

# Grey Whale *Gray Whale Ranch* owners offer housing plan

## Proposal includes land donations

By MARIA GAURA  
Sentinel staff writer

3-30-90  
SANTA CRUZ — The owner of the Grey Whale Ranch has proposed building 75 to 85 homes on the 2,400-acre property in exchange for a package of donations to the community.

The proposal was met with mixed reviews by representatives of groups trying to turn the property into a state park and by a county official.

The scenic property near UC Santa Cruz has been the center of controversy for two years over plans to cut timber on 310 acres. Local activists have been lobbying to have the ranch bought for use as a state park, but after two years little money has been raised.

Ranch manager John Steinbacher presented the proposal at a Wednesday meeting of the Grey Whale Ranch ad hoc committee. Formed by Assemblyman Sam Farr and state Sen. Henry Mello, the panel includes a wide range of area residents concerned with the ranch's future.

Steinbacher proposed donating the environmentally sensitive Cave Gulch area to UC Santa Cruz, placing several hundred acres of the land in trust to help build and maintain a performing-arts center at UCSC, and building an affordable-housing project on UCSC land.

Further negotiations could also lead to expanding an Empire Grade Road site already being studied for a new middle school and Little League playing fields, he said.

In exchange, landowners Ron and Linda Yanke would create 75 to 85 estate homesites on the central,

meadow portion of the ranch. The lots would provide gorgeous ocean views and would not require the cutting of many trees, he said.

The plan also includes logging on the northern portion of the ranch, the portion donated to the UCSC Community Performing Arts Center Fund. Proceeds from the first timber harvest would be split between the Yankes and the performing arts trust fund. Subsequent logging on the land would benefit only the trust fund.

Cave Gulch, located in the southeast corner of the ranch, would be donated to UCSC to link the campus nature preserve with Wilder Ranch State Park.

