

**Gordon Family Ranch**  
6060 Gordon Valley Road  
Napa, Calif. 94558  
5/1/07

**Patrick Lowe, Deputy Director**  
**Napa County Planning Department**

### **General Plan Comments**

My name is Don Gordon and I live and farm in the Gordon Valley area in the eastern part of Napa County near the southern end of the Vaca Mountain Range. I have previously sent comments, which are attached, and I wish to reintroduce and add to them.

For those of you who are not familiar with the area we are a small valley approximately 300 acres 15 miles east of downtown Napa. The soils in this area are good and have been farmed for generations. Our primary crop on the valley floor is Wine Grapes with a very small acreage of Walnuts (4 acres). There are also some hillside vineyards on the more gentle slopes. The adjoining rolling hills are primarily leased out for cattle grazing.

We have a land zoning issue in this area that should be brought into conformity with the rest of the county. A majority of our valley is in an Agricultural Resource Area as defined in the Napa County General Plan (See Attached Map). We farm and have similar soil types and ground slopes as the Wooden Valley Area yet we are excluded from The Ag Preserve and the benefits of having 40 acre Zoning. We were blanket zoned several years ago into a situation of no parcel splits with less than 320 acres. (Please see attached comments submitted previously) We protested the zoning at that time but were told by staff not to worry because we were in a Ag Resource area and it would be changed to AP zoning and we would be able to have smaller lot sizes. This did not happen!! Now is the time for the county to look and rezone these designated as Ag Resource Areas.

We do not have the opportunity to farm smaller parcels and put housing on them for ourselves and our employees. Preventing the next generation from living on the ranch effectively prevents them from participating in the family farm. Preventing employee housing increases the already arduous hardship of running an efficient and successful operation. This is creating an inequity for agriculturalists in our area since we cannot share the benefits of AP zoning as other parts of the county.

The parcels on the attached map all have a portion of, or are entirely within the Ag Resource Area. I propose the inclusion of all of these parcels into the Ag Preserve. This part of the county has been overlooked for years as a premium grape growing area but it has proven itself during the last 20 years and should be treated as other similar areas in the county and zoned AP.

The Ag Resource line on the existing map is not at all accurate. It encompasses some, bisects others and misses several areas of prime Ag land that should be included within the Ag Resource boundary.

I propose the adjustment of the Ag Resource line on the map to include all of the parcels that include the prime soils of the Gordon valley floor. The zoning on these parcels should be changed to AP 40 to be consistent with other similar areas within Napa County. This addition to the Ag Resource Area includes no areas with more slope than what is already included in the existing Ag Resource Area. The parcels that should be included in this adjustment are Parcel's # 33-220-05, 33-180-01, 33-170-15, 33-220-07, and 33-170-02.

Attached to this letter please find:

1. History of Zoning in the Gordon Valley Area
2. Comments previously submitted
3. County Map showing Ag. Resource Areas within County
4. Map of Ag Preserves lands Napa County
5. Map Showing Existing Ag. Resource Area Gordon Valley
6. Map Showing Proposed Ag. Resource Area Gordon Valley
7. Signed support of proposal by all affected parcel owners.
8. Parcel Maps showing Parcels proposed to be changed.
9. Google map of entire Valley
10. Section showing pictures of Farms & Ranches farmed in the Gordon Valley.

Thank you for considering these points in your planning and zoning decisions. Your decisions do affect farm families that are trying to keep the family on the farm but finding it extremely difficult with zoning the way it is at this time.



Don Gordon

Gordon Ranch \* Loney Ranch \* Gordon Family Ranch \* Morgan Ranch



**Don Gordon**

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Fax

6060 GORDON VALLEY ROAD NAPA CALIFORNIA 94558-8611

## **1. History of Zoning in Gordon Valley**

- a. Mistakes made in the 1950's allowing liberal parcel splits thinking that Gordon Valley would be part of Fairfield some day.
- b. 1970's County saw mistake and changed to Ag Watershed 80 to 320 to split, which was overkill for some areas.
- c. 1970's first general plan designated a haphazard line as an Ag Resource area in the vicinity. This line chopped up parcels and was not at all accurate to prime Ag soils or mild slopes.
- d. 1970's Wooden Valley made Ag Preserve zoning.
- e. 1983 our family committed our entire upper rangeland ranch to 400-acre parcels and put them in Williamson Act. We held out the lower parcel with prime soils and rolling foothills to split for family housing at a later date as needed.
- f. 1990's Measure J passed which is designed to keep Agriculture in Napa County. One thing it did not address was how to zone from one Ag type zoning to another Ag type zoning. Example; Ag Watershed to Ag Resource or Ag Preserve. In many areas of our county, especially in the outlying valleys, zoning discrepancies have never been corrected.
- g. 1993 County made all Ag Watershed 320 to split thus taking away the option to split on lower parcel. We protested this change at that time and were told by staff that they were going to look at Ag resource areas individually and rezone them.
- h. From that point on it was put on the back burner and never reviewed.

Please turn page

## **What Should be Done with This General Plan**

### **2. All Ag Resource Areas should be reviewed.**

- a. Flawed lines should be studied and changes considered as promised in the past.
- b. AP Zoning should be considered for other valley and low rolling foothill areas of the county.
- c. Ag Resource lines should be more closely aligned with parcel lines for simplicity of administration.
- d. Meet the goals of the general plan by balancing the needs of Ag Preservation and personal needs of the folks that live and work in our agricultural areas.

## General Plan Update

The Zoning in the Gordon Valley Area of Napa County should be looked at very closely. It has been haphazardly zoned in the past with little study put towards its actual use or needs of its inhabitants.

During the late 1950's it was zoned rural residential with 5 to 20 acre parcels permitted. The thinking behind this was that it would someday be gobbled up by Fairfield. This was a huge mistake and we now have homes in extremely steep and hazardous areas prone to mudslides and wildfire.

During the last Zoning change it was blanket Zoned 160 or 320 to split anything. This was an overkill in the opposite direction. We must look at this area & fine tune the zoning to more fit the soil types and individual areas. When the Ag Preserve was created they left Gordon Valley out thinking it would become part of Fairfield. I think it might be time to look towards putting portions of Gordon Valley into the Ag Preserve. Much of the area is class 1 soils and intensively farms which fits the criteria of the Ag. Preserve. As the other outer valleys it is becoming known for the premium grapes that can be grown here. The areas that are put into Ag Preserve could be Zoned to 40 acres minimum and give the opportunity to split some of the more intensively farmed areas so more buildings could be allowed.

Please consider the above thoughts during the development of the new General Plan.

Don Gordon

Submitted March 29, 2005

## Land Use Map

The Land Use Map Provides a Generalized Picture of the Goals and Policies Contained in the Land Use Element Report Using Eight Broad Land Use Classifications and Eight Symbols. The Map Presents a Graphic Overview of the General Distribution and Location of Major Land Use Areas and Facilities.

## The Land Use element of The Napa County General Plan

Including the Map was amended by the Napa County Board of Supervisors, 1998, subject to a vote of the People by Resolution No.

02-01 on March 25, 2002

*Bill Ladd* Director

Approved by *Mary Jo Stapp* May 1998 and 1999, Clerk of the Board

### Legend

#### General Plan

##### URBAN

- Cities
- Urban Residential
- Rural Residential
- Commercial
- Industrial
- Public-Institutional

