

East Meadow update, 7/18/22

East Meadow Action Committee

Many of us recently received this message from University Relations:

Do you remember your days on campus, overlooking the bay, walking through the towering redwoods between classes, and seeing the fawns prancing through the meadows? The UC Santa Cruz campus is like no other. Combining breathtaking views with life-changing research and educational opportunities, UCSC is a special place that you'll remember for a lifetime. **When looking fondly back on memories, it's important to remember that this was made possible by the generosity of donors just like you.**

When raising funds, the University enthusiastically champions its unique environment—a campus “like no other.” But in other contexts, different values prevail. Student Housing West, a project driven by haste, the bottom line, and privatization, marks a clear break with the fifty-year tradition of careful building and stewardship that has made UCSC what it is.

The East Meadow Action Committee, allied with many concerned Alumni, donors, students and local citizens, has opposed the most destructive part of this massive project, the 5% slated for the iconic East Meadow campus gateway. EMAC has proposed several alternatives that would bring needed housing to campus while preserving its distinctive character. So far, the University has resisted any changes to their plan. EMAC's legal challenges have failed. They were, necessarily, limited to technical aspects of the Environmental Impact Report, and the judgements were correspondingly limited, saying nothing about the overall value of the project. We are no longer litigating. But a second group has filed two lawsuits, addressing different issues, that are working their ways through the District Court. These are likely to extend into the Autumn, and in the meantime the University cannot break ground.

The struggle to protect the meadow needs to continue in other ways. We can still hope that some combination of financial limitations, widespread opposition, and renewed vision, may result in a housing project returned to something like its original form, limited to the West campus, and distributed over a wider footprint. To encourage this outcome, it is imperative that as many people as possible, those who continue to find the present project unacceptable, make it clear that opposition has not disappeared. This can take many forms: guest commentary in the Sentinel (see attachment), letters to various press outlets, pressure from Alumni and potential donors, vigils in the meadow, photography and art projects.

Song Nelson, local artist, musician, naturalist, and UC alumna, sings a beautiful song she composed about non-human life in the meadow. Please listen and share widely:

[https://soundcloud.com/willow-394731169/meadow-song-july-mix?
utm_source=clipboard&utm_medium=text&utm_campaign=social_sharing](https://soundcloud.com/willow-394731169/meadow-song-july-mix?utm_source=clipboard&utm_medium=text&utm_campaign=social_sharing)

This and other resources are available on our website:
eastmeadowaction.org