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SIERRA NEVADA ALLIANCE

# 1999 Calaveras Community Renewal Project



*"Building Our Future Together"*

**Glencoe • Rail Road Flat • West Point • Wilseyville**

February 2000

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## 1999 Calaveras Community Renewal Project Report

Foothill Conservancy and Sierra Nevada Alliance

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## Summary

*“The long-economically depressed communities of the Upper Mokelumne River seized their own fates rather than waiting for some out-of-town developer to save them, setting a model for other rural communities contemplating whether to grow bigger or better.”*

— Calaveras Enterprise,  
December 31, 1999

Early in 1999, a group of local citizens in the Calaveras County, California communities of Glencoe, Rail Road Flat, West Point, and Wilseyville coordinated a local citizen-based, sustainable community development project using the “Economic Renewal” model developed by the Rocky Mountain Institute. The project was sponsored by the Foothill Conservancy (Conservancy), a local conservation and community organization, and the Sierra Nevada Alliance (Alliance), a regional coalition of 65 local and regional conservation organizations. It was funded by grants from the W. Alton Jones Foundation to the sponsor organizations. A community survey conducted as part of the project was funded primarily by a grant to Calaveras County.

Through this process, more than 200 local residents analyzed their social, environmental, and economic assets and considered what kinds of actions they should take to make their local economy more sustainable. After considering a long list of project ideas, community members selected four projects for initial development:

- Community learning centers that will teach new skills to adults and youth
- Building the local youth center into a self-sustaining organization with a skate park
- A community switchboard/network to link residents, businesses, and resources
- Downtown beautification for West Point and Rail Road Flat

Most of the projects are off to a strong start. The community learning centers began operating in late 1999, funded with a grant from the County. More than 200 adults and children have participated in the early sessions and many are helping to plan and operate the centers. The beautification effort has held two cleanup days in West Point, and the community switchboard is doing outreach and gearing for startup.

In addition, local residents have created a permanent organization to continue the work begun in 1999: the Mokelumne Alliance for Community Renewal (MACR)



Council. The council, the first of its kind in the area, will work to ensure that the initial projects are successful and that new ones build on their initial success. It will serve as a stable, organized group which can take advantage of available funds, technical advice, and community and regional resources and expertise.

The Calaveras Community Renewal Project was a success for the community and the sponsor organizations. The selected projects will help build the social capital on which sustainable economies rely, while beginning to build links among businesses and local residents. The formation of the MACR Council will ensure the work continues. And the relationships and skills built over the course of the project will serve a new generation of leaders well as they work for the benefit of their communities.

The greatest success of the project, however, is not any single project or organization, or new individual skills, but the creation of an optimistic, can-do environment conducive to positive change. We look forward to seeing the ongoing efforts transform the recent community dynamic of defeat, depression, and conflict to one of hope, cooperation, and success.

## Background

The four small towns of Glencoe, Rail Road Flat, West Point, and Wilseyville are in the northern part of Calaveras County, an area whose economy was formerly dominated by the timber industry and before that, by mining. The combined population of the communities is around 4,000. The four towns are physically isolated from the rest of Calaveras County by four forks and canyons of the Mokelumne River and winding mountain roads.

While in recent years the economy of the Sierra foothills has gradually changed to one where service industries, including tourism, prevail, the West Point area has not made a fully successful transition from a resource-based economy. Unemployment rose with the closure of the area's last lumber mills and associated industry consolidation, poverty grew in segments of the community, and many in the area gave up hope for the local economy. School enrollment dropped in the two elementary schools, an indication of declining population. And in 1998, an arson fire burned much of downtown West Point.

In 1997's *Sierra Nevada Ecosystem Project Report*, the West Point area scored low in a community capacity analysis that measured the ability of local people to work together to solve problems. When faced with controversial issues, the community was seldom able to favorably resolve them. Even a project as apparently beneficial as a proposal to establish a community park failed as the result of community conflict. Recognizing the difficulties facing the community, local residents contacted the Foothill Conservancy in 1998 to express interest in a community capacity-building project.

## Economic Renewal process

In the fall of 1998, sponsor organizations Foothill Conservancy and Sierra Nevada Alliance began to discuss the potential for the project with local residents. After a January 1999 meeting with consultant and then-Alliance director Rick Breeze Martin, local planning commissioner James Coyne, and area resident and Conservancy director Steve Wilensky, the Conservancy and the Alliance laid out a basic framework for the process. Early in the following month, organization representatives began to meet with groups of local residents to explore local interest. The Conservancy then contacted Michael Kinsley of the Rocky Mountain Institute (RMI) and secured an agreement from him to help with the project, which would use RMI's "Economic Renewal" model, which emphasizes consensus-based community decision-making. After a second facilitated community meeting in early March 1999, a "core group" of local residents volunteered to coordinate the project.

### Two-day RMI intensive training

On a rare snowy weekend in early April, this core group participated in an intensive, two-day workshop conducted by Kinsley in West Point and Wilseyville. Conservancy and Alliance president Katherine Evatt and Alliance executive director Laurel Ames

also participated in the workshop. Participants learned how to conduct each step of RMI's Economic Renewal process and received a crash course in sustainable economics, group and community dynamics, consensus-based decision-making, collaboration, and meeting facilitation. Kinsley gave a public presentation in West Point on the Sunday following the workshops, attended by an interested group of nearly 100 local residents.

### Community workshops

The RMI Economic Renewal process, which has been conducted in small communities across the country and in Canada, uses a series of facilitated workshops that lead from establishing a community vision to project action plans, guided by principles of economic sustainability (see [page 22](#)). From May 1999 through November 1999, the core group, which had adopted the name "Mokelumne Alliance for Community Renewal" (MACR), coordinated the process in the West Point area. Eight public workshops were held in the town halls of West Point and Rail Road Flat, and the core group met between meetings to strategize and organize the workshops.

More than 200 local residents took part in the community workshops. Ages ranged from teens to seniors, and representatives of most community groups took part in some part of the process (see interest list, [page 18](#)). The county supervisor for the area, Paul Stein of West Point, participated in many of the workshops and provided key project support (see "Community Survey," below).

Foothill Conservancy president Katherine Evatt (president of the Alliance through July 1999), actively participated in the meetings and gave guidance, support, and assistance to the group. A professional facilitator, Diane Bush, attended most of the community workshops and many of the core group planning meetings. She provided valuable organizational advice and experience as well as facilitation when needed. Alliance executive director Laurel Ames played a key role in the early community meetings and first public workshop, and assisted with the project selection workshops toward the end of the process.

### Community survey

To provide information for ongoing community development efforts, the County of Calaveras joined forces with the Economic Renewal process to conduct a community survey. The mail-in community and business survey was conducted by Applied Development Economics (ADE) of Berkeley, California, under contract to the County of Calaveras and the Sierra Nevada Alliance. The survey was developed by MACR core group members with assistance from ADE. It included questions on community attitudes, employment, job training needs, shopping preferences, demographics, and business operations, and was funded by a Community Services Block Grant to the County and the Alliance's W. Alton Jones Foundation project grant.

A cash drawing held in conjunction with the survey served as advance publicity and to provided additional incentives for recipients to complete and return the survey. Prizes of \$150, \$100, and \$50 were given to the lucky winners, whose survey return envelopes were drawn by ADE. The survey return rate was nearly 15 percent.

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*"This process was something new — a chance to take control or our destiny, see what we had in common, and see where that would take us."*

—Steve Wilensky,  
Glencoe

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The survey was completed in November and the results were compiled and posted on ADE's Web site ([www.adeusa.com](http://www.adeusa.com)) in December 1999 (see results beginning on [page 23](#)). The results will help the community in selecting future projects and serve as a detailed basis for future community planning and grant applications. Few rural communities in California have such detailed information available for planning purposes. County departments, county service agencies, and local entrepreneurs are already using the survey data in strategic and project planning.

### Projects selected and new organization formed

The series of community workshops led local residents to select four projects — a community switchboard/network, assisting the local youth center in becoming a self-sustaining entity with a skate park, community learning centers in West Point and Rail Road Flat, and downtown beautification in both towns. Selecting initial projects was a real challenge, as there were many creative ideas put forward (see list [page 16](#)). Volunteer committees developed project action plans at the final process workshop and the projects are moving ahead. The community learning centers began operating in late 1999, the downtown beautification has held two cleanup days, and the switchboard is conducting outreach and gearing for startup.

All the projects share one substantial theme that is key to local economic and social health and building community capacity and social capital — building connections among local residents. This rural area is sparsely inhabited and residents often do not know what is going on in their own community, much less the one down the road and over the next fork of the Mokelumne. The selected projects have begun to bring people together in ways that have not previously existed, and should help lay the foundation for the long-term stability the area badly needs. It is apparent that area residents recognize the need to build local social capital before embarking on larger economic development efforts (see survey results, [page 23](#)). In addition, the community has established a permanent organization, the Mokelumne Alliance for Community Renewal Council, to help ensure these projects are carried out and to coordinate efforts for future projects. This is the first organization of its kind in the area and involves residents of all four communities.

### New community skills

Those who worked in the core group and attended the workshops learned new skills that should serve them and their community well. People who had never spoken in public or run a group meeting gained new experience and confidence. Individuals who had never participated in local community affairs are now dedicated to community service. And the community as a whole has seen that it has new leaders who are willing to work for months on a volunteer project that benefits everyone. We believe that their dedication has helped restore a sense of optimism in the community.

As the final phase of sponsor group involvement in the project, the Foothill Conservancy will provide planning support and training for the projects and community organizations. This spring, consultant [Rick Breeze-Martin](#) will conduct workshops in strategic planning, fundraising, and other aspects of organizational development to help community members build a stronger foundation for lasting success.

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*“The Community Learning Center has created new leadership opportunities for adults and young people. Local residents design classes, create publicity campaigns, teach classes, do strategic planning, create outreach programs, and develop organizational skills.”*  
— Judy Spadoni, CLC coordinator

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## Early spinoffs

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*“Things are finally changing in our community. We have new momentum and new ideas. It’s exciting!”*  
— West Point resident

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There are already positive spinoffs from the project. One group is organizing a community garden in downtown West Point. Others are working together to take over a community park in Rail Road Flat to ensure its continued operation. A group that organized a nonprofit community park corporation has handed over the entity to the MACR organization. A local landowner is planning to build new commercial buildings, including a grocery store he will personally operate, in West Point — the first time any such activity has been planned in years. A new shop, Sage, has opened in West Point to sell health products to local residents. The Blue Mountain Coalition for Youth and the West Point Rod and Gun Club are discussing Mokelumne River watershed restoration efforts and helping form a broad-based Mokelumne watershed restoration council, with the Conservancy and Alliance providing resources and support. The media has acknowledged the work of the group and the idea that small solutions may in fact be rural Calaveras County’s best hope for the future (see editorial, [page 21](#)). Local residents plan to become involved in the county’s economic development corporation, which currently has no representative from the four communities. Other spinoffs should be apparent in the coming months and years.

