

Agricultural Advisory # 1



Katherine Douglas *Public Comment - Committee*

From: Mel Graham
Sent: Friday, October 6, 2023 9:02 AM
To: sbcob
Subject: Fwd: Scan-AAC Signed Letter to the BOS, RE North Fork Ranch Frost Ponds Project, 10-4-23_0001.pdf
Attachments: Scan-AAC Signed Letter to the BOS, RE North Fork Ranch Frost Ponds Project, 10-4-23_0001.pdf

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From: Mel Graham <mgraham@countyofsb.org>
Sent: Friday, October 6, 2023 7:24 AM
To: Jacquelyne Alexander <jralexander@countyofsb.org>
Subject: FW: Scan-AAC Signed Letter to the BOS, RE North Fork Ranch Frost Ponds Project, 10-4-23_0001.pdf

Jacquelyne-

Please see attached a letter from the Ag Advisory Committee to the Board of Supervisors and please let me know if you have any questions. Tashina sent it to sbcbcc@countyofsb.org yesterday, but I wanted to make sure you received it directly too.

Thank you,



Mel Graham
Agricultural Integrated Pest Management Specialist
Agricultural Commissioner's Office
624 West Foster Road, Santa Maria, CA 93455
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From: Tashina Sanders <tsanders@countyofsb.org>
Sent: Thursday, October 5, 2023 11:22 AM
To: sbc sbcbcc <sbcbcc@countyofsb.org>
Cc: Mel Graham <mgraham@countyofsb.org>; Caird, Brian <BCaird@porlamarnursery.com>; Caird, Ron <rcaird@porlamarnursery.com>; Carrie Jordan <carrie@babefarms.com>; Contreras, Noe <noecs@aol.com>; Crittenden, Arna <kaiserpeak@yahoo.com>; Douglas, Cindy <ckdougl@yaho.com>; Ellis, Kaylee <kaylee@grower-shipper.com>; Ferini, Brett <Brettf@lagunafarms.com>; Giorgi, Bill <billgiorgi@gmail.com>; Greene, Philip <philip.a.greene@gmail.com>; Henry Van Wingerden <vanwingerden1@cox.net>; Jane Gray (jgray@dudek.com) <jgray@dudek.com>; Jose Chang <jchang@countyofsb.org>; Litten, Lacy <lacy@factsfromfarmers.com>; Merritt, Sharyne <organicavocadogrower@gmail.com>; Miles, Bradley <coletero71@gmail.com>; Sharer, Randy <oldbeanfarmer@yahoo.com>; Shurtleff, Denise <denise.shurtleff@cambriawines.com>; Stollberg, Jim <jim@maverickfarming.com>; Thomas, Tyler <tyler@dierbergvineyard.com>; Van Leer, Paul <paulnlvranch@earthlink.net>; Van Wingerden, June <jbwingerden@hotmail.com>; Williams, Brook

<duvarita@gmail.com>; Wineman, Claire <claire.wineman@grower-shipper.com>; Zimmermann, Mark <markzimm2018@gmail.com>

Subject: FW: Emailing: Scan-AAC Signed Letter to the BOS, RE North Fork Ranch Frost Ponds Project, 10-4-23_0001.pdf


Please see the attached letter regarding North Fork Ranch Frost Pond Project.

Regards,



Tashina Sanders

Agricultural Biologist/ Weights & Measures Inspector
Agricultural Commissioner's Office / Weights & Measures
185 West HWY 246, Suite 101, Buellton, CA 93427

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COUNTY OF SANTA BARBARA
AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

October 4th

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

Re: North Fork Ranch Frost Ponds Project

Dear Chair Williams and Board of Supervisors:

The Agricultural Advisory Committee (AAC) discussed the referenced project at our regularly scheduled meetings on August 10 and September 14, 2023. After extensive discussion, the AAC voted unanimously to submit the following comments to you regarding several important agricultural issues:

Harmful Precedent in Determination Process

The AAC is concerned that the Planning Commission found for denial, despite the fact that the Zoning Administrator approved the project with the CEQA Mitigated Negative Declaration, including a determination that with mitigation, the project's water use impacts would be reduced to a less than significant level.

Furthermore, Planning and Development Staff recommended approval and found the project to be consistent with County development standards and requirements.

The AAC believes that the finding process did not follow established standards and that the determination by the County Planning Commission was in error. It is of utmost importance to agriculturalists that decision makers follow established standards in making their determinations, so that the large investments that are required to conduct business can be made with confidence as to how various issues will be addressed. Therefore, our concern is not just with the conclusion drawn, but also with the process used to reach that conclusion.

Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) and Water Rights issues

The AAC is concerned with the County using land use authority to make water rights and use determinations in lieu of the local Groundwater Sustainability Agency (GSA) and Water District. The Groundwater Basin status and associated water rights are SGMA issues that should be referred to the local GSA and Water District.

In summary, the AAC is concerned with what it believes are procedural problems evident in how this decision was made, and ultimate findings by the Planning Commission that may set a harmful precedent and could negatively affect agricultural producers and landowners in the future.

Sincerely,

Paul Van Leer, Chair

Committee Members

Bradley Miles
Ron Caird
Sharyne Merritt
Jim Stollberg

Lacy Litten
Claire Wineman
Paul Van Leer, Chair
June Van Wingerden
Tyler Thomas, Vice Chair
Bill Giorgi, *Alternate*
Chrissy Allen

Representing

1st District Supervisor, Das Williams
2nd District Supervisor, Laura Capps
3rd District Supervisor, Joan Hartmann
4th District Supervisor, Bob Nelson
5th District Supervisor, Steve Lavagnino
California Women for Agriculture
Grower-Shipper Association of SB and SLO Counties
Santa Barbara County Farm Bureau
Santa Barbara Flower & Nursery Growers' Association
Santa Barbara Vintners
Santa Barbara County Cattlemen's Assn.
California Strawberry Commission