

SACOG HONORS REGION'S BEST AT AWARDS CEREMONY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
December 10, 2010

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SACRAMENTO – The Sacramento Area Council of Governments today honored outstanding regional efforts in transportation, smart growth planning and air quality as part of the 2010 *SACOG Salutes!* Regional Awards Program. The high-profile awards were presented to individuals and organizations whose achievements and innovations made a significant difference in the Sacramento region in 2010.

Bill Hughes Elected Official: **Congresswoman Doris O. Matsui**

Blueprint Excellence: **Yolo County 2030 General Plan**

Business of the Year: **Bogle Vineyards**

Business of the Year: **Mulvaney's B&L**

Citizen of the Year: **Joanne Neft**

Employee of the Year: **Jim Campbell, Yolo County**

Organization of the Year: **Soil Born Farms**

Mary Brill Youth Excellence: **GEO Environmental Science & Design Academy
at Grant Union High School**

Project of the Year: **Highway 70 East Nicolaus Bypass**

Special Recognition: **Apple Hill Growers Association**

SACOG instituted the annual awards program in 1999 to honor outstanding regional work by organizations, businesses and individuals. Detailed background on each recipient follows. High-resolution copies of the photos included are available upon request.

For further information on the awards, categories and past recipients, please visit:
www.sacog.org/about/awards/sacogsalutes/categories/ or contact Erik Johnson at
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Bill Hughes Elected Official Congresswoman Doris O. Matsui

Congresswoman Matsui recognizes that the viability of our rural areas is key to the success of the entire region. She has been an effective and committed legislative advocate on behalf of agriculture, flood protection, watershed management, open space and smart-growth principles.

One notable legislative success was naming the entire Sacramento River Watershed as a priority area for the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Agriculture Water Enhancement Program (AWEP). This has allowed over \$1 million from the USDA to be allocated to projects in the Sacramento Valley. These projects have promoted ground and surface water conservation and improved water quality on agricultural lands.

A longtime supporter of the Blueprint, Congresswoman Matsui readily seeks sustainable land-use and transportation solutions. In Congress, she has supported smart growth, livable communities, complete streets, improved air quality, clean technology and local businesses. Thanks to the efforts of Congresswoman Matsui and her understanding of rural-urban connections, our region is economically and environmentally on stronger ground.

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Blueprint Excellence

Yolo County 2030 General Plan

The Yolo County 2030 General Plan approaches growth by providing for the creative management of the county's most valuable tangible asset, agricultural land. The plan designates more than 97 percent of the unincorporated area for agriculture and open space, creates a new Agricultural District in Clarksburg, and specifies the expansion of the local food system and the diversification of the local agricultural economy.

Yolo County's plan also calls for mixed-use zoning, a range of housing choices, infill development, growth boundaries and buffer zones, and improved transportation infrastructure that includes bike lanes, designated farm-to-market routes, and improvements to public transit and the Port of West Sacramento.

An inspiring example of rural-urban connections, the Yolo County 2030 General Plan integrates agriculture, open space conservation, local food systems, transportation, housing, commercial development, employment and economic growth into a blueprint for a healthy and prosperous future.

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Business of the Year Bogle Vineyards

In 30 years, Bogle Vineyards in Clarksburg has become the 18th-largest winery in California. To say the family-owned and operated business grew beyond its small-town Sacramento River Delta home would be an understatement. In recent years, its growth has forced the winery to sending most of its grapes out of the area to be processed.

The sixth generation of the Bogle family to farm in the Delta is bringing it all home with the expansion of their operations to a new winery complex. Three new buildings at Jefferson and Hamilton roads in Clarksburg will accommodate all of the winery's crushing, bottling, packaging, storage, and administration. In addition to the truck traffic and greenhouse gases the local facility will save, the new winery operates with state-of-the-art energy efficiency measures and a rooftop photovoltaic solar system. In addition to the jobs created during construction of the building expansion, the new facility will add over 60 new employees—double the current payroll.



