



Green Footnotes

COMMITTEE FOR GREEN FOOTHILLS www.GreenFoothills.org

Spring 2002



Kathy Smith

Protecting Coastside farming: **A long-term effort**

by Lennie Roberts

“They aren’t making farmland any more,” as the old saying goes. But on the San Mateo Coastside, they aren’t paving much of it either — thanks to strict policies protecting the rural agricultural lands and strategic purchases of threatened farmlands.*

As recently as the early 1970’s, no Coastside protections existed to prevent sprawling development. The County General Plan predicted that several hundred thousand people would be living along the Coast by

1990 — some 100,000 people in Half Moon Bay and the mid-Coast and another 100,000 in the south Coast. A huge dam on Pescadero Creek at Worley Flat, called for in the plan, would provide water for that metropolis.

The Coast could have gone the way of the Valley of Heart’s Delight — which we now know, unromantically, as Silicon Valley. Some of the best agricultural land in the world was lost in just a generation, as mile after mile of apricot and prune orchards were subdivided and paved over for commercial development, freeways, shopping centers, and housing.

Proposition 20 saved the Coast

In 1972, Californians approved Proposition 20, the California Coastal

Initiative that preserved rural open space and agricultural lands — dramatically changing the politics of Coastal protection.

In 1980, a strict Coastal Plan enacted by the County eliminated the permissive agricultural zoning that had allowed fertile Coastside farmlands to be chopped up into one-acre parcels. New strict Coastal agricultural zoning, based on a complex density formula derived from land characteristics, allowed only an average of one house per 100 acres.

Strict zoning served two purposes. It prevented agricultural land from being converted to other uses, and it reduced land speculation, by allowing land prices to reflect agricultural value rather than a hypothetical developed value. The new zoning established a permanent urban/rural boundary (unlike the short-term urban growth boundaries in Santa Clara County) that prevented sprawling subdivisions from consuming farmland.

Coastal protection today: The battle continues with a new twist

Not surprisingly, the Coast continues to face development threats. During the dot-com boom, ridiculous prices were paid for agricultural land, and huge “trophy” houses were built. Recently, CGF convinced the Board of Supervisors to consider a finite size limit on houses compatible with modest farmhouses, barns, and outbuildings in rural areas.

Adopting a novel approach that complements zoning and other regulatory reforms, Peninsula Open Space Trust (POST) implemented a highly successful program of permanently preserving the agricultural land base of the Coastside. POST buys threatened farmland from willing sellers, places agricultural easements on the property to limit or eliminate all non-agricultural development potential, and sells the land back to farmers. Where appropriate, POST adds protections for sensitive habitats in the terms of the sale agreement.

POST’s approach is more effective than

*It takes 500 years to make an inch of topsoil — one big storm could wash that inch away if the land is inadequately protected.



COMMITTEE FOR
GREEN FOOTHILLS

Committee for Green Foothills is a regional grassroots organization working to establish and maintain land-use policies that protect the environment throughout San Mateo and Santa Clara Counties.

The mission of the Committee for Green Foothills is to protect and preserve the hills, forests, creeks, wetlands, and coastal lands of the San Francisco Peninsula through grassroots education, planning, and legislative advocacy. Founded in 1962, the Committee is a Bay Area leader in the continuing effort to protect open space and the natural environment of the Peninsula.

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Green Footnotes is published three times a year by the Committee for Green Foothills for friends and supporters.

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From the Executive Director..

Recently, Committee for Green Foothills Founder Lois Crozier-Hogle received the prestigious Tall Tree Award for Outstanding Citizen. This award is given once a year by the Palo Alto Chamber of Commerce and the *Palo Alto Weekly* to an extraordinary individual who has worked tirelessly on behalf of our local community; it is an award which Lois so richly deserves. For the award celebration, I was asked to prepare an introduction for Lois and I want to share parts of it with the hope that you too will find much to be inspired by.

Tall Tree Award ceremony, April 4, 2002

"Let me tell you, preparing an introduction for Lois is a daunting task!! This is a woman who has more facets than a Tiffany diamond, and like a diamond, Lois has a quality of light and sparkle that is quite fascinating and difficult to describe with words.

"In the time available this evening for an introduction, I will scarcely do Lois justice, so I invite each of you to take an opportunity to know her better. There is so much to learn from this wise woman.

"The first thing you must know about Lois is, of course, the Committee for Green Foothills.

"Just about 40 years ago to the day, Lois and a handful of visionary citizens came together out of mutual concern over the fate of the Peninsula foothills. Silicon Valley was beginning to sprout like an exuberant spring weed and its tendrils were starting to reach for the foothills. These people knew that if Silicon Valley's growth was not contained, the precious foothills would be lost to development. So, Lois brought the group of about 25 people together in Ruth Spangenberg's living room. This founding group formed a board of directors, united in its desire to stand FOR something, hence the name Committee FOR Green Foothills was chosen. In a historic moment that evening, Wallace Stegner agreed to become the Committee's Founding President if, and

only if, Lois would agree to be the chief organizer, ringleader and orchestrator.

"She agreed!

"Forty years later, the Committee still stands strong in defense of the foothills and coastal lands of San Mateo county and thanks to Lois and her merry band of environmental pioneers, we can still look to the foothills and feel their blessings.

"And now, before we welcome Lois to the stage, I want to share with you a passage from a piece written by Wallace Stegner entitled "Roses for Lois."

"...she (Lois) has been central to this particular group (Committee for Green Foothills) from the beginning. She felt the urgency, she generated the ideas, she kindled other spirits from the incandescence of her own. She opened not only her purse and her house, but her heart to the cause of preserving the public and environmental interest against the forces of short-sighted greed. In leading, and inciting and inspiring so many kinds of people over so many years, she has created more than just another environmental group. She has helped create a community of like minds as well as a community of effort. And though she had other things in mind while she worked, the by-product that she didn't anticipate is not to be ignored. The by-product is love. Thanks to Lois, we are much more a community, a neighborhood, a family, than we would have been without her example, her enthusiasm, her energy, and her vision.

