



greenfootnotes

COMMITTEE FOR GREEN FOOTHILLS



Sandbar at Pescadero Lagoon Artificially Breached

BY LENNIE ROBERTS

Coastal visitors on a recent October day may have been startled to see a giant excavator on Pescadero State Beach digging a ditch in the sand from the Pescadero lagoon to the ocean. What was going on here?

A VITAL COASTAL ESTUARY

Formed by the confluence of Pescadero and Butano Creeks, Pescadero lagoon and marsh comprise the largest, most complex, seasonally closed lagoon system between San Francisco Bay and Elkhorn Slough (in Monterey County). Coastal estuaries such as Pescadero are among the most biologically productive habitats in the world. Pescadero's complex ecosystems provide habitat for some of California's rarest wildlife, including a number of threatened and endangered species, some of which have conflicting habitat requirements. The Pescadero lagoon is also notable for being the only lagoon on the Central Coast where fish kills – including federally threat-

ened steelhead trout – have been regularly observed at the time of the breach of its natural sandbar.

AN ENVIRONMENT OF CHANGE

The very nature of the marsh and lagoon at Pescadero is to evolve and respond to change. A dynamic environment of water, wind, drifting sands and debris brings constant change to the marsh. Natural flooding and seasonal cycles cause variations in water level, salinity, and water quality.

HUMANS HAVE GREATLY ALTERED THE NATURAL SYSTEM

Beginning in the early 1920s, farmers diked off adjacent agricultural fields by building levees along Butano Creek, impeding the natural flooding process. These levees had the unintended consequence of increasing the frequency of flooding. Over the decades, Butano Creek has filled with silt generated by historic bad logging practices, old farm and logging roads, stream bank failures, and ongoing agricul-

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Greetings from the Executive Director

CYNTHIA D'AGOSTA

COMMITTEE FOR GREEN FOOTHILLS

We are a grassroots 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization working to establish and maintain land use policies that protect the environment throughout Santa Clara and San Mateo Counties.

Our mission is to protect the open spaces, farmlands, and natural resources of Santa Clara and San Mateo Counties through advocacy, education and grassroots action.

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By the time you read this, I will have started my new job as Executive Director of Filoli Center in Woodside. But as I write now, the news is still settling in. Although I am excited about my new opportunity, I am still adjusting to the fact that this is the last Executive Director message I will be writing for this remarkable organization.

It's been four and a half years since my arrival at CGF – years that have been very rewarding and fruitful – but have gone by too quickly. While at CGF, I've made many friends and together we've accomplished a lot. I am forever indebted to many, many, people for their kindness, their support, and for the experience I've gained. In particular, the mentorship of Mary Davey, Lennie Roberts, and Margaret MacNiven has been priceless. I will always strive to live up to their expectations and examples.

I will miss regular interactions with CGF's amazing staff as well as the CGF Board. All are dedicated conservationists who care deeply about the place where we live and work. I admire and respect these folks very much, so much so that I am planning to continue to stay involved with CGF. The issues we address, and the work we do, is as essential today as it was in the '60s when CGF was formed.

During my time as Executive Director, CGF has grown and changed. With Board support we built a successful and highly skilled advocacy team; strengthened our delivery of educational programs; formed several new partnerships; and continued to build our community outreach programs in neighborhoods from Gilroy to Half Moon Bay. My tenure has also been filled with such highlights as

honoring Peter Douglas, Pete McCloskey, Lennie Roberts, and Mary Davey – guiding lights all. All of this was vividly topped off with a grand event, CGF's very successful Golden Celebration in September. This occasion sincerely displayed the solidarity and warmth CGF family and friends bring to one another, and renewed everyone's commitment to the work we do. If you haven't experienced one of these phenomenal CGF gatherings, you owe it to yourself to share in the camaraderie – and you owe it to our environment. I hope to see you at the next event and I sincerely thank you

“My tenure has also been filled with such highlights as honoring Peter Douglas, Pete McCloskey, Lennie Roberts, & Mary Davey – guiding lights all.”

for allowing me to share these last few years with you. 🌿



From the President

MARGARET MACNIVEN

On September 23rd the staff and board of CGF welcomed over 300 sponsors, Honorary Hosts, members and their guests to our Golden Celebration birthday party at Runnymede Farm in Woodside for an afternoon of hiking/strolling amongst the eclectic array of sculptures that grace the property. The perfect autumnal California sunshine matched the glow in our hearts as we listened to congratulatory accolades for the organization from local, state, and national elected officials, as well as inspirational words from our speakers, John Christensen and Lynn Stegner. I would like to thank everyone involved including the entire Rosekrans family for so generously opening their estate for our party, as well as the CGF staff and board for all their hard work organizing the event.