With significant economic and environmental benefits to the region, Bogle Vineyard's expansion continues the legacy of Patty Bogle, who led the growth of the winery from local pioneer to industry leader, and who was a founding member of the Yolo Land Trust.

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Business of the Year

Mulvaney's B&L

Patrick and Bobbin Mulvaney prove that a not only fine-dining restaurants and caterers can buy from local farmers, but that locally grown food can be incorporated at many scales and in many outlets. The Mulvaney's promote the region's locally grown produce in their new venture, the Crocker Museum Café, and in several community service projects.

The Mulvaney's have become unofficial ambassadors for the Sacramento region. The B&L restaurant is a must-taste destination for food lovers. The Crocker Museum Café showcases seasonal and local ingredients to the expanded Museum's visitors from near and far. And this year, Patrick Mulvaney worked with the Sacramento Metro Chamber to develop a panel on a study mission to Seattle, Washington focused on rural-urban connections and featuring experts from Seattle and Sacramento.



The Mulvaney's have sponsored numerous opportunities for low-income youth, including the Jr. Chef Competition, and the Junior League's Kids in the Kitchen, to gain hands-on experience with healthy foods and in restaurant operations.

This year, the Mulvaney's were key contributors to the development and opening of Plates Café and catering, a service learning restaurant for St. John's Shelter for Women and Children. Plates Café also features locally grown produce, and Patrick and Bobbin are looking into opportunities for the café to add a farm stand that can serve the Depot and the clients at St. John's.

Whether bringing local ingredients to culinary mastery, or providing job and life skills to women who need a second chance, Mulvaney's B& L has deep roots in the food system that feed the entire community.

Contact:

Patrick Mulvaney

Mulvaney's B&L

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Citizen of the Year

Joanne Neft

Joanne Neft is a passionate advocate on behalf of local foods and the people who grow them. Over the past 20 years, Joanne has utilized a variety of strategies in her activism, including nutrition research, owning a gourmet café, land preservation, and most recently, writing a successful cookbook about eating seasonally in Placer County.

As the first director of the Placer County Agriculture Marketing Program, Neft established the PlacerGrown campaign for marketing the county's agricultural products. The campaign's success has made it a national model. She's known as a major motivating force in commissioning the USDA study that identified the high levels of the chemical synephrine, a natural anti-histamine, in Placer County Mandarins, and for publicizing the results. Neft opened the Foothill Farmers' Market in 1990, and in 1995 founded the Mountain Mandarin Festival, which attracts tens of thousands to Placer County each November.



Most recently, Neft collaborated with local chef Laura Kenney to conduct a year of eating locally. Their meals culminated into a self-published cookbook, which has sold thousands of copies online and in bookstores throughout California.

Joanne has "retired," but continues to be an advocate locally and regionally. She is a board member of Placer Legacy, working to preserve farm land and create open space for the county.

Contact:

Joanne Neft

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Employee of the Year

Jim Campbell, Yolo County

A principal engineer for Yolo County's Department of Planning and Public Works, Jim Campbell led an 11-year effort to connect the cities of Woodland and Davis with Class-II bike lanes. Campbell went above and beyond his assignment, becoming the project's advocate, fundraiser, and consensus-builder among multiple jurisdictions.

The bikeway encourages bicycling as a form of transportation and recreation, creating environmental and health benefits. Wider roads also reduce the propensity for conflict between vehicles and slow-moving farm machinery traveling through the rural area.

Jim's "can-do" attitude and tireless pursuit of funding resulted in a bikeway that yields environmental benefits, and increases safety for bicyclists, rural residents, farmers moving machinery and commuters traveling on rural Yolo County. His personal and professional commitment has resulted in lasting effects for our region.

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Organization of the Year

Soil Born Farms

Fruits and vegetables grown on urban sites, in Rancho Cordova and Sacramento County, is only the beginning at Soil Born Farms, a non-profit that grows awareness of our local food system. Soil Born Farms' education programs focus on land stewardship, service and leadership skills, ecological and agricultural literacy, and food access.

