

# The Carmel Pine Cone

Volume 98 No. 19

On the Internet: [www.carmelpinecone.com](http://www.carmelpinecone.com)

May 11-17, 2012

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## Del Piero stands by '95 vote for water cutback

■ Green Party, LandWatch founder back him for county supervisor

By KELLY NIX

NEARLY 17 years ago, the State Water Resources Control Board issued a monumental decision, Order 95-10, compelling the Monterey Peninsula's water company, California American Water, to drastically cut its pumping from the Carmel River.

Since then, Peninsula residents have spent tens of millions of dollars toward building an alternative water supply project, only to be rewarded with a host of failed proposals. Hundreds of millions of dollars are yet to be spent to comply with 95-10.

At the center of the historic order was Monterey

County Supervisor candidate Marc Del Piero, who served on the state water board in 1995 and voted in favor of the cutback order. He's running against incumbent 5th District Supervisor Dave Potter and Pacific Grove Mayor Carmelita Garcia.

In an interview this week, Del Piero, a water-rights attorney and bankruptcy trustee, stood by his support of the historic mandate — a godsend to environmentalists but a nightmare to others.

"Looking at 95-10 through a lens in 2012," Del Piero told *The Pine Cone*, "demonstrates that the public agencies and the California American Water company have been sadly lacking in satisfying their obligations to ensure the residents of the Monterey Peninsula have adequate water resources."

The state order was sparked by lawsuits filed against Cal Am by the Carmel River Steelhead Association, the local Sierra Club chapter and others, contending the company's diversions were damaging the riparian vegetation and the steelhead fish and red-legged frog. Cal Am — they insisted, and the state water board concurred — also didn't have the legal right to pump so much water from the river.

The impact of the 1995 cutback order was felt immediately when the Monterey Peninsula Water Management District issued a permit moratorium that required vacant lots to be left unbuild and prevented businesses from expanding and homeowners from adding bathrooms and even bar sinks. But things could get a lot worse: In October 2009, the state water board issued a cease and desist order against Cal Am, setting a timeline for the private company to stop diverting half the water it pumps from the river by the end of

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Marc Del Piero



Dave Potter

## P.B. plan sails through coastal commission

By KELLY NIX

THE PEBBLE Beach Company and the California Coastal Commission resolved a decades-old controversy when they came to terms this week over development plans in Del Monte Forest.

In a landmark decision Wednesday, coastal commissioners voted unanimously to support land use amendments that would allow the Pebble Beach Co. to pursue its final buildout of the forest — without the new golf course the company sought for many years.

"I believe this is a historic agreement that both protects the coastal resources in Del Monte Forest," coastal commission executive director Charles Lester said at the meeting in San Rafael, "and provides for significant development for the Pebble Beach Company into the future."

The plan sets aside 635 acres as protected habitat, while

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## HILLYARD TAPPED TO JOIN CITY COUNCIL

By MARY SCHLEY

PLANNING COMMISSION chairman Steven Hillyard was unanimously appointed to fill former councilman Mayor Jason Burnett's seat on the city council Tuesday.

Ten people applied for the appointment, and Burnett and councilwoman Paula Hazdovac interviewed all the candidates and deliberated on two separate occasions before reducing the field to two recommendations: Hillyard and Carmel Innkeepers Association head Carrie Theis.

"It really was incredible, the applications and people who came forward, so it was a tough decision" Hazdovac said.

During each 30-minute interview, they asked the candidate to explain why they wanted to join the council, discuss their past experience with city government and volunteer groups, and express their opinions on issues facing the community. The field included Kristy Downing, Carolyn Hardy, Tom Leverone, Rich Pepe, Bob Profeta, Michael LePage, Harrison Shields, Linda Wilde, Theis and Hillyard.

In their report to the council and the public, Burnett and Hazdovac wrote, "Of all the candidates, two present themselves as having a particularly strong ability to complement the expertise of the existing city council, to contribute to the four goals [community character, long-term vitality, organizational effectiveness and fiscal stability] adopted by the city

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## All's well with retriever after Big Sur hiking ordeal

By CHRIS COUNTS

IT TOOK a heroic effort by a group of backpackers May 6 to bring a large dog back to civilization after it was injured along the Pine Ridge Trail in Big Sur.

The previous day, Leeroy — a good-natured, 3-year-old male golden retriever from Emeryville — had accompanied his owner, Edward Gaba, and three other 20-something hikers — Lily, Liz and Jeff, who didn't want their last names used — on an overnight trip up the Big Sur River Gorge. But a short distance before they reached their destination, Sykes Camp, Leeroy collapsed and was unable to continue. He had to be carried into the camp.

Gaba and his friends had hoped that after a night of rest,

Leeroy would be OK to make the return trip.

But when the retriever didn't rise to the challenge the following morning, they were forced to try to carry him 12 miles back to Pfeiffer Big Sur State Park, where they had parked their vehicle.

An average adult male golden retriever weighs between 65 and 75 pounds. Leeroy weighs at least that much.

Utilizing fallen branches and an assortment of backpacking equipment, the group built a gurney to try to carry Leeroy, but it fell apart. Other methods were more successful, including a "fireman's carry," with the men taking turns with the exhausting and plodding task of carrying Leeroy on

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## An Esalen Spring? Staff upset by sudden layoffs, while website stirs debate

By CHRIS COUNTS

TO THE public, Esalen is a tranquil place where people come from all over the

world to soak in its natural hot baths, receive massages and participate in workshops on a wide variety of personal growth topics.

Underneath that veneer, however, the

world-famous workshop center has been seething with controversy as staff members and supporters object to what they see as an effort by the board of directors to turn Esalen into a money-making resort. Some staff members even created a website modeled on Wikileaks, [www.esaleaks.com](http://www.esaleaks.com), to air their complaints. Things really got hot after three-longtime managers were fired in April.

"Esalen now emulates the worst of corporate America," reads one post on Esaleaks.

According to board member Gordon Wheeler, the firings in April of office manager Kathleen Kleinsmith, gate manager Eric Erickson and maintenance manager Daniel Cryns were part of a long-planned reorganization that was

Perched on the edge of a cliff in Big Sur, the Esalen Institute (left) is well known for its natural hot springs and personal growth workshops (right). But accusations are flying that its board is transforming it into a money-making resort.

"mapped out by the community in 2005-06." "Their positions were eliminated," Wheeler said.

But the move brought an avalanche of criticism from many current and former staff. Board member David Lustig and one of Esalen's most popular workshops leaders,

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