## Benefits to environmental group sponsors

The project was also a success for the environmental community, which is often viewed as insensitive to the needs of people. The active involvement of the Conservancy and Alliance, along with the funding and guidance the groups provided, helped overcome some of the misconceptions lingering among some residents of this formerly timber-dependent area. We believe that seeing two environmental groups put thousands of dollars — and a great deal of time — into community building, with faith that community-based decisions would be good for the environment, made a positive impression on local residents. The personal involvement of group representatives was a key component of building greater trust throughout the process.

The community project was a great learning experience for all involved, including the sponsor group participants. The relationship-building that occurred during the project and the groundwork laid should have positive effects in the communities of Calaveras County’s Upper Mokelumne region for years to come.

## Spreading the word

Two members of the MACR core group, union organizer/farmer Steve Wilensky and youth center director Alan Willard, and Conservancy/Alliance president Katherine Evatt, participated in a structured panel discussion at the Sierra Nevada Alliance conference in August 1999, sharing their experiences with nearly 100 environmental activists from throughout the Sierra and beyond. Michael Kinsley opened the conference as its keynote speaker. This report will be distributed to all Alliance member groups, the press, community members, and local governments to help others who might be considering undertaking a similar effort.

## Successes and challenges

### SUCCESSSES

#### Funding from foundations and state grant

Many of the things that went well with the project and that are detailed below — involving Rocky Mountain Institute, using paid facilitators, printing advertisements, and the community survey — as well as the printing of this report, were made possible by grants from the [W. Alton Jones Foundation](#) and a state Community Services Block Grant to the County of Calaveras (for the survey). The sponsor organizations started the process with about \$29,000 in combined grant funds. The county's contribution of the block grant to the project leveraged an additional \$7,500 in matching funds from the foundation, which helped us market the survey in advance and make it more thorough, as well as to conduct additional training for local residents. Grant monies also made it much easier to pay for hall rental, photocopies, photographs, and the myriad other project expenses that add up over time. While this project could be duplicated on a smaller budget, doing so would require more donations of time, materials, and in-kind services.

#### Small advance planning meetings

The project sponsors and local residents carefully selected participants for the first exploratory meeting in West Point, making sure to invite community leaders with good connections in the four communities, including local supervisor Paul Stein. They, in turn, developed a list of potential participants, by interest, which served as a touchstone and reference throughout the process (see list, [page 18](#)). The second planning meeting built on that list and led to the formation of a strong and talented core group.

#### Dedicated and talented core group

The members of the MACR core group had diverse and complementary skills that served them and the process well (see member list, [page 17](#)). The group included extremely articulate speakers, wonderfully talented artists and craftspeople, perceptive and strong facilitators, energetic and caring generalists, excellent organizers, good writers, and good listeners. All were sincerely dedicated to helping the community — and all were already quite busy. Core group members were willing to devote a great deal of their personal time to this process and to stick with it even when things weren't going exactly as expected. They supported each other and created an open, positive environment for their group meetings and the workshops. Some of those who attended the first small exploratory meeting in February continue to be involved in the permanent organization and projects.

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*"I was reenergized by the quality of the people in this community."*  
— MACR core group member

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#### Involving Rocky Mountain Institute

Michael Kinsley's two-day workshop and public presentation in April 1999 got the project off to a strong start. The workshop gave the core group the confidence to move forward with the project as well as solid new skills and knowledge. It also served as a real team-building experience. Kinsley's e-mails of support and his return



visit in August gave the group needed boosts when they were questioning their effectiveness or simply growing tired with the long process. His advice and support were also very useful to the project sponsors, neither of which had previously been involved in this type of project.

### **Help from professional facilitators**

The involvement of paid facilitators was most helpful, especially early in the process. It helped free the sponsor group representatives from running the early meetings and allowed them to participate more fully. In addition, the facilitators' skills helped smooth over rough spots in the community workshops and core group meetings. The facilitators also passed on facilitation and organization skills to the core group members and gave valuable advice to the sponsor organizations. Having facilitator Diane Bush help organize most of the public workshops and coach the core group members who ran the workshops was especially important since we did not have a single paid project coordinator (see "Lack of coordinator," [page 10](#)). Skills learned from the facilitators should be valuable to the core group members in future community work.

### **Using an established process**

The RMI Economic Renewal process is a very sound one that builds in a logical, step-by-step way to project selection. Being able to work collaboratively without having to develop our own process was most helpful, especially considering time constraints on the project and participants' natural tendency to burn out. In addition, using a process known to be successful in other communities helped persuade locals that this project was worthwhile. There is no doubt that using an established structure saved a great deal of time, and the core group was able to modify the process to suit community needs. It also allowed the group to stay on track when town hall meeting participants wanted to jump to the end point — project selection — right away. Some core group members were concerned that the process was too long, but others commented that they could not see how it could be any shorter and still yield the same results. As previously mentioned, the team-building aspects of the RMI workshop were very helpful to the group and to the project.

### **Support from local government**

The support of local county supervisor Paul Stein helped immeasurably. Stein is well-respected by many of his constituents and his endorsement of the project early on helped give it credibility. His dedication of the CSBG grant for the cooperative survey was also very helpful and leveraged additional project funds, as previously noted. Jeannie Boyce of the Calaveras County administrative staff played a key role in organizing the community and business survey and in working with the survey contractor.

### **Community support/lack of overt controversy**

In a community where people have been very outspoken in opposition to most projects, this one was remarkably free of overt opposition. While the core group members were concerned at times that some forces in the community would work against the project, that did not occur. Some community members attended nearly every town hall meeting. Workshop attendees actively and enthusiastically participated in the various phases of the project.

### **Supportive press coverage**

The *West Point News*, a local monthly paper, helped publicize the meetings and its editor participated as a member of the core group. The coverage in the paper enabled news of the project to reach many locals who might not otherwise have heard of it. Positive publicity was also received in the *Calaveras Enterprise* and *Stockton Record*. The *Amador Ledger-Dispatch* and *Calaveras Ledger-Dispatch* ran some of the longer project press releases in full (see sample text [page 20](#)), spreading educational information on sustainable economic development to the general public. The Conservancy's long working relationship with local and regional media and knowledge of media relations helped the core group.

### **Project identity: name, slogan, logo, graphics**

The core group selected the name Mokelumne Alliance for Community Renewal and the slogan, "Building Our Communities' Future Together." Core group member Connie Strawbridge, a graphic artist who is co-owner of local advertising firm Good Communications, designed a logo and most of the meeting promotion posters used for the town hall meetings, as well as a full-page ad for the *West Point News* (see poster samples [page 21](#)). The name, slogan, logo, and quality graphics enhanced the positive image of the group and process and gave it polish and focus.

### **Illustrating the process in visual terms: the banner**

Early in the process, core group members created a long canvas banner illustrating the process as a winding road ending with project selection. The banner was hung on the wall for each community workshop. This illustration helped workshop participants, many of whom were not especially familiar with processes of this type, understand that each workshop was a waystation along a journey rather than an end in itself. It also helped participants who came to the effort midway through the process to understand which steps had already been taken, and kept people on track.

### **Providing examples of previous community collaboration**

Early on, the group decided that it needed to reach back into the community's history to show how people had historically worked together to benefit the greater community. Many examples of cooperation and collaboration were brought forward and pointed out in early town hall meetings. This helped dispel some of the skepticism about this cooperative project.

### **Appreciation of broad viewpoints**

This project emphasized the need to involve diverse community interests in any community development project. Core group members and other participants learned to better appreciate the richness and strength that comes from broad representation and gained an understanding that community members' core values were very similar. We think this understanding will serve the area well when future conflicts arise and help ensure that future projects involve diverse interests.

### Leveraging other efforts and resources

This project effectively leveraged other efforts underway and continues to build upon them. Supervisor Paul Stein had already planned a community survey, as previously noted, which fit nicely with the project's needs. The MACR group was able to use information from a county Healthy Start grant survey, and the latest Healthy Start grant in turn uses data from the project survey. The community learning centers have built a community-driven partnership with the local schools, county agencies, and social service agencies and groups.

### Help from the sponsor groups

In addition to providing funding for the project, getting it off the ground, and providing facilitators, project sponsor groups Foothill Conservancy and Sierra Nevada Alliance handled all project accounting, helped coordinate and write the community survey, wrote some of the press releases, developed a sample meeting announcement phone script, helped with core group and public meetings, arranged for Michael Kinsley's April training and a return visit to the core group in August, and provided liability insurance for meeting facilities.

## CHALLENGES

### Outreach efforts

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*"I enjoyed the cross-section of the communities that the process attracted and I feel that adds to its strength."*

— MACR Core Group member

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The RMI Economic Renewal process, and the sponsor groups, emphasized outreach to all interest groups as essential to this project. Outreach efforts met with mixed results. Members of nearly all interest groups participated at some point, but we did not have consistent, active participation from the Native American MiWuk Indian community in West Point or from young people. Some of the community leaders and business owners who attended early workshops did not participate later, and they were not especially helpful in promoting the process. The core group seemed to make a strong personal outreach effort early in the process but later tended to rely too much on posters and media instead of concerted personal efforts. The question of how best to engage the MiWuk community was not resolved by the group and remains a challenge for the ongoing efforts.

### Workshop numbers

Participants in the workshops were supportive and enthusiastic but not always numerous. Whether this was due to weather (most of the meetings were in the heat of the California foothill summer), family and work obligations, or other reasons is unknown. Many residents of the area move there — or stay there — to live quiet, private lives and avoid community involvement, which may have been a strong contributing factor. There is also a group of newer, younger, urban retirees and commuters in the community that generally doesn't get involved in community efforts — and for the most part they avoided this process, too. The core group may also have erred in deciding to conduct most of the workshops on Sunday afternoons. Later in the process they held some weeknight workshops and found that attendance improved.

### **Community based on isolation**

This process might work better in a bigger town where more people actually live in the town rather than out in the country, and where there are stronger social and governmental institutions. People move to towns to be close to activities and people. In the upper Mokelumne region, people are generally disconnected from institutions and often have little social interaction (with a few exceptions, including churches, veterans organizations, and the Boy Scout troop). They live in a remote setting with dispersed residences by choice.

