

greenbelt action

The Bay Area's Land Conservation and Urban Planning Non-Profit

San Francisco • San Jose • Santa Rosa • Walnut Creek

Fall 2001

Bay Area Briefs

Sonoma and Santa Clara Counties get new representation on the Greenbelt Alliance Board of Directors. *page 2*

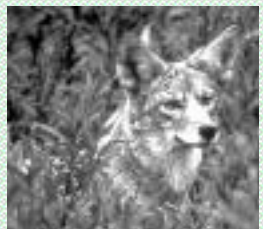
Eat, drink and be merry on Oct. 14 at **A Taste of the Greenbelt.** *page 4*

Livermore's Future?



Greenbelt Alliance is working with a local group called The Friends of Livermore to fight sprawl development. Recently proposed projects would add 148,000 car trips a day to already crowded roads. Instead of sprawl development, Greenbelt Alliance is encouraging compact development that would revitalize Livermore's downtown and provide affordable housing for local teachers and retail workers. We led a tour to look at smart growth options for Livermore on August 12 as part of our **Urban Outings** series.

📍 **For your own on-line tour of Livermore,** visit the Events and Outings section of our Web site at www.greenbelt.org. To join our efforts in Livermore, contact East Bay Field Representative Evelyn Stivers at 925-932-7776 or estivers@greenbelt.org.



Wildlife needs a home in the Bay Area. South Bay Field Representative Autumn Bernstein's background in wildlife biology helps her

shape our vision of a Silicon Valley that includes the natural world. She's helping lead the **Silicon Valley Conservation Council** in its efforts to raise money for the **Santa Clara County Open Space Authority** so it can purchase key wildlife corridors in Santa Clara County.



People need homes, too. The Bay Area's population keeps growing—and statistics show 88% of the state's growth in the last 10 years has

been from people in California having babies.* Where will our kids and grandkids live—without destroying the Greenbelt? *page 4*

*Ca. Dept. of Finance, California Demographic Research Unit Report # E-7 California State Population Estimates, with Components of Change and Crude Rates, July 1, 1990-2000, viewable at <http://www.dof.ca.gov/HTML/DEMOGRAP/E-7a.xls>.

Saving Silicon Valley Ranchlands

We Stop a Golf Course in the Santa Cruz Range



These gorgeous hills at Sargent Ranch in southern Santa Clara County were proposed as a site for two golf courses ringed with luxury homes until Greenbelt Alliance and its allies stopped the project.

By Autumn Bernstein
Greenbelt Alliance South Bay Field Representative

I never refuse an opportunity to visit a wild, unspoiled part of the Bay Area's Greenbelt. So when developers called me in early May and asked if I would like to tour Sargent Ranch, I immediately accepted. I knew their motivation was more than just a sightseeing tour. The owners of this land in the Santa Cruz mountains southwest of Gilroy wanted to build a subdivision and two golf courses, and they hoped to head off any potential opposition.

I'd heard about Sargent Ranch and caught glimpses of it while driving south on 101 between Gilroy and Salinas. Even from the freeway, this 7,000-acre ranch is beautiful. Several hundred acres of prime farmland line the freeway with rolling, oak-studded hillsides as a backdrop. Two year-round creeks and their tributaries wind through the hillsides, providing spawning grounds for endangered steelhead that return each winter.

The ranch is located in the southwest corner of Santa Clara County, about as far away from any city as you can get in Silicon Valley. And it is unusually large. Ownership of much of the Santa Cruz Mountains has been fragmented into small parcels, while this 7,000-acre expanse of open hillside land is still intact. This fact, combined with the unique habitat and geologic features located on the ranch, have made the Sargent Ranch a key target for preservation. Land conservation groups have been eyeballing Sargent for years.

Unfortunately, conservationists are not the only ones who've had their eyes on Sargent Ranch. In 1992, Greenbelt Alliance helped defeat a massive development proposal that called for 4,000 estate homes, an office building, a resort hotel and two golf courses. Shortly thereafter, developer Wayne Pierce bought Sargent Ranch and began devising his own sprawling plan for 150 golf course homes.

