

Fremont Public Hearing on Niles Canyon Truck Ban April 3

The Fremont City Council will discuss and take public input on their Niles Canyon Road Truck Restriction Initial Study Report on Tuesday, April 3, at 7 pm. The meeting will be at Fremont City Council Chambers, 3300 Capitol Ave., Building A, in Fremont.

Fremont has taken action to try to change the scope of Caltrans' misguided Niles Canyon highway widening project, by initiating a process with Caltrans for restriction of trucks over 5 tons on Niles Canyon Road to help improve safety in the canyon. To prohibit or restrict trucks on a state route such as Niles Canyon Road (Hwy 84), there are certain Caltrans procedures required in the process. One of the major steps in the process is the preparation of an Initial Study to provide information necessary to justify the proposed truck restriction. Fremont has completed the required Initial Study and it is ready for public input and City Council consideration.

The initial study indicates that panel trucks and smaller trucks (less than the 5 ton size that can be banned) are responsible for most of the accidents involving trucks and a disproportionate number of accidents in the canyon. Banning big-rig trucks and trucks of 5 tons would potentially reduce accidents, but the data do not show that these larger trucks are disproportionately responsible for accidents in the canyon. There is no data on whether big rigs in the canyon cause unsafe driving conditions or induce drivers to pass unsafely, but it is likely big rigs are a factor in accidents they are not involved in and thus not recorded. Interestingly, Fremont's data on collisions and fatal accidents in the canyon differed from Caltrans' suspect data. Significantly, there is data showing that most metrics of safety conditions have improved in the canyon, since the 2007 installation of a center-line rumble strip by Caltrans.

Click here for the [Initial Study](#).

The public can make comments at the public meeting April 3 or send comments to:

Mr. Kunle Odumade, Transportation Engineer
City of Fremont
P.O. Box 5006
Fremont, CA 94537
(510) 494-4746
E-mail kodumade@fremont.gov

A full City Council report for this item should be available on Friday, March 30 on the City Council agenda [website](#).

Our suggested comments:

- 1) Thank Fremont for conducting the study and for opposing Caltrans' unnecessary highway widening
- 2) The Initial Study reveals that safety conditions have improved since the 2007 installation of the rumble strip, a partial solution to safety issues in the canyon without highway widening
- 3) A large truck ban is still desirable to incrementally improve safety and is consistent with the scenic and aesthetic values of the roadway

Sunol Reaches Agreement on Gravel Quarry

Save Our Sunol and mining company Oliver de Silva have entered into an historic agreement regarding the proposal submitted by Oliver de Silva to Alameda County to revise the permit to operate the existing gravel quarry (SMP-30) on Calaveras Road in Sunol.

The agreement follows a 2008 Alameda Creek Alliance [conservation agreement](#) with Oliver de Silva regarding the existing Sunol Valley Quarry and the proposed Apperson Ridge Quarry. The

2008 agreement reduces the quarries' biological impacts, provides extensive mitigation and conservation measures for special-status wildlife species, and assists in fish-passage and habitat improvement projects for steelhead trout.

From the Save Our Sunol press release:

Discussions have been underway for over three years regarding the proposed project. The two parties have come to an agreement which meets the SOS environmental, health, and safety concerns, and provides mitigation for the impacts of development on the community of Sunol. SOS has been very pleased with the ongoing discussions and feels that the project in its proposed form, and the safeguards provided by the California Environmental Quality Act, makes the project one that SOS can strongly support and one that is in the best interests of Sunol.

The main provisions of the Agreement provide for the payment of up to \$20,000 to the Sunol Community Emergency Response Team (CERT), which is organizing and training community members to be prepared for major disasters. Sunol CERT is also purchasing disaster supplies and storage containers that will be strategically located in the community. In addition, the Agreement provides for the contribution of \$50,000 per year, with a cost of living adjustment, to a Community Improvement Fund, for the life of the permit. The Community Improvement Fund will be held in trust for Sunol by the County of Alameda. The Sunol Advisory Committee, appointed by the Alameda County Board of Supervisors, will oversee the process of community organizations and groups submitting applications for funding, and make recommendations for funding approval to Alameda County.

The Agreement also commits ODS to working with SOS and appropriate agencies to facilitate the planning of a regional trail through the quarry property that would connect the Sunol Water Temple with Sunol Regional Park.

Save our Sunol President Pat Stillman stated that "Around 3 years ago Oliver de Silva came to Save Our Sunol to request our support for their revised quarry project. Over this time, we have been meeting with them to discuss possible impacts to the community and residents. We believe that this agreement is fair and just for the people of Sunol. It will provide sustainable funding for the life of the project while providing for meaningful improvements to the community."

The Board of Directors of SOS approved the Agreement unanimously. Funding will commence once all the necessary permits and approvals have been obtained and work is ready to proceed.

