



Katherine Douglas *General Public Comment - Grp 3*

From: Kathryn Lohmeyer Rohrer <lohrohrer@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, May 4, 2026 10:49 AM
To: sbcob
Subject: General Public Comment for May 5, 2026 Bd of Supervisors meeting
Attachments: 05.04.2026 ltr to BOS re Los Olivos SPA designation.pdf; 05.04.2026 ltr to BOS re Los Olivos SPA designation.pdf

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.

Please distribute to the Board and post online as my **General Public Comment**: both this letter and the attached documentation.

Thank you for your time and assistance. Sincerely, Kathryn

May 4, 2026

Board of Supervisors
County of Santa Barbara
105 E. Anapamu Street
Santa Barbara, CA 93101

RE: Los Olivos Special Problems Area (SPA) Designation

Honorable Supervisors,

I request your assistance in resolving a long-standing inquiry regarding our family’s 12.5-acre agricultural parcel located in Los Olivos. A year ago, I attempted to engage with the Planning Department’s Development Review Division to clarify the status of our property, yet critical questions regarding the foundation of the current land-use restrictions remain unanswered.

Specifically, I am seeking your intervention to address the following two points:

- **Removal of the Special Problems Area (SPA) Designation from our family’s parcel:** One year ago, I requested clear guidance on the procedure for removing the SPA designation from our property. As a working farm and home, we are unaware of any specific physical or environmental basis that justifies applying this restrictive designation to our particular acreage.
- **Request for Contemporaneous Evidence:** During my correspondence with the Development Review Division, I requested any historical evidence, findings, or records from May 1974, supporting the

original creation of, and boundary-setting for, the Los Olivos SPA. To date, no such evidence has been provided.

Because the SPA designation is foundational to many policies and decisions that govern our land and that our neighbors, it is imperative that such legislative action and its application be rooted in evidentiary support and not be arbitrary, capricious, or procedurally unfair. I therefore respectfully request that the Board's guidance and assistance in determining both:

1. **Current Validity:** Whether substantial evidence exists to support the continued application of the SPA designation to our home and farm under present-day conditions.
2. **Historical Justification:** Whether there was sufficient evidence *in the record in May 1974* to establish the reasonableness of the Los Olivos SPA's creation and boundaries in relation to the promotion of public health, safety, or the general welfare and prosperity of the community.

As a resident and farmer invested in the future of Santa Ynez Valley planning area, I believe in the importance of transparent, evidence-based governance. I look forward to your guidance on how we can resolve these discrepancies and ensure our property is designated accurately.

Thank you for your time and for your service to Santa Barbara County.

Sincerely,
Kathryn Lohmeyer Rohrer

--

Kathryn Lohmeyer Rohrer

Kathryn Rohrer
Ballard Adobes, Los Olivos

May 4, 2026

Board of Supervisors

County of Santa Barbara
105 E. Anapamu Street
Santa Barbara, CA 93101

RE: Formal Request Regarding Los Olivos Special Problems Area (SPA) Designation –

Honorable Supervisors,

I request your assistance in resolving a long-standing inquiry regarding our family's 12.5-acre agricultural parcel located in Los Olivos. A year ago, I attempted to engage with the Planning Department's Development Review Division to clarify the status of our property, yet critical questions regarding the foundation of the current land-use restrictions remain unanswered.

Specifically, I am seeking your intervention to address the following two points:

- **Removal of the Special Problems Area (SPA) Designation from our family's parcel:** One year ago, I requested clear guidance on the procedure for removing the SPA designation from our property. As a working farm and home, we are unaware of any specific physical or environmental basis that justifies applying this restrictive designation to our particular acreage.
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Because the SPA designation is foundational to many policies and decisions that govern our land and that our neighbors, it is imperative that such legislative action and its application be rooted in evidentiary support and not be arbitrary, capricious, or procedurally unfair. I therefore respectfully request that the Board's guidance and assistance in determining both:

Kathryn Rohrer
Ballard Adobes, Los Olivos

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Thank you for your time and for your service to Santa Barbara County.

Sincerely,



Kathryn Lohmeyer Rohrer

Kathryn Rohrer
Ballard Adobes, Los Olivos

Mary 13, 2025

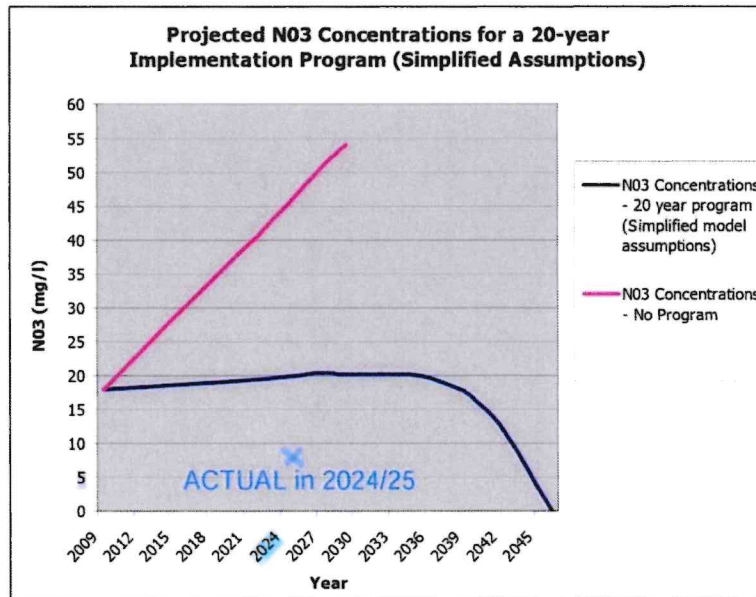
Dear Ms. Beyeler,

Please forward this letter to the members of the [Special Problems Committee](#). I am also copying Supervisor Joan Hartmann here in case this request falls outside of the Special Problems Committee's jurisdiction.

I write to request information about the mechanisms/procedures for requesting that our home and land ([APN 135-230-002](#)) be **removed** from the "Special Problems Area" ([Building Regs. In SB County Code Chapter 10, Article XV](#);) designation for Los Olivos.

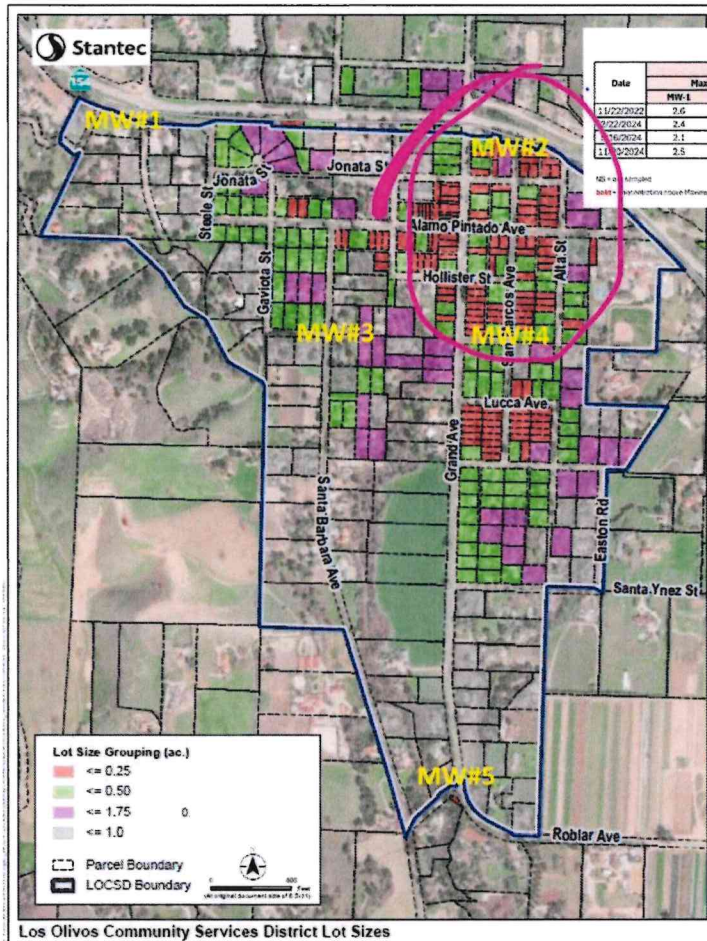
As you can see on **Page 10** of the linked pdf of the [2010 Los Olivos Wastewater Management Plan](#) (LOWMP), our parcel is located at the southern- and western-most corner of the Los Olivos Special Problems Area (SPA). As is explained in great detail in the LOWMP, the Los Olivos SPA was created in the 1970s based on an expectation that nitrate levels in the groundwater would continue on an upward trajectory that would result in levels well in excess of the maximum contaminant level (MCL) by 2025.

