



**COMMITTEE FOR
GREEN FOOTHILLS**

June 30, 2005

Supervisor Liz Kniss
Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors
County Government Center
70 W. Hedding Street, 10th
Floor, East Wing
San Jose, CA 95110

Dear Supervisor Kniss;

Thank you for your prompt reply to our letter of June 15th concerning delayed environmental protections associated with the Stanford University GUP. We appreciate the combination of environmental protections and monitoring items you list in your June 22d letter as having occurred since the approval of the GUP, and we recognize the County's efforts and success on these matters.

Our letter focused on the S1 and C1 trails as mitigation for the increased Stanford development that was approved and is occurring, even if the expansion is slower than anticipated. While progress has occurred on other issues, these two trails are the primary benefit that the public was supposed to receive as mitigation for the many impacts Stanford development has on public resources. The GUP states that within one year of its approval in December 2000, Stanford would identify and complete the agreement for the trail easements. Many of us in the community reasonably expected that two years would be sufficient to plan, analyze, and build both trails.

However, four and a half years later, we are still waiting. We will be lucky if the S1-A Trail gets completed by the end of 2006, a full five years after the GUP was signed. Even if the County moves more rapidly on the C1 Trail, the public will be lucky to hike the C1-A Trail before 2009. The public deserves prompt action on the trails, and no further delays on these trails, which were designed to be mitigation for a ten-year permit that began in 2000.

The County negotiated appropriate protection for the Special Conservation Areas in the GUP, as you mention in your letter. Just as the Stanford foothills protection needed to be finalized through the Open Space and Field Research Zoning, an acceptable SCA Plan and zoning must be completed. The Draft SCA Plan posted on the County website is helpful, although there is no posted clarification that the Draft is a Stanford document and not the County's proposal; no invitation for comment or direction as to who should receive comments and by what deadline; and no timeline for proceeding with a Final Plan and zoning. We suggest the County make these improvements to the SCA portion of its website, and move this process forward.

Finally, we are very encouraged by your personal interest and support for the Sustainability Study. While it will be some time before the GUP requires Stanford to begin the Sustainability Study, nothing stops the University from beginning it now. Stanford's growth and operations have an ongoing effect on the environment and the community, so the sooner it conducts the Sustainability Study, the earlier the Study can help manage those effects. As I mentioned in an email I sent to your office two weeks ago, you stated in 2001 that you would help "establish a working group to help define the parameters of this study." We are eager to assist in this matter.

Please contact us if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

<signed>

Brian A. Schmidt
Legislative Advocate, Santa Clara County