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**San Marcos Foothills Coalition**

March 13, 2009

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

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

Chairman Centeno and Members of the Board of Supervisors:

The San Marcos Foothills Coalition is committed to the protection and preservation of the San Marcos Foothills as an example of the need for and benefits of open space preservation for future generations of Santa Barbara visitors and residents.

We write this letter to urge the Board of Supervisors to direct staff to advance two specific programs as immediate priorities for the County Planning and Development Department in the upcoming budget for next fiscal year.

1. The highest priority for the County's Comprehensive Planning Department should be initiating a Gaviota-area Comprehensive Plan Element. The County should also fund development of a Climate Action Strategy as a high priority.
2. The County should immediately seek private and governmental grants to supplement General Funds to accelerate the Gaviota plan.
3. The Planning Department should reprioritize its existing workload to ensure substantial immediate progress on the Gaviota Plan in FY 2009-2010, including major restructuring of the Long Range Planning Department to free up funds for more planners and less managers.
4. The Planning Department should schedule a Planning Commission workshop on the Gaviota Plan process in June

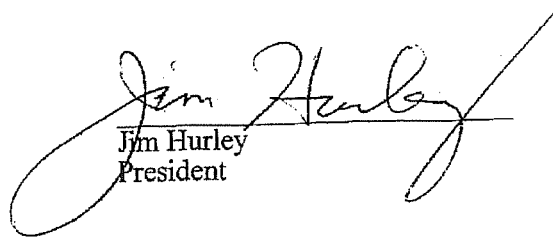
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Chairman Centeno and Board of Supervisors
March 13, 2009
Page 2

These steps are necessary to establish programs and policies that can best preserve the Gaviota Coast to meet the needs of future generations, and to address and ameliorate the significant ecological impacts associated with climate change.

Thank you for your consideration of the views and concerns of the San Marcos Foothills Coalition in this important process.

Sincerely,



Jim Hurley
President