in the Tracy area and beyond."





# Companies that announced big bonuses after GOP tax cut are now laying off their workers

TARA CULP-RESSLER

At least two major companies that publicly announced large bonuses for their employees after the passage of a massive GOP-led tax overhaul — which represented a windfall for wealthy Americans and big corporations — quietly laid off hundreds of workers at the same time. Comcast laid off more than 500 sales employees right before Christmas, according to documents reviewed by media outlets including the Philadelphia Enquirer, Philly.com, and the Daily News. The documents were confirmed by at least one former Comcast employee who was not identified in the press.

## THE TRUTH ABOUT AT&T'S \$1,000 BONUS FOR WORKERS

AT&T is also in the process of laying off thousands of employees, according to the Communication Workers of America (CWA) union, which represents AT&T workers. CWA filed a lawsuit against the company claiming that some of those layoffs are needless, and that the timing of the terminations — just two weeks before Christmas — represents “an extraordinary act of corporate cruelty.” Both telecommunications giants struck a very different tone in the aftermath of the tax bill that was rushed through Congress last month. Comcast and AT&T were among the businesses that claimed Republican lawmakers’ effort to restructure the tax code in favor of wealthy corporations would allow them to be more generous to their workers, and publicly announced \$1,000 year-end bonuses for their employees. The CEOs of both companies specifically cited the tax bill in separate press releases touting these “special” bonuses. But Larry Robbins, the vice president of CWA Local 4900, told the IndyStar that AT&T started privately notifying its workforce of impending

layoffs at the same time as it publicly celebrated the benefits of the tax bill. “We believe the \$1,000 bonus and the promise of 7,000 new jobs are all a publicity stunt,” Robbins said.

## UNION TO SOUTHWEST: \$1,000 WORKER BONUSES DON'T MAKE UP FOR YEARS OF STAGNANT PAY

In general, union leaders have been incredibly skeptical of the big companies promising bonuses to their employees in the wake of the tax overhaul. After Southwest Airlines became the latest company to announce its plan to award \$1,000 bonuses, the Aircraft Mechanics Fraternal Association (AMFA) told ThinkProgress that the gesture isn't enough to make up for years of workers' stagnant pay and the company's unfinished collective bargaining agreement, which is currently under negotiations. Republican lawmakers touted their tax plan as good news for American workers, arguing that providing corporate tax cuts allows those companies to put money toward worker compensation and job creation. This dubious theory, known as “trickle-down economics,” hasn't been borne out in U.S. history and is unlikely to work as promised in the Trump era, either. Even though promises of big worker bonuses have successfully captured headlines, large corporations have already signaled that their shareholders are the ones who will reap the greatest benefits of the tax overhaul. Several major companies have announced massive share buybacks, which don't do anything to benefit their workers but instead further enrich their shareholders.

Source: Think Progress 1/6/18  
<https://thinkprogress.org/>

## Contact Your Reps

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Representative Jerry McNerney (D-9th District) 2222 Grand Canal Blvd #7, Stockton, CA 95207. 209-476-8552. Fax 209-476-8587. 1210 Longworth HOB, Washington DC 20515; [info@jerrymcnerney.org](mailto:info@jerrymcnerney.org), 202-225-1947, <http://www.JerryMcNerney.org>; Twitter: @RepMcNerney

Representative Tom McClintock (R-District 4), 8700 Auburn-Folsom Road, Suite 100, Granite Bay, CA 95746, 916, 786-5560, fax 916-786-6364; 434 Cannon HOB, Washington, DC, 20515, Fax 202-225-5444, Fax 202-225-544; Twitter @RepMcClintock

Representative Jeff Denham (R-District 10), 4701 Sisk Road, Suite 202, Modesto, CA 95356, 209-579-5458, Fax 209-579-5028. 1730 Longworth HOB, Washington, DC 20515, 202-225-4540. Twitter @ RepJeffDunham

Governor Jerry Brown, State Capitol, Sacramento, CA 95814. 916-445-2841

State Sen. Cathleen Galgiani (District 5), 31 E Channel St, Room 440, Stockton, CA 95202. 209-948-7930; State Capitol, Rm 4082, Sacramento, CA 95814. 916-651-4005

Assemblyperson Susan Talamantes Eggman (District 5), 31 E. Channel St., Rm. 306, Stockton CA 95202, 209-948-7479

# Our civic duty – preserving the best of downtown Stockton

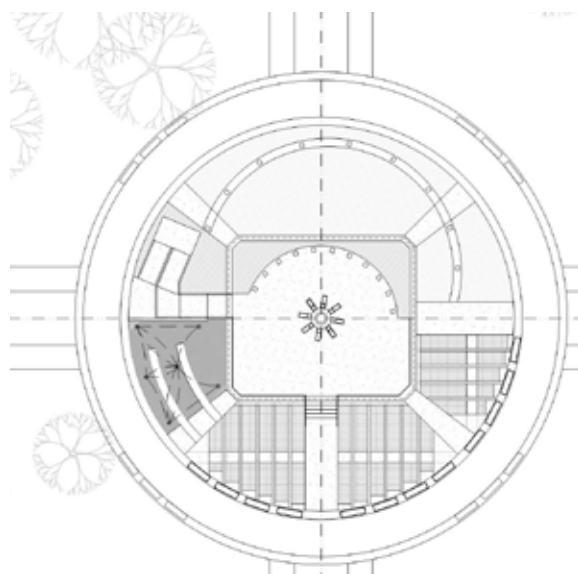
CHRISTINA D. B. FRANKEL

Save Downtown Stockton Foundation (SDSF for short) is working on the Hunter Square Spire Revitalization Project in MLK Jr Plaza, with the City of Stockton. The Project is a public-private partnership that takes the water fountain feature – the Spire – from the original and now demolished Hunter Square and reinvents its future: The Spire will be reinstalled in the unused fountain basin of MLK Jr Plaza and turned into a sundial per a public vote.

When SDSF advocates for the Spire Project in the community, we take the listener on a journey: First, we ask, “Do you remember the original Hunter Square?” Inevitably there are stories of remembrances related to downtown Stockton. A parade or civic event, eating or shopping downtown or visiting the original Hunter Square or using the courthouse.

Then we ask, “Do you remember the tall fountain feature? Are you familiar with fountain in MLK Jr Plaza?” Then, “Who is SDSF?” and “Why are we doing this?”

Sometimes, it is a long journey of context. Inevitably, the dawn of understanding comes: They understand the value of the Spire as an important piece of downtown Stockton's history. That the Spire is really public and civic art. They like reusing the Spire, finding another use for a piece of history, such as turning the Spire into a sundial. They want the unused fountain at MLK Jr Plaza to have new life. They like the idea of leaving their legacy, through purchasing of engraved bricks surrounding the Spire. They appreciate that SDSF is taking on the heavy lift of fronting the effort. And they empathize with the



SDSF when we discuss the length of time it has taken to get an equitable agreement with the City of Stockton.

Invariably the hardest for people to understand is why? After all, shouldn't the City take on this work? Or isn't that what we pay taxes for?

The SDSF was founded by two architects, Linda Derivi and Christina Frankel, who work in Stockton and wanted to preserve the heart of Stockton – its downtown. History and art are key components of SDSF's mission. The co-founders realized that creating catalyst projects, such as the Hunter Square Spire Revitalization Project, would

be the key to jumpstarting other revitalization and investment in downtown. And that there was a vacuum in the City: A lack of focus on vibrancy. Things that make every day living meaningful, like parks, art, history. Thus, the need for civic duty or ownership and participation in what makes downtown Stockton unique.

Civic duty can be defined generationally. If you are of a certain “vintage”, you participated in the making of your community without being asked; whether it be through public input, support of public projects, volunteering or just making sure the community looked good - a type of “personal public responsibility” of a community. For example, SDSF came across a 10-page newspaper spread in the Stockton Record in 1965 of the unveiling of the original Hunter Square. Pages of articles and ads excited about the new civic plaza. And less than 50 years later it was torn down? SDSF's goal is to re-engage the public in active engagement of its own community; to remind Stocktonians of its history and unique downtown; and to have the public once again being involved and proud of their downtown.

Want to make a difference? Leave a legacy and buy a Brick? Join SDSF for its Annual Inspire Fundraiser themed “Friday Fiesta” at the Mexican Heritage Center on Friday, March 23. For more information: [www.savedowntown-stockton.com](http://www.savedowntown-stockton.com)

**CHRISTINA D. B. FRANKEL IS CO-FOUNDER/EXECUTIVE DIR. FOR SDSF, 924 N. YOSEMITE ST. STOCKTON, CA 95203-2217**  
**WWW.SAVEDOWNTOWNSTOCKTON.COM 209.814.5429**



# Hopes for 2018 by movement leaders around the globe

## BEVERLY BELL

Across the globe, 2017 brought us to new lows. Yet, even as crisis after crisis shook us to the ground, they also inspired many to rise up and take to the streets and other venues of popular power. Donald Trump as president awakened millions, sparked new cross-sectoral coalitions, and galvanized people to creative and effective action.

Across the world, those who never had the luxury of complacency continued their struggles for participatory democracy; economic justice; an end to wars and violence; protection of the global commons; the rights and security of women, LGBTQ folk, and other excluded populations; and an end to theft and plunder of indigenous and small-farmer lands.

Here, nine movement leaders share their hopes for the new year. From the head of Greenpeace USA to an opponent of patriarchal capitalism in Zimbabwe, these thinkers, strategists, and organizers have made significant contributions to different sectors and continents. And cutting across all their aspirations is a common theme: that solutions to some of the most intractable challenges on the planet will come from people uniting and organizing into powerful movements.

### ALICIA GARZA OAKLAND, CALIF.-BASED ORGANIZER AND CO-FOUNDER OF BLACK LIVES MATTER

My hope for 2018 is that Black people are joined by the rest of the nation in solidly rejecting the new regime that has taken power. From suffrage to voting rights, from anti-Apartheid, emancipation, and #BlackLivesMatter to UndocuBlack and #MeToo, Black people have kept our eyes on freedom. Though we are not mules on whose backs freedom depends, the innovation and vision of Black people is critical, along with the activation of millions who understand that our futures are tied to one another. Let this be the year that sexual harassment and violence is seen through the eyes of Black women, the year that Congress is reorganized, and the year that progressive movements nurture and support Black communities by decisively taking on the fight against anti-Black racism as a fight for all of us. I hope that not another mother loses her child to police violence or the violence of government neglect. I hope a new movement emerges, committed to the fight against anti-Black racism in all its forms and united in pursuit of a future for all of us. I hope this is the year that the current administration is soundly rejected in favor of an interdependent, mutually beneficial global community.

### ANNIE LEONARD EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF GREENPEACE USA

I have high hopes for the new year, hopes based on the very real momentum building across the country. In 2017, millions of people who have long felt concern about climate change, increasing inequity, the deterioration of our democracy, and more went from being isolated and angry to united and active. That gives me hope since an inclusive peoples' movement is the best line of defense against those who want to plunder the planet and its people. And that movement is growing more powerful by the day.

Closer to home, I hope that Greenpeace and allies win the lawsuit attempting to shut us up or shut us down. In 2017, Energy Transfer Partners, the company that built the Dakota Access pipeline (the focus of the Standing Rock protest), filed a \$900 million SLAPP suit against Greenpeace. This is an attempt to silence and intimidate critics of pipelines and defenders of indigenous rights. I hope 2018 brings a resounding dismissal of this lawsuit, sending a strong message to corporations everywhere that they can't silence constitutionally protected advocacy. Dissent, nonviolent protest, and activism are crucial parts of our democracy, and are needed now more than ever.



### GUSTAVO CASTRO, CO-COORDINATOR OF FRIENDS OF THE EARTH MEXICO/ OTROS MUNDOS; CO-COORDINATOR, MESOAMERICAN MOVEMENT AGAINST THE MINING EXTRACTIVE MODEL

Responding to advanced capitalism with its savage extractivism in Latin America, organized peoples are resisting with more force, giving hope to the planet and me for the coming year. Electoral, military, and corporate coups d'état have encountered stronger fight-back from the Left, regardless of the cost to life and liberty; so too have free trade and investment agreements, the vehicles for making gigantic corporate investments in the territories of indigenous people and rural farmers (for everything from drilling and fracking of oil and gas; mining; monocultural production of African palm and other crops; and shrimp and factory cattle farming). Left movements are also fighting the theft and pillage of lands, waters, and other commons of nature, as well as the infrastructure needed to make huge profits from them, like oil pipelines and dry canals.