"What is more, she demonstrates that the more one gives, the more is left. She is richer, not for what we have been able to give her, but for what she has given us."

During this, the Committee's 40th anniversary year, we have much to celebrate. And as always, our celebrations begin and end with extraordinary people—those who have come together over the decades with courage and the spirit of taking action on behalf of our local environment.

Please join us in honoring our Founder and First Lady of the Environment, Lois Crozier-Hogle. **CGF**

Will the County protect the foothills of the Matadero and San Francisquito Creek watersheds?

by Denise Dade

Peninsula residents treasure the foothills of the Matadero and San Francisquito Creek watersheds, located west of Palo Alto and the Stanford University campus, as a natural resource worth protecting for generations to come. Providing more than just a scenic backdrop, offering the eye respite from urbanization, these watersheds provide valuable habitat for diverse species including coyote, raptors, raccoons, and listed species such as the steelhead trout, red-legged frog, and the California tiger salamander.

The County also recognizes the value of this land. In 1987, it adopted "Open Space Preservation: A Program for Santa Clara County," which identified 61 sites throughout the County as significant regional resources. The sites are ranked in order of importance for acquisition and preservation based on their qualities as watersheds, viewsheds, and urban buffers. The foothills of the Matadero and San Francisquito Creek watersheds make up a large portion of the tenth site on the list.

Sadly, many of the top-priority sites have not been protected. The County allowed a golf course to be built on the first priority site: Santa Teresa Ridge near San Jose. Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District purchased a significant portion of the number two priority site, Lexington Reservoir and its watershed, saving these lands from development — but only after activists worked for years to defeat multiple golf course and subdivision proposals.

Fifteen years after the adoption of "Open Space Preservation: A Program for Santa Clara County," most of the original 61 sites have not been preserved. With the encroachment of urbanization, the importance of preserving the top-priority sites grows each year.

Stanford opposes permanent protection

Unfortunately, Stanford has stewardship over a significant portion of the foothills of the Matadero and San Francisquito Creek



Stanford's foothills comprise a significant portion of the Matadero and San Francisquito Creek watersheds — lands the County has identified as a priority for protection.

County extends Stanford's trails deadline

by Kathy Switky

The two public trails that are expected to one day link Stanford lands to nearby open space continue to arouse heated debate. As Stanford and the community continue to argue over the acceptability of various trails options, the County has granted the university a second deadline extension, pushing the trails' completion date even further into the future.

Trails required as mitigation for university's development

Stanford agreed to develop and dedicate two public recreational trails as partial mitigation for the right to develop approximately 4.5 million square feet in the core campus granted by the 2000 General Use Permit (GUP). The GUP originally required the trails to be dedicated by December 12, 2001;

however, the trail alignments Stanford has proposed are unacceptable because:

- the trails don't provide the required connections for the Bay to Ridge trail
- some segments are unsafe, unpleasant, and environmentally inappropriate; and
- one trail proposed by the university cuts across the Special Conservation Area specifically set aside to protect the threatened red-legged frog.

Community asks for safe, scenic trails that connect to open space

The environmental community has remained united in opposition to the trail alignments proposed by Stanford. The Committee for Green Foothills, Stanford Open Space Alliance, Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District, Sierra

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Bernard Andrie

This rural 92-acre oak woodland in Woodside has been targeted by a private school that would replace this stunning viewshed with an institutional development that violates the Town's General Plan.

Development in rural Woodside would violate General Plan and set bad precedent

by Kathy Switky

Every day, Peninsula commuters passing Sand Hill and Woodside Roads along Highway 280 enjoy breathtaking views to the west: rolling green hills, extensive oak woodlands, and — off in the distance — Skyline Ridge.

Destroys viewshed and ridgeland

The proposed development of a 34,000-square foot private school complex on this site would change all that. It would replace spring's extravagant display of Mule's Ears (a showy member of the sunflower family) with baseball and soccer fields built right next to the freeway. The expansive views would be "screened" by trees to hide the institutional fencing; farther back along the ridges, the land would be recontoured to accommodate this development.

Threatens blue oak woodlands

The proposed new Woodside campus of the Phillips Brooks Academy (now in Menlo Park) would not only destroy these stunning

views enjoyed by all area residents, it would have significant and irreversible environmental impacts — including the loss of a number of blue oaks. "The blue oak woodlands on this site are among the area's best," said Committee Legislative Advocate Lennie Roberts. "Their destruction would be a huge loss for the entire community."

Violates Woodside's General Plan

While the impacts of the proposed 290-student school are significant, Committee for Green Foothills opposes the development because this project does not comply with Woodside's General Plan. The Town's General Plan was carefully crafted to prevent intensive use of rural areas, and specifies that new institutional and commercial uses — such as this school — should be limited to the Town Center and Skylonda Center.

Site inappropriate for intensive institutional use

The General Plan calls for development to be "properly related with respect to adjacent land uses..." This school is proposed

for the end of a dead-end road in a huge tract of open space near a single residence — where this development and its large daily population pose significant safety, traffic, and fire dangers.

This rural site is clearly inappropriate for an intensive use such as the proposed school — and is just the kind of institutional development specifically prohibited by the Town's General Plan.

Approval could open Sand Hill corridor for development

Importantly, approval of this project would not only violate Woodside's General Plan — it would set precedent for further development of the western corridor of Sand Hill Road. This would undermine years of work to protect open space, viewshed, and habitat in this region.

Following a third Planning Commission hearing in May, the Town Council is expected to meet regarding this project. **CGF**

For more information about the project, or to get involved, visit www.GreenFoothills.org/action.