It's Steelhead Spawning Season

Now that winter has decided to make an appearance, watch for steelhead trout in lower Alameda Creek in the flood control channel, particularly at the BART weir in Fremont.

Construction of a fish ladder is coming soon to a BART weir near you, and we would like to document any and all steelhead in the lower creek this winter and spring.

Adult steelhead have been seen in lower Alameda Creek in some recent years through March, and even as late as April and May. Migrating steelhead try to ascend the BART weir after major storms as flows decline, typically when the stream flow in the lower channel is about 200 to 400 cubic feet/second (cfs). You can check the current Alameda Creek stream flow on the web in [lower Niles Canyon](#) and in [the flood control channel in Union City](#)

See our [web page](#) on what to do if you spot steelhead in Alameda Creek.

Desalinization Project Discussion March 31

"Should a Bay Area Regional Desalination Project be an Option for our Water Supply?"

The Bay Chapter of the Sierra Club invites you to attend a free public workshop on March 31 about the status, potential benefits and potential environmental drawbacks of a joint desalination project under consideration by five Bay Area water utilities (SFPUC, EBMUD, CCWD, SCVWD and Zone 7 Water Agency). Find out what our water agencies have been studying, what their plans are, and what concerns environmentalists have about the Regional Desalination Project and its likely location near Pittsburg, at the confluence of SF Bay and the Delta.

The workshop will be at the CSU East Bay Oakland Conference Center, at 1000 Broadway, Suite 109, in Oakland (corner of Broadway at 11th St, one block south of 12th St Oakland BART station), on Saturday, March 31, from 8:30 am to 1:15 pm.

RSVP is required. For more information see <http://www.bayareadesalconference.eventbrite.com>

Help Restore Salmon to Marsh Creek in Contra Costa

Friends of Marsh Creek Watershed is an organization that has been working hard to bring back salmon to Marsh Creek in Oakley, Brentwood and Antioch, and has been named as the only west coast finalist for a River Network grant. The grant to help restore Marsh Creek will be anywhere from \$2,000 to \$25,000, with the final grant amount dependent on how many online votes Friends of Marsh Creek receives.

Please send in a vote for Friends of Marsh Creek by clicking [here](#) and then clicking on "Vote Now"

Visit the [Friends of Marsh Creek Watershed](#) to learn more about the restoration of Marsh Creek

Regional Salmon News

[Downstream Vengeance in California](#)

CounterPunch – March 14, 2012

[Stop the Delta Water Grab](#)

San Francisco Chronicle opinion piece – March 13, 2012

[Salmon Win in 9th Circuit Court](#)

San Francisco Chronicle – March 6, 2012

[Humboldt, Hoopa Ask for More Water to Avoid Possible Fish Kill](#)

Eureka Times-Standard – March 4, 2012

[Obama Will Veto HR 1837 If It Passes Senate](#)

AlterNet – March 3, 2012

[Pricey Delta Tunnels Will Harm Fish](#)

SF Bay – March 2, 2012

[Help for Fish Ordered on Yuba River](#)

Sacramento Bee – March 2, 2012

[A Victory for Central Valley Salmon](#)

NRDC blog – March 2, 2012

[Feds Negative on Yuba River Dams](#)

Appeal-Democrat – March 1, 2012

[**Calif. Delta Tunnel Plan Would Increase Pumping**](#)

San Francisco Chronicle – March 1, 2012

[**Fantastic Voyage: The Salmon's Uphill Struggle for Survival**](#)

KQED Quest – February 29, 2012

[**California Water Tunnel Project Could Initially Harm Smelt, Salmon**](#)

Sacramento Bee – February 29, 2012

[**Feinstein: House Water Bill 'Slanted and Dangerously Short-Sighted'**](#)

February 29, 2012

[**Corporate Welfare Republicans Vote to Make California Salmon Extinct**](#)

AlterNet – February 29, 2012

[**River of Plenty: Oregon Projects Huge Salmon Run for the Troubled Klamath River**](#)

Los Angeles Times – February 28, 2012

[**Local Fishermen Optimistic About Salmon Season**](#)

Santa Rosa Press Democrat - February 28, 2012

[**Bill Would Steal 260 Billion Gallons of Water Annually From California Salmon for Wealthy Water Brokers**](#)

Center for Biological Diversity press release – February 28, 2012

[**Officials Predict Good Salmon Fishing Season Off California Coast**](#)

Santa Rosa Press-Democrat – February 27, 2012

[**Contentious Bill Would Reshape the Restoration of San Joaquin River**](#)

Fresno Bee – February 26, 2012

[**PFMC Fall-Run Chinook Predictions Were Optimistic**](#)

FishBio – February 22, 2012

The Alameda Creek Alliance is a non-profit community watershed protection group. Please support our efforts by becoming a member.