

[Fresno Bee commentary, Wed., March 27, 2013:](#)

## **Shale oil could bring boost to Valley**

By Adam Gray and Henry T. Perea

The central San Joaquin Valley has long provided opportunity to anyone willing to work hard and play by the rules. That opportunity is rooted in an economy based on agriculture, energy production and food processing among other industries.

But over the last five years, the Valley has been impacted by the Great Recession with unemployment levels in some areas still more than twice the state average. With many small businesses faltering, cities are making draconian cuts and opportunities for constituents are dwindling. We have the opportunity to do better.

While we work to diversify our economy, it's important that we continue to develop in areas where we have a competitive advantage. Our Valley always has been an area where community development has been based on the land and producing products for California. While we have suffered through hard times, we now have hope that, once again, our area will flourish like other parts of the state.

According to a new study by the Schools of Public Policy and Engineering at the University of Southern California, California's Monterey Shale, which is perhaps the largest deep shale oil reserve in the world, could produce job and economic benefits for the Valley and our state.

In fact, the study found that increased oil production could result in as many as 512,000 new jobs in 2015 and up to 2.8 million jobs by 2020. The corresponding state and local government revenue could range from \$4.5 billion at the low end all the way up to \$24.6 billion a year. Overall, this has the potential to increase the state's gross domestic production from 2.6% to 14.3% per person. Many states -- North Dakota, South Dakota, Wyoming, Pennsylvania and Ohio, among others -- are witnessing powerful economic revivals led in large part by increased oil production.

In addition, Texas, as the nation's top producer of oil and natural gas, has kept gasoline prices 50 cents a gallon cheaper than California. The oil locked in the Monterey Shale will push California up to Texas production levels, thus dropping gas prices -- a welcome relief to all Californians.

Even the conservative estimate of shale oil production would bring needed changes to our area. Rather than worrying about their well-being and the possibility of bankruptcy, cities might be able to fund critical services that provide for the less fortunate. K-12 schools and the region's colleges also would benefit from a more vibrant local economy and a state treasury that can make higher education more affordable.

No doubt, there will be many critics, especially from those who don't know what double-digit unemployment looks like. We expect objections to focus on environmental concerns and further reliance on fossil fuels. And while we whole-heartedly support the development of alternative fuels, we must look to develop every source of energy, including oil. Instead of relying on unstable parts of the world for oil, we should take advantage of our natural resources, create new jobs and ensure that the California economy is still one of the most powerful in the world.

While it would be unwise to ignore these concerns, we believe California can take advantage of this vast oil resource and do it in an environmentally safe way. We should learn from the experiences of other states and do it right. Additionally, we will work to ensure that we mitigate the potential impacts to other resources such as agriculture and water. With increased oil production, the Valley would have the means to escape the chronic double-digit unemployment that has negatively impacted our families and communities. Our region must come together and fight to keep this opportunity.

We agree with Gov. Jerry Brown when he spoke of addressing any concerns "based on science, based on common sense and based on a deliberative process that listens to people -- but also wants to take advantage of the great opportunities we have in this state."

We could not have said it any better.

*Assembly member Adam Gray, D-Merced, represents the 21<sup>st</sup> District, which includes all of Merced County and parts of Stanislaus County. Assembly member Henry T. Perea represents the 31<sup>st</sup> District, which includes portions of the City of Fresno.*

## **6th graders learn about being green at Planet Party**

By Rose Albano-Risso, City Editor

The Manteca Bulletin, Tuesday, March 26, 2013

There will be one group of sixth graders that will not be riding the school bus to the annual Planet Party on Thursday, April 4, at the Manteca Unified Office campus.

The students, along with their teachers, will be walking from Stella Brockman Elementary School in the Villa Ticino subdivision off South Airport Way to the event site just a few minutes on foot away. In the process, they will be learning about how walking helps reduce air pollution.

Some 2,000 sixth graders throughout Manteca Unified will be learning about how to become better stewards of their environment by taking part in 15-minute interactive presentations on various topics such as clean air, impacts of commuting, renewable energy, recycling, and water conservation among many others.

Topics on how to keep the air clean for present and future generations will be featured by event sponsors such as Valley Clean Air Now, Commute Connection, and South San Joaquin Irrigation District.

Conservation and agricultural presentations will be given by J.R. Simplot, the Micke Grove Zoo, California Waterfowl, and the California Department of Fish and Game, among others. PG&E, SSJID and other businesses will have displays and information about energy. The students will learn about recycling in the display booths of Epic Plastics, Onsite Electronics, Owen-Illinois, and other businesses. Teaching the students about the latest green innovations will be such business participants as Ricoh, Shred-It, and the San Joaquin County Public Works. Water conservation and other hydrologic issues will be presented in the booths of the cities of Lathrop and Manteca, SSJID, and MCR Engineering.

The major sponsors of Planet every year are Frito Lay, PG&E, Gen 7/American Modular Systems, CBC Steel, Allied Waste Services and Valley CAN.

The sixth-graders from the various schools will be arriving at intervals at the Planet Party site which is the grounds of the Manteca Unified district offices on the northwest corner of Airport Way and Louise Avenue. Planet Party co-chairpersons are Victoria Brunn and Patty Page.