

Modernizing our Community Separator Policies

By Teri Shore, Greenbelt Alliance



For 20 years, Sonoma County's community separator policies have prevented subdivisions, shopping malls and big box stores from sprawling into nearly 17,000 acres of natural and agricultural lands between our towns and cities. In 2016, Sonoma County must renew the voter-backed community separator measures that historically passed with more than 70% of the countywide vote.

For the first time in decades, Sonoma County has an opportunity to review, revise and improve voter-backed open space policies.

Sonoma County Conservation Action was among the first to send a letter to the Board of Supervisors urging them to develop and support a robust renewal, update, and expansion of community separators.

So far, the supervisors have not committed to anything beyond a bare-bones renewal. They will soon vote on a work plan to renew the community separators, so individual and organizational letters are needed now to urge them to extend community separator

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Local Coastal Plan at Risk

*By Padi Selwyn,
 Preserve Rural Sonoma County*

In a quiet effort to rewrite the Sonoma County General Plan Coastal Agriculture element, the Sonoma County Permit and Resource Management Department (PRMD) has been revising the Local Coastal Plan (LCP) that has protected our coast for decades, and would open the floodgates to development. Four community meetings have been held on the coast, but only after pressure from Preserve Rural Sonoma County, did the PRMD staff outline the most dramatic changes to the Coastal Agriculture elements at the last meeting in Timber



Cove in late September.

The proposed amendments could totally undermine the safeguards offered in the current plan by allowing permitted development of industrial winery/event centers on what are presently purely agriculturally-zoned lands on the Sonoma Coast. Much like the cumulative impacts that are having a negative effect on areas like the Dry Creek Valley and Valley of the Moon, the Sonoma Coast appears to be the next development target by the wine industry. With the onset of warming temperatures inland, the So-

We're adding E-Newsletters

We're adding a regular e-newsletter to our communications! If you don't currently receive our email notices, please contact us at diane@conservationaction.org. Thank you for helping us keep you informed on pressing issues and actions needed for the environment!

sonoma Coast would provide cooler temperatures for Pinot and Chardonnay grapes.

The Sonoma Coast appears to be the next development target by the wine industry. An investment group led by Flanagan Vineyards owner bought a 300 acre parcel near Bodega (complete w/ 8,000 square foot estate home). First the vineyards will be developed. Yes, this is Agricultural zoning, and we don't have a problem with that beyond the monocrop aspect, removal of Oak, Fir, Pine, Redwood and all other native biota. It's the procession of winery buildings, bottling plants, visitor parking, commercial kitchen, new wells into the aquifer, wastewater treatment, event parking, traffic, and alcohol-impaired drivers on narrow coastal roads that give us heartburn for the coastal zone.

Only a huge outcry from the public may be able to stop the powerful



wine lobby from achieving this goal and the potentially destructive im-

(Continued on page 2)

Community separators protect agriculture, waterways, drinking water, groundwater and recharge areas, wildlife corridors, hillsides, and woodlands. They also help to preserve clean air, water, and enhance climate resiliency – all key to public health and wellness across populations and income levels. Greenbelt protections are strongly supported by voters in Sonoma County. Three supervisors are up for re-election in 2016: Supervisors Susan Gorin, Shirlee Zane and Efren Carrillo. To demonstrate their commitment to protecting Sonoma County's natural and agricultural land use, they must direct the Permit Resource and Management Department to implement a community separator work plan for the 2016 ballot measure that includes renewal, revisions of 20-year old policies and consideration of additional designations in priority areas.

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*A hearty Thank You to our friends at
Preserve Rural Sonoma County for
their advocacy on this issue!*



A black and white photograph of a large indoor gathering. Numerous people are seated at round tables, facing towards the front of the room. The room has a high ceiling with exposed wooden beams and large, rectangular skylights. At the front, a large projection screen displays a presentation slide. Two people are standing near the screen, possibly giving a presentation. The atmosphere appears to be a formal or semi-formal event.