### **Timing driven by funding**

The timing of the project was driven by the need to spend the W. Alton Jones Foundation and CSBG grants in 1999. Had this not been a factor, the core group might have chosen to do most of the workshops in the fall and winter rather than over the spring and summer, which could have increased community participation. Summer and school intersession vacations affected core group involvement and community participation. In addition, given more time to carry out the process, it would have been better to conduct the survey in advance of the public meetings rather than putting it together concurrently and distributing it at the end of the process.

### **Lack of local project coordinator**

Project coordination tasks were split among members of the core group, nearly all of whom work full-time, Conservancy president Katherine Evatt, (also employed full-time), who lives nearby in Amador County, and facilitator Diane Bush, who lives in the Lake Tahoe area. The core group opposed the idea of spending money on a coordinator, believing that the group members could carry out coordination tasks. Since the sponsors tried to leave as many decisions as possible up to the group, they did not insist that a coordinator be hired. However, the project probably would have run more smoothly if a project coordinator had been engaged, on at least a part-time basis.

### **Shared leadership**

The core group members chose to share responsibilities for chairing planning meetings. In a follow-up survey, some of the members regretted this decision, while others thought it had worked relatively well. The uneven skill levels of the group members was a challenge — some had extensive experience in organizing and running meetings while others did not (see next section).

### **Need to develop meeting management skills**

The sponsors found that many of the core group members did not have basic skills needed to organize or run small group or community meetings. Time was spent helping members learn basic skills such as assembling an agenda and running a meeting. However, because of this, local residents who had never run meetings before learned new skills and can now share them in future projects.

### **Core group members were human**

The individuals who volunteered for the core group were already busy when they agreed to participate in this process. Some were better than others at realistically

defining their existing time constraints. As in all groups, some core group members failed to honor commitments, others dropped out for personal reasons, some burned out, and some left when they could not dominate the group or resolve a disagreement. All of this seemed normal, however, and given the amount of time required to complete the process, attrition was relatively low. As previously noted, some of those who attended the first small exploratory meeting in February are still involved in the MACR Council and projects.

### Finding a facilitator

It took us some time to find suitable, affordable facilitation for the project. Our original facilitator of choice, Rae Levine of Inverness, decided after the first meeting that West Point was just too far away for her to be able to participate. We tried another group of facilitators from Sacramento and did not find them a good fit. We searched further and were very fortunate to engage Diane Bush of Creative Connections, in Zephyr Cove, Nevada, whose skills and style worked well for the group. The shifting of facilitators at the beginning of the project was problematic for the sponsor organizations and doubtless created some confusion for the participants.

### Fear of change

Local residents appreciate the positive aspects of their rural communities and fear negative change (although the vast majority recognize that some change is needed — see “Household survey summary,” [page 23](#)). Much to the surprise of sponsor group Foothill Conservancy, which in Amador County has been misrepresented as a “no-growth group” because of its growth management advocacy there, some residents of the area did not want to participate because they thought the project was intended to promote increased population and housing development in the area! We also found that a few participating second-home owners were very concerned that the project would somehow change the rural attributes of the area they most appreciate. It was a challenge to educate these residents about the goals of the project and the economic needs of the community. “Taking charge of change,” became an effective project slogan to help counteract the fear of negative change.

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*“We want to help make the downtown feel and look nice so that people will want to be there.”*

—Harriet Coyne,  
downtown  
beautification group

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### Working in four communities

This project was made more complex by the fact that the project area encompassed four related but distinct small communities. It required a number of decisions and much discussion that would not be required in one community, ranging from where to hold meetings to how to get people from the different communities involved.

### Facilities

The quality of meeting facilities in the communities varied widely, and poor acoustics were a problem in the West Point Town Hall. Many of the meetings require large amounts of wall space, which was not readily available in each site. The community hall in Rail Road Flat was an excellent facility with two large, adjoining rooms and good acoustics, but we found that residents of West Point were unlikely to attend meetings held there.

## Some stories behind the process

### Questions about the sponsors' motives

In this former timber area, quite a few people were suspicious of the motives of the two sponsoring environmental groups. The sponsors were quite forthright in their discussions of what they would get from the project, what they wanted from it, and who they were, which helped allay some of the concern. The issue came up in a very specific way on the second day of the RMI training workshop. Two participants had been discussing the project with other community members who thought that the sponsors would control the outcome.

The training group discussion boiled down to one issue: forests. Would the groups veto a project if it involved logging activity? The answer: "No, we will live with the outcome of the process because we have faith in the community." While some fears no doubt remained in the broader community, this expression of confidence seemed to satisfy those who had been defending the process and helped them stay involved. And the sponsors kept their word and did not influence project selection.

### Dealing with "difficult" people

At various times, the core group discussed what to do about residents with a history of disrupting meetings and focusing on conflict. At the very first "vision" workshop, one individual, who arrived mid-way through the meeting, attempted to take charge of one of the breakout groups and change the agenda. The local core group facilitator strongly but respectfully informed him that his comments were not pertinent and let him know what was being discussed. After a few minutes, he backed down. While he did not participate in future meetings, he also did not cause further problems for the group or attempt to disrupt other meetings.

At a couple of workshops, residents loudly avowed that they had the "solution" for strengthening the local economy and therefore could save everyone the trouble of a long process. The core group facilitators did an excellent job of treating those individuals respectfully while maintaining control of the meeting and returning participants to the agenda. All project ideas were noted and considered.

### "The park"

The failed West Point park effort came up often in the process, beginning in the early planning meetings. The park experience had been very divisive and bitter. While people wanted to put it behind them, it was a clear and present example of the community's inability to positively resolve conflict and the dangers of forging ahead on a project without developing the idea in a broad-based group. The leader of the pro-park group attended Michael Kinsley's public presentation in West Point but did not come to later community meetings. Late in the process, however, he handed over to the core group the by-laws and articles of incorporation for his nonprofit recreation organization, saying that he thought the group might be able to put the entity to good work. Doing so was a public acknowledgment of the potential for positive change brought about by the process.

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## Major meetings

*Note:* The MACR core group met between each of the town hall meetings to plan the meeting, publicity, discuss how the process was working, and assign meeting tasks. Initially, the group met twice between meetings, but soon they worked more efficiently and only met once between town hall meetings. The core group meetings are not listed here.

February 5	Facilitated exploratory meeting, West Point. Met with a small group of local residents to discuss possible project, measure interest in project, list community interests that should be involved.
March 6	Larger exploratory meeting, West Point. Invited people listed at February 6 meeting, discussed collaboration, sustainable economic development, the RMI process, called for volunteers for core group.
March 13	First core group coordinating meeting, West Point
March 25	Core group team-building workshop, using RMI format.
April 9 and 10	RMI ER Process training with Michael Kinsley, Camp Lodestar, Wilseyville, and Veterans Hall, West Point. Core group members spent two days in intensive workshops learning basic principles of sustainable economic development as well as how to conduct each phase of the ER process.
April 11	Introductory town hall meeting with RMI's Michael Kinsley, West Point Town Hall. Discussed sustainable economic development, the ER process, how it has worked in other towns, introduced core group members.
May 23	<i>Building a Community Vision</i> , West Point Town Hall.
June 13	<i>Identifying Community Assets</i> , West Point Town Hall
July 11	<i>Discovering New Opportunities</i> , Rail Road Flat Community Hall
August 1	<i>Generating Project Ideas</i> , West Point Town Hall
August 22	<i>Evaluating Project Ideas</i> , West Point Town Hall
September 15	<i>Selecting Projects</i> , West Point Town Hall
September 19	<i>Selecting Projects</i> , Rail Road Flat Town Hall (same format as September 15)
November 10	<i>Developing Project Action Plans</i> , West Point Town Hall



## Community vision statement

### Mokelumne Alliance for Community Renewal, Community Vision Statement

*Developed from community workshop held in May 1999.*

Our vision is to work cooperatively to improve our communities. Our needs for employment, education, recreation, and basic services must be met in light of the things we value, those things that brought and keep us here. In our decisions we want to demonstrate our respect for people of all ages; children, youth, adults and older adults.

We want to

- Improve our ability to provide for our families economically by developing existing businesses and creating new business where needed. In keeping with the rural nature of our area we seek to encourage a variety of small businesses that meet the needs of the residents. We want to emphasize sustainable community renewal for long-term prosperity.
- Develop attractive, thriving town centers with a variety of businesses and services. Reliable transit to town centers, as well as safe access for pedestrians and non- motorized modes of travel are desirable.
- Assure the health of our residents through access to health care.
- Strengthen the sense of a unified community that increases the well being, safety, and security of our residents.
- Enhance our ability to grow through a variety of educational opportunities.
- Present a strong unified voice in communicating with the county government. We seek governmental recognition of the development needs of our businesses and assistance with obtaining variances in regulations.
- Encourage an active cultural environment that includes art, music, and theater that enriches the lives of area residents.
- Provide residents with the opportunity to utilize their skills and talents through employment, volunteerism and mentoring or apprentice programs.
- Promote celebration of/appreciation of our local history: gold, timber, Indian, and ethnic diversity of the area. We seek to preserve our historical buildings and sites.
- Support good air quality and watershed management; clean, free-flowing rivers, healthy forests, clean air, and preservation of wild areas.
- Develop recreational areas for all residents with opportunities for family recreation and safe areas for children's and youth activities.

