



Sonoma Mountain Preservation

Nov. 28, 2021

SMP Board

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Sonoma County Board of Supervisors
Tennis Wick, Permit Sonoma
Dyett and Bhatia, engage@sdcspecificplan.com

Dear Supervisors, Staff, and Consultants,

Sonoma Mountain Preservation fully supports the perspective, recommendations, and proposal that development be based on performance standards put forth in the Sonoma Land Trust's response letter of 11.18.21 to the SVCAC, NSVMAC, and Springs MAC.

In addition, SMP has three specific recommendations for the Supervisors, Permit Sonoma, and the consultants:

1. Create more time before the Supervisorial vote so that legal deficiencies can be corrected, and a new approach formulated. The consultants have been given extended deadlines and leeway in their work. We ask the Supervisors to support their constituents by asking the DGS and State to extend the same courtesy to the community.
2. Formally establish a conservation easement on, and set aside, the 750 acres of proposed open space. The easement should include the 150-year-old (and subsequent) water rights and riparian stream setbacks. This land must stay in the public domain permanently. As proposed and discussed for the last eight years, this acreage needs to remain in County (Regional Parks) and State (Jack London State Historic Park) ownership. Doing this will ensure that the land is not used as a pawn between competing interests and will significantly reassure the surrounding community and conservation organizations.
3. Work to ensure that the State takes up the burden of its own neglect at the site. When a private individual sells land with toxic waste on it, that individual is required by law to clean up the site before selling. We wonder why the same standard should not be applied to the State. Rather than assuming the

\$100 million infrastructure cost problem should be passed on to developers—creating, in essence, three plans that the community largely rejects—think outside the box.

Developing performance standards is one approach. Another is to lobby that some of the \$31 billion State surplus be used to address infrastructure cleanup. Another is to get the support of the CA Natural Resources Dept. in support of the 30*30 goal; we note that the State contributed significant monies to help purchase the Witter family land along the Eel River.

Putting solely “economic viability” at the center of proposed alternatives is a narrow and outmoded response, especially in one of the 34 most bio-diverse areas on the planet. The climate emergency, affecting everyone in the Valley, calls for a broader, more wholistic, and long-term perspective. The heart of the matter at SDC is that this place sustains us all, humans, creatures, and forests alike.

Sincerely,

Meg Beeler, Chair
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Traditional territory of Southern Pomo, Wappo, Patwin, and Coast
Miwok