

Willits Economic Localization The WELL Bucket

Volume 6 – Issue 6

November / December 2011

Schedule of Events November & December

Nov. 8

Election, Vote Yes on Measure A

Nov. 14, 6 pm

WELL CC Meeting

WAG building, 221 S. Lenore Ave.

Nov. 17, 7 pm

Now & Then Film, See below

Nov. 19, 11 am - 3 pm

Herbal Class: Winter Wellness.

Info: Beth at 459-1810

Nov. 20

WELL Potluck & Community

Brainstorm, at Little Lake Grange,

see page 1

Nov. 24, 11 am - 4 pm

Community Thanksgiving Dinner,

Senior Center

Dec. 9 & 10

Holiday Crafts Fair

Community Center. Friday, 12 - 8 pm; Saturday, 10 am - 6 pm

Ongoing Events

Every Thursday, 3 - 5:30 pm

Farmers Market, Little Lake Grange,

Pine & School streets

Now & Then Film Series

Nov. 17, 7 pm at The Grange - The film "Nourish" traces our relationship to food from a global perspective to personal action steps. "Nourish" illustrates how food connects to such issues as biodiversity, climate change, public health and social justice. Where did my food come from and how did it get to me? The food choices we make create a ripple effect that is felt around the world. Be the difference and vote with your fork. Snacks available.

WELL Potluck and Community Brainstorm

Sunday, Nov. 20, 4 pm Little Lake Grange School & Pine Street, Willits

4 pm: Enjoy a potluck with friends & neighbors

4:45 - 6:15 pm: "Talking Stick" Brainstorm:

- Celebrate successes
- What is your vision for Willits' future?
- What are obstacles & opportunities?
- What are highest priorities for WELL?

Your ideas will help shape WELL's program for 2012

BYPASS ACTION ALERT NOV. 9 DEADLINE!

After an "informational meeting" on October 18th, the Corps of Engineers is now potentially poised to grant a permit allowing CalTrans to begin construction of Phase I (only two lanes) of the Willits Freeway Bypass.

Please see page 2 for the letter WELL's Coordinating Committee has submitted. We feel the project will do far more harm than good – not only to wetlands but to our community.

PLEASE WRITE A LETTER OF YOUR OWN – it can be short – by the Nov. 9 deadline.

Permit Manager, Dave Wickens U.S. Army Corps of Engineers San Francisco District, Regulatory Division 1455 Market St., 16th Floor San Francisco, CA 94103-1398

See page 2 for sample letter

continued from page 1

Re: Willits Bypass Project Final Mitigation and Monitoring Plan (MMP) Number 1991-194740N

Dear Mr. Wickens:

WELL is a non-profit organization representing over 300 Willits area residents who want our community to thrive. We believe the MMP for the Willits Bypass is inadequate and flawed.

Avoiding adverse environmental impacts is always preferable to mitigating them. This project involves a massive impact on wetlands, and the success of proposed mitigation is extremely uncertain. The record on past wetlands creation, restoration, or "enhancement" is abysmal. Even the "temporary" impacts during many years of construction are likely to cause permanent damage to habitats and drainage patterns.

And yet the need for the project is not adequately justified at this time. Almost ten years have passed since the Bypass Draft EIR/S and Conceptual Mitigation Plan were presented to the public for comment. The data submitted at that time predicted increased traffic volumes; not only has there been no increase, but traffic has decreased by 20%.

Further, the EIR/S at that time rejected any two-lane alternative as not meeting project objectives, and yet the Phase I project - which is the

only portion being mitigated or contemplated for construction in the foreseeable future - is only two lanes. (Incidentally, a two-lane half of a freeway is likely to be considerably less safe than a road designed to be two lanes.) If two-lane bypass options were seriously considered, we believe alternatives exist that would have much less environmental impact, not to mention less cost to the public treasury.

Another factor is that the proposed mitigation plan itself will result in other unforeseen impacts in Little Lake Valley, notably converting hundreds of acres of farmland to other uses and reducing our local tax base. These issues have not been analyzed nor subject to review by the affected public.

Finally, significant changes have occurred, not only in the design and mitigation of the project itself, but also in its economic and environmental context. Peak oil is upon us, with rising fuel costs, and we urgently need to reduce emissions that are causing global climate change.

