

## **I. INTRODUCTION**

### **A. PROJECT BACKGROUND**

The proposed project consists of the subdivision of 21 parcels (totaling approximately 1,910 acres) into 106 lots, including 102 residential lots, one acre each; four build-able open space lots totaling approximately 1,787 acres; and, approximately 25 acres of internal residential roads. Approximately 113 acres of existing vineyard would be removed to accommodate proposed development and buffer zones. Approximately 140 acres of replacement vineyard would be replanted onsite. Development proposed within the open space lots includes a homeowner's association facility, recreation center, community center ("ranch headquarters"), and an equestrian facility. The proposed project would be developed in three phases. Additional components include the construction of a wastewater treatment plant, treated effluent storage ponds, effluent disposal/irrigation system, drilling of two new wells, construction of a water storage tank, installation of private water service lines, entry gates and features, public utility extensions, and landscaping. In addition to these three phases, the applicant proposes a 7.7-acre dude ranch within one of the open space lots. The applicant is not currently requesting a permit to construct the dude ranch; however, the dude ranch is included in this Environmental Impact Report (EIR) as a future development proposal.

### **B. PROJECT HISTORY**

In 1982, French winemaker Andre Allier-Deutz purchased the undeveloped project site and planted the Maison Deutz Vineyard. The winery and storage area were constructed in 1983. By 1984, the project site supported approximately 185 acres of wine grapes. In 1997, the project site was sold and re-named the Laetitia Vineyard and Winery. A tasting room, owner's residence, two farm support quarters, two irrigation reservoirs and associated pipelines, water wells, and several agricultural accessory buildings were constructed onsite. In addition to wine grapes, lemon orchards are cultivated onsite, and livestock grazing land is located in the far northeastern corner of the project site. Special events were also held at the winery for several years, including receptions, banquets, weddings, concerts, wine tasting events, and charity functions.

Existing structures onsite include a 19,278-square foot wine processing building, a 5,572-square foot hospitality building, 47-space parking lot, 11 wells, and access roads. In November 2000, a Sprint cellular facility was approved on the project site (County Permit Number D000190D). A proposal for two additional equipment cabinets was approved in March 2003 (County Permit Number C4453).

Several land use and development permits were applied for between 1999 and 2002, including a proposal for a 200,000-square foot winery expansion, construction of wine barrel storage caves, and two wastewater treatment ponds (County Project Number D990134D). The landowners revised the project to consist of a 44,000-square foot expansion limited to the production and processing building, tasting room, parking area, and special events (County Project Number D990349D). The wastewater pond was constructed under County Permit Number C0842, approved July 2000. The applicant has withdrawn prior land use permit applications related to expansion of the winery facility, tasting room, and special events. Special events are limited to

those currently occurring approximately six times per year, wine industry related, by invitation only, and limited to less than 200 guests.

### **C. PURPOSE OF THE EIR**

This EIR has been prepared in accordance with the State and County administrative guidelines established to comply with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) of 1970, as amended. Section 15151 of the State CEQA *Guidelines* provides the following standards for EIR adequacy:

*“An EIR should be prepared with a sufficient degree of analysis to provide decision makers with information which enables them to make a decision which intelligently takes account of environmental consequences. An evaluation of the environmental effects of a proposed project need not be exhaustive, but the sufficiency of an EIR is to be reviewed in light of what is reasonably feasible. Disagreement among experts does not make an EIR inadequate, but the EIR should summarize the main points of disagreement among the experts. The courts have looked not for perfection but for adequacy, completeness, and a good faith effort at full disclosure.”*

The purpose of this EIR is to identify the proposed project’s significant impacts on the environment, to indicate the manner in which such significant impacts will be mitigated or avoided, and to identify alternatives to the proposed project that avoid or reduce these impacts. This EIR is intended to serve as an informational document for use by the County of San Luis Obispo, other responsible agencies, and the general public in their consideration and evaluation of the environmental consequences associated with the implementation of the proposed project. This document is provided to the public and decision-makers for their review and comment as required by CEQA.

Under the CEQA process, an EIR must serve as a full disclosure document that enables the lead and responsible agencies to fully evaluate potential environmental impacts and the consequences of their decision on a proposed project. This EIR has been written to comply with the requirements of CEQA for the analysis of the proposed project, as well as the development and evaluation of alternatives to the proposed project.

### **D. EIR STRUCTURE**

Contents of the EIR are outlined below and the appendices contain background and technical information compiled and developed throughout the environmental review process. Contents of the EIR were determined from the results of an Initial Study prepared by the County of San Luis Obispo, as the lead agency, and responses from the Notice of Preparation (NOP) for the EIR that was sent to responsible agencies. The Initial Study, the NOP, and comment letters received during the NOP review period are included in Appendix A.

