

News Advisory

TO: News editors, reporters

FM: Holly A. King, Director of Agricultural Programs @ Great Valley Center
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RE: Forum will educate on ways to protect, replace, enhance farmland

Urban encroachment on agricultural land and stressed economic viability are some of the challenges faced by agriculture today. According to the California Department of Conservation, the net change in agricultural acres from 2000-2002 was a decrease of 4,964 acres in Placer County and 2,844 acres in El Dorado County.

How can farmers, city planners and local officials best protect and enhance the agricultural landscape of these fast-growing areas? Find out at the Holding Our Agricultural Ground forum Wednesday, Nov. 2 at the Loomis Library. The event is sponsored by Valley Vision and conducted by the Great Valley Center through a grant from the Natural Resources Conservation Service.

Attendees will receive information they can adapt to their local communities and use to drive informed preservation decisions. Speakers will review the regulatory framework that affects the loss of ag land and discuss different ways to offset or “mitigate” those losses, sharing the pros and cons of the different approaches based on real-world experiences. They’ll also outline a land trust’s role in protecting working landscapes with a focus on willing sellers and buyers.

Speakers include:

- **Heidi Tschudin, principal, Tschudin Consulting Group** Heidi is a former Placer County Community Development Director with 25 years of experience in land-use planning, project management and implementation of state environmental laws. She has taught for the UCD Extension Program, several state universities and the International City/County Management Association.
- **Kathryn Kelly, executive director, Yolo Land Trust.** The trust has acquired 26 agricultural conservation easements in the past seven years which permanently protected more than 5,400 acres of prime ag land in Yolo County.
- **Jeff Darlington, executive director, Placer Land Trust.** Heidi came to the trust from the Mono Lake Committee, a highly successful nonprofit conservation organization dedicated to the preservation of the Mono Lake Basin in the Eastern Sierras. He has worked for the California Department of Conservation and is the Placer trust’s first executive director.

Valley Vision is a nonprofit organization that promotes civic involvement and regional planning and solutions. The Great Valley Center is a nonprofit that supports activities and organizations that promote the economic, social and environmental well-being of California’s Great Central Valley.

What: Holding Our Agricultural Ground forum

When: Wed, Nov. 2, from 6-8 p.m.

Where: Loomis Library Community Room, 6050 Library Ave. in Loomis

Forums in Yuba/Sutter and Sacramento counties are also planned before December. (END)