All these factors point to a need for a new or substantially revised EIR/S, with new opportunities for public comment and involvement.

We request that the Army Corps hold a public hearing in Willits to consider these and other relevant concerns about this project and the MMP.

Respectfully,

WELL Coordinating Committee

Keystone Pipeline is in Obama's Hands

The proposed Keystone XL pipeline would carry toxic tar sands oil from Canada to Texas refineries with disastrous consequences: more Boreal forests destroyed; toxic spills into aquifers across America; and potentially exceeding the tipping point on global climate change. As reported in the previous WELL newsletter, people across the globe – including Willits' own bike parade on Sept. 24th – are calling on President Obama to stop this project.

The State Department, with a flagrant conflict-ofinterest, is giving its blessings to the pipeline. The decision, however, is entirely in Obama's hands. Make a quick call and ask him to stand up for the health of our children, grandchildren, and the whole planet.

President Obama, (202) 456-1111 or 456-1414 For more info, go to:

http://350.org or www.tarsandsaction.org.

Label GMOs Initiative Volunteers Needed

A statewide initiative is about to be launched that will require Genetically Modified Organism (GMO) food products sold in California to be labeled as such.

This is an excellent next step to Mendocino County's successful Measure H, passed in 2004, which prohibited growing or raising GMO products here.

While Measure H has kept GMO crops out of our farms, it did nothing to alert consumers to the GMOs on the shelves of our grocery stores, so that people can make informed choices about what they buy and eat.

To learn more about this new initiative, go to http://labelgmos.org. If you're interested in helping collect signatures in Willits, contact Skye Patterson at sufikat@yahoo.com or 459-1932.

WILLITS FARMERS MARKET WINTER SCHEDULE



Willits Farmers
Market goes
indoors this month
through next April.

Starting November 3rd, Little Lake Grange will host the market, every Thursday throughout the winter, with new hours. Market

starts at 3 pm, as usual, but closes at 5:30 pm.

Look for fresh produce, eggs, meat, crafts, and bakery goods every Thursday. Music as usual. Special events, including chef's demonstrations and cooking classes, will be featured this year.



Above, winter veggies.
Left, winter squash, tomatillos and tomatoes.
Right, Mason's winter veggies, at the indoors Farmers Market at the Little Lake Grange.



Photos by Elaine Hamby

Report from the

2011 Bioneers Conference

By Beth Reidel

The Theme of the Bioneers Conference this year was "From Breakdown to Breakthrough: Transforming Civilization in the Age of Nature." The many amazing speakers are too many to list. However they included such noteables as John Liu, a correspondent and award-winning cinematographer; Rebecca Moore of Google; Gloria Steinem, a world-renowned feminist activist; and Phillipe Cousteau, who continues the family legacy of exploration and protection of the underwater world.

Some of the many topics I found most interesting were:

- Creating coalitions powerful enough to defend labor rights, human rights, and the right to a healthy and clean environment;
- Growing soil and local healthy food especially for schools, thereby teaching sustainable ecological living;

- The need to "grow" 100,000 new farmers to replace our presently aging farmer population (whose average age is 63).
- A very impressive film presentation illustrating a dramatic successful restoration of a large-scale ecosystem.

Biomimicry ideas and ways of solving environmental and sustainable living problems were also discussed. One interesting example was a type of glass presently being manufactured with ultraviolet markers in it, similar to cobwebs, so birds can see them. Also there's now a type of cement, the production of which actually sequesters CO2 instead of creating it.

As I was learning about all these innovative ideas and solutions already happening, I was reminded of how much life is improving in this world. It also made me proud to live in a community where we are implementing many of these ideas, plus creating our own grassroots coalitions and solutions for transforming our own social and ecological challenges.

The 2012 Bioneers Conference is set for Oct. 19-21, in San Rafael. More info: http://www.bioneers.org/

Report from WELL Event BUILDING AN ARK

By Madge Strong

This WELL event on Oct. 23 was filled with eyeopening information and ideas about what we can do personally and what agencies and organizations are doing to be prepared for emergencies. Are we ready for fires, earthquakes, and who knows what? Probably not – but we can improve!

Speakers included Sheriff Tom Allman, Brooktrails Fire Chief Daryl Schoeppner, Don Rowe of the Red Cross, Jeff Crawford of CERT (Community Emergency Response Team), and Marilynn Boosinger, talking about emergency supplies. About 40 people attended.