Protecting Coyote Ridge

by Don Mayall

Driving south on 101 toward Morgan Hill, one sees a long ridge to the east — green now, but otherwise unremarkable when seen from the valley floor. On the ridgetop, however, one finds a place of sweeping vistas, home to singing grass, wildflowers, eagles, falcons, and coyotes... but few people.

Known as Coyote Ridge, it consists of a rock known as serpentinite, or serpentine — so-called because its unweathered pieces can be green and scaly like a snake. Serpentine's unique mineral characteristic helped shape Coyote Ridge's amazing and unusual ecosystem that includes ten protected wildlife species and twelve rare plants.

Coyote Ridge's most famous resident listed as threatened by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, the Bay Checkerspot butterfly, depends upon several plants that grow in the ridge's serpentine soils. Suitable Bay Checkerspot habitat has been lost to development elsewhere in the valley. The last sizable population of this butterfly is found on Coyote Ridge, and this ridge is critical to the butterfly's survival.

Unfortunately, development is not the only threat to butterfly habitat—habitat loss also occurs when non-native grasses invade the area. This invasion has occurred in the valley as a result of air pollution and poor grazing practices. Well-managed grazing actually is now an essential conservation strategy needed to control the invasive plants that threaten this native habitat.

Civilization is very close to this treasure, and expanding every day. Lines of new homes, factories, and golf courses are all advancing on the serpentine ridges. For a number of reasons, Coyote Ridge is the most important area in need of preservation as open space in the Santa Clara Valley. This is why we must preserve it:

Coyote Ridge is a cornerstone in the belt of open space around Santa Clara Valley. Its

preservation will protect the Santa Clara Valley from urbanization that would spread across the Hamilton Range and join with the San Joaquin Valley.

Coyote Ridge is part of an intact ecosystem and wildlife corridor. The ridge is contiguous with public and undeveloped lands to the north, east and south.

Coyote Ridge is a repository of rare and endangered species. The U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service has identified the preservation of Coyote Ridge as key to the recovery of endangered species.

Coyote Ridge is a natural science laboratory. Scientists from Stanford University,

U.C. Davis, Berkeley and elsewhere are studying effects of soils, temperature, pollinators, and human environmental factors on the ecosystem here.

Coyote Ridge is part of our heritage. Unlike most of the rest of the valley, it was not used for agriculture or development, and remains much as it was before the development of the valley.

The Committee for Green Foothills has joined with the Santa Clara Valley Chapter of the California Native Plant Society (CNPS), the Loma Prieta Chapter of the Sierra Club, the Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society, Greenbelt Alliance, Acterra,

and others in a coalition to ensure the protection and preservation of this remarkable area.

For more information about Coyote Ridge or to get involved with the campaign to protect it, visit the CNPS Coyote Ridge website: www.stanford.edu/~rawlings/coyote. **CGF**

Don Mayall, a retired researcher from Ohlone College, has been a member of the Santa Clara Valley Chapter of CNPS since the mid-80s, and has served as Conservation South Chair, Field Trip Coordinator, Vice President, and President. He currently serves as the Chapter's Rare Plant Coordinator for Santa Clara County.

*Coyote Ridge is
a cornerstone
in the belt of
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Clara Valley.*



Success on Prop 40 means millions for local open space

When California voters passed Prop 40, the "California Clean Water, Clean Air, Coastal Protection and Safe Neighborhood Parks Bond Act," in March, they approved funding for environmental resources throughout the state.

Committee for Green Foothills, one of nearly 500 conservation, health, and civic organizations that supported the measure, helped secure \$2.6 billion in funding for programs that will improve water supplies and air quality, protect natural resources, support parks and recreation, help manage the impacts of growth, and protect farmland.

The proposition — one of the largest state environmental bond measures in US history — will fund a number of local projects, including \$11 million for the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District.



Spring wildflowers are ablaze at Coyote Ridge.

Ken Hines

Santa Clara County LAFCO denies sprawl and upholds urban boundaries

by Kathy Switky

A project that could have opened the door to sprawl countywide was rejected in February when the Santa Clara County Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) denied Morgan Hill's request to extend services outside its city limits for an urban-scale project located on County lands.

The Morgan Hill City Council had approved the extension of urban services (police, fire, water and sanitation) to a project proposed for lands outside of the city limits. The city's extension of these services outside the city's Urban Services Area — the boundary that defines where cities can allow urban development — was essentially an attempt to short-cut the legal process, which requires the city to first annex the land before providing these services.

Committee for Green Foothills, in collaboration with Santa Clara Valley Audubon and Greenbelt Alliance, acted quickly to successfully lobby LAFCO to uphold its policy designed to prevent just this sort of sprawl-inducing development from moving forward. By denying Morgan Hill's request, LAFCO upheld its goal of keeping urban-scale development inside city limits.

Shortcut would have violated decades of regional planning

Placing urban development outside of the city's service area is not only inappropriate — it would have set a dangerous precedent for the entire County. Approval of this project outside city limits would have undermined more than thirty years of managed growth in Santa Clara County, and opened the door to sprawl.

In addition, the project presented

significant negative impacts. The project site is zoned for agriculture, and the State of California's Department of Conservation has identified it as "prime farmland" and "farmland of statewide importance". Extending urban services to the project site would not only impact surrounding agricultural operations — it would also encourage conversion of valuable farmland.

Committee asks LAFCO to uphold urban boundaries

Because the applicant proposed urban-scale development in the rural, unincorporated area of the County, the request went to the Local Agency Formation Commission, a local agency set up by the state to enforce city boundaries.

The Committee for Green Foothills and other environmental groups lobbied LAFCO to deny the request in accordance with LAFCO's goals: to encourage orderly urban boundaries, discourage urban sprawl, and preserve agricultural and open space lands.