Since 2005, Soil Born Farms has focused its Farm-to-School programs on providing experiential farm-based education and hands-on cooking classes. Soil Born provides access to their certified organic vegetables directly to students through during-school and after-school youth programming at their Hurley Way Farm—not far from the Arden Fair Mall.



Soil Born Farms' American River Ranch utilizes land adjacent to the American River Parkway, facilitating visibility from this popular regional park and a farm stand that is accessible to the general public. The American River Ranch began supplying local schools with fresh, locally produced seasonal vegetables in 2008. Soil Born provides Sacramento Country Day School with produce to stock their salad bar and is currently working with the Sacramento Unified School District to expand a salad bar program piloted in 2007.

Soil Born Farms is a living rural-urban connection for the many adults and children they serve, connecting them to fresh, healthy food.

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Mary Brill Youth Excellence GEO Environmental Science & Design Academy at Grant Union High School

Established 4 years ago in partnership with the Health Education Council, the GEO Academy engages high school students with real-world projects that foster community, critical thinking, and appreciation of the environment and natural resources.

The curriculum offers outdoor learning and hands-on experiences in environmental horticulture, landscape architectural design, habitat restoration, green business, and environmental science monitoring. Their best-known project, a branded salsa sold at farmer's markets and in gourmet grocery stores, provides agricultural production, processing, and business experience. In a testament to its relevance, the GEO Academy has a 100 percent graduation rate.

The GEO Environmental Science & Design Academy integrates rural-urban connections in every lesson. Not only do students gain exposure to agricultural, environmental and green-business careers, but they gain experience in creating sustainable communities.

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Project of the Year Highway 70 East Nicolaus Bypass

Sacramento, Sutter and Yuba counties have grown rapidly in the past ten years, with increased commuter, recreational, commercial and agricultural traffic. Growth forecasts for the Sacramento to Chico corridor indicated that traffic congestion and delays would continue to increase if State Highway 70 was not improved.



In September 2010, Caltrans completed the 4-lane freeway segment from Striplin Road to north of Bear River in Sutter and Yuba counties. The \$81 million project was finished one year ahead of schedule.

Caltrans worked closely with various local, state and federal agencies to meet all mitigation requirements for this project and ensure compatibility with the surrounding environment. In addition, the project included designs incorporated into the structural elements featuring a "rice over rolling hills" motif to reflect the area's agricultural heritage.

The project achieved immediate traffic congestion relief for 18,000 daily commuters, and eased goods movement and thus economic vitality for the region. For the community, the removal of a four-way intersection in east Nicolaus improved the quality of life for that small town. It also provided a significant safety improvement for students at Marcum-Illinois Elementary School, by diverting highway traffic away from the school.

The Highway 70 East Nicolaus Bypass is an example that reaches far beyond the roadway in its impact, with economic, environmental and quality of life benefits for the entire region.

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Special Recognition Apple Hill Growers Association

The Apple Hill Growers Association has created successful marketing opportunities for specialty growers in El Dorado County, including farm stands, seasonal campaigns and special events. Apple Hill packs a juicy punch with a small budget and management led by a volunteer board of local growers. As one of the first successful growers association marketing efforts in our region, Apple Hill serves as a model locally and nationally.



The association began with 16 original ranches about thirty years ago. Today, the association includes over 50 ranches, Christmas tree growers, wineries, a micro-brewery, a spa, and vineyards. This successful strategy is now implemented and improved upon by second- and third-generation growers, in cooperation with new entrepreneurs that join the effort.

Besides an attractive logo, the Association uses a variety of branding strategies and marketing activities to bring consumers to Apple Hill. They include the Apple Blossom Festival, map brochures, a helpful website, and a series of Growers' Cookbooks.

The Apple Hill Growers Association is a replicable example of how rural-urban connection can be a source of income—and longevity—for small farms.

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Apple Hill Growers Association

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