

## FW: Clear cutting & AG ponds

Jennifer Caffee

Mon 8/8/2016 12:49 PM

To: BOS\_Legislative Assistants <BOS\_Legislative-Assistants@co.slo.ca.us>; cr\_board\_clerk Clerk Recorder <cr\_board\_clerk@co.slo.ca.us>;

Jennifer Caffee  
Legislative Assistant  
5th District Supervisor Debbie Arnold  
San Luis Obispo County

-----Original Message-----

From: William Grove [<mailto:wmgrove@me.com>]  
Sent: Friday, August 05, 2016 9:40 AM  
To: Debbie Arnold <darnold@co.slo.ca.us>  
Subject: Clear cutting & AG ponds

Please vote no on these two items on August 16!

Thank you,  
Susan grove

Sent from my iPad

AUG 08 2016

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CALIFORNIA WILDLIFE FOUNDATION

Oakland, CA 94612



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August 3, 2016

The Honorable Lynn Compton  
Chair, Board of Supervisors  
County of San Luis Obispo  
Room D-430  
County Government Center  
San Luis Obispo, CA 93408

**RE: Interim Zoning/Urgency Ordinance of the County of San Luis Obispo Prohibiting the Clear-Cutting of Oak Woodlands and Limiting the Removal of Native Trees in the Inland Area, Oak Woodlands Management Plan, and a Permanent Oak Woodlands Protection Measure**

Dear Chairwoman Compton:

The California Oaks program of the California Wildlife Foundation commends you and the other members of the Board of Supervisors for enacting the Interim Zoning/Urgency Ordinance of the County of San Luis Obispo Prohibiting the Clear-Cutting of Oak Woodlands and Limiting the Removal of Native Trees in the Inland Area. We are writing to encourage the extension of the ordinance and the adoption of a permanent measure to protect the county's invaluable natural capital.

We offer the informational resources of California Oaks as the county begins the process of preparing a permanent measure to protect oak woodlands and preparing an Oak Woodlands Management Plan to update the 2003 plan. Additionally, we offer our assistance in advancing the Oak Woodlands Management Plan, including providing guidance on conservation easements to preserve the conservation values of agricultural lands.

A focus on oak woodlands protections may meet less opposition than a measure that seeks protections for a broader range of species. Such a focus may also align more closely with the current provisions of the San Luis County General Plan.

One of the challenges in crafting an enduring regulatory response to the June 2016 clear-cut of the Justin Vineyard oak woodlands is that such lands are at the intersection of a range of areas under the county's jurisdiction. We understand that you are balancing the goals set forth in the Conservation and Open Space Element of the county's General Plan with those set forth in the Agricultural Element. For example, we understand that the Board of Supervisors is upholding the values associated with protection of agricultural lands articulated in the Agricultural Element, which includes the following statements on page 2-9:

- *Agriculture provides productive open space that contributes to the rural character of the county.*
- *Retaining land in agriculture can have a secondary benefit of retaining other open space resources such as riparian lands, important habitat, and scenic quality.*
- *The open space qualities of agricultural lands contribute to the high quality of life and*

*add to the livability of our communities.*

- *Broad expanses of agricultural land can contribute to the long-term protection of important ecosystems and natural communities.*
- *A strong commitment to agriculture will reduce the pressure to convert productive lands to urban uses, thereby reducing urban sprawl.*

We suggest that the Conservation and Open Space Element's Biological Resources Policy 3.3: Oak Woodlands Preservation—*Maintain and improve oak woodland habitat to provide for slope stabilization, soil protection, species diversity, and wildlife habitat*—serves to protect the vital ecosystem services that oak woodlands contribute to the agricultural landscape. These ecosystem services extend beyond property lines, and, when degraded, have impacts beyond property lines as Neil Heaton of Estate Vineyards LLC so eloquently stated:

As things stand right now, we will suffer the most from the erosion from this particular project. They have taken away an entire ecosystem here and denuded it of every bush, every substantial rock. The total environment has been ruined for any native wildlife species. The only thing that allows us to stay on these rural properties is the existence of this underground aquifer...It provides us with the ability to stay on the land and be able to raise our families and earn the livelihood on a relatively small parcel. I am 4<sup>th</sup> generation Heaton on this property. My son is 5<sup>th</sup> and he has three children. There you've got 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> generation. We are very happy in our surroundings and everything. This development, if allowed to continue, will mean the end of our way of life, and our home here on this property.

(<http://www.sanluisobispo.com/news/local/environment/article83125347.html>)

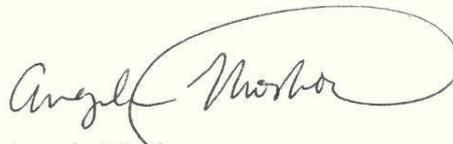
We encourage the County of San Luis Obispo to establish protections to prevent further loss of oak woodlands. Oak restoration, while important, is on balance, a small step towards restoring the many ecosystem services of a mature oak woodland. Oak seedlings require many years to reach maturity. Thus, assuming the replanted oaks are cared for adequately to reach maturity, the net result is many years of lost ecosystem services following the destruction of the oak woodland.

Oaks provide beauty, important habitat for wildlife and plants, watershed function, and carbon sequestration. Thank you very much for your consideration and for your leadership in conserving San Luis Obispo County's invaluable oak resources.