## Project ideas

\* Selected for initial project development

*Note: Projects not selected for initial development have been archived and will be revisited as initial projects are completed.*

### Community Services

Legal services for the elderly	Kaiser/VA health clinic
Community calendar committee	Sustainable youth center *
Senior/youth mentoring	Dial-a-ride
Assisted living facility	Community learning centers*
Resident sheriff	Test fire hydrants and wash streets
Enrichment classes	Community college extension classes
Expand literacy	Community plan
Oral history project	Community switchboard*
Create local foundation	Activate local fire siren
Online community	Child care
Forum for interaction with MiWuk community	
Support MiWuk health center	

### Business projects

Bakery	Think tank
Walnut business	Directory
Install ATM downtown	Farmers' market
Wood pellet manufacturing plant	Botanical water treatment plant
Plan for corner lot in West Point	Farm trail
Art trail	Centralized firewood sales
Bed and breakfast inn	Retreat center
Coffee house/bookstore	Cooperative winery
Low-flush toilet project	Business mentoring
Artisan coop	Car rental coop
Business incubator	Business support center
Local scrip	Local natural products
Energy independence project	List of workers for cottage industries

### Culture, entertainment, recreation

Fish planting	Music festivals
Skate park*	Skate/bike/walking paths
Golf course at former mill site	Site improvements at swimming holes
Performance stage in town hall	Outdoor performance area
Equestrian park	Expanded library
Pave road to Shadd's resort	

### Downtown improvement

Downtown facelift*	Restore historical building facades
Flowers and benches	Sidewalks for RR Flat
Public toilet	Trees

## Mokelumne Alliance for Community Renewal Core Group

Hans Atman, *craftsman*, Rail Road Flat

Harriet Coyne, *investor and gardener, former restaurant owner,\** West Point

James Coyne, *investor, county planning commissioner, former restaurant owner,\**  
West Point

Katherine Evatt, *public sector editor, writer, former president, Sierra Nevada Alliance;*  
*current president, Foothill Conservancy,\** Volcano

Maryann Gravitt, *fix-it person and artist,\** West Point

Susan McMorris, *wellness consultant, former teacher and psychologist,* West Point

Sunny Merik, *writer and editor,\** Wilseyville

Chris Niebur, *handyman and musician,\** West Point

Kay Rousseau, *nurse practitioner and artist,\** West Point

Brian Smith, *self-employed logger and farmer,\** West Point

Suzanne Smith, *artist and project leader, Calaveras Teen Challenge Program,\**  
West Point

Vicki Snead-Hinckle, *Realtor and local actor,\** West Point

Judy Spadoni, *Healthy Start program coordinator,\** Rail Road Flat

Michael Spadoni, PE, *quality assurance consultant, artist, writer,\** Rail Road Flat

Bryce Stein, *county drug and alcohol counselor,\** West Point

Connie Strawbridge, *co-owner Good Communications, advertising and publishing,*  
*graphic artist,\** West Point

Steve Wilensky, *SEIU union organizer and organic farmer,\** Glencoe

Van Wilhite, *self-employed machinist,\** West Point

Alan Willard, *Director, Blue Mountain Youth Coalition youth center, former timber mill*  
*and construction worker,\** West Point

\*attended one or both days of RMI workshop

*Other attendees, core group meetings*

Gloria Grimes, *Tribal Chairwoman, West Point Rancheria*

Margaret McLeod, M.D., *physician, Glencoe*

Bob Brabon, *contractor, Glencoe*

Mike Bowsher, *Black Diamond Graphics, West Point*

Jim Strauch, *retiree, West Point*

Note: List includes community members who were part of the core group at any time during the process. Apologies to anyone we have inadvertently omitted.

## Community interests identified in February 1999

Native American Community  
AARP  
Area 12 Seniors  
Loggers  
Labor  
Unemployed  
Agriculture  
Construction Workers  
Telecommuters  
Cottage Industries  
Bar Owners  
Religious Leaders  
Business People  
Realtors/Construction Contractors  
School  
VFW  
American Legion  
CDF/Fire Dist./Medical\*  
Lions  
Sierra Pacific Industries  
Oddfellows  
Boosters Club  
Blue Mountain Coalition for Youth  
Miners  
Arts  
Youth

## Project support

### Funders and in-kind donors

W. Alton Jones Foundation, Charlottesville, Virginia, *grants to Sierra Nevada Alliance and Foothill Conservancy*

County of Calaveras, *survey funds*

Rainbow Cottage, Paul and Bryce Stein, West Point, *lodging for Michael Kinsley*

Cummiskey Canvas, West Point, *canvas for project map banner*

Sandy Gulch Sign Company, West Point, *paint for project map banner*

Good Communication, West Point, *posters, photographs, logo design, advertisements, photocopies*

Camp Lodestar, United Methodist Church, Wilseyville, *facility rental*

West Point Community Covenant Church, *meeting facility*

West Point Lions Club, West Point Town Hall, *meeting facility*

Rail Road Flat Community Hall Committee, *meeting facility*

West Point Veterans' Memorial Hall, *meeting facility*

West Point News, *publicity, advertising*

Service Employees International Union, Local 790, Stockton, *photocopies*

Blue Mountain Youth Center, West Point, *meeting facility*

Country Women Newsletter, West Point, *flip chart stands and banner materials*

MichaelJack Consulting, Rail Road Flat, *photocopies*

Breeze-Martin Consulting, Sonora, *project consulting services*

### Sponsors

Sierra Nevada Alliance, South Lake Tahoe, CA

Foothill Conservancy, Pine Grove, CA

### Local government

County supervisor Paul Stein, West Point

Jeanne Boyce, Director, Calaveras County Health Services Agency

### Facilitators

Diane Bush, Creative Connection, Zephyr Cove, NV

Rae Levine, Inverness, CA

EJL Associates, Sacramento, CA

### Training, advice, and support

Michael Kinsley, Rocky Mountain Institute, Snowmass, CO

Rick Breeze-Martin, Breeze-Martin Consulting, Sonora, CA

### Community and business survey

Applied Development Economics, Berkeley, CA

## Sample press release text

No one knows the West Point—Rail Road Flat —Glencoe—Wilseyville area like the people who live there. That’s the idea behind a community workshop to be held on Sunday, June 13, at the Rail Road Flat Community Hall, beginning at 2 pm. Everyone who lives in the area — from students to retirees — is invited to share their knowledge and ideas at the workshop, which will identify the upper Highway 26 area’s community assets, problems, and needs. The event is step two of a community renewal project intended to build a stronger local economy and community.

“Too often the decisions that affect our communities are made by people who don’t know our area like we do, or people with a narrow interest,” said Judy Spadoni, one of the local citizens who will facilitate Sunday’s workshop as part of the Mokelumne Alliance for Community Renewal. “But no one knows these places better than the people who live here — they are the real experts. When you’re trying to figure out what an area has or what it needs, local people are the ones who know best.”

The Community Renewal project now underway in the upper Highway 26 communities uses a series of public workshops to move from broad discussion of the area and its needs to generating ideas for specific economic and community projects. Participating local residents will analyze project ideas and later decide which ones the communities want to pursue.

Following a process developed by the Rocky Mountain Institute (RMI), the project is focusing on sustainable, small-scale economic development that is consistent with community values and priorities. Four basic economic principles guiding the process are described in RMI’s *Economic Renewal Guide*:

- **Plug the leaks.** Like heat from an uninsulated home, dollars leak from an inefficient community. Plugging unnecessary leaks puts money back into the local economy just as surely as if it had been earned through new industry—but it avoids many growth-related problems and costs.
- **Support existing businesses.** Too many communities woo outside businesses while overlooking the wealth-creating power of their own entrepreneurs. Locally owned businesses tend to be more responsive to local needs and values, and more likely to stand by the community through thick and thin. Supporting them also keeps more dollars circulating in the local economy.
- **Encourage new local enterprise.** As with existing businesses, new businesses will contribute far more to the local economy if they’re locally owned. A town that’s plugging leaks and supporting existing businesses is an exciting place to start a new one.
- **Recruit compatible new businesses.** “Smokestack—chasing”—the indiscriminate courting of outside corporations—is a risky, high-stakes game that has left many a small town in the lurch. However, having pursued the previous three steps, a community will be in a stronger position to recruit new businesses that are compatible with its values and needs.”

Small communities around the country and in Canada have used the RMI process to develop projects from small business coalitions to farmers’ markets to energy conservation efforts. The local Community Renewal project is funded by grants from the W. Alton Jones Foundation to sponsor organizations Foothill Conservancy, a local conservation organization, and the Sierra Nevada Alliance, a regional coalition.

“This project belongs to everyone. If people participate and make it a success, we’ll all benefit in the long run.” said Spadoni. “Sunday’s workshop should be fun and productive.”

For more information about the Calaveras community renewal process, contact Judy Spadoni at 209-293-7160. end

## Sample meeting posters

Attention Residents Of West Point, Wilseyville, Rail Road Flat & Glencoe!

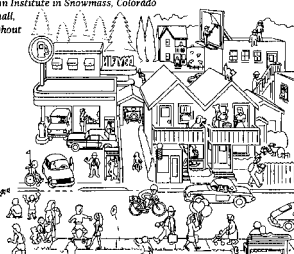
**Help To Determine The  
Future Of Your Community —  
Come To A  
Town Meeting  
On Economic Renewal**

**Date:** Sunday, April 11, 1999  
**Time:** 2:00 P.M. **Place:** West Point Hall

**With Guest Speaker: Michael J. Kinsley**


Come hear Michael Kinsley, Director of the Economic Renewal Program of The Rocky Mountain Institute in Snowmass, Colorado describe how people in small, rural communities throughout the country are building strong, sustainable local economies. Learn what economic renewal can do for our area and how you can be involved!

Kinsley is the author of "The Economic Renewal Guide", an innovative resource that emphasizes the use of collaboration and consensus to determine the needs and desires of the people. A project has already been launched in the West Point area.



Website For The Rocky Mountain Institute: <http://www.rmi.org>  
Sponsored By The Sierra Nevada Alliance & The Foothill Conservancy • Funded By W. Alton Jones Foundation

Attention, Residents Of Rail Road Flat, Glencoe,  
**WEST POINT & WILSEYVILLE!**  
You Are Invited To A  
**Town Workshop**  
Presented By The  
Mokelumne Alliance For Community Renewal



"Building Our Future Together"  
The Focus Will Be On  
**Creating A Community Vision**

Come participate in exercises to develop a community vision. We need your response to these three questions:  
What do I love about my community?  
What would I like to change about my community?  
When the above things have changed, what will my community be like?

**Date:** Sunday, May 23, 1999 **Time:** 2:00 P.M.  
**Place:** West Point Community Hall

This meeting is the second in a series of six meetings to help residents of Rail Road Flat, Wilseyville, Glencoe and West Point determine projects which would begin the process of community renewal. Meetings will be held in all of the communities mentioned above. On June 13, we will meet in Rail Road Flat.  
Sponsored By The Sierra Nevada Alliance & The Foothill Conservancy • Funded By The W. Alton Jones Foundation. For information Call Joy Spahr at 955-7168

## Sample press coverage

### West Point on right track, *Calaveras Enterprise*, April 13, 1999 —reprinted with permission

Fast-growing Calaveras County may find a key to its economic future in rough-hewn West Point.

The communities along upper Highway 26 have launched an economic renewal effort that turns conventional wisdom on its head.

And the rest of the county ought to whirl round for a look.

Rather than ask what kind of deal a community can cut a big developer to bring in a new shopping center or a business park, people in the West Point area will be asking what they value most about where they live.

Rather than going to meetings and arguing with officials trying to sell their ideas, West Point folks will be going to meetings to find out about each other's ideas.

