

## **East Meadow Update, 5/18/20**

Without the work and support of the many friends of the East Meadow, the parking lots and pre-fab housing planned for it would probably be nearing completion. That we have kept the bulldozers at bay for two years is a tribute to all of our efforts. Once more, the meadow turns from green to gold, and UCSC's traditions of environmental stewardship and site-respectful planning remain mostly intact.

This spring was the season of our litigation, as EMAC's CEQA (California Environmental Quality Act) lawsuit moved through the legal process. EMAC co-founder Paul Schoellhamer did yeoman work going through the Administrative Record (over 60,000 pages!) and helping our attorneys with the legal briefs. Fundraising efforts for legal fees were also successful; we have been deeply moved by the depth of support for protecting the meadow.

On May 15, 2020, our CEQA litigation had its oral argument before Judge Paul Burdick of the Santa Cruz County Superior Court. At that hearing the Judge put forth his tentative verdict in the case, and that tentative verdict registered clear support for the arguments in EMAC's briefs. Lawyers for the UC system argued aggressively against that tentative verdict becoming the final verdict, and our side argued in support. The Judge ordered both parties to produce further briefs on specific issues raised in the oral arguments. He also set a date for the final verdict in the case: June 19, 2020.

At the university, much has changed since we began our now two-year effort to save the meadow from destruction and to preserve the campus' environmental integrity. Several administrators who were the most vocal champions of East Meadow development are no longer in their positions. The current Chancellor and Executive Vice Chancellor were not involved in approving the project. The present fiscal environment, which will bring big budget cuts to the University and which may negatively impact undergraduate and graduate enrollments, may be less favorable for big construction projects, particularly their most controversial components. This is why an EMAC victory at this stage could be so consequential.

As we enter these last few weeks, the outcome is uncertain. The additional work required by the judge brings unexpected legal expenses. We are deeply grateful for your past support, and we realize that in our present situation there are many worthy causes that need your help. If you are able to give more to protect the East Meadow for generations to come, now would be the time.

We hope you and yours are well.

### **East Meadow Action Committee**

To contribute, see instructions at [eastmeadowaction.org](http://eastmeadowaction.org)