

## Group wants Mountain House jobs assured

by Erin Sherbert

Record Staff Writer

A local environmental group is calling on the San Joaquin County Board of Supervisors to ensure that the Mountain House development generates enough jobs and affordable housing.

The Mother Lode Chapter of the Sierra Club has written a letter to the board asking that the county, after reviewing the balance between jobs and housing in the future, be able to change the number of homes per acre or rezone land within Mountain House to allow for more jobs or affordable housing.

“It’s important if, in 10 years, there are 10,000 residents and only a handful of jobs that the county board take a direct role to turn things around,” said Eric Parfrey, chairman of the Sierra Club’s Mother Lode chapter and a former San Joaquin County planner.

Otherwise, Parfrey said, he fears Mountain House could become another development with all houses and no jobs.

The Board of Supervisors will consider a plan Tuesday that would rezone land for the next seven villages of Mountain House, which will include 9,000 homes, senior housing, a golf course and K-8 schools.

The board will also vote on a development agreement that would lock in zoning changes and densities so that it could not be changed in the future without the approval of the developer, said Chandler Martin, deputy director of planning for San Joaquin County.

Part of the Mountain House Master Plan requires the Board of Supervisors to evaluate the ratio of jobs to housing as well as Mountain House’s affordable housing program after 2,000 homes are occupied.

So far, about 700 homes are occupied, and there’s been no commercial, industrial or office development yet, said Eric Teed-Bose, project manager for Trimark Communities, LLC.

Should the board determine that there are not enough jobs to balance out the housing, it has the option to revise the goal of creating a mix of housing and jobs or institute an economic development program to attract employers to Mountain House according to the Mountain House Master Plan.

The board could even re-evaluate how fast homes are being built. What the board cannot do is change the number of homes per acre to generate jobs unless the developer agrees, Teed-Bose said.

Trimark is still obligated to balance housing and jobs as the development progresses, Teed-Bose said, adding that he is confident it will be achieved.

The development is projected to generate as many as 22,000 jobs by the time of its completion, which is expected in the next 30 years. By that time, the population will be approximately 42,000, Teed-Bose said.

Teed-Bose said that in the next phase of development, Trimark is proposing to eliminate a marina, which would be replaced by commercial retail and office spaces. This change has the potential to add 300 jobs, he said.

“We are increasing the amount of jobs that can be realized in Mountain House,”  
Teed-Bose said.