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Santa Barbara County League of Conservation Voters

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COUNTY OF SANTA BARBARA
COMMUNICATIONS CENTER

Chairman Joe Centeno
Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors
105 E. Anapamu Street
Santa Barbara, California 93101



RE: March 17 Agenda Item # 7, Planning and Development Department 2009-2010 Annual Work Plan

Chairman Centeno and Members of the Board of Supervisors:

The Santa Barbara League of Conservation Voters appreciates the effort the Board is making to consider long range planning and to consider these needs in the context of forthcoming budget hearings regarding the Planning and Development Department.

We urge the Board of Supervisors to ensure that two programs are nominated as priorities for the County:

- development of a Gaviota Regional General Plan component. Another high priority is development of a Climate Action Strategy to slow the effects of global climate change on the Gaviota Coast's sensitive natural resources and allow time for reactive protective strategies to be developed.
- The Global Climate change program.

Private and governmental grants and partnerships could be explored to supplement County General Funds to expedite development of the Gaviota plan. Other funding sources are available as well, including some under the County's control such as CREF and CIAP. State Coastal Conservancy and Wildlife Board grants, along with private donors

The Planning and Development Department also has the opportunity to reprioritize its existing workload to prioritize progress on the Gaviota Plan in FY 2009-2010.

We strongly encourage the Board to direct staff to continue the series of workshops regarding the Gaviota Coast by conducting an early planning workshop before the Planning Commission. This will help the planning process continue the momentum on Gaviota Coast planning from Board workshops last year. A workshop of this nature will help identify specific milestones, timelines and division of labor among County Staff .

This process should lead to a team that ensures continued progress on this planning effort.

Thank you for your careful consideration these comments.

Sincerely,

Greg Helms
Member
Santa Barbara County League of Conservation Voters