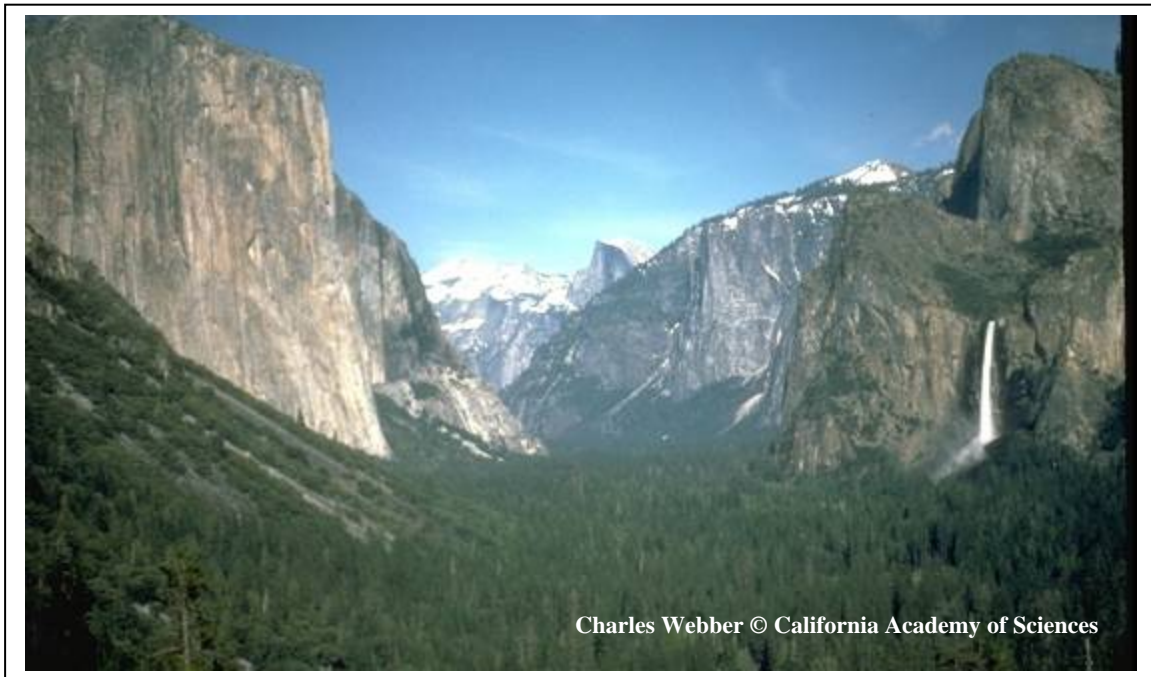


MARIPOSA COUNTY



COUNTY INFORMATION

Size: 1,463 sq. miles (3,789 sq. kilometers)

Population: 17,130 (as of 2000 US Census)

Location: South-West Sierra

Official Website: www.mariposacounty.org

CONSERVATION STORY

Merced/Mariposa County Asthma Coalition Fights for Clean Air in the Sierra

Air pollution and its effect on public health is an issue which has been creeping to the forefront in recent years. In Mariposa County, a non-profit called the Merced/Mariposa County Asthma Coalition has joined in and taken action against air pollution.

The Merced/Mariposa County Asthma Coalition (MMCAC) is a community-based health organization. With over 150 volunteer members, the MMCAC has provided services and education to the residents of Merced and Mariposa Counties for over 10 years. From clinical and public education about asthma to advocacy work to clean up the air the MMCAC strives to make the places we live healthy for people with respiratory disease.

Since the program started four years ago, it has spread across the San Joaquin Valley, Southern California, and Texas, and been acknowledged in a special report of the October 2007 Journal of Environmental Health.



Merced/Mariposa County Asthma Coalition
Controlling asthma through awareness and education

The Merced/Mariposa County Asthma Coalition's mission is: "controlling asthma through awareness and education." The MMCAC began the Asthma-Friendly Flag Program in February 2004. This program uses flags with the colors of the Air Quality Index to signal to school children and their care providers the level of outdoor pollutants on a daily basis. On unhealthy air days schools adjust the schedule of outdoor activities in order to prevent students' exposure to this asthma trigger. Teachers can use the asthma coalition's Active Indoor Recess (AIR) curriculum to find fun games and exercises to do with their classes inside on those days.

