



March 20, 2009

Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors  
105 East Anapamu Street  
Santa Barbara, CA 93121

**RE: Hunter-La Purisima Resort General Plan Amendment Initiation**

Dear Chairman Centeno and Honorable Supervisors,

The Santa Barbara County Action Network (SB CAN) is a grassroots, county wide organization whose work includes the preservation of agricultural lands and environmental resources. The initiation of the general plan amendment as detailed in the staff report would violate adopted County policy that governs rural land use, and therefore, we urge you to deny this request.

If approved, this proposed general plan amendment would set a dangerous precedent that would open up agricultural land, including the Gaviota Coast and other pristine areas, to new development. Because 90% of the privately owned land in Santa Barbara County has Agricultural zoning, this has huge implications for our county.

During the last several years, there has been tremendous pressure to open agricultural lands to new development, which SB CAN and other environmental organizations have repeatedly opposed. Approving this amendment could encourage property owners to take parcels out of agricultural production to pursue recreational projects that would qualify them to apply for a resort overlay. This would lead to the urbanization of rural areas and the loss of valuable and viable agricultural lands.

Your staff wisely recommends denial of this initiation, noting the "inconsistency with the fundamental tenets of the county's land Use Element" and the fact that the GPA options "could result in negative effects to agricultural lands." In addition, the Agricultural Advisory Committee voted 7/1 to recommend the denial of this project.

We strongly urge you to support the staff and AAC recommendations to deny the request for the initiation.

Sincerely,

Deborah Brasket  
SB CAN Executive Director

Delivered by email March 20, 2009

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