



# Central Coast Forest Association

## CCFA INTERVIEWS SANTA CRUZ COUNTY SUPERVISORS

By Doug White, CCFA Director

The Board of Directors of CCFA has decided to initiate a public relations effort to win the good will of the Santa Cruz County board of Supervisors. Although we know the lumber industry in this county is conducted in an environmentally friendly manner, we need to make sure the supervisors understand this, too. We hope to create a mutual feeling of trust and understanding.

For a start, CCFA Board member Cate Moore and I recently requested and were granted an interview with newly elected First District Supervisor John Leopold. After an extended introductory period, we asked the supervisor to comment on the following questions:

- As a new supervisor, what do you consider to be Santa Cruz County's most pressing problems, and how do you intend to go about correcting them?
- Is there an Economic Development Department funded by the county? If there is, why does it have such a low profile?
- In your opinion, how important is the tax revenue income generated by the lumber industry within Santa Cruz County?
- Santa Cruz County currently appears to be unable to fully fund some of the governmental operations that all California counties are obliged to conduct. How would you seek to increase this county's revenue stream?
- To what extent should the Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors, exercising its authority over land use issues, be allowed to prevent a landowner from cutting and selling trees growing on his property?
- How would you rationalize the taking of a citizen's right to cut down and sell trees growing on his property?
- What effect should the elimination of potential logging activities on a real estate parcel have on the County's assessment of the parcel, for property tax purposes?

Supervisor Leopold did not answer these questions in the way we would have liked, but this is understandable. He had known very little about the CCFA and about the forest business in general. His supervisorial district contains the community of Live Oak, where he and most of his constituents live, and where neighborhood crime is considered to be the County's most pressing problem. As a new supervisor, his attention is focused on the issues that are manifested within his district. It will be our responsibility to bring to his attention the problems we have and how they directly, and indirectly, effect his constituents.

During the coming weeks, we intend to meet with the other four supervisors in order to introduce ourselves and to ask them for their comments on the questions we asked Supervisor Leo-

pold. Our goal is the creation of good will and a friendly and cooperative relationship with the County Court House. We want to erase any negative misconceptions about CCFA that may have developed in the past.

When honest people learn more about each other, they become more willing to try to compromise in order to work together for the common good. The foresters of the CCFA are good stewards of the lands they own and manage. Perhaps now is the time to make sure that all our county leaders are made aware of this fact. People support people they know and respect. ■

## INTERVIEW WITH JOHN LEOPOLD

From the taped interview

**CCFA: As a new supervisor, what do you consider to be Santa Cruz County's most pressing problems, and how do you intend to go about correcting them?**

**JL:** He considers his district's most pressing problem to be public safety and out-of-scale development. His district puts more calls into the sheriff's office than any other area, while it does not have the same access to law enforcement that other areas of the county have. The huge budget deficit includes a \$25M cut to law enforcement.

He places much of the blame for out-of-scale development on the backs of former supervisors of the area.

**CCFA: Is there an Economic Development Department funded by the county? If there is, why does it have such a low profile?**

**JL:** There is none and this needs to change. There is a Redevelopment Agency. Santa Cruz County has the second smallest area in the state, but is mid-level in population. There is no one who thinks about fund-raising.

**CCFA: In your opinion, how important is the tax revenue income generated by the lumber industry within Santa Cruz County?**

**JL:** He has been on the job only nine weeks, but knows economic development centers on retail business such as shops. He's looking towards encouraging "green-collar" jobs, such as solar power development, which he says is good for the environment, for jobs, and for the public. The county needs to increase revenues, but not just chase sales taxes. It needs to build a workforce that cannot be outsourced, so it needs to build its own workforce to build the alternative energy needed. He particularly emphasized the solar alternative, and since there are not currently enough people working in solar technology, this is the opportunity to create new jobs by training new technicians to build solar systems.

**CCFA: To what extent should the Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors, exercising its authority over land use**

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**issues, be allowed to prevent a landowner from cutting and selling trees growing on his property?**

**How would you rationalize the taking of a citizen's right to cut down and sell trees growing on his property?**

**JL:** He believes in the positive role of government regulations in people's lives and that regulation should benefit the whole rather than the few. He knows that Santa Cruz County has good timber harvest practices, possibly the best in the state. While some people feel that more regulations are needed, he believes that there is currently a good balance between regulation and property rights in the County.