If the criminalization of social movements has grown, it is because the resistance continues to grow too, more than ever. In Latin America, people organized into organizations, and movements are defending their human rights, territories, and life.

### SAMIA SHOMAN PALESTINIAN AMERICAN EDUCATOR IN THE SAN FRANCISCO BAY AREA

On Dec. 21, when 128 member countries of the United Nations voted with Palestine against the US president's declaration of Jerusalem as the capital of Israel, my hope for Palestine was renewed. This hope grew when popular singer Lorde cancelled, on moral grounds, her upcoming concert in Tel Aviv on Christmas Day. Her announcement revalidated that the Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions movement, which seeks to end

international support for Israel's brutal occupation of Palestine, is growing and working. The action and resilience of Ahed Tamimi, the Palestinian teen activist who stood up to Israeli soldiers' aggression, has filled Palestinians with hope that there is a new generation leading the resistance.

My hope is that one day soon the American populace will catch up to the international community, which seems more aware of the growing violence and oppression against Palestinians at the hands of the Israeli government and military forces, and more willing to speak out about it. And when the streets of America are filled with people supporting Palestinians' right to self-determination and liberation, this hope will be fulfilled.

### MICHELLE L. COOK DINÉ (NAVAJO) HUMAN RIGHTS LAWYER FOCUSED ON PROTECTING INDIGENOUS RIGHTS AND TERRITORIES

The indigenous human rights movement was infused with new energy by the mass mobilization on the ancestral territories of the Standing Rock Sioux Nation in North Dakota, against the Dakota Access pipeline. There is no tidy ending to that tale. The safety and future of indigenous people, lands, and waters still hang in the balance, and still need the world's full support. At the same time, Standing Rock sparked a movement to stop international capital from flowing to the Dakota Access pipeline via banks, cities, and pension funds. In 2018 and beyond, indigenous people wielding the divestment tool -- with women in the forefront -- will be working to stop more financing of harmful projects and corporations.

This promises to be another year of indigenous mobilization to protect ancestral lands from plunder, such as Bears Ears in Utah from uranium mining and Louisiana's Atchafalaya Basin from the Bayou Bridge oil pipeline.

We are hopefully at a turning point in human rights in America, for indigenous self-determination and treaty rights, and for remedy by state and non-state actors. Moving forward from Standing Rock, as after the 1965 civil rights activity in Selma, Alabama, we are in a societal shift that will continue to inspire more just alternatives.

### MELANIA CHIPONDA FEMINIST ACTIVIST AND CLIMATE JUSTICE CAMPAIGNER WHO WAS PART OF THE ZIMBABWEAN UPRISING THAT TOPPLED ROBERT MUGABE

The march of millions across Zimbabwe on Nov. 18 for our democracy, peace, and economic salvation succeeded in bringing down Mugabe. It was a revolution. As an African feminist, I marched for something deeper, as well: for the liberation of women, for equality for people from all races, religions, genders, ethnic groups, and classes.

But from a feminist perspective, the /real/ revolution has not yet happened. My dream for 2018 and beyond is for true change, not just for a changing of the guard, from Mugabe to his former henchman, the vicious Emmerson Mnangagwa. If we want to correct the political and economic system, then we should get rid of patriarchal capitalism. I feel trapped where every avenue to power is overwhelmingly male-dominated. A more cooperative and egalitarian economic system cannot be based on male supremacy.

In a world where women are viewed as mothers and caregivers before anything else, and have to overcome strong ideological and political resistance from men to

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# Hopes for 2018 by movement leaders around the globe

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participate in political and economic systems, my hope is that we start a real revolution against patriarchal capitalism.

**GREG ASBED**  
COFOUNDER OF THE FARMWORKER-DRIVEN HUMAN RIGHTS  
AND ECONOMIC JUSTICE GROUP  
THE COALITION OF IMMOKALEE WORKERS

There were real glimmers of hope in 2017 that, when seen together, just might be the light at the end of one of the darkest years in this country's history. No glimmer shone brighter here in Immokalee, Florida, where some of this country's poorest, least powerful, most exploited workers found a way by building common cause with consumers, to turn what had been called "ground zero for modern-day slavery" into what is today known as "the best working environment in US agriculture." Through the Fair Food Program, the Coalition of Immokalee Workers is eliminating longstanding abuses from sexual assault to forced labor and, in the process, giving farmworkers a real voice in the decisions that shape their lives. If transformational, worker-led change can happen in Southern agriculture, it can happen anywhere. And that is my hope: that we come together in 2018 and start building the new day in the new year.

**ERIKA GUEVARA ROSAS**  
AMERICAS DIRECTOR AT AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

Across the Americas throughout 2017, a growing social discontent inspired people to take to the streets and raise their voices for an end to repression, marginaliza-

tion, and injustice. My inspiration to continue fighting for a better world in 2018 comes from countless small, brave acts by individuals and campaigns and resistance from movements that have and can make a real difference as we stand up to defend human rights.

Inspiration in 2017 came from the massive social movement of Ni Una Menos, or Not One Fewer, denouncing femicide and other violence against women and girls across Latin America. The long struggle of Peruvian activist Maxima Acuña had stopped a mining company that wanted to take over her land; recently, the Peruvian Supreme Court ruled in her favor. The decriminalization of abortion in Chile was a testament to the work of millions of women across the continent. And these are just a few of last year's stories of courage that have profoundly impacted people's lives.

In spite of the repressive response from governments, massive mobilizations in every corner in the region demanding state accountability and respect for human dignity will continue this year to transform the paradigms of power.

**EMEM OKON**  
DIRECTOR OF  
KEBETKACHE WOMEN DEVELOPMENT & RESOURCE CENTRE,  
A NIGERIAN ECO-FEMINIST ORGANIZATION  
BATTLING OIL COMPANIES

As women in the Niger Delta, we hope for this for 2018: Nothing about us without us! Throughout this new year, we will be aiming for greater power for the eco-feminist movement as we battle the oil companies who have stolen our lands, degraded the environment and biodiversity, and increased violence. I expect more visibility of women as we take action for the protection, remediation, and restoration of our environment. I

anticipate ever-larger women's mobilizations and look forward to deep consultations with women pushing oil companies to conduct Environmental Impact Assessments before commencing activities on their communities' land. I envision the aspirations of community people being recognized and respected by oil corporations. Finally, I take hope from knowing we will push for a women's rights perspective as we engage with and monitor the Sustainable Development Goals, to ensure that no one is left behind and to ensure that government and the oil companies do the right thing.

**BEVERLY BELL IS ASSOCIATE FELLOW AT THE INSTITUTE FOR POLICY STUDIES. SHE HAS WORKED FOR ALMOST FOUR DECADES AS AN ADVOCATE, ORGANIZER AND WRITER IN COLLABORATION WITH SOCIAL MOVEMENTS IN MANY PARTS OF THE GLOBE.**

Source: YES! Magazine 1/9/18 <http://www.yesmagazine.org>

## Congratulations!

Periodically we get a donation request letter returned to us, usually because someone has moved out to the area. But we celebrate the ones that come back from our members in correctional institutions.

We are happy to see that someone has been released and celebrate that with them. Hopefully they have connected with groups in their area that will support them as they rejoin their broader community. A couple of resources in Stockton, CA may be a good place to start:

Friends Outside and Friends and Family Center  
<http://friendsoutside.org/chapters.htm>

Friends Outside Administrative Staff,  
7272 Murray Drive, Stockton, CA 95210  
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 4085,  
Stockton, CA 95204  
Phone: (209) 955-0701 Fax: (209) 955-0735

Fathers & Families Offices <http://ffsj.org>  
Youth & Family Empowerment Center, 338 E. Market Street, Stockton, CA 95202



## Mainstream Media = Truth? Check out the Alternatives and Find out for yourself!

If you tap in to some of the alternative media, you will get a very different perspective on events. Especially now, when the mainstream media often acts as a cheerleader for whatever the administration does, it's necessary to go a little further to get your news. An internet connection is helpful.

**Firedoglake** <http://firedoglake.com>

**Emptywheel**  
<http://emptywheel.firedoglake.com/>

**Calitics** <http://www.calitics.com/>

**Eschaton** <http://www.eschatonblog.com/>

**Huffington Post**  
<http://www.huffingtonpost.com>

**Hullabaloo** <http://digbysblog.blogspot.com>

**Daily Kos** <http://www.dailykos.com>

**Talking Points Memo**  
<http://www.talkingpointsmemo.com>

**TPM Muckraker**  
<http://www.tpmmuckraker.com/>

**FiveThirtyEight.com**  
<http://www.fivethirtyeight.com/>

**Congress Matters**  
<http://www.congressmatters.com>

**Think Progress** <http://thinkprogress.com>

**Down With Tyranny**  
<http://downwithtyranny.blogspot.com/>

**Crooks and Liars**  
<http://www.crooksandliars.com>

**Media Matters** <http://mediamatters.org/>

**Common Dreams**  
<http://www.commondreams.org/>

**Truth Out** <http://www.truthout.org/>

**Raw Story** <http://www.rawstory.com>

**Open Left** <http://www.openleft.com/>

**AlterNet** <http://www.alternet.org/>

**Independent Media Center**  
<http://www.indymedia.org>

**The Nation** <http://www.thenation.com/>

**Hightower News**  
<http://www.webactive.com/hightower/>

**Mother Jones** <http://www.motherjones.com/>

**In These Times** <http://inthesetimes.com/>

**The Guardian**  
<http://www.guardian.co.uk/worldlatest/>

**Corporate Watch**  
<http://www.corpwatch.org/home/PHH.jsp>

**KPFA (94.1 FM)** provides excellent coverage on many issues. You can listen on the internet at <http://www.kpfa.org>

**Democracy Now!** on KPFA, 94.1 FM and KVMR, 89.5 FM or on the web at: <http://www.democracynow.org>

**People's World** <http://www.peoplesworld.org>

## Book review

# The Universe Story calendar and book

**THOMAS R. SPIRITBRINGER**

*The Universe Story* book, written by Thomas Berry and Brian Thomas Swimme, was the first synthesis of science, religion, the humanities and all other disciplines that told our New Common Story of our 13.8 billion year journey of wonder, awe and reverence up to today. Now, after 435 years since 1582 CE, it is the perfect time to bring forth a new world and Earth-wide calendar that tells *The Universe Story* with reality, meaning and value. The Gregorian Calendar is still based on the Earth being the center of their Universe in 1582 CE. It was based on the knowledge of that day which taught that the Universe only went out to Saturn.

*The Universe Story Calendar* (TUSC) honors all national, religious, cultural calendars while transcending The Gregorian Calendar as the overall, comprehensive, compassionate context for all of them. Unity, meaning, reality and value are the roots of this new educational tool for

our Human species at this time of Great Promise and Great Peril.

Within TUSC, I have focused on the United Nations days that honor issues like migrants, violence against women, world AIDS, mountains, water, nuclear disarmament and many others. The UN is our human family's primary means of working toward unity, peace and justice. This is also the focus of the Universe Story Calendar.

Please consider this new educational, unity tool for our planet Earth. We are in this project for the "Long-Haul" because, as we know, as of today, that Life on Earth can survive for 400 million years if we turn from our present destructive presence. We are the esteemed ancestors of our great-grandchildren of 2067 CE. With deep joy for Humanity as our new world and Earth-wide calendar is promulgated.

**GO TO WWW.2017YEAR  
OF THE UNIVERSE STORY.  
COM TO ORDER A 2018  
CE CALENDAR AND THE  
COMPANION BOOK.**



# Farming for a small planet

FRANCES MOORE LAPPÉ

People yearn for alternatives to industrial agriculture, but they are worried. They see large-scale operations relying on corporate-supplied chemical inputs as the only high-productivity farming model. Another approach might be kinder to the environment and less risky for consumers, but, they assume, it would not be up to the task of providing all the food needed by our still-growing global population.

