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November 26, 2013

Via Email and Hand Delivery

Board of Supervisors
County of Santa Barbara
123 E. Anapamu Street
Santa Barbara, CA 93101

GAVIOTA COAST PLAN
DECEMBER 3 HEARING
OBJECTION TO PUBLIC ACCESS TRAIL AT RANCHO DEL CIELO

Dear Chair Carbajal and Members of the Board,

The purpose of this letter is to object to any effort to locate a public trail on or immediately adjacent to Rancho del Cielo which is a unique resource in Santa Barbara County.

Rancho del Cielo, also referred to as the Reagan Ranch, is owned for perpetual safekeeping by Young America's Foundation, a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization. A portion of the Ranch is located near the crest of Refugio Road and is partially located inside the Gaviota Coast planning boundary and partially outside the boundary.

Rancho del Cielo served as the west coast retreat for President Reagan during his services as California State Governor in the 1970s and as President of the United States during the 1980s. The ranch came to be known as "the Western White House". President Reagan hosted such world luminaries as Queen Elizabeth and Soviet Premier Mikhail Gorbachev here.

The Washington Post called it the "place to see the hand of the man" and "a true national treasure."

Young America's Foundation purchased the property from the Reagan Family with the specific intent of preserving its character as a museum for insight by future generations into the humble surroundings which energized the 40th President of the United States.

Conservation and protection of the Ranch are paramount. The structures and improvements have been preserved in the condition they existed when President and Mrs. Reagan owned and occupied the property. These assets form an invaluable and irreplaceable window into President Reagan, much like Mount Vernon forms an insight into President George Washington or Monticello into President Thomas Jefferson.

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Steven Hayward, author of *The Age of Reagan*, put it this way: “The millions of Americans who visit Mount Vernon and Monticello often aren’t aware that they are privately owned and privately maintained. In fact, in the 19th century these properties were in such disrepair that we’re lucky to have them at all. They had to be restored at very great expense. The Reagan Ranch, by contrast, is being preserved in exactly the condition it was in the last day Ronald Reagan walked out the front door, right down to the magazines in the magazine racks, the books on the shelves, the tools in the tool shed, and the saddles in the tack room—and so you really see an authentic picture of Reagan as he was and not a recreation.”

Young America’s Foundation is committed to protecting the 688 acre Ranch and the irreplaceable artifacts contained within it.

We firmly believe any proposed public trail access through the Ranch poses serious threats - vandalism, theft and fire damage chief among them. *Given the scope and remoteness of the property, and the irreplaceable nature of the structures and artifacts, we believe these threats cannot be sufficiently mitigated to justify public trail access through, adjacent or near the Ranch, and vigorously oppose such a proposal.*

Members of the public who might be on a public trail or near the site would undoubtedly be tempted to climb fences, open gates, mill about and alter or damage the property in an effort to satisfy their curiosity about the Reagans and their ranch. “Souvenir hunting”, trespass, and vandalism are constant concerns and problems at other facilities with public access. Careless smokers or even overnight hikers stopping to rest and using a campfire could cause irreplaceable damage.

Young America’s Foundation takes its preservation goals seriously and asks that you do the same. New public access trails, either on the Ranch (as currently shown on proposed PRT map Figure 4-2, copy attached) or within easy access to the Ranch, are not consistent with the mission of preserving the Ranch. We ask that you borrow a preservation technique from local archaeologists and help us preserve the Ranch by limiting public knowledge of its exact location and by directing people away from, rather than toward, the site.

We understand the goal of placing an east-west trail uphill of the coastal trail between Gaviota and Refugio Road. We believe this goal should be recognized in the same manner that the goal of placing an uphill trail between the Hollister Ranch western boundary and the Gaviota Plan western boundary (see Initiation Draft page 4-10, copy attached), namely, “... Recognizing the unique value of the area, the County shall work with willing landowners and other agencies to explore options for future trails”.

To help us preserve Rancho del Cielo, we ask that you:

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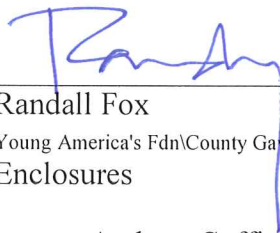
(1) remove from the PRT Map – East Panel, Figure 4-2, placement of an uphill Camino Cielo trail between Refugio Road west to the Baron Ranch trail, and

(2) change the proposed text at page 4-10, to remove items 2 and 3 related to the relevant area of the PRT Map – East Panel, Figure 4-2, and instead include text identical to the language proposed for the uphill area from Hollister Ranch to the Gaviota Coast Plan's western boundary, namely, "Recognizing the unique value of the area, the County shall work with willing landowners and other agencies to explore options for future trails".

Thank you for considering this matter. Your decision will have a substantial impact on this unique and important resource.

Sincerely,

REETZ, FOX & BARTLETT LLP



Randall Fox

Young America's Fdn\County Gaviota Plan\BOS Ltr 13.11.26.doc

Enclosures

cc: Andrew Coffin, Young America's Foundation

alignment narrative. The existing adopted Parks, Recreation, and Trails map PRT-1 is reproduced as Appendix A for reference.

Trail Alignment Narratives

The following trail alignment narratives provide additional supporting information regarding proposed trail alignments and locations, alignment preferences and intent (where specified), opportunities and constraints, as well as resource, land use and ownership considerations to be addressed in conjunction with future trail planning efforts.

PRT Map – East Panel (See Figure 4-2)

1. One additional inland trail route shall be created between El Capitan State Park (north of Highway 101) and the eastern planning area boundary, to achieve one additional vertical trail from Highway 101 to West Camino Cielo. For this future trail alignment, the proposed trail alignment on Dos Pueblos Ranch or the proposed Farren Road trail (Goleta Community Plan PRT-3 map) shall be reviewed and one selected as the most suitable and achievable route.
2. The *proposed trail alignment* for the West Camino Cielo crest trail west of Refugio Road generally follows existing boundaries between APNs 081-040-037,-046,-042,-003 and adjacent southern properties, primarily following the existing private road and previously disturbed areas.
3. Planning and implementation of the proposed West Camino Cielo crest trail west of Refugio Road should consider the potential for alternative trails, including existing trail easements as an alternative alignment.

PRT Map – Central Panel (See Figure 4-3)

No specific trail alignment narrative.

PRT Map – West Panel (See Figure 4-4)

Gaviota State Park to Hollister Ranch western boundary

1. The *proposed trail alignment* from Gaviota State Park to the Hollister Ranch western boundary indicates a continuation of the coastal trail.
2. Encourage continued dialogue with willing landowners to explore managed public access and recreation options.

Hollister Ranch western boundary to Gaviota Coast Plan western boundary

1. The *proposed trail alignment* from the Hollister Ranch western boundary to the Gaviota Coast Plan western boundary indicates a continuation of the coastal trail.
2. Recognizing the unique value of the area, the County shall work with willing landowners and other agencies to explore options for future trails.