

Public Comment - May 17 - Presentation by Petaluma Bounty

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ParksNRec

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Dear Members of the Commission,

I reviewed slides for Petaluma Bounty's presentation and wanted to offer a little history - I believe history is helpful in fully understanding evolution of projects and programs, and hope you agree.

When the Petaluma Bounty farm was first begun many years ago, volunteers from Paula Lane Action Network (PLAN) dedicated hundreds of hours over the first year of start-up to help begin and establish the farm. One of our Board members in particular was an almost daily volunteer, helping Amy, the first farm manager hired to work for Petaluma Bounty.

I was disappointed that Petaluma Bounty took the entire property for planting, not at that time accommodating a pair of Red-shouldered Hawks who had a nesting location in a tree right there. The hawks' presence there indicated adequate prey (gophers) and no human encroachment. They lost their nesting site because of the arrival of and take-over of the property for the farm.

When we cultivate food gardens, especially in areas where there may have been little to no human presence for quite some time, we need to be aware of land we are taking, what species may have been relying upon parts of an environment for survival, and seek and plan for balance and work around existing realities.

The first year and a half of the start-up of Petaluma Bounty was one PLAN was dedicated to helping and to keep going. This is a hallmark of PLAN, an organization you do not hear much about - We volunteered in this effort while also continuing to oppose a residential development on Paula Lane and advocate for permanent open space, something most Petaluma residents did not believe could ever occur here.

Petaluma Bounty becoming part of Petaluma People Services helped stabilize the community farm and I'm pleased for the continuing service Petaluma Bounty brings to the Petaluma community.

Susan Kirks

Chair, Board of Directors, Paula Lane Action Network

Naturalist, expertise in American Badger