
White Slough Vallejo Enforcement Action

From Paul Theiss <theiss.paul@gmail.com>
Date Wed 4/15/2026 11:10 AM
To BCDC Public Comment <publiccomment@bcdc.ca.gov>

 2 attachments (3 MB)

Letter from Sierra Club Solano Group to BCDC Staff 1-20-26.docx; IMG_2223.jpeg;

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Dear Commissioners,

Thank you for this opportunity to submit Public Comment, and for your attention to the human and environmental disaster on White Slough in Vallejo.

The action before you ignores the human element. For years Vallejo has taken a “left blower” approach to its unhoused population, moving them from one encampment to another without adequate provision for shelter. The White Slough properties are places where they can retreat with less danger of being forcibly evicted. Last year two residents of White Slough were murdered while trying to prevent an intruder from carrying a gun into the encampment.

Hearing of BCDC’s proposed enforcement action from the local press in January, the Sierra Club responded by asking BCDC to participate in a collaborative effort to solve this problem. The response was simply a reference to BCDC’s statutory power to enforce clearances. (See attached letter.)

The staff exhibits and photos before you imply that the population of the property in question is sparse to nonexistent. But just this morning I took the attached picture of an encampment on the property.

The Sierra Club renews its request for BCDC to participate in a collaborative process involving the residents of White Slough, property owners, the City of Vallejo, and other interested parties. The way we treat people is inextricably linked to the way we treat our environment.

Thank you for considering my views.

Sincerely yours,

the Rev. Paul G. Theiss
151 Hill Drive, Vallejo CA 94590
510-909-5754
Sierra Club Solano Group

Cc Mayor Andrea Sorce, City of Vallejo

Attached: letter to BCDC staff January 20, 2026

Photo of White Slough encampment on Parcel , April 15, 2026

Letter from Sierra Club Solano Group to BCDC Staff

January 20, 2026

Anne Usher

Senior Enforcement Analyst, Bay Area Conservation and Development Commission (BCDC)

Phoenix Armenta

Senior Manager for Climate Equity and Community Engagement, BCDC

Dear Mses. Usher and Armenta,

We write to express concern about potential legal action by BCDC against the current owner of the White Slough property in Vallejo. We were made aware of BCDC's renewed interest in the White Slough by a recent article in the Vallejo Sun. <https://www.vallejosun.com/a-homeless-vallejo-resident-owns-the-citys-largest-encampment-now-hes-pressured-to-evict-his-neighbors/> We welcome your interest, but ask that any enforcement actions be postponed until there is time for collaborative problem solving, including BCDC, of this urgent human and environmental problem.

The Sierra Club, Solano Group has long been aware of the White Slough problem. Some of our members live within walking distance. This encampment is one of many in Vallejo, which has the largest population of unhoused people in Solano County. The main driver of homelessness is the lack of affordable housing, which is particularly acute in Vallejo. Very little affordable housing has been permitted here for the last twenty years. The City of Vallejo's approach has been characterized as a "leaf blower," clearing one encampment only to shift the people to another. Some move to White Slough because City bulldozers can't reach them there. Unfortunately, this isolation has led to other serious problems. Last year two residents were killed while trying to protect their encampment from a gun wielding intruder. The human and environmental cost is extreme.

The Sierra Club, Solano Group is committed to the environment. We support the City of Vallejo's efforts to prepare for sea level rise and build affordable housing. We are leaders in the campaign against California Forever's plan to develop a deepwater port on sensitive shoreline at Collinsville. We advocate for Rep. Garamendi's plan to expand the San Pablo Bay National Wildlife Refuge. As part of the Sierra Club's Redwood Chapter we participate in the Club's Bay Alive program.

But we are also aware that environmental and social justice are inextricably linked. Punitive action against those living on the White Slough would further victimize those who suffer the

most from failed policies of the past. Today's policy makers and enforcers should take responsibility for dealing with that reality.

Perhaps BCDC's threat of legal action could be the catalyst for progress on the White Slough problem. We ask that those most affected, our unhoused neighbors, be brought into a collaborative problem solving process with BCDC, the City of Vallejo, environmental groups and other interested parties.

Sincerely yours,

Paul Theiss, for the Sierra Club Solano Group

Cc

Alicia Bales, Sierra Club Redwood Chapter

Arthur Feinstein, Sierra Club Bay Alive

Mayor Andrea Sorce, City of Vallejo

Andrew Murray, Manager, City of Vallejo

Eli Smith, advocate for the unhoused

Ryan Geller, The Vallejo Sun

