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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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FIRST WEST NILE POSITIVE BIRD FOR PLACER COUNTY

ROSEVILLE, Calif., June 30, 2010 – The first bird in Placer County to test positive this year for the West Nile virus has been found in Rocklin.

“The bird was picked up by our staff on June 21, 2010, and test results were confirmed today,” stated Mary Sorensen, Entomologist for the Placer Mosquito and Vector Control District.

The discovery of a West Nile virus positive bird indicates that the virus is replicating in the bird population. Experts state that it will only be a matter of time before mosquitoes start testing positive for the virus, when mosquitoes start feeding on infected birds. Current District protocol is to increase surveillance in the area the dead bird was found, and District staff is already out setting additional traps. “Although no mosquito samples have tested positive in Placer County so far, there has been a significant increase in Culex populations, the type of mosquito that is the primary vector for West Nile virus,” Sorensen noted.

This news comes at a critical time in the mosquito season, just before a holiday weekend, when most people will be out celebrating and enjoying the weather. Dr. Mark Starr, Director of Community Health for Placer County Health and Human Services, is hoping that Placer County human case counts will be the same last year - zero. “In order for that to happen, everyone needs to protect themselves from mosquitoes this summer,” Starr states.

It is inevitable that people will be outside this weekend, especially during peak mosquito feeding times at dawn and dusk. However, public health experts urge residents of Placer County to defend themselves against mosquitoes by wearing an effective insect repellent.

As for the rest of the summer, the Placer Mosquito and Vector Control District recommends the 3 Ds of protection:

- **Drain** any standing water that may produce mosquitoes.
- **Defend** yourself and your home by using an effective insect repellent and dressing appropriately when outside, and making sure screens on doors and windows are in good condition.
- Contact the **District** for any additional help controlling mosquitoes around your home.

For more information, residents of Placer County may contact:

Placer Mosquito and Vector Control District
(888) 768-2343 or visit
www.placermosquito.org

Placer County Health and Human Services
(530) 889-7141 or visit
www.placer.ca.gov

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