



Mission Statement: Protect the long-term economic and environmental viability of Napa Valley by addressing climate change through the preservation and the restoration of the natural environment and resources upon which the health of our vineyards, wineries and entire community relies.

Save Napa Valley Foundation advocates on behalf of Napa Valley, a national treasure, to assure its agriculturally based community endures into perpetuity.

January 11, 2023

NO to Le Colline!

Unprecedented has become the word of our times; unprecedented heat, drought, wildfires, winds, storms, and floods, not to mention tornados and hurricanes in other parts of the country and around the world. As these realities confirm the climate crisis, are we in Napa County stepping up to take unprecedented action? Sadly, the answer remains no.

As I sat in my house early Tuesday morning in this storm, with wind howling, rain streaming down and power dead, I worked by an oil lamp. Then the Napa Register flashed across my battery powered screen. I read quickly, finishing the article that caught my eye, just as the internet went down...

The title read, "Napa County decision on proposed Le Colline Vineyard coming." If permitted, this project would require cutting down 25 acres of mature conifers and ripping out nine acres of grasslands, all directly adjacent to the 177-acre Linda Falls Preserve in Angwin, owned by The Land Trust of Napa County. For those who aren't familiar with Linda Falls, it is one of the most scenic topographies and easily accessible hiking trails in Napa County. From its headwaters in Angwin, Conn Creek flows through the falls, through Conn Valley and on to Lake Hennessey, the major source of water for the City of Napa.

Evidently, based on our county government's opinions to date, we don't have to be concerned about the carbon that those 25 acres of mature trees currently sequester or the soil their roots hold in place. Nor should we worry about the loss of wildlife habitat and corridors, or the proposed vineyard's nitrogen rich sediment, a major cause of algae bloom, that will flow through Linda Falls and on to Lake Hennessey. We should also close our eyes and noses to the current algae bloom problems at Lake Hennessey and not think about how the development would only exacerbate this very real issue.

Opponents of this project have offered to find an alternate property to develop as vineyard; others have implored the owner and powers that be to at least reduce the size of the development. To the first, the owner had no interest, and to the second his attorney expressed the need to protect potential profit. Given current development and licensing costs for a project such as this and the years it will take before there is wine to sell, it is unlikely that this development will ever make a profit.

If potential profit is any basis for the county's decision as stated in the article, an independent cost/profit analysis should be done before a final decision is made. Yet, profit should not play any role

in the County's decision-making process concerning any proposed development. That is not the government's job.

Bottom line, Napa County's General Plan, under Conservation Element #65, states that the *county will maintain and enhance carbon sequestration*. In addition, the Board of Supervisors and every city in Napa County passed a Climate Emergency Resolution with the stated intention to "Do no more harm." Are these just meaningless, "Say what they want to hear and move on," documents? Every development that replaces a forest for a vineyard or a large home with landscaping is doing further harm.

Our Unprecedented Climate Crisis requires Unprecedented Action now. Hence, every project and policy must be evaluated first and foremost through a Climate Crisis Emergency lens. Our leaders need to address policies that enable environmental harm. It is too late for committees, meetings, and consultants. It is time for action. As Napa Students for Climate Action have repeatedly said, "You know what to do." Now, the only thing needed is the courage to do it.

Over the next 10 or so days, courage means saying no, no to the harm that the Le Colline development would unleash on our natural environment through the loss of carbon storing mature forest, deleterious impacts on wildlife, and on our precious water resources. Approval of this project will exacerbate our Climate Emergency. This development of beautiful open space and forest land must be stopped. We have a moral obligation to do no further harm.

Sincerely,

Laurie Claudon

Laurie Claudon-Clark
Secretary
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