##### OPEN SPACE

- Agriculture, Watershed & Open Space
- Agricultural Resource

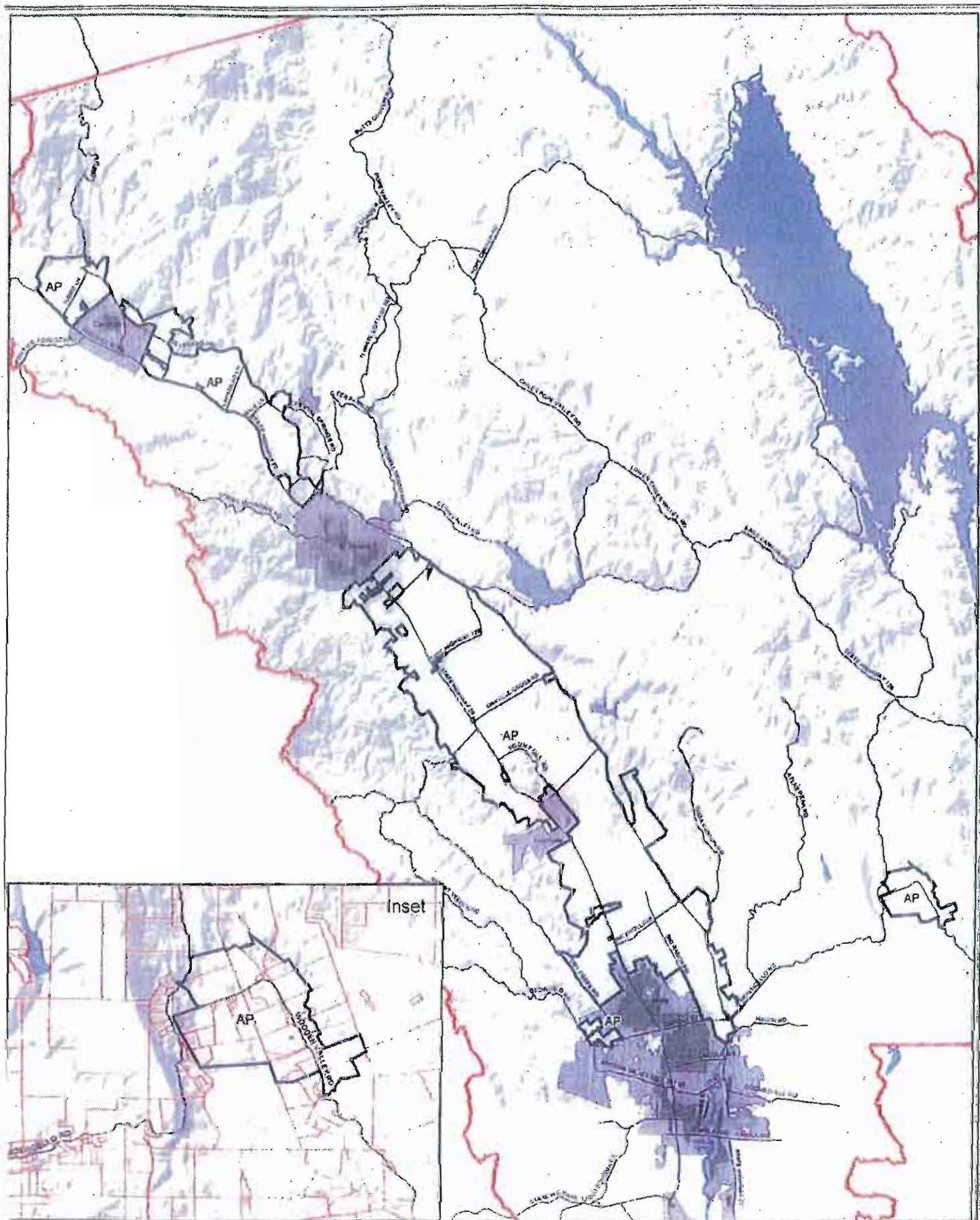
##### TRANSPORTATION

- Mineral Resource
- Railroad
- Limited Access Highway
- Major Road
- Secondary Road
- Airport
- Airport Clear Zone
- Land Use - General Plan

### ACTION RECORD

1. Adopted by Resolution 1998-02-01
2. Amended by Resolution 1998-02-02
3. Amended by Resolution 1998-02-03
4. Amended by Resolution 1998-02-04
5. Amended by Resolution 1998-02-05
6. Amended by Resolution 1998-02-06
7. Amended by Resolution 1998-02-07
8. Amended by Resolution 1998-02-08
9. Amended by Resolution 1998-02-09
10. Amended by Resolution 1998-02-10
11. Amended by Resolution 1998-02-11
12. Amended by Resolution 1998-02-12
13. Amended by Resolution 1998-02-13
14. Amended by Resolution 1998-02-14
15. Amended by Resolution 1998-02-15
16. Amended by Resolution 1998-02-16
17. Amended by Resolution 1998-02-17





Local Ordinance 1140-01  
 Data Provided by: County of Napa  
 9/1/2007

Warning: This map was prepared for informational purposes only. No liability is assumed for the accuracy or completeness of the information.

## Ag Preserve Zoning

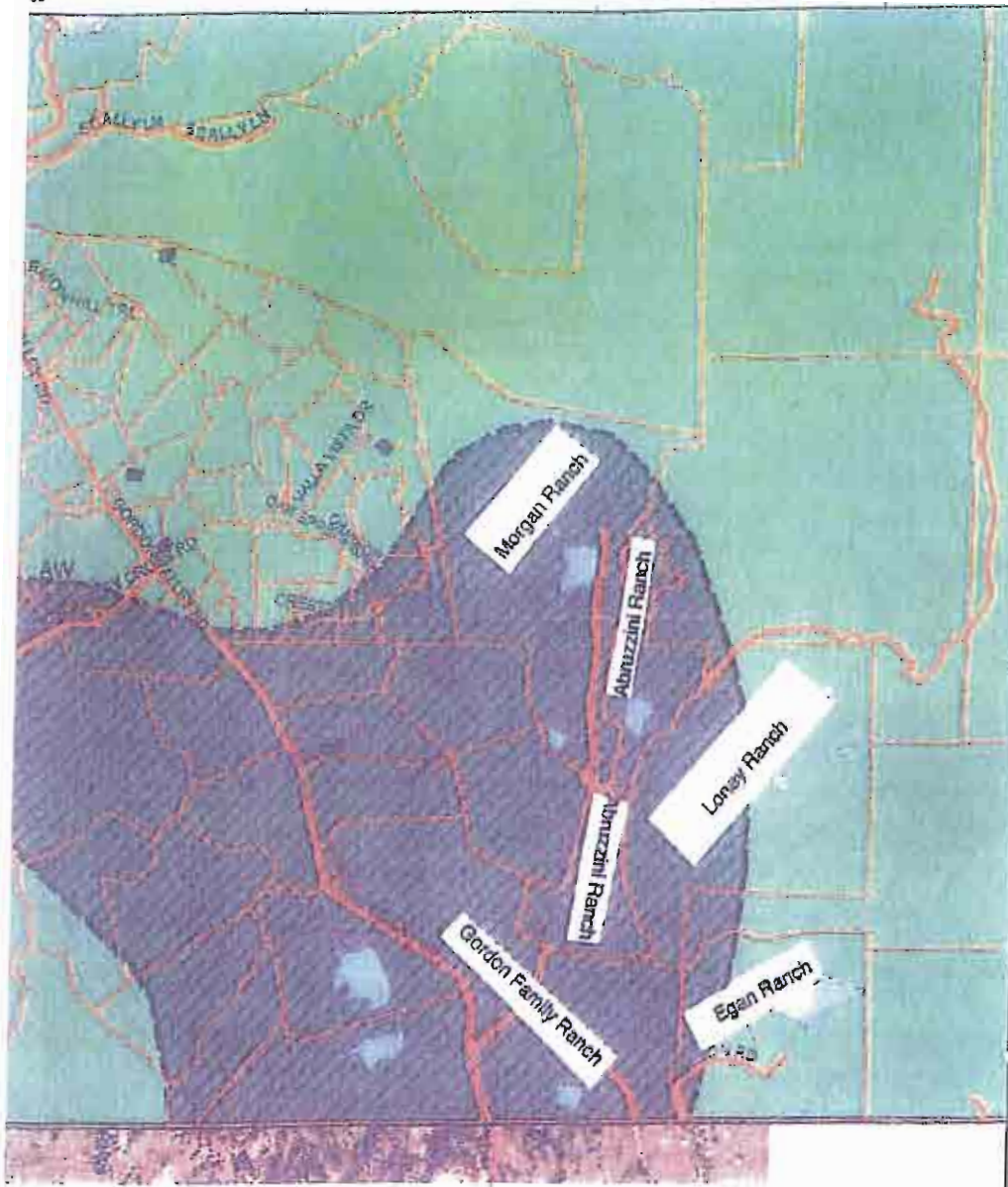
1 inch equals 17,000 feet



- Zoning
- Major Roads
- City Boundaries
- Parcels

County of Napa  
 Conservation, Development  
 and Planning  
 1000 1st St. Napa, CA 94559





# Legend

## General Plan

### URBAN

- Cities
- Urban Residential
- Rural Residential
- Industrial
- Public-Institutional

### OPEN SPACE

- Agriculture, Watershed & Open Space
- Agricultural Resource

### TRANSPORTATION

- Mineral Resource
- Landfill - General Plan
- Airport
- Railroad
- Airport Clear Zone

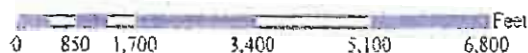
### Wineries in Vicinity

- Producing
- Approved
- Pending

### Parcels

- Zoning (outline)
- Water Bodies
- American Canyon
- Calistoga
- County
- Napa
- St Helena
- Yountville
- County Boundary

Existing Ag.  
Resource Area



3609

Source: Datum: NAD 83,  
State Plane Coordinates,  
NAD 83, Feet

Disclaimer: This map was prepared for  
informational purposes only. No liability  
is assumed for the accuracy of the  
information herein.