Denial of project will discourage sprawl and protect open space

In February, the LAFCO Commissioners voted unanimously to uphold their policies preventing urban development from occurring outside city limits. With this vote, the Commissioners sent a clear message to local cities and developers that urban service areas will be enforced, and that development must follow appropriate protocol. By denying the request, LAFCO continues to limit development outside urban boundaries to a low-density, rural scale — and to protect the rural character of our County lands. **CGF**

Tour the foothills by bicycle!

As part of our 40th Anniversary celebrations, the Committee is hosting a bicycle tour of the foothills. This is a great chance to see some of the lands the Committee has helped protect — and enjoy a good workout with fellow cyclists.

On Sunday, June 23, we'll lead 50k and 100k routes through the foothills. Our 100k ride will be challenging and moderately-paced; the 50k ride will be shorter and easier. Both groups will stop to regroup and take in the views — and learn more about our work.

Registration is just \$15, and includes a box lunch served at the end of the ride. Ride brochures and registration forms are in local bike shops; you can also request one from the Committee at (650) 968-7243 or download one from www.GreenFoothills.org. Register early — space is limited!

BOARD NOTES

April brought more than sunshine and a new fiscal year — it brought a new slate of officers to the Committee's Board of Directors.

The board unanimously elected as Vice President **Karen Kidwell** and as Secretary **Sue LaTourrette**. Re-elected were President **Mary Davey** and Treasurer **Dorothy Bender**. We are grateful for the dedicated leadership of all four of these women.

We thank outgoing officers **Hertha Harrington** and **Dave Perrone** (each of whom has served as Vice President for the past several years, and continues as a Director) and **Brielle Johnck**, who has served as Secretary for the past year.

The Committee Board also bids a fond farewell to Brielle, who has resigned from the Board after three years of service as a Director. We thank Brielle for her commitment and hard work, and are grateful that she will continue to work for the local environment as a member of MPACT (Mid-Peninsula Action for Tomorrow) and the Menlo Park Environmental Commission.

...**Palo Alto Baylands**, where CGF helped uphold the city's protective riparian corridor policy and prevent soccer fields from being built on marsh habitat.

...**the long-awaited Devil's Slide Tunnel**, for which the final Environmental Impact Statement should be approved in coming weeks — despite the increased estimated cost and new projections that construction should start in 2003 or 2004.

...**the eastern foothills** in southern Santa Clara County, where the proposed Patrick Ranch Vintage Estates would place an 18-home subdivision on exposed ridgelines.

...**the Midcoast Community Council**, which is reviewing the San Mateo County Local Coastal Program.

...**the Santa Clara County Open Space Authority**, for which land owners recently approved a huge increase in public funding.

...**local political officials**, who are participating in regular breakfast meetings with CGF representatives and other local environmental advocates.

...**thirteen volumes** of Department of Fish and Game data on San Mateo County's coastal streams, now compiled and organized by watershed in a publication by the Green Foothills Foundation.

...**the San Mateo County Parks Foundation**, which is helping raise the \$3 million necessary to complete the purchase of Mirada Surf, the area's last undeveloped bluff, for a community park at the south end of El Granada.

...**Skyline Ridge**, where we successfully argued for a reduction in the scale and visibility of new facilities at Skylawn Memorial Park.

...**Stevens Creek Canyon**, where the Canyon Heights Academy proposes an inappropriate development that threatens wetlands, the creek and open space in Cupertino.

...**the Coastal San Mateo Stewardship Conference** in April, which CGF co-sponsored to help encourage cooperative stewardship on the coast.

...**Large Group Assembly facilities (LGAF)** in Santa Clara County, where the Board of Supervisors is studying whether to allow these urban-scale developments outside of city limits.

...**the League for Coastside Protection**, which endorsed a number of environment-friendly candidates for local office and saw most of them elected.

...**the Habitat Conservation Plan** for Santa Clara County, which is required mitigation for the development of Coyote Valley and the expansion of Highway 101 between San Jose and Morgan Hill.



...**Santa Clara County**, to ensure that the conservation easement for the California Tiger Salamander is

strong and provides adequate mitigation for the development of the Carnegie Foundation offices.

...**Cellular communications towers** throughout San Mateo County, the visual impact of which the Committee continues to work to reduce.

...**Peninsula Open Space Trust**, which recently announced its purchase of the 3,681-acre Driscoll Ranch and an innovative agreement that gives the seller a lifetime right for grazing, pedestrian and equestrian activities on the Skyline property.

...**the Bay Area Open Space Council**, a group of public and nonprofit organizations providing regional leadership for protection of local open space, which the Committee just joined.

...**Pescadero Marsh**, where some propose to alleviate flooding problems by dredging Butano Creek, thus destroying aquatic habitat and species.

...**the Community Resource Group**, a group of professionals and citizens (including CGF's own Denise Dade and Mary Davey) providing advice to County staff on the oversight of Stanford's General Use Permit.

For more information on what the Committee is watching, call (650) 968-7243 or visit www.GreenFoothills.org.

The Committee is watching...

North Wavecrest: A valuable habitat for raptors

by Gary Deghi

Raptors are what we typically think of as the birds of prey: hawks, eagles, falcons and owls. To a raptor traveling along the coast, the North Wavecrest area in Half Moon Bay seems a veritable smorgasbord. This area has everything a hawk could want: mature trees that provide perching and roosting sites, grasslands that provide foraging habitat, riparian corridors and coyote brush in fields that provide cover, and an abundance of voles that serve as a source of prey.

The North Wavecrest area is considered by Sequoia Audubon Society (SAS) as the most important habitat for wintering raptors in San Mateo County, as it supports a greater diversity of raptors and number of individuals than any other site. A portion of North Wavecrest is the site of the proposed Wavecrest Village Project, a large residential and commercial project, including a new middle school and Boys' and Girls' Club, currently being reviewed on appeal by the California Coastal Commission (CCC).

My objective in writing this article is to inform readers about the effect the Wavecrest Village Project would have on raptor populations so that informed comment can be delivered

when a decision is to be made on this project by the CCC later this year.