Davis ended her wonderful talk with two inspirational quotes for the audience. Margaret Mead said, “Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has.” And a teaching from her Jewish tradition: “You are not obligated to complete the task, but neither are you free to desist from it.” ♦

Website Transformed

By Lea Morgenstern Baylis,
Communications Manager

We are beyond excited to announce that our website, ConservationAction.org, has had a transformation! We have been working hard over the past six months to make this website an excellent resource for everyone interested in our work and in learning about environmental issues in Sonoma County.

The easy to navigate website has some wonderful features:

- * The News section where we highlight our current campaigns
- * Our Victories section where readers can learn more about our history and achievements
- * A Resources page which includes important coalitions that support the environmental movement in Sonoma County
- * And of course, several ways to get the community more involved with our work.

We find that our mission, improving our quality of life and protecting the natural beauty of Sonoma County for all generations, comes alive on the new site.

The layout is much more user friendly, so locating our current issues or researching past projects is a breeze.

Our history has shown us that motivating people to take action requires serious passion, diligence and commitment. With our new website we think it will be easier for folks to feel the groundswell and get involved to make a difference in our community.

The website also makes it easier to connect with us on social media where we maintain a very active Facebook page and have a growing presence on Twitter and Instagram also.

So if you haven't already taken some time to explore the new www.ConservationAction.org, please do so and let us know what you think! ♦



New Conservation Action .org Features:

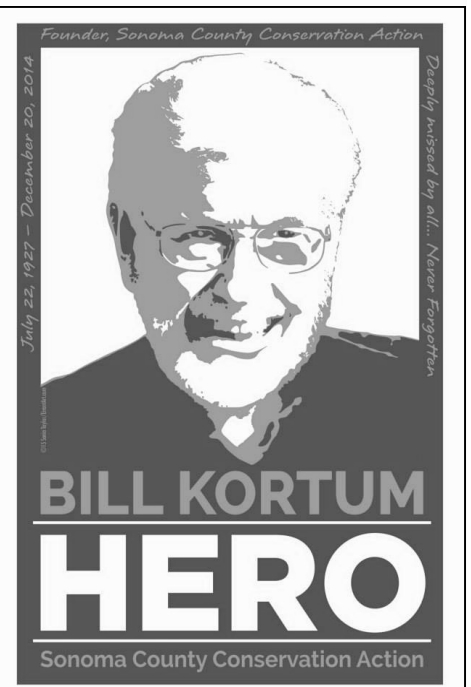
- **Refreshed** look and feel
- **News** blog section for current campaigns and events
- **Our Victories** section for Conservation Action achievements and history
- **Resources** page with links to important coalitions and information (including E-Mail links for County Supervisors!)
- **Regular Updates** in Our News and Current Issues Blogs
- **Encourages Community** and Member Involvement
- **Highlights stories and actions** in our diverse base of support

Kortum Legacy Campaign

*Thank you to everyone who made a donation in Bill Kortum's honor to our Kortum Legacy Fund. If you would like to make a contribution in memory of Bill Kortum, please visit the website, ConservationAction.org or mail us at:

SCCA- Kortum Memorial Fund
540 Pacific Ave., Santa Rosa, CA 95404

*There is a new book that has been published about Bill's life and major environmental accomplishments, written by the late John Crevelli. Books can be purchased at Copperfields Bookstore in Petaluma, Sebastopol, and Montgomery Village, Santa Rosa.



Petaluma's SMART Station

By David Keller, Board President

It recently came to our attention that SMART management and some board members are in negotiations to develop Petaluma's downtown station area block. One potential developer is offering to build a new Eastside station in exchange for development rights to the downtown Petaluma station-area block owned by SMART. SMART management apparently favors changing the previously identified and approved Corona Road Eastside station to a site at the vacant Adobe Lumber parcel on Old Redwood Hwy. The Adobe Lumber site is outside the city limits, and would serve this developer's financial interests as the owner of nearby office park buildings.