Santa Barbara County Los Olivos Wastewater Management Plan



Kathryn Rohrer
Ballard Adobes, Los Olivos

The Los Olivos Community Services District (LOCSO) installed 5 monitoring wells in their district, and their testing results from 2023 and 2024 consistently show that nitrate levels are well below the MCL at the southernmost end of the District, which are very near where our home is located.



THE DISTRICT

372 Parcels
 ~40 Commercial
 ~332 Residential

Annual Budget
 (FY 2024-25)
\$243,039

None of the “conditions” identified in the LOWMP as contributing to the “Special Problem” and needing to be addressed in our area apply to our **12.5 acre AG-I zoned parcel**, which has the benefit of using the **entirely new septic system** (tanks and leach field) that we had installed a few years ago.

Moreover, as described above, contemporaneous groundwater monitoring results reflect that the SPA designation is not warranted based on the quality of the groundwater under and near our home and many of the Los Olivos SPA parcels – particularly the parcels that are .5 acres or larger and are situated to the west or the south of the downtown commercial core.

Kathryn Rohrer
Ballard Adobes, Los Olivos

Under the County LAMP and the specific plan for Los Olivos, all of these larger western and southern parcels need to replace their existing septic systems with new systems when their current systems fail. Our family has personal knowledge of two nearby parcels that recently installed and have had great success with **advanced onsite** systems in recent years.

In light of current scientific data reflecting that our parcel is not contributing to groundwater contamination in the Los Olivos area, we respectfully request your assistance in the process of removing the SPA designation from our land.

With sincere thanks,



Kathryn Lohmeyer Rohrer

2411 Alamo Pintado Road / 2411 Santa Barbara Avenue, Los Olivos, CA

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 142, Los Olivos, CA 93441

Phone: 562.673.6444

Email: lohrohrer@gmail.com

RE: CORRECTION Re: Follow-up Re: Inquiry Re Removal of Special Problems Area designation

1 message

Beyeler, Gwen <gvonklan@countyofsb.org>

Mon, Jun 2, 2025 at 9:57 AM

To: Kathryn Lohmeyer Rohrer <lohrohrer@gmail.com>

Cc: "Crabtree, Jason" <jcrabtree@countyofsb.org>, Joan Hartmann <jHartmann@countyofsb.org>

That sounds great. I believe Travis and I will be available Monday 6/9 from 1-2:30pm, Tuesday 6/10 from 4:30-5, Wednesday 6/11 from 4:30-5pm, Thursday 6/12 11:30-12pm, or Friday 6/13 from 1-1:30pm or 2:30-4pm. Let me know if any of those times will work for you both.

Best,

**Gwen Beyeler***Supervising Planner*

Development Review Division

Planning & Development Department

County of Santa Barbara

624 W. Foster Rd.

[Santa Maria, CA 93455](#)

805-934-6269

gbeyeler@countyofsb.org<https://www.countyofsb.org/160/Planning-Development>**From:** Kathryn Lohmeyer Rohrer <lohrohrer@gmail.com>**Sent:** Monday, June 2, 2025 9:35 AM**To:** Beyeler, Gwen <gvonklan@countyofsb.org>**Cc:** Crabtree, Jason <jcrabtree@countyofsb.org>; Joan Hartmann <jHartmann@countyofsb.org>**Subject:** Re: CORRECTION Re: Follow-up Re: Inquiry Re Removal of Special Problems Area designation

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Thank you, Gwen.

I'm out of town/state this week, but we can find a time to talk next week. I'd like to schedule something when my husband will also be available.

Thank you, Kathryn
Kathryn Lohmeyer Rohrer
Sent from my iPhone

On Jun 2, 2025, at 10:16 AM, Beyeler, Gwen <gvonklan@countyofsb.org> wrote:

Hi Kathryn,

The County would review revisions to the Special Problems Area Overlay as part of a Long Range Planning effort, which would be initiated by the Board of Supervisors. I'm happy to discuss in further detail with my Deputy Director, Travis Seawards, and do my best to answer questions. Are you available for a phone call today at 11am or 1pm, tomorrow at 10am, 2pm, 4pm, or 5pm, or Wednesday at 11am?

Best,



Gwen Beyeler

Supervising Planner

Development Review Division

Planning & Development Department

County of Santa Barbara

624 W. Foster Rd.

Santa Maria, CA 93455

805-934-6269

gbeyeler@countyofsb.org

<https://www.countyofsb.org/160/Planning-Development>

From: Kathryn Lohmeyer Rohrer <lohrohrer@gmail.com>

Sent: Thursday, May 29, 2025 10:53 PM

To: Beyeler, Gwen <gvonklan@countyofsb.org>

Cc: Crabtree, Jason <jcrabtree@countyofsb.org>; Joan Hartmann <jHartmann@countyofsb.org>

Subject: Re: CORRECTION Re: Follow-up Re: Inquiry Re Removal of Special Problems Area designation

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Thank you, Gwen.

This is informative.

To be clear, I'm not seeking rezoning or elimination of the designation for other parcels.

I am interested in having the designation removed from our (single) parcel based on current groundwater monitoring data and the fact that our 12.5 acre parcel is not constrained or problematic in light of our new, modern treatment system and leach field.

I cannot discern any basis in law or fact for our parcel being burdened with a "special problems area" designation, and I would like to know how to begin the process of asking the Special Problems Committee and Board of Supervisors to remove this burden from our property rights.

Thank you, Kathryn

Kathryn Lohmeyer Rohrer

Sent from my iPhone

On May 29, 2025, at 9:39 AM, Beyeler, Gwen <gvonklan@countyofsb.org> wrote:

Good morning Kathryn,

I will continue to look into this request for you. I will work on getting an answer for you as soon as possible. Some initial things to consider are that changing a zoning overlay requires an application for a Rezone and changing a general plan designation requires an application for a General Plan Amendment. These applications are reviewed for consistency with applicable standards and are referred to the Planning Commission for review and the Board of Supervisors for adoption.

Your motivation to remove the designation from your parcel doesn't matter, but I want to see if there's another less costly and less time-consuming way that I can help 😊 Feel free to give me a call at my office line below when it is convenient for you, and we can discuss.

Best,



Gwen Beyeler

Supervising Planner

Development Review Division

Planning & Development Department

County of Santa Barbara

624 W. Foster Rd.

Santa Maria, CA 93455

805-934-6269

gbeyeler@countyofsb.org

<https://www.countyofsb.org/160/Planning-Development>

From: Kathryn Lohmeyer Rohrer <lohrohrer@gmail.com>

Sent: Thursday, May 29, 2025 9:32 AM

To: Beyeler, Gwen <gvonklan@countyofsb.org>

Cc: Crabtree, Jason <jcrabtree@countyofsb.org>; Joan Hartmann <jHartmann@countyofsb.org>

Subject: CORRECTION Re: Follow-up Re: Inquiry Re Removal of Special Problems Area designation

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My apologies for the horrifying typos. That's what I get for using voice-to-text while I drive. (But I kind of like "holy unnecessary" — haha)

Corrected below.

