

Abib, Daniela

From: Villalobos, David
Sent: Tuesday, October 13, 2015 2:48 PM
To: sbcob
Subject: Fwd: Chaparral Protection
Attachments: PastedGraphic-3.tiff; PastedGraphic-7.pdf

Sent from Outlook

----- Forwarded message -----

From: "**Cherie Topper**" <chertopper@audubon.org>
Date: Tue, Oct 13, 2015 at 2:44 PM -0700
Subject: Chaparral Protection
To: "Villalobos, David" <dvillalo@co.santa-barbara.ca.us>

Dear David,

Would you please pass this letter along to all Santa Barbara County Supervisors? It has been delivered to Janet Wolf already. Thank you.

Cherie Topper
Santa Barbara Audubon Society

Dear Santa Barbara County Supervisors,

I am writing today on behalf of the 1100+ members of the Santa Barbara Audubon Society to protest the last minute change to the Eastern Goleta Valley Community Plan (EGVCP) EIR language regarding the treatment of chaparral as ESH (MM BIO-1 (Policy ECO-EGV-5.4)). The change in wording, as outlined below (from page 10 of the EGVCP EIR Revision Letter), effectively REMOVES the chaparral protection intended by the original EIR language. We urge you to restore this changed wording (below) BACK to the ORIGINAL plan wording approved in a 4:1 vote by the Planning Commission.

- *Chaparral (specifically the following four rare types: e.g., chamise chaparral, lower montane mixed chaparral, ceanothus chaparral, and soft scrub – mixed chaparral alliances) where it supports rare or vulnerable native vegetation alliances and/or sensitive native plant and/or animal species*

Please support the Planning Commission's 4-1 vote, the Final EIR with ORIGINAL chaparral protections intact, and the work by the local conservation community to protect our watersheds and wildlife habitat by **rejecting** this last-minute change which severely undermines chaparral protection, and makes violations nearly impossible to enforce.

In addition to stripping the designation of its “teeth” in the event of chaparral removal prior to permitting, pushback to this change could lead to requiring extensive biological surveys prior to each clearing event to determine whether rare or endangered species are present in (or supported by) the chaparral to be cleared. This could add considerable cost and bureaucracy to individual property owners seeking to remove chaparral, and would unnecessarily complicate the permitting process, take away limited resources of NGOs, and add to planning staff’s already full plate.

Staff’s wording change does nothing to mitigate the significant impacts to wildlife habitat identified in the EIR, but rather has the effect of removing protections entirely due to the near-impossibility of enforcement. **We urge you to support a return to the previous wording (below), which would simply designate four types of chaparral as ESH, requiring environmental assessment and permitting PRIOR to chaparral removal outside of the defined exemption categories (safe zone clearing, fire-fighting, etc...).**

- *Chaparral (specifically the following four rare types: chamise, lower montane mixed chaparral, ceanothus chaparral, and soft scrub – mixed chaparral alliances)*

Thank you for your work on behalf of our precious Santa Barbara environment,

Cherie Topper
Executive Director, Santa Barbara Audubon Society
www.santabarbaraaudubon.org
Phone: !