

ACTION

BAY AREA ACTION NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 1990
VOLUME 1 NUMBER 3

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OVERPOPULATION: HERE AND NOW

Population stabilization is an integral part of stopping environmental deterioration around the world. Deforestation in the tropical rain belt, chronic hunger in many countries, and the current water rationing in California are all effects of over-population. Unfortunately, our already overpopulated world is growing more crowded every day.

The rate of increase in the number of people on this planet and the predicted population using the present regional growth rates are staggering. In 1810, one billion people inhabited Earth, double the number of 200 years earlier. By 1910, the population doubled to 2

billion and again to 4 billion in 1974. Now, the population is over 5 billion and expected to reach 6 billion before the year 2000. By that time, the United States and Canada will have added 38 million and Latin America 225 million to their

respective populations. We are already witnessing overcrowding in cities, malnourished people everywhere, and irreversible environmental damage. More people will only compound these problems.

Overpopulation is defined as

a population that has exceeded the "carrying capacity" of its available land. The carrying capacity is "the number of people who can be sustainably supported in a given area without degrading the natural, social, cultural and economic environment for present and future generations."*

Some causes of our present state of overpopulation include improper or unavailable birth control, needs for inexpensive labor for family enterprise, traditionally large families due to religious beliefs or cultural pressures, desires for male children for cultural reasons, misperceptions

Continued on page 5



OUR MISSION

Bay Area Action is a citizen action organization working in the San Francisco Bay Area to preserve and restore the environment. We are dedicated to the creation of an ecologically sound society grounded in equality, justice and peace.

Our projects use many strategies: hands-on restoration work, neighborhood organizing, workplace audits, rallies, video technology, publica-

tions, sales of environmentally-sound products and cooperation with other groups. But they all serve one goal: the development and empowerment of a network of new, more informed activists in the Bay Area. By channeling the energy of individuals into collective participation, we may better solve regional environmental problems.

BAA works locally to achieve the global Earth Day 1990 "Agenda for the Green Decade."

BAA'S PLACE IN THE BIG PICTURE

People power.

That's what Bay Area Action is all about. As our mission statement proclaims, we are a "citizen action organization" for the environment. But what does that mean?

It means we believe in grassroots community organizing. We organize people to act together on their concern for the environment. Our experience with Earth Day 1990 probed that many people want to do more than write a check (though we're surely not opposed to that!), send a letter or make 50 simple changes by themselves in their homes.

How are we doing this? By plugging people into our projects, almost all of which are entry-level programs designed to get people involved with each other in making local changes that create measurable, real-world results. Whether it's in school, the workplace, the neighborhood, on campus, or at home, our projects respond to people's need to take action and "do something" about the environment.

All BAA projects seek to overcome the paralysis many people feel when confronted with numbing news about far-away ozone holes, poisoned waterways, global warming and other problems that seem beyond our control. "Think globally, act locally" is more than a slogan; it's the principle that guides our work.

The environmental movement has achieved some stunning victories, but the overall health of the planet continues to decline. That stark fact suggests that we have not put to best use all the tools in our social change toolbox. Perhaps the most underused tool is grassroots organizing, and that's where BAA fits in. All the terrific work of the lawyers, educators, lobbyists, writers, scientists and publicists in all the other environmental groups will never solve the crisis without the widespread, daily involvement of people from all walks of life.

We want to expand the numbers of people who take an active role in environmental change, rather than simply redivide the existing pool of talent and energy. That's why most of our projects appeal to newcomers, though even veteran activists will find we have much to offer. Our goal is the development and empowerment of a network of new, more informed activists in the Bay Area.

You can help. By joining one or more of the projects which are described on these pages, joining with other BAA members in your area to organize local BAA projects or by volunteering in our office, you can help turn the rhetoric of Earth Day into the reality of a greener Bay Area.

Don't agonize, organize! The Earth needs all the help we can give.