Kathryn Lohmeyer Rohrer

Sent from my iPhone

On May 29, 2025, at 9:25 AM, Kathryn Lohmeyer Rohrer <lohrohrer@gmail.com> wrote:

Thank you, Gwen. I am at work all day today and in meetings most of the day.

Do I need a reason to ask to have the designation removed from our parcel? What I'm asking is: does my motivation matter?

The designation is a burden on our property, and we now have contemporaneous groundwater monitoring data showing that it is not warranted. Why should our parcel, or any similarly situated parcel, be saddled with a designation that lacks a factual and legal basis? It feels like inappropriate and wholly unnecessary government interference with our property rights.

Please let me know how to get this issue in front of the special problems committee and the board of supervisors

Kathryn Lohmeyer Rohrer

Sent from my iPhone

On May 28, 2025, at 11:16 AM, Beyeler, Gwen <gvonklan@countyofsb.org> wrote:

Hi Kathryn,

I have been looking into this. Technically revising the Special Problems Area may be a lengthy, costly process that needs to be adopted by the BOS. I am not certain of this, but I think that is what would need to happen. Since SDRC/SPC is an internal committee, there are no mailings or public agendas.

In practice, when a property is in a Special Problems Area, it is simply flagged for the applicable County departments (in this case, County Environmental Health Services). If your parcel is no longer affected by the applicable issue, then EHS would understand that as part of their review.

I'm interested in talking with you about why you want to remove your parcel from this designation so I can try to help. Can we set up a phone call tomorrow afternoon to talk more? Let me know some times that work for you.



Gwen Beyeler

Supervising Planner

Development Review Division

Planning & Development Department

County of Santa Barbara

624 W. Foster Rd.

Santa Maria, CA 93455

805-934-6269

gbeyeler@countyofsb.org

<https://www.countyofsb.org/160/Planning-Development>

From: Kathryn Lohmeyer Rohrer <lohrohrer@gmail.com>

Sent: Friday, May 23, 2025 9:43 AM

To: Beyeler, Gwen <gvonklan@countyofsb.org>

Cc: Crabtree, Jason <jcrabtree@countyofsb.org>; Joan Hartmann <jHartmann@countyofsb.org>

Subject: Re: Follow-up Re: Inquiry Re Removal of Special Problems Area designation

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Checking in to see if you have been able to locate information.

In the meantime, please include me on mailings of notices and agendas for the Special Problems Committee.

Thank you, Kathryn

Kathryn Lohmeyer Rohrer

Sent from my iPhone

On May 16, 2025, at 12:34 PM, Beyeler, Gwen <gvonklan@countyofsb.org> wrote:

Good afternoon Kathryn,

As noted in my response to you yesterday (see attached), Subdivision Development Review Committee/Special Problems Area Committee are made up of staff representatives who review development applications for compliance with applicable regulations. Since the meetings are not public hearings, there are no notices. I'm happy to send you agendas if you let me know which dates you are interested in! The committees meet on the first and third Wednesdays of the month.

We need to research the process to remove parcels from a Special Problems Area. Special Problems Areas are adopted by Resolution. As you mentioned, the SPA was adopted by resolution by the BOS in the 1970s as shown on the attached resolution. Removal of a parcel from a Special Problems Area is not a request we receive often, and so we need to look into this and coordinate with County Environmental Health Services.

Are you planning to submit an application for new development on your site?

Let us know if you have any other questions in the meantime!

Best,

<image001.png>

Gwen Beyeler

Supervising Planner

Development Review Division

Planning & Development Department

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805-934-6269

gbeyeler@countyofsb.org

<https://www.countyofsb.org/160/Planning-Development>

From: Kathryn Lohmeyer Rohrer <lohrohrer@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, May 16, 2025 12:30 PM
To: Crabtree, Jason <jcrabtree@countyofsb.org>
Cc: Joan Hartmann <jHartmann@countyofsb.org>; Beyeler, Gwen <gvonklan@countyofsb.org>
Subject: Re: Follow-up Re: Inquiry Re Removal of Special Problems Area designation

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Mr. Crabtree --

My apologies for reaching out to you. I am trying to find a point of contact for the [Special Problems Committee](#).

I have not (yet) received a response from Ms. Beyeler, and it looks like she may have moved into a different role within the Planning Department. I also cannot find the person listed as Chair of the Special Problems Committee, Eric Graham, on the Planning Department pages.

I would greatly appreciate it if you could point me to someone who can provide information about the Special Problems Committee and help address my requests, which include:

1. Where can I find meeting notices and agendas of the Special Problems Committee?
2. Where can I find information about the mechanisms/procedures I need to employ to request that the Special Problems Area designation be removed from our parcel?

Thank you fo your time and guidance. Sincerely, Kathryn

Kathryn Lohmeyer Rohrer

Sent from my iPhone

On Thu, May 15, 2025 at 8:00 AM Kathryn Lohmeyer Rohrer <lohrohrer@gmail.com> wrote:

Ms. Beyeler,

Please reply to let me me know if you received this.

Additionally, I have not been able to determine where on the County website I can find meeting notices and agendas for the Special Problems Committee. Where are those public records stored?

Many thanks, Kathryn

Kathryn Lohmeyer Rohrer

Sent from my iPhone

On May 13, 2025, at 7:53 PM, Kathryn Lohmeyer Rohrer <lohrohrer@gmail.com> wrote:

Dear Ms. Beyeler,

Please forward this letter to the members of the [Special Problems Committee](#). I am also copying Supervisor Joan Hartmann here in case this request falls outside of the Special Problems Committee's jurisdiction.

I write to request information about the mechanisms/procedures for requesting that our home and land ([APN 135-230-002](#)) be **removed** from the "Special Problems Area" ([Building Regs. In SB County Code Chapter 10, Article XV](#);) designation for Los Olivos.

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<image.jpeg>

The Los Olivos Community Services District (LOCSD) installed 5 monitoring wells in their district, and their testing results from 2023 and 2024 consistently show that nitrate levels are well below the MCL at the southernmost end of the District, which are very near where our home is located.

<image.jpeg>

None of the "conditions" identified in the LOWMP as contributing to the "Special Problem" and needing to be addressed in our area apply to our **12.5 acre AG-I zoned parcel**, which has the benefit of using the **entirely new septic system** (tanks and leach field) that we had installed a few years ago.

Moreover, as described above, contemporaneous groundwater monitoring results reflect that the SPA designation is not warranted based on the quality of the groundwater under and near our home and many of the Los Olivos SPA parcels – particularly the parcels that are .5 acres or larger and are situated to the west or the south of the downtown commercial core.

Under the County LAMP and the specific plan for Los Olivos, all of these larger western and southern parcels need to replace their existing septic systems with new systems when their current systems fail. Our family has personal knowledge of two nearby parcels that recently installed and have had great success with **advanced onsite** systems in recent years.

In light of current scientific data reflecting that our parcel is not contributing to groundwater contamination in the Los Olivos area, we respectfully request your assistance in the process of removing the SPA designation from our land.