Unfortunately, despite some 20 years of public engagement and consensus, and SMART's concurrence with Petaluma's Central Specific Plan, General Plan, and Station Area Plan, and inclusion of Corona Road as the only Eastside Petaluma station location in SMART's own approved EIR, SMART management is now claiming that "the location for a future Petaluma station has not been identified or determined."

Sonoma County Conservation Action, the foremost political supporter



of SMART and its taxpayer funding, is frustrated with SMART's apparent willingness to revise the Petaluma's Eastside station location without engaging in early, full public review. This is antithetical to our strong support for open and responsive government. The Corona Road station location well serves the area's residents, businesses and students at the SRJC Petaluma campus, and is easily accessible by bus, shuttle, bike, and walking as well as for park-and-ride commuters.

We are asking SMART's Board of

Directors to commit promptly to a full public process and full CEQA and EIR to address any impacts of the proposed Adobe Lumber site, including annexation to the City of Petaluma,

* SMART is in talks to change the previously approved Corona Road station to vacant Adobe Lumber parcel.
* Corona Rd. location serves the area well and is easily accessible by existing public transit, park & ride, and bike.
* Tell SMART to commit to a robust public process and EIR.

flooding, utilities service, transit and transportation planning, bike and pedestrian access, as well as potential inducement for intensive development at the edge of Petaluma's Urban Growth Boundary, contrary to the intent of UGBs. We also would like SMART to issue a national search in response to a Request for Proposals for design and construction of the downtown station area block, as it recently did for Santa Rosa.

After 20 years of public decision making of Corona Road as Petaluma's second rail station, we would be sorely disappointed if SMART tries to shortchange our city's and citizens' work and collective decisions. ♦

News in Brief

By Dennis Rosatti, Executive Director

Winery Working Group

Sonoma County Permit and Resource Management Director Tennis Wick created a short term advisory group to provide feedback into the issue of winery and associated event permitting in Sonoma County. The group, composed of about 20 members from the wine industry, homeowners and neighborhood group representatives has been meeting in public since early summer 2015. The group has no official advisory or legislative power, but has served as a sounding board for the Director and his staff who are tasked with proposing new regulations that recognize issues of overconcentration, traffic, noise and other impacts that the explo-

sion of wineries and events have had in Sonoma County in recent years. An important meeting is happening at PRMD to solicit public feedback on NOVEMBER 16th, 5:30-9PM!

NorCal Climate Mobilization

Conservation Action will be supporting the march in *Oakland on Nov. 21st* to raise attention to the UN Climate Change Conference happening in Paris Nov. 30th-Dec 11th. Check our website for information on how to join the group bus to go to Oakland.

SMART is Coming

The SMART train has made several major advances in the past few months, and is on track to begin its initial operating segment service at the end of 2016. The new railcars have

been arriving from the factory in Chicago, and the track reconstruction came to a completion last week when the bridge at Haystack Landing in Petaluma came into operation. We will continue to keep you posted on the advancement of SMART!

Iron Rangers at the Coast

We have stayed vigilant on the Self-Pay Station (Iron Ranger) issue at the Sonoma Coast State Parks. It looks like the CA Coastal Commission (CCC) will be hearing the appeal from State Parks in Santa Rosa in April of 2016. State Parks has convened a small group of stakeholders for initial discussions to explore ways to bring funding to State Parks with the least amount of impact to Sonoma County residents and prevent interference with coastal access. ♦

20th Annual Gala at Shone Farms celebrating SCCA

By Diane Schulz, Office Manager

This past July 11th, our Annual Gala Dinner and Auctions was held at beautiful Shone Farm, the SRJC's agriculture and viticulture school's home amidst the farms and vineyards of West Sonoma County. Over 200 guests attended and with a fine caterer, Ceres Community Project and an effervescent auctioneer, State Senator Mike McGuire providing the fuel, our guests poured out the support. Matt Maguire, from Friends of Lafferty Ranch, delivered a fiery speech about the fight to open Lafferty Ranch to the public.