Sheriff Allman kicked off the presentations, noting that our County is fairly isolated and spread out, yet we're better prepared than most for emergencies. We have a rapid response force. Communications are critical! Allman is part of a "gang of five" which, with federal funds, has supplied ham radios to all the schools.

Allman has experience first-hand from other disaster sites, including Kosovo, Katrina, and India. One lesson is what people can live without. The better prepared the citizens are for what they DO need, the easier the job of the agencies. He recommends everyone have a minimium 72 hours of supplies for water, food, and medications for all family members – and don't forget your animals.

'The better you are prepared, the easier the job of emergency responders'

Daryl Schoeppner is not only Brooktrails Fire Chief but also chairs the Mendocino County Fire Chiefs Association (23 fire departments) that meet bi-monthly. The group also includes the CHP, CalStar Fire, the Sheriff and other relevant agencies which coordinate mutual aid and response systems. For evacuations, they coordinate with the Sheriff under a unified command.

Although Brooktrails does have limited and narrow roads, there are several alternative access routes for emergency vehicles, and plans are in place for controlling and prioritizing public evacuation. They feel they handled the lightning fires of '08 well, and they've learned a lot and improved since then.

Schoeppner agreed with Allman that it's not a question of "if" there's an emergency, but "when." Both believe that an earthquake will be even more challenging - and unpredictable - than fire. Allman noted that a fault line goes right through town, crossing Main Street at about the Masonic Lodge.

Schoeppner also introduced his companion "Ashes" – a calm chocolate Lab (who happened to be born the day

of the lightning fires) trained and certified to identify fire propellants, to track, and to search rubble for survivors. She (along with Schoeppner) is sometimes deployed to other counties since she's the only dog with this training in northern California.

Don Rowe is a volunteer with the Red Cross. They serve three counties from headquarters in Santa Rosa, with a team in Ukiah and currently only one trained volunteer in Willits and one on the coast.

Anyone interested in their training course should contact Don at rc@canzona.com or 463-2456 or Teri Wilcox

'It's not a question of "if" but "when"

at herblady0280@sbcglobal.net or 459-0213.

Red Cross had four shelters set up during the lightning fires, and they also assist individual families or neighborhoods hit by fire or other calamity, including providing shelter, food, and medical needs.

Rowe urged everyone to "get a kit, make a plan, and be informed." Know how to shut off gas if needed (but call PG&E to relight). Have a list of contact numbers – someone out of the area for family members to reach. He provided useful literature about what should be in that emergency supply kit.

Jeff Crawford spoke about Brooktrails CERT – one of the best in northern California. In emergencies, they work under the Brooktrails Fire Department's direction to alert neighborhoods, form central communications (they are equipped with ham radios), and perform auxiliary services and support for law and fire officials. Non-emergency tasks may include traffic direction, freeing first responders for other tasks. Brooktrails, Laytonville and Willits CERTs all operate as one team. To find out about periodic CERT trainings for new volunteers led by Janet Rayner, email brooktrailscert@gmail.com or call Janet at 459-5212.

Marilynn Boosinger gave an overview of both longterm preparedness in the home and being ready for evacuation from home with an easily accessible 72 hour emergency kit as well as supplies that can be kept in the car. Handouts were available with details about how, where and what to store as well as different methods of water decontamination. Food for long-term storage should be rotated regularly and incorporated into daily meals.

The 72 hour kit should include items of food that can be eaten without special preparation, such as canned soup and beans. Keep in mind special dietary needs, medications, pet supplies, diapers and any other necessities specific to one's household members.

First-aid supplies at home and a basic first-aid kit in the car are advised. Don't forget a light source with fresh batteries or a hand-cranked lamp. Include warm, waterproof clothing and a mylar thermal blanket in the 72 hour kit.

BUILDING AN ARK continued from page 4

She emphasized avoiding going into debt to stock up, but also don't become overwhelmed and do nothing. Start small, then extend supplies as you can.

Sheriff Allman added kudos to KZYX for immediate local news, and it was noted Willits will soon have our own AM radio station.

