

Housing, jobs, air quality on minds of Arvin residents

Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, Oct. 18, 2007

The future of Arvin was the topic of discussion Wednesday night at the Arvin Veterans Hall.

Planners from the Kern Council of Governments met with about a dozen residents to discuss how the town will change in the next 50 years and how developers can meet the needs of the community.

The workshop was the second phase of a regional blueprint process to help cities and counties in the San Joaquin Valley plan for growth.

Arvin residents said they wanted better housing, jobs and air quality, according to discussions with KernCOG in May.

KernCOG suggested approaches to some of those needs such as adding mixed housing developments in the town.

An option could be having more businesses built closer to residential homes and transit routes, said Darrel Hildebrand, KernCOG's assistant director.

Hildebrand called this "smart growth" and would mirror how communities were built before World War II.

"It's really the way it was before the 1940s," he said.

KernCOG is scheduled to meet with other communities this month to discuss future growth.

Planners will visit the Delano VFW Memorial Building, 1025 Garces Highway at 6 p.m. on Tuesday.

On Wednesday, KernCOG will host a 6 p.m. meeting at the Kern River Veterans/Senior Building, 6405 Lake Isabella Blvd.

Double Track for Tehachapi

Valley Voice Newspaper, Thursday, Oct. 18, 2007

Tehachapi - Valley council of governments including Tulare (TCAG) are united in support of a plan to double track the Tehachapi rail corridor to move more goods through the valley from Oakland to the L.A. basin.

The \$82 million project would be paid by a combination of Proposition 1B transportation bond funds and half by BNSF railway. BNSF says improvements should increase rail traffic by 40% when completed helping to move more goods with less pollution and congestion compared to big diesel trucks.

The Tehachapi line is important because it connects the valley to the L.A. area and its big ports as well as the rest of the country over Union Pacific-owned track that connects with both UP and BNSF in Bakersfield. But rival BNSF runs 70% of the freight on the Tehachapi tracks and has agreed to pony up the 50% share to make the improvements. UP on the other hand has refused to consider co-funding of rail improvements on other valley tracks like their main line down Highway 99, at least in the past.

The project is the culmination of the San Joaquin Regional Goods movement plan that would tap into the funds as part of the Trade Corridor Improvement Funds now budgeted by the state as result of the passage of the 1B bond last November. TCAG is expected to support the idea to be submitted by the valley group to the state next month.

County chair of the Board of Supervisors, Allen Ishida, says he rode on a special passenger train BNSF ran over the Tehachapi loop a few weeks ago as the rail company was lobbying for the idea.

One potential outcome of the state and rail lines co-funding is that for the first time passenger rail traffic could run on the Tehachapi line as well as the Union Pacific line on Highway 99. At a recent meeting of the San Joaquin Valley Rail Committee (October 11) a Union Pacific rep was asked if passenger rail traffic on their 99 route was possible and he replied that go through AMTRAK and "the process begins." That's the first time a UP rep ever said that. Currently AMTRAK travels only on BNSF lines in the valley.

While the Tehachapi project would be the COGs highest priority, Tulare County's hopes funds will be made available for the top local priority -- the Betty Drive route realignment and grade separation at the

Union Pacific line in Goshen that will help more trucks move in and out of Goshen to the Visalia Industrial Park more quickly.

Developer plans Kern's first solar plant **Company takes advantage of state energy mandate**

BY STACEY SHEPARD, Californian staff writer
Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, Oct. 18, 2007

A Nevada-based developer plans to put one of Kern County's most abundant resources to use.

Ecosystem Solar Electric Corp. recently announced plans to build the county's first solar thermal energy plant in an unincorporated area near Boron. The 109-megawatt plant will be built on 40 acres of land owned by Ecosystem Solar Electric Corp. and its sister company, Solar MW Energy.

The Kern solar plant, which will cost \$100 million to build, will be the first of four the companies plan to build. The other three will be located in San Bernardino County, said Nick Panchev, CEO of both companies.

The solar plant is one of many clean energy projects cropping up around California as utilities strive to meet a state mandate that requires 20 percent of their energy to come from renewable resources by 2010, according to Amy Morgan, a spokeswoman for the California Energy Commission, the agency that certifies solar plants.

"These large solar thermal projects will help California reach the goal," Morgan said.

