



FIGURE I-4

EIR approval goes to proposed Schwan Lake

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of the park on the 15 acres of private property to be acquired and the development of the Schwan Lake portion should be kept quite separate, to protect the environmental qualities of Schwan Lake.

The consultants also suggest that if the county wants a major sports complex to accommodate county-wide or regional spectator sporting events, it seek another site entirely.

This recommendation has been noted with much interest by members of the Citizens for a Mid-County Community Center, which wants the county to develop a mid-county regional park on the 102-acre former O'Neill Ranch. This property also happens to be the site of a proposed high and medium-density residential development planned by Ohio Equities, present owners of the O'Neill property adjacent to Soquel High School.

The citizens' group recently asked the

County Parks, Open Space and Cultural Services Commission to endorse its Mid-County Community Center proposal to no avail. The parks commission didn't say yes and didn't say no, but did say it intends to go ahead with Schwan Lake Park purchase and development. After that's done, the members indicated, they will be happy to talk about a Mid-County Community Center on the O'Neill Ranch site, but they didn't know where the money would be coming from.

Schwan Lake Park is one of three regional parks in a county-wide park master plan developed by the parks commission and approved by the Board of Supervisors. The others are Pinto Lake Park near Watsonville and a San Lorenzo Valley Community Park on the banks of the San Lorenzo River near Ben Lomond.

Originally, the county had planned to develop a mid-county sports complex on the Schwan Lake Park site. However, the

State Department of Parks and Recreation didn't want any uses in the vicinity of the 23-acre Schwan Lake that would interfere with its role as wildlife habitat.

Current development plans for Schwan Lake Park concentrate all sports and active recreational uses on the present site of a Granite Rock sand and gravel plant. The lake area would be left in a natural area. Observation areas at the north end of the lake for observing birds and wildlife are planned.

Placement of a sports complex on the Granite Rock property would be a desirable improvement over the present use, the consultants found. They recommend the master plan of development should aim for preservation of the present near-natural habitat for wildlife, and maintenance of the lake and its shores as valuable undeveloped open space in the midst of a highly dense urban area.

A member of Citizens for a Mid-County

Community Center pointed to comments of the consultant under the heading "Alternatives to the proposed action." Taking into consideration the concept plan for the sports complex, the consultant concluded it is not a regional recreation facility, but will serve a relatively small service area--larger than the immediate neighborhood, but less than urban-wide.

The O'Neill site advocates are sure to point to this as a drawback to the Schwan Lake site, if it comes down to a choice between the two.

The consultants add, that if the county decides on a complex capable of sporting events, they will have to seek an alternate location offering better transportation, nearness to a greater number of users, less chance of interference with the objectives of the Schwan Lake project, and less danger of increasing traffic congestion near the coastal shoreline. -- By M.B.

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