

Golf course planned for La Selva Beach

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LA SELVA BEACH — Members of the Buena Vista Country Club are continuing with plans for the creation of a 90-acre golf course in La Selva Beach.

"The members of the golfing community in the county need more golfing facilities. The existing golf courses have become overcrowded," said David Barlow, president of the Buena Vista Country Club. "We have such a huge influx of golfers from other areas into

Santa Cruz County."

Plans for a golf course west of Highway 1 and north of Buena Vista Drive began in 1992 but suffered a setback in 1996 when an environmental study went awry.

To conduct the environmental study, Cal Poly students were hired to research the migration patterns of the long-toed salamander. Traps were set throughout the property for the collection of live salamanders, but eventually an anonymous caller revealed to authorities

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that 24 salamanders were found dead in the traps. In response, the U.S. Department of Fish and Wildlife revoked Cal Poly's permit.

The project's most recent setback occurred last year with the death of Joe Callahan, a leader in the golf course plans and former president of the country club.

This year, the organization is in the process of completing a Habi-

tat Conservation Plan and an Environmental Impact Report, according to Barlow. Once these reports are complete, the project will be brought before the Santa Cruz County Planning Commission, the Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors and the California Coastal Commission.

The 82 private citizens who make up the Buena Vista Country Club have been working with those who own the land for the proposed course over the past six years. Plans for the golf course includes a 15,000 square-foot clubhouse, seven lakes

and a salamander reserve.

In addition, the country club has arranged with Watsonville's Water Treatment Plant to use treated waste water, which would normally flow into the Pajaro River, for the irrigation of the golf course. Barlow also stated that the golf course will also help to recharge local groundwater.

"We're longtime county residents; we're very aware of water problems with Santa Cruz County," said Barlow. "On our site, we have designed seven lakes that will act to percolate and recharge the aquifers."