

Planners throw major roadblock at California 18-hole proposal

SAN JOSE, Calif. — A developer's plan to build an 18-hole golf course in the hills above Lexington Reservoir has suffered a major and possibly fatal setback.

The Santa Clara County Planning Commission recently voted unanimously against Los Gatos developer Pete Denevi's plan to build a private country club, restaurant, driving range and health club on 210 acres west of Highway 17 at Bear Creek Road.

The project was originally proposed for land across from the Alma Fire Station that was formerly owned by Alma College, a Jesuit seminary that closed in 1967.

Denevi has the option of appealing to the county board of supervisors. But his chances do not appear very promising. Not only did the planning commissioners deny Denevi's building permit request, they also refused to certify his environmental impact report, claiming that the report was inadequate.

The county planning commission's decision is the latest development in a long-running battle between Denevi and local environmental groups like the Sierra Club and Audubon Society.

The land at issue consists mostly of rolling meadows, oak trees and redwood groves and the proposed project became the

pre-eminent land-use battle in Santa Clara County in the past year. Environmental groups have been trying for 15 years to convert the land into a state park.

Denevi still has options to buy the land. The proposed golf course is only a small part of a larger parcel that totals about 1,100 acres. Stanley Ho, a Hong Kong casino developer and billionaire, bought the land in 1989 from the Jesuits.

Arizona developer plans three more courses

TUCSON, Ariz. — Developer Conley Wolfswinkel has visions of building a golf mecca within the 8,000-acre master-planned residential community of Rancho Vistoso in Oro Valley, a 30-minute drive north of downtown Tucson.

The second and newest course at Rancho Vistoso, the Tom Weiskopf-designed Vistoso Highlands, opened in late December 1995. Wolfswinkel and his Vistoso Partners LLC plan three more 18-hole golf courses with the next one, the "Tortolita" or "Boulder" course, starting construction next August. That would

mean five golf courses in all.

Wolfswinkel said he is entertaining the idea of having a different golf course designer do each of the next three courses.

Rancho Vistoso's first course, in Del Webb's Sun City Vistoso, was designed by architect Greg Nash. Wolfswinkel is also negotiating to get top-level hotels like a 400- to 500-room Marriott and possibly a Ritz-Carlton to lodge the golfing tourists.

Rancho Vistoso is expected to have a residential population of about 10,000 when fully developed.



Wildcat Cliffs Country Club
Highlands, NC



Forest Ridge Golf Club
Broken Arrow, OK



The Standard Club
Duluth, GA



Scioto Country Club
Columbus, OH



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