Sincerely,

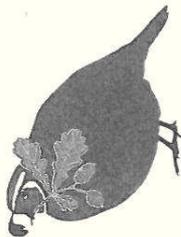


Janet Cobb  
Executive Officer  
California Wildlife Foundation/  
California Oaks



Angela Moskow  
California Oaks Information Network  
Manager/California Oaks Coalition

cc: Jocelyn Brennan, Legislative Assistant  
California Oaks Coalition  
Tommy Gong, San Luis Obispo County Clerk Recorder



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 428 13th Street, Suite 10A  
 Oakland, California 94612

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San Luis Obispo, CA 93408

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Board of Supervisors  
San Luis Obispo County

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To: San Luis Obispo County Board of Supervisors:  
From: The San Luis Obispo Chapter of the California Native Plant Society  
Re: **Recommendation for renewal of the Draft Native Tree Interim Zoning/Urgency Ordinance**

August 5, 2016

The California Native Plant Society (CNPS) is a statewide conservation organization dedicated to celebrating California's native plant heritage and preserving it for future generations. At the San Luis Obispo (SLO) County Board of Supervisors (Board) meeting on July 15, 2016, representatives of the San Luis Obispo Chapter of CNPS spoke in favor of the adoption of the Draft Native Tree Interim Zoning/Urgency Ordinance, and we now request that you vote to continue the ordinance for one year at your meeting on August 16, 2016.

CNPS understands the arguments made by members of the Board concerning both the need for a native tree ordinance and the burden that could be imposed upon landowners by its implementation. We clearly heard that the Board members were united in wanting to prohibit clearcuts of native forests and woodlands, such as the action that provoked the Urgency Ordinance, but were not in full agreement about how to protect individual landowners against perceived government intrusion into their operations. The SLO Chapter of CNPS believes that a collaboration between agricultural interests (such as Farm Bureau, Ag. Liason Advisory Board, U.C. Extension), county staff, interested citizens organizations, and conservation interests, can forge an agreement within a year that would allow a limited amount of tree removal with minimal landowner expenditure in terms of paperwork, costs and time. CNPS is willing to join other stakeholders to offer possible alternative avenues such as simple tree conservation agreements on ranch management. These agreements would shelter a landowner from reporting obligations and allow cutting during the duration of the agreement. They would follow the same concept as 'Farm Plans' used in implementation of water quality management.

The SLO Chapter of CNPS would also like to work with SLO County staff regarding technical issues. This could include developing a very fast remote assessment of tree cover that will allow baselines to be established concerning possible future reduction of canopy. CNPS believes this would be useful in advising landowners of the approximate number of trees or reduction of canopy that would be permitted under the ordinance. Landowner concerns about uncertainty regarding the allowable number of trees that could be cut was evident from the speaker's podium, and should be addressed.

Our last comment concerns the 5% allowable cut permitted over the life of the Urgency Ordinance of 1-2 years. CNPS understands that the number may be derived from U.S. Forest Service calculations on sustainable cutting in softwood forests, but as conifers grow much faster than hardwoods, the number would be unsustainable in the long term for oak woodland. Sustained yield is the core principle and watchword of good stewardship of woodlands for over one hundred years. A proven concept, "sustained yield" provides for the best economic return and environmental outcome. CNPS considers the 5%

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Item No. 17  
Meeting Date: August 16, 2016  
Presented by: California Native Plant Society  
Rec'd prior to meeting & posted to web on: August 11, 2019



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allowable cut of forest canopy on rural parcels a liberal and uncomplicated implementation of this guiding principle, but would suggest a slightly lower percentage or longer timeframe for the permanent ordinance.

Wood recoverable from California Oak woodlands has been well studied. Cal Poly's Dr. Norman Pillsbury has written many foundational studies for this resource. He is a firm advocate of the practice of "Coppice Management; that is the removal of suppressed (non-canopy stems) and selective thinning of branches. The EO allows these practices without permit triggers.

The volume tables presented by Dr. Pillsbury in his studies of Live Oak indicate that average yield in cord wood volume of Live Oak is about 51 cords/acre or 4150 cubic feet of wood/acre. His test plots show immaterial change in total canopy closure when stands are thinned to 100 square feet / acre. Current prices for oak firewood are between \$300-\$325 a cord, thereby having a potential economic yield of roughly \$16,000 per acre.

Thus, for purposes of scale --- a 20 acre "woodlot" could be cut to 19 acres under the Urgency Ordinance guidelines (5% removal), and yield 51 cords of firewood, more than an owner might burn in a lifetime. Thinned judiciously, that same 20 acres would yield 20 cords/year on a sustained basis (or 1 firewood cord per acre) from "in-growth" with zero footprint effect under the ordinance.

In summary, CNPS requests:

1. That the Urgency Ordinance be extended for one year;
2. That a collaborative approach to a long-term Ordinance be developed; and
3. That the 5% allowable cut figure be used for the duration of the ordinance.

CNPS offers these comments for your consideration, and our representatives from the SLO Chapter are available to meet with members of the Board to answer any questions that might arise concerning this letter, CNPS concerns, and our member qualifications.

Sincerely,

Dr. David Chipping, Conservation Committee Chair  
San Luis Obispo Chapter, California Native Plant Society

([dchippin@calpoly.edu](mailto:dchippin@calpoly.edu))

Reference:

Pillsbury, Norman and Lawrence Bonner. June, 2004. Sudden Oak Death Assessment and Economic Viability of Coast Live Oak in Three California Counties, Seventeen Year Results Tech Report #12 Urban Forest Ecosystem Institute Cal Poly State University

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