

Other Voices

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Help save the Bridgeport bridge, now!



Photo for The Union by John Hart The California State Parks closed the wooden bridge at Bridgeport on Pleasant Valley Road because the bridge is unsafe.



Wagon rides across the Bridgeport covered bridge were part of the fun during a grand-opening event for the historic barn at the South Yuba River State Park in 2009. The bridge has been closed since 2011 when state officials deemed it unsafe and needing repairs.

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Save Our Bridge

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For those of us who live in Nevada County, the Bridgeport covered bridge spanning the South Yuba River is a symbol of home.

In summer, we bring our families to the State Park beaches to relax, laugh and swim in the healing waters of the South Yuba with this iconic bridge as the backdrop.

We all have fond memories of walking across this California landmark, an important Gold Rush-era toll bridge of the Virginia Turnpike built in 1862 by sawmill owner David Wood.

State Parks put up chain-link fencing and closed the bridge in 2011 after engineers found severe and unsafe structural problems.

It is estimated it will cost more than \$1 million to restore what is considered the longest single span, wooden covered bridge in the world.

There's hope! Earlier this year, in his proposed budget, Gov. Brown allocated the funds needed to completely restore and reopen the bridge. This week, a community committee called "Save Our Bridge" is calling on your help during a letter-writing and phone-call campaign to save the threatened Bridgeport covered bridge still very much in danger of collapse.

Now all of us have the chance to save the bridge. Contact state legislators on the budget committees right away and let them know how important saving Bridgeport covered bridge is to you and our Golden State.

- Support complete funding for the Bridgeport Covered Bridge Restoration Project.
- Time is of the essence: The covered bridge has been closed since 2011 and is at risk of collapse. It's a state and national landmark that must be saved.
- In the governor's January budget proposal, the five-year infrastructure plan includes \$1.2 million (\$318,000 in 2014-15 and \$943,000 in 2016-17) to complete the Bridgeport Bridge Restoration Project.
- Support this budget proposal with respect to Phase 1, which is "shovel ready" now, and request that the committee move the \$943,000 already intended for expenditure in 2016-2017 to 2015-16.
- The South Yuba River State Park attracts up to 890,000 annual visitors.
- We have unanimous support from our local elected officials, including the city councils of Grass Valley, Nevada City and Truckee along with Nevada County Supervisors, who have all written resolutions in favor of the bridge restoration project.

“Save Our Bridge” is made up of concerned citizens, elected officials and local organizations, such as South Yuba River Parks Association (SYRPA), South Yuba River Citizens League (SYRCL) and Bear Yuba Land Trust.

For more information and a sample letter to send the Budget Committee, see the “Save Our Bridge” page at: www.southyubariverstatepark.org.

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