Since the mid 1980s, five large solar thermal power projects have been built in California, producing a combined 354 megawatts of electricity, according to the Energy Commission. The last one went online in 1990.

In addition to Solar Electric Corp.'s four proposed plants, six other major solar projects capable of producing a combined 2,500 megawatts of electricity have been announced or are under the commission's review.

Solar thermal energy is often generated using long, curved mirrors that concentrate sunlight on a liquid inside a tube. The heated liquid is used to produce steam that drives an electric turbine.

The other major type of solar energy comes from photovoltaic cells that absorb sunlight and convert it directly to electricity.

The rise of new power sources has prompted utility companies to build new infrastructure.

Earlier this month, Pacific Gas & Electric announced plans to build a new transmission line from Bakersfield to Fresno in order to distribute new energy generated by wind and solar projects in Tehachapi Mountains and the Imperial Valley. Southern California Edison has also embarked on a similar transmission line project to deliver wind power from the Tehachapis to customers in Southern California.

Currently, about 12 percent of PG&E's energy and 16.7 percent of Southern California Edison's energy comes from wind, geothermal, biomass, solar and hydroelectric suppliers.

The solar plant slated for Kern County will produce enough energy to power between 70,000 and 100,000 homes. The power will be sold and distributed either to PG&E or Southern California Edison, Panchev said.

The solar plant must first be approved by the state, a process that usually takes at least one year and includes an environmental review of the proposed project. Once built, the plant will be owned by private equity investment firms, Panchev said.

Panchev said his companies have owned the land in Kern County for 17 years but were held up getting the plant built because of energy policies that didn't encourage the use of solar power.

"Now that there's incentives," he said, referring to the state's renewable energy mandate, "this is going to be the next major source of energy for the United States."

Plans for coal power plants scrapped

By MATTHEW BROWN , Associated Press Writer
in the Modesto Bee, Thursday, October 18, 2007

BILLINGS, Mont. - At least 16 coal-fired power plant proposals nationwide have been scrapped in recent months and more than three dozen have been delayed as utilities face increasing pressure due to concerns over global warming and rising construction costs.

The slow pace of new plant construction reflects a dramatic change in fortune for a fuel source that just a few years ago was poised for a major resurgence. Combined, the canceled and delayed projects represent enough electricity to power approximately 20 million homes.

The U.S. Department of Energy's latest tally of pending coal plants, released last week, shows eight projects totaling 7,000 megawatts have been canceled since May. That's besides the cancellation earlier this year of eight plants in Texas totaling 6,864 megawatts. Utilities have also pushed back construction on another 32,000 megawatts worth of projects, according to the Energy Department report.

"All these reports that we were about to be inundated with coal plants, I believe this report tells a different story," said Kenneth Kern, director of analysis and planning at the department's National Energy Technology Laboratory. "What has actually happened, if you look at it closely, was much more modest than what was anticipated," he said.

Coal has been a mainstay for utilities, producing half of all electricity consumed in the United States. But it's also one of the largest sources of greenhouse gases blamed for climate change.

In the late 1990s, with natural gas prices rising, utilities eyed cheaper coal as the fuel of choice to meet the growing demand for electricity. Now it appears the resurgence of "King Coal" may have been overstated - or at least put in check.

As Congress considers restrictions on greenhouse gas emissions, analysts said utilities are suspending some projects while they wait to gauge the economic impact of future regulations.

Meanwhile, material costs and demand for skilled labor has prompted plant costs to spike 40 percent or more. Industry representatives blamed increased competition from China and other developing nations aggressively pursuing new coal plants.

"This is like a tsunami attacking the whole industry all at once, with very limited amounts of solutions going forward," said Daniele Seitz, an industry analyst with Dahlman Rose and Co. in New York.

In Texas, TXU Energy has turned its attention to nuclear and wind power after dropping eight of 11 proposed coal plants.

"We're taking a different look at the way we plan to meet the demand for energy," said company spokesman Tom Kleckner.

Fewer coal plant proposals in the United States should be welcome news for environmentalists. They have made the utility industry a prime target in their push to confront climate change.

But the trend also could portend problems in satisfying a projected 40 percent increase in electricity demand by 2030, said James Owen with the Edison Electric Institute, which represents many of the nation's major utilities.