Contrary to such assumptions, there is ample evidence that an alternative approach—organic agriculture, or more broadly “agroecology”—is actually the only way to ensure that all people have access to sufficient, healthful food. Inefficiency and ecological destruction are built into the industrial model. But, beyond that, our ability to meet the world’s needs is only partially determined by what quantities are produced in fields, pastures, and waterways. Wider societal rules and norms ultimately shape whether any given quantity of food produced is actually used to meet humanity’s needs. In many ways, how we grow food determines who can eat and who cannot—no matter how much we produce. Solving our multiple food crises thus requires a systems approach in which citizens around the world remake our understanding and practice of democracy.

Today, the world produces—mostly from low-input, smallholder farms—more than enough food: 2,900 calories per person per day. Per capita food availability has continued to expand despite ongoing population growth. This ample supply of food, moreover, comprises only what is left over after about half of all grain is either fed to livestock or used for industrial purposes, such as agro-fuels.

Despite this abundance, 800 million people worldwide suffer from long-term caloric deficiencies. One in four children under five is deemed stunted—a condition, often bringing lifelong health challenges, that results from poor nutrition and an inability to absorb nutrients. Two billion people are deficient in at least one nutrient essential for health, with iron deficiency alone implicated in one in five maternal deaths.

The total supply of food alone actually says little about whether the world’s people are able to meet their nutritional needs. We need to ask why the industrial model leaves so many behind, and then determine what questions we should be asking to lead us toward solutions to the global food crisis.

## VAST, HIDDEN INEFFICIENCIES

The industrial model of agriculture—defined here by its capital intensity and dependence on purchased inputs of seeds, fertilizer, and pesticides—creates multiple unappreciated sources of inefficiency. Economic forces are a major contributor here: the industrial model operates within what are commonly called “free market economies,” in which enterprise is driven by one central goal, namely, securing the highest immediate return to existing wealth. This leads inevitably to a greater concentration of wealth and, in turn, to greater concentration of the capacity to control market demand within the food system.

Moreover, economically and geographically concentrated production, requiring lengthy supply chains and involving the corporate culling of cosmetically blemished foods, leads to massive outright waste: more than 40 percent of food grown for human consumption in the United States never makes it into the mouths of its population.

The underlying reason industrial agriculture cannot meet humanity’s food needs is that its system logic is one of disassociated parts, not interacting elements. It is thus unable to register its own self-destructive impacts on nature’s regenerative processes. Industrial agriculture, therefore, is a dead end.

Consider the current use of water in agriculture. About 40 percent of the world’s food depends on irrigation, which draws largely from stores of underground water, called aquifers, which make up 30 percent of the world’s freshwater. Unfortunately, groundwater is be-



ing rapidly depleted worldwide. In the United States, the Ogallala Aquifer—one of the world’s largest underground bodies of water—spans eight states in the High Plains and supplies almost one third of the groundwater used for irrigation in the entire country. Scientists warn that within the next thirty years, over one-third of the southern High Plains region will be unable to support irrigation. If today’s trends continue, about 70 percent of the Ogallala groundwater in the state of Kansas could be depleted by the year 2060.

Industrial agriculture also depends on massive phosphorus fertilizer application—another dead end on the horizon. Almost 75 percent of the world’s reserve of phosphate rock, mined to supply industrial agriculture, is in an area of northern Africa centered in Morocco and Western Sahara. Since the mid-twentieth century, humanity has extracted this “fossil” resource, processed it using climate-harming fossil fuels, spread four times more of it on the soil than occurs naturally, and then failed to recycle the excess. Much of this phosphate escapes from farm fields, ending up in ocean sediment where it remains unavailable to humans. Within this century, the industrial trajectory will lead to “peak phosphorus”—the point at which extraction costs are so high, and prices out of reach for so many farmers, that global phosphorus production begins to decline.

Beyond depletion of specific nutrients, the loss of soil itself is another looming crisis for agriculture. Worldwide, soil is eroding at a rate ten to forty times faster than it is being formed. To put this in visual terms, each year, enough soil is washed and blown from fields globally to fill roughly four pickup trucks for every human being on earth.

The industrial model of farming is not a viable path to meeting humanity’s food needs for yet another reason: it contributes nearly 20 percent of all anthropogenic greenhouse gas emissions, even more than the transportation sector. The most significant emissions from agriculture are carbon dioxide, methane, and nitrous oxide. Carbon dioxide is released in deforestation and subsequent burning, mostly in order to grow feed, as well as from decaying plants. Methane is released by ruminant livestock, mainly via their flatulence and belching, as well as by manure and in rice paddy cultivation. Nitrous oxide is released largely by manure and manufactured fertilizers. Although carbon dioxide receives most of the attention, methane and nitrous oxide are also serious. Over a hundred-year period, methane is, molecule for molecule, 34 times more potent as a heat-trapping gas, and nitrous oxide about 300 times, than carbon dioxide.

Our food system also increasingly involves transportation, processing, packaging, refrigeration, storage, wholesale and retail operations, and waste management—all of which emit greenhouse gases. Accounting for these impacts, the total food system’s contribution to

global greenhouse gas emissions, from land to landfill, could be as high as 29 percent. Most startlingly, emissions from food and agriculture are growing so fast that, if they continue to increase at the current rate, they alone could use up the safe budget for all greenhouse gas emissions by 2050.

These dire drawbacks are mere symptoms. They flow from the internal logic of the model itself. The reason that industrial agriculture cannot meet the world’s needs is that the structural forces driving it are misaligned with nature, including human nature.

Social history offers clear evidence that concentrated power tends to elicit the worst in human behavior. Whether for bullies in the playground or autocrats in government, concentrated power is associated with callousness and even brutality not in a few of us, but in most of us. The system logic of industrial agriculture, which concentrates social power, is thus itself a huge risk for human well-being. At every stage, the big become bigger, and farmers become ever-more dependent on ever-fewer suppliers, losing power and the ability to direct their own lives.

The seed market, for example, has moved from a competitive arena of small, family-owned firms to an oligopoly in which just three companies—Monsanto, DuPont, and Syngenta—control over half of the global proprietary seed market. Worldwide, from 1996 to 2008, a handful of corporations absorbed more than two hundred smaller independent companies, driving the price of seeds and other inputs higher to the point where their costs for poor farmers in southern India now make up almost half of production costs. And the cost in real terms per acre for users of bio-engineered crops dominated by one corporation, Monsanto, tripled between 1996 and 2013.

Not only does the industrial model direct resources into inefficient and destructive uses, but it also feeds the very root of hunger itself: the concentration of social power. This results in the sad irony that small-scale farmers—those with fewer than five acres—control 84 percent of the world’s farms and produce most of the food by value, yet control just 12 percent of the farmland and make up the majority of the world’s hungry.

The industrial model also fails to address the relationship between food production and human nutrition. Driven to seek the highest possible immediate financial returns, farmers and agricultural companies are

increasingly moving toward monocultures of low-nutrition crops such as corn—the dominant US crop—that are often processed into empty-calorie “food products.” As a result, from 1990 to 2010, growth in unhealthy

eating patterns outpaced dietary improvements in most parts of the world, including the poorer regions. Most of the key causes of non-communicable diseases are now diet-related, and by 2020, such diseases are predicted to account for nearly 75 percent of all deaths worldwide.

## A BETTER ALTERNATIVE

What model of farming can end nutritional deprivation while restoring and conserving food-growing resources for our progeny? The answer lies in the emergent model of agroecology, often called “organic” or ecological agriculture. Hearing these terms, many people imagine simply a set of farming practices that forgo purchased inputs, relying instead on beneficial biological interactions among plants, microbes, and other organisms. However, agroecology is much more than that. The term as it is used here suggests a model of farming based on the assumption that within any dimension of life, the organization of relationships within the whole system determines the outcomes. The model reflects a shift from a disassociated to a relational way of thinking arising across many fields within both the physical and social sciences. This approach to farming is coming to life in the ever-growing

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# Boggs Tract Community Farm: So much to learn in the garden

**SUSAN MORA LOYKO,**  
**PUNTES CLASSROOM COORDINATOR**

What better way for children to learn about fruits and veggies, the importance of good nutrition and appreciating some of the outdoor wonders than in a garden. As they have for the last five years, students from Washington Elementary School trek out to the nearby Boggs Tract Community Farm once a week to work, play and learn in the Classroom Garden.

The 6.5 acres of Boggs Tract Community Farm provides the students with a large and diverse education area for observing and learning through a variety of hands-on activities. The students from 4th, 5th and 6th grades are part of an afterschool program that provides them an opportunity to come to the Classroom Garden. Each week the students focus on an area of gardening from understanding the parts of seeds and plants, what plants need to grow, the difference be-

tween good bugs and bad bugs, how trees grow and why we need them, the importance of pollinators and so much more. There are lots of discussions about the importance of eating fresh fruits and veggies so children gain a better understanding of good nutrition and why processed foods are not healthy for their bodies.

Currently, the students have planted cilantro, a variety of lettuces, broccoli and spinach. They've had the opportunity to watch their plants grow from small seedlings to full-sized plants that they can take home to their families. All the children understand the one hard and fast rule of the garden, they have to sample a fruit or veggie before they say they don't like it. That has not proved to be a problem as the children are more likely to eat something they have grown.

They also get the opportunity to exercise the right or creative side of their brains with hands-on craft projects such as painting their own small bird houses or

decorating squash gourds, creating bead bracelets and more. Helping the students in their learning are Master Gardeners Priske Kelly, Mary Fry and Susan Mora Loyko. The women get great joy in working with the students in the garden. Being in the outdoor learning environment gives students the opportunity to hear croaking frogs, observe butterflies and bees flit from plant to plant and take time to watch birds fly overhead.

No time on the farm is complete without taking a few minutes at the end of each class to allow students to write in their journals and draw about what they learned during the day's activities. They never seem to struggle with what to write because the garden offers something out of the ordinary for learning. For more information on the Boggs Tract Community Farm and the Classroom Garden, please contact Susan at [smloyko@puentescas.org](mailto:smloyko@puentescas.org)



Students Theresa, Jose and Giovanni work with teacher Priske Kelly to learn more about seeds.



Jose decorates his birdhouse that will hang in the classroom garden.



Fatima, Dayana, Gianna and Theresa learn how to make a pumpkin flower pot.



Teacher Mary Fry works outdoors as the students learn more about trees.

## FARMING. CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

numbers of farmers and agricultural scientists worldwide who reject the narrow productivist view embodied in the industrial model.

Recent studies have dispelled the fear that an ecological alternative to the industrial model would fail to

nity, knowledge, and the capacities of all involved. Agroecology can thereby address the powerlessness that lies at the root of hunger.

Applying such a systems approach to farming unites ecological science with time-tested traditional wisdom rooted in farmers' ongoing experiences. Agroecology also includes a social and politically engaged movement

practices that do not rely on purchased chemical inputs, farmers in the Global South commonly make natural pesticides using local ingredients—mixtures of neem tree extract, chili, and garlic in southern India, for example. Local farmers purchase women's homemade alternatives and keep the money circulating within their community, benefiting all.

### THE RIGHT PATH

When we address the question of how to feed the world, we need to think relationally—linking current modes of production with our future capacities to produce, and linking farm output with the ability of all people to meet their need to have nutritious food and to live in dignity. Agroecology, understood as a set of farming practices aligned with nature and embedded in more balanced power relationships, from the village level upward, is thus superior to the industrial model. This emergent relational model offers the promise of an ample supply of nutritious food needed now and in the future, and more equitable access to it.

Democratic governance—accountable to citizens, not to private wealth—makes possible the necessary public debate and rule-making to re-embed market mechanisms within democratic values and sound science. Only with this foundation can societies explore how best to protect food-producing resources—soil, nutrients, water—that the industrial model is now destroying. Only then can societies decide how nutritious food, distributed largely as a market commodity, can also be protected as a basic human right.