The idea is pretty simple: if people can agree on what they most cherish about their community, they ought to choose realistic projects that realize those values.

The economic renewal process is really about building a better community by learning how to get along.

The model comes straight out of the "Small is Beautiful" school and is meant to help little places keep going rather than bloating.

But Calaveras County is less a great big place than a loose federation of little places tucked in a wedge of Sierra

sliced by two rivers.

The county could become a big place if all those little towns add enough shopping centers and plow enough subdivisions so separate places start blending together.

That's not likely anytime soon, even under the rosiest growth scenario.

What's more likely to happen is a shopping center will pop up here, a subdivision there, and later on people will wonder what happened and fume that no one ever consulted them.

Calaveras as a whole could stay a special place if every one of its little communities regularly got together and democratically discussed what it wanted to become, rather than waiting for outside, anonymous forces to do it for them.

Of course, no one says the process of agreeing on things as a community is easy. And certainly no one is pretending that the county can completely wall itself off from regional and global economies.

But there's a middle ground in there somewhere, a place where neighbors —oldtimers and newcomers —can share ideas about how they want their community to look and feel.

Right now, it happens to be West Point.

## Economic Renewal basics

### FOUR PRINCIPLES OF ECONOMIC RENEWAL

- Plug the leaks.
- Support existing businesses.
- Encourage new local enterprise.
- Recruit compatible new business.

### NINE TOOLS OF ECONOMIC RENEWAL

1. Ask why
2. Manage demand
3. Pursue development, not necessarily expansion
4. Seek small solutions
5. Find problem-solvers who care
6. Increase the “multiplier effect”
7. Find hidden local skills and assets
8. Build social capital
9. Organize regionally

### SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- Use renewable resources such as timber, water, and quality of life no faster than they can be renewed
- Use nonrenewable resources understanding that someday a renewable solution will be required
- Seek ways to strengthen the economy without increasing “throughput”
- Focus more on getting better, less on getting bigger
- Seek development that increases diversity and self-reliance
- Put waste to work
- Regard quality of life as an economic asset
- Consider effects of today’s decisions on future generations
- Consider the off-site effects of decisions
- Consider the cumulative effects of a series of decisions
- Measure whether actions actually do what they’re intended to do

— *from Economic Renewal Guide, Rocky Mountain Institute* —



## Household survey summary

Source: Applied Development Economics Economic Renewal Survey Results, December 1999

### PERCEPTIONS OF LOCAL AREA ECONOMY

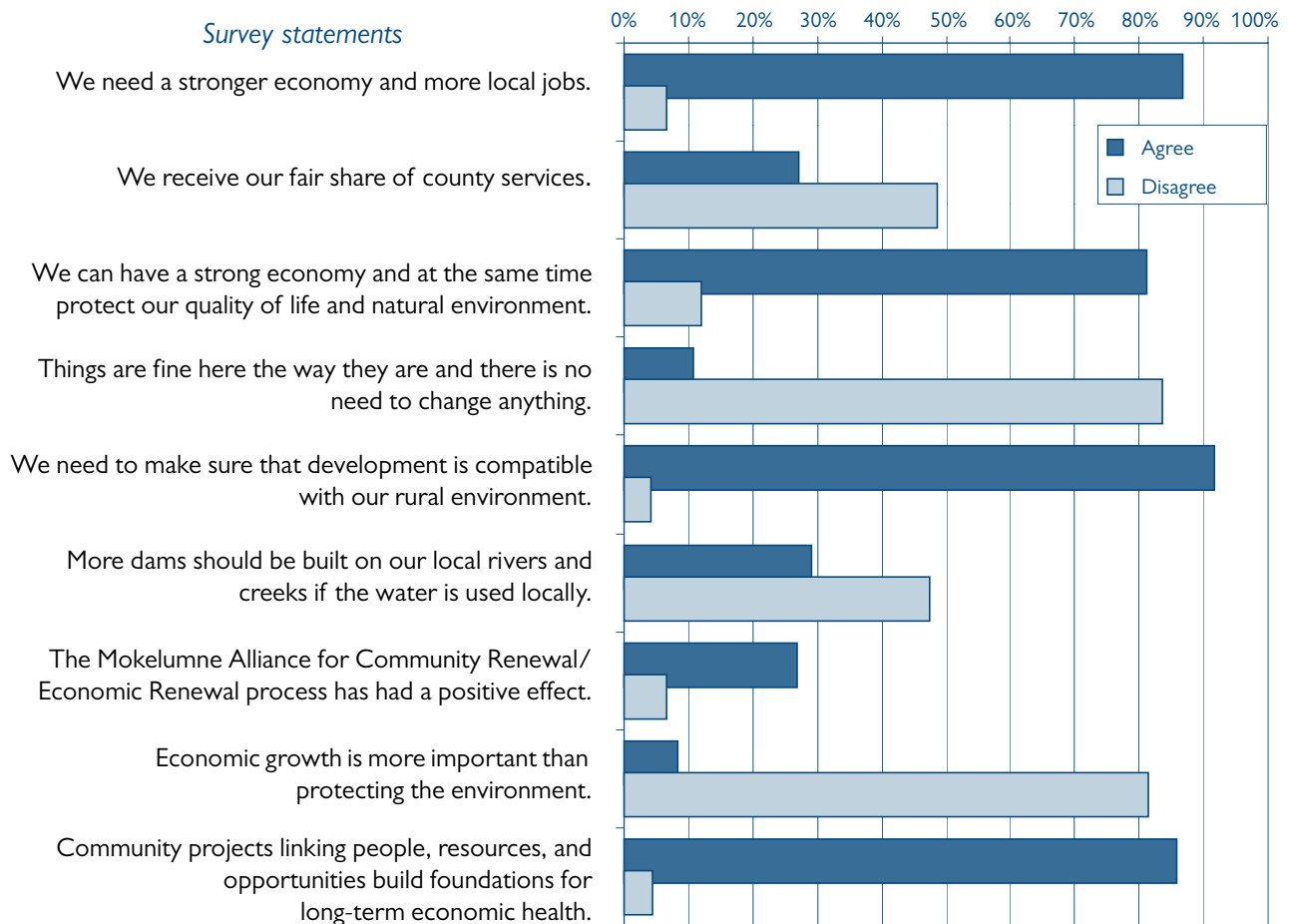
The depth of feeling about these issues appears very strong. It is extraordinary to have more than 80% agreement on any statement of this kind.

The majority of residents *agreed* strongly with the following statements:

- We need to make sure that development is compatible with our rural environment.
- We need a stronger economy and more local jobs.
- Community projects linking people, resources, and opportunities build foundations for long-term economic health.
- We can have a strong economy and at the same time protect our quality of life and natural environment.

The majority of residents *disagreed* strongly with the following statements:

- Economic growth is more important than protecting the environment.
- Things are fine here the way they are and there is no need to change anything.



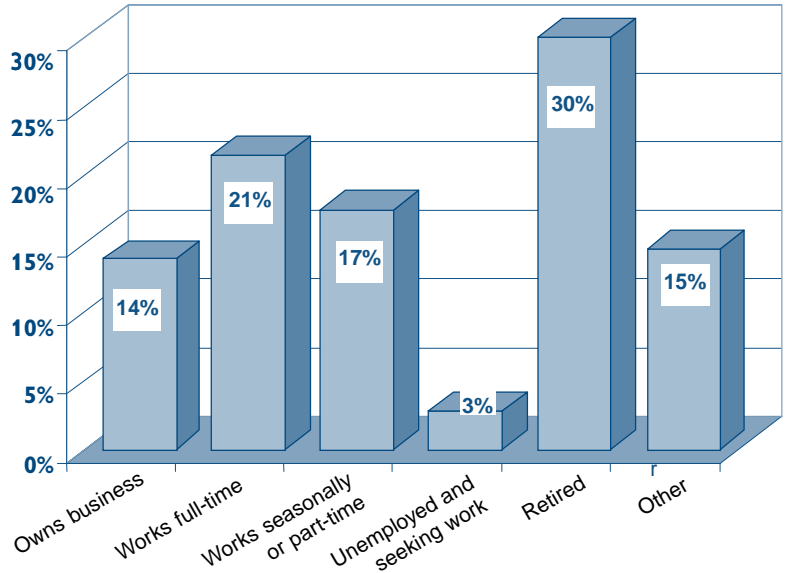
Note: Percents do not equal 100% as there was a "No opinion" category.

## EMPLOYMENT

### EMPLOYMENT STATUS OF WORKING ADULTS (AGE 18+)

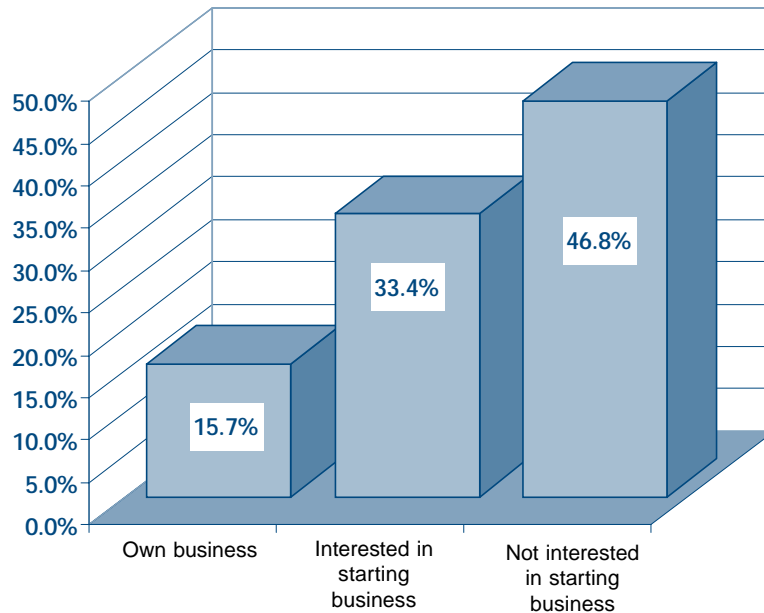
- 30% of adults in the area are retired and no longer seeking paid employment.
- 14% of adults in the area own a business.
- One out of five adults in the area (20%) works full time at one or more jobs on a year round basis.
- Few adults are unemployed and seeking work (2.7%); however, more are unemployed and not seeking work due to lack of jobs in an area matching skills, training, and interest (3.7%)

Common reasons for not seeking work include disabilities, illnesses and homemaking.