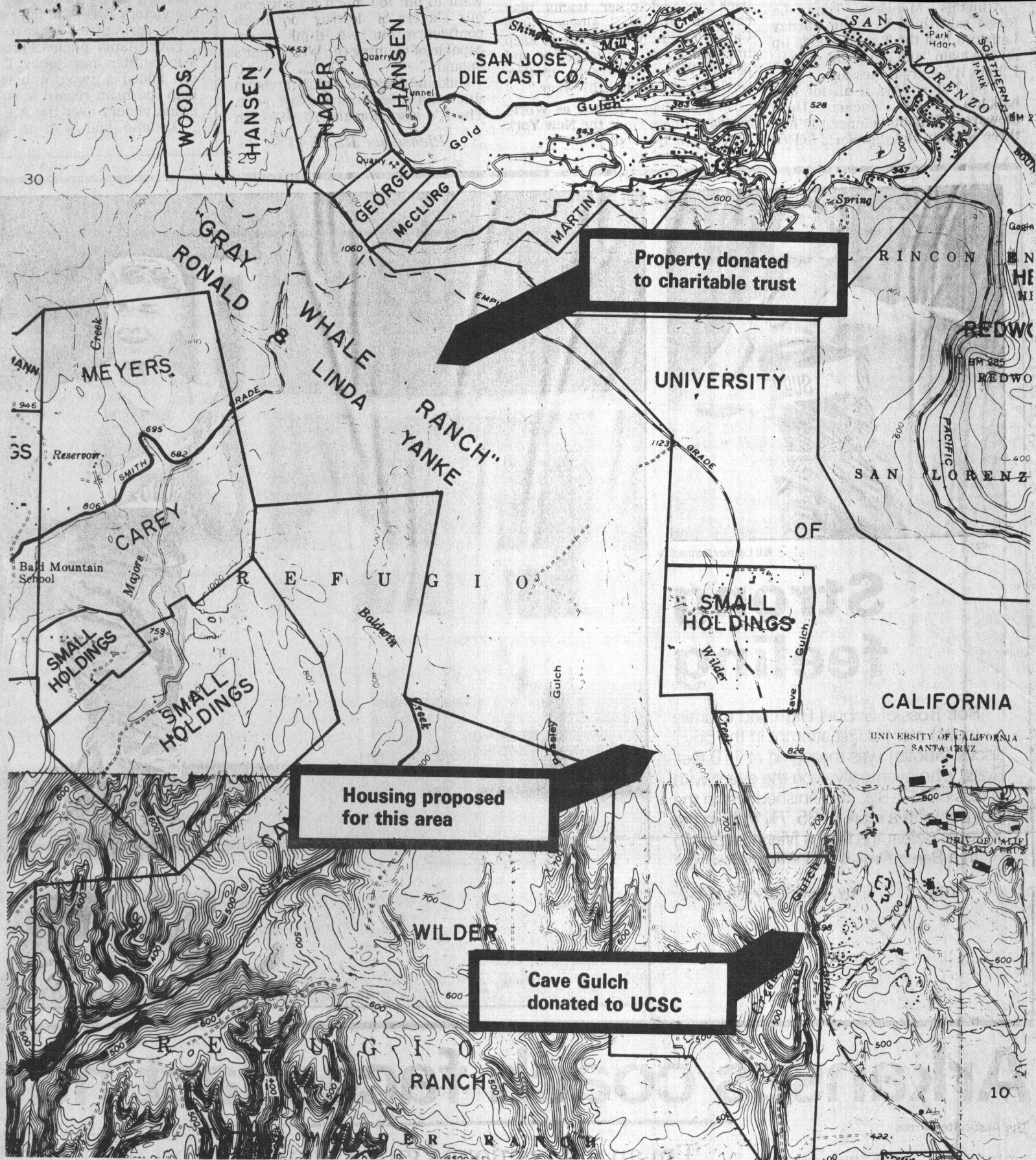
The county filed a lawsuit against the Yankes and several state agencies last April in an attempt to block a timber harvest on the southern portion of the ranch. A hearing is scheduled for April. Steinbacher has offered to place the harvest plans in limbo for one year, even if the Yankes prevail in court, as long as progress is made on his proposal.

Developers who build homes in the county are required to make 15 percent of their projects affordable to low- and moderate-income people. Steinbacher plans to build an affordable-housing project for seniors on land to be provided by UCSC that will exceed the county's requirement. UCSC has long sought to build affordable housing on campus, according to UCSC spokeswoman Stephanie Hauk.

Steinbacher's proposal contains general guidelines but few specifics. He plans to set up a community advisory group to define the areas

Please see RANCH — A24





Grey Whale Ranch owners' proposal includes housing, and donating environmentally sensitive land to UC Santa Cruz.

## Ranch/ Proposal draws mixed reaction

Continued from Page A1

to be donated, built on and possibly used for the school site. An environmental inventory of the entire ranch is planned, he said. The study will be needed to decide the future of specific areas.

The proposal was received with cautious enthusiasm by Andy Schiffrin, aide to Supervisor Gary Patton, whose district includes the

property.

"I see it as a positive step that the property owner seems to want to work with the community to reach an agreement acceptable to everybody," Schiffrin said. "At this point the community group has to decide under what conditions they will be willing to work with the property owner. This is the first time we've heard of the owner's conceptual plan or his proposal for the pro-

cess."

"We're delighted to be involved in the planning process," said UCSC spokeswoman Hauk. "He's saying he wants the involvement of the community before he develops a proposal. We're pleased to help look into the project's feasibility, but the ultimate decision rests with the county."

But Celia Scott Von der Muhll, an attorney representing a group

called Save the Grey Whale Parklands, panned the proposal.

"It's not an acceptable plan," she said. "We don't even know if their figures are accurate yet. We're still interested in public acquisition of the property, and that's not what's proposed here."

Members of the Grey Whale Ranch ad hoc group will mull Steinbacher's proposal and discuss it at a future meeting, Schiffrin said.