**FRANCES MOORE LAPPÉ IS THE CO-AUTHOR, WITH ADAM EICHEN, OF THE NEW BOOK, *DARING DEMOCRACY: IGNITING POWER, MEANING, AND CONNECTION FOR THE AMERICA WE WANT*. AMONG HER NUMEROUS PREVIOUS BOOKS ARE: *ECOMIND: CHANGING THE WAY WE THINK TO CREATE THE WORLD WE WANT* (NATION BOOKS) AND THE ACCLAIMED *DIET FOR A SMALL PLANET*. SHE IS ALSO A YES! CONTRIBUTING EDITOR.**

Source: *Common Dreams* 1/12/18  
<https://www.commondreams.org/>

*The total supply of food alone actually says little about whether the world's people are able to meet their nutritional needs. We need to ask why the industrial model leaves so many behind, and then determine what questions we should be asking to lead us toward solutions to the global food crisis.*

produce the volume of food for which the industrial model is prized. In 2006, a seminal study in the Global South compared yields in 198 projects in 55 countries and found that ecologically attuned farming increased crop yields by an average of almost 80 percent. A 2007 University of Michigan global study concluded that organic farming could support the current human population, and expected increases without expanding farmed land. Then, in 2009, came a striking endorsement of ecological farming by fifty-nine governments and agencies, including the World Bank, in a report painstakingly prepared over four years by four hundred scientists urging support for "biological substitutes for industrial chemicals or fossil fuels." Such findings should ease concerns that ecologically aligned farming cannot produce sufficient food, especially given its potential productivity in the Global South, where such farming practices are most common.

Ecological agriculture, unlike the industrial model, does not inherently concentrate power. Instead, as an evolving practice of growing food within communities, it disperses and creates power, and can enhance the dig-

of farmers, growing from and rooted in distinct cultures worldwide. As such, it cannot be reduced to a specific formula, but rather represents a range of integrated practices, adapted and developed in response to each farm's specific ecological niche. It weaves together traditional knowledge and ongoing scientific breakthroughs based on the integrative science of ecology. By progressively eliminating all or most chemical fertilizers and pesticides, agroecological farmers free themselves—and, therefore, all of us—from reliance on climate-disrupting, finite fossil fuels, as well as from other purchased inputs that pose environmental and health hazards.

In another positive social ripple, agroecology is especially beneficial to women farmers. In many areas, particularly in Africa, nearly half or more of farmers are women, but too often they lack access to credit.

Agroecology—which eliminates the need for credit to buy synthetic inputs—can make a significant difference for them.

Agroecological practices also enhance local economies, as profits on farmers' purchases no longer seep away to corporate centers elsewhere. After switching to



## Getting to 350:

# What it will take to fix global warming

PETER MONTAGUE

In 2017, scientists for the first time spelled out what it will take for civilization to survive global warming. Simply ending the use of fossil fuels isn't going to do it; we must /also/ extract billions of tons of carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) out of the atmosphere and store it somewhere forever. The world has been edging toward this momentous conclusion for a long time, but in 2017, scientists finally laid out the details.

At least as early as 2001, a few scientists started saying atmospheric CO<sub>2</sub> could not safely exceed 350 parts per million for very long. The world snoozed. Then, in October 2009, huge, noisy crowds of young people jammed the streets in 4,300 synchronized demonstrations in 188 countries, to publicize 350 parts per million (ppm) as a climate goal. The world began to wake up.

Now, thanks to climate activists (and many scientists), the 350 goal is firmly fixed on the global agenda. However, few people still have any real idea what it will take to achieve 350. In 2017, though, climate godfather James Hansen and his colleagues laid it out for us.

From 1981 to 2013, Hansen was director and chief scientist for the National Aeronautics and Space Administration's Goddard Institute for Space Studies. In that global warming was upon us. Some scientists scoffed, but today all the world's major scientific organizations acknowledge that he was right. After another 20 years studying global warming, in 2008, Hansen published his disturbing conclusion that global warming promises "irreversible catastrophic effects" if we allow CO<sub>2</sub> to exceed 350 ppm past the end of this century.

The natural amount of CO<sub>2</sub> in the air is 280 ppm, but by 2016, it had risen to a dangerous 404 ppm because of humans burning coal, oil and natural gas. It's now rising a bit more than 2 ppm each year and the rate of increase is accelerating. As everyone now knows, CO<sub>2</sub> acts like a blanket in the air, warming the planet and changing the climate.

### WHY IT MATTERS

Hansen is a physicist, and his argument is based on physical evidence from Earth's rocks and ice, which contain a record of past CO<sub>2</sub> levels, temperature, climate and sea levels. We are now living in a warm period between ice ages -- a balmy epoch known as the Holocene, which began about 11,700 years ago. During this warm period, humans invented agriculture, formed villages and towns, then cities, creating modern civilization.

Today, everyone on the planet is dependent upon Holocene conditions -- moderate temperatures, steady sea levels, abundant sea life, manageable storms, predictable patterns of rain, snow, snow-melt and river flows, plus plenty of food

thanks to regular seasons, abundant pollinators, ample fresh water and moist, temperate soils. If those things change -- especially if they change rapidly, as they are now doing -- hundreds of

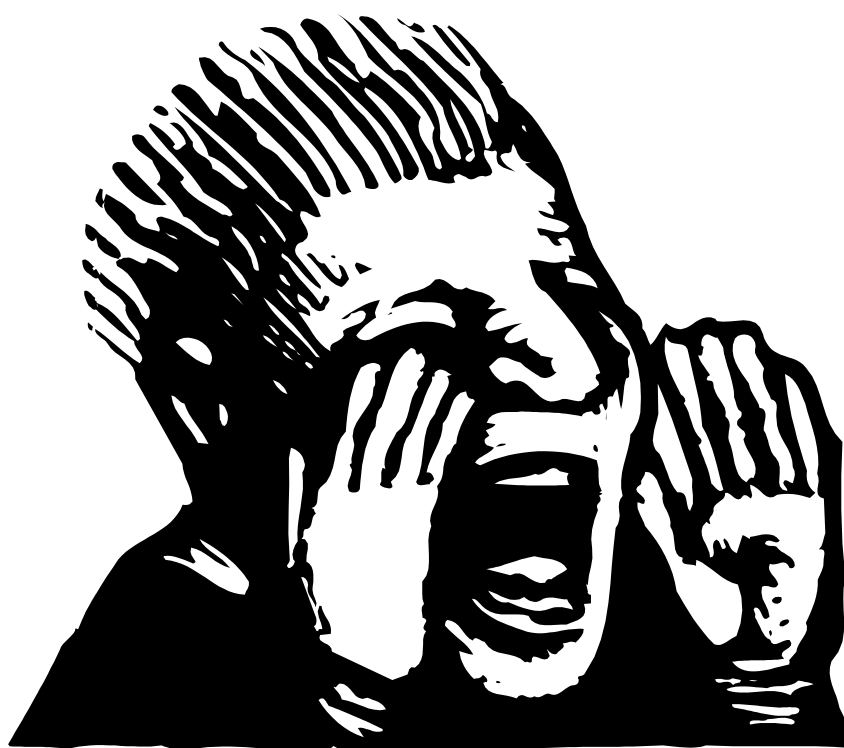
millions of people will find themselves short of food, fresh water or tolerable temperatures, and will migrate into someone else's territory, creating conflict, war and social upheaval. If present warming trends continue, the foundations of civilization will crumble.

### THE SCIENCE OF 350

Hansen's argument goes like this: In the last warm period before the Holocene (in an epoch called the Eemian) the global average temperature peaked about 1.8 degrees Fahrenheit warmer than the Holocene average, and two things were hugely different from today: 1) sea level was 20 to 30 feet higher, and 2) coastal storms were much larger, producing waves that could push 1,000-ton boulders out of the sea onto the land.

Global average temperature today is already warmer than it was during the Eemian. If it remains so for long, polar ice will melt away, sea level will reach Eemian levels, and the world's coasts will be swamped. Since 1750, the global average temperature has risen about 2.07°F and additional warming of about 1°F is "in the pipeline," meaning the heat has already entered the ocean and will be warming the atmosphere in the next

several decades, no matter what we do. /In sum, we have already overshot safe CO<sub>2</sub> limits/ and polar ice is already melting faster than most scientists thought possible.



### THE SPEED OF MELTING MATTERS

From the geologic record, we learn that sea-level rise can occur abruptly -- 13 feet to 15 feet in a century. Because of the unprecedented speed of recent warming, Hansen believes a 20- to 30-foot rise could occur within 50 to 150 years. Even the more optimistic estimate -- a 20-foot rise in 150 years -- would average 16 inches every decade, which even wealthy, low-lying cities could not accommodate for long. "The economic and social cost of losing functionality of all coastal cities is practically incalculable," Hansen writes.

### HOW MANY PEOPLE LIVE ON LOW-LYING COASTS?

Worldwide, an estimated 145 million people live three feet or less above sea level. Even a three-foot rise this century would bring economic chaos. In 2007, the world's low-elevation coastal zone (less than 33 feet above sea level) was home to about 700 million people (then about 11 percent of the global population), and millions more have moved to the coasts since then. About two-thirds of the world's cities larger than 5 million people lie at least partly in this endangered zone. "It is not difficult to imagine that conflicts arising from forced migrations and economic collapse might make the planet ungovernable, threatening the fabric of civilization," Hansen writes.

### WHAT WILL IT /REALLY/ TAKE TO GET BACK TO 350?

Getting back to 350 isn't as simple as it may seem. As we extract CO<sub>2</sub> from the air, it will be replaced by CO<sub>2</sub> seeping back out of the ocean and the land. Therefore, almost all of the CO<sub>2</sub> that humans have

emitted since 1750 must be sucked out of the air and stored somewhere forever. Hansen's latest paper, for the first time, calculates the size of the task.

### THREE THINGS WE COULD DO

1. We could initiate a "concerted global-scale effort" (Hansen's phrase) to remove carbon from the atmosphere and store it in soil by "improving agriculture and forestry practices" worldwide. He offers an estimate -- which he calls "ambitious" -- that we could remove about 370 billion tons of CO<sub>2</sub> from the air this century by such a global effort.

2. Simultaneously, we could rapidly reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from fossil fuels -- modifying all power plants, industrial operations, buildings and vehicles. How fast we reduce emissions will determine the necessary size of step three, which is...

3. We can build machines to extract CO<sub>2</sub> directly from the air. Even with maximum CO<sub>2</sub> removal by improved farming and forestry, and even with rapid, steady decreases in fossil fuel emissions, CO<sub>2</sub> would still exceed 350 ppm in year 2100, threatening civilization. Therefore, direct removal of CO<sub>2</sub> from air is essential, Hansen calculates.

In his 2017 paper, Hansen describes two practical CO<sub>2</sub>-removal scenarios: 1) reducing CO<sub>2</sub> emissions 6 percent per year for 80 years (2020 to 2100), or 2) reducing emissions only 3 percent per year for 80 years. Hansen shows that if we choose the 6 percent per year reduction, then we must capture and store 560 billion tons of CO<sub>2</sub>. If we reduce emissions only 3 percent per year, we must extract 870 billion tons of CO<sub>2</sub> and store it forever.

### TWO WAYS TO STORE CO<sub>2</sub>

There are two basic ways to store CO<sub>2</sub>: 1) permanently solidify the CO<sub>2</sub> by combining it with basalt rock, creating carbonate minerals, such as limestone; 2) compress the CO<sub>2</sub> gas into a liquid and pump it a half mile or more below ground, hoping it stays there forever. This second approach has several problems. For one thing, pumping billions of tons of liquid CO<sub>2</sub> underground will almost certainly cause earthquakes, which are destructive, costly and frightening. Second, if the CO<sub>2</sub> ever leaks back into the atmosphere, it defeats the purpose. Third, liquid CO<sub>2</sub> is dangerous -- if much CO<sub>2</sub> leaks to the surface abruptly, it could kill all living things near the leak. Therefore, people are likely to oppose a CO<sub>2</sub> burial site anywhere near them.

### THE COST

Turning CO<sub>2</sub> into stone seems the better option if it can work on a grand scale. The chemistry is simple, but the technology remains largely untested. The few researchers currently doing it aim to get the price down to \$100 per ton of

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE



# Sierra notes: Why are our native amphibians disappearing?

It's January, and if you're ever near slow-moving water on a rainy night, you might hear a whole chorus of frog calls. You might hear the call of more common species like the Sierran Treefrog or the California Toad. If you were extremely lucky, you might hear call of sensitive Foothill Yellow-legged Frogs or California Red-Legged Frogs, whose populations are both at risk right now. During and after a good rain, frogs and toads croak to attract a mate. These rainy-season songs were much more wide-spread in the last century, before the region was as developed as it is now. If amphibians continue to face severe threats, it's possible that by the next century we won't be able to hear them at all.