BAA NOTABLES

The Bay Area Action Store is now open for business! Items for sale include recycled paper products (including envelopes, stationery, greeting cards, and household products), biodegradable cleaners, environmental books, water-saving devices, compact fluorescent lightbulbs, posters, pins & buttons, bumper stickers, and more. Canvas shopping bags and solar-powered devices will soon be available as well. Drop by at 504 Emerson St. in Palo Alto, or call 321-1994 for more information.

Bill McKibben, author of The End of Nature, will be at the BAA office in Palo Alto on Saturday, November 17th, between 7pm and 9pm to speak and autograph copies of his book. Besides his new best-seller, he has written hundreds of pieces for The New Yorker as well as pieces for The New York Times, and Rolling Stone. 504 Emerson St., \$3 donation at the door.

The First Annual **Bay Area Action Holiday Party** will be held on Thursday, December 13 from 5:30pm to 8:30pm in place of the regular monthly meeting. Come to enjoy food, drink and music and to learn more about BAA projects. Door prizes will be awarded, and the store (see above) will be open for business. Living Christmas Trees can also be purchased (call ahead to reserve one). 504 Emerson St. in Palo Alto, \$10 at the door.

VOLUNTEER NOW!

Support projects, vital to BAA's success, desperately need person-power to accomplish their tasks. The **store** and **office** must be staffed, the **issues** and **recycling** committees need researchers and information specialists, and the **communications** and **video** projects need media pros (or amateurs) to get the word out via paper and television. To help, call Volunteer Coordinator Susan Stansbury at 321-1994.



FUNDRAISING: THE BACKBONE OF BAA

To date, BAA has been supported by memberships, donations, a benefit concert by Uakti, merchandise sales, a benefit frisbee event and grants from Aspect Telecommunications and the Hancock Foundation. But more funding is desperately needed if we are to grow into the vital role we need to fill. To help, call Executive Director Owen Byrd at the BAA office: 321-1994.

BAY AREA ACTION PROJECTS

...What's going on and where you can fit in: call group contacts at 321-1994

ACTION: The muscle of BAA, the action committee finds and plans ways for us to get up and do something about environmental problems. Recent successes have included displaying Beat the Back-Up messages (see below) and sending a large contingent to the beach cleanup at Pomponio state beach (where besides picking up lots of re-

cyclables and trash, they unearthed a large water heater). Members of BAA Action were also involved in two recent public forums: David Smernoff spoke on his experiences at Redwood Summer at the Peninsula Conservation Center, and he and Julie Whitbeck co-chaired a session on Energy and the Environment at a Columbus Day workshop

on the Gulf crisis held at Stanford University. Events for the coming months are being planned **now**.

Contact: Dave Smernoff.

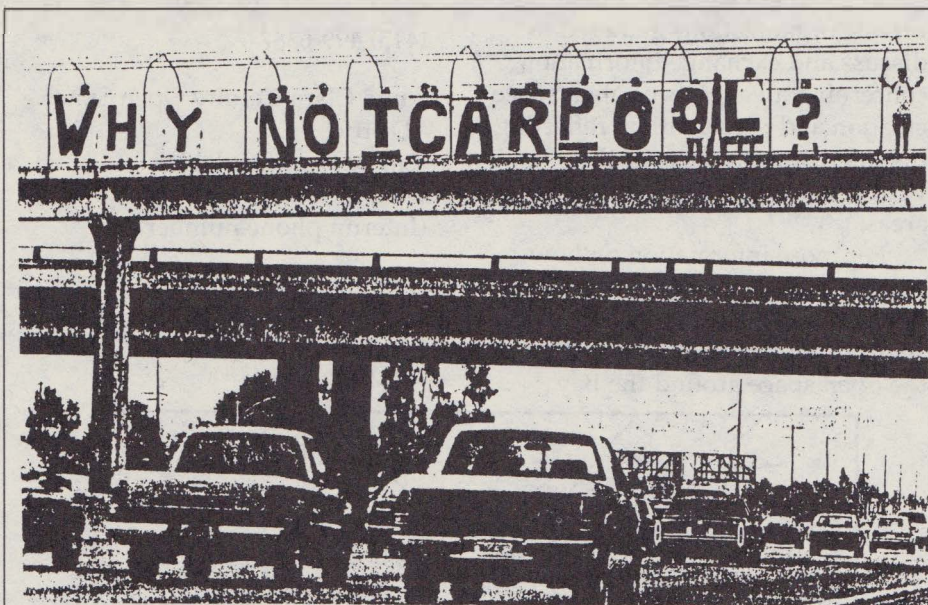
ALTERNATIVE TRANSPORTATION: After the success of Beat the Back-Up Day, Alt. Trans. is continuing to encourage efficient forms of commuting. Coordinating efforts with the many Bay Area organizations studying various aspects of alternative transportation, their goal is for every commuter to get out of his/her car at least one day a week. **Contact:** Geoff Nichols.

