

SANTA BARBARA COUNTY BOARD AGENDA LETTER



Clerk of the Board of Supervisors
105 E. Anapamu Street, Suite 407
Santa Barbara, CA 93101
(805) 568-2240

Agenda Number:
Prepared on: 7/1/02
Department Name: Planning and Development
Department No.: 053
Agenda Date: 9/3/02
Placement: Departmental
Estimate Time: 15 minutes
Continued Item: NO
If Yes, date from:

TO: Board of Supervisors

FROM: John Patton, Director
Planning and Development

STAFF CONTACT: Lisa Plowman, Supervising Planner, 568-2025
Peggy Burbank, Planner, 568-2019

SUBJECT: Resolution from the Rural Resource Protection Technical Advisory Committee

Recommendation(s):

That the Board of Supervisors:

Accept the resolution and notebook from the Rural Resource Protection Program Technical Advisory Committee.

Alignment with Board Strategic Plan:

The proposed Rural Resource Protection Program is consistent with the following adopted Strategic Goals:

- ◆ *A High Quality of Life for All Residents*
- ◆ *A Community that is Economically Vital and Sustainable.*

Executive Summary and Discussion:

The attached resolution and materials is the final product of the Rural Resource Protection Program Technical Advisory Committee (TAC). Though neither a complete product nor a completed process, the resolution and notebook are a measure of the success of the TAC process. The partial draft 2-track program created by the TAC and contained in the notebook is an innovative idea that's time has yet to come.

In December 2000, the Board of Supervisors directed staff to create the TAC to assist staff in refining a regulatory program and defining alternatives for the protection of natural and cultural resources in inland rural areas of the County. The committee was comprised of experts in the fields of resource sciences and productive agriculture, and included members representing cattle grazing, vineyards, orchards, row crops and

the Farm Bureau. The committee initially was charged with discussing archaeological resources, riparian corridors, wetlands and sensitive species habitat. In September 2001, the Board received an update on the TAC process and its innovative 2-track program, and directed the TAC to also include oaks as one of the resources to be covered by the program. With the departure of the agricultural representatives from the TAC in February 2002, the Board in June 2002 (after attempting to regain those members), concluded the TAC process and disbanded the committee. It also directed staff to pursue a different vehicle for the protection of the resources, namely new guidelines for the existing Grading Ordinance. Nevertheless, the Board acknowledged the achievements of the TAC: (1) the initiation of a dialogue between agriculturists and resource scientists; (2) the amassing of a wealth of technical information about both farming and the resources; (3) the identification of other challenges and opportunities for the agricultural and environmental communities and the County; and (4) the conception of the 2-track program which affords a property owner a non-regulatory option for resource protection.

The TAC held its last meeting on June 24, 2001. This resolution conveys the partial draft 2-track program to the Board from the TAC with the hope that when circumstances permit, it may be resurrected, completed and made an option available for landowners.

The notebook contains the committee's work on the no-permit track of the 2-track approach, up to February 2002. Thus the contents reflect the work of the entire committee, before the agricultural representatives resigned. It needs to be understood that the proposed recommended program in the notebook does not reflect a consensus of the TAC membership; rather, each section describes what was consented to at the time to allow the discussion to move forward, with the expectation that any part of it could be re-visited at a later time. In fact, the incomplete nature of the various components of the program would have required a second look in order to finish them.

In addition to the notebook, the purpose of this presentation to the Board is to recap the values of the TAC process which was a new way of involving the public in a community issue: providing a forum to allow dialogue between disparate interests and cross education to take place, and work toward a mutually acceptable solution. The TAC demonstrated these benefits in their meetings and generated an innovative solution that is flexible, collaborative, and incorporates both disincentives and incentives.

Mandates and Service Levels:

Neither the Rural Resource Protection Program nor the Technical Advisory Committee is specifically mandated by state law. However, state law does mandate the County to have and implement a Conservation Element of the General Plan, and also mandates participation by the public in the policy development process.

The attached materials and resolution of the Technical Advisory Committee is one source of information for the Board of Supervisors and the public and will not impact levels of service.

Consistency with the Five Year Work Program:

The Rural Resource Protection Program is included in Comprehensive Planning's five-year work program. The Board decided in June 2002 to bring the Technical Advisory Committee process to a close. These materials represent the culmination and product of that process that finished in Fiscal Year 2001-02.

The Rural Resource Protection Program will now focus on the preparation of guidelines for the Grading Ordinance to provide increased certainty for landowners and to protect the natural and cultural resources in the inland rural areas of the County while allowing for and supporting agricultural expansion.

Fiscal and Facilities Impacts:

Funding for the Rural Resource Protection Project is included in the Planning and Development, Comprehensive Planning, General Plan Element cost center listed on page D-262 of the FY2002-2003 budget.

The attached materials and resolution of the Technical Advisory Committee does not require funding or the expenditure of any funds from the FY 2002-03 budget.

Special Instructions:

The Clerk of the Board to publish a legal notice ten days in advance of the hearing date.

Concurrence:

N/A.