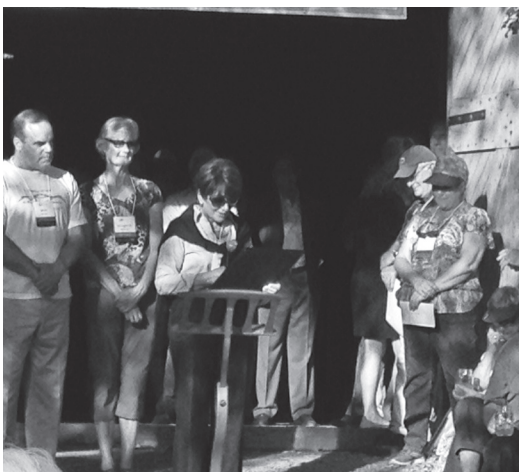
CGF focused this past year, its 50th, on member outreach and education through a series of monthly programs (all the while continuing our effective advocacy work, as you can see from other articles in this newsletter). I attended all but one of these events, and to my delight found I was able to come up close and personal with the ecology of the Bay Area from the San Mateo coast, down through the Peninsula and the Baylands, to the foothills of Coyote Valley and Gilroy. I have said it before and I will say it again, we live in an area of amazing natural beauty with

a complex array of intertwining habitats and intricate ecology, which CGF's work, together with that of other environmental advocacy and land protection groups, has done so much to help preserve.

I am sure by now you all know that our capable and creative Executive Director, Cynthia D'Agosta, has moved on to become the ED of Filoli, a National Trust historic estate in Woodside. This is sad news for CGF, and we will miss her very much. But a 50-year-old organization is used to hiccups, and already our competent and strategic Board of Directors has started the search process for a new ED. Cynthia leaves CGF with an effective and hardworking staff who will continue our mission of protecting the open spaces, farmlands, and natural resources of San Mateo and Santa Clara Counties. Thank you, Cynthia.

And now, let me ask for your support as we move into our second half century. I hope you will remember CGF when deciding which organizations you would like to help with your year-end giving. Thank you all so very much, and here's to wishing all at CGF – members, friends, staff, and board – a happy and successful 2013. 🐾

“...we live in an area of amazing natural beauty...which CGF's work...has done so much to help preserve.”



tural work. Efforts over the last two decades to begin to return the lagoon's hydrology to a more natural condition by opening up levees and restoring farm fields to wetlands may well have benefitted some endangered species while creating adverse impacts on others.

HOW PESCADERO'S ESTUARINE SYSTEM FUNCTIONS TODAY

Pescadero lagoon is connected to the ocean by a natural channel that allows an exchange of salt water and fresh water during winter and spring. When stream flows in Pescadero and Butano Creeks diminish in the summer and fall, the sandbar at the mouth closes and the lagoon's water chemistry changes from saltwater to fresh or brackish conditions.

After the first significant winter storms, the sandbar opens and tidal action is restored to the marsh. Researchers theorize that during the first "flush" of the outgoing tide, turbulent mixing of oxygen-depleted water and sediments may be causing fish kills. These fish kills have occurred at Pescadero lagoon in 13 of the last 17 years.

Scientists point to increased water temperature, stratification of saline and fresh water layers, decomposition of wetland plants, and the interaction of water and wetland soils as potential contributing factors for degraded water quality.

Can the marsh and lagoon be managed to improve conditions for the fish without impacting other species?

This fall, in an effort to maintain sufficient water quality in the lagoon and reduce the likelihood of another fish kill, NOAA Fisheries, with cooperation from State Parks and other wildlife agencies, initiated two early breaches of the sandbar. The first attempt to manually dig a channel with shovels, proved insufficient, so a week later, an excavator dug a deeper channel, which temporarily restored tidal action to the lagoon. Although no immediate fish kills were observed, it is too early to tell what, if any, impacts the premature breaching of the sandbar may have on the marsh and lagoon ecosystems.

