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April 16, 2012

LATE  
DIST

Supervisor Doreen Farr, Chair  
Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors  
105 East Anapamu Street  
Santa Barbara, Ca 93101

RE: Las Varas Ranch

Dear Supervisor Farr,

I'm familiar with the history of surfing in the Santa Barbara area and have frequently surfed the Gaviota Coast. I know the coast well all the way up to and around Point Conception. I was once a member of the Santa Barbara Surf Club. My friends include some of the more famous early surfers of the Santa Barbara area. I have worked in surf shops, for board manufacturers, and have made a living locally as an urchin fisherman.

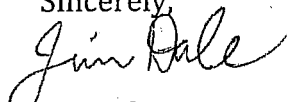
I began surfing Edwards Ranch in about 1961-1962 and continued to do so until about the mid-70's when family and fishing became my priority. In those early days, we went to Edwards because it was an exotic place. It was somewhere to go to get away from the crowds that were beginning to overrun other local breaks when surfing's popularity exploded in the 60's. There were at least a dozen of us surfing there at that time. We just hoofed it in across the property following each other's trail. We did not have permission, nor were we ever asked to leave.

A lot of the guys who surfed Edwards in those days have passed away.

After moving on to other things in the last half of the 1970's, when I had the occasion to drive by the Las Varas Ranch, I would see lots of surfers' cars parked just off the highway. I could see that Ed's was becoming popular and heavily used. I no longer consider myself a local at Edwards, and have not been there for a long time.

I understand some non-surfers are suggesting that surfers walking to the point from down coast can easily paddle up the point from the beach there to enter the line up at Edwards. This is absurd. Having to paddle out through the waves stacked up east of Ed's against strong down shore currents would waste energy needed to surf. That would be foolish and dangerous during conditions favorable for surfing Edwards.

Sincerely,

  
Jim Dale