

Katherine Douglas

Public Comment - Group 1

1



From: Robert Ryan <robryan071945@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, October 4, 2023 3:56 PM
To: sbcob
Subject: North Fork frost ponds
Attachments: North Fork Frost Ponds - Copy.docx

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I am a native Californian, grew up in Santa Barbara County and have a residence near Cottonwood Canyon, a couple miles west of the proposed project.

My concerns primarily address two issues as they relate to the scope of the project:

-Resource Management

-Economy of Scale

North Fork is possibly the largest agriculture operation in the Northwest region of the Cuyama Basin. They rely on water to grow grapes. This water and the wells drilled (12+) are allowed and unregulated by the County.

Records show that in the 6 years of pumping, their water level has declined.

What happens when the added water demand from their proposed reservoirs exceeds the regulated threshold maximum of 31 acre- feet/year?

Doesn't a water right allow for a "reasonable amount of water"?

Will the existing vineyard size adversely tax the ground water supply for the other Basin users?

Water is the life-blood for all humans.

Thank you for your intelligent consideration.

Robert Ryan

Katherine Douglas

From: jean gaillard <jeangaillard@hotmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, October 4, 2023 5:24 PM
To: sbcob
Subject: Oct 10th Harvard Reservoir Hearing
Attachments: North Fork Vineyard Frost Pond Project.docx

Caution: This email originated from a source outside of the County of Santa Barbara. Do not click links or open attachments unless you verify the sender and know the content is safe.

To the Clerk of Board of Supervisors,

For professional reasons I'm unable to attend in person or via zoom the October 10th Harvard Reservoir Hearing.

Find hereby, my comments on Agenda #1, to be distributed to the Board of Supervisors.

Thanks

Jean Gaillard

Sent from Mail for Windows

From: The Brown-Gaillard Trust

To: The Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors

Date: 10/10/2023

Public Comment: North Fork Vineyard Frost Pond

Agenda Item #1

Expected time of hearing: 9:30AM

The Brown-Gaillard Trust owns and operates a ranch and a small-scale farm situated South of the Central Management Area (CMA) in the foothills of the Cuyama Valley (CV). We have been involved developing the Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP). I'm also a member of the Standing Advisor Committee (SAC) advocating for more equitable groundwater use in the CV and supporting smart farming solutions to the challenging climate conditions.

The Brown-Gaillard Trust rejects the proposed "Frost Pond Project" that includes the building of 15-acre covered reservoir as frost ponds. We support the Panning & Development Commission's decision to deny the permit. The use of eco-friendly alternatives such as wind turbines needs to be encouraged.

This Harvard – backed Vineyard seems unaware of and inexperienced in sustainable farming practices. Their proposal to build large ponds for frost protection will have considerable long lasting negative impact on the eco-systems, such as:

- The destruction of 15.6 acres of wildlife habitat and native plants.
- High water use for frost protection that accelerates the already declining groundwater table.

The proposed frost protection ponds are part of the Harvard Vineyards' strategy to have uncontrolled and unlimited water pumping in the Western Region of the CV. This disregard for basin-wide sustainability and the necessary shared responsibility to achieve it, will lead to considerable delay in achieving SGMA's goal of groundwater sustainability for the CV by 2040.

The negative effects of an over drafted and declining groundwater table will negatively impact on the disadvantaged communities of the CV. The 3 communities and ranchers/farmers of the CV are already struggling with pumping restrictions and decreasing water quality that are threatening their livelihoods.

Initially Harvard drilled 12 agricultural wells as deep as 800 feet to irrigate the 800-acre vineyard. They added at least 4 more wells in the past few years to compensate for poor well performance. Filling all the frost ponds requires 135 AF of pumped groundwater, which is the equivalent of 70 householders' water needs. It is not clear if the project will require more ponds and wells in the coming years, further exacerbating the negative impacts on CV's groundwater resources.

Since 2016 Harvard Vineyards has coped with frost periods that can damage grape flowers. The frost danger period for grapes is only 6 weeks from mid-March to late April. They have constructed concrete slabs and installed 10 wind turbines to move hotter air to the plant and disperse the cold air. Those eco-friendly frost protection systems are rented and economical.

There is no justification to support the proposed North Fork Vineyard Frost Pond Project. The use of eco-friendly alternatives such as wind turbines should be encouraged.