

Protecting Heritage & Habitat

In the vicinity of these modern towers is an ancient *Ramaytush* Ohlone village site with over 5,000 years of human presence, as well as critical habitat for two endangered butterflies. In the late 1990s, this important area was set to become the commercial component of the Terrabay development. The property owner proposed hotels, stores, restaurants, an office tower, a freeway ramp, and a parking structure—a plan that faced immediate and passionate opposition.

"When you're there you get the feeling that you're back into the past. It made me feel wonderful...I'd like to see it totally preserved. That's all."
-Ella Rodriguez

"People forget the meaning of spirituality, of respect. They look at this with scientific interest, as if it's about dinosaurs. I don't."
-Patrick Orozco

Ella Rodriguez, an Ohlone/Esselen woman, served as an on-site observer of an archeological study of the village site, performed in 1989. The report, commissioned by the property owners but kept private, was not made public until 1997 when it was leaked anonymously to San Bruno Mountain Watch.

For Ella Rodriguez and Patrick Orozco, another indigenous advocate, the study—while helpful politically—was not necessary to justify or prove the site's significance.



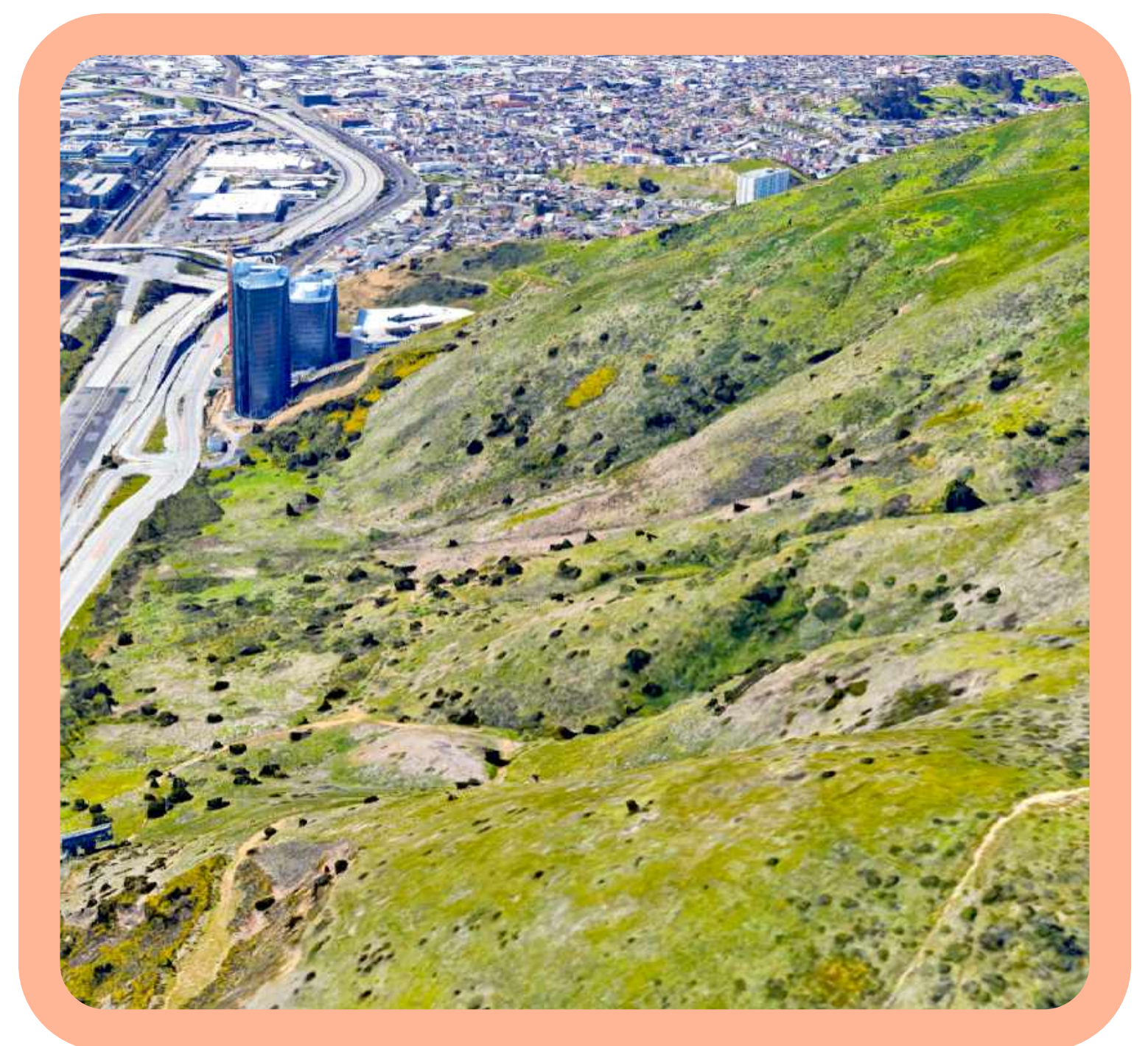
Opposition to the Terrabay project began in the 1980s, like the protest above in 1989.

Silver Lupine



Golden Violet

Silver lupines and golden violets are host plants of the Mission Blue and Callippe Silverspot butterflies, respectively, during their larval stages.



Construction came to be concentrated on the south end of the property, thereby protecting the cultural sites, wetland meadows, seasonal streams and endangered butterfly habitat—including an abundance of host plants—to the north.

An influential meeting of the South San Francisco City Council held on May 26th, 1999 stretched past midnight as 37 people—indigenous and allies—spoke against the development. Following the public comments, council members instructed the developers to revise their plans.



Protecting the area's grassland habitat for the endangered Mission Blue (left) and Callippe Silverspot (right) butterflies was a key component of the conservation advocacy.

In the summer and fall of 1999, San Bruno Mountain Watch filed two lawsuits—one jointly with the Center for Biological Diversity—challenging the environmental approval processes of the second phase of Terrabay's residential projects.

In March of 2000, a settlement was reached out of court, with the developers agreeing to make 25 acres of the commercial project area available for purchase as open space.

From 2001 to 2004, The Trust for Public Land raised nearly \$1.3 million dollars to acquire this acreage, enabling its addition to San Bruno Mountain State and County Park.

FUNDS CONTRIBUTED

- \$860,000 - U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- \$325,000 - Caltrans Environmental Enhancement and Mitigation
- \$50,000 - San Francisco Foundation
- \$50,000 - Pajaro Valley Ohlone Indian Council



The protection of Ohlone heritage was honored with ceremony and dances on the mountain.