Several decades ago, most streams and meadows of the northern Yosemite region were home to robust populations of amphibians, from California Red-legged Frogs and Foothill Yellow-legged Frogs to Yosemite Toads and Sierra Newts. These species are integral to their ecosystems, and are highly specialized to their environments. Unfortunately, as mentioned in our recent newt article, amphibians are the most threatened vertebrate group on Earth, with one in three species threatened by extinction. California Tiger Salamanders have lost about 75 percent of their historical breeding habitat. Red-legged Frogs, the largest native frog species west of the Mississippi River, have been driven from 70 percent of their range. There are multiple proposed causes for these population declines, but the answer is likely a combination of factors.

## CHYTRIDIOMYCOSIS

A major cause of population decline in California amphibians is the deadly fungal pathogen chytrid, or *Batrachochytrium dendrobatidis* (Bd). The fungus causes frog skin to cease its normal functions, including ab-

sorbing oxygen and nutrients, which in most cases is fatal. Having already led to the extinction of 200 frog species, scientists are striving to understand the spread of the disease and hope to someday halt it. Mountain Yellow-legged Frogs, whose numbers have already been reduced by 90 percent, are heavily impacted by Bd in the alpine lakes of the Sierra Nevada. These frogs are the subjects of an experimental treatment by UC Santa Barbara: capture wild specimens, immunize them to the disease, and release them.

Both invasive Bullfrogs and the common Pacific Tree Frog are considered carriers for this disease. Humans can help reduce the spread of the fungus by disinfecting footwear after use in water, and by discouraging amphibian pet imports and bait use.

## CHEMICAL POLLUTANTS

The Sierra Nevada mountains are often downwind of agricultural land in the Central Valley, allowing for agrochemicals to travel from farmland into ground and surface water at higher elevations. Pesticide residue has been documented in the bodies of Southern Mountain Yellow-legged Frogs and Pacific Tree Frogs, and a study on California Red-legged Frogs found a significant association between their population decline and wind-borne agrochemicals. Herbicides like the ubiquitous Atrazine can affect amphibian hormones (as well as bird, rodent, and human endocrine hormones), effectively sterilizing them and sometimes causing males to become female. Other pesticides can cause delayed metamorphosis, suppression of the immune system, and fatality. Nitrate pollution from fertilizers can also cause deformity or be fatal to California Toads and Pacific Tree Frogs.



## HABITAT DESTRUCTION AND DEGRADATION

Like other wildlife, amphibians are heavily impacted by habitat loss and alteration. Urbanization, especially near aquatic habitats, can devastate a population by polluting the water, diverting water for human use, and fragmenting habitable areas. Habitat fragmentation can split a large population into many small ones with reduced genetic diversity and movement capabilities, which limits their ability to respond to environmental changes. Activities like clear-cutting and grazing alter plant ecosystems and numbers. This produces a cascading environmental effect that can make the land uninhabitable for some amphibian species.

Source: CSERC 1/8/18  
<http://www.cserc.org/>

## CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

CO2. If they succeed, the 6 percent-per-year reduction plan will cost \$700 billion per year for 80 years. (For comparison, the proposed US military budget for 2018 is around \$640 billion.) At \$100 per ton, the slower 3 percent-per-year emissions reduction plan would cost about \$1.1 trillion per year for 80 years.

Of course, the \$100-per-ton estimate could be wildly optimistic. The American Physical Society (APS) -- the professional association for physicists -- has estimated that air capture and storage of CO2 will cost at least \$610 per ton. If this APS estimate held true, then a 6 percent-per-year reduction would cost \$4.2 trillion each year, and 3 percent-per-year reduction would cost \$6.7 trillion per year, every year for 80 years. Those are large sums.

Whatever it finally costs to get back to 350, based on historical CO2 emissions the US would be liable for 26 percent of the total cost -- somewhere between \$182 billion per year and \$1.1 trillion per year, using the cost estimates given above.

These are painful but perhaps manageable sums in a growing global economy, but there's another way to measure the size of the required CO2-capture effort: by comparing it to the global oil industry. In 2015, refineries processed 4.4 billion tons of crude. Notably, it took over 120 years to build that processing capacity. If we reduce CO2 emissions 6 percent

per year, we'll need to build the equivalent of today's global oil industry in 72 years. That is arguably doable with a major, concerted, global effort.

On the other hand, if we reduce CO2 by only 3 percent per year, we'll have to build a CO2 storage industry the size of today's global oil industry in 26 years, and within 80 years, we'll have built a CO2 processing system three times the size of today's oil industry. This seems beyond human capacity, which tells us we need to reduce global CO2 emissions faster than 3 percent per year.

The 6 percent per year reduction rate (or close to it) could be feasible if we had a global agreement on that goal. Belgium, France and Sweden each reduced CO2 emissions between 4 and 5 percent per year for more than a decade when they switched from coal to nuclear power in the 1970s. (Today only Sweden remains fully committed to nuclear power. In France, a decades-long cover-up of construction flaws has undercut confidence in the nuclear option, and Belgium is phasing out <http://goo.gl/QwCyyY> the technology. In the US, greying advocates of nuclear power hope against hope that a new generation of "small modular" atomic reactors will arrive in time to revive the industry. However, serious unresolved safety issues -- and the disaster-scarred track record of the technology -- continue to repel investors and the public. Many new, exotic nuclear reactor designs have been

proposed, but all suffer to one degree or another from ruinous unsolved problems, including weapons proliferation, radioactive waste disposal, extreme technical and managerial complexity, terrorist threats, long construction times, public mistrust and high cost. Far cheaper, simpler and safer renewable energy systems are already available off the shelf, and investors know it.)

## WHAT'S POLITICALLY POSSIBLE?

If a 6 percent annual emissions reduction using renewable energy seems technically doable, then we can ask whether it's politically possible. So long as the sky is a free toilet for waste carbon, there's a strong incentive to continue emissions as usual. In the US, to reduce emissions 6 percent per year for 80 years, we'd have to impose a carbon tax on coal, oil and natural gas, to be collected at the mine mouth or well head and distributed uniformly to every citizen. (Such a tax would improve, not diminish, economic prosperity.) Worse, governments worldwide are presently subsidizing fossil fuels to the tune of \$5.3 trillion per year, or \$10 million every minute, 24/7. Those subsidies would have to end.

## MAKING CORRUPTION ILLEGAL

Naturally, before we could end massive subsidies and impose a tax on carbon in the US, we'd have to get private money out of our politics. Our system of perfect-

ly-legal corruption allows the fossil corporations (and their lawyers, consultants and subcontractors) to buy Congress. As a result, in 2016, 180 of the 535 members of Congress (34 percent) simply denied climate science. It pays to do so. On average, the 38 Senate deniers have each received \$732,788 from fossil fuel interests while science-believing senators each got only \$182,902. On average, each House denier has received \$272,536 from the fossil corporations while science-believing members each got only \$80,095.

Obviously, fixing corruption in our politics is an *essential* reform that must happen before global warming can be brought under control. But it's a reform that could appeal to *all* issue-oriented people. *It is the one reform that makes all other reforms possible.* You might think that a gigantic coalition of concerned residents and activists from *all* issue-groups would join together to make it happen. But so far you would be disappointed. Can we still make it happen? Yes, we can.

**PETER MONTAGUE IS A HISTORIAN AND JOURNALIST WHOSE WORK HAS APPEARED IN COUNTERPUNCH, HUFFINGTON POST, THE NATION AND MANY OTHER PUBLICATIONS. HE HAS CO-AUTHORED TWO BOOKS ON TOXIC HEAVY METALS.**

Source: Truthout 1/6/18  
<http://www.truth-out.org/>



# Instead of worrying about budgets and deficits, ask about impact

STEPHANIE KELTON

Budget deficits can be a very powerful weapon in the battle against poverty, inequality, economic environmental and social justice. I worry very much about the vilifying of budget deficits and the use and reliance and dependence on questions of how social spending will impact budget deficits, to the complete disregard for the impact of programs and policies on people.

I worked with Senator Bernie Sanders as he pushed an ambitious policy agenda to do things like raise the minimum wage, put millions of people to work on large scale public investments, provide paid family leave, tuition-free colleges universal healthcare, and so on. And in every turn, no matter what he proposed, the first question on everyone's lips was, "How are you going to pay for it?" And then, "What does the

[Congressional Budget Office] say? Does it get a good score or does it get a bad score, in which case the deficit might increase and it might add to the national debt?"

Everything in Washington revolves around this impact on debt and this question of paying for it. And my opinion—and I was the chief economist on the Senate Budget Committee—is that this is absolutely the least important question that anyone could possibly ask.

It has nothing to do with people or the ways in which these policies and programs really matter. No one asks, "How many kids would be lifted out of poverty if we did program X, Y, or Z? How would the programs reduce wealth inequality? Racial wealth inequality? How would the poor, the sick, the elderly be impacted? Would they be safer and more secure if we pursued these policies? What about the planet?"

We need to hold policymakers accountable and push them to focus on the things that matter. They need to know that we will not stand for excuses that have to do with the budget deficit and the impact on the national debt. My position is that the federal government of the United States of America can move forward with a poor people's agenda because it can always create the money to fund that agenda, and we can't settle for any pushback that says anything else. The federal government is nothing like a household. It doesn't have to play by the same set of rules, and in fact it's damaging when it tries to play by the same rules of a household or a private business when it comes to its own budget.

I want to suggest that in this effort, this moment, never let anyone draw you into a toxic conversation about budget deficits or public debt. These are barriers that are erected to protect the government from the demands of its citizenry. We have public money that can be used to serve the public purpose. Settling for less is not an option. It will never get us full transformative policies.

## AUDITING THE US

I've been involved in trying to promote a federal job guarantee program. We recently looked at this, and we costed it out. If we were to do something big and bold like a living wage, and include benefits and healthcare, make it a permanent feature of the US economy, we estimate that the cost of a program like this is something like \$500 to 600 billion a year.

How are you going to get there if you have to answer to paying for the defi-

cit? It will never cost out under any circumstance with the CBO or any other wonky DC establishment. You must push beyond settling for

programs that meet their scoring targets. We can't be worried about where the money will come from or how the program will affect the budget.

As probably the most famous economist of all time, John Maynard Keynes, said nearly 100 years ago: "Look after the unemployment and the budget will look after itself." If we are going to have programs envisioned as part of a moral agenda, then they are going to be big, they are going to be expensive, and they are going to impact the deficit. And you know what? That's okay. So what I want to suggest is that there is an army of economists ready to stand by you, to use the weight of their credentials and training to defend a moral agenda against the inevitable cries that America is too poor to do anything else.

**STEPHANIE KELTON IS PROFESSOR OF PUBLIC POLICY AND ECONOMICS AT STONY BROOK UNIVERSITY. SHE WAS PREVIOUSLY THE CHIEF ECONOMIST FOR DEMOCRATS ON THE US SENATE BUDGET COMMITTEE AND SENIOR ECONOMIC ADVISOR TO SEN. BERNIE SANDERS IN HIS PRESIDENTIAL CAMPAIGN. SHE DELIVERED THIS TESTIMONY DURING THE SOULS OF POOR FOLKS AUDIT VIRTUAL HEARING AHEAD OF THE LAUNCH OF THE POOR PEOPLE'S CAMPAIGN.**

Source: Inequality.org via Truthout 1/9/18  
http://www.truth-out.org

## Net neutrality bill gains support

JAKE JOHNSON

Open internet defenders in the Senate reached an "important milestone" on Monday when Sen. Claire McCaskill (D-Mo.) announced she will co-sponsor legislation that, if passed, would overturn FCC chair Ajit Pai's "corrupt and illegitimate" order to kill net neutrality. McCaskill's support gives the Congressional Review Act (CRA) resolution introduced by Sen. Ed Markey (D-Mass.) the 30 votes necessary to force a vote on the Senate floor. The CRA gives Congress the power to pass a "resolution of disapproval" to nullify new regulations within a 60-day window.

Passage of a CRA would "repeal Pai's repeal," explains Dana Floberg of Free Press, which would leave the web "right back where [it] started -- with strong net neutrality rules."

McCaskill's announcement -- which was shortly followed by Sen. Cory Booker's (D-N.J.) own declaration of support for Markey's bill -- was applauded by internet freedom ad-

vocates, who concluded that every other lawmaker should get on board or face serious electoral consequences.

