

Ramirez, Angelica

From: Villalobos, David
Sent: Friday, January 24, 2020 1:33 PM
To: sbcob
Cc: Pfeifer, Kathy
Subject: FW: Sierra Club Los Padres Chapter Support for Strauss Wind Project
Attachments: Sierra Club Los Padres Chapter to BOS re Strauss Wind.pdf

From: Jonathan Ullman <jonathan.ullman@sierraclub.org>
Sent: Friday, January 24, 2020 12:27 PM
To: Villalobos, David <dvillalo@co.santa-barbara.ca.us>; Williams, Das <DWilliams@countyofsb.org>; Hartmann, Joan <jHartmann@countyofsb.org>; Adam, Peter <peter.adam@countyofsb.org>; Lavagnino, Steve <steve.lavagnino@countyofsb.org>; Briggs, Errin <eriggs@co.santa-barbara.ca.us>; Zorovich, John <Jzoro@co.santa-barbara.ca.us>; McShirley, Kadie <kmcshirley@countyofsb.org>; Fischer, Gina <gFischer@countyofsb.org>; Bertrand, Ethan <eBertrand@countyofsb.org>; Kruzel, Ashley BOS D2 <Ashley.Kruzel@countyofsb.org>
Subject: Sierra Club Los Padres Chapter Support for Strauss Wind Project

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Dear Santa Barbara County Supervisors and staff:

Please accept the attached letter from the Sierra Club Los Padres Chapter in support of the Strauss Wind Project.

Regards,

Jonathan Ullman
Director
Sierra Club Los Padres Chapter
Santa Barbara and Ventura Counties, California

P O Box 31241
Santa Barbara, CA 93130-1241
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LOS PADRES CHAPTER

PO Box 31241
Santa Barbara CA
93130-1241

January 23, 2020

Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors
123 E. Anapamu Street
Santa Barbara, CA 93101
Via email: sbcob@co.santa-barbara.ca.us

Re: **Strauss Wind Energy Project (Modified Project Layout) - SUPPORT**

Dear Honorable Supervisors,

As the oldest environmental organization in California, the Sierra Club is deeply committed to conservation. Our local chapter has been protecting the Gaviota Coast, our oak woodlands and our region's unique ecosystems for more than sixty years. We lead hundreds of free hikes every year and engage in environmental and climate advocacy and education every day. Despite the identified impacts, on balance, we see this project as the best way to advance conservation goals. **We support staff's recommendation of denying the appeals and approving the environmentally superior modified project as unanimously approved by the Planning Commission.**

- Oak removal is a serious concern, which is why we supported the "environmentally superior alternative" which greatly decreased the number of oak tree removals. Unlike oil, which is a highly globalized product, electric energy is used locally. The energy produced here will be used here and along PG&E's transmission lines. We have limited options for producing that power and none without impacts. This is the only serious wind proposed in our county in the past decade. Northern Santa Barbara County, located at one end of PG&E's grid, needs some forms of utility power generation as we begin a transition to meet California's 100% renewable energy goal.
- We appreciate the EIR's detailed look at risk to birds and comprehensive mitigations, including BIO-15a which requires surveys so that they site each turbine away from nests, water sources and bird-attracting habitat. The modified plan also reduces turbines in areas where raptors were observed, and "active control technology" would shut down turbines if large birds are detected on site per BIO-15b. There is no evidence that additional measures, such as more smaller turbines or different placement would be any better.
- We also understand the impacts to plants like the Gaviota tarplant. We live in a unique and biodiverse region. On the plus side, this project will enable conservation measures and studies that wouldn't otherwise be possible.
- Big picture, climate change poses the biggest threat to birds and other species. Golden eagles, for instance, are losing breeding range due to climate change, and their migration patterns are out of sync with when food is available to feed their young. **The risk to our ecosystems and birds like these is not that**

Chair

Katie Davis

Vice-Chair

Jim Hines

Secretary

Gerry Ching

Treasurer

Richard Hunt

At Large

Michael Stubblefield

At Large

David Gold

At Large

Alex Pujo

Arguello Group Rep

Rebecca August

SB Group Rep

Martha Sadler

Conejo Group Rep

Hugh Warren

Ventura Network Rep

Elizabeth Lamar

we will build wind turbines, but that we will not build enough wind turbines fast enough to save them.

- We should also keep in mind that people, including our friends and neighbors, are demonstrably suffering due to climate change already. The fires and mudslides here were made more deadly and damaging due to climate change. People have died. People have lost everything they own. People are traumatized and struggling to put their lives back together. (The three most expensive wildfires in world history have happened in the last two years in California.) In addition, people are suffering from the pollution associated with our current still mostly fossil-fuel energy supply. The only thing that has changed in the last decade since the original Lompoc Wind Project was approved, is the urgency of action on climate change. Scientific report after report explains that failure to rapidly transition away from fossil fuel energy will bring profound societal and ecosystem crisis – in our lifetimes and for generations as far into the future as we can imagine. **This is the challenge of our time. Your decisions will help determine whether we do our part in meeting it or not.**

We disagree with the impacts related to “visibility” of the turbines. We look forward to one day viewing the wind turbines as a positive symbol of our clean energy future and a beacon of hope for a more sustainable world.

We urge you to approve the Strauss Wind project.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Jonathan Ullman". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Jonathan Ullman
Chapter Director
Sierra Club, Los Padres Chapter