



Superior California Chapter Newsletter

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Association of Environmental Professionals - Superior California Chapter
www.superioraep.org

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AICP Members! Continuing Education Credits Now Available for AEP Programs

by Matt Franck

Recently, AEP established a new service for its members. Those of us who also are members of the American Institute of Certified Planners (AICP) are required - as of January 1, 2008 - to engage in mandatory continuing education in order to enhance the ongoing integrity of the AICP program. AICP members must, within a two-year reporting period, earn 32 Certification Maintenance credits (1 hour = 1 credit) from a suite of programs *that have been registered in the system*.

Thanks to the efforts of Kelly Koldus - the current Orange County Chapter Director and now a Director-at-Large - AEP is now an officially registered provider of Certification Maintenance courses. Sponsored programs can be found on the APA calendar - go to www.planning.org/calendar and browse by "provider" or "city." There are two disclaimers at this time. First, the Superior California Chapter must remember to send its program information to Kelly Koldus so that it can be added to the APA calendar. If you don't see one of our local programs listed, please let one of the Board Members know! Second, APA reports that the Certification Maintenance online registration system is undergoing an extensive upgrade and will be unavailable until early December.

AICP is the professional institute of the American Planning Association. For more information, see www.planning.org/aicp.

REMINDER!!! AEP Holiday Mixer 2008

AXIS GALLERY – WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 10, 2008 - 5 TO 8PM

This year's mixer will be held at Axis Gallery (1517 19th Street, Sacramento), an artist-run cooperative which has been building a reputation for exhibiting challenging contemporary artwork for over 15 years. Come enjoy delicious appetizers and get acquainted with friends and colleagues, new and old. Beer, wine, and non-alcoholic beverages will be served. Attendance is complimentary.

Please RSVP by December 3, 2008 to Kristie Ehrhardt, as space is limited to 75 attendees.
(<http://www.superioraep.org/dec102008rsvp.php>)

CEQA and You Will Find-a: “Basics” Workshop Provides an Overview of CEQA to those Seeking Information on California’s Environmental Review Process

By Scott Sjulín

On Friday, November 14, 2008, members and friends of the Superior California Chapter gathered in Sacramento for AEP’s 2008 CEQA Basics Workshop. The workshop provided an overview of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) process, including purpose, rules, documentation, legal challenges, and relationship to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). Three speakers, each with varied backgrounds in environmental science, planning, and policy, assisted in presenting the workshop’s informative contents.

- **Sydney Coatsworth**, AICP, Vice President and Managing Principal of *EDAW*’s Sacramento office, contributed to the workshop as a speaker and moderator. Ms. Coatsworth introduced the basic purposes of CEQA and later provided details on impact and mitigation assessment early in the CEQA process. She also examined CEQA’s relationship with other legislation, including NEPA and state global climate change policy. Ms. Coatsworth has over 20 years of experience managing projects in need of CEQA, NEPA, or other environmental policy compliance, and has taught courses for previous AEP workshops.
- **Tiffany Wright**, Partner at the Sacramento-base law firm of *Remy, Thomas, Moose, and Manley, LLP*, provided an overview of basic CEQA regulations, as well as legal challenges and defenses in the CEQA process. Ms. Wright reviews environmental documents and planning studies to ensure compliance with CEQA, state planning and land use laws, NEPA, and other relevant statutes.
- **Michael Johnson**, an Environmental Scientist and Lawyer at *Kleinfelder*’s Sacramento office, presented details on CEQA project types, exemptions, and required documents. Mr. Johnson’s presentation focused on the Environmental Impact Report (EIR), a key environmental analysis document in the CEQA process. The audience especially enjoyed Mr. Johnson’s simple breakdowns of CEQA process basics: *scoping game plan*, *document-document-document*, *details*, and *follow the rules*. Mr. Johnson specializes in natural resource planning and permit coordination.

The workshop featured a variety of attendees, from public agency employees and private consultants to developers and attorneys. Guests contained varied levels of CEQA experience: for some, it was a refresher course after years of practice, but for many, it was their first endeavor into the CEQA process. Attendees of all experience levels were able to absorb valuable content from the workshop’s speakers.

Special thanks to Janet Dallas, President of the Superior California Chapter, who organized the event, and to the three speakers for providing an invaluable learning experience.

