



August 28, 2023

San Luis Obispo County Planning Commissioners
Via email to Yeighmy@co.slo.ca.us

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SBCAN

P.O. Box 6174
Santa Maria, CA 93456
805.563.0463
ken@sbcancan.org
www.sbcancan.org
Facebook.com/SBCANorg

Dear Commissioners:

Santa Barbara County Action Network, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, works to promote social and economic justice, to preserve our environmental and agricultural resources, and to create sustainable communities.

We urge you to deny the proposed Dana Reserve. We share Nipomo Action Committee's concerns about this project.

We are concerned with impacts to Santa Maria's water basin and the loss of 3,000 oaks and endangered and special status plants on a unique and irreplaceable biological habitat.

Oak woodland and associated Burton Mesa Chaparral on the project site is a unique and irreplaceable biological habitat and the largest remaining oak woodland on private property on the Nipomo Mesa and in the Santa Maria Valley with endangered and special status plants.

The proposed off-site mitigation for oaks is not a replacement of oaks or like habitat and sets an alarming precedent for the future of oak woodlands within San Luis Obispo and Santa Barbara Counties. There is no suitable location for the replacement of the rare maritime chaparral, which is also difficult to reestablish.

Preserving forests is critical to slow global warming. Forty percent of this property has oak forest and woodland. Recent independent calculations demonstrate each year that 3,000 trees (the number proposed for removal) would capture and store in the soil 596,220 lbs. of carbon from the atmosphere each year. Over 20 years this translates to removing 14,120,550 lbs. of carbon sequestration, removing 51,775,380 lbs. of carbon dioxide from the air.

Affordable housing and habitat protection are not mutually exclusive, and we must challenge the developer's narrative that clearcutting oaks and building million-dollar homes is a requirement in order to fund the rest of the project.

Thank you for your consideration,

Ken Hough
Executive Director

Cc: jpaulding@co.slo.ca.us