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Katherine Douglas *Public Comment - WE Watch*

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**From:** Nancy Emerson <nancyfemerson52@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Saturday, December 7, 2024 7:23 AM  
**To:** sbcob  
**Subject:** AEO Letter for Board  
**Attachments:** WEWAEObdSupLetterFinal12624.docx

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I thought I had sent this Friday morning about 11 a.m. but found it in my drafts this morning. My apologies. Please include the attached letter from WE Watch in your Public Comment section, I will send this to the Supervisors personally. Thank you. Nancy Emerson

P.S. I am registered to speak at Tuesday meeting.

*WE Watch, P.O Box 830, Solvang CA 93464*

December 6, 2024

TO: Board of Supervisors  
FROM: WE Watch  
RE: Agricultural Enterprise Ordinance



WE Watch recognizes that, importantly, the Agricultural Enterprise Ordinance offers new ways to stabilize agricultural income. But there is unfinished business. **Unless further efforts are made to protect the neighbors living on smaller AG-1 properties next to the AG-II zones in our Valley and elsewhere, ag's gain will surely be their loss.** We know there will be less daytime peace and quiet for the neighbors due to the 6 agritourism uses. Campgrounds and Farmstays can cause problems every day of the year. We urge you to ensure less noise impact during the day and peace and quiet at night by enacting our first two recommendations.

**A. We support the following changes to reduce noise impact from Small Scale Events, Educational Experiences, Campgrounds and Farmstays:**

**1.500 foot setbacks from the exterior boundary of the agricultural premises with 1,000 foot setbacks if amplified sound is used, where residences are on the adjoining properties.** This needs to apply, not only to residential zones, but also to AG-1-5, AG-1-10 and AG-1-20 zones.

Our SYV residential zones are only in cities and townships. Few AG-II-40 and 100 zones adjoin these locations. But we have AG-II-40 and AG-II-100 zones scattered among our primarily residential smaller AG-1 zones in the Inner Rural Area and smaller AG-1 needs protection. See Notes for further explanation.

**2.9 p.m. Ending Times or Quiet Hours for all above uses, not just Campgrounds.** This will assure that guests attending events and educational activities + those in charge will have left before 10 p.m. Farmstays, including any remote locations, will be quiet, too. Most wineries in our county close earlier than 9 p.m. (7 or 8 p.m.). Staff may have information about other CA counties hours regulations.

**3. Give one last look at the total number of campers possible on camp sites.** No one may ever have 8 people on a campsite. But if they do, potentially on AG-II-40 sites there can be 120 guests/night and on AG-II-100,

160 guests/night. That can be 1 campground or a combination of low impact and regular camping.

**B. Enforcement and evaluation** are part of the unfinished business. The Small scale Events and Educational Activities with the Incidental Food Service can be exempt from permitting. If Exempt, there needs to be some recording mechanism that will enable them to be included in evaluation. The ordinance needs to at least note that evaluation will be done to determine how well the ordinance is meeting its goals, perhaps after 3 years. In the meantime, enforcement will be important.

1. We recommend adding the **Revocation text** already in the Campground and Farmstay sections of the agritourism/rural recreations uses - Small Events, Educational Experiences, Incidental Food Service (2). This is a powerful “enforcement tool” that can motivate adherence to the AEO regulations.

2. We recommend **registration** for Exempt agritourism/non-agriculture uses.

3. We support any other **enforcement tools** you ask staff to add.

**C. We recommend cleaning up problems with language** that can lead to misunderstanding, abuse or problems during litigation::

1. Ask staff to clarify language describing **how many owner or guest provided accommodations can be on each campground site and what counts as 2 vehicles.**

2. We recognize how hard it is to define **Primary Commercial Agricultural Use** while it is the **secondary agritourism, non-agricultural uses** that threaten to overwhelm the primary agricultural uses and the Supplementary Agricultural Uses in the AEO. Realtors are already advertising and selling AG-II sites to hospitality companies. Please ask staff to keep working on determining accurately and fairly how to define and measure the primary and secondary uses. The ordinance requires that agriculture be the primary use.

Our goal is to help make this as fair and useful an ordinance as possible. We thank the staff, the Planning Commission and you for bringing such a complex ordinance to fruition. We want to particularly thank Julie Harris for her above and beyond efforts to answer our questions.

## **Notes**

**Zoning Situation in Santa Ynez Valley.**

**Our smaller AG-1 zones (5, 10 and 20 acres), as well as residential zones, need as much protection as possible.**

*As you read, please remember we are talking about “zones,” which can contain parcels with multiple owners.*

1. AEO's EIR stated that potentially the SYV could see 75% of AEO activity.
2. SYV has 2/3 of the 1,600 AG 1 parcels in the County, almost all inside the SYV Community Plan Area (Inner Rural Area), which is 72 square miles.  
Scattered through it are some AG-II-40 and AG-II-100 zones with most of them surrounded by the predominant AG-1 zones and/or by other AG-II-40 or 100 zones.
3. Residential zoning only exists in the 2 cities and 3 townships in the SYV.
4. Four AG II zones adjoin only 3 of these areas and only on 1 or 2 sides.
5. There are 8 EDRNs (Existing Developed Rural Neighborhood (zoned AG-1-5 through AG-1-20). All are adjoined by AG-II-100 and 4 by AG-II-40, on 1 or more sides.
6. In addition, 6 AG II-40 zones are adjoined by AG-I-5, 10 or 20 zones, 3 on 3 sides and 3 on 1 side.
7. Three, AG-II-100 zones are adjoined by the smaller AG-I zones. **Buttonwood, now owned by a hospitality company, is surrounded on all 4 sides, the others - 2 sides and 1 side.**