

# Summit area remains stalled

EARTHQUAKE '89  
SAN LORENZO VALLEY/SUMMIT

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SUMMIT — Uncertainty appears to be the only constant for residents in the Summit area of the Santa Cruz Mountains, nearly five months after the Oct. 17 quake.

At a public meeting at Loma Prieta Community Center designed to update them on any progress in finding out whether they'll be able to return to their homes, the more than 100 people in attendance learned the results of a geologic study were still at the mercy of the elements.

Residents expressed frustration and anger over why the Summit area is being singled out, with building permits not being issued without geologic review, while the rest of the county is allowed to

rebuild.

"People up here are feeling the 'greenbelt syndrome' people in Santa Cruz would rather we not rebuild at all," a Summit resident said. "They'd rather turn this area into one big state park. Has Mr. Patton (Santa Cruz County Supervisor Gary Patton) taken steps to protect people there in the city of Santa Cruz; has he told them there's a danger area there too?"

A geologist studying the area for the county said the mountains still have not received enough rain to draw any long-term conclusions about the possibility of future earth movement.

"From a geologic standpoint, we are very badly constrained in terms of what information we can

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give to you or the county," Jerry Weber said. "If we continue to have dry weather we could go on for years like this and never know, it could take one year, it could take two years, it could take 10 years.

"The time factor is one we have no control over."

Near the end of the meeting, a resident asked Weber for his opinion on the risk of continuing to live in the Villa, based on what he knew to date.

"I can't evaluate the risk for other people," he said. "I would say the level is someplace between moderately high and high at this point for renewed (ground) movement.

"We think the potential for it to move quickly and catastrophically at this time is low, but we don't know for certain."

Brian Walls, a member of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers overseeing a \$600,000 federal study of the Summit area, said some initial findings based on mappings, drillings and core sample studies could be available in a few weeks.

"Most of the drilling in Villa Del Monte and the Schultheis Road area is complete," Walls said. "We expect the initial geologic characteristics would be available in several weeks. I don't have an exact date. Beyond that we're quite dependent on the weather."