### INTEREST IN BUSINESS OWNERSHIP

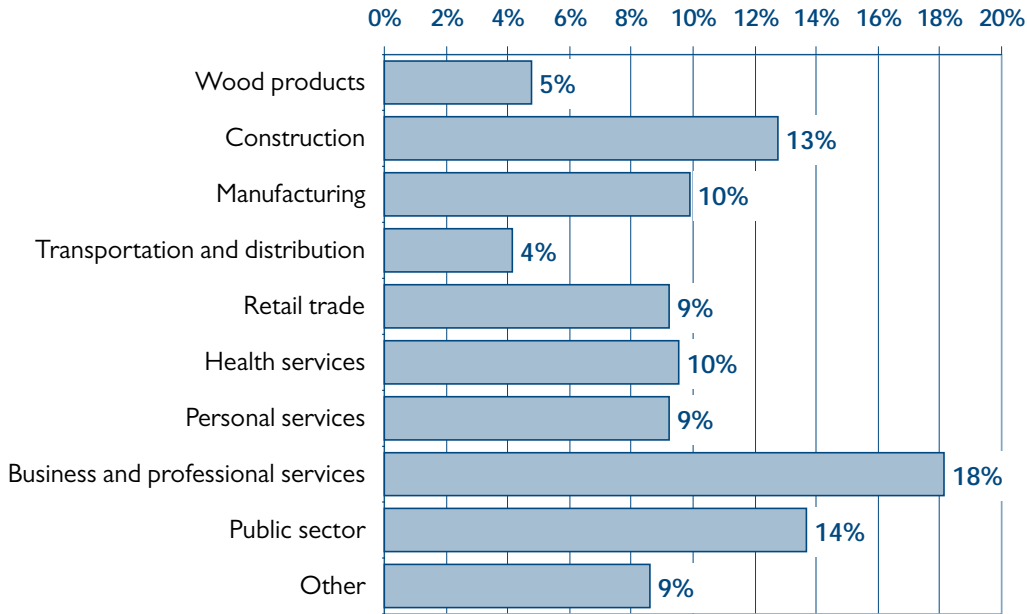
- While 15.7% adults own a business full-time, 14.8% of those adults claim their business generates incomes that needs to be supplemented by other incomes.
- 33% of adults are interested in starting a business. 47% are not.
- Adults in the area belong to many organizations, including the Chamber of Commerce, AFL-CIO, unions, and professional associations.



**CURRENT WORKFORCE INDUSTRIES**

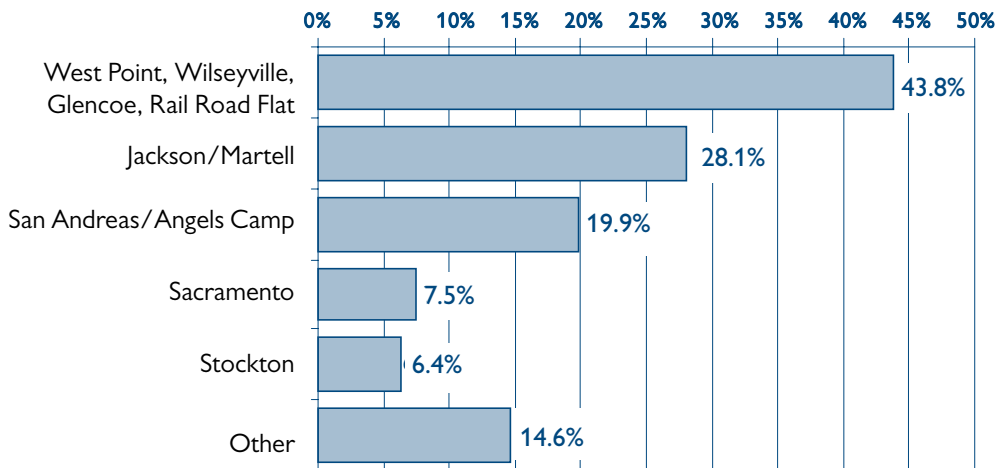
- The largest industries in which local adults currently work are business and professional services, the public sector, and construction.
- The smallest industries include wood products and transportation/distribution

**Industries in Which Local Adults Work**



**CURRENT WORKFORCE PLACES OF WORK**

- Over 43% of working adults work locally in the West Point, Wilseyville, Glencoe, Rail Road Flat area.
- About 8% can telecommute at least one day a week.
- Some residents commute a long way for work, including San Francisco and San Jose.



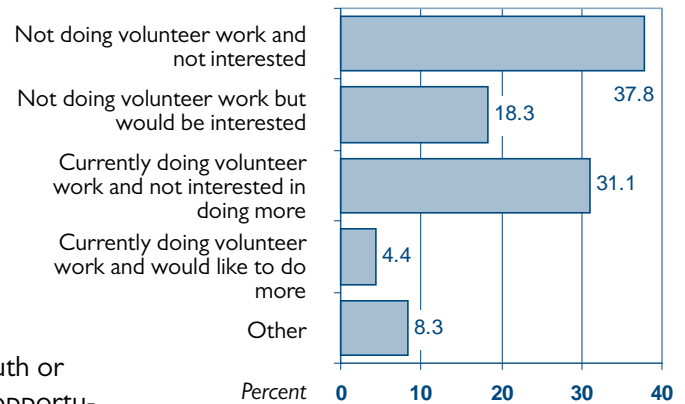
### CURRENT JOB SATISFACTION

- Almost 40% of working adults are satisfied and not interested in changing jobs. Another 12% are self-employed, satisfied and not interested in changing jobs.
- Another 25% are interested in new employment but are not currently seeking new work.
- 4% would consider leaving the area to seek work elsewhere.

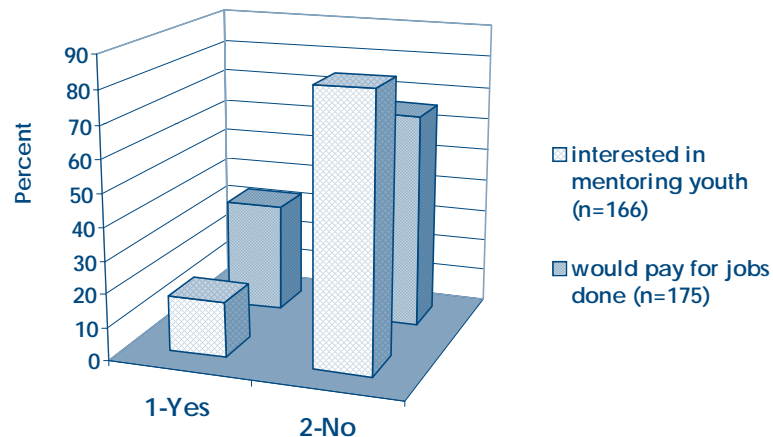
### LOCAL RETIREES

- Over one-third of retired adults are currently volunteering already. Of these, most are not interested in any additional volunteer work.
- Over 37% of retirees are not currently doing volunteer work and are not interested in doing any.
- 18% are not currently volunteering but would be interested.
- 18% are not currently volunteering but would be interested.
- Some explain that they are not able to volunteer due to disabilities and/or an inability to drive.
- 83% of retirees are not interested in mentoring youth or adults about education, training, and employment opportunities. 17% are interested.
- One-third of retired persons are willing to pay others in the community to do jobs or chores. Two-thirds are not.

**Retiree Volunteer Interest and Activity**



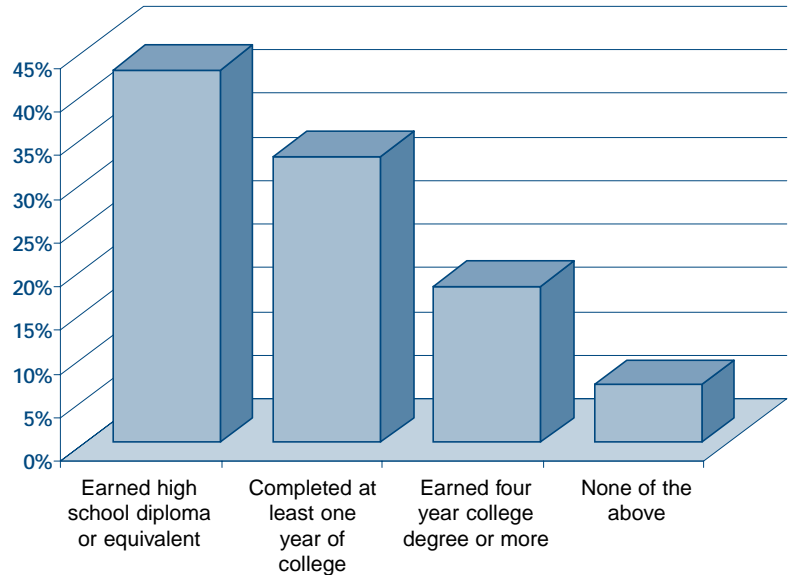
**Retiree Interest in Mentoring Others and Paying Others for Work**



## EDUCATION AND TRAINING NEEDS

### LEVEL OF EDUCATION

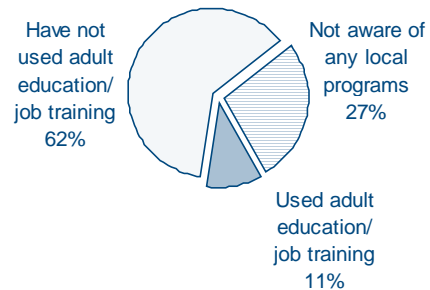
- 18% have a four-year college degree or more.
- Another 33% have completed at least one year of college.
- 43% have earned a high school diploma or equivalent.
- 6.6% have less than a high school education.



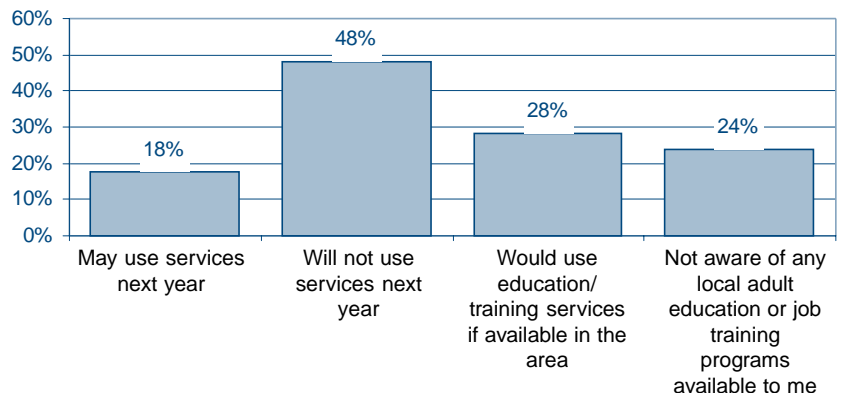
### USE AND AWARENESS OF LOCAL ADULT EDUCATION /JOB TRAINING SERVICES

- During the past two years, 11% of local adults have used adult education or job training services. 62% have not.
- 27% adults say that in the last two years they were not aware of any local adult education or job training programs.
- 18% say they may use local adult education or job training services this next year, while 48% say they will not. 28% say they would use the services if they were available in their area.
- Some reasons they do not utilize the classes include lack of local transportation and an ability to receive training through their current jobs.
- 70% of adults say they are not interested in new skills.
- 30% say they would like new job skills, including computer skills, CADD, clerical skills, cabinetry, business planning skills, dental lab technology, graphic design, teaching, bookkeeping, real estate appraisal, and web design.