With sincere thanks,

Kathryn Lohmeyer Rohrer

2411 [Alamo Pintado Road / 2411 Santa Barbara Avenue, Los Olivos, CA](#)

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 142, Los Olivos, CA 93441

Phone: 562.673.6444

Email: lohrohrer@gmail.com

<05.13.2025 request to Special Problems Committee and Supv Hartmann.pdf>

<IMG_1822.jpg>

<LOCSD MW results.jpg>

<from 2024-12-11 LOCSD Packet Groundwater Well Data.jpg>

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[Kathryn Lohmeyer Rohrer](#)

<mime-attachment>



Kathryn Lohmeyer Rohrer <lohrohrer@gmail.com>

RE: Special Problems Area Info

1 message

Beyeler, Gwen <gvonklan@countyofsb.org>
To: Kathryn Lohmeyer Rohrer <lohrohrer@gmail.com>

Mon, Jul 7, 2025 at 8:06 AM

Hi Kathryn,

I've continued to look into this and contacted other departments. So far, I have not found anything more than what I've sent you previously. I'll keep you posted if I hear anything else.

Let me know if you have any questions based on this information.

Best,



Gwen Beyeler

Supervising Planner

Development Review Division

Planning & Development Department

County of Santa Barbara

624 W. Foster Rd.

[Santa Maria, CA 93455](#)

805-934-6269

gbeyeler@countyofsb.org

<https://www.countyofsb.org/160/Planning-Development>

From: Kathryn Lohmeyer Rohrer <lohrohrer@gmail.com>

Sent: Monday, June 16, 2025 4:38 PM

To: Beyeler, Gwen <gvonklan@countyofsb.org>

Subject: Re: Special Problems Area Info

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.

Gwen,

Thank you for this follow-up and for your continuing efforts. I am aware of Article XV, Ch. 10, provisions re Special Problems Areas, but the attached "Special Problems Area Booklet" is something I've never seen before.

I was/am particularly interested in Ordinance No. 2998 (on page 44 of the Handbook pdf), which is new information to me. I will work on finding out more about that.

I sincerely appreciate your time and your efforts to help us locate information about how the initial decision was made to create the Los Olivos Special Problems Area and any subsequent law, rules, or other decisions related to this specific area.

Sincerely, Kathryn

ORDINANCE NO. 2998
AN URGENCY ORDINANCE OF THE COUNTY OF SANTA BARBARA RESTRICTING ISSUANCE OF BUILDING PERMITS FOR RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS UNDER CERTAIN CONDITIONS ON LOTS LESS THAN ONE-HALF ACRE IN SIZE

The Board of Supervisors of the County of Santa Barbara do ordain as follows:

SECTION 1. PURPOSE
The purpose of this ordinance is to prevent impending intensive residential development of existing small lots in the Los Olivos area of the County of Santa Barbara until sufficient time has been allowed for plans to be worked out and implemented in order to alleviate and if possible avoid problems of pollution of the underground water table from individual sanitary sewage disposal systems, increased flood damage from severe storms and inadequate access because of existing substandard street improvements.

SECTION 2. LIMIT ON ISSUANCE OF RESIDENTIAL BUILDING PERMITS
No building permits for new residential buildings shall be issued unless the Special Problems Committee has approved the building before the adoption of this ordinance, for lots or parcels of land of less than 75,000 square feet net size in the Los Olivos area of the County of Santa Barbara, which has heretofore been designated a "Special Problem Area" by Resolution No. 74-224 of the Board of Supervisors of the County of Santa Barbara, pursuant to the provisions of Section 3202 of the Santa Barbara County Code. Building permits may be issued for lots or parcels of land which are bounded on all sides other than one by a public right-of-way.

SECTION 3. TERMINATION
This ordinance shall not apply to any lots or parcels of land which are not "Special Problem

Having the foregoing facts in mind, the Board of Supervisors, on May 2, 1977, adopted an urgency ordinance restricting issuance of further building permits on lots less than 75,000 square feet net size at a time when 226 lots or parcels of land in the said Los Olivos "Special Problem Area" had been improved to residential and commercial buildings and applications for additional building permits were anticipated. That urgency ordinance will expire, by its terms, and will be of no further force and effect on November 2, 1977. To date the problem of sanitary sewage disposal, extensive flooding during severe storms, and adequate improvement of County roads in the area have not been solved.

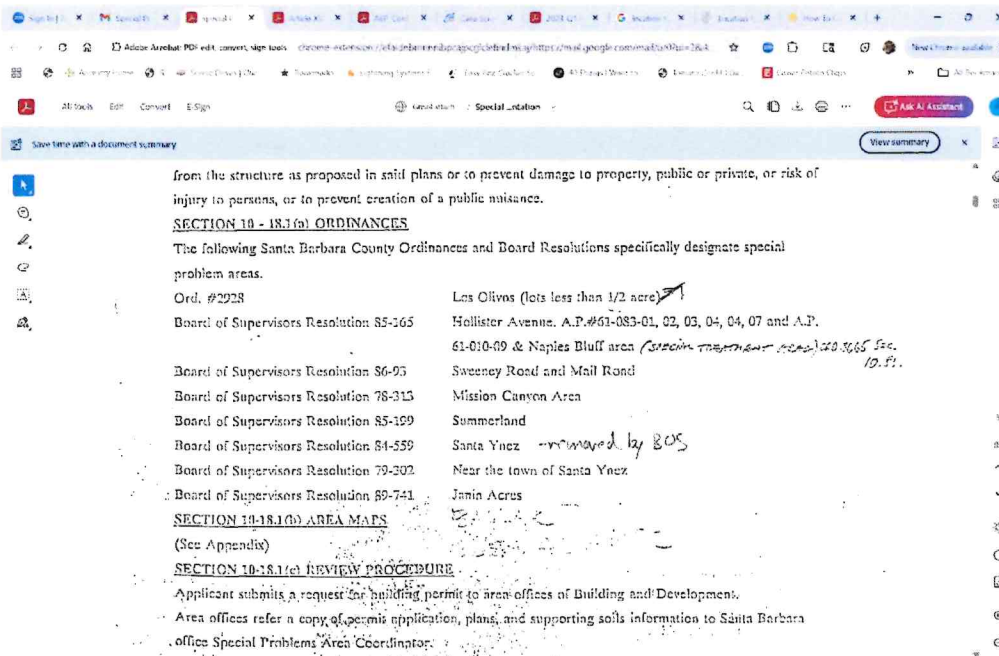
Accordingly, unless this ordinance takes effect immediately, it is anticipated that many building permit applications will be received and permits granted because no other authority will exist, all of which will create immediate hazards to public health and safety in the said area because such anticipated intensive development in said area will greatly increase the said existing sewage disposal, flooding and road improvement problems.

SECTION 4. PUBLICATION
Before the expiration of fifteen (15) days after its passage, this ordinance shall be published once, with the names of the members of the Board of Supervisors voting for and against the same, in the Santa Barbara News-Press, a newspaper of general circulation, published in the County of Santa Barbara.

PASSED, approved and adopted this 31st day of October 1977.

MARRELL FLETCHER
Chairman, Board of Supervisors
County of Santa Barbara
State of California

ATTEST:
(Seal)
HOWARD C. MENZEL
County Clerk-Recorder



On Mon, Jun 16, 2025 at 3:55 PM Beyeler, Gwen <gvonkian@countyofsb.org> wrote:

Hi Kathryn,

Here is some additional documentation related to the formation of Special Problems Areas. We are working on getting more details on the Los Olivos Special Problems Area from County Environmental Health Services and Flood Control and will get back to you soon!

Best,



Gwen Beyeler

Supervising Planner

Development Review Division

Planning & Development Department

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624 W. Foster Rd.

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--

Kathryn Lohmeyer Rohrer

Kathryn Rohrer
Ballard Adobes, Los Olivos

May 4, 2026

Board of Supervisors

County of Santa Barbara
105 E. Anapamu Street
Santa Barbara, CA 93101

RE: Los Olivos Special Problems Area (SPA) Designation

Honorable Supervisors,

I request your assistance in resolving a long-standing inquiry regarding our family's 12.5-acre agricultural parcel located in Los Olivos. A year ago, I attempted to engage with the Planning Department's Development Review Division to clarify the status of our property, yet critical questions regarding the foundation of the current land-use restrictions remain unanswered.