Several days later, I found myself in the backseat of a sport utility vehicle piloted by Skip Spiering, a developer working with Pierce. Also squeezed into the backseat were representatives of the Audubon Society, Sierra Club and the Committee for Green Foothills. As we headed up the steep dirt road into the hills, I was astonished at their beauty. Ancient

oaks crowned the ridges, and shady bunches of willows, cottonwoods and sycamores lined the creeks.

Our host began pointing out where the houses, roads, and golf courses would be. We spotted several female deer meandering down a grassy slope where a future mansion would loom. The site of golf course # 1, a low boggy swale, is habitat for tiger salamanders and endangered red-legged frogs.

Sargent Ranch is a one-of-a-kind gem. Unfortunately, the proposed development would have been anything but unique. Sprawling golf course developments blanketing isolated hillsides of the Bay Area are becoming all too common. (Pierce has also proposed a similar golf course/luxury home vision in Contra Costa County at Roddy Ranch. Greenbelt Alliance has helped keep that project at bay.)

If Sargent Ranch were lost, it would set a dangerous precedent for all of Santa Clara County. A longstanding County policy bans urban development outside of cities. But the Sargent Ranch proposal would have created an end-run around that policy, opening the floodgates for similar subdivisions on ranches throughout the county.

There are over 100,000 acres of ranchlands in Santa Clara County, mostly in the drier Diablo Range that lies east of San Jose and Gilroy. Imagine if all 100,000 acres were developed according to the Sargent Ranch golf course model!

As we bumped and bounced across the ranch, my conviction grew. We could not allow this development to happen. We returned from our tour unpersuaded by the developer's blandishments and newly motivated to protect the Sargent Ranch. For weeks, Greenbelt Alliance and our environmental allies at the Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society and Committee for Green Foothills worked together to defeat the project. We talked to supervisors, attracted media coverage and community support, and made it clear we would make noise at the County hearing.

Our efforts paid off incredibly well. So well, in fact, that Pierce actually withdrew his proposal just hours before the Board of Supervisors was scheduled to vote on it. This tremendous victory ensures that the special beauty of Sargent Ranch, and other large ranches in Santa Clara County, will remain—for now. Greenbelt Alliance will stay vigilant.

Help Us Preserve East Bay Open Space

East Bay Field Representative Evelyn Stivers (below) recently led local citizens on a hike to see open space near Antioch at risk from proposed sprawl developments. Greenbelt Alliance is also working to stop a thousand-acre sprawl development in Tassajara Valley. The local water district opposes the project because it will strain water supplies. The San Joaquin kit foxes, tiger salamanders and peregrine falcons in the neighborhood would also be protesting, if they could.



RICHARD ROLLINS

Q If you live in Contra Costa County, write your Supervisor to oppose the Camino Tassajara project, or contact Evelyn Stivers to help at 925-932-7776 or estivers@greenbelt.org.

Arden Jones Memorial Fund Supports Greenbelt Protection



Arden Jones

When long-time conservationist and Stegner Fellow in Poetry Arden Kennedy Jones passed away in February 2001, his family chose Greenbelt Alliance to receive memorial gifts in his memory. Arden Jones' daughter Megan McAbay and her husband Adam set up the Arden Kennedy Jones Memorial Fund as a part of Greenbelt Alliance's Endowment. By dedicating funds to our Endowment, this special gift will keep on giving in perpetuity. To date, donations to the Jones Memorial Fund total over \$4,000. The family felt this was a fitting way to honor Arden, who spent his life relishing the beauty of the natural world and sharing his understanding through his poetry and storytelling.

Q For information on giving to Greenbelt Alliance's Endowment, contact Development Director Steve Van Landingham at 415-398-3730 or svanlandingham@greenbelt.org.

ENDANGERED EDGES OF THE BAY AREA

Protecting Brentwood and Gilroy



AUTUMN BEENSTEIN

At risk: Gilroy area

Brentwood and Gilroy have a lot in common. They're both towns at the edge of the Bay Area's consciousness. Brentwood is at the eastern edge, in the part of Contra Costa County where the hills flatten out into the rich farmland of the Central Valley. Gilroy is at the southern fringe, where Silicon Valley office parks cease and garlic and beans rise along the road to Monterey.