LONGER-TERM CHALLENGES

If additional management of the marsh is contemplated, CGF has called for a straightforward, transparent, and inclusive decision-making process based on sound science. All stakeholders, including CGF and other environmental groups, should be included in this process. A comprehensive monitoring program will be critical to determining any future actions. Restoration of the marsh and lagoon should use techniques and strategies that most closely mirror natural hydrological processes, avoid harm to endangered species, are the least environmentally damaging, and address the sources of sedimentation and water quality problems throughout the watershed that are major contributors to degradation of the marsh. 🐟



The first attempt: a channel is dug manually



The second attempt: an excavator clears the channel



Endangered Tidewater Goby are found in Pescadero lagoon

Celebrating CGF's Golden Year

*A thank you to some of our partners
for a wonderful year of programs*

BY KARIN LIN

STEGNER BENCH HIKE

CGF members set out on an invigorating and brisk morning hike to commemorate our founding President, Wallace Stegner, on what would have been his 103rd birthday. Join us in 2013 for this annual hike.

ADOBE CREEK WATERSHED TOUR

This educational watershed tour, which started at Adobe Creek headwaters at Hidden Villa and concluded at the Baylands, was developed in conjunction with the *Shaped by Water* exhibit at the Los Altos History Museum. Participants enjoyed an array of well-informed speakers, including Pliny Keep (Hidden Villa), Rick Lanman (Founder, Friends of Adobe Creek), Junko Bryant (Acterra), Linda Gass (Curator, *Shaped by Water* exhibit), Tony Ndah (Santa Clara Valley Water District), Richard Moll (former Adobe Creek Watershed Group member), Donald McDonald (Los Altos Town Historian), Brian Schmidt (SCVWD), and Jim McCarthy (Adobe Creek Streamkeeper).

COYOTE RIDGE AND COYOTE VALLEY HIKES

The knowledgeable docents from the Santa Clara County Open Space Authority made these hikes fun and exciting. We thank them for their time and knowledge.



Brian Schmidt speaks at Adobe Creek Watershed Tour

BAYLANDS WALK AND TALK

This interesting and informative program drew an unexpectedly large crowd eager to hear stories from local environmental heroes Enid Pearson and Florence LaRiviere. The presentation was followed by a Baylands walk led by Eileen McLaughlin and bird walks guided by Mark and Amy Sanchez and John DeBell.

LOS GATOS CREEK WATERSHED TOUR

We had the pleasure of demonstrating Watching Our Watersheds (WOW!) on our recent CGF tour highlighting the history and function of Los Gatos Creek and the important steps being taken to protect and preserve the creek amid the unique challenges related to balancing water storage and conveyance with the need for recreational areas. The tour was made possible by our partnership with the History Museum of Los Gatos and featured a variety of speakers including Ymelda Laxton (History Curator), Larry Ames (Community Activist), Jana Clark (De Anza Instructor), Mercury Freedom (community member), David Farnese (Santa Clara County Parks and Recreation Park Ranger), Peggy Conway (retired Director, Los Gatos Public Library), Bruce Newhall (South Bay Fishing in the City Lead Core Volunteer), and Helen Chapman (CGF Board member).

REDISCOVERING LOCAL TRAILS & NATURAL HISTORY: AN EVENING WITH JOHN MUIR LAWS

CGF would like to thank the Sempervirens Fund for partnering with us to develop this very successful evening event. We would also like to thank our outstanding speaker, John Muir Laws, as well as the representatives from the Ridge Trail, Bay Trail, Water Trail, and Coastwalk California who shared their information and insights with us. 🐾

We Thank Our Donors

**YOUR SUPPORT MAKES
OUR WORK POSSIBLE**

Gifts received April 1, 2011 through March 31, 2012 but not listed in the Summer 2012 newsletter.

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Robert and Dorothy Young

Making a Difference

Ron Erskine joins CGF's Board

BY JULIE HUTCHESON

A passion for preserving and protecting precious open space continues to attract new members to our Board. Such is the case with our newest Director, Ron Erskine. Ron is a semi-retired professional “jack-of-all-trades.” He’s been a builder, a real estate agent, a founder and owner of Coast Range Brewing Company, and is now a columnist, a teacher at a community college, and an outdoor-wellness program advisor. A native Bay Area resident, Ron has volunteered for over 20 years at Henry Coe State Park and serves on the Board of Directors of the Coe Park’s Pine Ridge Association. He is an avid outdoorsman and has twice hiked the John Muir Trail among many others.

