

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Trees get water

Take heart, Fresno and be encouraged. We're committed to saving our trees.

In response to Jonna Richardson's June 14 letter expressing concern that trees on our medians won't be watered, the fact is that the new state water restrictions only prohibit watering turf or grass on median islands.

Here's what the signs actually say: "In response to the Governor's Executive Order, turf irrigation for this median island has been turned off. Thank you for your patience during this historic statewide drought."

There's no fine print. It states clearly that we're not going to water the grass on our medians per the Governor's Executive Order. Trees will still be watered, but because it's difficult to modify the irrigation systems along streets like Van Ness and Huntington, we're truck-watering the trees on the affected medians once a week.

In addition, we're working to make sure the trees in our parks are getting the precious water they need.

Let's remember, we're all in this together — and together is the only way we're going to meet our conservation goal!

Scott Mozier, public utilities director, city of Fresno

Crazy priorities

Some years back we were told to plant more trees to clean the air and save the planet even though it was evident California was approaching a drought. Now what we planted is turning brown and it is considered a "badge of honor" to have a brown lawn. How strange that California waited so long to demand a water cutback. What was once the "food basket" of the world is turning into the "empty basket."

In the meantime, we have to save the delta smelt (maybe it will be the source of a cure for some diseases and that's why it's being spared). Priorities, what are they? Instead of focusing on water, monies are being used to tear up the Fulton Mall (around \$20 million, I read). And don't forget, it's only going to take us 30 minutes to get to Bakersfield on that bullet train. It's sickening!

Nancy Kilgore, Clovis

Back scratchers

I got angrier as I read The Bee's story of the Harris Construction lease-leaseback and the Fresno Unified school trustees' back-door dealings. This is so typical of bureaucrats in power to do as they want so long as there's an appearance of "due diligence."

In politics there's the old adage "follow the money" and you'll see who's scratching whose back. This, like all other sneaky Fresno cronyism deals, will be brushed under the table and come election day, no one will remember.

Brad Castillo, Fresno

Lush grounds

I was driving on Shaw Avenue last week past Fresno State's Save Mart Center and I was aghast at the beautiful

expansive green grass surrounding the building.

I sure wish the grass at my home looked this good. My grass is pretty much dead and gone because of my choice to water my few fruit trees and vegetable garden. This is another example of our government saying to we citizens, “Do as we say, not as we do.”

Dave Buchan, Fresno

Shame on Costa

This is in regard to Rep. Jim Costa’s “yes” votes on the Trans-Pacific Partnership and Trade Adjustment Assistance:

Costa’s votes on Friday were tantamount to a direct attack against what little remains of the sovereignty of his constituents. Need we remind him again that until he leaves office and becomes a lobbyist that he still works for us — the working people who do the actual turning of the cogs of society.

Moving forward, we will see whether or not his financial self-interest will trump his moral responsibility to the people who count on him to have their backs in situations like this one. I hope for all our sakes that Rep. Costa and the rest of the bought-out representatives can redeem themselves as we move forward and make the right choices for the right reasons.

The congressman needs to do what’s best for the people of his district, for the majority of them — not a handful of unfriendly money-laden business interests.

Jason Dalldorf, Fresno

No fake grass

I was appalled by the front-page article about Granville Homes’ policy to install synthetic grass in their landscapes. This is such a foolhardy choice for our community, yet this article reads like an advertisement.

These plastic outdoor carpets heat up in the summer (a study at Brigham Young University found they can be 37 degrees hotter than the air temperature), take a long time to break down in landfills, leach toxic chemicals into the soil and air, and likely contribute to climate change.

Every real plant helps oxygenate and clean our dirty Valley air; synthetic turf does the opposite. How ironic that Granville would call this plan part of their EcoSmart program.

I implore our leaders, builders and homeowners to avoid synthetic turf and make the effort to employ more creative, functional and attractive ways to reduce our water use. Consider a very small patch of real, cool, air-cleaning grass. Try surrounding it with drought-tolerant plants that maintain our soil and nurture beneficial birds and bees. Add interesting yard art and rocks, useful patios and drip-irrigated edibles.

Let’s make Fresno a model of health and beauty.

Andrea Farber De Zubiria, Fresno

Save this park

There’s an easy fix to funding more parks in Fresno. The \$16 million in federal money that thankfully hasn’t yet been tapped to bulldoze a beloved park should instead be used to restore it and expand green space in downtown’s concrete jungle.

Yes, I’m referring to the TIGER grant that self-professed park supporters like Cary Catalano, Oliver Baines, Clint

Olivier and Ashley Swearingin tout in their efforts to destroy our amazing, well-designed, mid-century modern masterpiece of a park, aka the Fulton Mall.

“Not a park,” the asphalt pushers might spit back. Well, that’s not only fake news to the locals and tourists who enjoy its greenery, benches, and outdoor art works daily, but also to the feds. You see, there’s a plaque on the mall with a message from the National Park Service: “This park was supported by the Land and Water Conservation Fund, which helps states and communities provide outdoor recreation and open space for all.”

Isn’t it great when our tax dollars are spent on something we can all enjoy? It can happen again if those who claim they support pedestrian-friendly places and parks actually put our money where their mouths are.

Jill Fields, Fresno

Lure of freedom

Finally, a Victor Davis Hanson opinion with which I can agree!

“Crossing the global border” (June 7) points out that the freedoms Americans enjoy are the lure for thousands of migrants from other countries.

Every day I am thankful that I was born in the U.S.A.

Marian Folker, Mariposa

Park facts

Chapter 5 of the city of Fresno’s General Plan clearly states the disparity in park space between south Fresno and north Fresno. It’s a fact — straight from the city. And it’s a fact that needs to be accurately reported.

Here’s another fact: All of Fresno is dead last when it comes to parks. I would hope our city leaders would spend more time solving our parks crisis than whining about how their own facts are being used to educate residents.

Hugo Morales, executive director, Radio Bilingüe, Inc.