

# SANTA BARBARA COUNTY BOARD AGENDA LETTER



Clerk of the Board of Supervisors  
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**Agenda Number:**  
**Prepared on:** 5/20/04  
**Department Name:** Agricultural Commissioner  
Planning & Development  
**Department No.:** 053  
**Agenda Date:** 6/1/03  
**Placement:** Administrative  
**Estimate Time:** 5 minutes  
**Continued Item:** NO

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Conservation Program\Oak Resolution SR.doc

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**TO:** Board of Supervisors

**FROM:** Bill Gillette, Agricultural Commissioner  
Val Alexeeff, Director, Planning and Development

**STAFF CONTACT:** Bill Gillette, 681-5600  
Alex Tuttle, Planner, 884-6844

**SUBJECT:** Oak Woodlands Conservation Resolution

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## **Recommendation(s):**

That the Board of Supervisors:

Adopt the Santa Barbara County Oak Woodlands Conservation Resolution and direct Planning and Development to submit the resolution to the California Wildlife Conservation Board.

## **Alignment with Board Strategic Plan:**

The recommendation is primarily aligned with Goal No. 4, A Community that is Economically Vital and Sustainable, and Goal No. 5, A High Quality of Life for All Residents.

## **Executive Summary and Discussion:**

The California Oak Woodlands Conservation Act of 2001 established the Oak Woodlands Conservation Program, to be administered by the Wildlife Conservation Board, and appropriated \$10 million for the long term voluntary protection and restoration of oak woodlands throughout California. The Act dictates that at least 80% of the funds shall be used for the purchase of conservation easements, grants for land improvements or cost-sharing incentives, and up to 20% of the funds may be used for public education, outreach, and technical assistance. In order to qualify for the funds, the Act requires that local jurisdictions adopt an Oak Woodlands Management Plan in the form of a resolution.

In April of 2003, the Board of Supervisors adopted the Oak Tree Protection and Regeneration Program, which provides both regulatory and voluntary protections for oak trees in the inland rural areas of Santa Barbara County. The Oak Tree Protection and Regeneration Program above does not

satisfy the requirements of the Oak Woodlands Conservation Act due to its regulatory components. However, aspects of the Program, primarily language within the Oak Tree supplement to the Conservation Element and encouragement of voluntary efforts to protect and restore oak trees and oak habitats, do satisfy the requirements of the management plan, but the County must adopt a resolution with certain minimum elements in order to fulfill the requirements set forth in the Act. Only after the County has adopted this resolution can private landowners, local government entities, and non-governmental organizations within the County submit grant proposals to the Wildlife Conservation Board. The resolution has been reviewed by members of the agricultural community throughout the County. The Agricultural Advisory Committee reviewed the resolution at their meeting on April 21, 2004 and voted 9-0 to recommend adoption by the Board of Supervisors.

The Oak Woodlands Conservation Program is strictly voluntary and adoption of this resolution will enable those parties who desire to seek funding assistance for protection and restoration of oak woodland resources to participate. This resolution will have no bearing on landowners or other entities who do not wish to participate in the program.

**Mandates and Service Levels:**

The Oak Woodlands Conservation Resolution is not mandated by state law or county ordinance. However, the resolution is consistent with the California Oak Woodlands Conservation Act of 2001 that encourages local governments to adopt resolutions and management plans in support of voluntary protection of native oak trees and woodlands. Adoption of the resolution and certification of private grant proposals by the Agricultural Commissioner's Office for consistency with the resolution would not impact service levels.

**Fiscal and Facilities Impacts:**

Adoption of the resolution will not require the augmentation of the Agricultural Commissioner's or Planning and Development's budgets with additional funds. Once the resolution is in place, the County's responsibility will be to certify grant applications for consistency with the resolution prior to submittal to the Wildlife Conservation Board. The certification of all grant proposals, as required by the Act, will be done by the Agricultural Commissioner's Office and is expected to be accommodated within existing staff workloads and budget allocations and no reduction in staff time dedicated to current and future work programs is anticipated. The work effort associated with this voluntary program is expected to be minimal and therefore no fiscal or facility impacts are anticipated.

**Concurrence:**

N/A

**Attachment:**

A. Santa Barbara County Oak Woodlands Conservation Resolution