CAMPUS/SEAC: Students at Stanford University, this year's regional SEAC (Student Environmental Action Coalition) headquarters, are working out of the BAA office to coordinate national college programs. Project coordinator Flora Lu and BAA Director Owen Byrd attended the October Catalyst conference at the University of Illinois where thousands of national campus activists met to discuss current environmental issues. **Contact:** Flora Lu.

EARTH TEAMS: This project is creating neighborhood teams around the Bay Area that will combat environmental problems in the home – energy efficiency, toxics, consumer habits, and so on. A pilot program in Palo Alto is already underway. **Contact:** Dave Vinokur.

SCHOOLS and YOUTH: Growing with every meeting, this project is working to reach out to Bay Area schools to promote environmental awareness and create finely-tuned recycling programs. Several local student groups have been using the BAA office as a contact point, and a travelling show is being planned to spread the word of environmental concern. **Contact:** Kathy Armer.

WORKPLACE: This committee is working to bring environmental concerns – recycling, energy efficiency, etc. – to the workplace via organizing workplace environmental committees. **Contact:** Candice Stark.



Members of Bay Area Action turned out several times before Beat the Back-Up Day to suggest an alternative to the single-occupant automobile. The message, shown here at the Oregon Expressway overpass on Highway 101, was noticed by thousands of commuters as well as local news media.

BEAT THE BACK-UP DAY A HUGE SUCCESS

Months of planning by Bay Area Action, KRON-TV (Channel 4), and other local agencies resulted in a Beat the Back-Up Day (September 18th) that surpassed every expectation. Ridership was up on virtually every public transit system in the Bay Area. Furthermore, BART has announced that it will increase the number of trains due to the increased use in recent months.

In Palo Alto, an alternative transportation parade put efficient forms of transportation on display for the public and the media. Co-organized by BAA, the Palo Alto

Medical Center, and the city of Palo Alto, it featured solar- and electric-powered vehicles, bicycles, horse-drawn carriages, people-drawn automobiles, roller bladers and unicycles. At the rally following the parade, Palo Alto Mayor Mike Cobb challenged other cities in the Golden Triangle (part of Santa Clara County) to raise the most alternative transportation pledge cards.

The Alternative Transportation Project at BAA is continuing its work to get commuters away from inefficient use of fossil fuels. See the **BAA Projects** column above.

FINDING ELBOW ROOM IN THE CONCRETE JUNGLE

Imagine sitting under a tree, relaxing and enjoying the shade on a hot, clear summer day. Now imagine sitting in that same spot after the area has suffered intense urban development. You might find yourself reclining against a hot, dirty stonefront, with litter strewn about the sidewalk, a few unpleasant smells in the air and a smog filled sky above the outline of buildings. You might yearn for that quiet spot under the tree.

Although the Bay Area is highly urbanized, there still exist local undeveloped areas, some of which are designated as "open space." Open space preserves, unlike city parks, are lightly developed wilderness areas near urban centers with access points, trails, and occasionally a preserved historical structure. An open space is designed to provide a place of isolation and solitude and a chance to investigate the natural conditions and bio-diversity of an otherwise densely populated area.