I presented data to the CCC last year that summarized results of Christmas Bird Counts conducted in the North Wavecrest area each winter by SAS begin-



North Wavecrest is a critical wintering site for the short-eared owl, *Asio flammeus*.

ning in 1988. The data demonstrates extensive use by species such as red-tailed hawk, red-shouldered hawk, white-tailed kite, Northern harrier, and American kestrel, and use also by sharp-shinned hawk, Cooper's hawk, great-horned owl, barn owl and short-eared owl. The value of the site is enhanced when considering the rare and vagrant species that have been documented during the winter or in migration: this includes ferruginous hawk, rough-legged hawk, broad-winged hawk, golden eagle, peregrine falcon, prairie falcon, merlin and Swainson's

hawk (the first documented record of overwintering Swainson's hawk ever in coastal Northern California).

On the Christmas Bird Count conducted on December 16, 2000, a remarkable 65 raptor individuals were observed over the course of one day within the approximately 500-acre North Wavecrest area that includes Wavecrest Village. This total consisted of 15 white-tailed kites, 10 Northern harriers, 1 sharp-shinned hawk, 4 red-shouldered hawks, 18 red-tailed hawks, 9 American kestrels and 5 short-eared owls, and 3 barn owls.

The North Wavecrest area, including Wavecrest Village, also annually supports a wintering population of up to as many as six short-eared owls. The short-eared owl is a large owl that lives only in grasslands and marshlands, and that has been designated as a species of special concern in California due to serious declines in numbers caused by conversion of grasslands to urban sprawl and agriculture. North Wavecrest is the most important wintering site for short-eared owl in San Mateo County, and is one of the most important wintering sites for the species in the greater San Francisco Bay region. When only coastal sites supporting wintering populations of short-eared owl are considered, the importance of the area takes on statewide significance.

The short-eared owls roost during the

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Contentious development in Half Moon Bay poorly placed

by Kathy Switky

Fur is flying over the proposed Wavecrest Village Project in Half Moon Bay — raising fears that the county's most important wintering-raptor habitat will be lost.

The proposed development would place a substantial residential, commercial, and mixed-use development on an extraordinary expanse of bluff-top open space about a mile south of downtown Half Moon Bay. The 205-acre parcel is — in the Sequoia Audubon Society's estimation — the most important habitat for wintering raptors in San Mateo County (see article on page 8).

Development sprawls at the urban edge

This sprawl-inducing, urban-edge, low-density development is poorly placed. It would be better suited as infill in some of the hundreds of vacant lots in Half Moon Bay.

Because Wavecrest Village would include a Boys' and Girls' Club and new middle school, supporters of the project have painted opponents as anti-education and anti-children. Regardless of the merits of the proposed tenants, any development on this valuable habitat is inappropriate.

Environmental groups challenge the project

Environmentalists are united in opposing this development because of its negative impacts on open space, wetlands, raptor populations, traffic, and water supplies. Committee for Green Foothills — along with Sequoia Audubon, the Sierra Club, and League for Coastsides Protection — are urging the California Coastal Commission to deny the project.

Decision still months off

The fate of this project is still up in the air. The Coastal Commission is expected to consider it at a meeting later this year, once a wetlands evaluation has been completed. Meanwhile, the Cabrillo Unified School District is evaluating other options for a school — including the existing Cunha site, which the Committee supports.

Like the proposed Phillips Brooks School in Woodside, the Wavecrest Village Project is simply a poorly placed development, and a classic example of short-sighted planning. The Committee for Green Foothills continues to watch for — and oppose — proposals such as these throughout the Peninsula, and favors workable solutions that ensure the use of sound planning principles. **CGF**

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day in the grasslands of North Wavecrest, and they forage at night over the entire North Wavecrest area, including the proposed Wavecrest Village. Development of Wavecrest Village would destroy approximately one-third of the foraging habitat for the wintering population of short-eared owls, compromising the viability of this population. Because much of the remaining habitat within North Wavecrest is privately owned and subject

to future development, the cumulative impact of the project is essentially the elimination of this wintering site for short-eared owls and other raptor populations.

The best way to mitigate these impacts is to limit the amount of open grassland impacted by the project, preferably by selecting alternative sites. I would like to see my 9-year old son benefit from a facility for Coastsides youth, and I would like for him to have the opportunity to attend a new middle school in the com-

ing years, but not at the North Wavecrest site, and not at the cost to the environment that would result from the Wavecrest Village Project. **CGF**

Gary Deghi is a wildlife ecologist, professional environmental consultant, member of the Board of Directors of Sequoia Audubon Society, and former member of the Half Moon Bay City Council.



County's new Land Use Work Plan includes environmental protections

by Kathy Switky

Land use advocacy requires a number of different strategies and tactics. More often than not, those of us working to promote sound land use find ourselves fighting ill-conceived development proposals, lobbying stakeholders, and working to uphold existing policies.



Hikers enjoy Calero County Park.

Occasionally we have the opportunity to help shape long-term planning for open space protections — as the Committee did recently with Santa Clara County's Land Use Work Plan.

Last year, the Committee for Green Foothills and other local environmental organizations began working with the County Board of Supervisors to help develop the 2002

Land Use Work Plan. This allowed us to raise open space and environmental issues and — given the County's limited resources — help determine the policy issues to be addressed in the coming year.

CGF collaborates with Audubon, Greenbelt to help set priorities

The Committee collaborated with the Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society to raise awareness of deficiencies in existing County policies. At the Board of Supervisor's land use workshop last September, we identified a number of key areas needing attention and highlighted particularly egregious examples of poor land use — including massive estate homes perched on ridgelines with invasive road cuts, and homes built right next to creeks. In addition, we identified a number of disturbing development trends that threaten open space.

