

Measure U in Angwin is necessary

October 14, 2012 • [Patrick Griffith](#)

This topic has been discussed every way imaginable from both sides. As a resident of Angwin and supporter of Save Rural Angwin (SRA), I have focused my attention on the issues of water, electrical power and roads — all of which are critical in Angwin and the surrounding area.

Pacific Union College claims to have an abundance of water and continues to sell tens of thousands of gallons weekly. The Las Posadas State Forest is in a volcanic basin at the bottom of which is an ancient water reservoir. That reservoir provides a true “trickle down” effect, providing water to many surrounding residences (this information is available from the county).

Older wells were dug to a depth of less than 200 feet. With the recent low rainfall and the overuse of water, newer wells are being drilled to depths in excess of 400 feet, evidence of a decline in the reservoir level.

Some residential wells are now insufficient. As the owner of a good well, I share water with two neighbors whose wells are no longer serviceable. But, how long will my well last?

Electrical power has been an issue in recent years. PG&E has confirmed that power lines are at capacity; and it would take millions of dollars to adequately expand the power supply to the Angwin area and Pope Valley.

Squirrels and broken trees frequently take out power for hundreds of homes. In 2009, a broken branch started a fire that came within 500 yards of our home and three others. Yet, PG&E is not about to spend the money to bury the power lines along Howell Mountain Road. It is cheaper to continue to repair broken lines.

The county’s 25-year plan does not include any expansion of roads in the upper valley area, especially Angwin. Only one road passes all the way through Angwin.

The Deer Park fire three years ago demonstrated the serious risk of fire in the Angwin area. We had to drive to Lake County and come home via Butts Canyon and Pope Valley.

Recent, heavy truck traffic (water, equipment and vineyard harvest) has left significant potholes in Howell Mountain Road. Many trucks travel the road in violation of state and county ordinances.

The recent patching disappears within a few weeks. The nature of the road lends itself to traffic accidents. Since 2005 we've had more than a dozen at our driveway.

In addition, the amount of traffic coming down from Angwin and the hospital is creating a significant traffic back-up at the Silverado Trail intersection once or twice each day.

Many may think Measure U is unnecessary, but it is the one sure way to stop the potential expansion of residential construction in Angwin. While most residents wish to see Pacific Union College thrive, the constant battles over excessive construction in Angwin are becoming costly and divisive.

Measure U will end the battles and hopefully enable people on both sides to work together for solutions that best provide for the long-term survival of Pacific Union College, Angwin and the surrounding residences.

Griffith lives in Angwin.