Next Steps on the Lewis S. Eaton Trail - River West Open Space Area

The River West Open Space Area- Fresno (a.k.a Spano River Ranch), encompasses 410 acres of riverbottom land just west of Highway 41 in Fresno. The property was purchased in 2001 through a joint transaction between the River Parkway Trust, the San Joaquin River Conservancy, and the Trust for Public Land. Over the last few years several agencies including the River Parkway Trust, the City of Fresno and the San Joaquin River Conservancy have been working to develop a plan for extending the Lewis S. Eaton Trail to the property from Woodward Park. **Read on below for more information about the current status of the trail extension project and how you can get engaged to ensure public access for all.**

The Conflict

The heart of the current conflict is over public access: specifically, two proposed staging areas that would include parking, restrooms, trail and river access. One staging area would be accessed from old Highway 41, and the other accessed from Audubon Dr and Del Mar Ave at Riverview Dr. The Mayor's office is proposing to seal off vehicle access at Del Mar and Riverview and eliminate the associated staging area. This means access to River West-Fresno by car, visitors will have to make a 10-mile round trip drive from the closest Hwy 41 entrance at Friant Rd; park and walk one mile to the entrance from the parking lot at Woodward Park; or, descend a steep staircase from Spano Park.
These proposed recommendations would substantially limit public access to the project, especially for seniors and families with young children.

Click here to view the River West Access for All Video

The San Joaquin River Conservancy is about to begin an Environmental Impact Report (EIR), which will provide opportunity for complete public input on the project and these issues. The City of Fresno is trying to circumvent this public process with the General Plan Update recommendations. **Here's what you can do.**

We Need You to Get Involved

- Write or call your City Council representative. Click here to find out who represents you.

- Write or call the Mayor's Office. 559.621.8000 or mayor@fresno.gov .
- Attend the City Council meeting on February 14. The City will release the agenda for this meeting on Friday, February 8 at 5:00 p.m. Click here to visit the City Council webpage to see the time for the River West agenda item.

In your communications, ask the City to:

- Provide a vehicle entrance at Riverview Drive to a trail parking and staging area
- Let the Environmental Impact Report and public input process do its job

More Information

- River West Project Fact Sheet
- River West Workshop Presentation for January 16
- Trust's Letter to the Editor
- The Trust's original River West Plan
- The City's current River West Plan
- Video the River West Video Petition

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