"Internet users are angry, educated, and organized. We refuse to back down. Net neutrality is too important to the future of our democracy," Evan Greer, campaign director of Fight for the Future, said in a statement on Monday. "Today's news shows that lawmakers from both parties cannot hide from their constituents on this issue. Every member of the US Senate will have to go on the record, during a tight election year, and

either vote to save the Internet or rubber stamp its death warrant." As Common Dreams reported last week, more than a dozen Democratic senators have thus far failed to go on the record.

With McCaskill and Booker co-sponsoring Markey's resolution, that leaves Diane Feinstein (CA) along with 16 other Senate Democrats and Angus King (I-Maine) -- who have yet

to make a commitment to defend net neutrality. In a statement following McCaskill's announcement, Matt Wood, policy director of the Free Press Action Fund, urged Senate holdouts to listen closely to the Americans who have "logged more than a million calls to Congress to reject FCC Chairman Ajit Pai's decision to kill net neutrality."

"Supporting net neutrality should be a no-brainer for members of Congress, whose constituents from across the political spectrum are united in their opposition to the Trump FCC's attack on the open internet," Wood added. "More and more lawmakers are recognizing this truth, helped along by the forceful outcry from the people they represent." If every Democrat signs on, Markey's legislation will still need the support of two Republicans in the Senate and around 20 Republicans in the House to pass.

Source: Truthout via Common Dreams 1/9/18  
https://www.commondreams.org

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**PEACE & JUSTICE NETWORK**  
of San Joaquin County





# Ahed Tamimi offers Israelis a lesson worthy of Gandhi

JONATHAN COOK

Sixteen-year-old Ahed Tamimi may not be what Israelis had in mind when, over many years, they criticised Palestinians for not producing a Mahatma Gandhi or Nelson Mandela. Eventually, colonised peoples bring to the fore a figure best suited to challenge the rotten values at the core of the society oppressing them. Ahed is well qualified for the task.

She was charged last week with assault and incitement after she slapped two heavily armed Israeli soldiers as they refused to leave the courtyard of her family home in the West Bank village of Nabi Saleh, near Ramallah. Her mother, Nariman, is in detention for filming the incident. The video quickly went viral. Ahed lashed out shortly after soldiers nearby shot her 15-year-old cousin in the face, seriously injuring him.

Western commentators have largely denied Ahed the kind of effusive support offered to democracy protesters in places such as China and Iran. Nevertheless, this Palestinian schoolgirl – possibly facing a long jail term for defying her oppressors – has quickly become a social media icon.

While Ahed might have been previously unknown to most Israelis, she is a familiar face to Palestinians and campaigners around the world. For years, she and other villagers have held a weekly confrontation with the Israeli army as it enforces the rule of Jewish settlers over Nabi Saleh. These settlers have forcibly taken over the village's lands and ancient spring, a vital water source for a community that depends on farming.

Distinctive for her irrepressible blonde hair and piercing blue eyes, Ahed has been filmed regularly since she was a small girl confronting soldiers who tower above her. Such scenes inspired one veteran Israeli

peace activist to anoint her Palestine's Joan of Arc. But few Israelis are so enamoured. Not only does she defy Israeli stereotypes of a Palestinian, she has struck a blow against the self-deception of a highly militarised and masculine culture. She has also given troubling form to the until-now anonymised Palestinian children Israel accuses of stone-throwing.

Palestinian villages like Nabi Saleh are regularly invaded by soldiers. Children are dragged from their beds in the middle of the night, as happened to Ahed during her arrest last month in retaliation for her slaps. Human rights groups document how children are routinely beaten and tortured in detention. Many hundreds pass through Israeli jails each year charged with throwing stones. With conviction rates in Israeli military courts of more than 99 per cent, the guilt and incarceration of such children is a foregone conclusion. They may be the lucky ones. Over the past 16 years, Israel's army has killed on average 11 children a month.

The video of Ahed, screened repeatedly on Israeli TV, has threatened to upturn Israel's self-image as David fighting an Arab Goliath. This explains the toxic outrage and indignation that has gripped Israel since

the video aired. Predictably, Israeli politicians were incensed. Naftali Bennett, the education minister, called for Ahed to "end her life in jail". Culture minister Miri Regev, a former army spokeswoman, said she felt personally "humiliated" and "crushed" by Ahed.

But more troubling is a media debate that has char-



acterised the soldiers' failure to beat Ahed in response to her slaps as a "national shame". The venerable television host Yaron London expressed astonishment that the soldiers "refrained from using their weapons" against her, wondering whether they "hesitated out of cowardice". But far more sinister were the threats from Ben Caspit, a leading Israeli analyst. In a column in Hebrew, he said Ahed's actions made "every Israeli's blood boil". He proposed subjecting her to retribution "in the dark, without witnesses and cameras", adding that his own form of revenge would lead to his certain detention.

That fantasy – of cold-bloodedly violating an incarcerated child – should have sickened every Israeli. And yet Caspit is still safely ensconced in his job.

But aside from exposing the sickness of a society addicted to dehumanising and oppressing Palestinians, including children, Ahed's case raises the troubling question of what kind of resistance Israelis

think Palestinians are permitted. International law, at least, is clear. The United Nations has stated that people under occupation are allowed to use "all available means", including armed struggle, to liberate themselves.

But Ahed, the villagers of Nabi Saleh and many Palestinians like them have preferred to adopt a different strategy – a confrontational, militant civil disobedience. Their resistance defies the occupier's

assumption that it is entitled to lord it over Palestinians. Their approach contrasts strongly with the constant compromises and so-called "security cooperation" accepted by the Palestinian Authority of Mahmoud Abbas.

According to Israeli commentator Gideon Levy, Ahed's case demonstrates that Israelis deny Palestinians the right not only to use rockets, guns, knives or stones, but even to what he mockingly terms an "uprising of

slappings". Ahed and Nabi Saleh have shown that popular unarmed resistance – if it is to discomfort Israel and the world – cannot afford to be passive or polite. It must be fearless, antagonistic and disruptive. Most of all, it must hold up a mirror to the oppressor. Ahed has exposed the gun-wielding bully lurking in the soul of too many Israelis. That is a lesson worthy of Gandhi or Mandela.

**JONATHAN COOK WON THE 2011 MARTHA GELLHORN SPECIAL PRIZE FOR JOURNALISM. HIS LATEST BOOKS ARE /ISRAEL AND THE CLASH OF CIVILISATIONS: IRAQ, IRAN AND THE PLAN TO REMAKE THE MIDDLE EAST AND /DISAPPEARING PALESTINE: ISRAEL'S EXPERIMENTS IN HUMAN DESPAIR.**

Source: Common Dreams 1/9/18  
<https://www.commondreams.org/>



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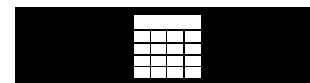


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## Upcoming Sierra Club meetings

**Sat, Feb 3, 12:30-3pm:** Special Forum:  
Beyond Fossil Fuels - Taking Action

Environmental leaders will speak on reducing oil dependence, Carbon Fee and Dividend, Cap and Trade, a 100% renewable target, decarbonizing buildings, and much more.

Diz Swift, Climate Change Program Director of the League of Women Voters of California, Kathryn Phillips, Director, Sierra Club California, Hal Ferber, founding member of the Sacramento chapter of Citizens Climate Lobby, Katelyn Roedner Sutter, Climate Program Analyst for the Environmental Defense Fund, and local volunteers will be available to speak with you about what's happening in our community. is forum discussing approaches to reducing carbon.

**Mon, Feb 26, at 7pm:**  
John Muir and the Big Trees

Naturalist John Muir may have come to California in 1868 to see the Giant Sequoia - the most massive trees in the world. At first he reveled among the groves, then he studied them scientifically, and lastly he fought to preserve "the noblest of the noble race." He visited the Calaveras Grove three times before it was a state park and used those visits to promote his ideas. Mike Wurtz, Head of Special Collections and curator of the John Muir collections at the University of the Pacific, will present John Muir and the Big Trees.

**Mon, Mar 26 at 7 pm:** At Your Service –  
Volunteering throughout the West

Why would anyone pay to do work on their vacation? Elaine Gorman, a Sierra Club outings leader for more than 25 years, will share memories of week-long adventures throughout the West, including Bears Ears National Monument, Pyramid Lake, Desolation Wilderness, Pinnacles National Park, Big Sur, and Yosemite. Working to eradicate invasive plants, remove illegal campsites, and maintain trails is extremely rewarding and offers an opportunity to visit and learn about beautiful and wild places.

All free and open to the public, in the Fireside Room, Central United Methodist Church, 3700 Pacific Ave, Stockton 209-670-4442.

**STOCKTON CIVIC THEATRE**  
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***IF YOU CARE ABOUT STOCKTON,***  
**Join KXVS!**  
***Become a member and***  
***Let's make Stockton***  
***better, together!***

KXVS - The Voice of Stockton

## Your Community Radio Station is Going FM, Finally!

If all goes well this year, Stockton, California will finally have an FM radio station dedicated to serve the community of Stockton. That would be nothing short of amazing, and very much needed in our area, since local media sources are so scarce. There are still a few hurdles to overcome, but you can help make this dream a reality.

KXVS The Voice of Stockton is now reaching over 100,000 people each month through daily live stream broadcasts on Facebook and YouTube! They broadcast informative programs 6-10 hours a day by and about the community and its members, including "Connections Peace & Justice Radio," hosted by Bruce Guidici, which airs Mondays at 8PM, and "Balancing the Scales: The Economic Justice Report" with Vic Berndorff on Sundays at 5PM. Meanwhile, behind the scenes, the all-volunteer staff has been busy getting ready to go "on the air" on the FM dial, building and planning, and making necessary adjustments in programming and personnel.

The main issue now is funding for the essential equipment required to operate an FCC licensed FM radio station, namely an Emergency Alert System (EAS), a Broadcast Delay System, a Point-to-point Microwave Transmitter & Receiver, and a larger Radio Tower & Antenna Array. Besides being a 501.c.3 nonprofit deduction, as an added incentive, sponsors of those items will enjoy daily mentions for the life of the station! (Really? Every day? Yes, for as long as the station operates!)

Now is a great time to get involved in this rare opportunity. Your support will have a lasting effect with ongoing recognition, greatly benefiting our community, and all the area nonprofits we promote. Your experience in communications, multimedia production, and marketing would be of great use, helping us grow and develop and fulfill our mission to serve.

To get involved, or to make a donation, please visit [KXVS.org/join](http://KXVS.org/join), call 209-467-4455, or email [inbox@TheVoiceofStockton.org](mailto:inbox@TheVoiceofStockton.org).

## Thank you! Thank you! Thank you! Thank You!

Without your financial support we cannot publish Connections, keep the Peace Center open, hold a Peaceful Holiday Faire, support Stockton's only community radio station KXVS-the Voice of Stockton or provide an outlet for alternative news and information locally and globally.

A little over 100 specific individuals contributed to our on-going work through donations using an on-line payment service, sending a check in the mail or leaving

donations at the Center. Many more contributed by attending an event, purchasing bumper stickers or buttons, a bowl of soup or a t-shirt.

Financial support is necessary. We would like to thank each and everyone one of you for your generous support and encourage others to send us what you can and spread the word that the Peace & Justice Network is a local non-profit that is worthy of your support. We are located at

the John Morearty Peace & Justice Center, 231 Bedford Rd., Stockton. To help support our work, send your checks to: Peace & Justice Network, P.O. Box 4123, Stockton, Ca. 95204-0123 - or make an on-line donation: [www.pjnsjc.org](http://www.pjnsjc.org) Click on the donations button.

PJNSJC is a 501(c)3 non-profit educational corporation. Contributions are tax deductible to the full extent allowed by law.

## Twin tunnels will hurt birds

**DAVE FRIES, CONSERVATION CHAIR,  
SAN JOAQUIN AUDUBON CHAPTER**

Much has been written about the effect of building the Twin Tunnels would have on fish in the Delta. Much less effort has gone into describing the effects of the Tunnels project on bird life. The proposal is for two 40 ft diameter tunnels that would connect three water intakes on the Sacramento River, located in the Hood-Courtland area, and tunnel through and 150 ft under the Delta, connecting to a new pumping plant near Tracy. The tunnels would be approximately 35 mi long. Cost estimates to build and manage the tunnels range from \$16 to \$50 billion. Building the tunnels would require multiple shafts 131 ft in diameter and 150 ft deep to insert the tunneling machines. Construction is estimate to take 13 years. There are three major concerns that the San Joaquin (SJ) Audubon Chapter has about the Petition.

