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Katherine Douglas *Public Comment*

From: Scott Augat <scott@cuyamabuckhorn.com>
Sent: Wednesday, October 4, 2023 2:54 PM
To: sbcob
Subject: Concerns Regarding Proposed Reservoirs in Cuyama Basin

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Dear Board of Supervisors,

I hope this email finds you well. My name is Scott Augat, and I serve as the General Manager of Cuyama Buckhorn, a boutique hotel located in New Cuyama, California's high desert within Santa Barbara County.

I am writing to you today to express my deep concerns regarding the proposed reservoirs in the Cuyama Basin and their potential impact on our community. The western end of the Cuyama Basin has a rich history as rangeland with very minimal irrigation. However, in recent years, we have observed a concerning decrease in the water table in the vicinity of our town, a trend exacerbated by just seven years of irrigation. This phenomenon raises significant questions about the sustainability of the proposed reservoirs and their potential long-term consequences for our region. One of the most pressing concerns is the source of water for these reservoirs, which is groundwater. Filling these reservoirs with groundwater would undoubtedly affect everyone downstream, further straining an already fragile ecosystem and putting the livelihoods of many at risk, including our local agricultural community.

Speaking of agriculture, Cuyama is home to numerous ranches and farms that play a crucial role in our local economy. The construction and operation of these reservoirs would undoubtedly have a detrimental impact on the agriculture that currently thrives on the western end of the Cuyama Basin. Furthermore, it's important to note the scale of these proposed reservoirs. They are significantly larger than any reservoirs currently present in Santa Barbara County, which only amplifies the potential environmental and economic consequences.

In light of these concerns, I would like to express my full support for the Planning Commission's decision to deny the permit for these reservoirs. It is my belief that this decision is in the best interest of our community and the preservation of our natural resources. Thank you for your attention to this critical matter. I urge you to consider the long-term impacts of this project on Cuyama and its residents and continue to prioritize the sustainability and well-being of our region.

Thank you.

Regards,

Scott Augat

General Manager
Cuyama Buckhorn
805.858.8513
scott@cuyamabuckhorn.com