



# greenfootnotes



## Celebrating the Past...

*"If there is such a thing as being conditioned by climate and geography, and I think there is, it is the West that has conditioned me. It has the forms and lights and colors that I respond to in nature and in art. If there is a western speech, I speak it; if there is a western character or personality, I am some variant of it; if there is a western culture in the small-*c*", anthropological sense, I have not escaped it. It has to have shaped me. I may even have contributed to it in minor ways, for culture is a pyramid to which each of us brings a stone."*

Wallace Stegner, 1987 (From *Living Dry*)



## As We Look toward the Future

### *Green Foothills Golden Celebration*

A Committee for Green Foothills Event

**A**s we have saluted our successes and milestones through the years, CGF will celebrate our 50th anniversary with a special event in a spectacular place. We invite you to join us as we observe our Golden Anniversary with an afternoon of camaraderie and festivity. Join us and other environmental stewards at the breathtaking Runnymede Farm in Woodside for scrumptious food, fascinating artwork, beautiful open space, hillside hiking, and, of course, many, many "wonderful people!"

Guests are invited to hike and view the stunning sculptures set throughout the grounds, spend time in our *History Corner* honoring our founders and long-time supporters, and visit the *Inspired By Nature* silent auction where you can bid on works by local artists such as Linda Gass, Don Quinn, Jacqueline Norheim, Kit Davey, and others.

You are sure to be further inspired by our program, hosted by **Jon Christensen**, Executive Director of the Bill Lane Center for the American West at Stanford, and featured speaker **Lynn Stegner**, author and daughter-in-law of Wallace Stegner. For more information visit [www.greenfoothills.org](http://www.greenfoothills.org) or call us at the office.

SEPTEMBER 23, 2012, 2:30–6:30 pm



## COMMITTEE FOR GREEN FOOTHILLS

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.

### STAFF

Cynthia D'Agosta **Executive Director**  
Lennie Roberts **Legislative Advocate**  
Alice Kaufman **Legislative Advocate**  
Julie Hutcheson **Environmental Advocate**  
Paul Davis **Development Director**  
Karin Lin **Program Assistant**

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**LAYOUT** William Moeller Design

**PHOTOS** CGF Archives pg 1  
Julie Hutchenson pg 2  
Cait Hutnik pgs 3, 7, 8

# Greetings from the Executive Director

by Cynthia D'Agosta

What better way to celebrate CGF's long and successful history than to honor founders and key stewards of our organization over the years? We will take the opportunity in this newsletter, and at our September Golden Celebration party (to which you are all invited!), to highlight and thank those who've come before us. CGF has made a lasting mark in the environmental movement of the Bay Area because of its leaders and supporters. As you can see in our donor thank-you list (pg 4-5), CGF has involved and inspired some pretty significant people.

It's been a real "trip down memory lane" spending time with Lennie pulling together pictures, articles, old newsletters, and past events to highlight. Lennie is an amazing reservoir of knowledge on local people and issues. I hope the images and names we've included here evoke great memories for you as they do for us. Please join us in saying thank you to everyone who has made CGF into what it is today. And don't hesitate to share your memories with us—please call me or Paul Davis anytime!

We have an amazing opportunity and a real responsibility to uphold the tradition, goals, and dedication of CGF's earlier generations. Fortunately, the clear vision and passionate commitment that has guided CGF through its first 50 years of environmental advocacy is stronger than ever. As we look forward to our future in a growing Bay Area, the struggle to see agriculture survive will continue, and threats to natural resources and open spaces will grow. So as we celebrate the past, we also recommit ourselves to CGF's ongoing role in the community we love.

# Hello Farmland, Goodbye Sprawl

by Julie Hutcheson

As part of our on-going efforts to prevent the loss of farmland in Morgan Hill, CGF has released our Study of Morgan Hill's Proposed Agricultural Mitigation Ratios (available on our website). The Study is in response to the City of Morgan Hill's draft Agricultural Mitigation Policies and Implementation Program that outlines how the City plans to lessen the impact of developing farmland and support the agriculture that remains.

The City's Agricultural Policies are to be adopted as part of a greater proposal to annex farmland into the city for development purposes. The area proposed for annexation and development is commonly known as the Southeast Quadrant. CGF has engaged in this issue for a number of



years and last wrote about it in our GreenFootnotes Summer 2011 edition.