### FRESH WATER LOST

First is the loss of fresh water flow through the Delta. The major source of fresh water flow through the Delta comes from the Sacramento River. Sacramento River water is the best quality water flowing into the Delta. The Petition is to take up to one-third of the Sacramento River flow and divert it through the tunnels. The decreased flow will result in increased salt water intrusion into Delta waters. Fish species will be harmed, food chain will be disrupted, and habitat will be destroyed. Birds that depend on specific habitat for living, both migratory and year round residents, and breeding will be further stressed and pushed toward extinction.

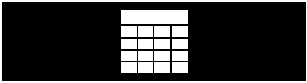
### 25,000 ACRES OF DELTA WILDLIFE HABITAT DESTROYED

Second is the destruction of habitat that would result from the disposal of the tunnel drilling spoils, often referred to as tunnel muck. The Waterfix EIR projects the tunnel muck would bury 25,000 acres of wetlands, riparian forest, grassland, and cultivated crop wildlife habitat in the Delta. Just how, when or where mitigation for the habitat destruction is to occur is not made clear in the EIR. For example, the project will destroy 22 Swainson's Hawk nesting sites. New trees planted for those lost, take decades to mature for nesting. There is no mitigation for loss Sandhill Crane's wintering habitat on Bouldin, Staten and Venice Islands, which will be heavily impacted by the decade or more of construction. There are dozens of identified bird species that need undisturbed Delta habitat to live. They are part of the unique abundance of the California Delta Ecosystem.

### LOSS OF PUBLIC DELTA ACCESS

Third is violation of the California Public Trust Doctrine which protects sovereign lands, such as tide and submerged lands and the beds of navigable waterways, for the benefit, use and enjoyment of the public. The health and beauty of the Delta is intrinsic to its recreational use. Birding and bird watching are extremely popular. The SJ Audubon Chapter has over 400 members whose enjoyment of the avian species and beneficial uses of the Delta has been ignored by the Waterfix Petition. The SJ Audubon Chapter is dedicated to preservation of our unique and beautiful Delta.





# FEBRUARY - MARCH 2018 CALENDAR

Editor's note: if your event isn't listed, let us know. Send all copy to: [bgiudici@caltel.com](mailto:bgiudici@caltel.com) by the 10th of every month.

**THURS-SUN**

**JAN 17 - FEB 4**  
***You Can't Take It With You*** by George S. Kaufman & Moss Hart. Opening Wed 7:30, Thur-Sat 7:30 pm, Sun 2:30 pm. Stockton Civic Theatre, 2312 Rosemarie Lane, Stockton. Martin Vanderhof, mostly referred to as Grandpa, is the patriarch of three generations of a slightly bonkers New York City family all living together under the same roof. 15 - \$27. 209-473-2424. [www.sctlivetheatre.com](http://www.sctlivetheatre.com)

**JAN 25 - FEB 9**  
***Delta Center for the Arts LH Horton Jr Gallery presents the Fine Art Faculty Show.*** Exhibiting artists include: Gary Carlos, Danita Cook, Shenny Cruces, Ronald Houck, Michael Leonard, Mario Moreno, Kirstyn Russell, Ruth Santee, and Robert Schumacher. Reception Feb 1, 5-7 pm. SJDC, 5151 Pacific Ave, Stockton. Tue 11am-4pm, Wed-Thu 11am-6:30pm, Fri 11am-1pm. Free and open to the public. 209-954-5507.

**SAT, JAN 27**  
***Stockton Symphony presents Classics 3, works by Khachaturian and Mussorgsky-Ravel with guest pianist Kerson Leong.*** 6 pm, Atherton Auditorium, 5151 Pacific Ave, Stockton. Adult \$25-67, student \$10-15. 209-951-0196.

**THURS, FEB 1**  
***Pacific Avenue Clarinets at the Haggin*** 1st & 3rd Thursdays. Five clarinets and an occasional percussionist play original works and transcriptions for clarinet. Performances feature sounds from Coltrane to Bozza. Featured are Michael Hernandez, Amanda Martin, Connor Moen, Christina Severin, and Chris Steffanic, 6:30-9 pm, Adult \$8, youth \$5, under 10 free with adult. Haggin Museum, Victory Park, 1201 N. Pershing Ave, Stockton, CA 209-940-6300

**THURS, FEB 1**  
***Peace & Justice Network board meeting,*** John Morearty Peace & Justice Center, 231 Bedford Rd, Stockton. 7 pm. All welcome. 209-467-4455

**FRI - SUN FEB 2 - 11**  
***Showbiz Theatre Company presents "Boeing, Boeing: A Non-Stop Comedy,"*** Winner of the 2008 Tony Award for Best Revival of a Play! This hysterically funny French farce adapted for the English-speaking stage features self-styled Parisian Lothario Bernard, who has Italian, German, and American fiancées, each a beautiful airline hostess with frequent "layovers." Fri-Sat 7:30, Sun 2 pm. 1744 Pacific Ave, Stockton. Adult \$25, senior \$20, students/children \$15. 938-0447.

**SAT, FEB 3**  
***Beyond Fossil Fuels: Taking Action*** 12:30 - 3 pm. Environmental leaders will speak on reducing oil dependence. Fireside Room, Central United Methodist Church Fireside Room, 3700 Pacific Ave, Stockton. Free. All welcome. 209-670-4442. (p 18)

**SUN, FEB 4**  
***Chamber Music Concert featuring Strata,*** a trio of Audrey Andrist, piano; Nathan Williams, clarinet; and James Stern, violin and viola that brings "definitely ensemble playing" and a "talent... that's worth getting worked up about" [Washington Post] to a repertoire that combines the great trio and duo repertoire of the past with an ever-growing body of new works written especially for them over the more than 25 years they have been playing together. 2:30 pm, Faye Spanos Concert Hall, 3511 Pacific Ave, Stockton. \$25 general admission 2 pm in the Spanos lobby, students of any age free. 209-956-2868

**THURS, FEB 8**  
***Stockton Planning Commission meeting,*** 6:00 pm. City Hall, 425 N El Dorado St, Stockton 209-937-8266

**SAT, FEB 10**  
***Party Gras - Cajun, Grub, cocktails.*** Set in the historic Deliberation Room, built in 1917, you'll feel like you're in the French Quarter. Dinner 7-9 \$35 includes jambalaya & cajun eats by A Moveable Feast with live samba dancers. Voodoo after part from 9-2 am \$5 cover, music by DJ Reflectshun, with drink specials - costumes encouraged. 19 N California St, Stockton. 209-610-0482.

**SAT, FEB 10**  
***Stockton Chorale presents "Awaken the Dream,"*** celebrating the words, life and inspiration of Martin Luther King, Jr.

**WED, FEB 14**  
***Unveiling the Soul, written and performed by Andonia Cakouros.*** Unveiling the Soul invites the audience to the core of the human spirit when every mask is shed. 11 am - 12 pm. Free and open to the public (sponsored by a grant from the Stockton Arts Commission Arts Endowment Fund). Tillie Lewis Theatre, SJ Delta College, 5151 Pacific Ave, Stockton. 209-954-5110.

**FRI, FEB 16**  
***U.S. Air Force Band of the Golden West free concert.*** Comprised of nearly 50 musicians, the band has performed for thousands of listeners in live concert appearances and for millions worldwide via its numerous recordings and television and radio broadcasts. 7 - 9 pm. Atherton Auditorium, SJ Delta College, 5151 Pacific Ave, Stockton. 209-954-5110.

**FEB 22 - MAR 16**  
***Delta Center for the Arts LH Horton Jr Gallery presents A Conversation on Race & Identity,*** Curated by Jan Marlese. Exhibiting artists include: Milton Bowens, Enrique Chagoya, Haley R. Hatfield, Alison Ho, John D. Konno, Tammie Rubin, Carissa Samaniego, Keyvan Shovir, Kerry Skarbakka, Eun-Kyung Suh, and Khalid Akil White Reception Feb 22 5 - 7 pm. SJDC, 5151 Pacific Ave, Stockton. Tue 11am-4pm, Wed-Thu 11am-6:30pm, Fri 11am-1pm. Free and open to the public. 209-954-5507.

**THUR, FEB 22**  
***Arts Lecture with Ceramic Artist Tammie Rubin.*** 10 - 11 am. Free and open to the public (sponsored by a grant from the Stockton Arts Commission Arts Endowment Fund). Tillie Lewis Theatre, SJ Delta College, 5151 Pacific Ave, Stockton. 209-954-5110.

***Stockton Planning Commission*** meeting, 6:00 pm. City Hall, 425 N El Dorado St, Stockton 209-937-8266

**FRI, FEB 23**  
***5th Annual Souper Supper & Auction, supporting Art Expressions of San Joaquin.*** Join us to raise funds for the Art Expressions arts programs, exhibits, art lectures and classes that we provide throughout the year. The beautifully crafted soup bowls are yours to keep, there will be a Live Auction, Silent Auction and raffle. The guest speaker is Basim Elkarra of the California Arts Council, and performing will be Minnie Eichele and the Valley Community Orchestra. Back again our very own Auctioneer Nancy Buckenham as well as the Celebrity and VIP Chefs who make this event so special. \$50 advance, \$55 door. Stockton Hilton Hotel, 2323 Grand Canal Blvd, Stockton. Tickets available online at [Eventbrite.com](http://Eventbrite.com), at the AESJ Gallery, 2318 Pacific Ave or by calling (209) 460-0780.

**FRI, FEB 23**  
***Ripon 56th annual Almond Blossom Festival,*** 3 - 10 pm. Carnival and vendors. Mistlin Sports Complex, Ripon. Info: [www.riponchamber.org](http://www.riponchamber.org)

**SAT, FEB 24**  
***Ripon 56th annual Almond Blossom Festival continues,*** Parade 1 pm downtown Ripon, 12 - 11 pm. Carnival, vendors, fun run, fashion show, art exhibit, bake off and more. Mistlin Sports Complex, Ripon. Info: [www.riponchamber.org](http://www.riponchamber.org)

**SUN, FEB 25**  
Peace & Justice Network annual potluck and meeting, 4 - 7 pm. Morearty Peace Center, 231 Bedford Rd, Stockton. 467-4455.

**SUN, FEB 25**  
***Stockton Symphony presents Pops 3 - Fire and Rain, starring AJ Swearingen and Jayne Kelli.*** Take a nostalgic tour of the 1970's with the dynamic singing-songwriting duo of Swearingen & Kelli as they perform a tribute to James Taylor, Cat Stevens, Joni Mitchell, Carole King, Fleetwood Mac and other great 1970's singer/songwriters. 2:30 - 5 pm, Atherton Auditorium, SJ Delta College, 5151 Pacific Ave, Stockton. Adult \$25-67, student \$10-15. 951-0196.

**SUN, FEB 25**  
***University Symphony Wind Ensemble and Concert Band,*** 2:30 pm, Faye Spanos Concert Hall, 3511 Pacific Ave, Stockton. \$10 adult, \$5 senior, students free.

**MON, FEB 26**  
***Delta Sierra Club meeting: John Muir and the Big Trees.*** 7 pm. Fireside Room, Central United Methodist Church Fireside Room, 3700 Pacific Ave, Stockton. Free. All welcome. 209-670-4442. (p 18)

**TUES, FEB 27**  
***Stockton City Council meeting,*** 5:30 pm. City Hall, 425 N El Dorado St, Stockton 209-937-8827

**THURS, MAR 1**  
***Film: Dolores showing at the Haggin*** 1st & 3rd Thursdays. Dolores Huerta is among the most important, yet least known activists in American history. An equal partner in co-founding the first farm workers unions with Cesar Chavez, her enormous contributions have gone largely unrecognized. 6:30-9 pm, Adult \$8, youth \$5, under 10 free with adult. Haggin Museum, Victory Park, 1201 N. Pershing Ave, Stockton, CA (209) 940-6300

**THURS, MAR 1**  
***Peace & Justice Network board meeting,*** John Morearty Peace & Justice Center, 231 Bedford Rd, Stockton. 7 pm. All welcome. 467-4455

**SAT, MAR 3**  
***University Symphony Orchestra.*** 7:30 pm, Faye Spanos Concert Hall, 3511 Pacific Ave, Stockton. \$10 adult, \$5 senior, students free.

