

# LOCAL

## Bugs found in development plans

*Endangered Species*  
Discovery of protected tiger beetles imperils builder's SV land-swap offer

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SCOTTS VALLEY — A tiny bug has taken over the 10 acres that the Keenan Land Co. had offered to the city for playing fields — and that means the city can kiss that gift good-bye.

Kerry Williams, the Glenwood project manager, said in a letter to city planning chief Laura Kuhn that “it would be imprudent to proceed with development plans for the fields” because the land is home to so many protected Ohlone tiger beetles.

It's not clear yet whether the change in plans will jeopardize Keenan's chances of winning City Council approval for a development of 74 homes on Glenwood Drive. The City Council is expected to discuss alternative sites for the fields on June 7.

City Councilwoman Stephany Aguilar said she wants to see a park somewhere on the 194-acre development site. Earlier, she had suggested the developers eliminate some

homes planned in the southern end of the property to locate a park.

“I'm hoping they'll consider that,” she said, “because this end of town also needs recreational elements.”

The decision came after surveys of the property by entomologist Richard Arnold found that 80 percent of the site is occupied by the beetle, which is under consideration for listing as an endangered species by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

That was a huge jump from four years ago, when Arnold found a small population of beetles clustered on a half-acre section of the property.

Williams initially had worked with federal officials and city planners to design a one-acre preserve. Plans were to fence the area and restrict drainage, lighting and access to the site in order to protect the bug.

Now the beetle has expanded in numbers throughout much of the site. Any disruption of the habitat could be considered a “tak-

ing” of the beetle, which is not allowed under the federal Endangered Species Act.

“We fully understand the urgent need for fields in Scotts Valley and we want to do what we can to help the sports leagues in town,” Williams said, “but given the high probability that the beetle will be listed, we have no choice but to eliminate the park from our plans.”

She said the developer is still offering “a highly beneficial package of recreational amenities for Scotts Valley.”

This includes 166 acres of protected open space, a \$250,000 endowment to maintain that preserve; two miles of trails for hiking, biking and horseback riding; and \$425,000 contribution for fields, parks and other recreational facilities.

Williams also reminded city officials that the county Transportation Commission has approved \$900,000 to improve the Glenwood Drive intersection with Scotts Valley Drive. This means the city can spend the

\$425,000 offered by the developer on recreational facilities or a community center instead of on road work.

The council that will take up the issue is different from the one that got the offer including the playing fields.

Since then, Councilman Cliff Barrett, who leans against the Glenwood development, has replaced Bart Cavallaro, who had leaned in favor of it. Councilwoman Stephany Aguilar also had expressed doubts about having the city take responsibility for maintaining the open space proposed by Keenan.

The proposed development has been highly controversial. Voters overturned the council's approval of a 145-home development last June. The developer took the no vote to mean that the project was too large and scaled it down to 74 homes. In February, the developer proposed cash contributions along with the park land to make the project more attractive.