In January 2002, Greenbelt Alliance joined us, and our three organizations worked together to identify County-wide priorities for the coming year. Together, we officially asked the Board of Supervisors to:

- Develop a strong riparian policy — including restoration and protection of the County's creekside habitat and watersheds;
- Strengthen protections for lands zoned "Hillsides" — preventing intrusive development, especially on ridgelines;
- Develop zoning policies for working landscapes — including agricultural lands and ranch lands;
- Create Special Conservation Areas throughout the County — identifying sensitive habitat areas and developing protective policies; and
- Continue to enforce the County's vision for managed growth and require urban development to occur inside existing cities — preventing sprawl from encroaching on rural County lands.



Calero County Park.

Work Plan includes protections for habitat, hillsides, rural areas

Thanks to our collaborative approach — and many letters and e-mails from CGF members — the final 2002 Work Plan included much of what we asked for. The plan will guide the County to significant new open space and environmental protections.

The Work Plan directs County staff to create protective Hillside policies and develop a countywide riparian ordinance that protects creekside habitat and watersheds by identifying significant natural areas. Developing these policies will be a top priority in the coming year.

The inclusion of these priorities in the Land Use Work Plan is a positive step forward for the protection of County lands for future generations — thanks to the Supervisors' forward vision and proactive approach to land use planning and management countywide. **CGF**

Ridge inspires conservation, wine — and celebration!

Monte Bello Ridge offers one of Skyline's most spectacular panoramas — from atop rolling grasslands, one can watch hawks soar, enjoy a bird's-eye view of the Stevens Creek watershed, and scan the entire Santa Clara Valley from on high.

This dramatic setting offers more than an amazing view. The ridge's combination of soil, sun exposure, and climate is unique as well. More than a hundred years ago, winemakers discovered that this environment was prime for grapes as well as hikers. Today, Ridge Vineyards is at the top both literally and figuratively — Ridge wines consistently win awards and international acclaim.

The stellar skyline setting of Ridge Vineyards is the site of the grand finale to the Committee's 40th anniversary celebration on **Sunday, September 8**.

"Umbrellas Over Time" will include a

wine reception, silent auction, live auction commandeered by local elected officials, and special honors for the Committee's collaborators over the years. And, of course, we'll enjoy Ridge wines and some delicious food. This will be the event of the year — don't miss it!

Our hosts for this special evening include Paul Draper, Ridge Vineyards CEO and vintner, and his wife Maureen, a musician and writer. (The event is also co-hosted by Committee President Mary Davey and 40th Anniversary Honorary Co-chairs Lois Crozier-Hogle and Mary Page Stegner.) Having lived on Monte Bello Ridge at the winery for more than 30 years, the Drapers are passionate about the area, and are now working to help protect it, as the newest members on the Committee's Board of Directors.

Ridge's vineyards, gardens, and views offer the perfect place to celebrate four



The Committee's 40th Anniversary celebrations will conclude with a spectacular evening at Ridge Vineyards on September 8. Don't miss it!

decades of protecting special places like Monte Bello Ridge. **Be sure to save the date**, and plan to join us for this very special evening atop the ridge.

For more information about Ridge Vineyards and their wonderful wines, visit www.RidgeWine.com.

For more information about our anniversary celebrations, visit www.GreenFoothills.org/40th. **CGF**

Committee members and friends can look for their invitations to the Ridge event in August.

CGF leaders win accolades

by Kathy Switky

As the Committee celebrates its 40th anniversary, we look to the many environmental leaders who have made our work possible over the years. Appropriately, some of our favorite heroes have been recognized recently for their accomplishments.

Committee for Green Foothills co-founder (and guiding light) Lois Crozier-Hogle received Palo Alto Chamber of Commerce 2002 "Tall Tree Award." Lois was one of the organizing forces behind the 1959 campaign to keep the factories out of the foothills and has been an active voice of the Committee ever since. Her experience, wisdom, and inspiration continue to guide our work — in fact, Lois is an Honorary Chairperson of CGF's 40th Anniversary celebrations.

Our Legislative Advocate for San Mateo County, Lennie Roberts, was nominated for a prestigious 2002 Women of Achievement Award, given by the Women's Fund of Silicon Valley. Lennie has been working to



Lois Crozier-Hogle



Lennie Roberts



April Vargas

protect open space in San Mateo County since 1978, and is one of the Bay Area's most respected environmental leaders. She has led the Committee in a number of critical open space battles on the San Mateo Coast and along Skyline.

Committee for Green Foothills Director and Green Foothills Foundation President April Vargas has been honored twice recently — the Half Moon Bay Review

Magazine honored April as a Coastside Woman of the Year, and she was named "Woman of the Year" in California's 19th Assembly District.

Please join us in congratulating Lois, Lennie, and April. Thanks to our dedicated, effective leaders, the Committee continues to lead the chorus of voices for open space protection as we begin our 41st year. **CGF**

Foundations

We would like to thank the following Foundations for their support of our education, outreach, and legal research this year.

Community Foundation Silicon Valley
Compton Foundation
The Larry L. Hillblom Foundation, Inc.
The INNW Fund
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The David and Lucile Packard Foundation

Foothills**Millennium Fund**

These generous major donors of \$1000 or more in the past fiscal year have made an extraordinary commitment to local open space protection. We are pleased to recognize them as members of the Foothills Millennium Fund.

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Thank you!

Members in and donors to the Committee for Green Foothills and the Green Foothills Foundation make possible our work to protect open space.

We'd like to thank the following individuals, foundations, and corporations for gifts received between April 1, 2001 and March 31, 2002.

Mariquita West
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Gifts of all sizes help ensure the future of our foothills. We'd like to thank the following donors and members for their gifts of \$1-\$999 this year.