Cate Moore completed the interview with the viewpoint of timberland owners, many of whom are CCFA members: people have to be able to realize at least some income off their land or they may be forced to find something else to do with it, perhaps install a vineyard or sell it for development. This is the viewpoint CCFA tries so hard to get our politicians to understand, that if we pay taxes on our land, yet cannot realize some income from it, it becomes a financial burden some of us are unable to bear. The most profitable option is to sell it for home sites, something we know the county politicians and residents do not want. Yet, when someone does buy a parcel of unharvestable timberland and prepares to build a house on it, he can get a permit to remove the trees completely in order to build that house. If the County is so anxious to control the building density on open space, then it must allow timberland owners to do a selective harvest every 10-15 years.

Those who are directly involved in the timber industry know that County and State regulations are so onerous on occasions that it is very difficult to continue harvesting timber.

More interviews to come... ■

## ***CCFA Annual Meeting - June 20 476 Swanton Road, Davenport***

CCFA's annual membership meeting will be held at the picnic grounds off Swanton Road, the same place it was held last year.

Once again, we will have Sandy Lydon, historian and professor emeritus of history-Cabrillo College, as speaker. Sandy is the author of the book, "Coast Redwood, A Natural and Cultural History", among several others. His talks are lively and filled with humor. He was so well received last year, we were begged to have him back. Fortunately, we were able to secure him for June 20th.

Andy Eggers, a North Coast resident who is a native of Switzerland and skilled in forestry, will present a demonstration of logging with his team of horses. From the standing tree to the finished lumber, Andy will secure a tree, skid it to his portable mill with the horses, and saw it into lumber.

Andy Eggers and Randy Clayton did horse logging in the Soquel Demonstration Forest a few years ago.

CCFA will provide meat, which will be barbecued at the picnic grounds, a big pot of beans, coffee and other beverages. Members are asked to bring a salad, desert or hot dish.

We will present our annual Forestry Excellence Award, bring members up to date on our efforts in behalf of timberland owners, and generally have a good time. Be sure to reserve June 20th for this important and fun event! ■

## **LEGISLATIVE ALERT**

### **CCFA Contribution**

CCFA members, landowners, and taxpayers should **keep their eyes on Senate Bill 211** (Simitian, D-Palo Alto). This state legislation authorizes the County of Santa Cruz to bypass the normal processes of creating a Special District (in this case, a Parks District) and vests this authority directly with the Board of Supervisors. The Parks District being proposed takes in the entire county of Santa Cruz, minus 800 acres owned by Mid-Peninsula Regional Open Space District. Normally, the creation of a Special District requires a petition with at least 5,000 valid signatures, it must be reviewed by the Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO), and it frequently requires environmental review.

Instead, SB 211 allows the Board of Supervisors to establish this Parks District and put it directly to the voters. Ratification of this Parks District will require only a simple majority of county voters to pass. The legislation also states that the Supervisors will set a public election to establish the Directors of the Parks District. This election will use existing Supervisors' Districts as the voting boundaries. It is unknown whether the Supervisors can place requirements or restrictions on who is eligible to run for these positions. Lastly, the legislation also lets the Supervisors determine the funding mechanism to support the Parks District. Presumably, they could call for a sales tax or property tax increase, or a ballot measure authorizing a bond. It is CCFA's understanding that any funding measure is subject to Proposition 218 and would require a two-thirds vote of the public in order to pass.

Of greatest concern to CCFA is the potential that this Parks District could be vested with eminent domain authority. In fact, the original language of the bill did exactly that. Fortunately, the latest amendment to the bill specifically precludes the use of eminent domain by the Parks District. We are extremely pleased by this change and will continue to monitor the bill to make sure that eminent domain authority is not reinstated.

However, CCFA has other concerns regarding this legislation. Is it really wise to bypass LAFCO review? Given the current condition of many local parks, wouldn't it be wise to consider potential environmental impacts, especially in the long term? Finally, this Parks District will have to be funded with your money. Is this the best time to be pushing yet another tax on the public?

CCFA will continue to monitor this bill. You can look at it online as it moves through the legislature at: <http://www.leginfo.ca.gov/billinfo.html> Type in SB211 and then click "search".

