

# COUNTY OF SANTA BARBARA

## AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

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August 20, 2015

Hon. Janet Wolf, Chair  
Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors  
105 East Anapamu Street, Fourth Floor  
Santa Barbara, CA 93101

### **Re: Las Varas Ranch Lot Line Adjustment Project**

Dear Chair Wolf and Honorable Members of the Board:

The Agricultural Advisory Committee (AAC) discussed the referenced project at our meeting on August 5, 2015 and we respectfully submit these comments to you regarding several important agricultural issues:

#### **Avoiding Predictable Land Use Conflicts**

The AAC opposes imposing any trail condition that results in predictable land use conflicts with agricultural operations. The AAC generally opposes siting of public trails on, through, or immediately adjacent to productive agricultural land due to reasonably foreseeable land use conflicts. Active recreational use trails and agricultural production are generally incompatible, particularly in situations where a large interface makes it difficult to monitor and enforce rules of responsible trail use. Examples of potential negative impacts of trail use on or near productive agriculture include: food safety being compromised by people, dogs, and horses; trail user safety; increased trespassing, wildfires, poaching, theft, and vandalism; agricultural use restrictions; and liability to the land owner for injury damage, loss, and potential litigation costs.

The AAC supports the following measures to mitigate the reasonably foreseeable, negative impacts of public trails on agricultural resources and to maintain the long-term viability of agricultural operations: (1) siting trails away from active agricultural operations, (2) establishing and enforcing limits on hours, days, and conditions of use to mitigate reasonably foreseeable conflicts, and (3) fencing the trail corridor with a design approved by the landowner.

#### **Agricultural Intensification and Management**

The AAC recommends against prescribing which form(s) of agriculture may be utilized in the future. Farms and ranches need flexibility to evolve over time to remain competitive in local and global markets. Production technologies and economic opportunities are constantly changing and being able to respond is critical to the continued vitality of agriculture countywide. In addition, AAC recognizes the importance of a "critical mass" in the long-term viability of agriculture and representatives from the Cattlemen's Association favor appropriate communal grazing operations to reduce the risk of sales of individual parcels in the future.

Thank you for your consideration of these comments.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Claire Wineman".

Claire Wineman, Chair

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#### **Committee Members**

Bradley Miles  
Ron Caird

#### **Representing**

1<sup>st</sup> District Supervisor, Salud Carbajal  
2<sup>nd</sup> District Supervisor, Janet Wolf

Sharyne Merritt – Vice Chair  
AJ Cisney  
Ruth Jensen  
Chrissy Allen  
Claire Wineman – Chair  
Paul Van Leer  
June Van Wingerden  
Morgan McLaughlin  
Willy Chamberlin  
Jason Sharrett

3<sup>rd</sup> District Supervisor, Doreen Farr  
4<sup>th</sup> District Supervisor, Peter Adam  
5<sup>th</sup> District Supervisor, Steve Lavagnino  
California Women for Agriculture  
Grower-Shipper Association of SB and SLO  
Santa Barbara County Farm Bureau  
Santa Barbara Flower & Nursery Growers' Association  
Central Coast Wine Growers Assn  
Santa Barbara County Cattlemen's Association  
Strawberry Commission