



#102
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Monterey Pine Forest Watch
P. O. Box 422
Carmel, California 93921

June 7, 2004

Thomas A. McCue, Coastal Planner
Monterey County Planning and Building Inspection Department
Coastal Office
2620 First Avenue
Marina, CA 93933

Dear Mr. McCue:

Monterey Pine Forest Watch would like to clarify our position concerning the map that we submitted with our comments about the DEIR for Pebble Beach Company's plan for Del Monte Forest, as we understand that it has created considerable controversy.

This map was created by overlaying data developed by Jones & Stokes in 1994 over a very high-resolution (~1 ft) infrared aerial photograph taken in 2002. The data was then modified to exclude only those areas of development that could clearly be seen on the recent aerial. Although the new GIS layer is a more accurate and up-to-date reflection of the undeveloped Monterey Pine Forest that currently exists, it does not take into account areas that should be categorized as "rural" (lots > than 1 acre) according to Jones & Stokes original data, nor does it allow for significant buffer zones around areas of development. It is therefore a conservative estimate of remaining undeveloped Monterey Pine Forest.

We realize, given the advances in technology that have occurred since 1994, that not all of the differences between the two data sets can be attributed to urban expansion. We want to emphasize that the map was never intended to be a definitive or precise measure of acreage lost to development, thus the reference as "approximate". It was not intended as an accurate record but for reference only to show that erosion of the forest is subtle and insidious. To precisely identify the amount of acreage that has been developed would require documentation through a laborious process of checking County parcel records...a process that would no doubt be a good idea.

From our earthbound vantage point we can see that there has been visible loss of forest habitat throughout the area in that time. The comparison of data

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represented in the map, however, indicated that the loss could be quite significant. But even if the amount of loss in actuality is half the amount indicated, through the imprecision of the data, it would still be significant, and it would serve to illustrate the point that forest habitat disappears by attrition. The corollary is that this loss is permanent and creates consequences that cause further jeopardy to the forest that remains. The best example is on the Peninsula, where in the cities of Carmel, Pacific Grove, Monterey and in Del Monte Forest the unique and diverse aspect of Monterey Pine Forest on the marine terrace soils has been reduced to a fraction of its former range, leaving only fragments, which no longer have room to expand and contract as the biology of Monterey Pine dictates. Coupled with the overall loss of 50% of the range of the Monterey forest as a whole and the fragmentation of a significant amount of the remainder, it would seem that erring on the side of caution when considering further development in the forest is a responsible attitude.

1 (cont.)

Once again, this map was submitted for reference only and was simply intended to stimulate us to greater caution. We hope this helps to lend clarity to this matter.

Sincerely,

Linda L. Smith

Linda L. Smith
President

Cc: Rich Walter, Jones & Stokes
Mark Stillwell, Pebble Beach Company