Created Date: 12/20/22

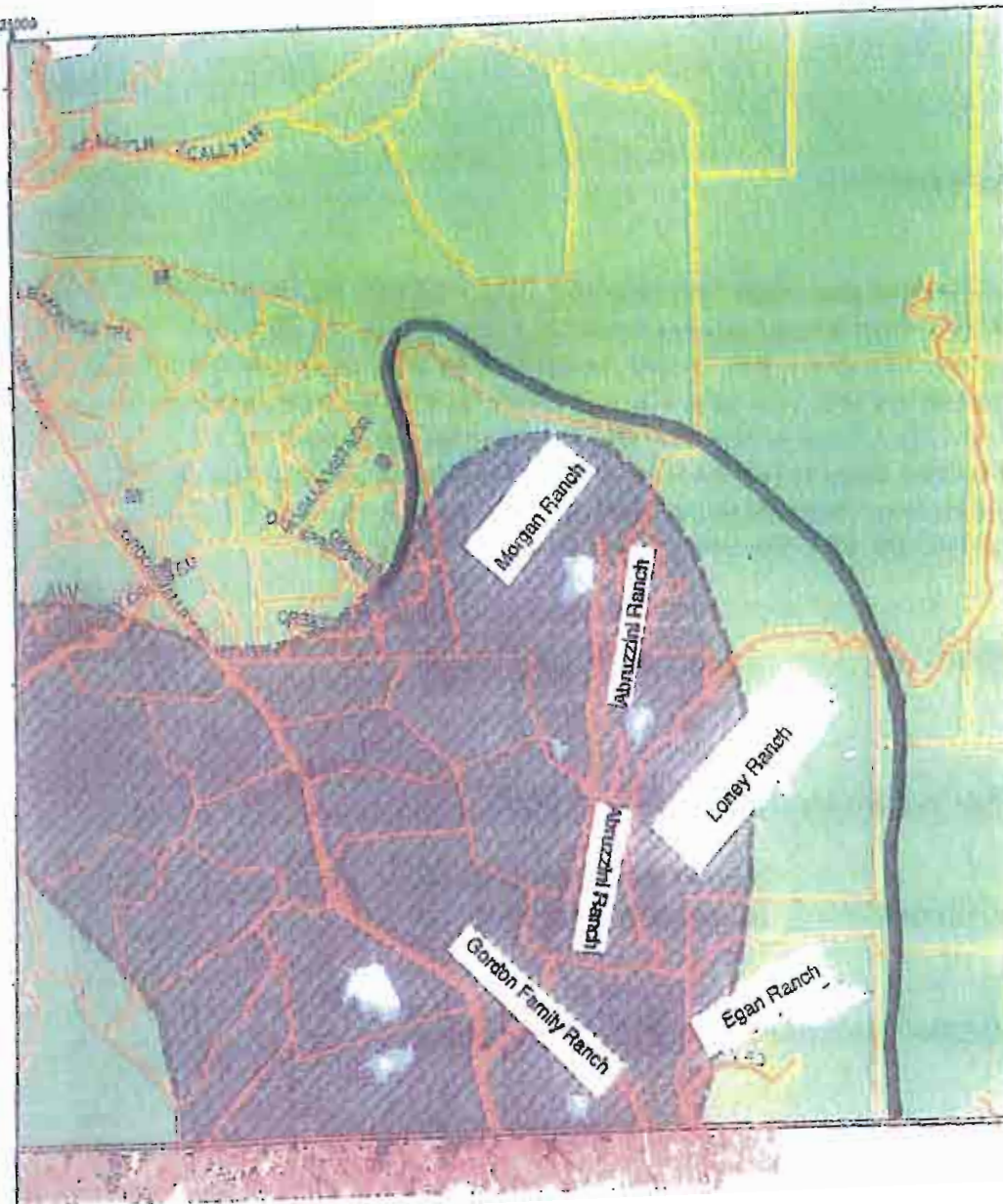
Revised Date: 12/20/2024

County of Napa

Conservation, Development  
& Planning

Planning General





### Legend

#### General Plan

##### URBAN

- Urban Residential
- Rural Residential
- Industrial
- Public-Industrial

##### OPEN SPACE

- Agriculture, Watershed & Open Space
- Agricultural Resource

##### TRANSPORTATION

- Mineral Resource
- Landfill - General Plan
- Airport
- Railroad
- Airport Clear Zone

##### Wineries in Vicinity

- Producing
- Approved
- Pending
- Parcels

##### Zoning (outline)

- Water Bodies
- American Canyon
- Calistoga
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- Yountville
- County Boundary

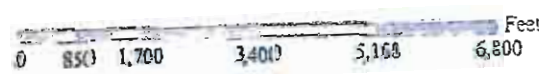
Proposed Ag Resource  
Area + AP Zoning

County of Napa

Conservation, Development  
& Planning

Planning General

Disclaimer: This map was prepared for informational purposes only. No liability is assumed for the accuracy of the data delineated herein.



Created Date: 12/25/22

To Whom It May Concern:

My parcel is included in the area that is being proposed to be changed to AP zone from AW zoning. I fully support this change in zoning and feel it is appropriate for this area. Being restricted to the requirement of having 320 acres before you can make a land split is just to limiting for this type of terrain. It gives us nothing to offer as incentive to bring our kids back to the farm business since they cannot even live on the property due to housing restrictions on large parcels. I fully support the proposal by Don Gordon of Gordon Family Ranch.