The Bush administration has said 6,000 megawatts of additional coal-fired capacity would be needed every year to cover that increase in demand.

"Obviously some things are causing developers to take a careful look at all of their options and whether they want to go forward with projects," Owen said. "But our industry must be able to meet that demand."

Of 151 new coal plants announced in recent years, only 15 have been built since 2002. Combined, they generate about 3,700 megawatts.

Of the remaining projects, 121 proposals still are considered viable. That includes 76 now listed by the government as "uncertain" in terms of whether or when they will be built.

Peter Altman, a climate policy specialist with the National Environmental Trust, said the new data raises questions about why the government was bullish on coal in past industry analyses. He said the latest report reinforces the need for Congress to do more to encourage conservation, which could ease the demand for new plants.

"The whole question of how many coal plants will be built is based on how much electricity we need. It is within our power to reduce demand," he said.

A spokesman for U.S. Sen. John Barrasso, a Wyoming Republican, said the Energy Department report shows more incentives are needed to help utilities develop cleaner coal-fired plants. Wyoming is the largest coal producer in the nation.

Barrasso spokesman Cameron Hardy criticized the current energy bill working its way through Congress as putting too much emphasis on renewable energies over fossil fuels, which provide the bulk of the nation's power.

"Wind energy is great. But we can't just fiddle around with the smallest portion of our energy production," Hardy said.

A spokesman for U.S. Sen. Jeff Bingaman, the New Mexico Democrat who chairs the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, said coal supporters should be satisfied with incentives included in Congress' last energy bill, in 2005.

Committee spokesman Bill Wicker added that the emergence of climate change as a driving issue in Washington has since shifted lawmakers' focus away from fossil fuels.

"The reality is all the trend lines are not supporting the construction of lots and lots of new coal plants," Wicker said.

Gray Wall Dims Hopes of 'Green' Games

China Has Vowed to Curb Pollution Before '08 Olympics, but Its Secrecy Is Feeding Skepticism

By Maureen Fan, Washington Post Foreign Service
Washington Post Tuesday, October 16, 2007

BEIJING -- In summer, a gray industrial haze coats this city of more than 15 million, descending over the Great Wall, sticking to humid hillsides and obscuring skyscrapers. Soaring temperatures and a lack of wind conspire with gunk-spewing traffic to foul the air.

The pollution is so bad many visitors are wondering how Olympic athletes will be affected and how this city can possibly be ready to host them in less than 10 months.

Beijing officials preparing for the Games point proudly to a state-of-the-art control room that measures pollutants at 27 monitoring stations around the city. They say they are adding subway lines and have moved many factories out of town. And in a four-day experiment in August that could be a model for action during the Games, officials eliminated more than a million cars from the city's streets by ordering motorists with odd- and even-numbered license plates to drive on alternate days.

But critics point to evidence of their own: Beijing does not regularly measure or evaluate some serious pollutants, including ozone and some types of fine particulate matter that can easily be inhaled deep into the lungs. Meanwhile, they have refused to publicly release figures on the amount of pollutants at any given location, such as the Olympic Village or Tiananmen Square, preferring to stick with a citywide average.

China has promised a "green" Olympics, but its failure to divulge what is actually in the host city's air has alarmed athletes, surprised environmental experts and raised questions about officials' commitment to making needed changes.

Australian athletes have announced they will arrive in Beijing as late as possible because of concerns that the air quality might hinder their performance. Two weeks ago, two Ethiopian middle-distance running champions announced they would forgo some events because of the "disgusting weather and air pollution." New Zealand and American athletes say they will wear face masks if necessary. Even Jacques

Rogge, president of the International Olympic Committee, warned that some endurance sports might be postponed if the pollution gets too bad.

Initially, Beijing planned a large-scale anti-pollution experiment in August in which authorities would shut down factories in and outside the city to better assess next summer's needs. There were also promises to work with surrounding provinces that contribute heavily to pollution in the capital, experts said.

But now there are indications such pledges will not be carried out. Liu Qi, head of China's Olympic organizing committee, told the Financial Times last month that factories would not be asked to close. And while Chinese news media have since reported that such a measure is being considered, skepticism remains.

"Some factory managers are refusing to close down for the Olympics, arguing that they are willing to slow, but not halt production," said Elizabeth C. Economy, director of Asia studies at the Council on Foreign Relations and author of a book on China's environment, "The River Runs Black."

