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Napa County Planning, Building  
& Environmental Services

To: Napa County Planning Department and Napa County Planning Commission

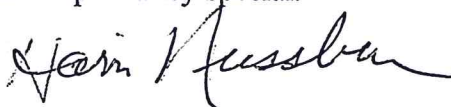
Reference: Diogenes Ridge Winery- Use Permit #P12-00347

I am sorry to say I will be away at the time of the hearing, but I would like to express my concern about the proposed Negative Declaration for the Diogenes Ridge Winery project. You are a group of bright individuals who must realize that we are in a drought situation and that adding more and more vineyards and more wineries only puts our citizens and the wineries and vineyards that already exist at risk. I believe the time will come when water trucks from vineyards and wineries will no longer be able to just plug into City fire hydrants to water grapes and to provide for the great water demand they have. Angwin does not have sufficient water for domestic use, which according to the State, is the #1 priority and #2 is irrigation. A winery is neither, which raises some legal issues.

Projects seem to be continually approved on the basis that any parcel in the Agricultural Watershed (hills) has a 0.5AF/YR. This assumption is not followed up with any water availability analysis. The fact that so many wells and streams have dried up and so much water is being transported confirms it is wrong. Just because a person drills a well and gets a certain amount of water today, does not guarantee that it will produce that amount over time. As large amounts of water are being pumped from the ground, we see the negative effect on many neighbor's wells. With thousands of water trucks on the roads hauling water to all parts of the Valley, I dare to think about its negative impact on the roads, safety of our residents, and on the environment. I question why Negative Declarations are being used for projects like this as compared to an Environmental Impact Report as required under CEQA. I'm sure it would show many more reasons for not approving this project. If time to study these projects is a problem, please take more time and delay approval. One thing that is often overlooked is with the depletion of groundwater, vegetation becomes more stressed, causing more, and more dangerous fires.

It is my understanding that it is your responsibility to insure that the citizens of this County are protected, and that a supply of water for domestic use is guaranteed until 2050. By continuing to approve vineyards and wineries and other large commercial developments without a guaranteed long-term supply of water you are failing to perform that duty. It is time to take a step back from approving any and all the requests that come before you until this major water issue has been resolved. I urge you to do the right thing for our County by requiring Environmental Impact Reports where needed, as in this request. Your positions are extremely important and the decisions you make will affect the future of this wonderful Valley and many lives. Over use of our resources can destroy what makes Napa Valley special.

Thank you,  
Harris Nussbaum  
[Nussbaum@napanet.net](mailto:Nussbaum@napanet.net)



3170 Mt. Veeder Rd  
Napa, CA 94558  
(707) 255-4054