The City has proposed an unprecedented 0.5:1 mitigation ratio (for every one acre developed a conservation easement is placed on half an acre) for all mitigation done within the city's sphere of influence. The California standard is 1:1—twice that proposed by the City. (The City proposed

*Continued on Page 7*

# Update from the President

by Margaret MacNiven

**T**ime flies when you are having fun! Already CGF is halfway through its 50th year, a year we are celebrating with member appreciation events that are informative and, yes, fun! So far this year members have enjoyed the expanse of wildflowers on Coyote Ridge, an important wildlife corridor connecting the Diablo Range with the Santa Cruz Mountains; hiked the foothills above Coyote Valley on a property recently purchased by the Santa Clara Open Space Authority; followed Adobe Creek as it meanders from its headwaters at Hidden Villa in Los Altos through recently restored areas before entering a channel in Palo Alto on its way to the bay; learned more about Searsville Dam during a docent-led hike in Jasper Ridge, Stanford's biological preserve; and walked the Baylands with environmental luminaries Enid Pearson, Florence LaRiviere and Eileen McLaughlin to learn more about our local wetlands. Our major donors were treated to a site visit of the Cargill property in Redwood City, site of the proposed Saltworks development (followed of course with wine and fresh-baked pizza!)



Staff photo (left to right): Nina Damer, Intern; Cynthia D'Agosta, ED; Lennie Roberts, Legislative Advocate; Karin Lin, Program Assistant; Paul Davis, Development Director; Alice Kaufman, Legislative Advocate; Julie Hutcheson, Environmental Advocate

And our celebrations continue. We have arranged a San Mateo County farm tour; another creek tour, this time the Los Gatos Creek; and an educational forum in which we will partner with Sempervirens Fund, an environmental group that for over 100 years has been dedicated to preserving redwood forests. The culmination of our festivities will be CGF's Golden Celebration in September, a not-to-be-missed event which will be the most fun of all!

We have continued our unrelenting advocacy work, as well as managed all these events, because last year our capable and creative ED, Cynthia D'Agosta, set about restructuring administration. Our three Legislative Advocates, Julie Hutcheson, Alice Kaufman, and the always-intrepid Lennie Roberts, are working on more projects than ever to ensure the natural beauty of the Bay Area continues to be protected. Paul Davis is now the Development Director and Karin Lin the Programs Assistant. The "New Team" has proven to be productive and successful and we are more committed than ever to our mission.

I want to take this opportunity to thank our long list of donors and to express my gratitude to you, the ones who make our work possible, and to ask you once again for your support as we embark upon our second half-century. I hope you will join me in supporting CGF as we reach out for sponsorships and donations for our Golden Celebration event at Runnymede Farm in Woodside this September. I can assure you your contribution will yield ongoing dividends as CGF continues its important work. It is no accident that the Bay Area is one of the most gorgeous places in which to live. Continued vigilance and hard work by organizations such as CGF are necessary to ensure it continues to be.

And one last note: I would like you to join me in welcoming Andrea Altmann as our newest Board member. Andrea, who recently moved to the Bay Area, has 10 years of experience in the environmental field, and brings to CGF a wealth of knowledge in a variety of areas ranging from climate adaptation planning to sustainable landscaping. We are delighted to have Andrea on our Board.

# We Thank Our Donors — Your

Gifts received April 1, 2011 through March 31, 2012

Gifts of all sizes help ensure the future of local open space. CGF would like to thank the following donors for their commitment to local open space protection.

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## In-Kind Gifts

Buck's of Woodside  
Cait Hutnik  
Gary Walton's Restaurants  
Hobbe's Restaurants  
Margarita Castro  
Margaret MacNiven  
Ridge Vineyards  
Shute, Mihaly & Wein-  
berger  
Starbuck's, Palo Alto  
Thomas Fogarty Winery  
Wittwer & Parkin, LLP  
Woodside Vineyards LLC



# The Committee is watching...

## **Devil's Slide Tunnel**

The Devil's Slide Tunnel at long last will officially open in late fall amid great celebration—watch for details as to time and date.

