

Katherine Douglas *Public Comment - Caliente Ranch Cuyama, LLC*

From: Jane Wooster <jane@woosterranch.com>
Sent: Tuesday, April 23, 2024 12:44 PM
To: sbcob
Cc: Ann Myhre
Subject: Caliente Ranch Cuyama, LLC Written Comment on Adoption of the 2023-2031 Housing Element Update Rezone Amendments
Attachments: Comments of Rezoning Perkins Road Lot.pdf

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Clerk of the Board of Supervisors
105 E. Anapamu Street, Suite 407
Santa Barbara, CA 93101

To: Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors
From: Caliente Ranch Cuyama, LLC
Contact Information – Jane Wooster, Ann Myhre, Managers
(831) 809-4568
Subject: 2023-2031 Housing Element

Recommended Action: Caliente Ranch Cuyama, LLC, recommends that the Board of Supervisors omit the New Cuyama site from inclusion in the Adoption of the 2023-2031 Housing Element Update Rezone Amendments.

Summary: We acknowledge that the lack of housing, and the lack of low income housing in particular, is a problem in the County. We also acknowledge that the State of California has put all counties in the position of trying to solve this problem without helping them find solutions. We also are able to see that the County is trying solve this problem without appropriate regard for the additional problems they are creating for existing residents of the County.

Our organic pastures border the town of New Cuyama on the west side of Perkins Road. These pastures are much the same as they were when our family came to the valley over eighty-five years ago. The County has acknowledged the importance of keeping these fields in agricultural production by entering into a Williamson Act Contract with us in an attempt to keep these fields in continuing agricultural production. We are very concerned that adding high density housing less than 300 feet from our fields will cause multiple problems in our ranching operation.

We run an organic ranch and we feel the development of this site has the potential to force water drainage into our fields, contaminating our organic operation. We are concerned that the storm runoff from additional hard surfaces will potentially reach our fields carrying water containing high bacterial levels, herbicides, pesticides, motor oil and greases, and that this will impact our organic pasture ground. Before you approve a zoning change in New Cuyama, we urge you to look at the existing drainage system in the town of New Cuyama.

Additionally, we are concerned that with a densely populated housing development next to us, we will have serious problems with dogs chasing our cattle. We use this pasture to calve out our heifers, and any dogs in the field will be a problem as the heifers need a quiet and safe environment.

In addition to this, the Cuyama Groundwater Basin has been classified as a critically over drafted basin by the State Board of Water Resources. Its water resources are deteriorating due to over pumping in the Central Management Area, which partially surrounds the town of New Cuyama. That in and of itself would indicate that adding another 39 or so housing units to the town water supply, or in fact adding ANY, new units to the town water supply is unreasonable.

We have been in the Valley since the late 1930's. We border the town of Cuyama. We have a very clear knowledge of the history of the town and how it was built. It was a planned community that "went up" virtually within a period of months. All of the houses, all of the churches, the store, post office, laundromat, park, air strip, medical facilities, restaurant, and recreation center were built at the same time. The water and sewage systems were state of the art at the time and were designed specifically for the size of that development. That was almost seventy-five years ago. The water

system and the sewage system have been minimally upgraded since that time. They were designed to accommodate a town of single-family homes. No change in zoning that results in growth should be allowed without a plan for accommodating that growth. Doing otherwise is simply bad planning that will result in further problems down the road.

We would also like to point out that there is at least one property in the valley that is already zoned into small lots that perhaps could meet the needs of the program if the County addressed the water, sewage and drainage problems, but even though it is apparently for sale, it seems to have been overlooked when developing this zoning plan.

Please consider removing the Perkins Road parcel from your Housing Element Update Rezone Amendment.

Jane Wooster, Manager
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4/23/2024