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Libby Vincent
K. Christie Vogel
John S. and Mary Lee Wachtel
Richard A. Walker
Louis S. Wall
Daria Walsh and Bruce
McNamara
Marilyn J. Walter
Dieter and Susan Walz
Tim Warmath
Joan S. Warmbrunn
Jacquie Watson
Terry Watt and Mark
Karwowski
Patricia Watters
Mr. and Mrs. Don Way
Don and Kim Weden
Mark S. Wegehaup
Gwen Weisner
Patsy Weiss
Anne M. Westerfield
Diane Wexler and Bruce Beron
Elizabeth Whalley
Lanie Wheeler
Ben White
Randall A. White
Lessly Wickle and Hank Field
Donald J. Wilhelm
Vicki Wilhite
Elinor and Bruce Wilner
Howard Wilshire and Jane
Nielson
Ron C. Wilson
Stephen Wilson
Mr. and Mrs. Peter Wolken
Eleanor J. Wood
Judy and Gary Wood
Patricia Wood
Woodside-Atherton Garden
Club
Nancy K. Woodward
Thomas and Ellen Wyman
Charles Yanofsky
Pamela Young
Carol Young-Holt and David
Sandage
Leslie and Marilyn Zatz
Ellen Zeff
Robert Zeien
Harriet and Steve Zelencik
Greg Zlotnick
Mary Lou Zoglin

Matching gifts These companies have matched recent gifts.

Bank of America
Cadence
Citicorp
Compaq
IBM
Intuit
Microsoft
Silicon Graphics
Sun Microsystems
Unilever

We have made every effort to ensure the accuracy of this listing. If your name has been omitted or listed incorrectly, please accept our sincere apologies and call us at (650) 968-7243.



Redondo Beach, Half Moon Bay.

Kathy Swick

Volunteer!

Have you ever wanted to be worshipped? Most people never realize it's as easy as volunteering! With limited resources — time, staff and money — volunteers are crucial in any effective nonprofit organization, Committee for Green Foothills included.

At Committee for Green Foothills, amazing, heroic, and stupendous volunteers help us with a variety of projects, including photography, organizing events, fundraising, mailings and event tabling. Yet there's always more that could be done. From one-time projects to ongoing office needs, projects await anyone with time.

Specific needs at CGF right now:

- Organizer — of the Committee's outreach materials, clippings and/or photos
- New member outreach — Event tabling, assembling new member packets and/or welcoming of new members
- Office aide — Faxing, data entry, filing, copying, and/or mailings
- Technology assistant — troubleshooting for our PCs and network

If you are at all interested in volunteering or would like to talk about ways you could help the Committee protect open space, please contact Velma at 650-968-7243 or Velma@GreenFoothills.org.

FARMING, from page 1

simply buying "agricultural easements" from a landowner, because easements can cost almost as much as outright purchases, but often do not adequately protect important resources or habitats.

Water wars — farmers vs. wildlife

Water remains one of the limiting factors for Coastal agriculture. Water from streams is the predominant source for farmers, but streams are also vitally important for threatened fish and other aquatic species. With the listing by federal and state wildlife agencies of the coho salmon, steelhead trout, California red-legged frog, and San Francisco garter snake, much more attention is being given to the plight of these species.

Endangered species depend upon adequate water, clean water, and cool water, shaded and protected by a healthy riparian streamside zone for their survival. Historic farm practices that pay little heed to erosion control, pesticide and herbicide use, and water withdrawals from creeks in the summer (dry) season will be undergoing much greater scrutiny in the future.

Off-stream reservoirs, with strict conditions on filling from streams in the winter season, are a strategy that accommodates both needs and also provide flood protection benefits. Some exem-

plary farmers are implementing voluntary measures, such as contour plowing, vegetated buffer strips, and cover crops to reduce erosion, but much more is needed.

We are also seeing some encouraging signs of new organic operations, but change comes slowly.

Helping farmers survive

The greatest untapped resource for San Mateo Coastal agriculture is the urban marketplace. Due to the close proximity of the Coast to 6.5 million potential consumers, local farmers and consumers can form a natural partnership to support our rural working landscape.

New efforts are underway to encourage buying local agricultural products underway through the California Alliance of Family Farmers (CAFF), based in Davis, with a local office in Santa Cruz. Numerous popular Farmers' Markets exist on the bayside, and we look forward to the day the Coastside has a Farmers' Market as well.

A number of outreach activities can be taken in fostering our local agriculture, including :

- Adopting a unique Coastal mark or logo, such as has been done in Sonoma County (Sonoma Select) and Marin (Marin Organics)
- Encouraging sales through the Bay Area's upscale markets and educating consumers about fresh local produce
- Promoting local, fresh produce in restaurants and schools

CGF's efforts to protect Coastside agriculture

What has CGF done to ensure agriculture remains viable on the Coast? We've been involved in a number of agricultural support efforts, including:

- Supporting a 160-unit farm labor housing project outside Half Moon Bay
- Encouraging compatible uses on farmland that bring visitors and farmers together
- Advocating for the removal of barriers to fish passage while ensuring crucial water supplies continue for agriculture
- Backing innovative agricultural practices that reduce environmental impacts. **CGF**

WATERSHEDS, from page 3

watersheds, roughly 2,200 acres. Rather than acting fairly and responsibly, Stanford has refused to grant permanent protection to these lands despite receiving more than generous core-campus development rights.

The County, in the 2000 General Use Permit, granted Stanford development rights far in excess of its legal and reasonable entitlement. Stanford has built over 12 million square feet on its 1,700-acre core campus, exceeding the density of Palo Alto by close to 40%, and has been granted the right to build approximately 4.5 million more over the next ten years.

In exchange for allowing hillside developers to exceed normal development entitlements, the County requires landowners to permanently dedicate ninety percent of their land as open space. The Committee for Green Foothills, speaking with others in the community, argued that Stanford should dedicate their portion of the Matadero and San Francisquito Creek watersheds as permanent open space as a condition of approval for its 2000 General Use Permit.

