



Garden Highway Tree Removal Challenged

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SACRAMENTO COUNTY, CA – A neighborhood group has filed suit to halt the removal of hundreds of trees along Sacramento's Garden Highway. The tree-cutting is part of the Natomas Levee Improvement Project.

The Garden Highway Community Association also wants the Sacramento Area Flood Control Agency to reconsider its environmental protection plan for the project which is designed bring the Natomas Basin up 200-year flood protection.

The lawsuit claims the loss of the trees will affect endangered and sensitive animal and vegetation habitats as well as negatively alter the state-designated Scenic Highway.

SAFCA responded in a statement to News10:

"The NLIP project calls for a new levee to be built immediately adjacent to the existing Garden Highway levee and requires the removal of any structures or vegetation that rests in the "footprint" of the new levee. SAFCA began 2009 pre-construction season work in January to remove and relocate trees and other structures. It is anticipated that 25-30% of the trees will be successfully relocated, rather than cut down and removed, and a larger success rate is obtained if replanting occurs in winter time while trees are dormant. To replace those trees that are not deemed viable for transplanting, SAFCA will create large woodland corridors, replanting trees

at a 3 to 1 replacement acreage ratio."

The suit also names the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

The neighborhood association says it is not against flood protection for the vulnerable basin but wants an independent study of the Natomas project. The group says SAFCA and the Army Corps used the same environmental consultant for the project.

Created: 3/5/2009 6:23:33 PM Updated: 3/6/2009 2:08:11 PM