He said the reverse 911 system is very valuable, so specific areas can be alerted to problems, such as the recent Aaron Bassler threat, fires, etc. People with cell phones can register their location with the Sheriff's department. Allman does not believe in forced evacuations;

advise people of dangers and they can choose to leave or not

Comments from the audience included:

- Fill your gas tank when ½ empty so you'll be able to evacuate if needed.
- Safe water supply is a key families and water agencies should have back-up systems.
- Willits should return to being a farm community, grow more of our own food.
- Willits Food Bank is interested in coordinating on food issues.
- It's important to know your neighbors. (Several neighborhoods are starting to form groups.)

Report from WELL Event

HARVEST THE RAIN

By Pat Norris

On October 6, WELL brought Nate Downing to our community with an inspiring and energizing program on Harvesting the Rain. His talk – illustrated with beautiful power point slides - focused on practical solutions to water conservation we can all implement, whether or not we have a garden.

At the outset, Nate noted that Governor Jerry Brown supports AB275, concerning rainwater catchment, which authorizes citizens to use the water they catch in their homes and yards. This will make quite a difference to homeowners and backyard farmers.

Water can be harvested from slopes, from water running down hills. Regarding the roof's potential to harvest water, 1000 square feet of roof can provide 641 gallons of water a minute. With 100 inches of rain in a year, that roof would provide 65,000 gallons of water. If we could catch all the water that falls on our property, we would have an enormous amount of water.

With respect to grey water, Downing advised that it never be stored. Get greywater out and into the ground using a branching technique, diverting it to watering trees as an example. He recommended checking out www.cleanwatersystems.com in Oakland, also www.oasisdesign.net.

Basically, water storage systems that copy nature are the most efficient. In addition to the branching found in nature, there are a number of other patterns. As Nate described spiral shapes, I got a whole new perspective on microclimates. Showing a spiral herb garden, he asked: which side of the spiral gets more sun? More shade or more breeze? The elements taken into consideration consist of light, heat, wind, moisture, and nutrients. It is possible to plant so that taller herbs shade others that do

not like too much sun, etc. The microclimates can exist only inches apart from one another, and good planning can direct the growth and well-being of our plants.

Concentric rings are another natural pattern that can be deployed around apple trees, for example, forming a living mulch. Another type of mulch is created by layering, also known as sheet mulching. A layer of cardboard is followed by a layer of manure, topped off by a layer of straw about 5 inches deep. The worms love it. Blankets of mulch protect the soil, form a weed barrier, prevent erosion, and contribute to new soil. Simple erosion control can be created by burying straw bales, perpendicular to the slope. Straw and hay bales hold water back the best.

Containing is an obvious way of saving water. Containers include ponds, water tanks and cisterns. Another technique is making a pumice underground container with a wick to the surface; the pumice becomes a large underground sponge. Containers can have their own microclimates depending on surface area, light, presence of algae, and other factors.

A very common pattern in nature is tesselation, an overlapping pattern found in snake skin and fish scales, honeycombs and pine cones. Swales are a common use of tessellation, built in a series so that when one fills up it spills down into the next. Soil will hold more and more water as it gets healthier, providing much better retention of water.

Water conservation in all its forms is an essential part of Permaculture (name derived from Permanent Agriculture). The principles of Permaculture are synergy, redundancy, cooperation and succession. It seems that these principles are pretty important for localization and a sustainable community, as well.

Nate lives in Santa Fe New Mexico with his wife Melissa and two young sons. In 1992 he started Santa Fe Permaculture, soon joined by Melissa, who has a degree and certification in landscape architecture. You can learn more of his philosophy, writings and work at his website www.natedowning.com.

NEW 2011

WELL COORDINATING COMMITTEE

At the WELL meeting (Building an Ark Forum) on Oct. 23, members present elected five people to serve on WELL's Coordinating Committee. Four were incumbents who will continue on the CC: Kimbal Dodge, Holly Madrigal, Laura Rowland, and Bill White. April Tweddell was elected as a new member, replacing Jane McCabe who recently resigned.

We thank Jane for her three years of dedicated service to WELL and our community (she is also active in Soroptomists and Healing Hearts, among other groups). Jane will continue to help WELL as a volunteer.

We welcome April, who considers WELL "the most vibrant civic organization in Willits at this time...forward-looking, working towards the 'greater good', and helpful to citizens with ideas on how to live a more conscious life in our amazing little town." April is retired from 28 years as a real estate agent in Willits. Prior to that she lived in the Monterey area, where she was a social worker for the Red Cross and worked as a gardener.