Three public open space districts exist in the Bay Area: the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District (MROSD), the Marin County Open Space District (MCOSD), and the Santa Clara County Open Space District (SCCOSD), the last of which will or will not have funding depending on the November election results in that county. Each of these district bodies has state authority to acquire and maintain properties as open space for free public use.

There are also several private, non-profit organizations working to expand the open space of the Bay Area. They include the Trust For Public Land (TPL) and the Peninsula Open Space Trust (POST), which purchase, hold and protect land until it can be sold to a public agency. POST is also involved in helping to develop the San Francisco Bay Area Ridge Trail which, when completed, will run continuously around San Francisco Bay. Another

group, Greenbelt Alliance, concerns itself with the entire Bay Area. In its efforts to protect the greenbelt that rings the bay, they coordinate their work with many other local groups with similar concerns. Greenbelt Alliance is also involved in the completion of the Bay Area Ridge Trail.

Recently, the MROSD sponsored the first International Open Space Conference in Palo Alto. Public and private organizations gathered to discuss and exchange information concerning all aspects of open space creation and preservation, reflecting the interconnectedness of the various efforts to maintain natural areas.

For more information on how you can help in open space preservation efforts, learn more about the agencies involved, or simply enjoy the open space around the Bay

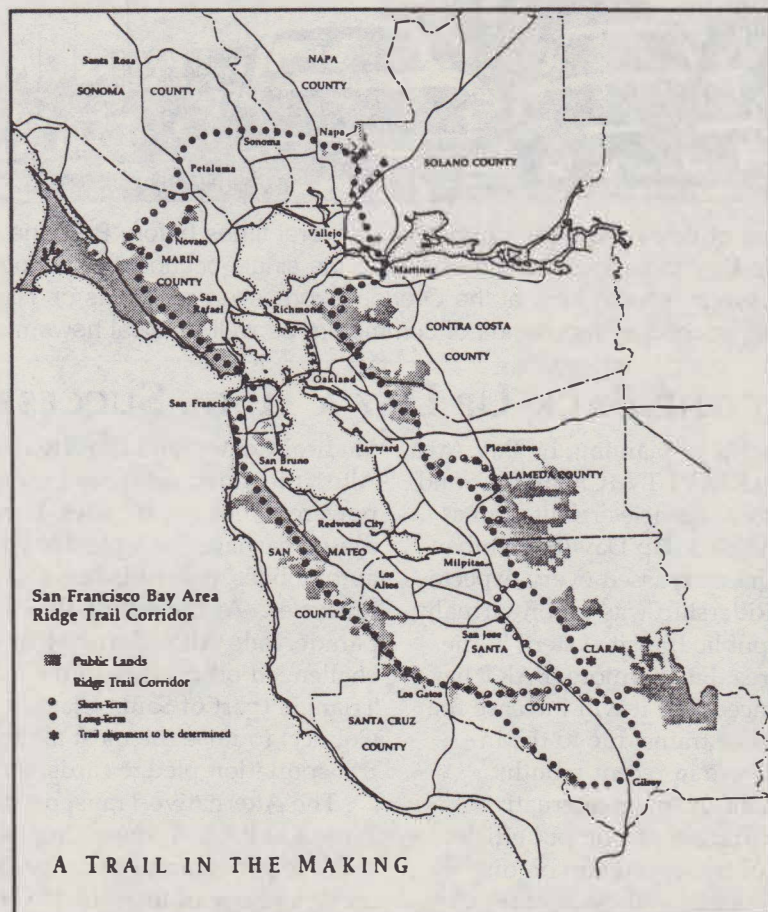
Area, call your local open space district or Greenbelt Alliance:

Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District
Old Mill Office Cntr., Bldg. C-135
210 San Antonio Circle
Mountain View, CA 94040
(415) 949-5500

Marin County Open Space District
Marin Civic Center
San Rafael, CA 94903
(415) 499-6387