Betty MacKenzie Lopez  
Loney Ranch

Parcel # 33-220-05

Betty MacKenzie Lopez Date 04-12-07

Fréd Abruzzini  
Abruzzini Ranch Vineyards

Parcel # 33-180-01  
Parcel # 33-170-15

Fréd Abruzzini Date 4-12-07

Robert Egan  
Egan Ranch

Parcel # 33-220-07

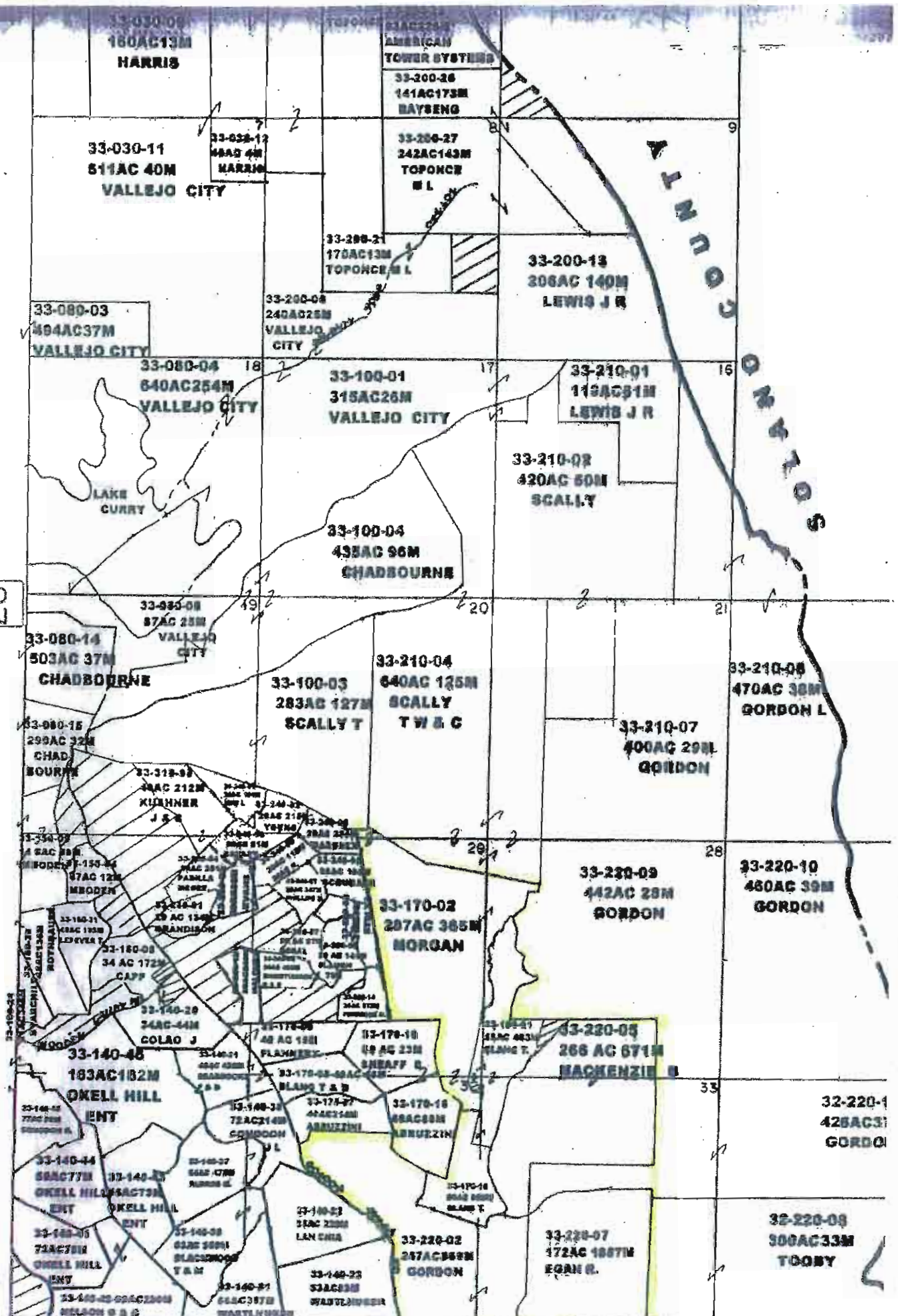
Robert D. Egan Date 4-12-07

Bill Morgan  
Morgan Ranch

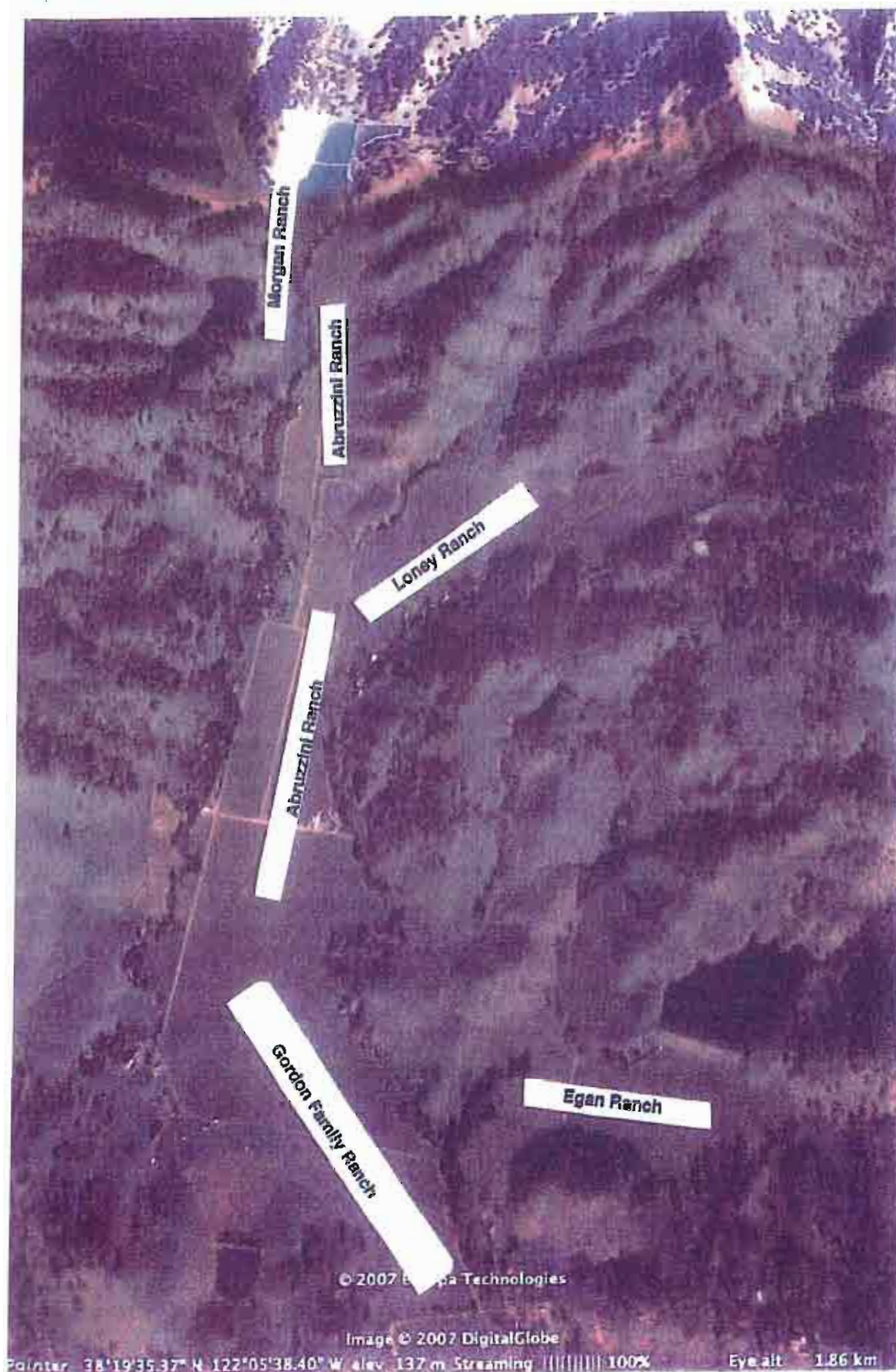
Parcel # 33-170-02

Bill E Morgan Date 4-12-07









© 2007 Europa Technologies

Image © 2007 DigitalGlobe

Painter 38°19'35.37" N 122°05'38.40" W elev. 137 m Streaming 100%

Eye alt 1.86 km

Gordon Valley



**Gordon Valley Pictures**  
**For Review as part**  
**Of General Plan Comments**  
**Submitted by Don Gordon**  
**Of Gordon Family Ranch**

**May 1st 2007**

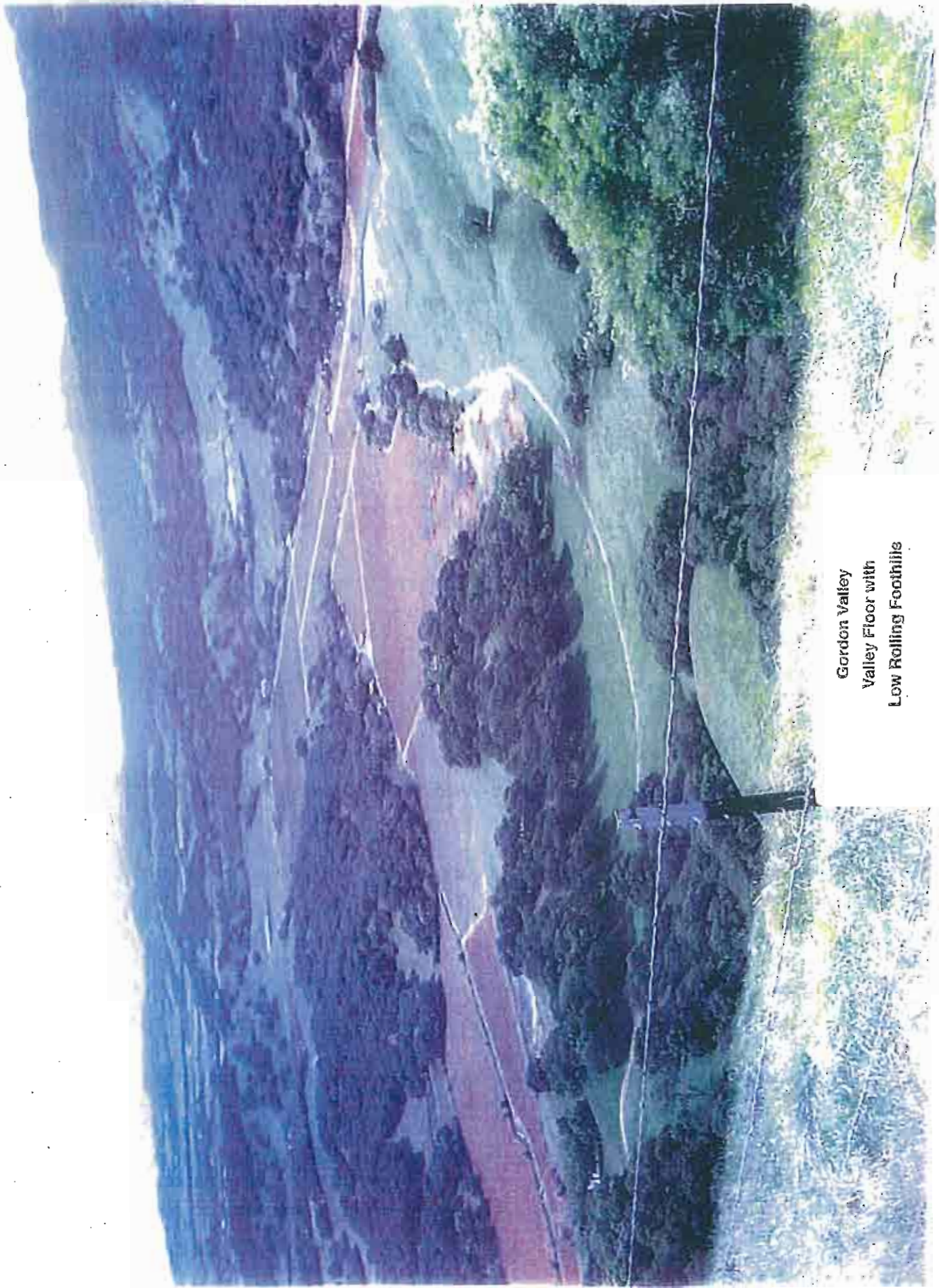
In Reviewing the following pictures please note that a major portion of the Gordon Valley area is not steep terrain requiring 360 acre AW Zoning. There are many acres of Valley Floor with Class One soils suitable for crops surrounded by rolling foothills within the mentioned parcels. These areas should be zoned AP with smaller parcel splits allowed similar to Napa and Wooden Valley areas which are already zoned AP.

