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River Partners' Vice President Honored for Work on California's Rivers

This Chico Farmer included among the top 15 candidates for the \$100,000 Purpose Prize.

CHICO, CA – 26 June 2006 – Sacramento resident Barney Flynn, founder and Vice President of River Partners, was named among the 15 finalists for the Purpose Prize by Civic Ventures on Monday, June 26. This is the first year the Purpose Prize will be awarded. The intent of the Prize is to recognize citizens over the age of 60 whose innovations and entrepreneurial spirit have brought outstanding contributions to society. Civic Ventures seeks to celebrate “social innovators” who continue to apply their experience and tackle pressing issues during their post-retirement years.

The only representative from Northern California, Mr. Flynn was one of over 1,200 nominees who entered into consideration for the Prize in February 2006. He and the other 14 finalists will wait until September, when the 5 winners of the \$100,000 Purpose Prize will be announced.

"First, it feels great to be part of the Civic Ventures Purpose Prize as we break new ground in recognizing the contributions of America's talented seniors. All fifteen Purpose Prize finalists are winners. Most of all, it's fulfilling to have national recognition for River Partners - both as a non-profit innovator, and as a force in the ever-important environmental work of the California Central Valley," says Flynn.

John Carlon, River Partners' President and long-time friend of Flynn, nominated Barney for his efforts in creating River Partners, a non-profit organization dedicated to river land restoration. "As an almond grower in Gerber, California, Barney saw how agriculture and conservation could work together," says Carlon.

Tired of fighting the Sacramento River to protect his orchard, Flynn saw the value in converting the fallow part of it back to natural habitat – plants and trees adapted to handling flood waters. Flynn offered an alternative to living within a flood plain: use habitat as a buffer zone rather than continually re-build his levee. With only 11% of California's river land habitat remaining, Flynn's flood plain solution also benefits wildlife.

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Flynn developed a state-of-the art database which helped River Partners to do large scale restoration by applying agricultural methods. Thanks to Flynn's innovations, River Partners has completed over 30 projects, mainly on public lands. A marker of success has been the return of the Least Bell's Vireo, an endangered songbird, to River Partners' restorations sites within the San Joaquin River National Wildlife Refuge.

Since 1998 River Partners has installed over 510,000 native trees, shrubs and plants along the Sacramento, Feather, Tuolumne, Stanislaus and San Joaquin Rivers. River Partners is a nonprofit organization whose mission is to create wildlife habitat for the benefit of people and the environment. More information about River Partners' projects and program is available at www.RiverPartners.org. Information about the Purpose Prize can be found at www.leadwithexperience.org.

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