

*Hostels*

## Elsewhere Is Fine

# Natural Bridges Residents Oppose Hostel

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By TOM HONIG  
Sentinel Staff Writer

The majority of residents in the Natural Bridges area declared their support Tuesday for a youth hostel in Santa Cruz — so long as it's not in their neighborhood.

The residents' message was delivered to state Parks and Recreation Department representatives, who conducted a public hearing at the Santa Cruz library conference room.

The state has appropriated money to establish a hostel in Santa Cruz, and is studying the

### Lompico Water

Lompico County Water District directors meet Wednesday at 7 p.m. at the district office to discuss the 1978-79 budget. The board also will meet in ex-

idea of putting the hostel at Natural Bridges State Park.

Despite some staunch support for the hostel, the majority of the speakers were dead set against the idea of the hostel at Natural Bridges.

"I'm not anti-hostel as such, but this simply is not the best site for it," one resident said. "Natural Bridges park is closed at night. It attracts a lot of families, and the area is low in crime and vandalism."

The danger from crime and vandalism would increase with the construction of a youth hostel — and not because of the visitors for which the hostel is planned, he continued. "The

danger is from indigents; you couldn't keep that type away from the hostel-types."

Many speakers urged the state to place the hostel at another site; generally, they mentioned Wilder Ranch State Park. But one speaker, who identified himself as a bicyclist, urged the state representatives to remember "a hostel needs to be close enough to the center of town so people can do their laundry or go to the store."

Also speaking in favor of the hostel was a young woman who has worked as a proctor at the temporary, summertime hostels which have been in San-

ta Cruz during the past few summers. She said that crime and vandalism have not occurred at the hostel, and complained that placing a hostel at a distant location such as Wilder Ranch would not be safe for women traveling alone trying to get to the hostel.

Another speaker said he is in favor of hostels, and would not even mind a hostel near him at Natural Bridges were it not for the danger of attracting traffic.

"A hostel would be fine. But that would mean you'd have to leave the gate open, and all the cars, vans and motorcycles would move in."

Although most residents backed the idea of hostels — in somebody else's neighborhood — some would not even go that far. "I'm from Tennessee, and

I just can't believe the taxes you have to pay in California," said one woman. "You're talking about using tax money to pay for a hostel. I can't afford a damn vacation for myself, but I'm paying for others to take a vacation."

No decision is imminent on the hostel question. The meeting, according to its moderator, Tom Crandall of the state

Parks Department, was scheduled simply as a public hearing. At one point, someone asked Crandall what he thought about the issue, and he replied, "I don't know."

He explained that the Parks Department would use information received at the public hearing to help in writing a report to the department director regarding the hostel.

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