Brentwood's population more than tripled over the last decade, making it one of the fastest-growing cities in the state.

But these towns are at the forefront of Greenbelt Alliance's priorities. Brentwood and Gilroy have some of the most productive farmland in California, and it's being rapidly paved over for poorly planned sprawl housing. The old downtowns of these erstwhile farm towns are languishing while willy-nilly subdivisions and strip malls suck resources away from the hearts of the communities. Many residents spend three or more hours a day commuting to jobs

in Silicon Valley and other job centers, adding to the region's air pollution and traffic congestion.

Greenbelt Alliance is working with local activists in these towns (including new board member Guadalupe Arellano—see profile on this page) to preserve their small-town qualities and their economic vitality while protecting the precious farmland and open space that is a resource not only for their residents but for the entire Bay Area.

Q If you live in these towns, please join our efforts to plan for a sustainable, livable future. Contact East Bay Outreach Coordinator Elinor Buchen at 925-932-1773 or ebuchen@greenbelt.org, or South Bay Outreach Coordinator Sam Casas at 408-983-0856 or scasas@greenbelt.org. If you're not a resident of these towns, support their farms by buying locally grown produce. And support Greenbelt Alliance by visiting our on-line donations page at www.greenbelt.org or write us at 530 Bush St. #303, San Francisco, CA 94108



At risk: Brentwood area

SUSAN MCFARLANE

Gilroy Councilmember, Rohnert Park Mayor Join Greenbelt Alliance Board

Greenbelt Alliance's policies are shaped by a geographically diverse board that reflects the entire Bay Area. Recently, influential leaders from the North Bay and South Bay joined our Board of Directors.

Guadalupe Arellano brings the voices of the grassroots of southern Santa Clara County to the Greenbelt Board. A Gilroy native, Arellano has been a city council member since 1997 and has championed environmental and farmland protection issues, focusing on preserving Gilroy's small-town character and encouraging smart growth. Arellano currently serves on the board of the South County Latina Coalition, and has served on the board of the South Santa Clara YMCA. With a degree in organizational behavior and management from the University of San Francisco, Arellano has worked in vocational rehabilitation and managed a shelter for battered women. She also served in the U.S. Army. Arellano and her brother, fellow Gilroy council member Peter, were recently featured in a profile in the *San Jose Mercury News* that noted that they are the only brother-sister pair elected to the same city council in California.

Jake Mackenzie is Mayor of Rohnert Park in Sonoma County and brings strong environmental and civic credentials to Greenbelt Alliance. Mackenzie worked with Greenbelt Alliance to pass a 4-year Urban Growth Boundary for Rohnert Park in 1996 and a 20-year UGB in 2000. Along with his wife, Barbara, he was a founding committee member of Greenbelt Alliance's Sonoma County Urban Growth Boundary campaign, which helped establish these important lines of protection for open space in numerous cities. Every city in Sonoma County except Cloverdale now has an Urban Growth Boundary. MacKenzie currently serves on the Regional Planning Committee of the Association of Bay Area Governments, the Local Government Commission, the Sonoma County Transportation Authority, and the North Coast Railroad Authority. He also serves on the advisory committee of the Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District. Born in Scotland, Mackenzie has resided in the U.S. since 1962. He earned his bachelor's degree in Farm Management and Crop Science at Edinburgh University and his M.S. and PhD. in Weed Science from Oregon State University. He has worked for 30 years as a pesticide regulator for the Environmental Protection Agency.

Greenbelt Hikes for Everyone!

Reservations are no longer required for Greenbelt Outings, unless noted otherwise. To get directions, check www.greenbelt.org or call 415-255-3273 the week of the outing. The following is a sampling of our Fall outings. To find out about all of our great hikes, bike rides, and other greenbelt adventures, sign up for our quarterly e-mail calendar or our mailing list by e-mailing info@greenbelt.org or calling 415-398-3730.