Specifically, I am seeking your intervention to address the following two points:

- **Removal of the Special Problems Area (SPA) Designation from our family's parcel:** One year ago, I requested clear guidance on the procedure for removing the SPA designation from our property. As a working farm and home, we are unaware of any specific physical or environmental basis that justifies applying this restrictive designation to our particular acreage.
- **Request for Contemporaneous Evidence:** During my correspondence with the Development Review Division, I requested any historical evidence, findings, or records from May 1974, supporting the original creation of, and boundary-setting for, the Los Olivos SPA. To date, no such evidence has been provided.

Because the SPA designation is foundational to many policies and decisions that govern our land and that our neighbors, it is imperative that such legislative action and its application be rooted in evidentiary support and not be arbitrary, capricious, or procedurally unfair. I therefore respectfully request that the Board's guidance and assistance in determining both:

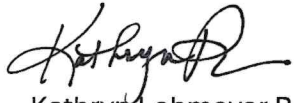
Kathryn Rohrer
Ballard Adobes, Los Olivos

1. **Current Validity:** Whether substantial evidence exists to support the continued application of the SPA designation to our home and farm under present-day conditions.
2. **Historical Justification:** Whether there was sufficient evidence *in the record in May 1974* to establish the reasonableness of the Los Olivos SPA's creation and boundaries in relation to the promotion of public health, safety, or the general welfare and prosperity of the community.

As a resident and farmer invested in the future of Santa Ynez Valley planning area, I believe in the importance of transparent, evidence-based governance. I look forward to your guidance on how we can resolve these discrepancies and ensure our property is designated accurately.

Thank you for your time and for your service to Santa Barbara County.

Sincerely,



Kathryn Lohmeyer Rohrer

Kathryn Rohrer
Ballard Adobes, Los Olivos

May 13, 2025

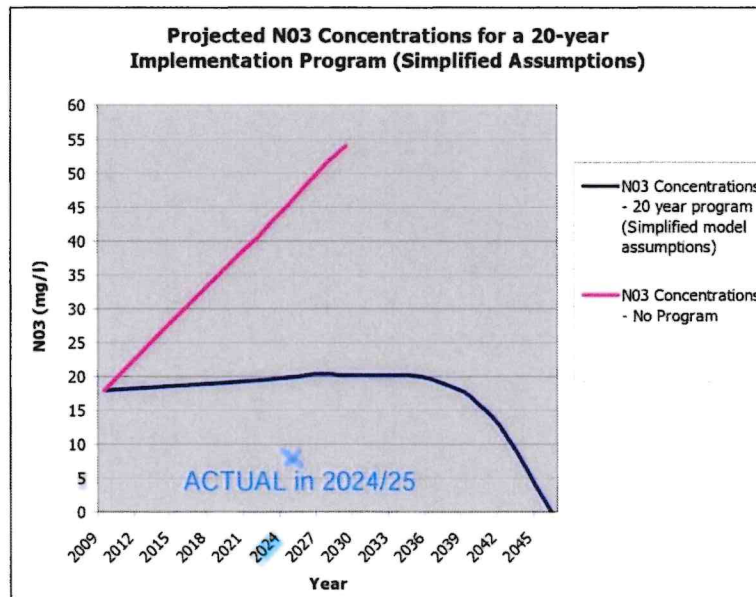
Dear Ms. Beyeler,

Please forward this letter to the members of the [Special Problems Committee](#). I am also copying Supervisor Joan Hartmann here in case this request falls outside of the Special Problems Committee's jurisdiction.

I write to request information about the mechanisms/procedures for requesting that our home and land ([APN 135-230-002](#)) be **removed** from the "Special Problems Area" ([Building Regs. In SB County Code Chapter 10, Article XV](#);) designation for Los Olivos.

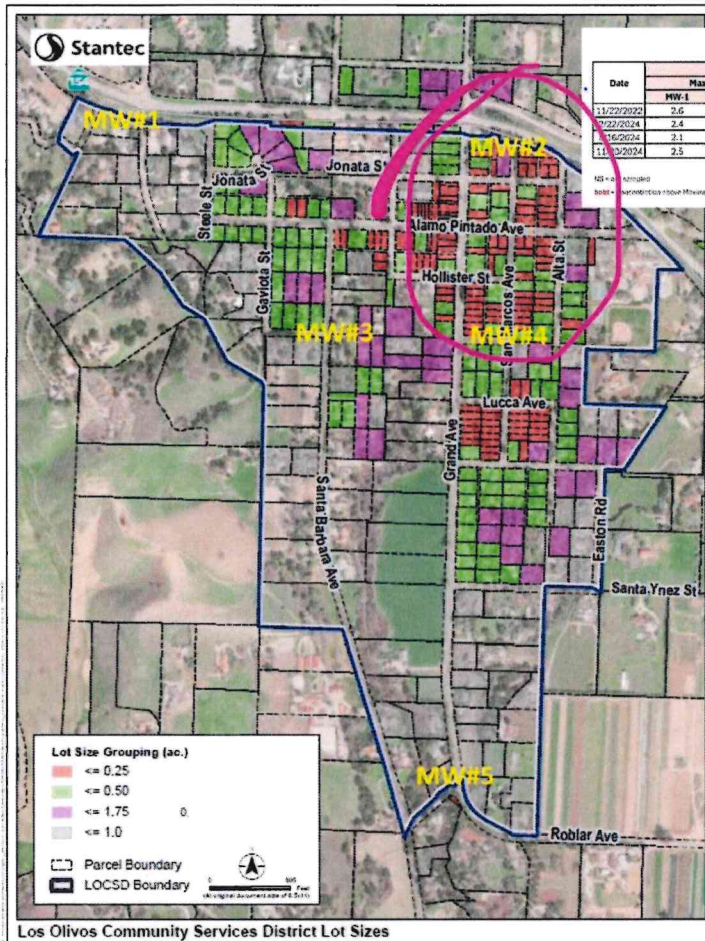
As you can see on **Page 10** of the linked pdf of the [2010 Los Olivos Wastewater Management Plan](#) (LOWMP), our parcel is located at the southern- and western-most corner of the Los Olivos Special Problems Area (SPA). As is explained in great detail in the LOWMP, the Los Olivos SPA was created in the 1970s based on an expectation that nitrate levels in the groundwater would continue on an upward trajectory that would result in levels well in excess of the maximum contaminant level (MCL) by 2025.

Santa Barbara County Los Olivos Wastewater Management Plan



Kathryn Rohrer
Ballard Adobes, Los Olivos

The Los Olivos Community Services District (LOCSO) installed 5 monitoring wells in their district, and their testing results from 2023 and 2024 consistently show that nitrate levels are well below the MCL at the southernmost end of the District, which are very near where our home is located.



THE DISTRICT

372 Parcels
 ~40 Commercial
 ~332 Residential

Annual Budget
 (FY 2024-25)
\$243,039

None of the “conditions” identified in the LOWMP as contributing to the “Special Problem” and needing to be addressed in our area apply to our **12.5 acre AG-I zoned parcel**, which has the benefit of using the **entirely new septic system** (tanks and leach field) that we had installed a few years ago.

Moreover, as described above, contemporaneous groundwater monitoring results reflect that the SPA designation is not warranted based on the quality of the groundwater under and near our home and many of the Los Olivos SPA parcels – particularly the parcels that are .5 acres or larger and are situated to the west or the south of the downtown commercial core.