Santa Clara County Open Space District
(No address available)
(404) 299-4296
(Interim phone number)

Greenbelt Alliance
116 New Montgomery, Suite 640
San Francisco, CA 94105
(415) 543-4291

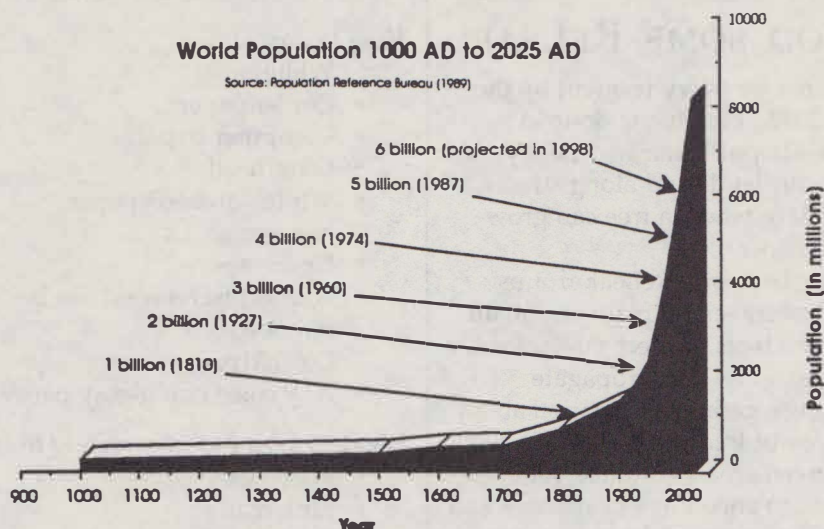


Source: Bay Area Ridge Trail Council — (415) 543-4291

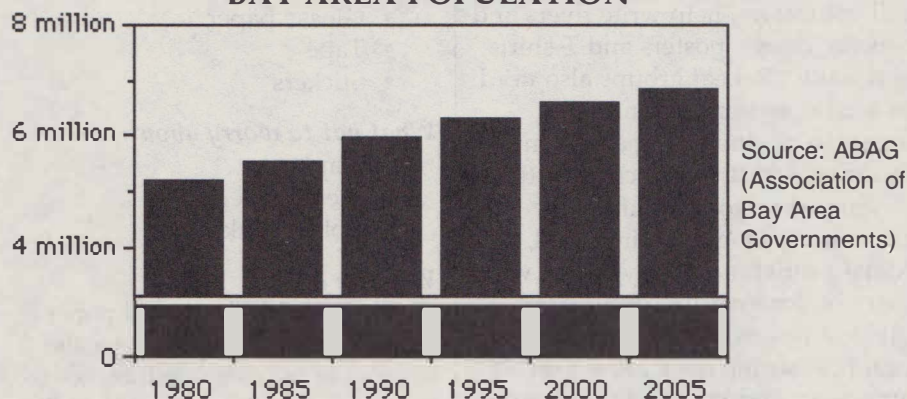
PROBLEMS

World Population 1000 AD to 2025 AD

Source: Population Reference Bureau (1989)



BAY AREA POPULATION



A Fall into Chaos

Consider the following scenario:

Assume a steady human population exists with plenty of land and with abundant renewable and non-renewable resources which are distributed equally to each member of the society. If this population begins to grow, systems of resource distribution must develop alongside. While adequate land is available for development and resources are not strained, society will remain content. Yet all available resources, including land, are finite, and if the population grows unchecked, it will one day exceed the carrying capacity of the environment and the society will experience the effects of overpopulation. At this point, the society can impose limits to maintain the population at a sustainable level, or it

can allow further growth.