#### **1. Scoping Process**

In compliance with State CEQA Guidelines, the County of San Luis Obispo has taken steps to maximize opportunities to participate in the environmental process. During the environmental

determination process, an effort was made to contact various federal, state, regional, and local governmental agencies and other interested parties to solicit comments and inform the public of the proposed project. This included the distribution of the NOP on April 15, 2005, to various agencies, organizations, and interested persons throughout the county and surrounding area. The proposed project was described, the scope of the environmental review was identified, and agencies and the public were invited to review and comment on the NOP. The close of the NOP review period was May 17, 2005. Agencies, organizations, and interested parties not contacted or who did not respond to the request for comments about the project at the time of distribution of the NOP currently have the opportunity to comment during the 45-day public review period on the Draft EIR (refer to Section G below).

## 2. EIR Contents

The scope of the EIR includes issues identified by the lead agency during the preparation of the NOP for the proposed project, as well as environmental issues raised by agencies and the general public in response to the NOP.

The EIR is divided into the following major sections:

**Introduction.** Provides the purpose of an EIR, scope and content of the document, and the use of the document.

**Summary.** Provides a brief summary of the project description, impacts and mitigation measures, alternatives, growth inducing impacts, and the monitoring program.

**Project Description.** Provides the general background of the project, objectives, a detailed description of the project characteristics, and a listing of necessary permits and government approvals.

**Environmental Setting.** Describes the physical setting and surrounding land uses.

**Environmental Impacts and Mitigation Measures.** Discusses the environmental setting as it relates to the various issue areas, regulatory setting, thresholds of significance, impact assessment and methodology, project-specific impacts and mitigation measures, cumulative impacts, and secondary impacts. The EIR analyzes the potentially significant impacts to the following resource areas, as identified during the preparation of the NOP.

- Geology and Soils
- Water Resources
- Biological Resources
- Paleontological Resources
- Archaeological Resources
- Historic Resources
- Agricultural Resources
- Transportation and Circulation
- Air Quality
- Noise
- Aesthetics
- Wastewater
- Recreation
- Hazards and Hazardous Materials
- Public Services and Utilities
- Population and Housing
- Growth Inducing Impacts
- Irreversible Changes

**Alternatives Analysis.** Summarizes the environmental advantages and disadvantages associated with the proposed project and the alternatives. Consistent with the CEQA Guidelines, the alternatives analysis discusses impacts on a general, qualitative level rather than a detailed analysis. As required, the “No Project” alternative is included among the alternatives considered. If the “No Project” alternative is identified as the “Environmentally Superior Alternative,” then the “Environmentally Superior Alternative” is chosen from the other alternatives.

**Environmental Analysis.** Identifies growth inducing impacts, including the spatial, economic, and/or population growth impacts that may result from implementation of the proposed project. This section also includes a discussion of long-term/short-term productivity and irreversible environmental changes.

**Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Plan.** This section contains a listing of all mitigation measures contained in the EIR, the requirements of the mitigation measures, the applicant’s responsibility and timing for implementation of these measures, the party responsible for verification, the method of verification, and verification timing.

## E. AGENCY USE OF THE DOCUMENT

The County of San Luis Obispo, as the CEQA lead agency, is responsible for administering the preparation of the EIR and will be responsible for certifying the Final EIR. Lead agency reviewers and decision-makers (i.e., the Planning Commission and the Board of Supervisors) will use the EIR as an informational document to assist in the decision-making process, ultimately resulting in the approval, denial, or assignment of conditions to the project. The following jurisdictions may also use this EIR in reviewing and issuing their respective permits and authorizations (as applicable):

- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
- California Department of Fish and Game
- California Department of Transportation
- Regional Water Quality Control Board
- San Luis Obispo County Air Pollution Control District

## F. PROJECT SPONSORS AND CONTACT PERSONS

Key contact persons are as follows:

Lead Agency: County of San Luis Obispo  
Department of Planning and Building  
County Government Center, Room 200  
San Luis Obispo, CA 93408  
Mr. Brian Pedrotti, Project Manager

Project Applicant: Janneck, Limited  
116 Cory Avenue  
Los Angeles, CA 90069  
Mr. John Janneck

Environmental Consultant: Morro Group, a Division of SWCA  
1422 Monterey Street, Suite C200  
San Luis Obispo, CA 93401  
Ms. Shawna Scott, Project Manager

**G. REVIEW OF THE DRAFT EIR**

This Draft EIR was distributed to responsible and trustee agencies, other affected agencies, surrounding cities, and interested parties, as well as all parties requesting a copy of the Draft EIR in accordance with Public Resources Code 21092(b)(3). The Notice of Completion of the Draft EIR was also distributed as required by CEQA. The 45-day public review period begins on September 22, 2008. During this period the EIR, including technical appendices, is available for review at the following locations:

County of San Luis Obispo	San Luis Obispo City/County Library
Planning and Building Department	995 Palm Street
County Government Center Room 200	San Luis Obispo, CA
San Luis Obispo, CA 93408	

On behalf of the lead agency, comments on the Draft EIR shall be addressed to:

Mr. Brian Pedrotti, Project Manager  
County of San Luis Obispo  
Department of Planning and Building  
County Government Center, Room 200  
San Luis Obispo, CA 93408

The 45-day public review period will end on November 8, 2008. Written responses to all significant environmental issues raised will be prepared and included as part of the Final EIR and the environmental record for consideration by decision-makers for the project.

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