

April 13, 2012

Board of Supervisors
County of Santa Barbara
105 Anapamu Street
Santa Barbara, CA 93101

Re: Las Varas Ranch Project/Doheny Family Project

Dear Honorable Board Members:

My name is Bill King. I have been in the cattle business for 50 years. During these years, I have run cattle on our home ranch and I have leased many ranches throughout the Tri-County area.

I understand that, during the review of the Las Varas Ranch project, there are people who desire to hike through the Doheny property and other privately owned ranches. In fact I have heard that some of these people say that, "the public hikes through cattle ranches all over the country." I am opposed to this proposal for several reasons.

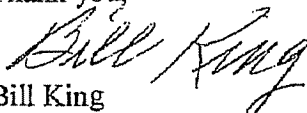
First, all ranches serve the dual purpose of being people's homes as well as their place of business. Surely, there is no one in your hearing room who will claim that they want to be forced to allow strangers to trek through their homes, yards, or work places.

Second, approximately half of Santa Barbara County is publicly owned, e.g., Los Padres National Forest, which consists of thousands and thousands of acres – plenty of area for hiking.

Third, range cattle are only semi-domestic animals. They are not accustomed to humans on foot or on bicycles. I have witnessed many cattle panic at the sight of human beings on foot which, of course, disturbs their normal habitat. In some instances, they have become a threat to the intruder. The disturbance of the cattle results in lost weight, abandonment of new calves, running into fences, and other activity that is a direct detriment to the income of their owners.

While I sympathize with outdoor enthusiasts' desire for areas to hike and enjoy the outdoors, there is plenty of public land to do so. To force upon ranchers the intrusion into their private property, near their homes, and across their place of business is unconscionable.

Thank you,


Bill King