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## Sebastopol may exempt itself from rules

SEBASTOPOL — The City Council has adopted an ordinance to protect plants and wildlife along the Laguna de Santa Rosa, but may exempt itself from the rules.

The city is a major property owner along the lagoon and has plans that might be hampered by the environmental studies required by the new wetlands zoning ordinance. The council will decide Tuesday whether to exclude some of its land from the regulations.

Members of Friends of Laguna want to protest the deletion, but may not get the chance.

Mayor Howard Reeser slammed his gavel down and angrily cut off Brenda Nichols last week when she protested the closure of the public hearing on the ordinance before members of the public learned that City Manager Melvin K. Davis prepared a memorandum questioning what to do about the city's acreage.

Nichols has written the council questioning the propriety of considering "major changes" in an ordinance after public hearings are closed, and asking again for the hearing to be reopened.

The city owns 55 acres on the east side and 40 acres on the west side of the lagoon within the 250-acre wetlands district. Any proposed development requires environmental studies of the potential effects on rare plants and vernal pools.

Davis said he is asking the council what it wants to do with 11 acres that includes the city's former sewer plant site. A cement company is considering the purchase of 1½ acres to expand its operations and the rest of the land has development potential, Davis said.

"The old sewer plant already is filled in and could be a further extension of the warehouse industrial development" in the area, Davis said.