



**LAND
TRUST**

OF SANTA CRUZ
COUNTY

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Land Trust Pulls Plug on State Open Space Bill *Group seeks fresh start after a year-long effort.*

The Land Trust of Santa Cruz County announced today that it was pulling proposed state legislation that would have facilitated voter consideration of an open space district in Santa Cruz County. State Senator Joe Simitian agreed to the Land Trust's request to no longer proceed with SB 211 containing provisions relating to an open space district in Santa Cruz County.

"We believed that this enabling legislation was a "first step" in the process and that a robust public process would follow," said Terry Corwin, the Land Trust's Executive Director. "But we found out that people wanted to be actively engaged right from square one..." She conceded that the Land Trust had "put the cart before the horse." Corwin said, "the timing didn't help either," citing the downturn in the economy after the process started.

Corwin said the Land Trust remains committed to finding a way to conserve Santa Cruz County's agricultural and environmental resources. She said the Land Trust needs to involve key constituencies in the process. By pulling the open space district provisions in SB 211 now, the Land Trust will be better able to absorb the lessons of the past year and to take a fresh look at how to move forward, Corwin said. She said the non-profit would be convening a wide spectrum of community members to chart next steps.

"People recognize that we need to take steps to protect our county's scenic beauty, our water supply, and our productive farms and forests, as well as care for existing protected lands," Corwin said. "The question is what is the right way to address these needs."

Corwin praised Senator Simitian for his efforts as the bills author and Assembly members Anna Caballero and Bill Monning, who co-authored SB 211. "It was great working with our state representatives on this," she said.

The Land Trust of Santa Cruz County was founded in 1978 and since then has protected more than 3,200 acres and worked with partners to protect another 10,000 acres. Information about the Land Trust is available at www.LandTrustSantaCruz.org.