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**Lenzi, Chelsea**

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**From:** Linda Krop <lkrop@environmentaldefensecenter.org>  
**Sent:** Monday, August 28, 2017 10:01 AM  
**To:** sbcob  
**Subject:** Rancho La Laguna  
**Attachments:** EDC letter to BOS re RLL property values\_2017\_08\_28.pdf

Please accept and distribute this letter to the Board of Supervisors.

Thank you,  
LK

**LINDA KROP**  
CHIEF COUNSEL  
906 Garden Street  
Santa Barbara, CA 93101  
805.963.1622 x 106  
[www.EnvironmentalDefenseCenter.org](http://www.EnvironmentalDefenseCenter.org)

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August 28, 2017

Chair Joan Hartmann  
Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors  
105 E. Anapamu Street, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Santa Barbara, CA 93101

**Re: Rancho La Laguna - DENY**

Dear Chair Hartmann and Honorable Supervisors:

This information confirms the effect that subdivisions have on agricultural property values and viability:

**Marin County: Agricultural Economic Analysis, Final Report (Nov. 2003)** (focusing on the impact of *estate developments* on agricultural lands to assist decision makers in developing program to support the future of Marin County's agriculture). The study reviewed an earlier study from 1973 and concluded that then ag lands were subject to speculation for subdivision into *suburban housing*, but today the major issue is *high value estate development*, but the results are similar—land costs are driven up beyond agriculture's ability to pay, thus discouraging the maintenance of ag use. With regard to the new estate development, Marin County's analysis concluded that "*high residential value drives up land ownership costs beyond what agricultural income can cover— usually by large orders of magnitude—depending on parcel size and the extent of improvements.*" The study used case studies to demonstrate how pressure for subdivision into large high value agricultural estates drives land values and taxes beyond agriculture's ability to pay, involves new estate owners in the complexities of agricultural management in which they have no experience and limited interest, and introduces land use conflicts between such new "urban estate owners" and remaining agricultural operations.

**American Farmland Trust, A New Perspective on California Farmland Conversion (2007):** The inefficient conversion of land makes "agricultural production more difficult and expensive with demands that routine agricultural practices be curtailed or modified to protect the health and security of new neighbors." And they create an additional market demand for rural land that in many regions is *inflating its price to a level above what commercial agriculture can pay and still remain economically viable.*

**Sacramento County (2000):** Conversion of agricultural land to "ranchettes" or large estate oriented parcels may have led to *conversion of 2,800 acres of land from agricultural to what in essence were urban or suburban uses.*

**Subdivision Profitability, by David L. Fried, Ph.D. in LANDWATCH, Monterey County (July 2001):** demonstrating through case studies that when a county approves a property for subdivision, *the value is multiplied many times.*

**Ranching the View: Subdivisions vs Agriculture; Richard L Knight, University of Colorado (1994):** a study in Colorado found "dramatic changes" in many rural parcels, where ranches with minimal rural dirt roads were transformed by *the addition of many large estate home sites and miles of new roads, leading to parcels too small and developed to be consistent with long term agricultural and open space values.*

**Subdividing Land: Tips for Landowners from a Developer (Steve Sanders, an attorney and developer, at [LotNetwork.com](http://LotNetwork.com)):** explaining how *through subdivision, the parts can be more valuable than the whole.*

**How Subdividing Can Double Your Money (Sam Saggars, 2013):** describing how *subdivision creates instant equity.*

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Linda Krop".

Linda Krop, Chief Counsel