

What's next for Cemex?

Davenport
 Community turns out to offer input on the future of former cement plant land

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DAVENPORT — More than 140 people packed Pacific School in Davenport on Wednesday to offer ideas on what should be done with the former Cemex property located on the North Coast.

Hiking, biking, camping and horseback riding were among the most popular suggestions.

Many folks said they don't want to see motorized access, hunting, campfires and smoking allowed.

Questions were raised about lighting, garbage, parking, roads, access points, dogs and restrooms.

No one was on board for including Cemex in the property's new name.

"Most of all, we'd like recreational use with minimal impact on the property," said Bonny Doon resident Jack Heintz, whose home borders San Vicente Creek next to the property. "We prefer light use, nothing too crazy, heavy on education and research projects."

The 8,500-acre forest in the Santa Cruz Mountains above Davenport was purchased for \$30 million in December by several conservation groups — a collaborative effort by the Living Landscape Initiative that includes the Land Trust of Santa Cruz County, Save the Redwoods League, Peninsula Open Space Trust and Sempervirens Fund.

For more than 100 years, the land had been home to Cemex, a cement plant that closed in 2009 under duress due to a major downturn in the economy.

The cement plant itself remains for sale.

Wednesday's community forum involved people breaking into small groups and writing down their ideas on large sheets of paper, and reading them aloud to the crowd.

Bonny Doon resident Erin McGinty said concern for plants and animals was at the top of her list.

"Protecting sensitive habitat and rare plants and allowing connectivity is important," she said.

Many North Coast residents said they consider the redwood forest part of their backyard.

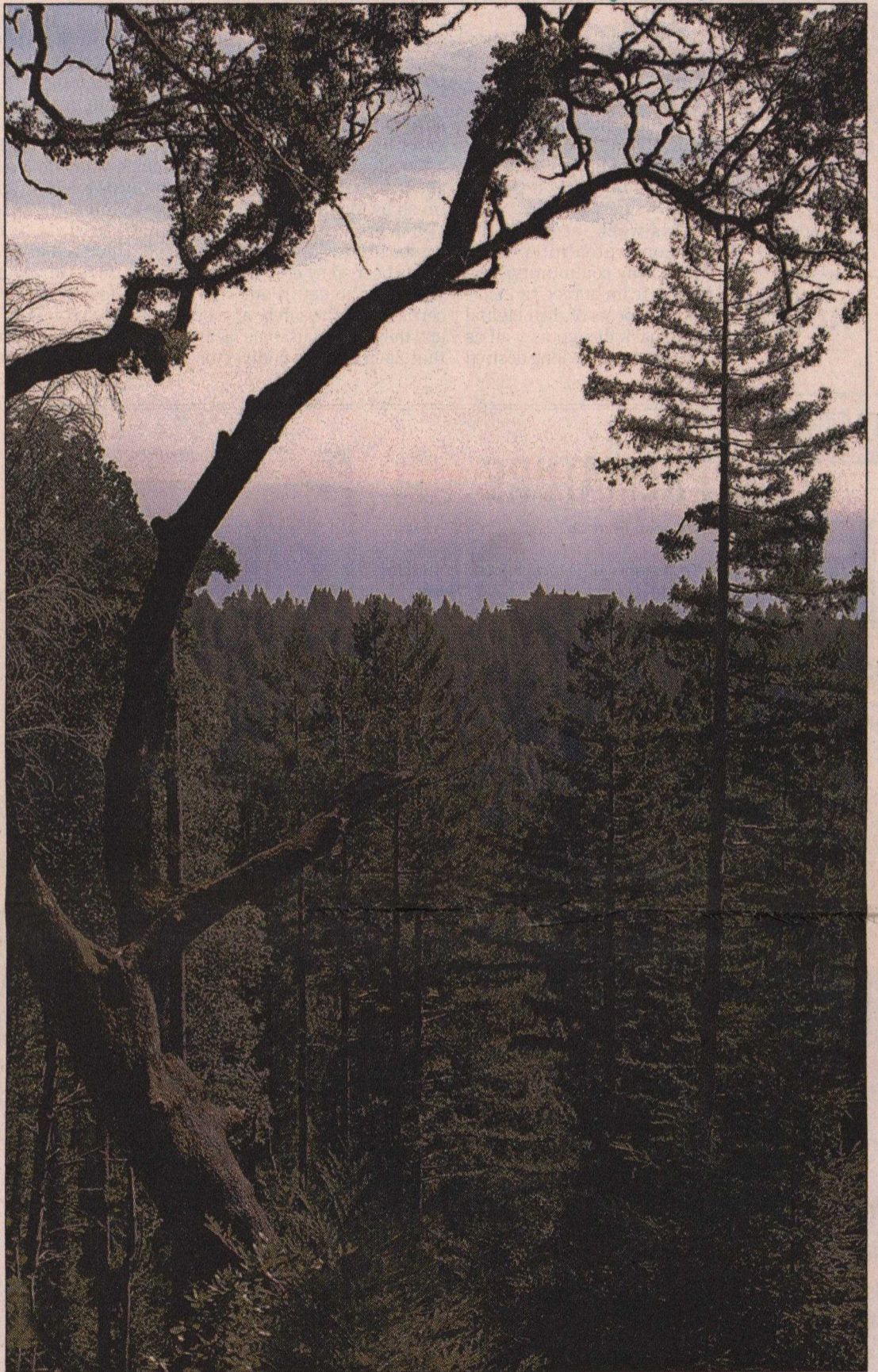
Conservationists say the land will remain in a natural state, free from housing and other developments.

The property is closed to the public while the conservation groups work on a management plan for site security, maintenance, exotic plant removal and logging.

SEE CEMEX ON A5

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JACK HEINTZ, Bonny Doon resident



ABOVE: The ocean is visible from an vantage point off Pine Flat Road in Bonny Doon on the Cemex property.

LEFT: A community meeting seeking public input for what will become of the redwood forest surrounding the former Cemex plant drew a crowd of more than 100 residents from Davenport, Swanton, Bonny Doon and Santa Cruz, spilling out of Pacific School in Davenport. Participants also included donors to the five groups that teamed up to purchase the land.

DAN COYRO/SENTINEL PHOTOS



DAN COYRO/SENTINEL

Wednesday's meeting seeking public input on what to do with the 8,500 acres of redwood forest surrounding the defunct Cemex drew a crowd of more than 140 people, who broke into smaller groups charged with listing possible uses for the land.

CEMEX

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Reed Holderman, executive director of Sempervirens Fund, said the land likely will stay closed through the end of the year until a management plan is finalized.

Public access and recreation definitely will be included in any final plan,

Holderman said.

The 8-mile-long property stretches from the coastal hills around Bonny Doon almost to the ocean.

The former Cemex property is part of 26,000 acres of protected open space along the northern coast that reaches from Big Basin Redwoods State Park to Wilder Ranch State Park.

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