

*"Change is inevitable...
Survival is not."*



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COSA v. Los Pueblecitos (The Hamlets)

Half Moon Bay, California – Coastal Open Space Alliance (COSA),¹ the "no growth, anti-community" cartel, has stooped to using egregious tactics to disenfranchise rural coastal residents. These urban extremists are fighting tooth and nail to deny rural coastal residents their constitutional right to vote to determine their community's future. We rural coastal residents and land owners stand united in our demand to exercise our right to vote on the Mid-peninsula Regional Open Space District's (MROSD) Coastside Annexation. The proposed annexation area engulfs 220 square miles of rural coastal lands from the southern boundary of Pacifica to the Santa Cruz County line, making it one of the largest open space annexations in United States history.

Why is COSA so afraid to let local voters determine their community's own future?

COSA's relentless propaganda campaign would have uninformed urban tax payers believe its altruistic motive is to "preserve the coast's open space and agricultural lands from urban sprawl." Nothing could be further from the truth! Due to stringent state and local coastal development laws, restrictive zoning regulations, policies and ordinances, excessive building fees and assessments, and severe infrastructure limitations, the San Mateo County Coastside has maintained negative growth and its natural beauty and rural qualities for decades.² There are over 200 less housing units in the rural coastal zone today than there were 20 years ago, and the population has decreased over the passing years. Theirs is the big lie, and these no growth statistics are a matter of public record. What contributed to the reduction of rural farms and housing stocks? – COSA!

¹ COSA member organizations include: Committee for Green Foothills, Midcoast Park Lands, Surfrider Foundation SMC, Save Our Shores, Half Moon Bay Open Space Trust, Peninsula Open Space Trust, Sierra Club, and Greenbelt Alliance. Save Our Bay is presently cooperating with government regulatory authorities in an ongoing investigation and audit of open space special districts, including a review of policies and practices relating to applications for grants, use of public funds, and valuation of properties for tax related purposes.

² The Housing Log prepared by the San Mateo County Environmental Services Agency, Planning and Building Division, the Rate of Development in the Rural Lands confirms the following: Number of dwelling units (1981-1995): 57 dwelling units; Permitted rate of development: 33 dwelling units per year; **Actual rate of development (average): 4 dwelling units per year** (pertains to main units, and not to second units or affordable housing); **The total number of dwelling units built in rural lands from 1996 to 2001: 12 dwelling units.** It is currently estimated that building fees and assessments for a new dwelling in the rural coastal area is approaching \$100,000. These building fees and assessments are incurred by a home owner before the completion of construction and the issuance of an occupancy permit.

On December 6, 1995, anti-coastal community lobbyist Lennie Roberts, Committee for Green Foothills, proclaimed to the San Mateo County Board of Supervisors that they were “partners” with the Committee for Green Foothills and the Sierra Club in implementing their so-called Coastside Protection Program. The Program’s land use and zoning amendments called for the reduction of government expenditures and reduction of costs to San Mateo County urban taxpayers for roads, law enforcement, fire protection, schools, and health services located in rural coastal lands. COSA’s program defined imminent “development threats” as any increased water supplies, additional sewer treatment facilities and larger highways. COSA would save the coast by choking the very infrastructure needed to sustain the rural coastal communities, and annex the entire coastal zone to MROSD and the Golden Gate National Recreation Area.

In early 2003, the Rural Lands Incorporation Now Committee (RLINC) (www.rlinc.org) filed a notice of intent with the San Mateo County Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCo) to circulate a petition to incorporate the Rural Lands into a township to be called “Los Pueblecitos” (the Hamlets). Less than 1,000 signatures are required to qualify the petition for the application process and for the ballot. LAFCo’s Executive Officer, at the direction of COSA has blocked the approval of the petition circulation to this day. RLINC has announced that it will start circulating the petition in the next few weeks. Why do the Rural Lands residents want to incorporate Los Pueblecitos? Incorporation will allow for local control and accountability for decisions affecting our rural hamlets, secure self-governance through elections of local residents, retain local tax revenues for community services and preserve as well as protect and sustain the quality of life and values prevailing within the proposed township.³ Los Pueblecitos will promote cost-effective services tailored to the need of local residents and land owners while providing coordinated resource management and planning services for vital community interests, including natural watershed systems, parks, and detached MROSD open space lands. The rural coastal residents have declared their vision for independence to be realized by July 4, 2005.

COSA has corrupted the San Mateo County Board of Supervisors, LAFCo, and the San Mateo County Elections Division. Their actions violate the very principles upon which our founding fathers used to build our country. Thomas Jefferson feared the tyranny of those who fear and distrust the people, and wish to draw all from them into the hands of higher classes. James Madison feared the tyranny of the majority and the abridgement of the freedom of the people by gradual and silent encroachments of those in power. John Adams feared all men, recognizing that the only maxim of the free government ought to be to trust no man living with power to endanger the public liberty.

³ Most of the County’s political leaders and open space advocates do not even live in the San Mateo County Coastside area. San Mateo County Supervisor Richard Gordon, District 3, the representative for the coastal area, lives in Menlo Park. Supervisor Gordon is a LAFCo commissioner and voted to approve the MROSD annexation on April 7, 2004. In a political campaign report filed with the Fair Political Practices Commission, Supervisor Gordon reported a \$500 civic donation to Green Foothills Foundation, a major proponent of the MROSD annexation. (San Mateo County is the only county out of fifty-eight California counties that elects supervisors at large rather than by the district. Each supervisor is now randomly assigned to represent districts.)