Public Abstract

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In the fertile but dry San Joaquin Valley in California, Irrigation canals serve as the life blood of the agricultural industry. These canals predate urbanization and the expansion of cities in the valley have incorporated canals as de facto elements of the urban environment. Neighborhoods in Fresno have developed relationships with these linear structures in the process of this incorporation. Canals, however, traverse a diverse range of neighborhoods, many of which, have different perceptions of and relationships with canals. This study examines the difference in perceptions of canals between two specific neighborhoods. Old Fig is a higher socio-economic neighborhood that exudes a specific sense of neighborhood. Contrasting that is Mayfair, a lower socio-economic, racially diverse neighborhood that lacks a specific neighborhood identity. A comparison of canal perceptions between these two neighborhoods will reveal the effect of neighborhood identity on environmental perception as well as reveal the lack of consideration concerning neighborhood level issues in canal land use policy.