Using its political clout, Stanford convinced the County to not require permanent dedication in return for the gargantuan development entitlements it obtained under the 2000 General Use Permit. Ignoring the wishes of the community and bowing to Stanford pressure, the County failed to secure the future of a large portion of the Matadero and San Francisquito Creek watersheds.

The County has the opportunity and responsibility to protect these watershed lands

The County has a rare opportunity to protect the foothills of the Matadero and San Francisquito Creek watersheds as it creates new foothill zoning required in the 2000 Stanford University Community Plan.

The proposed zoning created by County staff for the foothills contains loopholes. It lacks ridgeline development protection, and it contains no permanent protections. It is essential that the signif-

E-alerts help you act quickly!

To make it easier for you to get involved, Committee for Green Foothills is e-mailing E-alerts and other important information — instead of sending them via slow, expensive, paper-consuming snail mail.

We send about one alert a week, making it easy for you to keep up-to-date on Peninsula open-space issues.

Want to receive our E-alerts? Just send an e-mail to action@greenfoothills.org.

icant protections gained for the foothills through Stanford's 2000 Community Plan are secured with adequately restrictive zoning.

The future of the Matadero and San Francisquito Creek watersheds is up to us

For nearly 40 years — and especially during the 2000 General Use Permit process — the Committee has worked in close partnership with the community to protect these foothills.

It's time to remind the County of its own goals and responsibility to protect this land. Local cities and community members must speak out and work with the County to require the new Stanford foothill zoning to protect ridgelines from development and contain a mechanism that ensures dedication.

The proposed zoning process allows full public participation before the County Planning Commission sometime this June. The ultimate decision lies with Supervisor Kniss and the full Board sometime next fall.

Once again the foothills need our help. The County needs to hear from you. For the latest information on the proposed foothill zoning and how to make your voice heard, please visit www.GreenFoothills.org. To get our e-mail updates on this issue, register for our action alerts on our website or by e-mailing info@GreenFoothills.org. **CGF**

TRAILS, from page 3

Club, Acterra, People for Access to Trails in the Hills at Stanford (PATHS), Mid-Peninsula Action for Tomorrow, and the Portola Valley Planning Commission have formally objected to Stanford's proposed trail alignments and have proposed alternative routes. We are asking for scenic, safe trails that connect urban centers with open space — and that provide the trail linkages established in the County Master Trails Plan.

County extends deadline to August 2002

Despite months of negotiations, Stanford failed to present acceptable trail alignments by the December 2001 due date, and the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors extended the deadline by a month. At their January 2002 meeting, the Board again refused Stanford's proposed trail alignments, and granted a second deadline extension to Stanford, requiring the university to dedicate these public trails by August 2002 — eight months later than originally scheduled.

Much of the progress on the trails issue is thanks to Supervisor Liz Kniss, whose district includes Stanford, and who continues to work toward a solution to this controversial issue.

Study will outline differences in proposed trails

The Board of Supervisors has directed County staff to study each of the proposed trail alignments on the following criteria: environmental impacts, safety, impacts to other private property owners, compliance with the Countywide Trail Master Plan, and compliance with the Stanford Community Plan.

The Committee is pleased that the Board has established criteria for evaluating the trail proposals — each of these issues is key to the ultimate success of these trails. We are confident that the County staff's analysis will support our position that Stanford's proposed trails are inappropriate, and will lead to an acceptable trail solution. **CGF**

For more information, or to get involved, visit www.GreenFoothills.org/Trails.html.

Committee kicks off Environmental Forum series on June 5

Perspectives on rural land use — especially the location of group facilities such as schools and churches, which can be sentimental favorites — will be discussed at an upcoming Committee for Green Foothills environmental forum.

Why is there a growing trend to try to locate urban scale churches and schools in rural areas? Why are institutions driven to find locations outside city limits? How does this undermine decades of smart regional planning, and what can we do about it?

Leading experts in land use will grapple with these questions, and the need to provide quality sites for schools and

churches in a sustainable manner.

"Urban vs. rural: Finding homes for schools and churches" will be held on Wednesday, June 5 from 7-9 pm in room 206 of the Daly Science Building at Santa Clara University.

This is the first in a series of three environmental forums made possible in part by a grant from the Community Foundation Silicon Valley.

The event is free and open to the public. No reservations are required. We hope to see you there! More details, along with directions to the forum, can be found on our website at www.GreenFoothills.org/forum.

SAVE THE DATE!

**The grand finale of our
40th Anniversary
Celebrations:
"Umbrellas Over Time"
will be at Ridge Vineyards
on Saturday, September 8.**

Story of the Green Feet

During this 40th anniversary year, our "Green Feet" are showing. What does this mean — just what is the story behind the Green Feet?

Back when Committee for Green Foothills was getting started, someone nicknamed us Green Feet — a play on our name, and also an apt description of our grassroots nature.

The Committee's founders thought that was a perfect name for a plurality of foothill lovers. They liked to hike the skyline ridge, watch the fog roll along the slopes, and see the sun set behind a gentle hill. And they knew that if something wasn't done to control urban sprawl, those pleasures wouldn't last for future generations to enjoy.

So our Green Feet started marching to meetings of planning com-

missions, Boards of Supervisors, and City Councils. We started researching and testifying. Decades later, we're still working to defend open space.

Environmental issues have kept us on our toes for almost 40 years. And our job isn't finished — the splendid green foothills still need our testimony. Our feet may be green, but we're seasoned fighters, working to preserve the quality of life here on the Peninsula.

Fittingly, that someone who coined the "Green Feet" nickname was Mary Davey — our current Board President, and Chair of the Committee's 40th Anniversary Celebration.

In honor of the thousands of Green Feet who have worked for the last 40 years to protect open space, we're offering special Green Feet pins and bandanas to those who attend our events and celebrations this year. Let your Green Feet show, and let's continue to keep them moving to protect our local environment!



COMMITTEE FOR
GREEN FOOTHILLS

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