New officers will be elected at the Nov. 14 Coordinating Committee meeting (6pm at the log cabin, NE corner of WISC complex, 221 S. Lenore).

WELL Coordinating Committee 2011

Kimbal Dodge, 456-9128, office@WELL95490.org **Holly Madrigal,** 459-0447, one_visionary@yahoo.com **Peter Norris,** 456-9968, petersnorris@gmail.com

Laura Toomey Rowland, 459-1043,

lauratoomey@comcast.net

Madge Strong, 459-1493, mstrong@willitsonline.com

April Tweddell, 459-6734, april@pacific.net

Bill White, 456-0581, cortabianco@gmail.com

VOTE YES ON LIBRARIES! Measure A, November 8

WELL has endorsed a "Yes" vote on Measure A, the November 8 ballot initiative to save Mendocino County's libraries with a 1/8 cent sales tax. (That's only 12 cents per \$100 of taxable purchases! Food is not taxed.)

Time to renew WELL memberships!

Members should have received our appeal letter recently. Please send in your renewal and/or extra donation, if you didn't already do it. If you haven't yet joined, please do!

At \$15 per year, it's a bargain, keeping us afloat and keeping you up-to-date on myriad events and programs for a more localized, thriving Willits community.

Send to WELL, P.O. Box 42, Willits CA 95490 or by PayPal on our website: www.well95490.org.

All memberships are considered due in the Fall to cover the next year. If you joined mid-year, you may, if you wish, pro-rate dues for the coming year. Amounts over \$15 per person are gratefully accepted! All donations are tax-deductible.

And please let us know if your contact information has changed. Send an email to office@well95490.org or call Madge at 459-1493. If you can receive the newsletter by email, it saves us a great deal on printing and postage.

WELL 2011 EVENTS

Jan. 23 – Water & Energy Forum

Feb. 27 – Swap Meet

Mar. 27 - Growing Home Gardens

April 17 - Speaker Charles Bush

May 21 – Barn Dance

June 26 – Transportation Forum

July 9 – Speaker Michael Ruppert

July 30 – Transition Town Event

Aug. 27 – Walking Garden Tour

Sept. 24 – Bike Parade

Oct. 6 – Speaker Nate Downey

Oct. 23 – Building An Ark

Nov. 20 – Community Brainstorm

New Greenhouse at Howard Hospital's Commonwealth Garden

On April 14, COMMONWEALTH Gardens hosted the Community Foundation of Mendocino County as they presented checks to COMMONWEATLTH Gardens as well as several other non-profit organizations as part of the Community Foundation's annual grant program. The grant presented to COMMONWEALTH Gardens was for the construction of the greenhouse foundation. The Board of Directors of the Community Foundation awarded over \$100,000 in grants to local non-profit organizations through the Community Enrichment Grant program. These grants are made possible by families, individuals and organizations who have contributed to Community Foundation Endowment Funds for the long-term benefit of Mendocino County and its residents. Please visit www.communityfoundation.org to learn more about the Community Foundation of Mendocino County. We are very grateful for their support!

Also, thank you to Pete Mihelcic and his son, Danny, who developed the pathways around the orchard and up to the gazebo. And, to Mendocino Construction Services/Northern Aggregates for their on-going donation of rock for the pathways and greenhouse foundation.

Keith Johnson continues to serve as the Project Manager, doing whatever is needed in the garden - and often that is quite a bit – currently construction of the greenhouse. NEWS FLASH! With the help of Pete Mihelcic, once again, the metal framing of the greenhouse was put into place yesterday. Pete assisted with his lift truck, and what would have taken a couple of days was accomplished in approximately 4 hours. Each frame piece, consisting of top and sides, was lifted into place while Keith inserted them into the awaiting holder, which was then secured with bolts and nuts. If you would like to help Keith with the remaining structural framing pieces, please contact him at 354-0532.

The greenhouse was donated by Sparetime Supply and was delivered in September. Ron's Quality Construction helped with the 30 x 96 ft. foundation. The greenhouse completion will make it possible to have indoor crops during the winter and give us the ability to start seeds for the coming year of production.

