

de la Guerra, Sheila

Group 1

#2

**From:** Timothy Naughton <naughton.t.d@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 5, 2019 10:23 AM  
**To:** sbcob  
**Subject:** Brodiaea Appeal of the Planning Comission's recommendation for an EIR  
**Attachments:** Water is Precious!.docx



**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.**

I am not sure I will be able to attend the County Board of Supervisor's meeting this afternoon wrt the Brodiaea Appeal of the Planning Comission's recommendation for an EIR on the North Fork Ranch Ponds. Hence, I would like to submit my comments in the attached file (word document).

Thanks for reviewing these comments during the hearings.

Respectfully,

Timothy D. Naughton

## Water is Precious!

For the residents of the arid Cuyama Valley water has been, is and always will be the most precious commodity. This is a critically overdrafted region scattered by wells that have already run dry. We are witness to one dry well on our property already! For the residents of Cuyama Valley water is always precious, never wasted and there is an intense focus on the sustainability for current and future users of this limited resource. The proposed reservoirs are NOT designed to support agricultural practices that are not consistent with the current norm nor do they appear sustainable based on previous practices in the Cuyama valley.

The proposed reservoirs are NOT required to irrigate vines or fulfill an agricultural need. The grape vines are already thriving without them. The reservoirs are proposed merely to support the cheapest and most convenient method of providing frost control desired to maximize the yield of the crop. Frost control is not required to grow grapes it is merely desirable to maximize crop yield and there are numerous sustainable methods of frost control including; vineyard heaters, wind machines, helicopters, cold air pocket fans, double pruning, etc... The proposed reservoirs are only required to provide additional water capacity exclusively for frost events in late spring after bud burst. The required capacity is what the 11 well pumps cannot fulfill even while they are running at full power. In an optimal system the reservoirs would be drained every night during a frost and refilled each day.

Some additional facts on using water for frost control... Effective frost control requires more than 55 gallons of water per minute per acre. Or  $55 \text{ gal/min/acre} \times 1000 \text{ acre} \times 60\text{min/hr} = 3.3 \text{ million gal/hr}$  for this vineyard. Given that a frost event can last 10 hours per night for up to 4 nights in a row, we are talking about over a **100 million gallons of water per frost event**. Can the arid Cuyama Valley support this consumption? Clearly, this is significantly more water consumption than western Cuyama valley has ever supported in the past.

A responsible approach would require an Environmental Impact Report. Furthermore, there is plenty of time for an EIR. The vineyard is young 1 to 2 years old. Frost control is not useful until the vines start producing significant crop in the 4<sup>th</sup> or 5<sup>th</sup> year. There is plenty of time to do the right thing and the consequences of doing the wrong thing are extremely significant. The EIR would assure the residents that the land they love is not jeopardized. It would assure our children, our society and our mother earth that we are committed to doing the right thing for the continued existence of humans. And finally, it would assure the grower that their practices are sustainable.

**de la Guerra, Sheila**

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**From:** Pamela Baczuk <pambaczuk@fastmail.fm>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 5, 2019 11:56 AM  
**To:** sbcob  
**Subject:** Public comment for Agenda Item: Harvard Frost Ponds Appeal of EIR Report Decision  
**Attachments:** Harvard Frost ponds appeal.doc

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February 4, 2019

Dear Members of the Planning Commission,

On September 12, 2018 you made a decision to require an Environmental Impact Report on the Brodiaea, Inc. request for permission to develop 3 very large frost ponds for their extensive vineyard in the Cuyama Valley. This decision was based on your own sound reasoning, knowledge of the Cuyama Valley, and public input and comments. For Harvard, the primary investor, to appeal this decision, shows either their lack of awareness of the limited water conditions in the Cuyama Valley, or concern for their Vineyard's nearest neighbors and all the residents of the Cuyama Valley.

The Cuyama Valley is one of the most severely over drafted groundwater basins in California. Residents and representatives of the 4 counties sharing the valley have been in discussions and negotiations for many months about decreasing water usage. The State of California has mandated that groundwater usage must be decreased due to many years of unregulated extraction. Future generations will be without water if we do not conserve now. Community members, local ranchers and farmers and even those who live outside the Cuyama Valley have been concerned since first news of the Brodiaea Vineyard project surfaced. Harvard, an organization based on the East Coast, where rainfall is frequent and abundant does not seem to realize the impact of such large open water storage reservoirs in an area dependent on groundwater. Not only will there be many gallons of water extracted to fill the proposed ponds, there will be considerable evaporation from the large exposed surface areas, especially in the our very hot very dry summer months. Evaporation is a significant consideration in the planning discussions of the Groundwater Sustainability Project. Perhaps, the executives at the Harvard Endowment have been misinformed by their technical advisors, or if not, we must conclude that they are ignoring the groundwater conditions present and future. Ours is not the only region that has been impacted by Harvard's development of massive vineyards. Other nearby areas have been purchased and developed also. I would refer you to the article which appeared in the Wall Street Journal in December entitled "Harvard Quietly Amasses California Vineyards and the Water Underneath."

There is substantial evidence that the Project will negatively impact groundwater, natural habitat, including protected species, and create possible flooding conditions of the surrounding areas.

Preserving the native flora and fauna not only provide scenic beauty, natural habitat is necessary for preserving the ecosystem. An EIR study would inform everyone the amount of the impact.

It is important to consider that fact that frost ponds are not the only alternative to protecting crops from freezing. In the initial public hearing when the project was presented to the community, many experienced ranchers and farmers offered viable alternatives that would not require large groundwater extraction and storage..

It would also be informative to compare costs of the frost ponds Harvard is proposing and costs of other frost protection methods. The EIR should include this in their report. Even Harvard might prefer a more economical solution.

I urge you to uphold your original decision to require an Environmental Impact report and that it should include a study of the alternatives to frost ponds. The Cuyama Valley provides resources for its many residents, production of crops, livestock, a small town, and supporting businesses. The Scenic beauty attracts tourists. Prudent use of the remaining limited water in the valley will sustain Harvard's investment and many future generations.

Please remain steadfast in your decision to require the EIR.

Thank you.

Pamela Baczuk  
Resident and Property Owner in the Cuyama Valley

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