The steep rugged country surrounding this valley and foothill area has been preserved in the past by protection of Williamson Act. When the area was put under Williamson Act protection it was split into 400 acre parcels and it is the intention of the Gordon Family to keep it that way. The family made this commitment many years ago with intent of being able, if needed, to split the lower parcel for family and farm labor housing. This lower parcel along with other parcels in this proposal has Valley Floor and mild slopes. This option was removed when this area was blanket zoned in 1993 to 320 acres before splitting. This is entirely inappropriate for the lower foothills and valley floor and was a knee-jerk reaction by the county to correct previous mistakes in zoning.

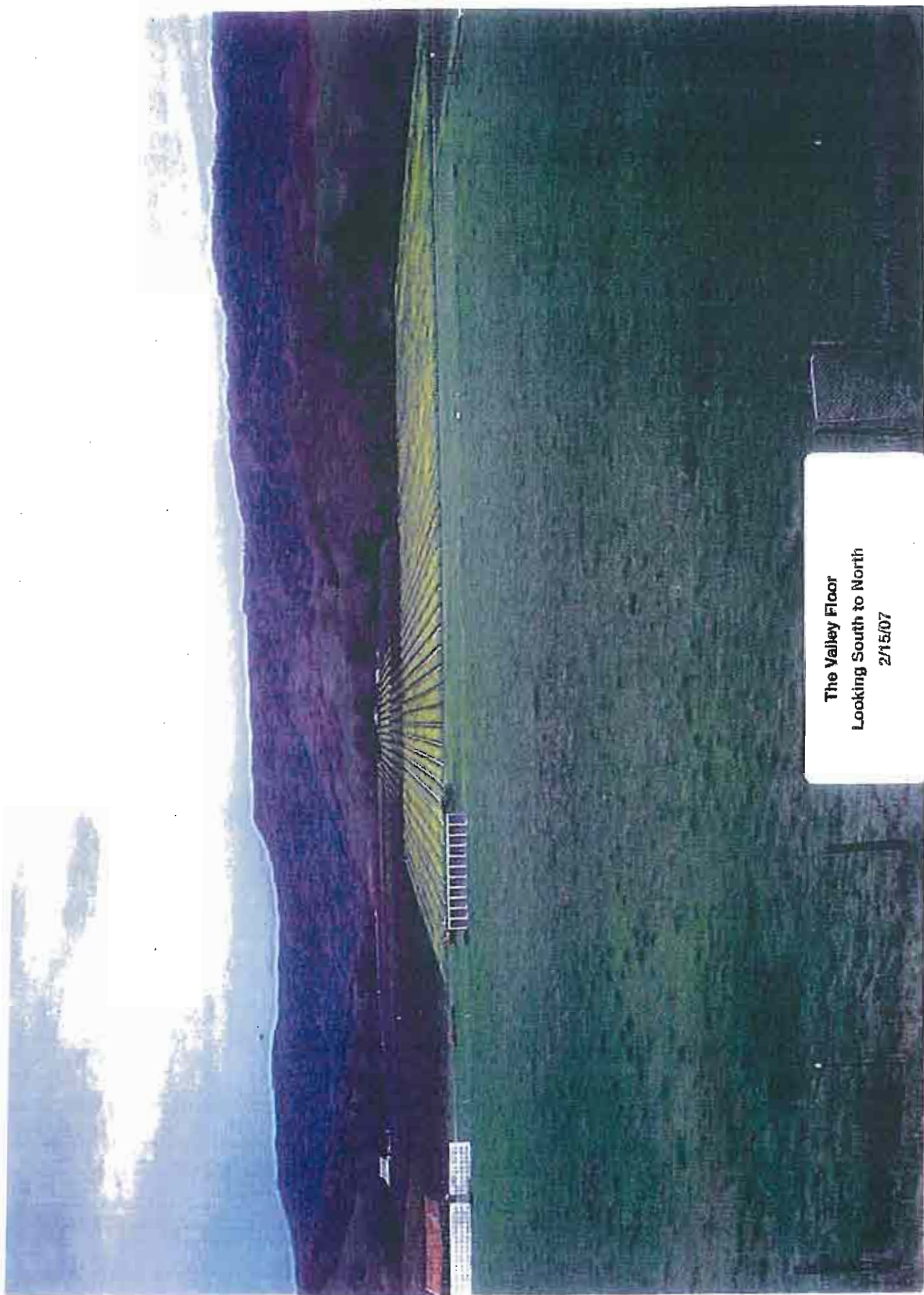
Now is an opportunity to correct an unjust and discriminating zoning decision made several years ago.

Please review these pictures along with the proposal and enlarge the Ag Resource Area in the general plan and change the zoning to AP.

