Field Trip Assignment
ES 61B

For the field trip portion of this class, you may either: (1) attend public governmental meetings, events, or other authorized proceedings, or (2) you may write emails/letters to administrative agencies or your representatives that pertain to environmental laws and/or regulations.

Meetings
The following proceedings are suggested and authorized:

a. April 8\textsuperscript{th}, 9:00 am to 1:30 am. California High Speed Rail Authority, Santa Clara County Board of Supervisor’s chambers, 70 W. Hedding St., San Jose.
b. April 12\textsuperscript{th}, 6:30 pm to 9:30 pm. Envision San Jose General Plan Update meeting. San Jose City Hall, 200 East Santa Clara St., San Jose, Wing Room 118-120.
c. April 14\textsuperscript{th}, 7:00 pm. Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line acquisition public comment meeting. Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisor’s chambers, 701 Ocean St., Santa Cruz.
d. May 6\textsuperscript{th}, 9:00 am. Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line final decision. Capitola City Hall, 420 Capitola Avenue, Capitola.
e. May 24\textsuperscript{th}, 6:30 pm to 9:30 pm. Envision San Jose General Plan Update meeting. San Jose City Hall, 200 East Santa Clara St., San Jose, Wing Room 118-120.
f. June 21\textsuperscript{st}, 6:30 pm to 9:30 pm. Envision San Jose General Plan Update meeting. San Jose City Hall, 200 East Santa Clara St., San Jose, Wing Room 118-120.

In addition to these meetings, there are regular city council meetings and/or board of supervisor meetings in the city/county where you live. I strongly suggest that you attend one or more of these meetings and report what was discussed. Other opportunities for meetings include city/county planning commission meetings, environmental commission meetings, transportation authority meetings, etc. These are too numerous to list, but each city and county has a website indicating the times and locations of these meetings.

For every meeting or event that you attend, you are required to complete Field Trip Notes that; (1) describe the meeting, and (2) indicate your impressions are regarding the meeting. You should simply write these Field Trip Notes during the meeting and submit them to us on the next day that we have class. Be ready to present this information to the class. See the next page for the format that you should use for providing us with the meeting notes.

Written Communications
With respect to any written communications to agencies or representatives, simply provide us with a copy of the letter, and include the amount of time you spent preparing the letter. Many environmental groups have letter-writing campaigns on their websites that will provide you with background materials for these letters. For example, go to sierraclub.org and click on “take action.” As of 4/6/10, they list over twenty opportunities. Likewise, the NRDC has over ten possibilities. Do not simply copy the letter that they suggest. As with any college-level assignment, you need to write these letters in your own words. Do not spend more than 2 hours writing any one letter. We will grade you on your ability to communicate the issues.
Field Trip Notes

Meeting/Event:  Final Coyote Valley Task Force meeting
Date:        April 14, 2008
Time:       5:30 to 8:30
Location:   San Jose City Hall
Purpose: To recognize the work of the task force and to forward the plan, now known as “Coyote Valley Plan - A Vision for Sustainable Development,” to the City Council

Items Discussed
The task force allowed each member to convey their impressions of the task force. There was no limit to the discussion, so every member was allowed to provide their recollections, frustrations, accomplishments and hopes for the future. Most of the members expressed a desire for the task force ideas to move forward and to be someday adopted by the City Council. Several of the task force members expressed frustration that the task force was not successful in implementing the CVSP. A few were relieved that the plan was halted and would not be progressing to the approval phase anytime soon.

Pat Dando made a motion to adopt a resolution regarding her ideas about the triggers, entitlements, and the ultimate success of the CVSP to incorporate the council’s mandate. Several members had a problem with this since the ideas were not well defined or articulated, there was some discrepancy as to what the resolution meant, and/or they were not in agreement with the components of the resolution.

Several members of the public commented about the CVSP in general, and to the resolution in particular. Many of the commenters were De Anza College students and faculty speaking out against the plan, and by extension, the resolution. Some of the commenters were supportive of the development as defined in the CVSP, and a couple would have liked to see less intensive development.

Some commenters discussed the legal problems with requesting the council’s adoption of the plan in total. One problem articulated was the lack of environmental review which was evident in the fact that none of the DEIR comments were included in the new Coyote Valley Plan. Further the CVP was not based on a fiscal plan that would provide an economic evaluation of the CVSP.

In the end, the task force agreed that they would not approve a resolution, but that they would include their final comments with the Coyote Valley Plan when it was forwarded to the City Council for approval.

My Impressions:
Several task force members and some of the commenters were abusive toward anybody who did not share their views. This included one city employee, who stated that environmental ideals were fine, but it is more pragmatic to work with the developers in creating an environmentally sustainable program for Coyote Valley. It is my opinion that the plan for Coyote Valley was not sustainable and that development interests dominated the task force. Therefore, it is no surprise that they were hostile toward those who disagreed with their views.