Ron sees an increasing role for CGF’s advocacy work in south Santa Clara County where there is constant pressure to expand onto its large open spaces. Central to what Ron loves about Morgan Hill (where he resides) is its open space: he wants to see that it is protected. Joining CGF’s Board of Directors means “being a part of making a difference, making the world a better place.” 🐾



Ron Erskine, Board Member

Jumping in with Both Feet

Welcome, Liz!

BY NANCY ARBUCKLE

Says Liz, “For 50 years, Committee for Green Foothills has worked to preserve our foothills, mountains, farms, forests, and coasts. When I think of those 50 years of hard-won victories, I feel a debt of gratitude to all of the staff, Board members, advocates, and supporters that have come through these doors. Without them, much of the natural beauty of the Bay Area would be a thing of the past. I am incredibly excited to be joining the CGF team, and am honored to have the chance to contribute to such important work.”

Liz is a food activist, anthropologist, and author. She has a master’s degree in nutritional anthropology from Oxford University where she studied the complex interrelationships between the food marketing industry, nutrition education efforts in our schools, and their profound and unexpected effects on our relationship with food. Liz is the founder of Full Circle Farm, an educational, organic farm on school land that connects 14,000 schoolchildren directly to the source of their food.

As a founding member of the Bay Area Children in Nature Collaborative, Liz is also working to engage schools and parents in increasing kids’ access to healthy, outdoor environments.

Liz’s most recent endeavor is Little Bee Pops – bringing healthy, sustainable summer treats to parks and Farmers’ Markets in Silicon Valley. Liz will be with us until May 2013 (when the Little Bee Pops season kicks in again) while we search for a permanent ED. 🐾



Liz Snyder, Interim Executive Director

Coming Together to Protect Our Watersheds

BY ALICE KAUFMAN

The 2012 Silicon Valley Watershed Summit, which took place on September 22 at Foothill College, was a great success, drawing over 240 participants. Community activists, agency staff, elected officials, and anyone who wanted to learn more about watershed issues in San Mateo and Santa Clara counties came to hear expert presentations, ask questions of workshop leaders, and collaborate with others.

Many partners, including CGF, worked together to bring this summit to fruition. CGF Legislative Advocate Alice Kaufman moderated a panel on legislation and advocacy issues regarding watersheds, which included presentations by elected officials such as Assemblyman Rich Gordon and Santa Clara Valley Water District Board member Brian Schmidt.

Because watershed issues encompass a wide variety of impacts and concerns, the summit focused on a “raindrop to groundwater” viewpoint that tied together storm water management, erosion, pollution, flood control, riparian protection, groundwater recharge, and the very nature of California’s water supply system. Participants were reminded

that everything within a watershed affects the rest of the watershed, and that when we fail to look at a watershed as a single system, we miss many of the underlying factors that contribute to water-related issues.

The Watershed Summit was organized by Peter Drekmeier of Tuolumne River Trust and Yoriko Kishimoto of Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District. Speakers included Brock Dolman of the Occidental Arts and Ecology Center’s Water Institute; Lester Snow, former California Secretary of Natural Resources and current Director of the California Water Foundation; Len Materman of the San Francisco Bay Area Joint Powers Authority; Phil Bobel, Asst. Director of Public Works for the City of Palo Alto; Jim Fiedler, Chief Operating Officer of the Santa Clara Valley Water District; and Jerry Smith, Professor at San Jose State University.

The presentations were followed by workshops on topics like advocacy, legislation, and creek restoration, and then by watershed-specific breakout groups where participants had the opportunity to collaborate on the issues facing particular Bay Area watersheds.



WATCHING OUR WATERSHEDS (WOW!)

WOW! is an interactive map in Google Earth format showing the present and historical surface water drainage of Santa Clara Valley based on the Oakland Museum Creek & Watershed Map series and historical ecology habitat reports from the San Francisco Estuary Institute.

The WOW! map of Santa Clara Valley was partially funded by a Watershed Stewardship grant to CGF from the Santa Clara Valley Water District Clean, Safe Creek and Natural Flood Protection special tax of 2000.

CGF would like to thank all the WOW! collaborators and especially its creators, Janet Sowers and Trish Mulvey.

To explore your watershed with WOW!, download Google Earth on your computer and visit:

www.valleywater.org/WOW.aspx



From left to right: Brock Dolman, Peter Drekmeier, Lester Snow, Yoriko Kishimoto

Coastal Farm Tour Highlights

A look at farming traditions and innovations

BY LENNIE ROBERTS

CGF's ever-popular Farm Tours returned to the San Mateo coast this summer when over 60 members and guests heard from inspiring speakers ranging from third-generation farmer John Giusti, who grows traditional coastal crops at the urban edge of Half Moon Bay, to a new wave of farmers on the South Coast, who are innovating new practices at TomKat Ranch, Fifth Crow Farm, and Pie Ranch.

