

November 24, 2009

To:

Kim Kimbell  
David Lackie

From:

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682-0302

Re: Eastern Boundary of GavPAC planning area

I would like the GavPAC to consider creating a more rational eastern boundary to the study area than the existing boundary.

The present boundary bisects the north/south orientation of Eagle Canyon, terminating on the coast at the eastern boundary of the Makar property. I have been variously informed that this boundary is the Western boundary of the Goleta Community Plan. I have also been told that this boundary is the eastern boundary of the Gaviota agricultural study area defined in an agricultural study undertaken by the County in the 1990s.

You will find the Goleta Planning Area map in the Goleta General Plan Adopted 5/09 at <http://www.cityofgoleta.org/index.aspx?page=194>, see figure 2-3. This planning area encompasses the Gaviota Coast west of Goleta to El Capitan, extending considerably inland of the coastal zone. The breadth of this planning area is contiguous with a significant portion of the area of our interest and appears to create a circumstance of mutual concern between the GavPAC and the City of Goleta (see note 1).

Bisecting the Eagle Canyon drainage to form our boundary is utilizing a political boundary in lieu of a more natural watershed boundary. This should be avoided when possible and it is possible in this case.

A planning void, a “white hole” if you will, is created by the exclusion of property from our study area from Eagle Canyon to the City of Goleta boundary, a close approximation of the County Urban Limit Line. This area is rural and agricultural in character and should not be “orphaned” through exclusion from the GavPAC process. It is essential that the GavPAC study area encompass Gaviota Coast lands that abut the City of Goleta western boundary through the eastern property lines of Ellwood Ranch and the Pulice property. Extending the study area boundary to these two properties will capture the majority of the upper Ellwood drainage and provide a reasonable and workable watershed boundary. Please see the attached parcel map for the area of the white hole.

Consider the current land use issues in the existing white hole.

- 1) Lot merger and 4 proposed houses in Eagle Canyon.
- 2) Un-permitted removal of 7.45A of vegetation overlooking Driftwood Cove (“Gaviota Holdings”).
- 3) The 13,333 square foot Ballantyne mansion on Farren Road.

4) A pre-application for a 24 house development by the owner of the Bacara Hotel on the Bacara Ranch, the highlands surrounding Tecolote Canyon, was submitted to P&D. This project has not advanced, but it provides a clear indication of the intentions of the owner. The issues presented by these actions and proposals are significant and deserve study by the GavPAC.

The area of the white hole is agricultural in nature. Extensive “Prime Farmland” exists in Bell Canyon and in Winchester Canyon. The rich bottom land of Bell Canyon is not under Williamson contract. Equally significant portions of “Farmland of State Wide Importance” exists to the east of Tecolote Canyon. “Unique Farmland” is abundant in Ellwood Canyon.

This area of the white hole is rural and agricultural. The most vulnerable portions of the Gaviota Coast are those closest to the urban environment. We will best discharge our duty if we include these lands in our study and recommendations.

Note 1: The following is from the City of Goleta General Plan, LU 12.8.

**LU 12.8 County Lands West of Goleta. [GP]** The following criteria should apply to future uses and development on lands in the unincorporated area of Santa Barbara County westward of Goleta, including the Gaviota Coast:

- a. The City supports County policies and zoning that will retain rural uses and the low-intensity, undeveloped character of this segment of the coastal terrace and nearby foothill areas.
- b. The urban-rural boundary line should not be extended to include any additional areas.
- c. Development of residential estates and “ranchettes” should be minimized. Whenever possible, any development potential should be transferred to lands on the inland side of US-101 at locations where such development will not be visible from the freeway and coastal bluffs.
- d. Low-intensity rural and agricultural uses are appropriate in this area; higher intensity uses that are allowed subject to a conditional use permit, such as churches or greenhouses, should not be approved in this coastal area.
- e. Preservation of scenic viewsheds is a high priority; development that would extend above the ridgelines should be avoided.
- f. Hillside development should be avoided; appropriate erosion and sediment control measures should be incorporated into all development proposals. Any development should be designed to protect watersheds and water quality.
- g. The City supports the provision of trail connectors between the Goleta urban area and the foothills and the Los Padres National Forest area.