## **MANAGEMENT TRANSITION AT BIG CREEK**

After 63 years of operation, Lud and Bud McCrary, long-time CCFA members, have transferred the positions of President and Vice President of Big Creek Lumber Co. to the next generation. On April 1, Janet McCrary Webb was named President and Ken McCrary and Ellen McCrary Rinde have become Co-Vice Presidents. Lud and Bud have informed CCFA that they have no intention of retiring anytime soon, but in fact have assumed the position of Co-Chairmen of the Board of Directors for the family-founded, owned and operated company. CCFA wishes Big Creek the best of luck in the future. ■

Central Coast Forest Association  
Membership / Renewal / Contribution

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Enclosed is \$ \_\_\_\_\_ for:  New Membership  Membership Renewal  Legal Fund  
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Please make checks payable to:

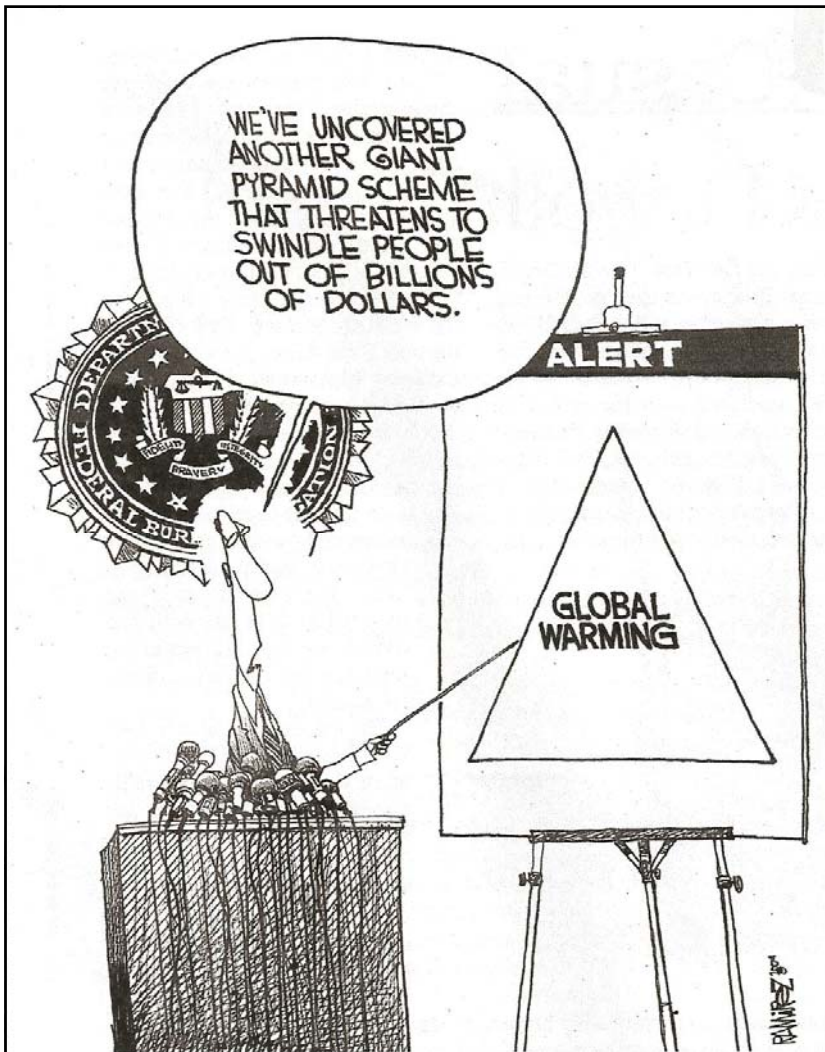
Central Coast Forest Association P.O. Box 1670 Capitola, CA 95010

<u>Membership Category</u>	<u>Dues</u>
Individual .....	\$50
Business .....	\$500

CCFA appreciates your support

CCFA is a 501-(c) 4 tax-exempt organization. Donations may be tax-deductible as a business expense.

Notes From the Nut-House



THE WIZARD OF ID



There is a big difference between good sound reasons, and reasons that sound good.

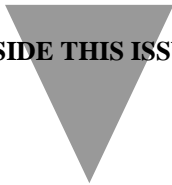
We're on the web!  
www.ccfassociation.org



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**INSIDE THIS ISSUE:**



The forests must be, and will be, not only preserved but used, and the experience of all civilized countries that have faced and solved the question show that the forests, like perennial fountains, may be made to yield a sure harvest of timber while at the same time all their far-reaching beneficent uses may be maintained unimpaired.

**John Muir**

*Founder of the Sierra Club in 1895*

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**CCFA's Mission**

*The Central Coast Forest Association is a non-profit alliance of small forestland owners, forestry professionals and forest-oriented businesses with close affinity to the woods, mountains, streams and wildlife of the Central Coast. Our purpose is to uphold and preserve our values, our property rights and our way of life. To advance this objective, CCFA will:*

- *Interact with community, political and environmental interests as a voice for forestland owners.*
- *Understand the news, law and technology of forestry and apply this knowledge for the benefit and protection of forestland owners.*
- *Inform members of matters affecting their lands and forests.*
- *Take political and legal action to defend the rights and property of all Central Coast forestland owners.*