Erin Tormey, who founded the first Certified Coastside Farmer's Market in Half Moon Bay 10 years ago, was on hand to describe how farmer-based markets can forge lasting connections between growers and customers.

John Giusti's family has been raising artichokes, Brussels sprouts, leeks, beans, and peas on the fertile coastal terraces near Half Moon Bay for 90 years. John is optimistic about the future of coastal farming thanks to CGF's help in preventing sprawling development beyond the city limits, and Peninsula Open Space Trust's success in acquiring threatened farmland and leasing it back to farmers like him.

TomKat Ranch has become a center for education and innovation in sustainable cattle grazing. Their herds are rotated onto new pastures every few days, helping to bring back native grasses, reduce erosion, and decrease the ranch's carbon footprint. Kathy Webster, TomKat's education director, introduced Carlie Henneman of PRBO Conservation Science, which operates a field station at TomKat. Richard

King, retired rangeland specialist, described the enormous benefits of conservation grazing to soil health, and Jeremiah Stent, grazing specialist, walked the group down to watch a happy herd of cows eagerly move into a new, greener pasture.

Fifth Crow Farms is in its fourth season. Its three partners, Teresa Kurtak, Mike Irving, and John Vars have instituted a diversified approach to growing organic vegetables and flowers. Fifth Crow has over 80 CSA customers who receive boxes of produce weekly in addition to selling at three local Farmer's Markets. Our group walked among a dizzying array of vegetables, learned about how organic farming approaches farming as an ecosystem that needs to be sustainable, and admired the pastured chickens that provide extra services by eating bugs and fertilizing fields at the same time.

Pie Ranch was our final stop. There, Jered Lawson and Nancy Vail walked our group through the farm explaining their visionary approach that integrates farming with natural systems and involves inner city kids directly in understanding their relationships to food through experiencing first hand the workings of a farm. The day was capped off by delicious pie produced from hand-ground wheat flour grown at Pie Ranch and organically grown fruits. Fortunately our group did not have to decide whether the pies outclassed the delicious lunch of organic veggies prepared by Cindy Simms and her crew from the Pescadero County Store. Everyone took home samples of bronze-leaved lettuce provided by Fifth

Crow Farms and Blue Lake beans and artichokes from Giusti Farms. Thanks to everyone who made this a special visit to the coast.

The innovations and traditions of these coastal farmers underscore the idea that every choice we as consumers make to buy fresh, seasonal, local food not only helps sustain the livelihood of local farmers, but also forges strong connections between consumers and the land upon which we all depend. 🌱



John Giusti talks about challenges traditional farmers face and opportunities for innovative partnerships

2012

Our accomplishments

DEVIL'S SLIDE TUNNEL A culmination of CGF's forty-year long campaign to protect Montara Mountain and McNee Ranch State Park from Caltrans' environmentally destructive freeway overpass. The environmentally sound mountain bypass tunnel is slated to open early next year, and will preserve the coastal environment and turn the existing cliff-hugging roadway into a spectacular hiking and biking trail.

EDUCATION & OUTREACH CGF held over a dozen events this year, including farm and watershed tours, hikes, and member appreciation gatherings. We also helped to create the South County Vision Map, a community-led vision for preserving South County's rich natural and agricultural resources.

REDWOOD CITY SALT PONDS The Cargill development project is on hold, for now. Challenges remain in protecting Redwood City's environmentally sensitive salt ponds. Much remains to be done.

PARKS CHARTER FUND Together with other environmental groups, CGF successfully advocated for the preservation of Santa Clara County's long-standing policy that parks and trails funded through the Parks Charter Fund should be of county-wide significance, rather than small neighborhood parks.

ROADSIDE RUNOFF CGF successfully convinced the San Mateo County Board of Supervisors to mow roadside vegetation instead of spraying with pesticides, which will help protect our creeks and streams.



Stegner Bench Hike (see page 5)

2013

Our goals for the year ahead

HABITAT CONSERVATION Continue to work with local agencies to ensure proper adoption and implementation of the Santa Clara Valley Habitat Conservation Plan. Four of six local partners have adopted the Plan, with the City of San Jose and the Valley Transportation Authority bringing the Plan to a vote on December 4th and 16th respectively.