Saturday, October 13 BART to Vollmer Peak

Explore a creek flowing through the Berkeley campus and ascend into the wild UC open space. Hike along a trail in Tilden to Vollmer Peak with a great view of reservoir lands and Mt. Diablo to the east. On the way back we'll spot historic houses by Maybeck and others. Hike is challenging and steep in places. From 9:30 AM to 4:30 PM. C 10 B

Saturday, October 27 A Day on Mt. Tam

Celebrate the last day of daylight savings on one of our favorite mountains. This transit-accessible, 13-mile hike takes you from Mill Valley to the peak of Mount Tamalpais, San Francisco's beloved playground. From 9:30 AM to 6 PM. A 13 C

Saturday, November 3 Pleasanton Ridge and Local Wine

Traverse Pleasanton Ridge, through the characteristic East Bay environment of oak-studded grassland and expansive views. See remnants of past agricultural activities and end the day with a taste of today's agriculture at Ellingston Winery in Sunol. From 9:30 AM to 4 PM. M 8 B

Saturday, November 10 Stunning Mt. St. Helena

This 11-mile hike is a long, steady climb through forest and open chaparral above the beautiful Napa Valley. The spectacular view from the 4,339-foot peak is an ample reward, offering a 360-degree vista that reveals the Sierras, Mt. Shasta and Mt. Diablo. From 9:30 AM to 4 PM. A 11 C

Sunday, November 18 Mt. Diablo Double

Bag two peaks in one day! Starting halfway up the mountain, ascend the Diablo summit and North Peak on this moderately paced but challenging hike that promises fantastic views from the East Bay's tallest landform. From 10 AM to 4:30 PM. C 8 B

Sunday, December 9 Mt. Madonna & Wine

Start with an easy hike through evergreen forests and visit the remains of a 19th century estate, then finish the day with a visit to Kruse Winery, near Gilroy. From 10 AM to 2 PM. E 3.5 A

Greenbelt Outings Key

Degree of Challenge	Miles	Elevation Gain (in feet)
E - Easy		A - Less than 1,000
M - Moderate	# of miles covered	B - 1,000 to 2,000
C - Challenging		C - 2,000 to 3,000
A - Advanced		D - 3,000 to 4,000
HC - Hard Core		E - More than 4,000

For Example: A hike with a rating of C 7 B is a challenging, seven-mile hike with an elevation gain between 1,000 and 2,000 feet.

Greenbelt Alliance Welcomes New Field Director

By Tom Steinbach
Greenbelt Alliance Executive Director



In August, Greenbelt Alliance welcomed **Jeremy Madsen** as our new Field Director. He brings a wealth of coalition-building, land-use policy, and grassroots organizing experience to his new job and we are thrilled to have him on board.

Jeremy has worked on growth, transportation, and trade policy issues from positions in California, Oregon, Washington, D.C., and Washington state. Most recently, he was Field Director of the Washington State Transportation Choices Coalition where he worked to convince the state legislature to dramatically increase funding for public transit and transit-oriented development.

As Field Director, Jeremy will set the strategic direction for our community-based work and manage our field offices in San Jose, Walnut Creek, and Santa Rosa, as well as our future Solano County office. His focus will be to continue Greenbelt Alliance's legacy of success in protecting open space and fostering livable communities throughout the Bay Area.

Farewell to Tom Mooers

As we welcomed Jeremy, we bid a fond farewell to **Tom Mooers**, who served as our first-ever Field Director, establishing the position as a leadership

hub for our local grass-roots organizing. We will miss his wit, energy, and enthusiasm and wish him good luck as he moves to the Sierra Nevada to start a new job as Executive Director of Sierra Watch. In his five-year tenure at Greenbelt Alliance, Tom was instrumental in delivering important greenbelt protection successes. As East Bay Field Representative, he led successful fights against sprawl developments in



Cowell Ranch, Tassajara Valley, Roddy Ranch, and Clayton Ranch. Tom also helped pass the 1996 Pleasanton Urban Growth Boundary and the 1996 Union City Hillside Protection Measure. As Field Director, he led the field staff's efforts to secure passage of the San Jose Greenline, Alameda County's Measure D Open Space Measure, and two Urban Growth Boundaries in Sonoma County; and to tighten the Contra Costa Urban Limit Line — all in 2000.