State media reports said Hebei province, which surrounds Beijing, will tighten its monitoring of pollutants and begin to measure ozone. But Xu Junhua, deputy director of the information office of Hebei's environmental protection bureau, said state officials had not contacted Hebei about any such plan.

"We have no idea of the details, like where to put the monitoring equipment, how to monitor the extra pollutants, how to collect data and how to publish it," Xu said. "We are waiting for the guidance of the central government."

Officials with China's State Environmental Protection Administration declined requests for interviews.

The lack of transparency and China's failure to take more stringent measures are worrying environmental activists. Economy said there appears to be a reluctance to do anything that would hinder the country's galloping economic growth.

"I think it is a striking indication of just how deeply capitalism, or perhaps individualism, has permeated China that some people would put profit before national pride," Economy said.

China is trying hard to ensure that it is seen as a modern, technologically advanced and open country during the Games. Beijing residents are famously proud of their home town; many activists who normally oppose the government are loath to use such an important moment to embarrass the country.

But hosting the Olympics is a huge undertaking. Communist Party authorities have issued self-conscious slogans declaring that China is ready to welcome the world, but have registered shock when human rights activists raised political concerns that the government here sees as immaterial to a sporting event. The pressure to deliver a safe and secure event, in which athletes don't keel over because of health problems, is enormous.

For now, Beijing officials are playing down worries about pollution and asking visitors to trust them. After all, they note, the 1984 Olympics went off smoothly in Los Angeles where pollution at the time was worse than it is today.

Joe Cassmassi, a meteorologist who helped monitor and forecast air pollution during the L.A. Games, said organizers managed to substantially reduce traffic at the time, thus easing concerns about air quality. But he suggested that Beijing could do even better.

"We could only ask for people's cooperation," he said. "China has a lot more control over sources of manufacturing. You're dealing with a country that has a little bit more authoritarian capability."

Critics say that it's clear Beijing is not using all the tools at its disposal. Ozone, a colorless gas and critical pollutant arising in large part from car exhaust and factory emissions, regularly goes unmeasured, even though more than 1,000 new cars take to the capital's streets each day.

Beijing also fails to monitor certain kinds of particulate matter. Authorities regularly track what is known as PM 10, particulate matter with an average diameter of 10 micrometers, but not PM 2.5, smaller particles that are far more dangerous and can trigger asthmatic problems. PM 2.5 has been the standard measurement in the United States for a decade.

Studies have shown that average concentrations of the larger pollutant, PM 10, often exceed China's own national standards. Concentrations of the less frequently monitored PM 2.5 register well above U.S. standards.

Beijing has also refused to release details on the actual amount of sulfur dioxide, nitrogen dioxide, carbon monoxide, ozone or particulate matter in the air during the August driving ban. Those individual components are important because they can have acute as well as chronic effects on people's health.

For athletes unaccustomed to Beijing's pollution, the assault can feel like "an invisible wet rag that chokes your lungs," Cassmassi said. "Eventually you acclimatize yourself, but a lot of people are going there and all of a sudden they're hit with pollutants they're not used to."

"Carbon monoxide replaces oxygen in the bloodstream and reduces the body's ability to oxygenate its tissue," said James M. Lents, a former top executive of air pollution control programs in Los Angeles and Colorado Ozone and sulfur dioxide attack tissue in the airways, hampering breathing and the processing of oxygen.

Even Chinese researchers have complained about the overly general pollution data, saying they are forced to purchase more specific information from various jurisdictions.

"We have been trying to get more detailed statistics on deaths from respiratory disease from the health department and pollutant concentration from the environmental department, but it's just too hard to get it," said Pan Xiaochuan, a Beijing University medical school professor studying the effect of inhalable particles on respiratory systems and death rates. "It has been secret information for the departments."

Chinese officials prefer to publish a citywide average for pollutants, arguing that readings from one location lack context. But averages tell nothing about pollution in a specific part of a city, analysts say.

What the government does measure, and is fond of citing, are "blue sky days," which its own environmental scientists concede are of no use when trying to actually measure pollution. "Blue sky days can't be considered a serious scientific notion," said Du Shaozhong, deputy director of the Beijing Municipal Environmental Protection Bureau. "It's just a saying that is understandable to the media and the public."

