



Friends of the Fiscalini Ranch Preserve

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December 7, 2015

Airlin Singewald, Senior Planner
Department of Planning and Building
County of San Luis Obispo
976 Osos Street, Room 300
San Luis Obispo, CA 93408

Via email: asingewald@co.slo.ca.us

Subject: Friends of Fiscalini Ranch Minor Use Permit DRC2015-00016 Request for Information

Dear Mr. Singewald,

I am enclosing the additional information you requested in order to process our application for a Minor Use Permit to conduct a forestry project on the Fiscalini Ranch Preserve. It is my understanding that you required the following information:

1. An estimate of the number of trees proposed for removal
2. An estimate of the amount of site disturbance
3. Documentation from a forester / biologist indicating the proposed reforestation plan will ensure the "long term health and biological continuance of the Monterey pine forest".
4. A peer review letter from a qualified biologist indicating they have reviewed and concur with the project approach, focusing specifically on the adequacy of avoidance, minimization and monitoring measures.
5. A peer review letter from a qualified forester indicating they have reviewed and concur with the project approach, focusing specifically on the adequacy of proposed reforestation strategies.

Item 1 will be addressed below. Items 2, 3 and 5 are addressed in the enclosed letter from Registered Professional Forester, Alan Peters. Item 4 is addressed in the enclosed letter from Rincon biological consultants Michael Tom, Karen Holmes and Colby Boggs. You will note that their letter recommends revisions to the project description. I have also enclosed a summary of my responses to their recommendations.

With regard to Item 1, we have arrived at an estimate by counting the number of trees to be removed in our three 1-acre test plots and extrapolating the result across the 50-acre project area. We used a definition of a tree (as opposed to a sapling) from the U.S. Forest Service as all pines and oaks (the only tree species present in the plots) over 5 inches in diameter or 15 inches in circumference at 4.5 feet from the ground. We estimate that we will be removing approximately 65 trees per acre, over a quarter of which are dead. This translates to approximately 3,150 trees over the entire project area or approximately 27% of the trees standing. Approximately 850 or 26% of the trees to be removed are dead. Some dead trees are also being retained for habitat.

It should also be noted that this estimate is definitely high, and considerably fewer trees are likely to actually be removed. This is due to the fact that the test plots were not selected randomly and are not representative of the entire forest. They were selected due to higher stocking levels requiring more thinning. Moreover, trees located within buffer zones surrounding sensitive species (e.g. wood rat nests, monarchs) have not been subtracted from the total.

Please let me know if any additional information is required.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Holly Sletteland". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Holly Sletteland
Project Manager
Friends of Fiscalini Ranch Preserve