### Use of Local Education and Job Training in Past Two Years



### Expected Use of Local Education and Job Training Programs Over the Next Two Years



## SHOPPING OPPORTUNITIES

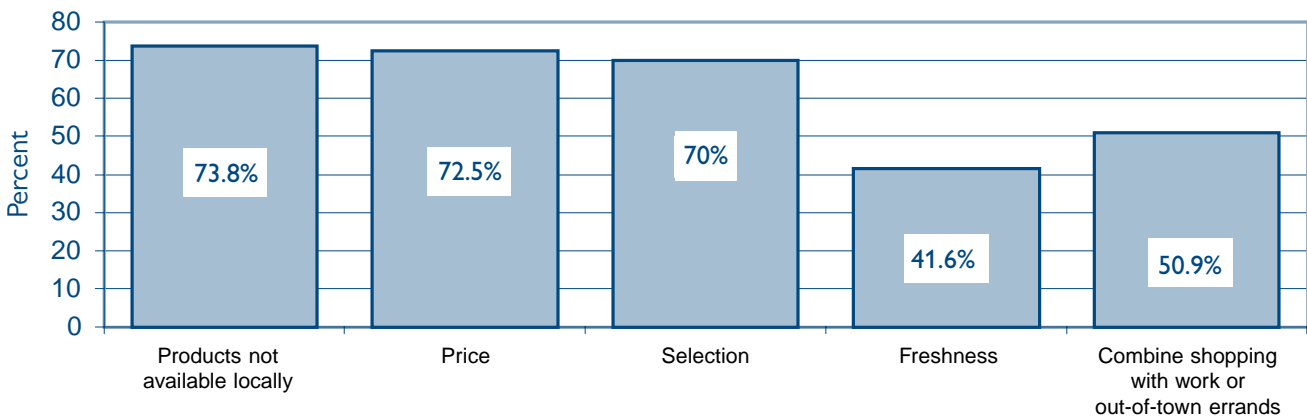
### SHOPPING LOCATIONS BY RETAIL CATEGORY

- Most households do their shopping in the Jackson/Martell areas. Over 50% of households in all categories do most of their shopping (except for hardware) there. 85% of households buy most of their groceries there.
- Almost one out of three households do most of their clothes shopping in Stockton or Sacramento.
- Over half of the households do their primary shopping for hardware in the local community.
- Not much shopping is done in San Andreas or Angels Camp.
- Other places households shop include the Bay Area, Modesto, and through mail order.

	Local Community	San Andreas/ Angels Camp	Jackson/ Martell	Stockton or Sacramento	Other
Groceries	4.3%	1.9%	84.5%	6.2%	3.4%
Eating Out	15.5%	3.4%	68.7%	8.6%	3.9%
Clothing	1.3%	0.3%	56.5%	31.2%	10.8%
Hardware	53.2%	2.1%	28.4%	11.2%	5.1%
Furnishings	3.0%	1.8%	51.2%	38.1%	5.9%
Personal Services	9.5%	9.4%	63.7%	12.2%	5.3%
All Other	7.7%	4.4%	64.4%	18.2%	5.9%

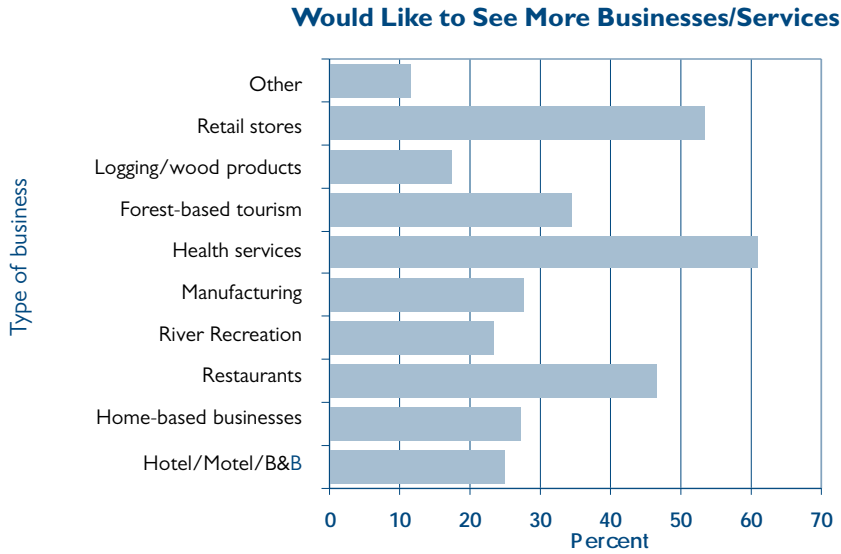
### REASONS FOR SHOPPING OUTSIDE OF THE LOCAL AREA

- Over 70% of households shop outside of their local area because products are either not available locally, or the price and selection are not what consumers want.
- One out of two households shop outside of the local area because they combine shopping with work or other errands out of town.
- Other reasons for shopping outside of the local area ranged from a lack of a decent grocery store or department store to the comment that local businesses are rude and unfriendly or that their stores are dirty and their stock is old.



**INTEREST IN INCREASED BUSINESSES AND SERVICES**

- Requests for additional shopping opportunities in the local community included a drug store, a large store like Wal-Mart or K-Mart, and many requests for a grocery store.
- General types of businesses or services households would like to see increased in the area include health services, retail stores, restaurants, and tourism.



**TRANSPORTATION**

**COMMON FORMS OF TRANSPORTATION**

- The vast majority of households use their personal vehicles when shopping or going to work.

**PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION**

- If public transportation were available, 29% of households said they would use it to shop, 19% to go to work, and 20% to go to the government center.
- 55% said they would not use public transportation even if it were available.

**DEMOGRAPHICS OF SURVEY RESPONDENTS**

**NUMBER OF PERSONS IN HOUSEHOLD BY AGE**

	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Valid Percent</i>
<b>0-5</b>	31	4.12%
<b>6-17</b>	118	15.69%
<b>18-21</b>	20	2.66%
<b>22-35</b>	66	8.78%
<b>36-65</b>	349	46.41%
<b>Over 65</b>	168	22.34%
<b>TOTAL PERSONS</b>	752	100.00%
<b>N=</b>	328	Households

**ETHNICITY OF ADULTS IN HOUSEHOLD**

	# Adults	% Adults
a) Caucasian	511	91.00%
b) Native American Indian	27	4.72%
c) Hispanic	13	2.32%
d) African American	2	0.36%
e) Asian	4	0.71%
f) Other	5	0.89%
<b>Total Respondents</b>	<b>561</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

**HOUSEHOLD INCOME**

- In Calaveras County, the area median income for a family of 4 persons is \$36,700.
- Overall, the respondents' income levels were 36% Target Income Group (TIG: below 80% area median income) and 64% non-TIG. This has a standard error of 3%.
- About half of the TIG households, or 18% of total households responding, were in the Lower Target Income Group (LTIG: below 50% of area median income).

**Household Income of Responding Households: Percents of Total Respondents by Place**

	Very Low Income: Below 50% AMI	Lower Income: Between 50% and 80% AMI	Lower to Median : Income: 80% to to 100% AMI	Moderate income: 100% to 120% AMI	Above Moderate Income: Over 120% AMI	No income reported	Total
<b>Glencoe</b>	2 7%	2 7%	4 14%	6 21%	14 50%	0 0%	28 100%
<b>Rail Road Flat</b>	12 29%	7 17%	5 12%	1 2%	16 38%	1 2%	42 100%
<b>West Point</b>	27 23%	24 20%	15 13%	12 10%	39 33%	3 3%	120 100%
<b>Wilseyville</b>	12 36%	6 18%	4 12%	4 12%	5 15%	2 6%	33 100%
<b>Mokelumne Hill</b>	4 11%	8 23%	4 11%	9 26%	7 20%	3 9%	35 100%
<b>No Address Reported</b>	3 4%	13 16%	12 15%	17 21%	26 33%	9 11%	80 100%
<b>TOTAL</b>	60 18%	60 18%	44 13%	49 14%	107 32%	18 5%	338 100%

Note: Area Median Income (AMI)= \$36,700 for family of 4 in Calaveras County in 1999.

	Surveys Sent	Surveys Returned	Response Rate	LTIG	TIG (incl. LTIG)	NonTIG	Standard Deviation	Standard Error
<b>Glencoe</b>	201	28	14%	7%	14%	86%	0.350	7%
<b>Rail Road Flat</b>	320	42	13%	29%	45%	55%	0.498	8%
<b>West Point</b>	1,150	120	10%	23%	43%	58%	0.494	5%
<b>Wilseyville</b>	256	33	13%	36%	55%	45%	0.498	9%
<b>Mokelumne Hill</b>	400	35	9%	11%	34%	66%	0.475	8%
<b>No Address</b>		80	24%	4%	20%	80%	0.400	4%
<i>Surveys with Addresses</i>		258	11%	22%	40%	60%	0.491	3%
<b>Total Surveys</b>	<b>2,327</b>	<b>338</b>	<b>14.5%</b>	<b>18%</b>	<b>36%</b>	<b>64%</b>	<b>0.479</b>	<b>3%</b>



**MAIN COMMENTS REGARDING ECONOMIC RENEWAL OPPORTUNITIES IN THE WEST POINT, WILSEYVILLE, GLENCOE, AND RAIL ROAD FLAT AREA**

- Need grocery stores.
- Need jobs.
- Need more choices and shopping opportunities.
- Prices are too high because there is no competition.
- Need more businesses in the area.
- Need more medical and dental services.
- Need a youth center and youth services.
- Leave the area alone.
- Need a gas station.

## Business survey results

**Source: Applied Development Economics Economic Renewal Survey Results, December 1999**

The following information is reported first by the total 73 businesses that returned a survey. The data reported alongside is for the subset of 33 businesses that reported their business as their main source of household income.