China has no national standard for evaluating ozone, Du said, because the explosion in the number of cars has been a relatively recent phenomenon. Its focus on sulfur dioxide follows years of burning coal.

"We promised for the Olympics that we will closely monitor carbon monoxide, nitrogen dioxide, sulfur dioxide and particulate matter. Of course, considering that ozone is important to people's health, we are also watching it," he said. "But the formation of ozone needs special conditions, like enough light, humidity and temperature, so once we can control one condition, we can control the ozone."

Some analysts express hope that a new environmental information law meant to take effect next year will help.

"What's going on now is a complex negotiation among those who share the Beijing airshed," said Deborah Seligsohn, who monitors energy and pollution issues in China for the Washington-based World Resources Institute.

"In the last year, the Chinese have put continuous monitoring equipment on power plants of 25 megawatts or more, which is a huge improvement," Seligsohn said. "There's a lot of work to be done. They're moving forward on many fronts at the same time, some of which will bear fruit by the Olympics and some of which won't."

[Modesto Bee, Guest Commentary, Thursday, Oct. 18, 2007:](#)

RANDAL O'TOOLE: Government plans don't work

Portland, Ore. - After more than 30 years of reviewing government plans, including forest plans, park plans, watershed plans, wildlife plans, energy plans, urban plans, and transportation plans, I've concluded that government planning almost always does more harm than good.

Most government plans are so full of fabrications and unsupportable assumptions that they aren't worth the paper they are printed on, much less the millions of dollars taxpayers spend to have them written. Federal, state, and local governments should repeal planning laws and shut down planning offices.

Everybody plans. But private plans are flexible, and we happily change them when new information arises. In contrast, special interest groups ensure that the government plans benefiting them do not change - no matter how costly.

Like any other organization, government agencies need to plan their budgets and short-term projects. But they fail when they write comprehensive plans (which try to account for all side effects), long-range plans (two to 50 years or more), or plans that attempt to control other people's land and resources. Many plans try to do all three.

Comprehensive plans fail because forests, watersheds, and cities are simply too complicated for anyone to understand. Chaos science reveals that very tiny differences in initial conditions can lead to huge differences in outcomes - that's why megaprojects such as Boston's Big Dig go so far over budget.

Long-range plans fail because planners have no better insight into the future than anyone else, so their plans will be as wrong as their predictions are.

Planning of other people's land and resources fails because planners will not pay the costs they impose on other people, so they have no incentive to find the best answers.

Most of the nation's 32,000 professional planners graduated from schools that are closely affiliated with colleges of architecture, giving them an undue faith in design. This means many plans put enormous efforts into trying to control urban design while they neglect other tools that could solve social problems at a much lower cost.

For example, planners propose to reduce [automotive air pollution](#) by increasing population densities to reduce driving. Yet the nation's densest urban area, Los Angeles, which is seven times as dense as the least dense areas, has only 8 percent less commuting by auto. In contrast, technological improvements over the past 40 years, which planners often ignore, have [reduced the pollution](#) caused by some cars by 99 percent.

Some of the worst plans today are so-called growth-management plans prepared by states and metropolitan areas. They try to control who gets to develop their land and exactly what those developments should look like, including their population densities and mixtures of residential, retail, commercial, and other uses. "The most effective plans are drawn with such precision that only the architectural detail is left to future designers," says a popular planning book.

About a dozen states require or encourage urban areas to write such plans. Those states have some of the nation's least affordable housing, while most states and regions that haven't written such plans mostly have very affordable housing. The reason is simple: planning limits the supply of new housing, which drives up the price of all housing and leads to housing bubbles.

In states with growth-management laws, median housing prices in 2006 were typically 4 to 8 times median family incomes. In most states without such laws, median home prices are only 2 to 3 times median family incomes.

Few people realize that the recent housing bubble, which affected mainly regions with growth-management planning, was caused by planners trying to socially engineer cities. Yet it has done little to protect open space, reduce driving, or do any of the other things promised.

Politicians use government planning to allocate scarce resources on a large scale. Instead, they should make sure that markets - based on prices, incentives, and property rights - work.

Private ownership of wildlife could save endangered species such as the black-footed ferret, North America's most-endangered mammal. Variably priced toll roads have helped reduce congestion. Pollution markets do far more to clean the air than exhortations to drive less. Giving people freedom to use their property, and ensuring only that their use does not harm others, will keep housing affordable.