"Tools for Schools" is a free program offered to schools in both Merced and Mariposa Counties. This program was created by the U.S. EPA and addresses indoor air pollution in classrooms and other areas around campus.

The Coalition also provides educational presentations for the community about the basics of asthma, indoor and outdoor environmental triggers, and the link between the environment and health. The coalition has worked with clinics and physician offices in both Merced and Mariposa Counties to distribute free peak flow meters and spacers to asthmatic patients.

Outdoor air quality advocacy work is also a strong and growing component of the work of the MMCAC. Recent work has focused on the San Joaquin Valley's 2007 8-hour ozone and 2008 PM 2.5 plans. Members of the asthma coalition are actively engaged in the update of Merced County's General Plan and are working to defeat a distribution center proposed to be placed in Southeast Merced near homes and schools.

The MMCAC takes an active role in statewide policy efforts and members often visit members of the state legislature to communicate the challenges of asthma and air pollution facing our communities. In 2007, the coalition experienced a great victory with the passage of Senate Bill 719 which expanded the Governing Board of the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District to include more representation from local cities and public members from the fields of health and science.

For those who want to spend a few days working for clean air with their community, the Merced/Mariposa County Asthma Coalition provides a multitude of volunteer opportunities. All members are volunteers including the five-member Steering Committee. Opportunities include helping with health fairs, visiting legislators in local offices and at the Capitol, writing articles for the coalition newsletter and website, providing testimony at public hearings, and helping with administrative work around the

office. There is a place for everyone's skills and voice wherever they feel most comfortable.

The Merced/Mariposa County Asthma Coalition meets the third Tuesday of every month at the Golden Valley Health Centers classroom, from 12:00 – 1:00 pm. Everyone is invited to join the coalition for lunch as they continue their educational and advocacy efforts in the community. To get involved with the Merced/Mariposa County Asthma Coalition, to donate or for more information see their entry listing below or visit their website at www.mmcac.org.

ORGANIZATIONS

The Merced/Mariposa County Asthma Coalition

Contact Name: Mary-Michal Rawling, Program Manager

Address: 737 W. Childs Ave., Merced, CA, 95341

Phone: 209-385-5490

Email: mrawling@gvhc.org

Website URL: www.mmcac.com

Counties of Activity: Merced, Mariposa, San Joaquin Valley region

Issue Focus: air quality

Group Type: staffed, volunteer

Public Events: meetings on the third Tuesday of every month at the Golden Valley Health Centers classroom, from 12:00 – 1:00 pm

Volunteer Opportunities: Opportunities include helping with health fairs, visiting legislators in local offices and at the Capitol, writing articles for the coalition newsletter and website, providing testimony at public hearings, and helping with administrative work around the office.

Accepts Donations: Yes (Make checks payable to: Golden Valley Health Centers, Memo: "Merced/Mariposa County Asthma Coalition")

Description: The Merced/Mariposa County Asthma Coalition is a grassroots community-based health organization formed in 1997 by a group of local healthcare providers. Located in California's central San Joaquin Valley, Merced County has a diverse population that is no stranger to the economic, environmental, and chronic health problems that rural communities commonly face. The coalition has been a part of the Community Action to Fight Asthma initiative since its inception and, as such, has worked to link these issues together through a variety of programmatic and policy work.

Sierra Foothill Conservancy

Address: PO Box 691, Mariposa, CA 95338

Phone: (209) 742-5556

Email: sfc-mariposa@sierrafoothill.org

Website: www.sierrafoothill.org

County: Mariposa

Description: The grasslands, foothills, and forests between Yosemite and Kings Canyon National Parks provide land for farms and ranches, a home for native plants and wildlife, and a source of clean water. The Sierra Foothill Conservancy protects these resources and ensures that present and future generations will continue to experience and enjoy the land in this region.

PUBLIC OFFICIALS AND AGENCIES

Mariposa County Board of Supervisors

Mailing Address: P. O. Box 784,

Mariposa, CA 95338

Phone: (209) 966-3222

FAX: (209) 966-5147

URL: <http://www.mariposacounty.org/board/index.htm>

Senate Representative – 14th District:

Counties Represented: Mariposa, Madera, San Joaquin, Fresno, Tuolumne and Stanislaus

Website: <http://republican.sen.ca.gov/web/14/>

Assembly Representative – 25th District

Counties Represented: Calaveras, Tuolumne, Mariposa, Madera, Mono

Website: <http://republican.assembly.ca.gov/members/a25/index.aspx>