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Wastewater may benefit agriculture and laguna

by Andrew Jowers

Years ago, before bulldozers and dairies, subdivisions and commuters, the Laguna de Santa Rosa teemed with wildlife, its skies darkened by tens of thousands, perhaps hundreds of thousands, of migrating fowl.

But today, the laguna's many lakes reduced to two, its waters polluted, its marshes and woodland dried up and ripped out, "if you see 10 Canadian geese, you feel like you've seen something outstanding," says ecologist and laguna specialist Marco Waaland.

While there is little chance

the laguna will ever return to its former glory, recently relaxed state guidelines that allow more highly treated wastewater from Santa Rosa's regional sewage plant into the laguna and Russian River could lead to an explosion of marshland and the wildlife that

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