Unlike planners, markets can cope with complexity. Futures markets cushion the results of unexpected changes. Markets do not preclude government ownership, but the best-managed government programs

are funded out of user fees that effectively make government managers act like private owners. Rather than passing the buck by turning sticky problems over to government planners, policymakers should make sure markets give people what they want.

Randal O'Toole is a senior fellow with the Cato Institute and author of the recent book, "The Best-Laid Plans: How Government Planning Harms Your Quality of Life, Your Pocketbook, and Your Future."

[S.F. Chronicle commentary, Thursday, Oct. 18, 2007:](#)

Open Forum

Combatting Climate Change

Making a real difference with forests

New rules would bolster California's carbon market

By Laurie Wayburn

The California Air Resources Board is set to further California's position as a climate leader on Oct. 25, when the board will vote on recommendations to endorse the California Climate Action Registry's forest protocols. The board's endorsement of these rules would create a foundation for the state to use forest conservation and restoration as one of the tools to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in keeping with California's landmark climate law, AB32.

Most people realize we must significantly reduce carbon dioxide levels in the atmosphere to successfully address climate change. Similarly, most people realize reducing emissions from fossil fuels is a first step, as these emissions are the source of more than 50 percent of the excess carbon dioxide in our atmosphere today.

Forest loss and depletion accounts for the other 40 to 50 percent of excess atmospheric carbon dioxide. Though forests store carbon dioxide as carbon when they grow, they release it as carbon dioxide when they are disturbed, such as happens when forestlands are converted into sprawling developments. In order for us to restore our climate, carbon-dioxide emissions from forests must be addressed with the same urgency and rigor as is being done with fossil fuels. California is preparing to take just this action.

California has some of the most productive forests in the world - forests that yield sustainable wood products, clean water, abundant wildlife and more. California also has the opportunity to restore some of the largest, most stable forest carbon banks in the world. Originally, California was almost half forested. Over time, however, California has lost more than one-third of its forests to development. With the state air board's leadership, we can start down the path to restoring our state's grand forests and livable climate.

The forest protocols were developed over four years through a public process and expert review. They are a remarkable accomplishment in two ways. First, they've established the first comprehensive set of scientifically rigorous standards to reduce forest emissions and increase net storage (sequestration) of carbon dioxide consistent with the global norms established under the Kyoto Protocol. Second, their establishment has created a "first place" positioning for California's forests in the growing global carbon market, a market that is estimated to exceed \$40 billion in revenue this year.

The protocols explicitly include sustainable forestry as a key tool to restore and maintain forest carbon stocks. The first project registered - now being certified - is a forest management project. The end result of this project will be not only greatly increased carbon stores, but also a long-term supply of sustainably harvested wood products. Managing this forest for its long-term climate benefits also ensures jobs producing wood products as well as in forest restoration.

The global carbon market has flourished since the Kyoto agreement came into force in 2005 and international norms for carbon-dioxide emissions reductions projects were formulated. Under Kyoto, carbon emissions reductions projects in all sectors (energy, transportation, forests, etc.) can be traded to help meet mandatory targets if they meet certain clear principles. The emissions reductions must be permanent, making a lasting difference. They must provide additional reductions compared to what would otherwise happen. They must create benefits that help sustain natural systems and rural economies.

California's registry program directly fulfills these principles, tying California's actions into global ones. When the Air Resources Board endorses the registry program protocols, an emerging and growing

market will have the certainty it needs to grow and thrive. Even at this early stage, demand is growing for California forest emissions reductions from businesses as varied as consumer products companies, public utilities and carbon investment funds. Individuals are also setting an example with their personal actions. Leaders such as California Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger, House Speaker Nancy Pelosi and state

Assembly Leader Fabian Núñez have used forest-based emissions reductions from registered projects to reduce their personal carbon footprints.

The California Air Resources Board has a tremendous opportunity to continue that leadership, make a real difference and keep California leading the carbon market by adopting these proposed protocols as the basis for voluntary early actions. It needs to take such action now, when it makes good sense - for our climate, our forests and our prosperity.

Laurie Wayburn is the president of the Pacific Forest Trust in San Francisco.