COMMONWEALTH Gardens/Christopher's Healing Knoll is a vision that began six years ago and



is coming to fruition through a donation made by William and Judith Bailey in memory of their son, Christopher. Infrastructure completed to date includes: fencing around the 5-acre garden site, well drilled and developed, pump house built, orchard with 50+ fruit and nut trees planted, grapes planted, irrigation to orchard and grapes complete, gazebo complete, greenhouse in process. A sincere thank you goes to the Bailey family, to the Community Foundation of Mendocino County, and to individual donations received from the community.

With many, many thanks and gratitude,
— Ananda Johnson

Check out the Wine & Mushroom Festival Train benefit for Howard Hospital, Saturday, Nov. 5.



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... would like to thank WELL for its support.

Brookside Farm welcomes volunteers to work in a beautiful setting and learn how to garden in Willits. Low income volunteers can earn up to \$20 per week in Farmers' Market credits.

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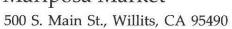
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WELL Coordinating Committee Briefs

September 19, 2011 Meeting

WELL member Larry River presented concerns about the potential Willits Creek trail. He and ranch owner Jann Smith do not wish to open the trail to public access.CC members understand the concerns but still hope to explore if security and privacy issues could be adequately addressed in the future.

The CoCom reviewed plans for upcoming events, including:

- Sept. 24 Bike Parade, part of a global day of action on climate change;
- Oct. 6 Nate Downey, which will include displays of water diverters for rain harvesting by Scotts Tanks;
- Oct. 23 Building an Ark, with some speakers lined up and others to be contacted, plus posters, PR, etc. Meeting will include CC election;
- Nov. 20 Potluck & Community Brainstorm our last event for the year.

Regarding the CoCom election, Jane McCabe has submitted her resignation, so 5 seats are "up." Most incumbents plan to run again, and we discussed other prospects.

We reported that the Garden Tour went very well. There were perhaps too many gardens for the time & energy to see; logistics and refreshments need to be simplified for next time. WELL will have a table for the Oct. 14 Hometown Celebration.

We also want to work with the Local First committee on ways to promote "buy local" – perhaps convene a meeting to focus on this.

Webmaster Harry Maurer showed us how we could submit items to be posted to the website. Thanks to Harry for keeping the website current!

October 17, 2011 Meeting

We heard reports on the **Harvest the Rain** event (see separate article) and our table at **Hometown Celebration** - good outreach and lots of signatures on the dairy shares petition. Beth Reidel also reported on the inspiring **Bioneers Conference** she attended last weekend.

"Buy local" and upcoming CoCom election were discussed.

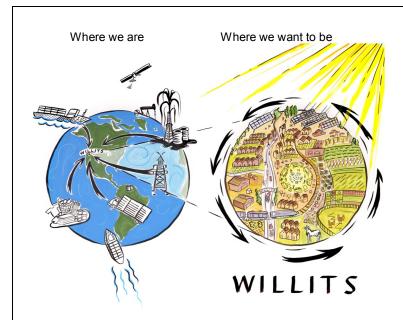
Plans were reviewed for the 'Building an Ark' Oct. 23 Event (see separate article), and initial thoughts about the Community Potluck & Brainstorm, Nov. 20 – more on that at next CC.

We briefly looked at financial data since 2009 and at a draft 2012 budget. This will be scheduled for action at our next CC. Peter volunteered to follow up on newsletter ad sales. Tim suggested Bylaws be posted on website. Madge will talk with Monique about bookkeeping, database & filing tasks.

We also had a lively and far-reaching informal discussion about how the "Occupy" movement might be relevant to WELL.

Next Coordinating Committee meeting is Monday, Nov. 14 at 6 pm

Complete minutes will be posted on our website: www.well95490.org



Join the WELL Group on Facebook

Search for "Willits Economic LocaLization" and choose the Group page.

http://www.facebook.com/home.php?
sk=group 176718939023521

WHAT IS WELL? Willits Economic Localization

Vision: An enduring local economy that provides health and security for our community.

Mission: To foster the creation of a local, sustainable economy in the Willits area by helping residents to learn valuable skills and to take action, and by partnering with other organizations to share knowledge and support projects that build a thriving community.

WELL is a 501(c)3 non-profit, membership organization.

WELL EMAIL: office@well95490.org Website: www.well95490.org Phone: (707) 459-7076



Willits Economic LocaLization P.O. Box 42 Willits, CA 95490