

County of San Luis Obispo Agricultural Liaison Advisory Board



2156 Sierra Way, Suite A
San Luis Obispo, CA 93401 (805) 781-5914

**Agricultural Liaison
Advisory Board (ALAB)**

Positions/Members/Terms

CHAIR: R. Don Warden

District One: Ovitt Appt.
Dan Westigard, (1/09)

District Two: Gibson Appt.
Lisen Bonnier (1/11)

District Three: Lenthall Appt.
Tom Ikeda (1/09)

District Four: Achadjian Appt.
Bill Struble (1/11)

District 5: Patterson Appt.
Christine Maguire (1/09)

Agriculture Finance Rep.
Mark Pearce (8/10)

Cattlemen Rep.
Dick Nock

Coastal San Luis RCD Rep.
Jean-Pierre Wolff (8/11)

Direct Marketing/Organic Rep.
Eric Michielssen (4/12)

Environmental Rep.
Anne McMahon (5/11)

Farm Bureau Rep.
R. Don Warden

Nursery Rep.
David Pruitt (4/12)

Upper Salinas-Las Tablas RCD Rep.
Charles Pritchard (1/10)

Vegetable Rep.
Richard Quandt (4/12)

Wine Grape Rep.
Neil Roberts (4/12)

County Agricultural Commissioner
Bob Lilley, *Ex-Officio*

U.C. Coop. Extension / Farm Advisor
Mary Bianchi, *Ex-Officio*

DRAFT MEETING MINUTES

Monday, November 3, 2008

Guests Present: Alison Jones, Janice Campbell, Brian Rianda (Ag Land Trust, Monterey County), David Broadwater (CSI)

Absent Members: Christine Maguire, Mark Pierce, David Pruitt, Neil Roberts

1. Call to Order: 7:05 PM. Quorum Present

2. Open comment

National Grazing Lands Conservation Initiative National Conference

<http://www.glci.org/>

Location: Sparks NV in December 2009. Group is looking for presenters. Contact Chuck Pritchard for more information.

Sonoma County Open Space District

<http://www.sonomaopenspace.org/>. Meetings with Sonoma District are being planned in SLO County sometime in new year. Anne McMahon is coordinating with Joy Fitzhugh and others.

3. Member/agency reports

- Agriculture Department (Bob Lilley)
 - Provided Planning & Building Department letter to Board of Supervisors regarding Planning programs. Programs to be discussed at Board on Nov. 25 during first quarter budget report.
 - County budget issues and implications – current de facto hiring freeze, downsizing, and reduction in services
 - Inclusionary housing ordinance / housing impact matrix – Planning Dept. exempted winery processing components but not office or tasting facilities.
 - Land Use Planning 101. Wed Nov 5, 6 PM at Farm Bureau. 50 sign-ups. How planning works from the three Divisions of Planning (Current, Long-range, Environmental) plus Agriculture Dept. as referral agency.
 - Conservation and Open Space Element (COSE) – Draft coming out in late November

- Mary Bianchi-
 - Provided UC IPM website www.ipm.ucdavis.edu/ 25,000 hits daily.
 - Kay Mercer hosting Nov. 6 mtg re: nitrate & nutrient interconnections @ Good Neighbor Bakery in Santa Maria.
 - Bill Tietje (UCCE) hosting mtg. re: appreciating oaks in urban landscape. Nov 13 @ Paso Robles Library conference center.
 - Farm Water Quality News – produced by Central Coast Farm Advisors (UCCE). Electronic. Quarterly. Sent to 2000 growers who participated in short course.
 - www.cesanluisobispo.ucdavis.edu/newsletterfiles/newsletter1657.html

4. Minutes: September 8 and October 6 ALAB minutes approved with corrections to the following: October 6 motion on **Item 6** carried 14-0, not 17. September motion **Item 4** carried 12-0, not 13.

5. AGP 16: Agricultural Land Conservation Programs: Brian Rianda, Ag Land Trust (ALT), Monterey brian@rianda.com

- Formed 1984 as the *Monterey County Ag and Historic Land Conservancy*
- Have purchased development rights, but also had some donated and some received as mitigation.
- Typically pay 85% of value with 15% donated by landowner.
- Determine value through a before and after appraisal, with easement negotiation and financing taking 1-2 years on average.
- Can deduct 100% (for farmers), 50% (for others) of adjusted gross income (AGI) against easement value. This deduction carries forward for up to 15 years.
- Reasons for easement: Put cash in pocket without paying tax, keeps property in ag production, helps heirs manage inheritances, potential source of income during difficult times, keeps land in production for future.
- **ALT** holds approx 22,000 acres with approx. 12,000 acres prime land near towns.
- Easements go beyond political area. Politics does not protect farmland resources.
- Primarily funded through CA Department of Conservation (DoC). Also funded with NRCS. Multiple funding partners make process more difficult and generally more restrictive.
- Use standard DoC easement document. ALT easements have no environmental restrictions.
- Challenges for ALT: developers are willing to pay more for land than other farmers or a land trust can afford; locating easements to direct growth away from best land but technological advances has made greater proportion of Salinas Valley high value ag land.
- Agriculture Easement typically creates a single parcel, expunges the right to divide, and limits dumps, surface mining and commercial signs. **ALT** does not restrict the agricultural use of the land.
- Question/Comment Summary from ALAB:
 - Potential problems with easement appraisals; Rianda: not been a problem locally
 - Funding for easements not keeping up with demand--need other approaches such as a long term contract as alternative/supplement to easement, with elimination of estate tax instead of direct funding of easement. Rianda agrees
 - Land use controls—minimum parcel size and interjurisdictional agreements reduce easement value (such as a Memorandum of Understanding between Salinas and County to not take land out of agriculture between city and river/west side of city). Rianda agrees.

