

## **That's no billboard for buzzards at Bullards Bar**

By Rob Young/Appeal-Democrat  
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**Q:** When driving east on the (Marysville Road) downgrade toward Bullards Bar, there is a structure on the ridge overlooking Bullards Bar. This structure is the size of a billboard but obviously it is not, inasmuch as only buzzards and low-flying aircraft could read it. It doesn't look like an old microwave telephone transmitter. What is it?

**A:** We were kind of hoping this would actually turn out to be a billboard for buzzards and started wondering what sort of products would be advertised there. Something for indigestion would be a good guess.

Even a Yuba County Sheriff's Department deputy thought it might be a billboard. That seemed unlikely, however, since the structure apparently is on U.S. Forest Service land.

Then we started thinking about some sort of device to contact extraterrestrials, a la "Close Encounters of the Third Kind." Nope.

The real answer is more earthly — but still pretty interesting. According to Curt Aikens, general manager of the Yuba County Water Agency and someone who knows a lot about Bullards Bar and the dam there, the YCWA uses the "billboard" to reflect radio signals in and out of the canyon.

Aikens didn't say who those signals are going to and coming from. Extraterrestrials maybe?

**Q:** There is a newly constructed canal that comes up from the south to the southwest corner of Beale Air Force Base and then turns west and runs parallel to Erle Road. You can see it as you drive along the entrance road as you enter Beale from the main gate. Do you know who constructed it, what it's for, and who it belongs to?"

**A:** Conveniently, Curt Aikens, the general manager of the Yuba County Water Agency, was able to answer this question, too, allowing us to kill two buzzards with one stone, so to speak.

The canal, a joint project by the agency and the Wheatland Water District, will supply water from the Yuba River to the Wheatland area.

"This will provide a more reliable source of high-quality surface water to the district. A side benefit will be higher groundwater levels resulting from less agricultural pumping," Aikens aid.

Over time, the canal should result in a more reliable source of groundwater for people who pump water to lower portions of that area, he said.

Construction will be completed this year, Aikens said.

*Since You Asked is published Tuesdays. Send questions to reporter Rob Young at the Appeal-Democrat, P.O. Box 431, Marysville CA 95901, e-mail him at [ryoung@appeal-](mailto:ryoung@appeal-)*