Further growth of the population now means an increased demand on an inadequate resource base. The systems of distribution will be unable to meet expectations equally, and development of land for housing may require overcrowding. The society can continue to operate fairly and force everyone to sacrifice and share limited resources, or it can allow some people to maintain certain levels of consumption while others, with little control over systems of production and distribution, are forced to lower their consumption. If this continues, groups of people might decide it is better to fight for the right to increase or maintain certain levels of consumption, rather than experience inadequate levels. Soon, this society would begin to look very

OVERPOPULATION CONTINUED

about the ability of the environment to support the current population, and population migration.

As the factors affecting population growth have become manageable, it has become possible for overpopulation to be gradually and carefully reduced. Attrition occurs when natural death rates and a birth rate below the replacement level fertility (currently 2.1 children per couple) combine to cause a decrease in population.

Of course, population stabilization must occur alongside other efforts to create a sustainable cycle of production, distribution and disposal, which rely on conservation, reuse and recycling. For example, although the developed countries have about 20 percent of the world's population, consumption in these countries amounts to 80 percent of global production. The United States alone, with only 5 percent of the world's population, consumes 25 percent of the world's energy output.

The issues surrounding population stabilization are complex and controversial. As personal and cultural values differ throughout the world, a single solution will be elusive or impractical, if not impossible. Clearly, though, it is necessary for everyone to realize the impact of overpopulation and to participate in efforts to bring the world's population to a sustainable level. For more information contact one of the groups dedicated to finding a population solution:

Population/Environment Balance:
(202) 879-3000

* Balance data sheet #27)

Zero Population Growth
(202) 332-2200

Population Reference Bureau, Inc.:
(202) 639-8040

Population Crisis Committee
(202) 659-1833

International Planned Parenthood:
(212) 995-8800

The Population Institute
(202) 544-3300

GROUP PROFILE

GIVE YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD SOME ReLEAF

The population of the Bay Area increases every day and along with it the infrastructure necessary to support our lifestyle. Where fruit orchards and oak forests once stood there are now apartments, houses, malls, streets and parking lots. The beautiful, green landscape is turning to lifeless gray concrete. For every four trees cut down to build houses and roads, only one tree is replanted. Yet trees are vital to life. They provide oxygen and food, regulate our climate and fresh water supplies, and contribute to the green that soothes our eyes and soul. Like all living beings they deserve respect and a place to grow and flourish.

Over the past few years numerous articles have awakened us to the greenhouse effect and the damage done to the biosphere by the decimation of the world's rainforests. We all want the destruction to stop, but often feel frustrated and incapable of doing something effective. However, the Amazon basin is not the only place where trees are being cut at a dizzying rate. Forests are disappearing fast everywhere. California, the Bay Area, your city and your neighborhood have lost most of their trees in the last hundred years. But...if you love trees and greenery, if you think that cities are more pleasant and human when there are lots of trees and parks around, if you like the coolness, shade and recreation that trees provide, if you think globally and want to act locally, if you want to help nature and the environment recover from the desolation here and now, there is ReLeaf for you.

The California ReLeaf network is a movement of people working to establish more trees in their neighborhoods and communities. It is a local response to global warming, deforestation and polluted cities. California ReLeaf is sponsored by the Trust for Public Land in San Francisco. Their goal is to plant a

new tree for every resident by the year 2000. Planting is done in parks, shopping malls, school yards, on public lands and along streets. Any place where a tree can grow and prosper.

The Bay Area ReLeaf groups need volunteers to plant and maintain new trees, protect those already existing, grow and propagate seedlings, gather information about the type of trees which will do well in a given area. Volunteers are also needed to encourage businesses and schools to participate and sponsor a ReLeaf project, contribute artwork, call volunteers, help write flyers and reports, design posters and T-shirts, and more. ReLeaf groups also need in-kind donations of materials, access to photocopying and printing facilities, and financial contributions.

Empower yourself and your community by getting involved. Make a difference today which will carry on for years to come. Your greatest reward will be seeing beautiful strong trees grow year after year, and knowing you have given them life.

