

SAVE THE BAY

Who are Cargill and DMB?

Cargill Inc.

Minnesota-based agribusiness giant Cargill Inc. would prefer to keep a low profile, but as America's largest privately-held company (with over \$115 billion in revenue in 2009, and business in dozens of countries worldwide), they are hard to ignore.

Unbeknownst to most of us, much of the food we eat every day has been handled by Cargill. They are the world's dominant grain seller, and produce 22 percent of domestic meat, almost 20 percent of the world's turkeys, 25 percent of U.S. grain and oilseed exports, and much of the salt and artificial sweeteners that are heavily relied upon by the fast food industry.

Cargill finds themselves the target of major environmental and human rights protests around the world, including accusations of forcing indigenous people off their land, illegally burning down the rainforests and polluting the rivers.

In the Bay Area, Cargill has repeatedly spilled toxic pollutants, manipulated property sales that cost taxpayers tens of millions of dollars, and undermined federal protection of wetlands with endless legal obstructionism.

DMB Associates

DMB Associates is an Arizona-based luxury-home developer that specializes in upscale, master-planned communities. They have built a name for themselves planning exclusive resorts and "premier" shopping destinations for the affluent. At one of their neighborhoods in California, the entrance fee is a \$2 to \$4 million custom home. In their proposed Redwood City development, they project most residents' incomes will far exceed the median levels in San Mateo County.

As for the environment, DMB is no stranger to controversy. DMB's mode of operation is split conservation groups, attempting to convince the public that in order to preserve some open space, you need to build on the rest. DMB touts their Martis Valley development as an example of environmental leadership, but the company fought environmentalists for years before being forced to make critical concessions. Local elected officials said that without lawsuits, the developer would never have limited the project's environmental harm. In 2009 they abandoned a massive project on undeveloped farmland in San Benito County, south of San Jose, which was forcefully opposed as sprawl by a broad environmental coalition.

Their most recent environmental controversy has been the Tejon Ranch development in Kern County, where they seek to replace a critical wildlife migration corridor (and near-extinct California Condor habitat) with suburban sprawl, hotel rooms, and no less than four golf courses to round out what they hope to be the "premier mountain destination retreat" for Southern California.

DMB's slogan is, "A Passion for Great Places." What's unfortunate is the form this passion takes – paving over land that deserves to be protected.