



Board of Supervisors
County of San Luis Obispo
San Luis Obispo, CA 93406
Sent via EMAIL: ad_Board_clerk@co.slo.ca.us

April 15, 2024

RE: Item: Dana Reserve Project Nipomo

Dear Chair Arnold and Supervisor Gibson, Supervisor Ortiz-Legg, Supervisor Paulding, Supervisor Peschong,

The Santa Lucia Chapter of the Sierra Club, on behalf of our 3,000 members and supporters in San Luis Obispo County, urges you to heed the residents of Nipomo and your South County Advisory Council and adopt the community's alternative plan for the Dana Reserve.

We commend the members of the Nipomo Oak Alliance, Nipomo Action Committee, and South County Advisory Council for producing an alternative design that would largely avoid the destruction of rare native chaparral habitat and a coastal oak woodland, reduce the project's greenhouse gas emissions and other air pollutants, along with excessive vehicle miles traveled (from 3,000 car trips a day to 1,700) and unplanned population growth (lowered from 4,500 to 2,600). In so doing, it will bring the project into compliance with dozens of County land use policies and avoid multiple violations of the Land Use Ordinance, a significant improvement over the project as proposed.

In the EIR, the best project alternatives were long on generalized statements of avoided environmental impacts and short on specifics. None of the project alternatives in the Final EIR included site plans or concept maps to illustrate the changes proposed and locations of the various mixes of housing and open space or the number of oak trees that would allegedly avoid destruction. This meant the Planning Commission was essentially flying blind when it deliberated on the project alternatives. You now have before you the detailed alternative your Planning Commission lacked.

The fact that this alternative plan is the product of a community volunteer effort betokens a concern by residents for the preservation of their community and a level of involvement in the planning process that we have not seen in over fifty years of our chapter's work protecting the environment of the Central Coast. This extraordinary community effort should weigh heavily in your deliberations.

We would also urge the board to heed the words of Stephanie Pincetl, Director of the California Center for Sustainable Communities at UCLA, who notes that the Dana Reserve project as proposed "is yet another example of 20th-century approaches to land use that have caused the current climate crisis. It will generate absolute vehicle miles traveled, destroy carbon sequestering oak habitat that is not substitutable or mitigable (habitat is unique to place, it's not a generic concept, interchangeable anywhere), perpetuate segregation and exposure of lower income populations to higher sources of emissions, will generate serious run off, and more."

We trust you will welcome the opportunity to correct those problems.

Thank you for your attention to this issue.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'SAH', with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

Susan Harvey, Chair
Conservation Committee
Santa Lucia Chapter, Sierra Club

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