

Erika L.

BLISTER RIDGE PROPERTY OWNERS  
WRITTEN TESTIMONY  
FEBRUARY 8, 2011 GOLETA VALLEY PLAN UPDATE

We the undersigned live and/or own farmland in the area just southwest of the Trout Club area, within the San Jose Creek watershed. We intend to work with the to bring about the watershed-based planning goals of this unique rural resource agricultural area.

This area is unique in that it is a high-fire hazard buffer to residential areas in close proximity, a resource habitat headland of San Jose Creek, one of the only remaining steelhead habitat, and an historical agricultural area with historical water rights. We, as property owners intend to assist the county in forging a new relationship between environmental protection, heritage conservation and fire protection and educational recreation.

We hereby request the following amendments presented in this written testimony be incorporated into the current draft plan and environmental assessment study: The underscored text is to be added to the plan language.

- (1) Page 46 under ESTABLISH A WATERSHED-BASED FRAMEWORK FOR LAND USE DEVELOPMENT PLANNING AND DECISION-MAKING.

Revise Policy EGV-2.2 to read as follows:

The County shall work with interested South Coast agencies, Native American heritage interests, rural landowners and agricultural interests to address watershed-based planning issues to improve the quality of regional hydrologic conditions.

- (2) ADD the following two policies to this section.

POLICY EGV-2.3: The County encourages the organic, wildcrafting agricultural uses in the San Jose Creek watershed areas to enhance water quality and natural and native planting heritage conservation.

POLICY EGV-2.4: The County recognizes the need to integrate resource management in watershed areas such as San Jose Creek area which includes:

- 1) a sustainable fire fuel reduction program;
- 2) fire prevention soil conservation
- 3) promotes water storage for high fire hazard areas in drought years
- 4) encourages landowner agricultural heritage wildcrafting agricultural practices which increases plantings of native botanicals and plants for habitat restoration, fire restoration, erosion control methods and water quality improvement programs.
- 5) Provide natural fire break grids, fire access roads from foothills to mountain areas to reduce fire risk in high fire, steep terrain rural areas.

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PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT

- (3) ON Page 62 ADD the following site specific uses.

BLISTER RIDGE AREA

The mountainous area south west of the Trout Club is a unique watershed that has existing recognized parcels of land which are smaller than existing zoning density designation. Each parcel in this area, which the County validated as a legal parcel at the existing size, should be given 10 acre density designation to match the existing historical land use patterns of the area. This area is also unique in that while it is a watershed and riparian area, it is also a ridge that is pivotal to several fire fighting firebreak areas. Special consideration and incentives should be implemented that encourage landowner participation in a private fire maintenance, water storage and botanical plantings and fuel reduction agricultural operations in this area as a permitted use.

Passive agri-tourism should be allowed that encourages hiking to overnight agri-camps, yurts, heritage seasonal gatherings, agricultural overnight retreat areas which promotes conservation and volunteer native plantings of botanicals, creating a harmonious passive ag-recreational use between rural and forested areas consistent with the San Jose Creek Study previously adopted by the County Board of Supervisors and will not be required to provide additional environmental studies for these uses.

In these budgetary restraining times, we should encourage property owner participation and involvement in helping the county form solutions without undue burden, for a sustainable pure water supply, fire safe neighborhoods, which promotes heritage agricultural and indigenous conservation practices. We the undersigned wish to be a model of the future for cooperation in meeting these goals.

Dated: 2-8-11

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