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Soquel Creek Polluted Even When Dam's Down

Soquel Creek is polluted with fecal coliform, even when the lagoon at the end of the stream is not dammed, Capitola councilmen learned Monday night.

City Manager Ryder Ray revealed results from four tests taken along the creek at four locations, twice a day.

He said a high numerical coliform count, an indicator of pollution, had been found.

Said Councilman Ronald Graves, "Something is strange here because on one day the count on the graph goes off the chart (of pollution count)."

Added Graves, "From these tests, it appears that the dam itself does not cause the pollution problem. It's coming from sources higher up the creek."

Ray agreed. He said four faulty septic tanks have been found already. The studies began last month after Ray Talley, head of the County Environmental Health Department, advised "reluctantly that the dam be closed."

The dam has created a summer "swimming hole" for youngsters for more than 25 years.

Ray said the tests have been taken at the Soquel Drive and Highway 1 bridges, near the Disco parking lot and where the creek flows into the ocean.

Citizens and merchants in Capitola have become concerned over the matter. Ray said he has "received a lot of help from the people in the city and would welcome more."

Mayor John Lappin asked anyone knowing of conditions along the creek that lead to pollution to contact the city office. "We want it fully understood that the council does not want the dam closed down. It's something we want to keep here. But we do not want youngsters to swim in polluted water either."

Ray said one more test will be taken this week. "Then we hope to take the report to a commercial firm and come up with an analysis."

In other business:

SIGN ORDINANCE — Councilmen set June 23 at 7:30 p.m. for a public hearing on the newly proposed sign ordinance, submitted recently by the planning commission. A public study ses-

sion also was set May 20 at 7:30 p.m.

ANNEXATION — The council voted unanimously to annex property near 38th Avenue, which owner R. S. Strong plans to use as part of a 50-unit trailer park.

MOBILE HOME PARK — Ray was told to ask the county planning commission for a 30-day delay on a request for a mobile home park at the north side of Clares Street and between Derby Avenue and Wharf Road. The council noted the area was not within the city limits, but added that it plans to annex the area and would like to zone it before a permit for a mobile home park is issued.

HIGHWAY — A resolution to change the federal and secondary highway systems list to include 41st Avenue as a secondary highway route, making it eligible for funds when available, was approved.