Gordon Valley  
Valley Floor with  
Low Rolling Foothills

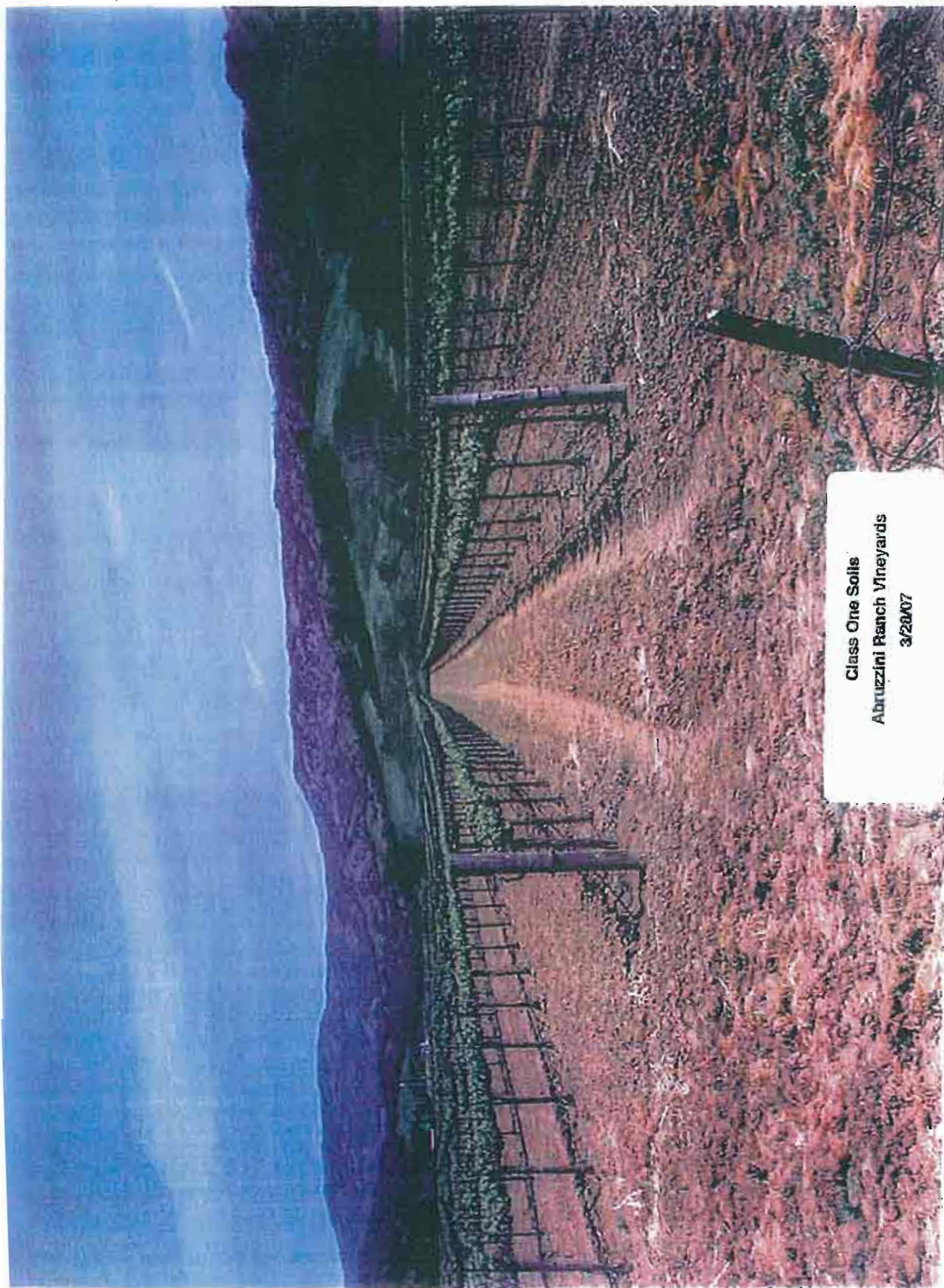






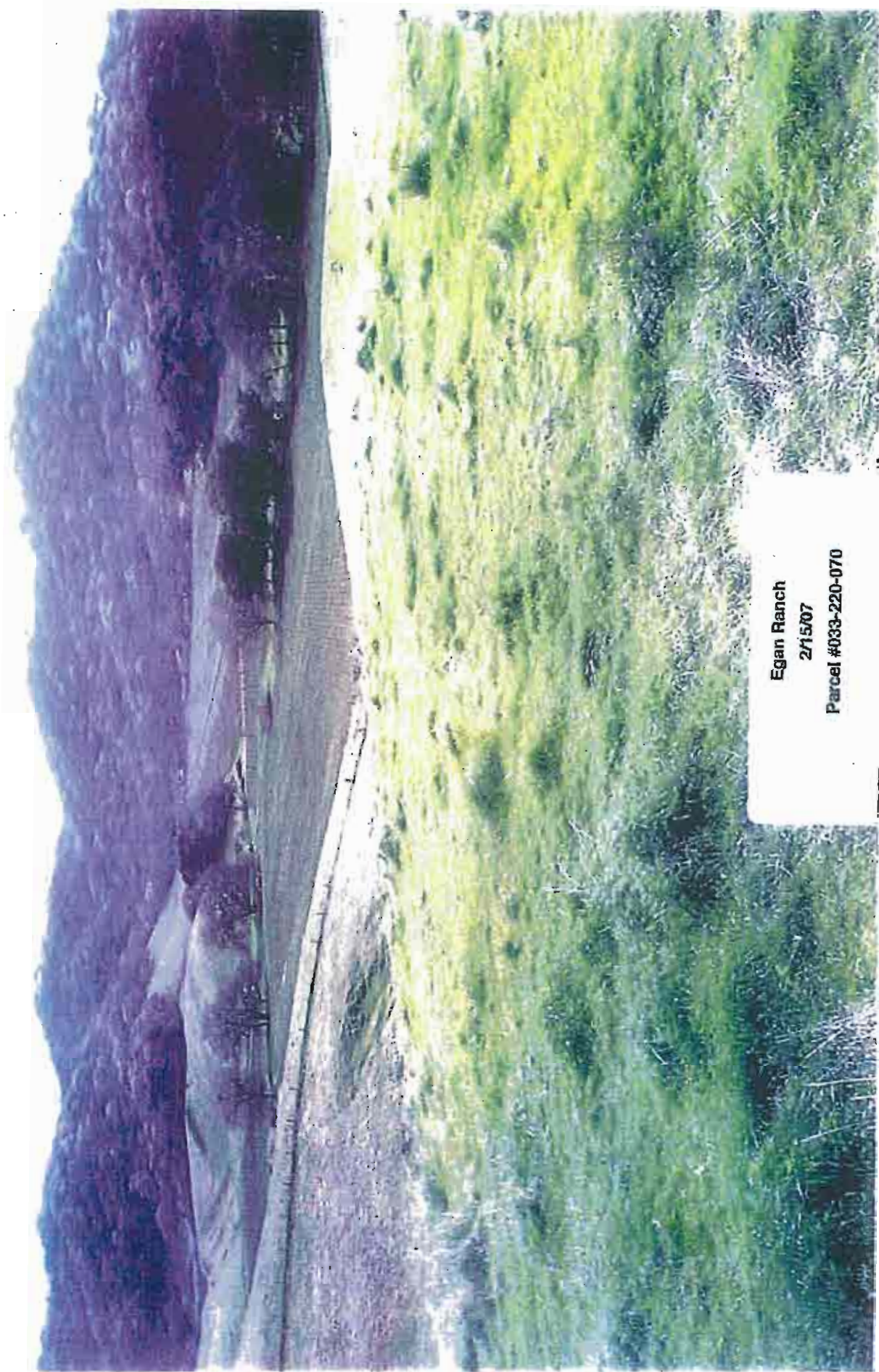
The Valley Floor  
Looking South to North  
2/15/07