EAST PALO ALTO WATERWAYS Host a series of community meetings in East Palo Alto to help create a community-led vision for protecting and restoring East Palo Alto's watershed.

EDUCATION & OUTREACH Hold monthly events highlighting the Bay Area's natural beauty and diversity including our farm tours, watershed tours, and hikes.

MORGAN HILL Work with local agencies to halt unchecked and costly plans for sprawl development.

GENERAL PLAN UPDATES Advocates for better policies and actions in Santa Clara County, Morgan Hill, and Gilroy General Plans that will ultimately lead to the long-term protection of farmland and open space while creating healthier communities.

RIPARIAN PROTECTION Advocate for the City of San Jose to adopt a robust riparian ordinance that will protect sensitive riparian corridors from development projects.

TAME THE TRASH Help unclog our landfills and waterways by continuing to promote ordinances restricting the use of single-use carry out bags and polystyrene food containers in targeted cities in Santa Clara and San Mateo Counties.



Birding at CGF's Baylands Walk & Talk

Planting a Tree with Lasting Shade

Jerry Hearn tells us about his decision to include CGF in his estate planning

CGF: You checked the box on the remit form for your annual gift that says you have included CGF in your estate planning. Please tell us what prompted you to do this and why you believe legacy giving is important.

JERRY: The Committee for Green Foothills is, in many ways, the foundation of our local environmental movement. The list of current and former board members reads like a *Who's Who* of our regional environmental heroes. The organization continues its important preservation work today as a result of the deep commitments of those giants of the past and the stalwarts of the present. By giving a legacy gift to CGF I feel that I, in my small way, am also contributing in a lasting way to the bright future that all of those

“Giving in this way is like planting the seed of a tree under whose shade I will never sit.”

“wonderful people” (as Mary Davey would say) have done so much to ensure. My hope is that this will help shape a world my grandchildren can live in and enjoy as I have been privileged to do. Giving in this way is like planting the seed of a tree under whose shade I will never sit. There is something profoundly comforting in that thought.

CGF: Was it difficult to choose which form of estate gift to use?

JERRY: Not for me. I felt that the easiest approach was to simply call out CGF as a recipient of some funds out of my estate. As CGF develops other vehicles for legacy giving, I will be among the first to consider them as a possible resource to carry out my estate plans.

CGF: Do you have any suggestions for others?

JERRY: First, consider making a gift of this nature in the way that best fits your financial situation. There are a number of vehicles that can enable you to ensure that CGF will benefit from your efforts, but will also provide you with a source of income during your life. Don't put off making such plans for the future; you never know when the future will arrive!

CGF: Thank you Jerry! 🌱



Jerry Hearn with outgoing E.D. Cynthia D'Agosta

CGF INVITES YOU TO JOIN THE GREEN FOOTHILLS LEGACY SOCIETY

For those like Jerry who care deeply about our local environment, estate planning offers a unique opportunity to acknowledge a thoughtful life by helping future generations. Establishing a bequest can ensure your legacy and the ability of Committee for Green Foothills to preserve our coasts, forests, farms, and orchards.

To name the Committee in your will or as a beneficiary of your bank or retirement account, the information below is all you need:

LEGAL NAME: Green Foothills Foundation
dba Committee for Green Foothills - A California nonprofit corporation

TAX IDENTIFICATION NUMBER: 94-6121854

ADDRESS: 3921 East Bayshore Road, Palo Alto CA 94303

FOR MORE INFORMATION
call Paul Davis at:

650-968-7243 x314

or email him at:

paul@greenfoothills.org

**HAVE YOU ALREADY
NAMED CGF AS
A BENEFICIARY?**

PLEASE LET PAUL KNOW.

CGF would like to recognize and remember Congressman Tom Lantos, Dalyn Wells, and Nancy P. Weston as members of the Green Foothills Legacy Society. They invested in CGF's work beyond their lifetimes.

The Committee is watching...

In Santa Clara County:

LOCAL AGENCY FORMATION COMMISSION (LAFCO) — which will hear Morgan Hill’s request for an urban service area expansion. CGF has opposed this project based on its premature expansion of the city’s boundary, unnecessarily adding to Morgan Hill’s already plentiful residential and commercial land supply.