Contact your nearest ReLeaf group:

Peninsula ReLeaf

P.O. Box 5894, Stanford CA 94309
(415) 325-2786 or 326-SEED

Sunnyvale ReLeaf

728 Dona Ave., Sunnyvale CA 94087
(408) 730-5820

East Bay ReLeaf

(415) 374-3145

THE FACTS ON PAPER RECYCLING

How to sort it:

White paper

- Copier paper
- Computer paper
- Letterhead
- White notebook paper

Newsprint

- Newspapers
- Glossy inserts need not be removed

Colored paper

- Any color non-glossy paper

What to keep out of recycling bins:

- Magazines
- Junk mail
- Bound books
- Post-its
- Glossy paper
- Tape
- Stickers

What not to worry about:

- Staples
- Metal paper clips
- Colored ink

Why the cost?

The supply of recycled paper is still less than the demand partly because of industry's reluctance to invest in special equipment until assured of steady, high demands for recycled paper products. The U.S. Forest Service, however, also contributes to the problem, since it sells its lumber at below market value. Because of this, many companies find it cheaper to produce non-recycled paper. To learn more about the paper cycle, contact Bill Weber, Recycling Coordinator, at 321-1994.

STEERING COMMITTEE

For more information about BAA projects, contact the following coordinators at BAA headquarters.

Action	David Smernoff
Earth Teams	Dave Vinokur
Schools	Kathy Armer
Workplace	Candice Stark
Campus	Flora Lu
Alternative Trans.	Geoff Nicholls

Director	Owen Byrd
Finance	Lora Minty
Store Manager	Amy Peters
Office Manager	Jeff Hoover
Volunteers	Susan Stansbury
Recycling	Bill Weber
Video	Harriet Howell
Communications	Will Doolittle
Issues	Dave Wilson

ECO-MINDED BUSINESS

Bay Area businesses are recognizing the need to offer environmentally conscious goods and services to their customers.

Value Business Products, a full-service office supply company located in Mountain View, is encouraging local companies to drop off their white paper for recycling. All recyclable white office paper (including computer print-out paper, copy paper, stationery, etc.) may be brought to VBP's bin, located at 2495 Old Middlefield Way.

In addition, they are providing their phone order customers with a complementary pick-up and delivery service of recyclables. (Call (415) 962-8900 for general information; for delivery service call (415) 962-8985 or (408) 293-9013.)

VBP has selected Bay Area Action to be the recipient of funds generated through this new recycling program. Together, VBP and BAA will promote this effort by informing local businesses of the program. We CAN help make an impact in our environment and at the same time support BAA.

What is your business doing for the environment? If you're not sure of the answer, it may be time to call BAA for ideas at 321-1994. Talk to Candice Stark of the Workplace Project, or Recycling Coordinator Bill Weber.

BOOK REVIEWS

GREEN RAGE:

RADICAL ENVIRONMENTALISM AND THE
UNMAKING OF CIVILIZATION
Christopher Manes (1990)

Sprinkled with quotes and references from Edward Abbey, Green Rage romanticizes radical environmental actions such as monkeywrenching, or "ecotage" (the use of sabotage to protect the environment). Green rage is a tightly argued, sophisticated defense of radical environmentalism. At the center of the radical environmentalists is the group Earth First!, whose motto "No compromise in the defense of Mother Earth" has frequently put them on the wrong side of the law. The controversial premise of the book is that human life is not the highest value on earth. Other life forms including the earth itself are as valuable. Manes claims that radical groups such as Earth First are at the leading edge of the environmental movement, setting the environmental agenda for the future.

THE POPULATION EXPLOSION

Paul Erlich (1990)

An updated and somewhat less radical version of Erlich's 1968 The Population Bomb, The Population Explosion steps through the ecological ramifications of the growing world population. Erlich argues that overpopulation is at the root of

many of the world's most compelling environmental issues such as global warming, acid rain, the African famine, the garbage crisis and the AIDS epidemic. He goes on to emphasize that the relatively modest overpopulation of industrialized countries is a more serious problem than the rapid overpopulation of third world countries due to their consumption-based lifestyle.

