



MICHAEL E. SOULÉ
CHAIR, ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES

SANTA CRUZ, CALIFORNIA 95064

Thu, Sep 5, 1991

Mr. Cliff Strong
County of San Diego
Dept. of Planning and Land Use
5201 Ruffin Road, Suite B
San Diego, CA 92123

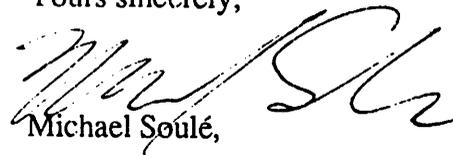
Dear Mr. Strong,

I have been asked to comment on the appropriateness of an 80-acre minimum lot size for inholding in the Cuyamaca National Forest with particular respect to the Central Mountain Subregion Community Plan Update Final EIR.

First, the denaturation (development) of inholdings threatens to destroy the wildlife/habitat value of the entire Forest, for reasons given in my previous letter. While it is conventional wisdom that "ranchette" type development is less harmful to wildlife, this is incorrect. Scattered housing with domestic animals, gardens, orchards, and livestock actually is detrimental to wildlife because such developments are attractive to wildlife, including deer, mountain lions and bobcats. The depredations of these wild animals leads inevitably to their elimination by outraged residents. As far as I know, there are no studies showing the minimum lot size that is consistent with wildlife survival and population viability, but the intuition wildlife biologist to which I have spoken is that lots must be large indeed to minimize the effects mentioned above. Eighty acres is probably a minimum. Below this size, in my opinion, one might as well write off the survival of mountain lions.

Second, San Diego Co. should be brought into conformity with the rest of the state with regard to agricultural zoning lot size minima.

Yours sincerely,


Michael Soulé,
Chair

cc: Cheryl Jones (Planning Commission)



*City of
Encinitas*

October 1, 1991

E. Gail Hano
Mayor

Chairman John MacDonald
Members of the Board of Supervisors
1600 Pacific Highway
San Diego, CA 92101

Maura Wiegand
Deputy Mayor

RE: The Forest Conservation Alternative

Dear Chairman MacDonald and Supervisors:

John Davits
Council Member

On behalf of the City Council I would like to express the City's support for the activities and undertakings of the Save Our Forests and Ranchlands organization. The preservation of the last remaining areas of the County's wildlife habitat is vital if we are to bequeath to our children and grandchildren that quality of life that we, and the Board of Supervisors, are working so earnestly to achieve.

Anne Omsted
Council Member

The City's planning philosophy supports large lot zoning for preservation of forest habitat and we would support a minimum zoning of 1 dwelling unit per 80 acres as presently under consideration. Please consider this matter with utmost care. The future of the County depends on you.

Sincerely,

Pamela Slater
Council Member

E. Gail Hano
Mayor

cc: Duncan McPetridge, Chairman
Save Our Forests and Ranchlands

Warren H. Shafer
City Manager

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United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
FISH AND WILDLIFE ENHANCEMENT
SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA FIELD STATION
Laguna Niguel Office
Federal Building, 24000 Avila Road
Laguna Niguel, California 92656

May 9, 1991

Ms. Cheryl Jones
San Diego Planning Commission
5201 Ruffin Road, Suite B
San Diego, California 92123

Re: Central Mountain Subregion Community Plan Update Final Environmental
Impact Report (FEIR)

Dear Ms. Jones:

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) commends the San Diego County (County) staff's inclusion of a "forest conservation" alternative in the referenced FEIR, and we would like to take this opportunity to support this alternative. The FEIR discusses three alternatives:

1. a "no project" alternative which leaves the existing community plan as is, addressing no environmental concerns and affording minimal environmental protection;
2. a "sponsor groups" alternative which proposes, among other things, an 8-acre minimum lot size for development in this area; and
3. the "forest conservation" alternative which includes a proposed 20-acre minimum lot size.

We understand that in addition to the 20-acre minimum, 40-acre and 80-acre minimums are also being considered under the forest conservation alternative. The Service strongly supports the adoption of an 80-acre minimum lot size as part of the Community Plan update for the following reasons.

The tremendous development pressures in San Diego County are rapidly destroying and fragmenting the remaining natural environment in the County. In fact, development is occurring so rapidly in southern California that fish and wildlife resources and habitats are being extirpated or threatened with extirpation at an alarming rate. This, in turn, is leading to an increased need to list more plant and animal species as threatened or endangered. Currently there are 13 federally-listed threatened or endangered species and 136 candidate species for listing in San Diego County alone, and these numbers are steadily increasing. As more species are included on the list of threatened and endangered species, their mandated conservation will place increasing restrictions on development, eventually leading to possible stalemates between environmental protection and development interests.

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Ms. Cheryl Jones

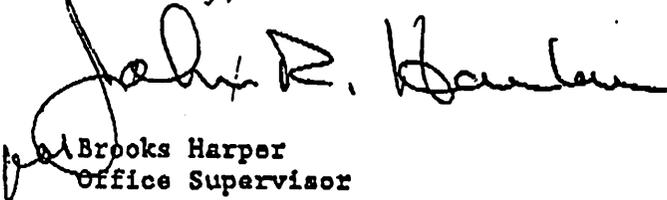
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The Service believes that the only logical approach to alleviate increasing conflicts now and in the future is the development of a regional multi-species conservation plan. The goal of such a plan would be to employ a biologically sound preserve design to identify and protect functioning ecosystems which would maintain the long-term viability of plant and animal species in the County, particularly declining, sensitive, rare, threatened, and endangered species. A comprehensive ecosystem approach is necessary to achieve this goal. Good preserve design within and between development projects can avoid the deleterious effects of habitat fragmentation, thereby avoiding the need for excessive and often expensive management efforts.

A Community Plan incorporating an 80-acre minimum lot size would be an excellent step toward facilitating the development of a multi-species conservation plan for this region. By planning the location and configuration of natural open space areas on proposed development sites and tying this into natural open space on existing developments, as well as on currently preserved parcels (such as National Forests and parks), an invaluable system of reserves and corridors can be established for protection.

The Service is very anxious to work with State and local agencies to initiate such a regional planning effort for the benefit of all concerned. If you have any questions on our comments or would like to discuss these issues further, please contact Suzanne Audet in this office at (714) 643-4270.

Sincerely,


Brooks Harper
Office Supervisor

cc:

Duncan McFetridge, Save Our Forests and Ranchlands, San Diego County, CA
Tom White, U.S. Forest Service, Escondido, CA
William Tippets, California Dept. of Parks and Recreation, San Diego, CA

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