

88-95

8/26-29/88

Laguna Update

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S.O. CONSERVATION
COUNCIL

Laguna de Santa Rosa advocates turned out in force at an Aug. 25 meeting for a small Sebastopol neighborhood group on Eleanor Ave., bordering the Laguna. The Laguna, which flows into the Russian River near Mirabel, lies at the bottom of a 250 mile watershed that reaches from Windsor to Rohnert Park and whose streams drain all the hills east of the Santa Rosa Plain.

The meeting on Aug. 25 began with the Peter Vilms/ Environmental Forum slide show "Laguna de Santa Rosa: Treasure in Peril." In the slide show, Bob Tancreto, engineer with the Northern Ca. Regional Water Quality Control Board, tells how the Laguna is filling in, partly from natural causes, and partly because of poor construction practices. Silt is carried down in streams from construction in the uplands, especially when vegetation is removed. Toxic spills in tributaries are a constant threat. This video is available for showing to interested groups by calling 578-0595.

Bill Cox, fisheries biologist with the State Department of Fish and (Cont'd on p.2)

Monday	10/24	9 am - noon
Thursday	10/27	1:30 - 5 pm
		7 pm - 9pm
Monday	10/31	9 am - noon

LAGUNA (Cont'd from p.1)

Game, told how Santa Rosa gave the 80 acre Laguna Ecological Preserve to the Fish and Wildlife Service to mitigate the damage caused by its sewage plant. The Department of Fish and Game, which now owns 3 parcels and has easements on two smaller parcels, is eligible for funds from proposition 70 to acquire more sites. Marco Waaland described a mapping project on which his firm is working for the State. Its purpose is to find and map vernal pools where rare plants may exist and to define areas where agencies could use their funds most effectively. He cited Portland's 40 mile of trails in a wildlife refuge as an example of what can be done.

A statement from Congressman Doug Bosco dated for release Aug. 25 stressed his interest in preserving the Laguna, probably through the establishment of a National Wildlife Refuge. The 9 member technical advisory group he recently appointed is chaired by Bob Sharp, who announced to the meeting that his group is charged to come up with recommen-

dations for appropriate legislation by mid-December.

Betty Guggolz, a rare plant specialist with the California Native Plant Society, stated that a big problem is that in agricultural areas in the Laguna no use permit is required to disturb the soil. Because of this, there is no way to require mitigation measures if rare plants are destroyed.

Brenda Adelman of the Sierra Club and River Citizen's Sewer Committee emphasized that in restoring the Laguna with treated effluent we should be careful not to ignore the potential hazards to water quality in the Russian River.

The final speaker, Helen Libeu of Laguna Today and Tomorrow, said her group was for "those who felt they had to kick around a little bit" to get action from government bodies to save the Laguna. The group has filed a lawsuit asking that the City of Sebastopol be required to do a full EIR on a subdivision in the Laguna.

According to a paper prepared by Supervisor Ernie Carpenter for the Aug. 25th meeting, he intended to agendize an item on Aug. 30 requesting to make the County Fish and Wildlife board the Lead Agency in addressing the acquisition, preservation and restoration of the Laguna.

The fate of the Laguna will next come up at the Sebastopol City Council on Tuesday, Aug. 30, 7 pm, in the Sebastopol Library Forum Room. The report of the Laguna Advisory Committee is available at Sebastopol's City Planning Office, public libraries, and the Environmental Center.