

Ripon police add electric motorcycles to force

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The Ripon Police Department has joined other Northern San Joaquin Valley cities that have started using electric motorcycles on patrol.

The department purchased two Zero Motorcycles last week with grant money from the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District.

The electric motorcycles have been helpful in off-road patrols along the Stanislaus River, said Sgt. Steve Merchant.

In just a few days of service, Ripon motorcycle officers have issued 10 citations for offenses including: being a minor in possession of alcohol, marijuana possession and possession of an open alcohol container.

The Zero Motorcycles are electric, so officers can move silently through trails in the riparian areas.

They produce no emissions and can be fully charged for about \$1.28.

The Ceres and Modesto police departments also recently started using the motorcycles.

Appellate court decision delays Friant Ranch development

By Marc Benjamin, staff writer

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The Friant Ranch residential development was delayed again after the 5th District Court of Appeal ruled the developers must add an air quality component to the environmental impact report for the 970-acre project.

The appeal court judges ruled that the study lacked a correlation between pollution and its health effects, said Bryan Wagner, lawyer for Friant Ranch developers.

The Fresno County Board of Supervisors approved the 25,000-page environmental document in 2011, including a finding that the pollution was unavoidable.

"The next step is to find out how much worse it would be," Wagner said.

Agreements reached earlier this year led the San Joaquin River Parkway Trust and the city of Fresno to end suits against the development.

Friant Ranch, proposed by the Bigelow-Silkwood family, would be a community of about 5,000 residents next to the tiny town of Friant across from Lost Lake Park.

The development would bring homes, shops and businesses to the rural area and cater to the 55-and-older set, similar to popular retirement communities in Arizona and Southern California.

The appeal court ruling will delay the project six to nine months, Wagner said.

A suit by the Sierra Club and League of Women Voters is still unresolved and is the only case outstanding.