

Steve Thompson, Chairman
Marin County Planning Commission
3501 Civic Center Drive
San Rafael, CA 94903

August 29, 2005

Re: Draft Environmental Impact Report for Lawson's Landing Master Plan, Coastal Permit, and Tidelands Permit

Dear Chairman Thompson and Commissioners,

We appreciate the opportunity to comment on this matter, which is so important to Marin County and to the California coastal region. Although each of the undersigned organizations is sending you a separate letter with detailed comments, we also wish to speak to you on this issue with a common voice. The failure to enforce environmental and public health and safety regulations at Lawson's Landing has been an embarrassment and a blight on the County for more than four decades. We look forward to working with the County and the Owners to resolve this unsatisfactory state of affairs. In October 2000, we provided the County with a detailed critique of the Initial Study which led to the commissioning of this Draft Environmental Impact Report. (Since our letter was inexplicably omitted from the scoping letters reproduced in Appendix B of the DEIR, we provide it here as Attachment A). Despite the years it has taken to complete this DEIR, it is a deeply disappointing document. It fails to address key issues or answer key questions, many of which were raised in our October 2000 letter. As a result, the DEIR does not provide the information or analysis required by CEQA.

Among the DEIR's major deficiencies:

The DEIR fails to provide information on existing uses. Our October 2000 letter specifically asked that the actual use levels be determined for RV camping, day users, and permanent travel trailers (Attachment A, p.13 & 14). Failure to provide this information means that the DEIR fails in its intention of establishing a baseline of existing uses.

The DEIR fails to establish which uses are un-permitted or legal non-conforming. Our October 2000 letter specifically asked that un-permitted uses be identified (Attachment A, p.11-12). Identifying these uses would not be difficult, given the existing documentation on the history of this property in County files, including earlier planning documents, (especially the 1975 Hoffman and Albritton Master Plan and the 1977 Del Davis Environmental Impact Report), the 2000 Chronology produced by County staff, the Local Coastal Plan and the Dillon Beach Community Plan. Failure to make any effort to identify un-permitted uses has resulted in a No Project Alternative

that makes a laughingstock of the County (and other responsible public agencies) by explicitly stating that in the absence of Project approval, illegal operations will continue on the property without enforcement of County or State regulations.

The Project Description is too vague. Our October 2000 letter pointed out that it is impossible to assess Project impacts without more detailed information, including the specific locations where camping and parking would be allowed. (Attachment A,, p.4-5. This information was not only requested by us, but was required by the County for the Lawson's 1968 Master Plan (Final EIR, Lawson's Landing, October, 1977, p.13) and is required in the Dillon Beach Community Plan (pg 6-31 Policy CD-14.1). Nonetheless, this information is missing from the DEIR.

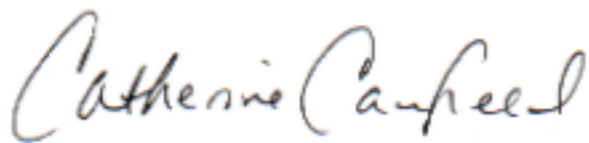
The DEIR fails to provide essential information. Our October 2000 letter also pointed out the need for more information regarding, *inter alia*, endangered species, invasive species, wetlands, marine resources, cultural resources the agricultural management plan, the consistency of the Project with the Williamson Act contract, details of required permanent conservation easement, and compliance with density limitations on agricultural and recreational parcels. The DEIR fails to provide this information, though in some cases, it recommends further studies *after Project approval*. In addition, the DEIR fails to consider the environmental impacts of proposed mitigations, such as the relocation of the wastewater treatment system and the emergency access road.

The DEIR cannot and does not adequately identify, evaluate, or mitigate the impacts of the Project. The failure to establish actual levels of existing uses, to distinguish between legal and illegal uses means, to provide detailed Project information, to obtain detailed scientific data, and to provide basic zoning information means that, as we point out in our individual letters, the DEIR's impact mitigations, cumulative impact mitigations, and Project alternatives are inadequate.

Although we would like to see the problems at Lawson's Landing resolved as soon as possible, we recognize that this DEIR does not begin to provide the information needed to identify and mitigate the Project's potentially significant environmental impacts, as required by CEQA. We urge you to direct staff to revise and re-circulate the DEIR with the information necessary to meet CEQA requirements, including Project Alternatives that reduce Project impacts. We also urge that the revised DEIR be completed in a timely manner and that the County and other public agencies take enforcement action on illegal uses on the site to protect the environment and public health and safety and to encourage a expeditious resolution of this matter.

Thank you for considering our comments.

Sincerely,



Catherine Caufield
Environmental Action Committee of West Marin,

On behalf of the following:

Barbara Salzman
Marin Audubon Society

Robert Soost
Marin Chapter, California Native Plant Society

Jana Haehl
Marin Conservation League

Monica Hunter
Planning and Conservation League

Gordon Bennett
Sierra Club, Marin Chapter

Ken Fox
Tomales Bay Association

cc: California Coastal Commission, Regional Water Quality Control Board

Attachment A: Letter from California Environmental Law Project on behalf of the Coalition to Protect Tomales Dunes, October 23, 2000