

## YOUR SPACE

# Managed growth – it's not a conspiracy

By Kirk Uhler

**T**here are many modern manifestations of the old saying, "Just because I'm paranoid doesn't mean they are not out to get me." One of these manifestations is the tendency of people to believe that nefarious forces, usually government-sponsored, are busily working away, planning the rise or demise of any number of causes, interests, foreign enterprises, etc.

Conspiracy theories, especially those involving the government, abound. Kennedy whacked Marilyn. Reagan developed crack cocaine/AIDS to eliminate the lower class. NASA never really landed on the moon.

The problem with most conspiracy theories is that they run counter to two laws of physics and human nature: First, the more moving parts something has, the more likely it is to break; second, a

## GUEST COMMENTARY



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secret known by more than one person is no longer a secret.

Thus bringing me, albeit in a roundabout way, to the Placer County Conservation Plan.

The Placer County Board of Supervisors, like most local governments, has struggled for decades with how to manage the converging and conflicting forces associated with new growth and development. We want affordable housing, but we want to be sure that new development pays all kinds of fees to mitigate its impacts. We don't want urban sprawl,

but neither do we want to "enrich" developers by giving them higher density.

As supervisors, we hear comments such as "I love this area that I just moved to, escaping the crushing growth of Los Angeles/Orange County/the Bay Area, and I don't want you to allow it to be paved over like the area I just left. It would spoil the neighborhood into which I just moved and my new house, which was just built." (I told you I was approaching this in a roundabout way.)

The Placer County Conservation Plan is not subterfuge, as some have suggested. It is not an effort to grab yet more private land and hold it in the public domain.

It is, conversely, an effort to navigate the aforementioned dichotomies, while recognizing that various state and federal

agencies will demand their pound of flesh as the county continues to develop. This process will take some time and will enjoy numerous opportunities to see the bright light of public scrutiny.

In the end, hopefully, we will have a plan that enables the county and its incorporated cities to meet our current and future growth needs while also meeting the environmental requirements set forth by various state and federal agencies.

Believe it or not, that really is what is driving this plan – the hope that managed growth can meet our needs. Now, if we could just do something about those darned black helicopters ...

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