More New Faces

Recently, Greenbelt Alliance welcomed a new North Bay Field Representative, **Jessica Parsley**, and a new Internet Outreach Coordinator, **Rachelle Acuña-Narvaez**. We've expanded our field staff by bringing on **Elinor Buchen** as East Bay Outreach Coordinator and **Sam Casas** as South Bay Outreach Coordinator. Meanwhile, we said thanks and good-bye to **Amy Tanner**, our Outreach Coordinator, and **Susan Moffat**, Communications Director.



Greenbelt Action is the quarterly newsletter of GREENBELT ALLIANCE, the Bay Area's leading land conservation and urban planning non-profit organization, with offices in San Francisco, San Jose, Santa Rosa and Walnut Creek. Founded in 1958, we are dedicated to protecting the region's greenbelt and enhancing the livability of our cities. Memberships begin at \$35 and include a subscription to *Greenbelt Action*.

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Dorothy Erskine (1896-1982)

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We're Making Greenbelt-Friendly, Affordable Housing Happen



Greenbelt Alliance's endorsement back in 1992 helped win approval for this attractive affordable housing project, Plaza del Sol, in San Francisco's Mission District. In the past two years our Compact Development Endorsement Program has offered our seal of approval on 33 projects.

By Janet Stone
Greenbelt Alliance Livable Communities Program Director

Greenbelt Alliance is working across the Bay Area to make sure that the region builds the Greenbelt-friendly, affordable housing that is so badly needed. This year, all California cities are required to submit their housing plans to the state to show they are meeting mandates to include affordable housing. In places as diverse as **Napa, Milpitas, Dublin** and **Mountain View**, local advocates are using this "Housing Element" process to push jurisdictions to build more multi-family housing.

Greenbelt Alliance believes that in order to reduce sprawl and protect open space, we must slow down development in the Greenbelt and build more infill housing—especially affordable housing—in urban and suburban areas where infrastructure already exists. So last fall we launched a regional Fair Share Affordable Housing campaign along with the Non-

profit Housing Association of Northern California, Urban Ecology, and others.

Greenbelt Alliance staff have testified at public hearings, helped lead community workshops, and distributed our "Model Housing Element Strategies" to cities and counties. In **Napa**, a citizens' task force has called for policies to create more housing choices and encourage mixed-use development. Community coalitions in **Marin County**, the **Tri-Valley area** of Contra Costa and Alameda counties, **Santa Clara County** and other areas have also advocated for similar measures. In **Dublin**, Vice-Mayor Janet Lockhart was inspired by ideas she heard during a housing conference organized by the Tri-Valley Interfaith Poverty Forum, Greenbelt Alliance, East Bay Housing Organizations, and other groups. She led a spirited council debate that culminated in a vote to pursue new measures for creating additional affordable housing.

What YOU Can Do About the Housing Crisis

Cities decide where and how much housing they want built within their borders by putting together a Housing Element, which is part of the city's General Plan (the blueprint for development). You can encourage your city to plan for more affordable, compact, transit-oriented, multi-family housing by writing to your city council and planning commission.

For more information on Greenbelt-friendly housing policies and for contact numbers for the Housing

Action Coalition in your county, see our "Fair Share Platform" and our "Model Housing Element Strategies" at the Livable Communities section of our website, www.greenbelt.org.

For more information, contact Janet Stone at 415-398-3730 or jstone@greenbelt.org or your local Greenbelt Alliance Field Representative (listings on page 3).

Write your city council to demand Greenbelt-preserving affordable housing NOW! The deadline for cities to submit their housing plans to the state is December, 2001.

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<http://www.greenbelt.org>

Change Service Requested



A Taste of the Greenbelt

October 14, 2001 at the Golden Gate Club, San Francisco Presidio

Come bid at our silent auction and taste the best wine, micro-brews, and fresh cuisine from Bay Area farms and vineyards. We'll feature wines from Davis Bynum, Ravenswood, Landmark, Hanna, Stags Leap and many more. Food by Bizou, Flea St. Café, Hayes St. Grill, Jardiniere, Wild Thyme Café, Rennie Burge Catering, and many other fine restaurants.

Buy your tickets online at www.greenbelt.org (click Events) or call 415-398-3730.

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