Kathryn Rohrer
Ballard Adobes, Los Olivos

Under the County LAMP and the specific plan for Los Olivos, all of these larger western and southern parcels need to replace their existing septic systems with new systems when their current systems fail. Our family has personal knowledge of two nearby parcels that recently installed and have had great success with **advanced onsite** systems in recent years.

In light of current scientific data reflecting that our parcel is not contributing to groundwater contamination in the Los Olivos area, we respectfully request your assistance in the process of removing the SPA designation from our land.

With sincere thanks,



Kathryn Lohmeyer Rohrer

2411 Alamo Pintado Road / 2411 Santa Barbara Avenue, Los Olivos, CA

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 142, Los Olivos, CA 93441

Phone: 562.673.6444

Email: lohrohrer@gmail.com

RE: CORRECTION Re: Follow-up Re: Inquiry Re Removal of Special Problems Area designation

1 message

Beyeler, Gwen <gvonklan@countyofsb.org>

Mon, Jun 2, 2025 at 9:57 AM

To: Kathryn Lohmeyer Rohrer <lohrohrer@gmail.com>

Cc: "Crabtree, Jason" <jcrabtree@countyofsb.org>, Joan Hartmann <jHartmann@countyofsb.org>

That sounds great. I believe Travis and I will be available Monday 6/9 from 1-2:30pm, Tuesday 6/10 from 4:30-5, Wednesday 6/11 from 4:30-5pm, Thursday 6/12 11:30-12pm, or Friday 6/13 from 1-1:30pm or 2:30-4pm. Let me know if any of those times will work for you both.

Best,



Gwen Beyeler

Supervising Planner

Development Review Division

Planning & Development Department

County of Santa Barbara

624 W. Foster Rd.

[Santa Maria, CA 93455](#)

805-934-6269

gbeyeler@countyofsb.org

<https://www.countyofsb.org/160/Planning-Development>

From: Kathryn Lohmeyer Rohrer <lohrohrer@gmail.com>

Sent: Monday, June 2, 2025 9:35 AM

To: Beyeler, Gwen <gvonklan@countyofsb.org>

Cc: Crabtree, Jason <jcrabtree@countyofsb.org>; Joan Hartmann <jHartmann@countyofsb.org>

Subject: Re: CORRECTION Re: Follow-up Re: Inquiry Re Removal of Special Problems Area designation

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.

Thank you, Gwen.

I'm out of town/state this week, but we can find a time to talk next week. I'd like to schedule something when my husband will also be available.

Thank you, Kathryn
Kathryn Lohmeyer Rohrer
Sent from my iPhone

On Jun 2, 2025, at 10:16 AM, Beyeler, Gwen <gvonklan@countyofsb.org> wrote:

Hi Kathryn,

The County would review revisions to the Special Problems Area Overlay as part of a Long Range Planning effort, which would be initiated by the Board of Supervisors. I'm happy to discuss in further detail with my Deputy Director, Travis Seawards, and do my best to answer questions. Are you available for a phone call today at 11am or 1pm, tomorrow at 10am, 2pm, 4pm, or 5pm, or Wednesday at 11am?

Best,



Gwen Beyeler

Supervising Planner

Development Review Division

Planning & Development Department

County of Santa Barbara

624 W. Foster Rd.

Santa Maria, CA 93455

805-934-6269

gbeyeler@countyofsb.org

<https://www.countyofsb.org/160/Planning-Development>

From: Kathryn Lohmeyer Rohrer <lohrohrer@gmail.com>

Sent: Thursday, May 29, 2025 10:53 PM

To: Beyeler, Gwen <gvonklan@countyofsb.org>

Cc: Crabtree, Jason <jcrabtree@countyofsb.org>; Joan Hartmann <jHartmann@countyofsb.org>

Subject: Re: CORRECTION Re: Follow-up Re: Inquiry Re Removal of Special Problems Area designation

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Thank you, Gwen.

This is informative.

To be clear, I'm not seeking rezoning or elimination of the designation for other parcels.

I am interested in having the designation removed from our (single) parcel based on current groundwater monitoring data and the fact that our 12.5 acre parcel is not constrained or problematic in light of our new, modern treatment system and leach field.

I cannot discern any basis in law or fact for our parcel being burdened with a "special problems area" designation, and I would like to know how to begin the process of asking the Special Problems Committee and Board of Supervisors to remove this burden from our property rights.

Thank you, Kathryn

Kathryn Lohmeyer Rohrer

Sent from my iPhone

On May 29, 2025, at 9:39 AM, Beyeler, Gwen <gvonklan@countyofsb.org> wrote:

Good morning Kathryn,

I will continue to look into this request for you. I will work on getting an answer for you as soon as possible. Some initial things to consider are that changing a zoning overlay requires an application for a Rezone and changing a general plan designation requires an application for a General Plan Amendment. These applications are reviewed for consistency with applicable standards and are referred to the Planning Commission for review and the Board of Supervisors for adoption.

Your motivation to remove the designation from your parcel doesn't matter, but I want to see if there's another less costly and less time-consuming way that I can help 😊 Feel free to give me a call at my office line below when it is convenient for you, and we can discuss.

Best,



Gwen Beyeler

Supervising Planner

Development Review Division

Planning & Development Department

County of Santa Barbara

624 W. Foster Rd.

Santa Maria, CA 93455

805-934-6269

gbeyeler@countyofsb.org

<https://www.countyofsb.org/160/Planning-Development>

From: Kathryn Lohmeyer Rohrer <lohrohrer@gmail.com>

Sent: Thursday, May 29, 2025 9:32 AM

To: Beyeler, Gwen <gvonklan@countyofsb.org>

Cc: Crabtree, Jason <jcrabtree@countyofsb.org>; Joan Hartmann <jHartmann@countyofsb.org>

Subject: CORRECTION Re: Follow-up Re: Inquiry Re Removal of Special Problems Area designation

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.

My apologies for the horrifying typos. That's what I get for using voice-to-text while I drive. (But I kind of like "holy unnecessary" — haha)

Corrected below.

Kathryn Lohmeyer Rohrer

Sent from my iPhone

On May 29, 2025, at 9:25 AM, Kathryn Lohmeyer Rohrer <lohrohrer@gmail.com> wrote:

Thank you, Gwen. I am at work all day today and in meetings most of the day.

Do I need a reason to ask to have the designation removed from our parcel? What I'm asking is: does my motivation matter?

The designation is a burden on our property, and we now have contemporaneous groundwater monitoring data showing that it is not warranted. Why should our parcel, or any similarly situated parcel, be saddled with a designation that lacks a factual and legal basis? It feels like inappropriate and wholly unnecessary government interference with our property rights.

Please let me know how to get this issue in front of the special problems committee and the board of supervisors

Kathryn Lohmeyer Rohrer

Sent from my iPhone

On May 28, 2025, at 11:16 AM, Beyeler, Gwen <gvonklan@countyofsb.org> wrote:

Hi Kathryn,

I have been looking into this. Technically revising the Special Problems Area may be a lengthy, costly process that needs to be adopted by the BOS. I am not certain of this, but I think that is what would need to happen. Since SDRC/SPC is an internal committee, there are no mailings or public agendas.

In practice, when a property is in a Special Problems Area, it is simply flagged for the applicable County departments (in this case, County Environmental Health Services). If your parcel is no longer affected by the applicable issue, then EHS would understand that as part of their review.

I'm interested in talking with you about why you want to remove your parcel from this designation so I can try to help. Can we set up a phone call tomorrow afternoon to talk more? Let me know some times that work for you.



