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June 24, 2003

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## **UC MERCED WINS ENVIRONMENTAL LAWSUIT**

### **California 5<sup>th</sup> District Appellate Court Affirms UC in Compliance**

MERCED, CA -- The California 5<sup>th</sup> District Appellate Court today affirmed a Merced County Superior Court ruling that the UC Regents acted properly under state law in certifying the Long Range Development Plan [LRDP] and Environmental Impact Report [EIR] for the UC Merced campus.

The ruling denies the appeal of the San Joaquin Raptor/Wildlife Rescue Center, Protect Our Water, and the Central Valley Safe Environment Network, which challenged the UC Regents' certification.

Carol Tomlinson-Keasey, Chancellor of UC Merced, said: "We are pleased by the ruling, which affirms full compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act [CEQA]. We have always said that we will abide by all applicable laws in creating the 10<sup>th</sup> campus of the UC system, including meeting or exceeding every environmental standard. It is our hope that those few individuals who oppose the campus will now join us in creating this great university."

The first phase of the UC Merced campus is currently under construction near Lake Yosemite, a reservoir northeast of the City of Merced. As part of the creation of the campus, the State and the University have combined with several entities to protect more than 25,000 acres of vernal pool habitat. Participating in the effort – which preserves in perpetuity approximately one-third of the most sensitive habitat in eastern Merced County – are The Nature Conservancy, the David and Lucile Packard Foundation, and the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation.

The UC Regents certified UC Merced's LRDP and EIR on January 16, 2002. The Merced County Superior Court issued a decision on October 1, 2002 affirming that the University was in full compliance with CEQA.

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