



ECOS
ENVIRONMENTAL
♦ COUNCIL ♦
OF SACRAMENTO

September 11, 2023

ECOS launches campaign to save wildlife habitat and farmland in Natomas

“We think the annual Farm to Fork month, with so many people celebrating the locally grown food in the region, is a perfect time to highlight how important farms are to people and wildlife.” stated Heather Fargo, former Mayor of Sacramento and lead of the Natomas Campaign for the Environmental Council of Sacramento (ECOS).

ECOS is calling on the public to protect Natomas open space and embarking on a major campaign to educate the community about how important the Natomas farmlands and open space are to wildlife in our region and beyond. Natomas is a special place; it is a vital part of the Pacific Flyway and home to 22 protected species, in addition to providing food for our region and the world.

The Natomas Basin Habitat Conservation Plan was established in 1997 to ensure the basin’s natural resources are not lost with the growth of the Natomas community. Unfortunately, loss of these resources is likely to happen because of proposed residential and industrial development projects covering more than 8,200 acres of land intended to remain in agriculture.

The first of those projects is the Airport South Industrial Project, a 450-acre warehouse district proposed for land south of I-5 and adjacent to the West Lake neighborhood in North Natomas. If approved, it would put over 6 million square feet of warehouses on foraging habitat for the endangered Swainson’s Hawk.

“ECOS wants Sacramento to remember the value of open space and farmland as a way to support wildlife and combat climate change. We Sacramentans have a role in protecting one of the Earth’s biodiversity hotspots,” said Fargo.



A new message is on display on a digital billboard along I-5 in downtown Sacramento. It has a simple message - save Sacramento’s wildlife habitat and farmland.

Targeted to those who enjoy the local dining experience offered in the city, it simply says, “There’s no Farm to Fork without farms” and “Natomas farmlands feed people and wildlife”.

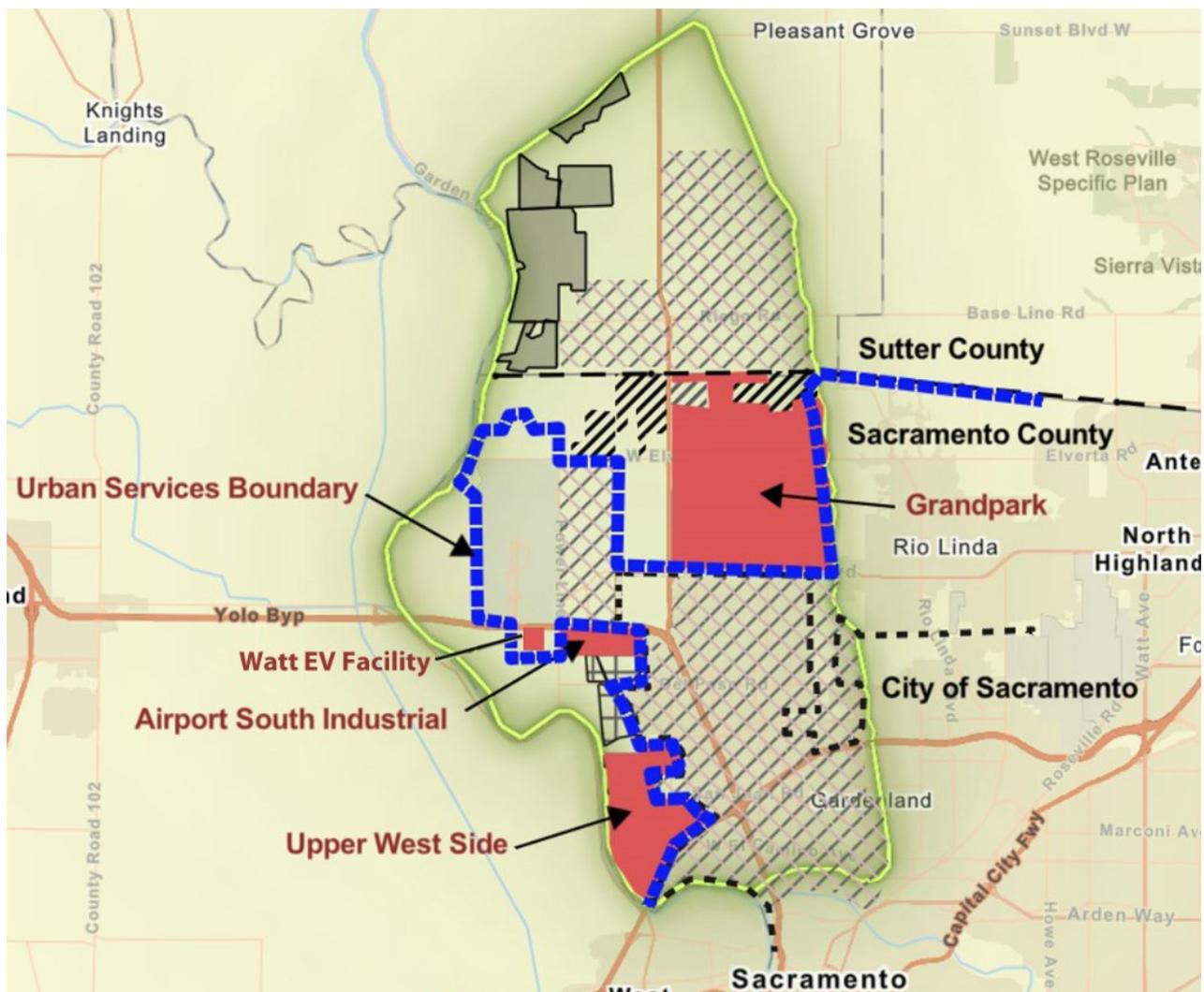
The billboard is timed to coincide with the annual Farm to Fork Festival that includes the Tower Bridge dinner on Sept 10 and the street festival on Capital Mall on Sept 22-23.

The billboard kicks off a major new campaign by ECOS, continuing its 50 years of efforts to protect the environment.

“The establishment of the Natomas Basin Habitat Conservation Plan was important for regional sustainability thirty years ago. Now with climate change, it is essential that we stop sprawl and protect biodiversity in this area. The NBHCP provided for development on 17, 500 acres, and the proposed projects are outside of that,” said Susan Herre AIA AICP, President of the ECOS Board of Directors.

ECOS is partnering with Sierra Club, Habitat 2020, Audubon Society, Friends of the Swainson’s Hawk and California Native Plant Society.

Map of the Natomas Basin The proposed projects are in red and are labelled.



More information is available on the ECOS website – <https://www.ecosacramento.net/>

Contacts: Heather Fargo, former Mayor of Sacramento, ECOS Natomas Team Lead: h-fargo@comcast.net, (916) 600-6615; and Susan Herre, President of ECOS Board, susanherre@gmail.com

The ECOS Mission:

Our mission is to achieve regional sustainability, livable communities, environmental justice, and a healthy environment and economy for existing and future residents. ECOS strives to bring positive change to the Sacramento region by proactively working with the individual and organizational members of ECOS, neighborhood groups, and local and regional governments.