

## Save Rural Angwin Quarterly Update

May, June, July 2015

### **July 22, 2014, Napa Valley Register:**

#### **"Supervisors favor less residential growth in Angwin."**

*"Five years after initially pledging to address the residential development potential of two parts of Angwin, a majority of the Napa County Board of Supervisors agreed Tuesday (July 22, 2014) that more housing units are ill-suited for those areas in the rural community atop Howell Mountain. The Board took no formal action, however, directed the Planning Director to begin drafting options for how to change parcels' land-use designations in the General Plan."*

**It is now one full year since NVR reported that status and six years since Action Item 114.1 to complete the Angwin land use designations became part of the Napa County General Plan Amendment.** For over a decade, Save Rural Angwin (SRA) has been a vigilant voice advocating resolving the unfinished issue of the Angwin "Urban Bubble". SRA continues to remain focused on the preservation of agricultural land and open space on the Green Fields south of Angwin Avenue between Howell Mountain Road and Conn Creek and to preservation of Angwin as a rural community. It should also be emphasized that Angwin contains the headwaters of Conn Creek, a perennial tributary of the Napa River. Conn Creek feeds Lake Hennessey, the primary municipal water supply for the City of Napa. SRA representatives have met with City of Napa Water Division personnel to discuss the watershed and health of Conn Creek.

Over the past year, the Land Trust of Napa County has been working collaboratively with multiple conservation partners to restore the streamside habitat along more than a mile of Conn Creek within the Linda Falls Preserve, which is located immediately downstream from the Green Fields. The riparian woodland habitat along Conn Creek that traverses the Angwin basin above the Linda Falls Preserve has been highly degraded by invasive exotic plant species including Himalayan blackberry, French broom and English ivy. As the transformation begins to unfold along Conn Creek within Linda Falls Preserve it will become imperative that restoration efforts be expanded upstream to the Green Fields area. Linda Falls Preserve and the Green Fields are vital to the health of the Conn Creek watershed.

At a yet-to-be scheduled public hearing THIS Fall 2015, County Planning staff intends to make a presentation to the Board about the five areas in Angwin for which Land Use Designations still need to be completed. One year ago, three of the five areas were not contested as they include the waste-water treatment plant for the college and the two

Urban Residential sites identified in the County Housing Element for 191 housing units. One year ago a majority of the Supervisors felt that for the remaining two areas proposed for re-designation from Urban Residential that a mix of Agricultural, Commercial and Public Institutional designations was the superior option for the future of Angwin. SRA representatives continue to meet with both Planning staff and individual Supervisors to promote our vision of Angwin.

When we know this Action Item is to be scheduled before the Board, we will send out notification and ask that you engage and express your desires, concerns, vision and support for preserving the rural character and open space central area with a restored-to-health Conn Creek and forested backdrop. This is your community, your environment and your quality of life!

In another arena, President Barack Obama announced in early July that he has created “Berryessa Snow Mountain National Monument” which includes parts of eastern Napa County. This designation covers 350,000 acres of existing public lands creating one region under a unified management plan and elevating Lake Berryessa to the kind of attraction it should have been from its creation.

Back on the local scene, there are numerous impassioned debates going on all over the County regarding the continuing expansion of wineries as event centers, vineyards replacing oak and conifer forests, increasing demands for hospitality services, inadequate affordable housing, and ever-increasing traffic snarling all main arteries in the County. As of late June, the Agricultural Protection Advisory Committee (APAC) has been meeting twice per month and is charged with making recommended changes to the County’s regulations and policies for new and expanding winery permits and their associated activities. The APAC is also considering other subjects such as parcel size, permitted production levels, visitation and hospitality numbers, water availability, waste production and disposal, permit compliance, issuance of variances and code enforcement. Their recommendations are to be presented to the Planning Commission for consideration in September. The issues are complicated and often intertwined with one another. SRA representatives have attended every APAC meeting. How APAC’s recommendations will affect Angwin remains to be seen.