As always the evening included awards – our annual Up Stream Swimmer award for politicians who

often pit themselves against their Council or Board's non-environmentally friendly members. This year we honored Julie Combs of Santa Rosa. The Dick Day Community Activist award went to Sonia Taylor, an artist who puts her skills to work for the kind of candidates and issues by which we abide. A new Bill Kortum Award for Leadership in Sustainability was awarded to Traethen Heckman of Daily Acts, for his work inspiring actions in the county. Guy Conner received our Kate Fraga Award for Persistent and Enduring Activism. Our dedicated team of canvassers and administrative staff were present to receive green clipboard awards for their various years of service and achievement.

Another feature this year was bringing the new Kortum Legacy Luncheon series to the attention of guests. Many people donated in memory of Bill, our co-founder. His name is synonymous with the Voter's Green Mandate, a phrase he coined which expresses exactly the on-going purpose of his and SCCA's life work. As long as we carry on in his name, we are keeping the maintenance of a sustainable economy and culture in Sonoma County a reality, now and for future generations.

Check our website, Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram sites for further information on upcoming Kortum Legacy Luncheons. We are committed to finding knowledgeable, engaging

speakers to increase your awareness of environmental challenges that face us. Thanks to all who participated.

We'll can't wait for next year's

Gala! ♦



THANK YOU 2015 Gala Sponsors!

Michael Allen & Helen Ross
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SEIU 1021
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Guy Conner
Debora Fudge
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Rick Theis & C.J. Johnson
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SOAR Inflatables
Sonoma/Mendocino/Lake Counties
Building & Construction Trades Council
Margaret Spaulding
Anne Teller
Tess Lusher and Chris Arai
Pam Torliatt

Clockwise from top: this year's Upstream Swimmer, Julie Combs pictured with SCCA Executive Director Denny Rosatti; below, Julie accepts her award on stage with Assemblyman Marc Levine, and former SCCA Upstream Swimmers, L-R: Deb Fudge (Windsor), Matt Maguire (Petaluma), Sarah Glade Gurney (Sebastopol), Senator Mike McGuire (Healdsburg), Rue Furch (West County), and Gary Wysocky (Santa Rosa).



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5 Reasons Conservation Action is adding E-Newsletters

1. News Travels Fast

Have you noticed that even yesterday's news seems stale? We want to bring you the most current information possible about our county's environmental issues. Adopting E-Newsletters will allow us to tell you about today's issues faster.

2. Streamlines Citizen Involvement

A key feature of connecting online is being able to make your voice heard instantly. We want you to be able to sign petitions, email your representative, and let the county supervisors know what you care about. By connecting online we can help you join the conversation and have an interactive experience.

3. Saves Money

We'll be sending fewer paper newsletters and more E-news! Saving on printing and postage enables us to broaden our reach.

4. Shareability

Have you noticed how easy it is to share information on social media? Sonoma County's environmental movement always needs more supporters. You can help by sharing our online newsletters with your networks!

5. Saves Trees

We are an environmental organization and we care about saving paper, obviously! Please, send us your email to:

diane@ConservationAction.org

Save the Date!
**Conservation Action's
Holiday Open House will
be held at our office, 540
Pacific Ave, Santa Rosa,
on Monday, December
21st from 5-7pm.**

**Join us for light refresh-
ments, ugly holiday
sweater contest, and
eco-caroling!**

SCCA Report Card Released
Enclosed in this newsletter is our latest **environmental report card** on local elected officials. We collected information from council watchers in our membership and otherwise over the past three months to produce the document. If you'd like to participate in future feedback on the report card, please email us at:
scca@conservationaction.org

SUPPORT CONSERVATION ACTION!

SCCA is sustained entirely by the contributions of local concerned citizens. Please sign up or renew today. Thanks!

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Contributions to SCCA support our advocacy and grassroots Organizing work. They are not tax-deductible.

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