



COUNTY OF SAN LUIS OBISPO
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

JAN 30 2009

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Cerro Alto Ranch
2710 Turri Road
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January 30, 2009

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San Luis Obispo County Department of Public Works
County Government Center, Room 207
San Luis Obispo, CA 93408

Subject: Los Osos Wastewater Project Draft Environmental Impact Report

The purpose of this letter is to express concerns about the findings of the draft EIR for the Los Osos Wastewater Project. My name is Jeff Buckingham and my family lives at 2710 Turri Road two miles north of Los Osos Valley Road at the base of Hollister Peak.

My experience in San Luis Obispo includes graduating from Cal Poly in 1981 and building two successful companies in the area. The first, Call America Business Communications Corporation, employed 200 people at its peak and was one of the top 20 employers in the county. Our current company, also called Call America, was founded in 2001 and employs 25 people in San Luis Obispo with plans for continued growth. During my time in San Luis Obispo I have served on the San Luis Obispo Chamber of Commerce Board in a number of positions and was Chair of the board in 2007. I currently serve as the Chair of the committee to re-write the Chamber's Economic Vision Document. My other involvement with the community includes membership in the Rotary Club of San Luis Obispo de Tolosa where I will be President in 2010-2011, The Cuesta College Foundation Board, The San Luis Obispo County Farm Bureau Board, The San Luis Obispo County Farm Supply Company Board of Directors, and the KCBX Community Advisory Board.

During my time in San Luis Obispo I have come to see that preserving and enhancing the quality of life and natural beauty of San Luis Obispo is absolutely critical to our economic well being. Companies that provide head of household jobs do not locate or stay in San Luis Obispo because of the financial benefits. They locate or are founded here because people value our quality of life and the natural beauty of our county. Enhancing our quality of life and preserving the natural beauty of San Luis Obispo County will only become more important due to the tough economic times before us.

Turri Road is one of the crown jewels of San Luis Obispo County and on any day there is a continuous stream of people walking, running, biking, and skateboarding on Turri Road. There are organized activities such as bike races and skateboard competitions, and many television commercials are filmed on Turri Road as well. There are a number of times during the year when it is easy to lose count of the artists painting the views from all directions along Turri Road. We often see people stopped in their cars or standing along the road using the natural landscape to help heal the turmoil in their lives. My personal favorites are the cars that move very slowly along Turri Road and as they approach we can see that they contain some of our senior citizens. Often, their white haired heads are barley tall enough to see over the dashboard but their eyes are bright as they gaze upon the cows in the fields. The cars move slowly to allow the occupants a chance to go back in time, to a landscape that is unchanged since they were young. How did these once common natural landscapes become so rare?

It is important for San Luis Obispo County to build a wastewater treatment plant for Los Osos but using permanent urban sprawl as a part of the solution is not the answer. The Draft EIR points out several alternatives with sites closer to Los Osos and some of the experts agree that these sites would actually work better without damaging one of the few remaining unspoiled landscapes in San Luis Obispo County. Given the link between quality of life and economic well being, how can the County justify the potential long term damage to our economy by degrading one of San Luis Obispo's most unspoiled places? How can the damage to our economy, recreation, and agriculture be mitigated? I know of no way to re-create a place where artists will line up to paint the beautiful views.

Using the unspoiled natural landscape as a place to locate urban problems is one of the oldest mistakes we make in our society. These kinds of mistakes are evident all around us and San Luis Obispo's remaining natural beauty is one of our greatest assets for quality of life and economic well being. It is particularly disappointing to see our County government favoring the most damaging alternative, especially as we are heading into tough economic times. How can our county possibly mitigate the loss of a crown jewel such as the natural beauty of Turri Road?

I strongly oppose the location of the treatment plant or spray fields on the Tonini property on Turri Road.

Sincerely,


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