**SUN, MAR 4**  
***Pacific Choral Ensembles,*** 5 pm. Cathedral of the Annunciation, Stockton. \$10 adult, \$5 senior, students free.

**TUES, MAR 6**  
***Artists' panel: A Conversation on Race & Identity with EfenAve, Alison Ho, Kerry Skarbakka, and Khalid Akil White.*** 11 am-12 pm. Free and open to the public (sponsored by a grant from Stockton Arts Commission Arts Endowment Fund). Tillie Lewis Theatre, SJ Delta College, 5151 Pacific Ave, Stockton. 209-954-5110.

**TUES, MAR 6**  
***Film Screening & Book Signing with Author and Producer Khalid Akil White,*** 7 pm. Free and open to the public (sponsored by a grant from the Stockton Arts Commission Arts Endowment Fund). Tillie Lewis Theatre, SJ Delta College, 5151 Pacific Ave, Stockton. 209-954-5110. Stockton Concert Band Concert directed by Arthur Holton, 7 pm, Atherton Auditorium, SJ Delta College, Stockton. Still only \$8; \$5 for students and seniors over 61, children under 12 free. 209-951-5110.

**WED, MAR 7**  
***SJ Delta College Band and Orchestra Festival,*** 8 am - 5 pm. Atherton Auditorium, SJ Delta College, Stockton. Still only \$8; \$5 for students and seniors over 61, children under 12 free. 209-951-5110. SJDC Symphonic Band Concert directed by M.J. Wamhoff, 7 pm, Atherton Auditorium, SJ Delta College, Stockton. Still only \$8; \$5 for students

and seniors over 61, children under 12 free. 209-951-5110. Pacific Jazz Ensemble, 7:30 pm. Faye Spanos Concert Hall, 3511 Pacific Ave, Stockton. \$10 adult, \$5 senior, students free.

**THUR - SUN, MAR 8 - 11**  
***Play Baltimore, by Kirsten Greenidge, directed by Greg Foro.*** Thur - Sat 7 pm, Sat-Sun 2 pm. Adult \$9, Students/seniors \$4. Tillie Lewis Theatre, SJ Delta College, 5151 Pacific Ave, Stockton. 209-954-5110.

**THURS, MAR 8**  
***Pacific Chamber Music Concert,*** 7 pm. First United Unitarian Church of Stockton. Free admission.

**TUES, MAR 13**  
***SJDC Jazz Bands,*** 7:30 pm, Tillie Lewis Theatre, SJ Delta College, Stockton. Still only \$8; \$5 for students and seniors over 61, children under 12 free. 209-951-5110.

**WED, MAR 14**  
***Arts Lecture with Milton Bowens*** 12:30 - 1:30 pm. Free and open to the public (sponsored by a grant from the Stockton Arts Commission Arts Endowment Fund). Tillie Lewis Theatre, SJ Delta College, 5151 Pacific Ave, Stockton. 209-954-5110.

**THURS, MAR 15**  
***SJDC Spring Festival of Choirs,*** 7:30 pm, Atherton Auditorium, SJ Delta College, Stockton. Still only \$8; \$5 for students and seniors over 61, children under 12 free. 209-951-5110.

**TUES, MAR 20**  
***Stockton City Council meeting,*** 5:30 pm. City Hall, 425 N El Dorado St, Stockton 209-937-8827

**SAT, MAR 24**  
***Stockton Symphony presents Classics 4, works by Ernesto Codero, Mozart and Schumann with guest violinist Guillermo Figueroa.*** 6 - 8:30 pm, Atherton Auditorium, 5151 Pacific Ave, Stockton. Adult \$25-67, student \$10-15. 209-951-0196.

**SUN, MAR 25**  
***Renaissance band Ayreheart present Original Folk Music from 13-17th centuries*** - Early Wales, English and Scottish folk music on original instruments, Performing as a quartet (Ronn McFarlane, lute; Brian Kay, vocals and lute; Will Morris, colascione; and Mattias Rucht, percussion), Ayreheart will feature the music of John Dowland, William Byrd and John Johnson along with old ballad tunes from England, Scotland and Wales. 2:30 pm. Faye UOP Spanos Concert Hall, 3511 Pacific Ave, \$25 general admission 2 pm in the lobby, students of any age free. 209-956-2868

**MON, MAR 26**  
***Delta Sierra Club meeting: At Your Service*** - Volunteering throughout the West. 7 pm. Fireside Room, Central United Methodist Church Fireside Room, 3700 Pacific Ave, Stockton. Free. All welcome. 209-670-4442. (p 18)

**FIRST SATURDAYS**  
***Free Yoga.*** Victory Park, 1201 N. Pershing Ave, Stockton, 9 - 10 am. Yoga in the Park is every first Saturday of the month until November. Free admission.

**SECOND THURSDAYS**  
***Single Payer San Joaquin,*** 6:30 pm at the John Morearty Peace and Justice Center, 231 Bedford Rd, Stockton

**SECOND SATURDAYS**  
***Stockton Citizens' Climate Lobby,*** 9:30 am - noon at the John Morearty Peace and Justice Center, 231 Bedford Rd, Stockton

**MONDAYS**  
***Community Radio Council Meeting,*** 7 - 9 pm, Morearty Peace & Justice Center, 231 Bedford Rd, Stockton. 467-4455.

**FOURTH MONDAYS**  
***Sierra Club*** 7 pm. Central United Methodist Church Fireside Room, 3700 Pacific Ave, Stockton. 7 pm program with social time following. All welcome.

**THURSDAYS**  
***Peace demonstration,*** 4-5 pm, edge of Delta campus on Pacific, across from Macy's. Free parking at mall. Weekly since 2003. We have signs, or bring your own. We get LOTS of honks! Info 464-3326.  
***Take Five Jazz club,*** 7 - 10 pm, Valley Brew

**FRIDAYS**  
***Peace demonstration,*** 4-5 pm, corner of Highway 4 & 49 in Angels Camp. Bring a sign with a positive message. We get LOTS of thumbs up! Info 559-6279.

***Jazz jam at Whirlow's,*** 7 pm, Whirlow's Tossed & Grilled, 1926 Pacific Avenue, Stockton. Enjoy a live jazz jam session every Friday at Whirlow's on Stockton's historic Miracle Mile! Bring your instruments and join the jam! Hosted by Philip Bailey. Free cover. 466-2823

***Live Music at Mile Wine Company,*** 7 - 10:30 pm. 2113 Pacific Ave, Stockton. Free. 465-9463

**SATURDAYS**  
***Crosstown Freeway Farmers Market,*** under the freeway between El Dorado & San Joaquin, Stockton. 7 - 11, or when sold out. 943-1830  
Live Music at Mile Wine Company, 7 - 10:30 pm. 2113 Pacific Ave, Stockton. Free. 465-9463

***A big thanks to our long-serving distributors!!***

**CALENDAR EDITOR'S NOTE: IF YOUR EVENT ISN'T LISTED, LET US KNOW. SEND ALL COPY TO: BGIUDICI@CALTEL.COM BY THE 10TH OF EVERY MONTH.**

# Working Locally for a Better World

## They marched because ...



I marched because ... I feel like it sends a very loud but peaceful message to Washington, letting them know that we are not going away.  
—Irene Svoboda Western

I marched ... for people who could not. I marched because I still can.  
—Heidi Anne Peterson



I marched with men, women and children all over the world to show my belief in democracy and the importance of voting with my feet!  
—Barbara Schwartz



I marched because ... I love this beautiful country and I reject the loathsome, spineless congress as they allow this very dangerous POTUS to viciously and deliberately tear apart the constitution and fabric of this nation.  
—Katya Evanhoe



I marched for women's rights. Gender doesn't justify less pay for the same work. I stand for "equal pay for equal work."  
—Elizabeth Gutierrez Hudson

I stand up for Rights and Justice. I sat down to acknowledge discrimination and injustice 57 years ago. Today I write and speak..because I want the world to know.  
Author Geraldine Hollis ("Back to Mississippi")



Very proud of my babies. They all made history. I WANT my babies to ALWAYS stand for something. If not, they'll fall for anything.  
—Antwanisha Williamson

## When we gather, we get energized

CONTINUED FROM FRONT PAGE

mandatory licensing. Yet action is stalled.

More needs to be done about climate change, say 64 percent of U.S. voters, according to a recent Quinnipiac University poll. Seventy-five percent want to see carbon regulated as a pollutant. But federal policy is moving in

the opposite direction.

We want government to be accountable to us, but here's the rub. We don't have the power to limit campaign spending—which 78 percent of Americans favor—accord-

*"Local power brings out joy."*

ing to a New York Times/CBS News Poll—or enact other policies that would make elected officials responsive to We the People instead of the big money interests.

So-called populists like Donald Trump tap into the frustration, and some—with a tolerance (or enthusiasm) for White supremacy—voted for him. But, with generals and Wall Street executives in the White House, the interests of ordinary people remain firmly outside decision-making circles. So how do we break through?

Two years ago, I took a road trip through 18 states, interviewing people about how they were making change. I visited struggling communities in the Rust Belt, Appalachia, Indian reservations, and the South, and everywhere I found people who were reimagining and rebuilding their communities, and feeling their power.

The people I visited were partnering up—immigrants and long-time residents, Black youth and elders, union workers and faith leaders—to make change where they live. They were blocking coal and gas projects and producing radio programs and theater productions that reflected a new story of what their communities value.

At the local level, government is more responsive. Seattle enacted a \$15 minimum wage. California is moving forward on a climate policy that will adhere to the Paris Accord, with or without federal government involvement. Texas is closing eight prisons in six years, according to the

Dallas News.




One of my co-workers at PeoplesHub, Melissa Rosario, lives in Puerto Rico and told me this story of a day following the hurricane. An elderly woman who lived alone was trapped when a sheet metal roof blew off an adjacent building and blocked the entrance to her home. A group of around 10 showed up to help. The woman laughed when she saw them. The helpers had nothing but a few hand tools and seemed unlikely to succeed, and neighbors advised them to wait for some big machinery. But together, they moved the debris. Then the neighbors brought over food and drink, and powerlessness turned to celebration.

Local power is by nature grounded—in ourselves, our values, and our family; in our community and culture; and in our ecological home. Archimedes said, "Give me a place to stand, and I can move the Earth." When we have a strong and connected community, we have that place to stand.

And local power brings out joy. When people remove debris after a hurricane or give blood after a mass shooting, it makes them feel better. Instead of getting burned out, frustrated, and isolated, when we gather, we get energized. The joy generated in those gatherings sustains and empowers us, and builds understanding across divides. And that local power, combined with the local power in other communities, is a foundation for changing things, nationally and globally.

**SARAH VAN GELDER IS CO-FOUNDER AND EDITOR-AT-LARGE OF YES! MAGAZINE, AND AUTHOR OF THE REVOLUTION WHERE YOU LIVE: STORIES FROM A 12,000 MILE JOURNEY THROUGH A NEW AMERICA. CONNECT WITH SARAH ON TWITTER: @SARAHVANGELDER**  
**<HTTPS://TWITTER.COM/SARAHVANGELDER>**

Source: YES! Magazine 1/1/18 <http://www.yesmagazine.org>

The League of Women Voters of San Joaquin County, Delta-Sierra Group, and Citizens' Climate Lobby join to present a forum:

### Beyond Fossil Fuels: Taking Action

Environmental leaders will speak about reducing oil dependence, Carbon Fee & Dividend, Cap & Trade, a 100% renewable target, decarbonizing buildings, and much more.

**Presenters:**  
**Diz Swift**, Climate Change Program Director of the League of Women Voters of California.  
**Katelyn Roedner Sutter**, Climate Program Analyst for the Environmental Defense Fund.  
**Kathryn Phillips**, Director, Sierra Club California.  
**Hal Ferber**, Sacramento Citizens' Climate Lobby.  
**Barbara Barrigan-Parrilla**, Executive Director of Restore the Delta

**Saturday, February 3, 2018**  
**12:30pm-3:00pm**  
**Fireside Room, Central United Methodist Church**  
**3700 Pacific Ave, Stockton**  
 Free and open to the public. Light refreshments will be served.