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## Laguna conference slated

by Dan Collins

The Laguna de Santa Rosa manages to attract a great deal of attention from city officials and the local media, but some people are still wondering what's so important about "that swamp" east of town.

In an effort to educate the citizens of Sebastopol about the unique and sensitive environment surrounding one of the most pristine wetlands areas in the state, the city council voted unanimously last week to support a State of the Laguna conference which is scheduled to

take place Sept. 23 in the Sebastopol Veterans' Memorial Building.

The all-day conference will focus on environmental and land use issues surrounding the waterway, including wastewater discharges, protection of endangered species and preservation of the ecosystem as a whole.

Pending legislation by Congressman Doug Bosco (D-Sebastopol) would provide \$15 million for the creation of a federal wildlife reserve surrounding the Laguna wetlands. The money would fund studies of the area, land acquisition and

initial management of the reserve.

Bosco will be among those speaking at the conference, along with numerous experts in wetlands ecology and management. Panel discussions and a walking tour of the Laguna are also scheduled.