## **San Mateo County History Museum**

An exciting exhibit celebrating “The People’s Tunnel” at Devil’s Slide is slated to open November/December and will be housed in the Rotunda of the Old County Courthouse

## **Big Wave**

Coastal Commission staff are reviewing the many issues raised by CGF and four other organizations in their Appeals of the controversial Big Wave Project, and is expecting to schedule a hearing on the Appeals in late summer or early fall.

## **Martin's Beach**

CGF and Surfrider Foundation have called upon the property owner, Vinod Khoshla, to restore public access to this picturesque fishing and surfing beach just south of Half Moon Bay.

## **Alpine Trail**

San Mateo County Supervisors have budgeted \$2 million in FY 2012-13 to repair and resurface the existing trail along Alpine Road instead of expanding it into a badly planned and located multi-use bi-directional trail, as Stanford had proposed. The Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors will determine how to spend Stanford’s \$10.4 million, mitigation funds required for impacts to recreational users from campus expansion.

## **Midcoast Local Program**

The California Coastal Commission is still reviewing the resubmittal in May of 2011 of the San Mateo County update of the Midcoast Local Coastal Program. CGF is keeping on eye on the proceedings.

## **Williamson Act Contracts**

San Mateo County has cancelled 128 Williamson Act contracts that have not met California state requirements for maintaining land in agricultural or open space use in exchange for substantial tax reductions.

## **San Mateo County Energy Efficiency and Climate Action Plan**

County staff are drafting a plan designed to reduce greenhouse gases and address climate change impacts. CGF will review and comment on the plan as soon as it becomes available.

## **Redwood City Salt Ponds**

Cargill and developer DMB recently withdrew their original application to build 12,000 housing units and 1 million square feet of office space on restorable salt ponds due to intense public objections to the project. Cargill and DMB say they will be back with a smaller plan, but are first asking the EPA and the

Army Corps of Engineers to declare the salt ponds exempt from the Clean Water Act and the Rivers and Harbors Act, efforts CGF adamantly opposes.

## **Google Campus Expansion**

Google is planning to expand its campus in to the Moffett Field/NASA Ames Research Center property and has presented a design concept to representatives of environmental groups including CGF. The plan addresses the protection and enhancement of adjacent natural resources including the two creeks (Stevens and Permanente) that run through the campus. One point of contention is whether or not Google’s expansion plans should include housing in the North Bayshore area of Mountain View.

## **Palo Alto Comprehensive Plan – Natural Environment Element**

CGF submitted comments on the draft of the Natural Environment Element of Palo Alto’s Comprehensive Plan. CGF also provided input to the Climate Adaptation Plan currently in development in Palo Alto. This plan will address how to respond to alterations in the environment due to climate change. CGF will continue to track the evolution of both of these documents.

## **Morgan Hill's Agricultural Policies and Implementation Program**

The City of Morgan Hill plans to release a revised version of the first draft originally circulated for public review in December 2011. CGF has provided initial comments on the draft and is continuing its analysis of the document to be assured of its accuracy, clarity, and effectiveness. The Agricultural Policies are part of a larger project to annex 760 acres—much of it prime farmland— into the city for eventual development.

## **Morgan Hill's Southeast Quadrant**

The future of a substantial amount of Morgan Hill’s agriculture is at stake in the City’s proposal to annex and invite private development in an area known as the Southeast Quadrant. The current proposal could potentially destroy much of the remaining prime farmland within the city’s sphere of influence. CGF is attempting to engage stakeholders in working toward more responsible planning and, ultimately, long-term preservation of farmland and continued feasibility of agriculture in the area.

## **The Institute Golf Course (Morgan Hill)**

The Institute has indicated they would like to host a PGA tournament at their private facility by 2013. The after-the-fact 2004 EIR for the Institute Golf Course did not evaluate impacts of a tournament nor did the Planned Unit Development zoning document permit this type of usage. It is unknown at this time how the City of Morgan Hill will proceed with an application to permit the tour once it is received. CGF is calling for the

completion of the outstanding mitigation measures to endangered species habitat and further CEQA review before a permit for such use is considered.

### **Santa Clara Valley Habitat Conservation Plan**

After more than seven years in the making, the final Habitat Conservation Plan (note to Julie: is “Final” actually part of the title of the document? Is “Final Plan” its proper name? I am not sure how to capitalize!) is set to be released in late August for public review. The plan is set to go through the approval process by the six local partners (cities of San Jose, Morgan Hill, and Gilroy, County of Santa Clara, VTA, and Santa Clara Valley Water District) in early to mid-fall. CGF has been an active stakeholder in the process and will continue to advocate for the adoption of the Plan, which is intended to preserve important habitat for endangered and threatened species and will be paid for via new development impact fees.