Gwen Beyeler

Supervising Planner

Development Review Division

Planning & Development Department

County of Santa Barbara

624 W. Foster Rd.

Santa Maria, CA 93455

805-934-6269

gbeyeler@countyofsb.org

<https://www.countyofsb.org/160/Planning-Development>

From: Kathryn Lohmeyer Rohrer <lohrohrer@gmail.com>

Sent: Friday, May 23, 2025 9:43 AM

To: Beyeler, Gwen <gvonklan@countyofsb.org>

Cc: Crabtree, Jason <jcrabtree@countyofsb.org>; Joan Hartmann <jHartmann@countyofsb.org>

Subject: Re: Follow-up Re: Inquiry Re Removal of Special Problems Area designation

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Checking in to see if you have been able to locate information.

In the meantime, please include me on mailings of notices and agendas for the Special Problems Committee.

Thank you, Kathryn

Kathryn Lohmeyer Rohrer

Sent from my iPhone

On May 16, 2025, at 12:34 PM, Beyeler, Gwen <gvonklan@countyofsb.org> wrote:

Good afternoon Kathryn,

As noted in my response to you yesterday (see attached), Subdivision Development Review Committee/Special Problems Area Committee are made up of staff representatives who review development applications for compliance with applicable regulations. Since the meetings are not public hearings, there are no notices. I'm happy to send you agendas if you let me know which dates you are interested in! The committees meet on the first and third Wednesdays of the month.

We need to research the process to remove parcels from a Special Problems Area. Special Problems Areas are adopted by Resolution. As you mentioned, the SPA was adopted by resolution by the BOS in the 1970s as shown on the attached resolution. Removal of a parcel from a Special Problems Area is not a request we receive often, and so we need to look into this and coordinate with County Environmental Health Services.

Are you planning to submit an application for new development on your site?

Let us know if you have any other questions in the meantime!

Best,

<image001.png>

Gwen Beyeler

Supervising Planner

Development Review Division

Planning & Development Department

County of Santa Barbara

624 W. Foster Rd.

Santa Maria, CA 93455

805-934-6269

gbeyeler@countyofsb.org

<https://www.countyofsb.org/160/Planning-Development>

From: Kathryn Lohmeyer Rohrer <lohrohrer@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, May 16, 2025 12:30 PM
To: Crabtree, Jason <jcrabtree@countyofsb.org>
Cc: Joan Hartmann <jHartmann@countyofsb.org>; Beyeler, Gwen <gvonklan@countyofsb.org>
Subject: Re: Follow-up Re: Inquiry Re Removal of Special Problems Area designation

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Mr. Crabtree --

My apologies for reaching out to you. I am trying to find a point of contact for the [Special Problems Committee](#).

I have not (yet) received a response from Ms. Beyeler, and it looks like she may have moved into a different role within the Planning Department. I also cannot find the person listed as Chair of the Special Problems Committee, Eric Graham, on the Planning Department pages.

I would greatly appreciate it if you could point me to someone who can provide information about the Special Problems Committee and help address my requests, which include:

1. Where can I find meeting notices and agendas of the Special Problems Committee?
2. Where can I find information about the mechanisms/procedures I need to employ to request that the Special Problems Area designation be removed from our parcel?

Thank you fo your time and guidance. Sincerely, Kathryn

Kathryn Lohmeyer Rohrer

Sent from my iPhone

On Thu, May 15, 2025 at 8:00 AM Kathryn Lohmeyer Rohrer <lohrohrer@gmail.com> wrote:

Ms. Beyeler,

Please reply to let me me know if you received this.

Additionally, I have not been able to determine where on the County website I can find meeting notices and agendas for the Special Problems Committee. Where are those public records stored?

Many thanks, Kathryn

Kathryn Lohmeyer Rohrer

Sent from my iPhone

On May 13, 2025, at 7:53 PM, Kathryn Lohmeyer Rohrer <lohrohrer@gmail.com> wrote:

Dear Ms. Beyeler,

Please forward this letter to the members of the [Special Problems Committee](#). I am also copying Supervisor Joan Hartmann here in case this request falls outside of the Special Problems Committee's jurisdiction.

I write to request information about the mechanisms/procedures for requesting that our home and land ([APN 135-230-002](#)) be **removed** from the "Special Problems Area" ([Building Regs. In SB County Code Chapter 10, Article XV](#);) designation for Los Olivos.

As you can see on **Page 10** of the linked pdf of the [2010 Los Olivos Wastewater Management Plan \(LOWMP\)](#), our parcel is located at the southern- and western-most corner of the Los Olivos Special Problems Area (SPA). As is explained in great detail in the LOWMP, the Los Olivos SPA was created in the 1970s based on an expectation that nitrate levels in the groundwater would continue on an upward trajectory that would result in levels well in excess of the maximum contaminant level (MCL) by 2025.

<image.jpeg>

The Los Olivos Community Services District (LOCSD) installed 5 monitoring wells in their district, and their testing results from 2023 and 2024 consistently show that nitrate levels are well below the MCL at the southernmost end of the District, which are very near where our home is located.

<image.jpeg>

None of the "conditions" identified in the LOWMP as contributing to the "Special Problem" and needing to be addressed in our area apply to our **12.5 acre AG-I zoned parcel**, which has the benefit of using the **entirely new septic system** (tanks and leach field) that we had installed a few years ago.

Moreover, as described above, contemporaneous groundwater monitoring results reflect that the SPA designation is not warranted based on the quality of the groundwater under and near our home and many of the Los Olivos SPA parcels – particularly the parcels that are .5 acres or larger and are situated to the west or the south of the downtown commercial core.

Under the County LAMP and the specific plan for Los Olivos, all of these larger western and southern parcels need to replace their existing septic systems with new systems when their current systems fail. Our family has personal knowledge of two nearby parcels that recently installed and have had great success with **advanced onsite** systems in recent years.

In light of current scientific data reflecting that our parcel is not contributing to groundwater contamination in the Los Olivos area, we respectfully request your assistance in the process of removing the SPA designation from our land.

With sincere thanks,

Kathryn Lohmeyer Rohrer

2411 [Alamo Pintado Road / 2411 Santa Barbara Avenue, Los Olivos, CA](#)

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 142, Los Olivos, CA 93441

Phone: 562.673.6444

Email: lohrohrer@gmail.com

<05.13.2025 request to Special Problems Committee and Supv Hartmann.pdf>

<IMG_1822.jpg>

<LOCSD MW results.jpg>

<from 2024-12-11 LOCSD Packet Groundwater Well Data.jpg>

--

Kathryn Lohmeyer Rohrer

<mime-attachment>



Kathryn Lohmeyer Rohrer <lohrohrer@gmail.com>

RE: Special Problems Area Info

1 message

Beyeler, Gwen <gvonkian@countyofsb.org>
To: Kathryn Lohmeyer Rohrer <lohrohrer@gmail.com>

Mon, Jul 7, 2025 at 8:06 AM

Hi Kathryn,

I've continued to look into this and contacted other departments. So far, I have not found anything more than what I've sent you previously. I'll keep you posted if I hear anything else.

Let me know if you have any questions based on this information.

