



Mission Statement: Protect the long-term economic and environmental viability of Napa Valley by combating climate change through the preservation and the restoration of the natural environment and resources upon which the health of our vineyards, wineries and entire community relies.

Save Napa Valley Foundation advocates on behalf of Napa Valley, a national treasure, to assure its agriculturally based community endures into perpetuity.

## **NAPA WATER FORUM RE-CAP**

The extremely successful, March 24, 2023 Water Forum, hosted by Save Napa Valley and The Mennen Environmental Foundation, can best be described as a rare opportunity for experts in hydrology, fish biology, groundwater/surface water and their interconnectivity, to join with local resource conservation leaders, state and local regulators and the leading research strategists from around the country to share and discuss new ideas concerning how to best manage Napa Valley's water. Though Napa Register's headline, "Forum looks at how nature, humans can thrive," missed the mark, SNVF appreciated their coverage. Knowledge is the first step to change.

Regretfully, one week before the forum, David Morrison, the interim CEO of Napa County, unilaterally cancelled Napa County government's participation. His totally flawed reasoning flew in the face of truth and meant that the voices of pertinent county employees were left out of the discussion. Yet, despite the "rug being pulled out from under us," the forum's success kicked off an exciting collaboration that can only grow.

The Forum was educational in nature and emceed by **Dr. Ted Grantham, of UC Berkeley and an adviser to the state water board. Dr. Grantham is the preeminent voice on hydrology and fish biology.**

## **BRINGING STEELHEAD TROUT & SALMON BACK TO THE NAPA RIVER**

**Peter Moyle, co-founder of the Center for Watershed Science at UC Davis,** talked about how a "reconciled ecosystem" can re-establish fish, local birds, and many species by having free flowing water in Napa through obstruction removal and integrated cooperation.

**Rich Marovich, the former Streamkeeper of nearby Putah Creek,** described his previous work with government, wine industry and environmentalists for mutually beneficial habitat restoration on the creek. "The return of native fish to Putah Creek is astonishing," Marovich said. He emphasized that fish are indicators of the health of the watershed and illustrated the importance of what we must and can do to improve the health of Napa's water ways.

**Craig Weightman, representative of the California Department of Fish and Wildlife** who spoke at length about CDFW's Green Tape Initiative. Essentially throwing CDFW's support for SNV'S Refugia project as outlined by NRCDC's Lucas Patzek. Mr. Weightman also discussed the "Green Tape Initiative" which will make it easier for regulators to sign off and collaborate on the stream obstruction removals.

**Bruce Barge, the chair of the local board of Napa Resource Conservation District** participated with the executive director pointing out the barriers along our waterways that keep steelhead trout and salmon from reaching spawning grounds. Over fifty barriers remain, but the best news out of the forum was Mr. Barge's announcement that they are working with Napa Flood Control and will be clearing the problems of the first 10 obstructions this summer!

### **Countywide Water District Discussion**

**Brendon Freeman, executive officer of Local Agency Formation Commission** talked about the possibility of a countywide water district. Our takeaway is that this would be so much more efficient, and resources shared would provide the cooperation and coordination necessary as our climate crisis continues to worsen.

**Joy Eldredge, City of Napa Deputy Director of Utilities**, who has been a consistent and prominent advocate of more shared resources spoke at length about the much-needed conservation amid our drought.

The final speaker was **Mark Kram, president of Groundswell Technology** who peaked the audience's interest as he described how ingenuity and modern technology could help the county fulfill its obligation to the state-required Groundwater Sustainability Plan. Innovation and technology can provide much needed data so that the best decisions can be made.