

Infineon Hires Owls to Hunt Rodents

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INFINEON RACEWAY (KRON) -- One of the Bay Area's major auto race tracks have some new residents who literally have a birds eye view of the action. But these animals aren't looking for race cars. They're looking for rodents.

Infineon is installing owl boxes in hopes the birds will stay there and hunt for gophers. The racetrack says the rodents are responsible for \$15,000 in damage to new landscaping at the facility.

To solve the problem, the track turned to the Hungry Owl project.

"We may make our living making a lot of noise," Infineon Vice President for Facilities Jere Starks told KRON 4's Greg Kinion. "But that doesn't mean we're environmentally unfriendly."

Starks says he was reluctant to use pesticides and other poisons.

"Poison is a quick fix," Maggie Rufo with the Hungry Owl Project said. "But for every rat you kill, another rat will come and fill its niche. So having natural predators around is really the way to go."

Rufo says a family of Barn Owls can eat 30-to-40 rodents a night. Starks hopes that will keep the rodent population down to make things more beautiful for the racetrack's human guests.

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