

March 12, 2006
Emily Minton, Senior Planner
255 N. Forbes Street Lakeport, CA 95453

Re: Marina at Lyons Creek

Comments: From Redbud Audubon Society

Dear Emily,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this proposed project. I will proceed with some specific areas of concern, but I also have just a few general comments about some things that I wonder if the developers of this project are aware of.

First of all, an Environmental Impact Report done 20 years ago is not adequate to address the issues that this development will create. We request either a completely new EIR or an extensive revision of the old one, which may be something the developers already have planned.

Two things that immediately stand out include the construction of the beach and the marina. Clearing of lakefront vegetation for beaches I believe is prohibited in the shoreline ordinance, or at least discouraged. Also, a marina will have a detrimental affect on the shoreline habitat in this area. An influx of jet skis and power boats so close to Rodman Slough and the habitat there for nesting herons and egrets is a grave concern to us. Also, I see no mention of the established Osprey nest that is in the oak tree on this property. Also, the willow trees that are in such "poor condition" because of mistletoe still provide excellent habitat for tree swallows, warblers, and a variety of other songbirds here.

We request a full or completely revised EIR; we request a redesign of the project using conservation design concepts that would still provide development opportunities but preserve the invaluable lakefront habitat. We question the adequacy of the oak mitigation plan and are also concerned about flood zone issues.

Following are comments that are not necessarily meaningful as far as legal issues regarding the California Environmental Quality Act, but are simply musings. Are the developers of this project aware of the extreme variability of the water quality of Clear Lake? For the past 8 to 10 years, algae conditions on Clear Lake have improved greatly but there is absolutely no guarantee that these conditions will continue. Marinas and developments on the lake tend to trap water and create even more smelly conditions than simply having open water. Our experts concede that they don't really know why Clear Lake has been relatively algae free over the past few years. Indeed, Bob Losius reported at one of our meetings that the phosphorus levels have actually risen, which is not a good thing. My point is, are these developers aware of what this lake can be like? Are these new proposals going to add to the problem like the development in the Clearlake Keys in the Oaks did?

The inevitability of development here must be accepted. All of these developments in this area

could be acceptable if approached using a Conservation Design model. Instead of maxing out the land and lakefront, design for open space and enjoyment of the lake without destroying it. Naming streets and circles after what they have destroyed is just not appropriate.

Redbud Audubon will be following these proposals carefully. We expect full compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act as well as the county's shoreline ordinance and proposed general plan. We believe quality developers will be willing to work with the environmental interests in the County. The project's promoters say they want Smart Growth, that is a good thing. Saying it and doing it are two different things. This project needs changing.

Sincerely,

Roberta Lyons Conservation Chair, Redbud Audubon Society
(707) 994-2024
13806 Cliff Drive
Lower Lake, CA 95457