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**Katherine Douglas** *Public Comment - Community Resources and Public Facilities*

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**From:** Kathleen Rosenthal <ksrvaquera@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, June 5, 2024 9:51 PM  
**To:** sbcob  
**Cc:** Villalobos, David; George Amoon; Jesús Armas; jlindgren@countyofsb.com; Walter (Duke) Loster; Tan, Fred  
**Subject:** June 11, 2024 Public Comment letter to BOS  
**Attachments:** Live Oak Working Group Request.pdf

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Please distribute the attached letter to the Honorable Supervisors for the BOS meeting of June 11, 2024.

I plan to speak on this issue during Public Comment via Zoom.

Thank you.

Kathy Rosenthal

June 6, 2024

County of Santa Barbara Board of Supervisors  
Clerk of the Board  
105 E Anapamu St., # 406  
Santa Barbara, CA 93101



RE: Countywide Recreation Master Plan and Live Oak Camp and Trail Project  
(Cachuma Recreation Area)

Dear Honorable Supervisors:

In 2020 representatives for the Santa Ynez Valley Riders - the longest running equestrian trail riding group in the Santa Ynez Valley- met with County Parks Deputy Director Jeff Lindgren, 3<sup>rd</sup> District Supervisor Joan Hartman, various trail advocates and area equestrians to discuss changes at the Live Oak Equestrian Trail and the possibility of re-establishing a horse camp campground at Live Oak Camp, as shown in the Cachuma Recreation Master Plan EIS. Those discussions were put on hold pending appeal of a judgement against the County for failing to conduct appropriate CEQA review of trail policy changes.

The appeal was denied, and the Court directed that changes to the Equestrian Trail at Cachuma Recreation Area require CEQA review. With the Recreation Master Plan (RMP) in process, the time is ripe to form a working group of stakeholders (i.e., grazing permittee, Parks management and staff, equestrians, fire department, etc.) to determine what is the best, most practical use and management policy for Live Oak Equestrian Trail and Live Oak Camp. **The goal would be to develop a project description for the RMP's EIR analysis.**

In addition, the County's Riding and Hiking Trails Advisory Committee (CRAHTAC) formed a working group last year to discuss and develop a trail policy for the RMP. At their July 10<sup>th</sup>, 2023, meeting the Committee approved the policy below and recommended that it be forwarded to your Board for review and inclusion in the RMP:

**"The Santa Barbara County recreational trail network is intended to serve trail user groups including pedestrians, equestrians, cyclists, and others. On a case- by-case basis, trails and/or trail segments will be designated as single-use, dual-use, or multi-use based on factors listed in the Santa Barbara County Trail Guidelines."**

This CRAHTAC recommended policy is counter to Parks Division's standard practice of multi-use because it recognizes that valid conflicts do exist between users, particularly given new technologies developed for mountain and e-bikes. This policy allows flexibility for some trails to be reserved for more traditional trail uses and mitigates conflicts hikers and horseback riders have with mountain bike and e-bike enthusiasts. The CRAHTAC recommended policy provides discretion in the determination of appropriate trail uses based on site-specific factors. The Trail Guidelines are currently being developed. This policy is vital for trail user safety and protects existing land uses such as habitat protection and agricultural grazing.

We request that your Board direct County staff to form a working group to discuss and develop the Live Oak Camp and Live Oak Trail project description and include the project for analysis in the RMP. We also request that the Santa Ynez Valley Riders be named as a working group participant. Our efforts were instrumental in creating the Live Oak Equestrian Trail and we look forward to working together with the Parks Division, Cachuma staff and other interested parties.

Thank you for your time and attention to this request.

Best Regards,

Kathy Rosenthal, President  
Santa Ynez Valley Riders

Cc: County Planning Commission, via David Villalobos, Hearing Support Coordinator  
County Riding and Hiking Trails Advisory Committee, via George Armoon  
Jesus Amas, Director, Community Services Department  
Jeff Lindgren, Assistant Director, Parks Division  
Walter (Duke) Loster, Supervisor, Cachuma Lake  
Frederick Tan, Deputy Fire Marshal