- How does farmland mitigation work? Rianda: Political entity places an easement (or received funding) on a piece of land to mitigate for development. **ALT** receives and monitors the property from county or city. **ALT** asks for 3-1 ratio, but mitigation is occurring on a case by case basis without established policy or procedures.

- NO ACTION TAKEN

6. Ordinance to Establish Regulations for the Land Application of Biosolids/Treated Sewage Sludge: Rich Lichtenfelds, Co. Environmental Health

- Current interim ordinance expires Feb. 2010. Need to adopt new ordinance by that time. County Env. Health currently accepting comments on this draft until Dec 1, 2008. A second draft will be made available in late spring 2009.
- County interest is to protect public health. The desire is an ordinance that is simple to implement and administer. Requires any land application of biosolids to utilize Exceptional Quality (EQ) biosolids.
- Based upon relatively low level of land application, the restriction of land application use to only EQ biosolids, EH considers that biosolids are not a critical issue; therefore a short and simple ordinance which encourages composting of biosolids.
- Questions from ALAB included (1) Yardage limit on land application is based upon local production, which had been estimated at 1,500 yards with a 1% growth rate, (2) carry-over from year to year, (3) enforceability and tracking, (4) informing biosolid producers about ordinance provisions, (5) third party on-site monitoring, (6) adequate penalties for violations.
- Mr. Broadwater (Center for Sludge Information) handed out his comment letter, which highlights a number of concerns, including: (1) the accumulation of metal – EQ sludge allows higher metal concentrations than are present in local sludge, (2) EQ biosolids is not adequately restrictive (3) notification of landowners - consent forms, (4) liability issues for landowner. Requests ordinance that complies with Board direction. Phone and email provided on handout.
- NO ACTION TAKEN

7. Pesticide Use Enforcement Program overview

- Health Commission will discuss Pesticide Use Enforcement (PUE) program, ag waiver, and county ag buffer policy at its Nov. 17, 2008 meeting
- **County Agriculture Department – PUE program (Janice Campbell)**
 - Background – pesticide task force. Completed work March 2004.
 - Health Commission Chair wanted to reconvene task force. The task force had recommended reconvening every 3 years. Staff recommended providing annual report.
 - At Nov. 17 meeting, staff will report on CA Dept Pesticide Regulation (DPR) Community Guide (http://www.cdpr.ca.gov/docs/dept/comguide/commtty_guide.pdf), maintenance gardener outreach, and ag waiver program.
 - Question/Comment Summary from ALAB:
 - Is there a solution to the “double standard” between home use and farm use such as education re: how commercial ag follows laws / uses alternatives, applies same materials as used in yards, residential users need to follow labels?
 - Need to educate homeowners to hire licensed applicators (maintenance gardeners), provide education to and through retailers, and make it clear that

homeowners, not applicators, are ultimately liable for pesticide use on their property.

- There is a loss of registrations through DPR for home use in response to urban water quality issues (stormwater).
- **Regional Water Board - Ag. Waiver program (Alison Jones)**
 - Waiver adopted July 04 – needs to be readopted by July 2009
 - Enrollment approx 91-93%, 400,000 acres approx.
 - Grower requirement is to complete 15 hours education and have farm plan.
 - 90% of acreage has completed waiver requirements. Approx 10% still completing.
 - Regional Board is pursuing enforcement and is settling first cases.
 - Waiver required water quality sampling. 2 options: On-farm monitoring or cooperative monitoring. There are 50 sites with cooperative monitoring in region
 - Sampling occurs monthly with toxicity testing 4x/yearly and sediment 1x/yearly. Toxicity tests 3 species: insect (invert), fish, and algae.
 - SLO sites include: Chorro Cr, Warden Cr, Prefumo Cr/SLO Cr, and Oso Flaco
 - Water quality issues in SLO County
 - Very little toxicity, although several sites with relatively high nutrient levels.
 - Oso Flaco creek occasionally shows toxicity.
 - Some sites have high nutrient levels, but limited organophosphate contamination (primarily Chlorpyrifos, Diazinon)
 - Regional Board working with growers to address water runoff – changes in irrigation management.
- NO ACTION TAKEN

8. NEXT MEETING - DECEMBER 1

Future agenda items

- Economic Element: Dana Lilley, Long Range Planning
- RCD (AGP 16: agricultural land conservation): John-Pierre Wolff, Coastal RCD
- Conservation Element: James Caruso
- Nature Conservancy(AGP 16: agricultural land conservation)
- Health Commission follow-up: Ag. Dept.
- Planning priorities – future
- Grading Ordinance – future

Meeting adjourned: 9:16 PM