Class One Solis  
Abruzzini Ranch Vineyards  
3/20/07





Egan Ranch  
2/15/07  
Parcel #033-220-070





Loney Ranch

2/15/07

Parcel #033-220-050



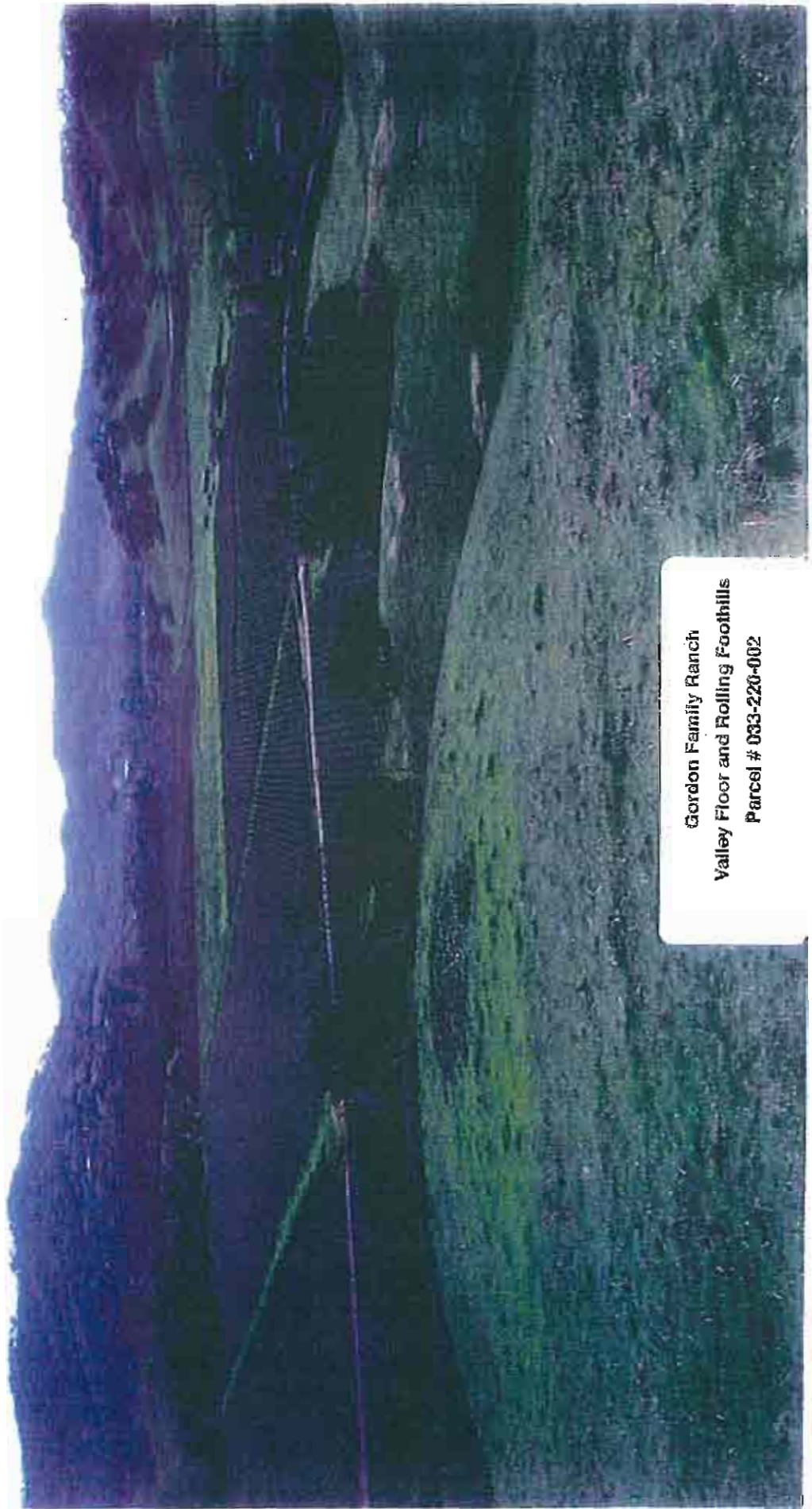


Morgan Ranch

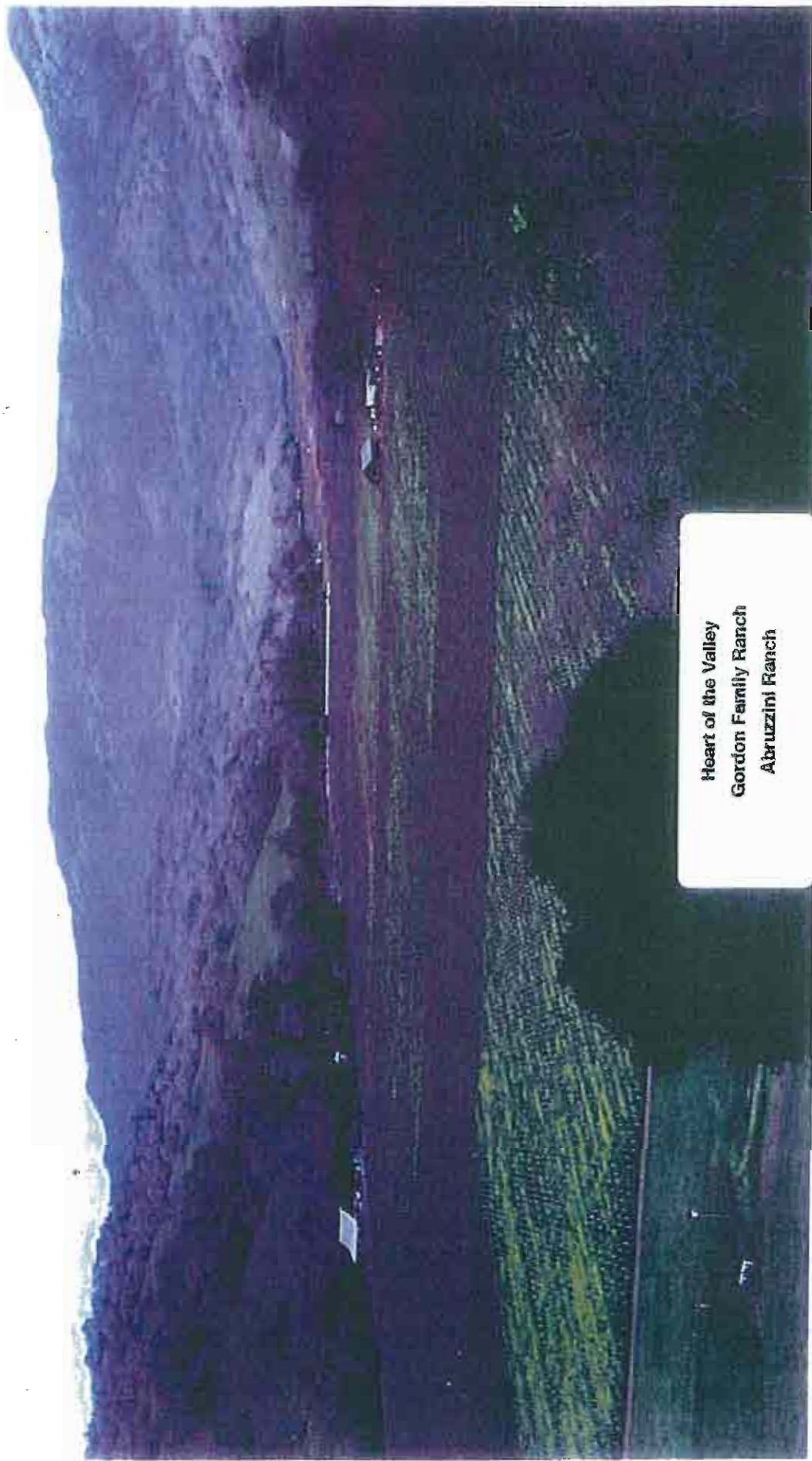
4/1/07

Parcel # 033-170-020





Gordon Family Ranch  
Valley Floor and Rolling Foothills  
Parcel # 033-220-002



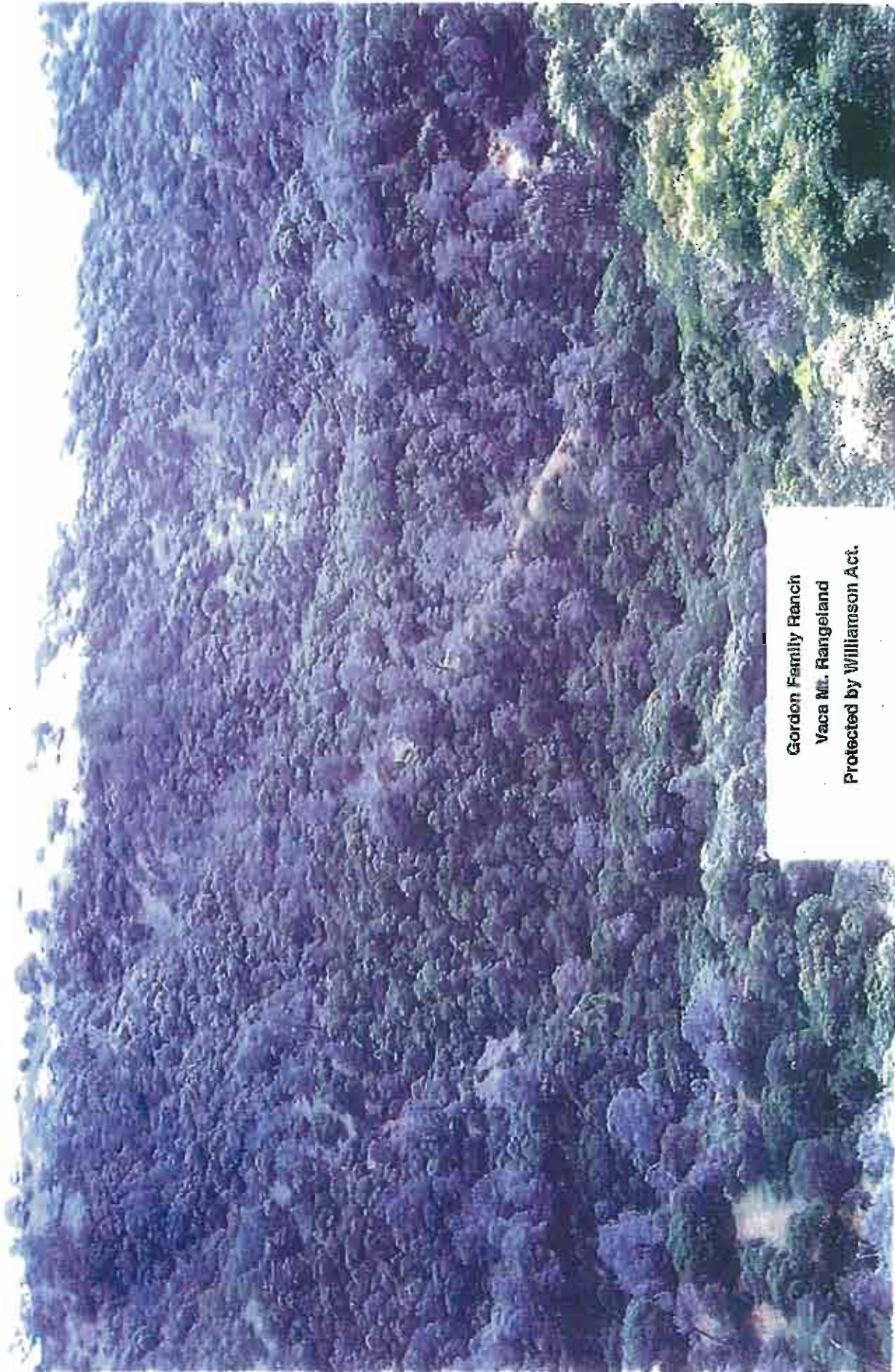
Heart of the Valley  
Gordon Family Ranch  
Abruzzini Ranch





