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Ramirez, Angelica

Public Comment - Group 1

**From:** Wiester John <jlwiester@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Saturday, November 14, 2020 5:31 PM  
**To:** sbcob  
**Subject:** Expansion of Ag Tiered Permitting Ordance



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To be considered at your Board Meeting Nov. 17

As a 50 year rancher in the Santa Ynez Valley I am very against the inclusion of Option 3 in AG II and AGI. Please delete same.

John Wiester  
7760 Santa Rosa Rd.  
Buellton, CA 93427  
805 688-6507

## Ramirez, Angelica

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**From:** Sharyne Merritt <professormerritt@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Sunday, November 15, 2020 1:27 PM  
**To:** sbcob  
**Subject:** Board meeting November 17 Item 2 Agriculture Tiered Permitting Ordinance  
**Attachments:** Merritt comments on ag tiered to BoS.docx

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please read the attached aloud at the meeting

Chair Harte and Honorable Board Members

As a farmer with farms in both District 1 and District 3, I support Options 1 and 2 and I vehemently oppose Option 3.

Options 1 and 2 can be implemented without interfering with agricultural operations; Option 3 will impact agriculture.

I urge you to postpone voting on this item until the Agricultural Advisory Committee (AAC) has been able to discuss and comment on it. As you know, the AAC was created by the Board to give advice on agricultural land-use issues. This item came up in the AAC's November 5 meeting but the list of possible uses was not offered. Lacking the list of possible uses the AAC was not able to discuss the proposal and offer advice. The next AAC meeting is December 3.

I would also like to comment on the process that created the list of possible uses. I applaud Commissioner Parke for seeking public comment. It is my understanding that he asked WEWatch to organize two workshops on Farm Stays in 2019. According to Nancy Emerson, "We sent information to 20 different Valley/countywide non-governmental organizations." It would have been useful to seek comment from the AAC and to use the Supervisors' and county's email lists to get broad participation.

Selection of participants in the workshops aside, it appears that Option 3 was not generated at the workshops. According to Ms. Emerson, "Some time later, in 2020, John Parke formed an advisory committee. . . . There are 2 members who did not attend the discussion meetings. The Board of Supervisors decided to not expand the Farm Stay ordinance to include the broader Agricultural Tourism for financial and other reasons. That may be why the advisory group is looking at the Ag Tiered Permitting ordinance. Option 2 contains ideas that came up at the 2 discussion meetings. . . . Option 3 goes far beyond what came up at the meetings. It may reflect conversations at his Advisory Group meetings."

I am certain Commissioner Parke's motives were honorable, but appointing an advisory group to generate elements of an ordinance without public process could create the appearance of bias.

Thank you for allowing me to comment.

Sharyne Merritt, farmer

## Ramirez, Angelica

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**From:** John Patterson <john.patterson@me.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, November 16, 2020 7:36 AM  
**To:** sbcob  
**Subject:** Comments for Agenda of 11/17/2020 re Agricultural Tiered Permitting Ordinance Amendments – Project Scope  
**Attachments:** Comments for Agenda of 11/17/2020 re Agricultural Tiered Permitting Ordinance Amendments – Project Scope

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## Ramirez, Angelica

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**From:** John Patterson <[john.patterson@me.com](mailto:john.patterson@me.com)>  
**Sent:** Monday, November 16, 2020 7:36 AM  
**To:** sbcob  
**Subject:** Comments for Agenda of 11/17/2020 re Agricultural Tiered Permitting Ordinance Amendments – Project Scope

November 16, 2020

### **Re: Agricultural Tiered Permitting Ordinance Amendments – Project Scope**

Dear Board of Supervisors:

We strongly urge you to support and follow Option 2 for Agricultural Tiered Permitting Ordinance Amendments. We believe this option adds uses that are relatively small in scale, incidental to, compatible with, and supportive of, the principal agricultural use of lands zoned AG-II.

John & Nikki Patterson  
AG-II-100 Ranch Owners  
Buellton, CA

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## Ramirez, Angelica

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**From:** Ed Seaman <eseaman3@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, November 16, 2020 9:31 AM  
**To:** sbcob  
**Subject:** Nov 17 Meeting, Agricultural Tiered Permitting Ordinance Amendments

**Caution: This email originated from a source outside of the County of Santa Barbara. Do not click links or open attachments unless you verify the sender and know the content is safe.**

To Whom it May Concern,

My name is Ed Seaman. Our family owns Restoration Oaks Ranch, a mostly wild 955 acre ranch located just South of Buellton on Highway 101. My wife and I are the owner/operators of Santa Barbara Blueberries, a family-oriented 18 acre UPick berry farm located on the ranch that receives roughly 100,000 guests a year. I am also the co-founder and Executive Director of the Wild Farmlands Foundation, a 501 (c)(3) public charity located on the ranch that promotes the value of small farms to local food systems and climate management, primarily through on-farm education and working pilot projects like our Worm Farm and our Oak Grasslands Restoration projects. My wife and I also manage Restoration Oaks Retreats, two small guest ranch facilities that we offer for farm stays on the ranch.

