

**Alicia Murillo**

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**From:** cdbbosmail@co.santa-cruz.ca.us  
**Sent:** Friday, April 10, 2015 3:17 PM  
**To:** CBD BOSMAIL  
**Subject:** Agenda Comments

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**Meeting Date :** 4/14/2015

**Meeting Type :** County Board of Supervisors

**Item Number :** 72.00

**Name :** Kevin Flynn

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Santa Cruz County

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**Comments :**

Please incorporate the following language into this resolution:

- WHEREAS, working lands are at risk of conversion to development (delete 'other uses')

and:

- Supporting the long-term economic viability of farming, forestry, and ranching by minimizing the loss of suitable working land to development, to maintain the land base, by providing.....

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The common ground of protecting working lands from development is a cause that reflects the the opinion of a large majority of Santa Cruz County residents. Language in the resolution should reflect only the issue of conversion of working lands to development. Santa Cruz County should not go on record as being in favor of a resolution that does not discriminate between creating parkland, open space and saving girl scout camps via conservation easements versus the creation of strip mall developments. The current draft of the resolution does not make that delineation. Let's hope the final document does.

The Board of Supervisors should do what they can to see more stories like the one below, instead of less.

From the Gordon & Betty Moore Foundation Website March 1 2012:

"Forever Green," now rings more true thanks to the purchase by Sempervirens Fund of conservation easements on two Girl Scout properties in the Santa Cruz Mountains that will protect redwood forests and habitat from subdivision, development, and commercial timber harvest while enabling Girl Scouts to continue camp operations. ....On March 1, Sempervirens Fund purchased conservation easements in the amount of \$2.86 million for two Girl Scout properties: the 270-acre Skylark Ranch near Ano Nuevo and the 142-acre Camp Butano Creek

near Pescadero.... Almost 10,000 campers enjoy over 36,000 days of summer and school-year camp experiences on these properties each year. ...."Girl Scouts have always been green, starting with our long-standing pledge to 'use resources wisely,'" said Marina Park, CEO of Girl Scouts of Northern California. "The conservation easements are win-win, helping us contribute to the conservation of our beautiful redwood forests while also providing funds to help conserve our properties and the camp experience for girls."

**From:** Nancy Macy [mailto:nbbm@cruzio.com]  
**Sent:** Thursday, April 09, 2015 3:51 PM  
**To:** Rachel Dann  
**Subject:** Re: Letter Regarding Working Lands Resolution

Bruce McPherson, Supervisor  
Board of Supervisors  
County of Santa Cruz  
701 Ocean St.  
Santa Cruz, CA 95060

April 7, 2015

RE: Working Lands Resolution

Dear Supervisor McPherson,

We appreciate the effort by you and your staff, especially Robin Musitelli, to provide us with information and materials related to the proposed Working Lands Resolution. It is readily apparent that significant sections of the Land Trust's *Conservation Blueprint Highlights*, and of the Resource Conservation District's *Healthy Lands & Healthy Economies: Nature's Value in Santa Cruz County*, provided impetus and language for the Resolution. We understand that the Farm Bureau also supported such a resolution.

It is important to prevent conversion of wild lands and working lands to housing. It is also important to control suburban sprawl, actively address climate change, reduce pollution, protect water resources, and recognize the economic value of our dwindling local natural resources. These efforts are all vital to the future environmental and economic well-being of our county. These central issues are analyzed in the aforementioned reports, making them valuable planning tools.

Knowing this background, however, does not eliminate remaining problems with the Working Lands Resolution, in spite of changes like removing hot-button language relating to "streamlining" the permit process.

While the Resolution quotes the *Blueprint Highlights*, when it states that working lands "provide valuable ecosystem services including wildlife habitat, clean water, and clean air," the Blueprint included a lot more. It analyzed and mapped several different categories of lands in Santa Cruz County, including water supply watersheds, developed land, lands containing critical habitat, and working lands, stating where they overlap. It acknowledged that working lands have real problems (erosion, groundwater overdraft, water and habitat degradation, and air pollution among them) and says, "To protect these working lands, the *Blueprint* recommends strategies to improve *how working lands are cared for* and to ensure their economic viability." (italics added)

The Resolution, however, lumps timber, farm and range lands together as equally valuable to the natural ecosystem, when some significantly modify the natural ecosystem. There is no acknowledgement of the importance of reducing negative impacts that working lands have. The implication is that "well managed" lands are beneficial to the natural ecosystem, but that is not a given, and the opposite is too often the case

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The presumed goal of a resolution of this type should be more than just recognition of the value of working lands. The resolution should also establish planning priorities and policies. As such, clarity of language and intent is important. Thus, we take issue with the Working Lands Resolution for many reasons, including the following:

As written, the Resolution inflates and conflates the environmental benefits — the ecosystem services — of working lands, while ignoring the potential degradation of each type. As written, the Resolution could be misused to justify the elimination of existing environmental regulations and to allow variances to the detriment of environmental integrity.