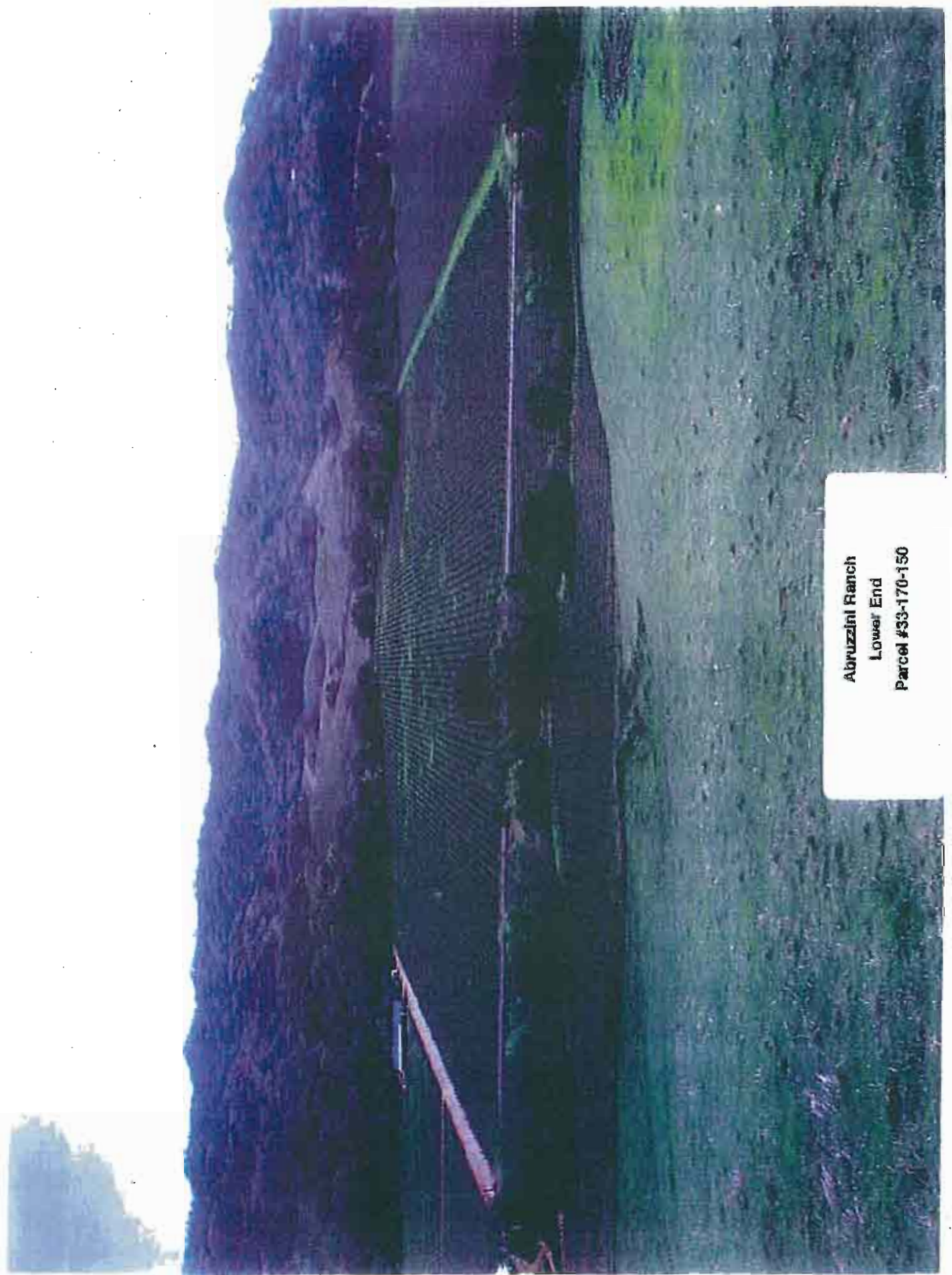
Gordon Family Ranch  
Vaca Mt. Rangeland  
Protected by Williamson Act.





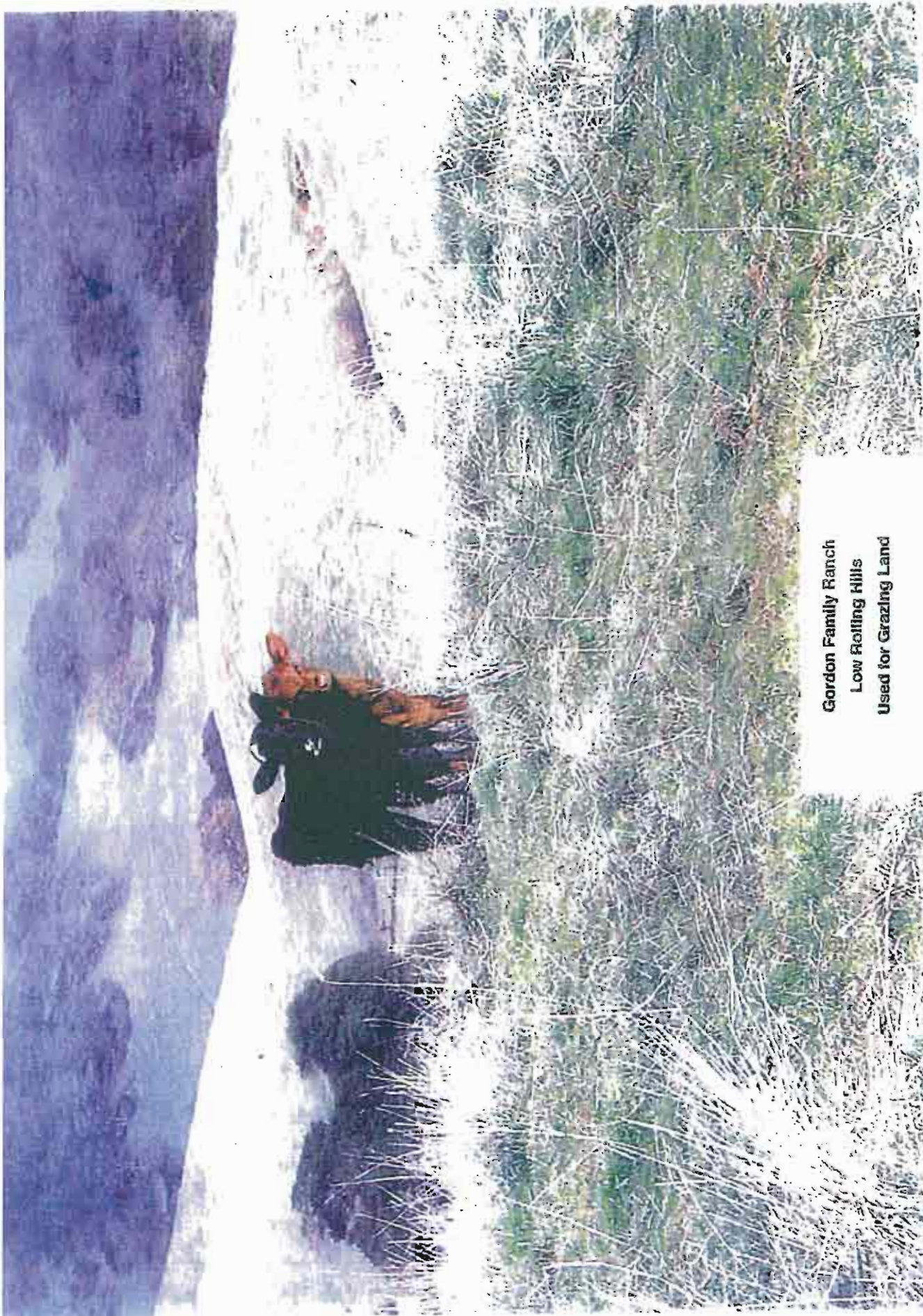
Gordon Family Ranch  
Yaca Mt. Rangeland  
Protected by Williamson Act.





Abruzzini Ranch  
Lower End  
Parcel #33-170-150





**Gordon Family Ranch  
Low Rolling Hills  
Used for Grazing Land**