[photos of the CEQA Basics Workshop on following page]



Michael Johnson, of Kleinfelder, captivated the audience with the four basics of the CEQA process: scoping game plan, document-document-document, details, and follow the rules.



"It's all in the book." Sydney Coatsworth, AICP, of EDAW, assures the audience that CEQA guidance is at their fingertips in AEP's CEQA Statutes and Guidelines summary book.



Tiffany Wright, of Remy, Thomas, Moose, and Manley, LLP, helped audience members navigate the legal challenges and defenses in the CEQA regulatory environment.

AEP Luncheon Provides a "Friendly" Discussion of CEQA Alternatives

By Scott Sjulín

On Thursday, October 30, 2008, members and friends of the Superior California Chapter gathered at the Fourth Street Grille in Downtown Sacramento for an AEP luncheon presentation entitled *How CEQA Alternatives Can Be Your Friends*. The presentation featured Brian Boxer, AICP, Vice President and Senior Division Manager of *PBS&J's* California & Southwest Science and Planning Division.

Mr. Boxer provided an overview of the development and analysis of project alternatives in the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) environmental review process. Included was an outline of recent legal developments pertaining to CEQA alternatives, advice on developing meaningful off-site project alternatives, and information on the "magic number" of alternatives needed for various project types. The presentation was informal and free form, which allowed for ample audience participation. As an added bonus, one AICP Continuing Education Credit was awarded to AICP members in attendance.

Special thanks to Janet Dallas, Jennifer Donovan, and Kristie Ehrhardt, of the Superior California Chapter, for organizing the event, and to Brian Boxer for providing an invaluable learning experience. Also, thanks to the Fourth Street Grille for accommodating the presentation on such short notice.



Brian Boxer's informal presentation style allowed for ample audience input and discussion.

Policy Editorial – Capturing Negative Externalities Related to Biodiversity

By Trevor Macenski, REA

The environment and its resources are constantly being affected by human actions. Whether it be population growth and rapid industrialization or chemical spills into waterways, these types of negative externalities should be internalized into the market to help preserve our planet's future. Negative externalities occur when exhaustible resources are depleted and when renewable resources are harvested at rates greater than the regeneration rates. There have been a number of economic arguments put forth regarding evaluation of the benefits of biodiversity. Most are commonly associated with humans, but economists have also debated whether biodiversity is inherently valuable, independent of its benefits to humans.

Diverse ecosystems are typically more productive than non-diverse ones and for this reason any set of species can never fully exploit all potential niches if they are limited. Since human economic productivity is largely reliant on Earth's ecosystems, adequate biodiversity needs to be maintained.

One of the most important reasons for loss of biodiversity is that conservation and sustainable use of natural resources is generally not very financially feasible because of a combination of economic/global/environmental market and policy failures. What this means is that natural resources are “under-valued” because no account is taken of the time it takes to produce the next harvest, nor any costs involved in managing lands for future harvests, nor the environmental and social costs associated with loss of products. Internalizing these costs, so that the free market users of such goods pay a larger part of these costs, is a central element in dealing with the “externalities” that are driving biodiversity loss.

A number of approaches have been taken to address externalities and these can be thought of in terms of incentive measures to support conservation of biodiversity. First, and probably the most important incentive in many areas is to remove incentives, policies, subsidies and low commodity prices which make it profitable to exploit natural resources without concern for long-term outcomes. Once we have overcome that challenge we can develop incentives to contribute directly to improving the management of biodiversity. The following are four different approaches to internalizing the negative externalities:

1. Trade liberalization and property rights - which can encourage greater benefits to local stewards of natural resources, by providing an incentive for them to engage in sustainable production systems.
2. Standards, regulations and restrictions - these are standard institutional instruments used to set maximum acceptable levels of resource depletion, for example by restricting fisheries access..
3. Fees and environmental charges - these can be used to recover costs of maintaining or replacing natural resources, and include timber taxes, fishing licenses, and park entrance fees.
4. Public financing and environmental funds - financial incentives can be offered to those who harvest in ways that reduce natural resource losses.

However, none of these incentives will be effective without well-regulated markets, nor will they work without strong political commitment to ensure that policy incentives are appropriate and implemented.

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