THE OHLONE WAY

Malcolm Margolin (1978)

It's hard to imagine that just two hundred years ago herds of elk, antelope and grizzly bear dotted the hills of the Bay Area while flocks of geese, ducks and other birds clouded the skies. The Ohlone Way vividly describes life among approximately forty triblets of indians known as the Ohlone that inhabited the Bay Area a short time ago. The author paints a picture of a simple life of this hunter-gatherer tribe that is dominated by tradition and ingenuity. The reader can't help but compare today's cement strewn, traffic congested environment with the tranquility described in The Ohlone Way. What happened? Where did it go? Can't we return to a simpler life? How can we call what we have done to the Bay Area progress? The Ohlone Way raises all these questions indirectly.

We need your support! Membership in BAA is tax-deductible and costs only \$10 per year, though we encourage a \$20 annual donation. Members receive both our bi-monthly newsletter and our Action Alerts (distributed during non-newsletter months). To become a member, fill out this form and return it (with a check payable to "PCCF-Bay Area Action"*) to:

Bay Area Action
504 Emerson St.
Palo Alto, CA 94301

Name _____ Phone _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Subjects of specific interest _____

I enclose an additional donation of: \$10 \$20 \$50 \$100 other: \$ _____

* The Peninsula Conservation Center Foundation (PCCF), a non-profit 501(c)(3) corporation, is the fiduciary agent for BAA.



Nuclear Weapons

Greenpeace and American Peace Test will sponsor an **International Disarmament Conference and Demonstration** in Las Vegas, Nevada on January 4th and 5th. The event is timed to precede the Partial Test Ban Amendment Conference at the United Nations in New York, January 7th - 18th. The event will be especially important as a symbol of the American public's desire for a comprehensive test ban. Attending the event will be native peoples from the USSR, USA, and South Pacific who have been displaced and poisoned by nuclear testing. Call the Action Project at BAA (321-1994) for information on participating.

GET THE WORD OUT!

Let Bay Area Action know about your event or call to action, and we'll relay the message to thousands of supporters. Just call 321-1994.

Treecutting

Over 5,000 mature eucalyptus trees are being clear-cut from Mt. Livermore on **Angel Island**. A Dept. of Parks and Recreation environmental impact report revealed possible adverse results of the cutting such as soil erosion and habitat destruction, but the agency is proceeding regardless. The citizen group Preserve Our Eucalyptus Trees has blocked the cutting for 4 years but must gather more strength for the current battle: call (415) 386-6624.

Development

ERRATUM

We apologize for an error in the last action pages: the land at **St. Patrick's Seminary** in Menlo Park has not been sold and no plans have yet gone before the city council. However, these oak woodlands are indeed threatened by development for million-dollar houses. St. Patrick's contains the last 1% of the mixed oak forest that was once the dominant ecology of this area. It forms a natural island in an urban setting, a breeding site for hawks and owls. A regional effort with some 4,000 members is working to save this threatened ecosystem. Call St. Patrick's Preservation Committee at (415) 369-7512 to get involved.



Education

Hidden Villa's Farm and Wilderness Preserve in Los Altos Hills is looking for volunteers to guide and teach preschool and elementary school children. The 2500 acre farm, open to the public since the 1920's, is visited by 20,000 children each year from local schools. The 4-part training for guides includes innovative strategies to stimulate children's curiosity and introduce them to their environment. Anyone interested in working with children in the out of doors is encouraged to join. College Credit is available. Call Robin Winston at (415) 948-4690.

The Bay Area Action Newsletter

A production of Bay Area Action, 504 Emerson St., Palo Alto, CA 94301 November/December 1990:

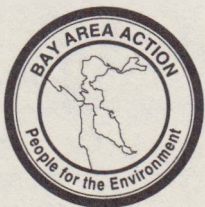
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BAY AREA ACTION

AN AFFILIATE OF THE
PENINSULA CONSERVATION
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PALO ALTO, CA 94303



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