

# City, county celebrate trail system

Greenbelt

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Project heralded  
for transportation,  
recreational benefits

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**SANTA CRUZ »** Last weekend, 70-year-old cyclist Janet Fogel shaved 10 minutes off her ride back to Capitola from Scotts

Valley, where she'd been visiting her grandchildren. And she had a National Geographic moment while doing it.

Fogel pedaled her way through Arana Gulch using a new multitrail system connecting cyclists, pedestrians and people with disabilities to and from Santa Cruz and Live Oak without using traffic-laden Soquel Avenue.

Just before dusk, as she came to the end of a new 340-foot-

long stress-ribbon bridge spanning Hagemann Gulch leading into the 68-acre greenbelt, she saw a large cluster of birds hovering above the meadow.

"It was an amphitheater of bird song," she said Wednesday as she stood with her bike on the new Hagemann Bridge after a city-county dedication ceremony. "This has been a dream of ours since I started cycling. I had no idea it was going to be so beautiful."

Officials celebrated the official opening of the trail and habitat restoration project with accolades for the numerous local and state agencies, advocacy groups and individuals who made the plans a reality after many regulatory hurdles and financial challenges. The \$6.5 million project is designed to provide a safe cross-town connection between Broadway in Santa Cruz to Brommer Street

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Hundreds turned out for the opening of the Arana Gulch Multiuse Trail on Wednesday, spanning Arana Gulch and connecting Santa Cruz with Live Oak.

DAN COYRO  
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## Arana

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in Live Oak, as well recreational open space, interpretive stations and cattle grazing to restore the native tarplant.

Critics fought the changes for years, arguing that paving would further endanger the tarplant and expose the meadow to excessive foot and bicycle traffic that would spoil its tranquility.

Because of the opposition and regulatory tweaks, what was once envisioned as a vehicle road through the former dairy site is now a mile-long series of porous concrete pathways connected by the Hagemann foot bridge and 70-foot-causeway over Arana Creek on the opposite end of the city-owned site.

David Cox, a descendant of the Arana family with deep ties to the land, said he was thrilled with the outcome, especially for his 21-year-old son Cameron, who has cerebral palsy and uses a wheelchair. Located near their Frederick Street



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Kids run through Arana Gulch greenbelt on the new Arana Gulch Multiuse Trail on Wednesday.

home close to the Santa Cruz Small Craft Harbor, the park is the first in the city to be fully accessible as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act.

"He can now come here and go to the other side of the harbor," Cox said.

Santa Cruz County Supervisor John Leopold, who

chairs the Regional Transportation Commission that played a significant role in coordinating and funding the project, said the trail system provides more than just health and transportation benefits for people passing from the city to the county.

"The community is coming

together in new ways," he said.

Santa Cruz Parks and Recreation Director Dannette Shoemaker urged the public's help in keeping the greenbelt clean and safe.

"We need you to be our eyes and ears to keep it as pristine as it is today," she said.