

Animals
✓ **Mosquito**
balm sought
in S. County

By TERESA JIMENEZ

Sentinel staff writer

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WATSONVILLE — Residents are itching for a solution to the area's mosquito problem, but the city and county are still studying how to get rid of the pesky insects.

Council members voted Tuesday to wait for a report on possible methods for mosquito abatement. The report will be presented at the council's May 26 meeting.

Recreation and Parks Director Pat Donahue said the city is anxious for a solution as well, since her staff "is being eaten alive."

Meanwhile, county supervisors are expected to discuss the subject at their May 19 meeting.

The city and county are considering working together because South County is being hit hardest by the pests, which are breeding in the water-filled sloughs after the wet winter.

The county hasn't had a mosquito abatement program since 1978, when voters passed Proposition 13.

Watsonville is looking into becoming part of the Northern Salinas Valley Mosquito Abatement District.

Peter Ghormley, executive director for the district, said the agency would annex only the Pajaro Valley, and would not consider serving the rest of Santa Cruz County, according to Donahue.

The city also looked into contracting the district for services this year, but district directors said they would not be interested in such an arrangement, Donahue said.

Water management, biological controls and spraying are among the methods used to limit the number of mosquitoes.