OAK MEADOWS — another project in Morgan Hill seeking to prematurely expand the city’s urban service area boundary for residential purposes. Consultants are reviewing comments submitted by CGF and others regarding the adequacy of the environmental review.

SANTA CLARA COUNTY OPEN SPACE AUTHORITY — where officials are embarking on the creation of a 30-year Conservation Vision for the county.

SANTA CLARA COUNTY PLANNING DEPARTMENT — as they revise the County’s General Plan, beginning with the creation of a new Health Element that will include policies about access to healthy food, encouraging physical activity, and promoting parks and trails, among other issues.

SOUTHEAST QUADRANT AND AGRICULTURAL POLICIES — as we wait for the release of Morgan Hill’s draft Environmental Impact Report on its precipitous expansion project into the Southeast Quadrant and its citywide Agricultural Policies and Implementation Program.

SANTA CLARA VALLEY HABITAT CONSERVATION PLAN — CGF is working in collaboration with other organizations to ensure adoption of the Plan by San Jose and the Valley Transportation

Authority. The other four local Plan partners — Santa Clara Valley Water District, County of Santa Clara, and the cities of Gilroy and Morgan Hill — already voted to adopt the Plan.

In San Mateo County:

ARATA RANCH — where picturesque pumpkin fields in San Mateo County’s rural agricultural area have been replaced by a commercial entertainment theme park, contrary to agricultural protection policies.

BIG WAVE OFFICE PARK AND WELLNESS CENTER — when coastal development permits for this controversial project were unanimously denied by the Coastal Commission in August, after which, project proponents sued, claiming discrimination. Earlier lawsuits challenging deficiencies in the project’s EIR brought by CGF, Montara Water and Sewer District, and Granada Sanitary District have been put on hold since the Coastal Commission’s decision effectively mooted the EIR approval.

CARGILL AND DMB — who have submitted a request to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Environmental Protection Agency, asking for a jurisdictional determination that the Cargill salt ponds are not covered by the Clean Water Act and the Rivers and Harbors Act.

In both Counties:

TWENTY-FOUR CITIES IN SAN MATEO AND SANTA CLARA COUNTIES to see if they will adopt similar ordinances to San Mateo County’s ban on single-use plastic carryout bags, which apply to all retail establishments except restaurants, non-profit charitable reuse organizations, and grocery produce bags.



The Committee applauds . . .

SANTA CLARA COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS — for upholding the historic policy of using the County Parks Charter Fund for parks and trails of countywide significance, rather than changing the policy to use the funds for small neighborhood serving parks.

... and for successfully balancing support of agriculture with protection of the environment when revising the regulations that apply to wineries. The Board of Supervisors achieved the goal of reducing the regulatory burden and expense for various winery operations such as hosting events, while still maintaining environmental protections.

SAN MATEO COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS — for its ban of single-use takeout bags, with appropriate exceptions, and its comprehensive environmental review covering 18 cities in San Mateo and 6 cities in Santa Clara Counties, which will enable a shift toward the use of reusable carryout bags by retail customers and reduce the environmental impacts of plastic bags.

SAN JOSE CITY COUNCIL — for voting to develop a riparian corridor ordinance that will determine how far new development should be set back from the banks of rivers and streams.



Upcoming Events

Some events are still being planned; dates and locations for these will be released along the way. Be sure to visit our website and watch for “event alert” emails for updates. All CGF events are open to the public; we encourage members to bring a friend or two!

JANUARY/FEBRUARY

Join CGF for a local birding event

FEBRUARY

Sunday, 17th:

Group hike to Wallace Stegner Memorial Bench in honor of his birthday

MARCH

Educational program with CGF and Acterra

APRIL

Saturday, 6th:

Coyote Hillside hike with CGF and Santa Clara County Open Space Authority

Sunday, 14th:

Explore Palm Property in the Coyote Valley Open Space Preserve or another newly acquired property not yet open to the public with CGF and Santa Clara County Open Space Authority

MAY

Saturday, 4th:

Join CGF and GreenTown Los Altos for a Permanente Creek Watershed Tour. Advance online registration required.

Visit www.greenfoothills.org for more information.

South County

Preserve the charm/Protect the environment

Committee for Green Foothills, together with Greenbelt Alliance and a number of volunteers, engaged residents of the South County in a series of design charettes that resulted in the South County Vision Map, a document that represents what residents of Morgan Hill, Gilroy, and others in the area most love and want to preserve.

Visit www.greenfoothills.org to view a PDF of the entire document.

