



Democrats Champion the Environment



Protecting the earth protects your family. The earth's future is their future.

Abusing the earth abuses us all.

For the common good:

- Protect what is still unharmed
- Undo the damage that's been done
- Do as little damage as possible

Protect what is still unharmed

Here in Santa Clara County, development on fragile rural hillsides has accelerated erosion. We can protect what is still unharmed by developing land responsibly.

For example, Congressman Mike Honda (D-San Jose) has actively worked on projects to prevent the disappointing policies of the Bush administration from doing further harm.

These include:

- As a Santa Clara County Supervisor, established the Open Space Authority in response to efforts by the citizens and local governments of Santa Clara County.
- Working with the Land Trust of Santa Clara County to secure federal funding to help purchase and preserve agricultural lands.

For California and the entire nation, Congressman Honda is joining:

- California Democratic Representatives Mike Thompson (D-Napa Valley-CA) and Hilda Solis (D-CA 32nd) in introducing two California Wild Heritage Wilderness bills. These bills will serve to protect over two million of California's most ecologically sensitive land and 22 of California's pristine from development or motorized disturbances by designating them as wilderness for future generations to enjoy.
- One-hundred and seventy of his colleagues in introducing the H.R. 4865, the National Forest Roadless Area Conservation Act. This bill will codify the Forest Service's Roadless Area Conservation Rule --a rule that the Bush Administration has been working to roll back.

California Republican Assemblyman Ray Haynes (R-Assembly District 66) turns around these Bush administration efforts by saying "These so-called "growth management" systems are little more than individual oppression measures, designed to increase the power of the few at the expense of the rest of us."

Assemblyman Ray Haynes' views would sacrifice the land of the few at the expense of the rest of us and confuse "no development" with "responsible development"--development that allows growth with minimal impact to the environment.

Developing our valley responsibly means that we don't sacrifice environmental health for economic health.

Undo the damage that's been done

We can undo the damage that's been done by cleaning up contaminated sites, cleaning our air by increasing our use of mass transit and hybrid cars, and passing energy-efficient building codes.

- Congressman Mike Honda is working with the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District to secure funding to clean up the Almaden Air Force Station. This air force station sits atop Mt. Umunhum in the Sierra Azul Open Space preserve, and is currently closed to the public because of asbestos and lead paint contamination.
- San Jose City Councilwoman Linda LeZotte (D-District 1) supports undoing the damage by "...having the city expand mass transit, buying hybrid cars for its fleets, and passing more energy-efficient building codes to start. Changing behavior is a daunting task, but we've done it before with recycling and water conservation."
- The City of Palo Alto's Green Business program includes a variety of incentives and opportunities for alternative transportation including:
 - Financial incentives for employees who bike, walk, carpool/vanpool or take public transit to work.
 - Bikes are available on loan and employees can even participate in a "car share" program.
 - Free shuttles and a commute alternative website are available to employees, residents and visitors.

Do as little damage as possible

Do as little damage as possible by preventing toxic waste and passing legislation that supports environmentally sound practices.

- "Return to Sender" legislation introduced by Assembly Member Loni Hancock (D-Berkeley/Richmond) addresses the proliferation of CDs and DVDs in the trash. This bill mandates that a postage-paid return mailer be included with CDs mailed unsolicited to individuals by profit-making entities. "Trashing high-grade plastic that can be reclaimed and converted into useful products is NOT the message for the 21st century," stated Ms. Hancock.
- The Electronic Waste Recycling Act of 2003 authored by State Senator Byron Sher (D-Palo Alto) establishes a free and convenient collection and recycling program for obsolete and unwanted television sets and computers.

In addition to financing a free and convenient recycling system, this bill contains provisions to reduce the use of toxic material in electronic devices including a ban on the use of some of the most toxic materials in electronic devices sold in California by 2007. Under the measure, manufacturers are required to report on the base line of toxic materials used in their products, reduce the use of toxic materials, and design devices so they can be recycled. This law also implements a first-in-the-nation restriction on the export of toxic electronic waste.

- The Green Business program announced by Santa Clara County Supervisor Liz Kniss (D-5th district) includes the news that the City of Palo Alto is the first city in the region to obtain Bay Area Green Business certification for its own operations. The goal of the Green Business program is to support businesses in adopting environmentally sound practices by providing assistance and public recognition.