We certainly are not going to get rich growing food at such a small scale like this, so we need the income and public relations benefits of ALL of these ranch entities for us to sustain our operations and make a reasonable living for ourselves and our employees. My wife and I coordinate all of the entities in a way that they support each other and the almost entirely wild, undeveloped nature of the ranch. We take our role as stewards of the ranch very seriously. We know other property owners, lifestyle farmers and ranchers that are just as passionate and serious as we are about stewardship. Your decisions will affect us all.

I recommend that the Board of Supervisors spend the time and resources necessary for Option 3. I have looked at Attachment 2 and reviewed the Agricultural Tourism/Tier Ordinance Potential Enterprises, and I believe that property owners that choose to invest in these activities should be enthusiastically embraced and supported, and given the go-ahead as inexpensively as possible. I trust that the Board will not allow another Disneyland be developed, however, I see nothing in Attachment 2 that should be restricted or priced so high that development becomes impractical.

We want to continue to grow nutritious food for our local food system, educate others about HOW we can manage climate change through healthy soils and healthy plants, train up the next generation of farmers and educate our community- especially youth. For us to do this, when we add up the expenses and revenues for the year, we must at least break even. If we believe that one of the enterprise opportunities on Attachment 2 would dovetail well with what we are already doing, we would like to be able to develop the opportunity quickly and cost-effectively and with the full support of the County. Permitting, if expensive and time-consuming, is an obstacle that folks with limited resources like ourselves cannot overcome. If we cannot change with the times and continue to be sustainable, we will simply retire, like so many other lifestyle farmers have done before us. The passion, knowledge of the land and willingness to do something special in our community retires with us.

According to the USDA Farm Census, since 1997, California has been losing no less than 533 small farms a year to retirement or industrial agriculture acquisition. Recently, AB-5 and Proposition 15 would have been disastrous for the small farm sector. The lack of effort to exempt or even acknowledge the small farm sector that

predominantly serves local communities everywhere has reflected a woeful ignorance of the need to secure local food systems and their small farm growers. Covid-19 amplified that need, but we don't seem to be learning much from those empty grocery store shelves. Oh, well, it's only food. We have our marijuana and we have our wine. We'll be fine.

We don't have much influence on Sacramento, but hopefully we can have an influence on our Board of Supervisors. Since we grow food, not pot and not wine grapes, maybe we are not a preferred class of grower. I would like to challenge the Board to think about what they really want climate-smart agriculture in Santa Barbara to look like. If it is property owners and growers like us, we need your help to sustain our way of life. If it is not us, then small scale, climate-smart agriculture in these parts is pretty much doomed. Please think about it.

In closing, please consider this: our record-breaking wildfires and the damn Covid-19 virus significantly shifted our world in 2020. Nobody knows what the economic future is going to be going forward, but we have a long recovery in front of us. Why in the world would we constrain the imagination, energy, or knowledge of our local landowners and their small farm sector stewards, especially if their creative efforts are bringing visitors in from outside of the county? If the liberty to do so is there, this could very well be an opportunity for some that are deserving and capable of taking advantage of it. Open it up and let's play it out.

Respectfully,

Ed Seaman

Restoration Oaks Ranch  
Santa Barbara Blueberries  
Wild Farmlands Foundation

805-868-0329

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**Ramirez, Angelica**

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**From:** Jackie Thiele <jackiethielegj@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, November 16, 2020 11:44 AM  
**To:** sbcob  
**Subject:** BOS meeting 11/17/2020 Item #2 Agriculture Tiered Permitting

**Caution: This email originated from a source outside of the County of Santa Barbara. Do not click links or open attachments unless you verify the sender and know the content is safe.**

Dear Board of Supervisors - Please do not allow "large scale" commercial or entertainment enterprises on AgI or AgII properties. "Large scale" and "higher density tourism uses" are not really defined. What does this mean? 100 or 1000 people at an event? This needs to be defined. Commercial enterprises should stay within city limits. Hunting cannot be done safely on all AgII properties when some are 30 acres and some 500 acres. Hunting on 30 acres cannot be done safely as shots would cross property lines. Option 3 is too broad and open ended. Thank you Jackie Thiele