1. Which of the following best describes the industry of which your business is a part?

<i>1-Industry</i>	<i>Total Database</i>		<i>Main Income Only</i>	
Advertising	2	2.8%	1	3.1%
Agriculture	6	8.5%	1	3.1%
Communication Svcs	2	2.8%	2	6.3%
Computer	4	5.6%	3	9.4%
Construction	9	12.7%	4	12.5%
Crafts	7	9.9%	n/a	n/a
Education	2	2.8%	n/a	n/a
Electricity	1	1.4%	1	3.1%
Fishing	3	4.2%	n/a	n/a
Forestry	1	1.4%	1	3.1%
Health	2	2.8%	1	3.1%
Logging	1	1.4%	1	3.1%
Manufacturing	8	11.3%	6	18.8%
Mining	1	1.4%	n/a	n/a
Other	10	14.1%	5	15.6%
Property	9	12.7%	5	15.6%
Retail	2	2.8%	n/a	n/a
Transport	1	1.4%	1	3.1%
<b>Total Respondents</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>100%</b>

“Other” category includes: Housekeeping, architectural designs, planning consultant, bookkeeping, direct marketing, research & development, environmental, stock trading, fine art, handyman, & antique restoration, newspaper.

2. Do you operate the business out of your home or elsewhere on your property, or rent or own a business location outside of your home?

	<i>Total Database</i>		<i>Main Income Only</i>	
Operate on Own Property	57	80%	26	79%
Operate Outside of Home	14	20%	7	21%
<b>Total Respondents</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>100%</b>

3. How long has your business been in operation?

	<i>Total Database</i>		<i>Main Income Only</i>	
Average Years	9		11	
<b>Total Respondents</b>	<b>73</b>		<b>33</b>	

4. Is this business your main source of household income?

	<i>Total Database</i>		<i>Main Income Only</i>	
1-Yes	33	49%	33	100%
2-No	35	51%	0	0%
<b>Total Respondents</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>100%</b>

5. How many employees does your business have, including yourself as owner/operator?

<i>Data</i>	<i>Total Database</i>		<i>Main Income Only</i>	
	<i>Full -time</i>	<i>Part-time</i>	<i>Full-time</i>	<i>Part-time</i>
Average of Emp	1.35	1.11	2.18	0.91
Sum of Emp	97.00	79.00	72.00	29.00
Pct of Total Employees (176 emp.)	55%	45%	71%	29%
<b>Total Respondents</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>32</b>

6. Does your business hire youth (under age 18)?

	<i>Total Database</i>		<i>Main Income Only</i>	
1-Yes	18	26%	11	34%
2-No	51	74%	21	66%
<b>Total Respondents</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>100%</b>

7. Where are most of your customers located?

	<i>Total Database</i>		<i>Main Income Only</i>	
West Point	18	26.6%	9	30.0%
Jackson	7	10.7%	1	4.7%
San Andreas	3	3.9%	2	5.9%
Mountain Ranch	2	2.3%	1	3.3%
Angels Camp	0	0.7%	0	0.4%
Throughout CA	24	35.8%	11	39.2%
Internet	2	2.8%	1	3.0%
Other	11	17.2%	4	13.4%
<b>Total Respondents</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>100%</b>

8. How do you promote or advertise your business? (Check all that apply)

	<i>Total Database</i>		<i>Main Income Only</i>	
Newspaper	13	20%	6	21%
Internet	12	18%	8	28%
Word of Mouth	52	79%	25	86%
Flyers/mailings	9	14%	5	17%
Other	16	24%	8	28%
<b>Total Respondents</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>n/a</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>n/a</b>

9. Does your business use the Internet in other ways (email/world wide web)?

	<i>Total Database</i>		<i>Main Income Only</i>	
1-Yes	32	49%	17	61%
2-No	33	51%	11	39%
<b>Total Respondents</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>100%</b>

10. What do you think local government should do to help local businesses like yours? (*Comments from businesses that are main sources of income are in **bold***)

- **Be more friendly with regard to development**
- **Be supportive of small business**
- **Continue leaving us alone, offer tax breaks stop the tax on business, equipment**
- **Eliminate business property tax**
- **Eliminate taxes and regulations**
- **Have more jobs in the area so more people would move here**
- **Have to go elsewhere to dump constr, trash that is from homes in the local area, we have to pay elsewhere help make dumping 7 days a week instead of just 4, sheet rock trash etc, (pay taxes yearly for this)**
- **Loans grants develop incentives, decrease road fees and encroachment fees**
- **Less protocol, i.e. red tape**
- **Local advertising/bus, association**
- **Local gov, could only help us by heading qualified interstate truck drivers to us**
- **More noticeable police/sheriff presence, support for improving downtown appearance & bus, positive attitude toward our area**
- **Our business is national but the local economy would helped by more government money coming into the community**
- **Provide low-interest business loans, grants, and more job training**
- **Purchase within county**
- **Quit putting stupid restrictions and increasing fees for permits to increase government's income**
- **Stay out of my business/ across the board flat tax**
- **Subsidize fast hi capacity (broad) connecting to the internet**
- Can't help; need mines and similar projects
- Continue to provide opportunities for learning to use computers
- Create a start-up period for new business, with graduated tax base
- Decrease taxes
- Enforce federal laws on government agencies, school dist, audit gov agencies, compensate competing business
- Help with grants to help businesses get started

- Keep fees, permits at a minimum or eliminate. Have a one stop office where there is creative thinking to help the entrepreneur
- Local employee support services, taxes incentives, support & development of professional building complex hardware
- Lower taxes
- Make low cost loans to business
- Minimize red tape
- No interest loans
- No need for assistance
- Nothing
- Nothing, stay out of it
- Too much government as it is, but you could cut taxes and that would work
- Promote building industry by lowering fees and permits costs
- Retrain sheriff office to watch hard core attitude
- Stay out of the way, reduce oppressive regulations
- Take off restrictions

11. Please list three products or supplies you buy for your business inside and outside the local area (i.e., West Point, Wilseyville, Rail Road Flat, Glencoe). (Comments from businesses that are main sources of income are in **bold**)

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**BUY INSIDE AREA**

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- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Advertisement signs, contractors, etc.</b></li> <li>• <b>Animal feed</b></li> <li>• <b>CPA services</b></li> <li>• <b>Diesel, oil, parts</b></li> <li>• <b>Food, construction supplies, repair services</b></li> <li>• <b>Gas, stamps</b></li> <li>• <b>Gasoline, diesel</b></li> <li>• <b>Hardware</b></li> <li>• <b>Hardware</b></li> <li>• <b>Hardware supplies</b></li> <li>• <b>Hardware, postage, bus. supplies</b></li> <li>• <b>Keys</b></li> <li>• <b>Lunch, firewood, cleaning &amp; hardware</b></li> <li>• <b>Misc hardware, small tools</b></li> <li>• <b>Most hardware, most lumber, tools</b></li> <li>• <b>Pants/supplies, lumber, supplies/welding</b></li> <li>• <b>Parts, hardware, gas</b></li> <li>• <b>Postage, UPS shipping</b></li> <li>• <b>Propane, printing, hardware maint</b></li> <li>• <b>Septic tanks, pipe, gravel</b></li> <li>• <b>Sewing services</b></li> <li>• <b>Toilet cleaner, gloves, mops</b></li> <li>• <b>Very little</b></li> <li>• <b>Xerox copies</b></li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cleaning supplies</li> <li>• Gas, groceries</li> <li>• Gas, maintenance supplies</li> <li>• Glue</li> <li>• Grain, hardware</li> <li>• Hardware</li> <li>• Hardware supplies, fuel, misc. Supplies</li> <li>• Hardware</li> <li>• Hardware, building supplies, fuel</li> <li>• Hardware, lumber</li> <li>• Hardware, milk</li> <li>• Hardware, office supplies, construction supplies</li> <li>• Hardware, use of copier</li> <li>• Lumber, paint, plumbing</li> <li>• Milk, eggs, lumber/hardware</li> <li>• Misc. fittings</li> <li>• Misc. supplies, hardware, fuel</li> <li>• Murphys oil, trash bags</li> <li>• Nothing available locally we can use</li> <li>• Paper, refreshments, writing materials, books</li> <li>• Phone service, internet service</li> <li>• Post off. Stamps</li> <li>• Straw, printing/copy</li> <li>• Wire, hardware</li> </ul> |
|--|---|

**BUY OUTSIDE AREA**

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- PG&E, water, gas
- Blueprinting, office supplies, computer products
- Computer products, supplies, software
- Copy paper
- Diesel, oil, parts
- Dyes, plumbing/electrical , surfactants
- Electrical supplies building permits
- Electrical supplies, construction material
- Fabrics, hardware, nations
- Food, construction supplies, repair services
- Fuel, Tires, trucks
- Hardware, lumber, most tools
- Hardware, rope, dyes
- Inks, substrates, equipment
- Medical supplies, x-ray screening
- Note pads, pens, ink pad stamps
- Office equipment, office supplies, office equipment
- Office products, printing, telephone
- Office supplies, animal feed, ag. Supplies
- Office supplies, computer hardware, furniture & equipment
- Office supplies, computer supplies, building supplies
- Office supplies, computer hardware for resale, co
- Paint, power tools, door locks
- Sheetrock, taping mud, auto supplies
- Specialty woods, tools, metal supplies
- Steel, nuts & bolts, pines/hubs
- Supplies
- Supplies, fuel
- Tools
- Windex, floor cleaner, rags
- Advertising, office supplies
- Burlap bags, equipment, chemicals
- Canvas materials, trucking hardware, printing
- Cleaning supplies
- Computer paper, office supplies
- Computer, paper supplies
- Craft supply, craft inventory
- Diesel fuel, tires, repairs
- Dried flowers, wreaths
- Electrical, lumber, plumbing
- Equipment, supplies
- Feed, fertilizer, equipment
- Fish food, electricity
- Forms, office supplies
- Glass, tires, paint
- Groceries, household supplies
- Gutter supplies
- Hay, grain, veterinary services
- Leather, motorcycles, helmets
- Massage lotion
- Materials, oils, hats
- Office supplies, service equipment, fuel
- Paint, art supplies, color copies
- Paper, copy, books
- Paper, ink cartridges, advertising
- Parts
- Pine Sol
- PG&E, water/gas
- Printer ink, copy paper, internet access
- Printing
- Seeds, organic supplies, irrigation supplies
- Slip, paint, molds
- Specialized products for ponds, chemicals
- Steel, paint, lumber
- Wax, office, supplies, mold
- Wood