### **California High Speed Rail Authority**

The California High Speed Rail Authority is seeking a 90-acre site for a multi-use (storage, maintenance, equipment) facility in southern Santa Clara County. So far, the Authority has proposed two potential sites in sensitive areas—one in Coyote Valley and the other in active farmland south of Gilroy. The need for this facility is due in large part to the Authority pursuing a “blended approach” to Caltrain and HSR north of Diridon Station in San Jose.

### **Hello Farmland, Goodbye Sprawl** (Continued from Page 2)

a 1:1 ratio applicable only to a small area of the Southeast Quadrant project known as Sub-district B.) A 2:1 ratio option is proposed for developers who would prefer to find lands for mitigation purposes outside of Morgan Hill, i.e., elsewhere in Santa Clara County.

The mitigation ratios are critical as they translate into how many acres of farmland a developer will be required to purchase as conservation easements to mitigate for the loss of farmland. Conservation easements are not only a crucial tool in protecting farmland from development but also in increasing the viability of farming operations.

The results of our Study indicated that:

1. There were significant enough discrepancies between the data we collected and the City’s to require them to further justify their land value data
2. The speculative development value on farmlands that are artificially augmenting land values are not reflective of true agricultural easement value and so cannot serve as the sole basis for determining the mitigation ratios
3. Mitigation costs at a 1:1 ratio may not place the City or developer at an economic disadvantage
4. Some proposed General Plan goals will be difficult to achieve under these ratios

The Agricultural Policies call out the need to “limit speculation associated with the conversion of agricultural land”. To achieve this, the City should plan future urban growth within its existing urban area and insist on keeping development out of the unincorporated Southeast Quadrant area. It could then work with landowners in that area to find those willing to place their land under conservation easements. The long-term goal would be the eventual acquisition of one or more contiguous areas of viable agricultural land that would make long-term farming feasible in Morgan Hill.

Where loss of farmland cannot be prevented, mitigation remains an important tool for agricultural land preservation. As such, CGF supports a 1:1 mitigation ratio inside the city’s sphere of influence as a fair standard for compensation for the irreplaceable loss of farmland within the community. We also are proposing a ratio increase — from 2:1 to 3:1 — for developers

wanting to mitigate lands outside of Morgan Hill. The 3:1 ratio would serve one of two purposes: either (1) to incentivize developers to mitigate inside Morgan Hill due to the potentially higher cost of mitigating lands outside of Morgan Hill, or (2) to generate true enhancement outside the city’s borders, going beyond fully mitigating the impact (as the 2:1 ratio does) and proactively preserving an additional acre of farmland.





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## Upcoming Events

### **Committee for Green Foothills 50th Anniversary Party**

*Sunday, September 23rd, 2:30 p.m.-6:30 p.m.*

Mark your calendars for the Committee for Green Foothills' Golden Anniversary, celebrating fifty years of protecting the "green and gold" foothills and open space that bring life to our communities. See front page and website: [www.greenfoothills.org](http://www.greenfoothills.org) for more information

### **The Los Gatos Creek Watershed Tour**

*Saturday, October 13th, 9:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.*

As with our previous Adobe Creek Watershed tour, this tour is in conjunction with the ongoing Shaped by Water exhibit, this time hosted by the History Museum of Los Gatos. Join CGF as we explore the Los Gatos Creek watershed and learn about this wonderful natural resource and the challenges it faces.

### **Speakers Forum with Sempervirens Fund**

*Tuesday, October 23rd, 7-8:30 pm*

CGF is partnering with Sempervirens Fund to host author John Muir Laws for an entertaining evening on the natural history of California. In addition to the talk, representatives from three major trail systems (Bay Trail, Coast Walk, and Ridge Trail) will be available to answer questions and inspire guests to get out and hike!

### **Devil's Slide Tunnel Opening Ceremony**

*November or December – Information will be forthcoming as it becomes available.*

Please see CGF's website for more information on these programs:  
[www.greenfoothills.org](http://www.greenfoothills.org) or call Karin Lin at: 650-968-7243 x 340