As written, the Resolution can be used to support policies to limit or thwart placement of the land under conservation easements or sale to public agencies (water districts, parks, etc.) for preservation as watershed, forest, waterway or habitat, despite the agreement of willing sellers being paid market value for their land. If such policies, that would limit conversion of working lands, had been put in place in the past, remarkable areas, such as Coast Land Dairy public lands, Elkhorn Slough National Estuarine Research Reserve and the Lompico Headwaters, would not have been preserved and protected. Some working lands should be converted to preserved lands to promote natural ecosystems.

The viability of working lands is no doubt important; these areas contribute to our economy by providing jobs, and they produce food and building products. Maintaining their viability, a stated goal, necessarily involves improving management practices, as they help to prevent conversion to housing development and suburban sprawl.

**However, a better Resolution would not assume that working lands are already “well-managed.” It would not lump them together as equally beneficial. It would not fail to acknowledge that preserving them as open space through purchase or conservation easement is a higher use and does a better job of providing the identified ecosystem services.**

A better Resolution would present the economic importance of working lands, and then define each type’s potential environmental importance without exaggeration (primarily protection from development). It would acknowledge that management of each kind of working land has the obligation to reduce its negative impacts in order to realize other potential environmental benefits.

At a minimum, such a Resolution should acknowledge the value of other types of land that preserve open space, with language such as, “While supporting working lands, Santa Cruz County also recognizes the important economic, recreational and environmental value of protected and preserved parklands, open space, preserved lands and lands under conservation easement within the county. No aspect of this resolution should be construed to diminish the county’s continued efforts to encourage the creation, protection and preservation of such lands.”

For these stated concerns, we urge you to reject the Working Lands Resolution as written.

Respectfully,

Nancy B. Macy, Co-Chair, Valley Women's Club's Environmental Committee for the  
SLV

Kevin Flynn, Member, Sempervirens Fund Board of Directors

Betsy Herbert, Environmental Writer

Jodi Frediani, Director, Central Coast Forest Watch

Jacqueline Wender, Vice-President, Sempervirens Fund Board of Directors

Jennifer Parks, Resident of Boulder Creek

Gillian Greensite, Chair, Conservation Committee, Santa Cruz Sierra Club

Patricia Matajcek, Member, Santa Cruz Sierra Club

Carol Carson, Environmentalist

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**From:** Kevin Flynn [mailto:keflynn1@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** Friday, April 10, 2015 2:40 PM  
**To:** Ryan Coonerty  
**Cc:** Bruce McPherson; John Leopold; Zach Friend; Greg Caput  
**Subject:** Working Lands Resolution - Girl Scout Camps Conservation Easement

Dear Supervisor Coonerty,

Please extend my thanks to Rachel Dann and Andy Schiffrin for taking the time yesterday to discuss what is, needless to say, a complicated topic.

The common ground of protecting working lands from development is a cause that both sides agree on and reflects the best interests and the opinion of a large majority of Santa Cruz County residents.

Expanding on the meeting with Rachel and Andy, I want to reiterate the importance of conservation easements and why language in the resolution should reflect only the issue of conversion of working lands to development.

Here is background on what was done in 2012 to save two girl scout camps in the Santa Cruz Mountains. I hope Santa Cruz County will not go on record as being in favor of a resolution that does not discriminate between saving girl scout camps and the creation of strip mall developments. The current draft of the resolution does not make that delineation. Let's hope the final document does.

Regards,

Kevin Flynn  
Member, Board of Directors  
Sempervirens Fund

From the Gordon & Betty Moore Foundation Website March 1 2012:  
<http://www.moore.org/newsroom/press-releases/2012/03/01/sempervirens-fund-purchases-conservation-easements-on-two-girl-scout-properties-in-santa-cruz-mountains>

*The Girl Scouts' 100th anniversary celebration theme, "Forever Green," now rings more true thanks to the purchase by Sempervirens Fund of conservation easements on two Girl Scout properties in the Santa Cruz Mountains that will protect redwood forests and habitat from subdivision, development, and commercial timber harvest while enabling Girl Scouts to continue camp operations. ....On March 1, Sempervirens Fund purchased conservation easements in the amount of \$2.86 million for two Girl Scout properties: the 270-acre Skylark Ranch near Ano Nuevo and the 142-acre Camp Butano Creek near Pescadero.... Almost 10,000 campers enjoy over 36,000 days of summer and school-year camp experiences on these properties each year. ...."Girl Scouts have always been green, starting with our long-standing pledge to 'use resources wisely,'" said Marina Park, CEO of Girl Scouts of Northern California. "The conservation easements are win-win, helping us contribute to the conservation of our beautiful redwood forests while also providing funds to help conserve our properties and the camp experience for girls."*

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