Best,



Gwen Beyeler

Supervising Planner

Development Review Division

Planning & Development Department

County of Santa Barbara

624 W. Foster Rd.

[Santa Maria, CA 93455](#)

805-934-6269

gbeyeler@countyofsb.org

<https://www.countyofsb.org/160/Planning-Development>

From: Kathryn Lohmeyer Rohrer <lohrohrer@gmail.com>

Sent: Monday, June 16, 2025 4:38 PM

To: Beyeler, Gwen <gvonkian@countyofsb.org>

Subject: Re: Special Problems Area Info

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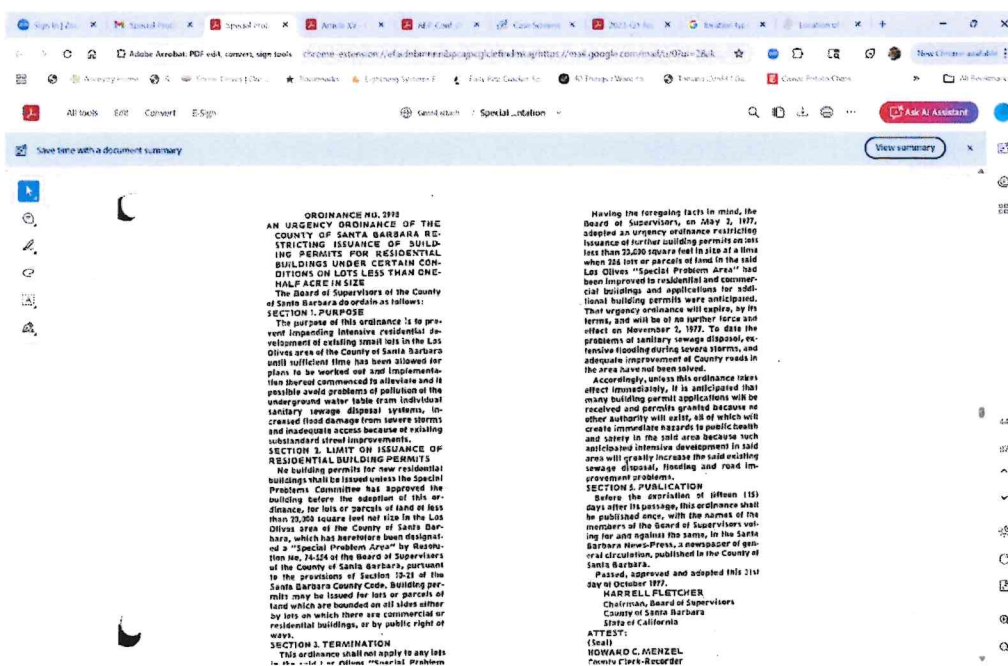
Gwen,

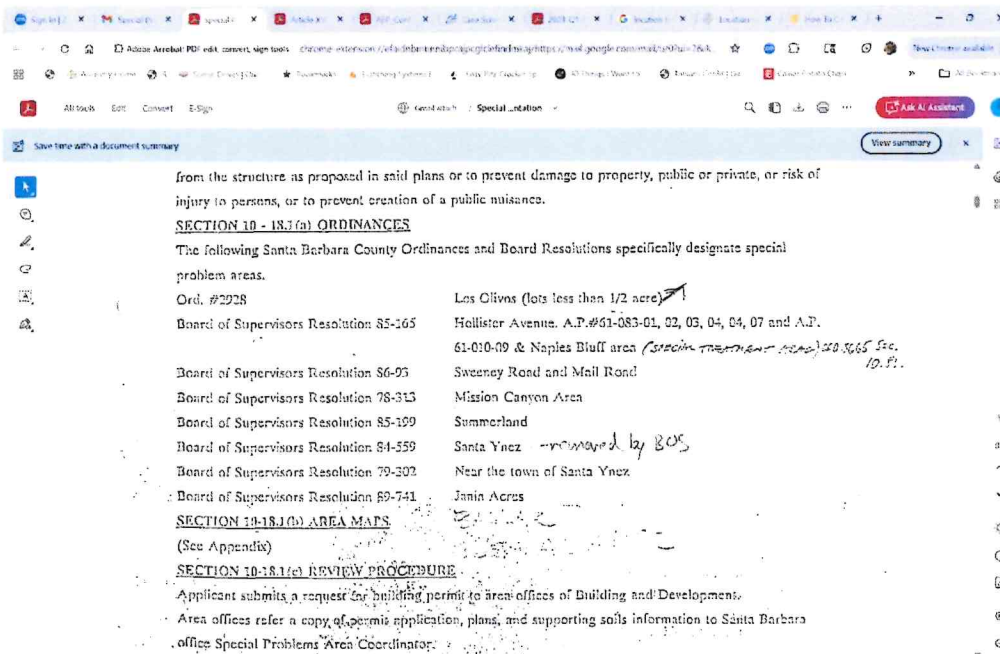
Thank you for this follow-up and for your continuing efforts. I am aware of Article XV, Ch. 10, provisions re Special Problems Areas, but the attached "Special Problems Area Booklet" is something I've never seen before.

I was/am particularly interested in Ordinance No. 2998 (on page 44 of the Handbook pdf), which is new information to me. I will work on finding out more about that.

I sincerely appreciate your time and your efforts to help us locate information about how the initial decision was made to create the Los Olivos Special Problems Area and any subsequent law, rules, or other decisions related to this specific area.

Sincerely, Kathryn





On Mon, Jun 16, 2025 at 3:55 PM Beyeler, Gwen <gvonkian@countyofsb.org> wrote:

Hi Kathryn,

Here is some additional documentation related to the formation of Special Problems Areas. We are working on getting more details on the Los Olivos Special Problems Area from County Environmental Health Services and Flood Control and will get back to you soon!

Best,



Gwen Beyeler

Supervising Planner

Development Review Division

Planning & Development Department

County of Santa Barbara

624 W. Foster Rd.

[Santa Maria, CA 93455](https://www.countyofsb.org)

805-934-6269

gbeyeler@countyofsb.org

<https://www.countyofsb.org/160/Planning-Development>

--

Kathryn Lohmeyer Rohrer

Katherine Douglas

From: Jana Zimmer <zimmerccc@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, May 3, 2026 3:15 PM
To: Mona Miyasato; sbcob; Laura Capps; Joan Hartmann; Steve Lavagnino; roy.lee@countyofsb.org; Bob Nelson; Solomon Richard; Garrett Huff
Subject: Fwd: 5/3/2026 Photos of County Fire Truck station 15 accessing all portions of las Encinas lane

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 INTEND TO PRESENT THESE PHOTOS IN PUBLIC COMMENT AND/OR COMMENT ON THE FIRE ORDINANCE ON TUESDAY. PLEASE ADVISE HOW I CAN TRANSMIT THEM SO THEY ARE SHOWN IN THE HEARING ROOM, OR WHETHER THESE ATTACHMENTS ARE ADEQUATE.

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Jana Zimmer <zimmerccc@gmail.com>
Date: Sun, May 3, 2026 at 2:55 PM
Subject: 5/3/2026 Photos of County Fire Truck station 15 accessing all portions of las Encinas lane
To: Jana Zimmer <zimmerccc@gmail.com>

These photos were taken on May 3, 2026, of your County Fire Station 15 truck (station 15 being located 5 minutes from my house) leaving Las Encinas lane after proceeding all the way down the lane, executing a "hammerhead" turn at Hill, -2646), just as our evidence proved they could- 3 YEARS AGO (Exhibit 113, 6.28.2023), and leaving the way they came. There are zero obstructions.

They responded very kindly to a neighbors call, whose cat had climbed up into an oak on my property. The cat is still there, but, luckily, I obtained this additional evidence **that your Fire Marshal and your Planning Director's claims that there is a fire equipment access issue on my lane are and have been false. As in, False.** You will note that I have just filed an additional tort claim based on their intentional, arbitrary failure and refusal to process my SB 9 application until I widen the lane further. The only question remaining in my mind is whether this "position" by County Counsel was taken at the direction of the Board at the outset of this dispute, (i.e. in deference to Das Williams) or the Board has allowed County Counsel to make policy, or your Executives are covering up their own mistakes.

This additional evidence will be presented to the court at our Case Management conference on May 18.



[IMG_1589.jpg](#)



[IMG_1588.jpg](#)



IMG_1587.jpg



IMG_1586.jpg



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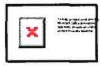


IMG_1566.jpg

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Jana Zimmer

(805)705-3784



Virus-free www.avg.com







