



PO Box 31241  
Santa Barbara, CA  
93130-1241  
February 13, 2015

Re: February 17, 2015 Agenda Item 6 -- Las Varas Ranch EIR

Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors

To the Board:

Chair  
David Gold

Vice-Chair  
Fran Farina

Secretary  
Gerry Ching

Treasurer  
Richard Hunt

At Large  
Michael Stubblefield

At Large  
Jim Hines

At Large  
Stephen Dougherty

SB Group Rep  
Katie Davis

Arguello Group  
Rep  
Gerald Connor

Conejo Group  
Rep  
John Holroyd

The Sierra Club Los Padres Chapter opposes certification of the Las Varas Ranch Project EIR and the zoning of this agricultural ranch for intense urban development.

Our chapter, with thousands of Santa Barbara County members, believes that the EIR fails to adequately address the intensity of this massive development in the protected coastal zone. We urge you to support the Planning Commission's recommendation not to certify the EIR and to require revisions that fully address the project's adverse environmental impacts.

The proposed project would substantially impair coastal scenic viewsheds as defined by the California Coastal Act, along with historic and cultural resources of the Gaviota coast region, according to the EIR. These are not acceptable tradeoffs to allow the development of one of the last great wild places along the entire central coast of California.

We call for you to protect coastal hiking and viewshed resources by:

- 1) protecting historic public access to Edwards Point and supporting the Santa Barbara County Coastal Plan's identification of Edwards Point as a Coastal park,
- 2) requiring dedication of an easement for a nearshore California Coastal Trail, and
- 3) preserving the blufftop open space on the ranch.

The removal of current agricultural production of this ranch and conversion of existing ranch lands to urban use require deeper examination.

The majestic Gaviota Coast is one of the great scenic and coastal recreational treasures of our region. The Sierra Club Los Padres Chapter is opposed to any development which significantly impairs this important coastal resource.

Respectfully submitted,

David Gold  
Chair, Los Padres Chapter, Sierra Club