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Erosion threat to laguna

$3.4 million study launched to find solution

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Erosion is threatening the Laguna de Santa Rosa, a meandering waterway at Sonoma County's heart, and without a solution there could be worse floods on the Russian River and declining wildlife diversity.

The laguna is a watery ribbon of grasses, shrubs and trees that winds more than 10 miles from Rohnert Park to the Russian River. Not quite creek and not quite lake, the laguna has been a mystery to many county residents, who see it simply as a wet spot along the road, for decades.

But the laguna is a vital and unique part of the county's environment and an important natural flood control device.

"People in west Santa Rosa and Rohnert Park and Sebastopol and Guerneville all suffer when there's too much sediment filling in too quickly in the laguna," said Kim Cordell, president of The La-

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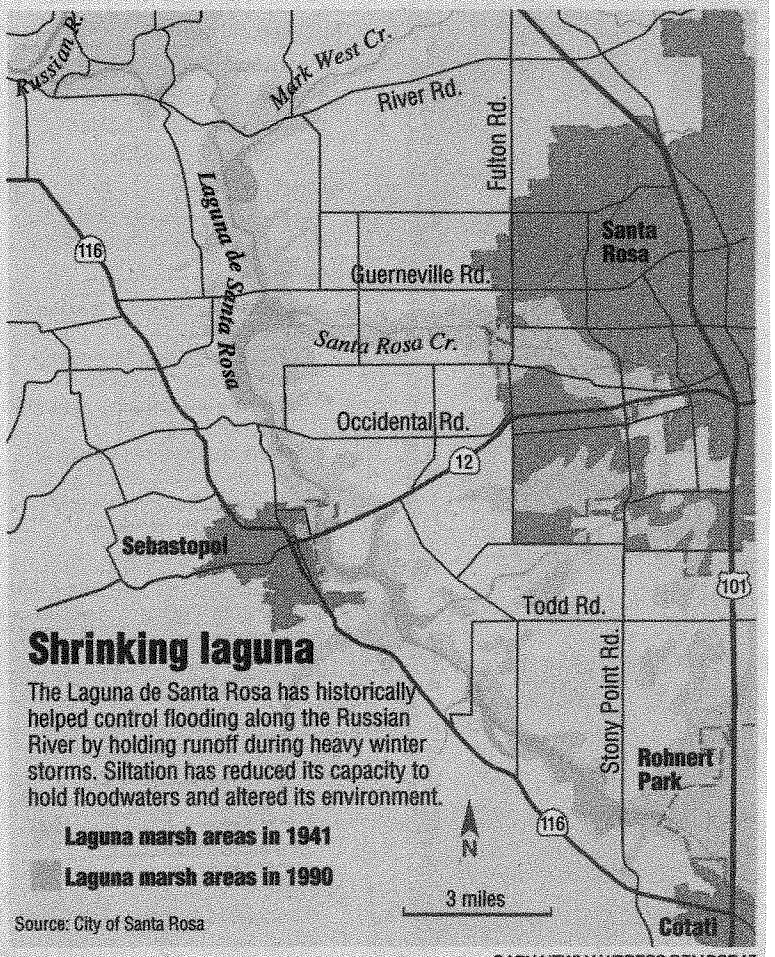

Shrinking laguna

The Laguna de Santa Rosa has historically helped control flooding along the Russian River by holding runoff during heavy winter storms. Siltation has reduced its capacity to hold floodwaters and altered its environment.

Laguna marsh areas in 1941

Laguna marsh areas in 1990

Source: City of Santa Rosa

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