

Desiree, Inc.

EROSION CONTROL PLAN APPLICATION

APN 039-040-042

5681 Silverado Trail, Napa CA

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REVISED PROJECT NARRATIVE

This is an application for a development permit. Desiree, Inc. owns the 53.7 acre property located at 5681 Silverado Trail in Napa County, APN 039-040-042 (the “Property”), which is the home of the Boisset-Gallo Family. It seeks approval of the enclosed Erosion Control Plan (“ECP”) to cultivate a premiere Stag’s Leap District, Napa Valley AVA Vineyard, which will also protect the family home from wildfire risk.

The property is in the Agricultural Preserve (“AP”) zoning district with a General Plan designation of Agricultural Resource (“AR”).

The Boisset Collection, a committed steward and leading proponent of organic and Biodynamic agriculture, will farm the vineyards utilizing sustainable hand farming viticultural practices and obtain Napa Green Vineyard certification. The grapes harvested from the carefully cultivated bespoke 1 meter x 1 meter vineyards will be used to produce an ultrapremium cabernet-based wine.

The proposed ECP proposes to develop 13.1 acres of vineyard (the “Project”), including removal of brush and trees, ripping, rock removal, soil cultivation for planting, seeding cover crop, mulching, trenching for irrigation pipelines, installing a trellis system and deer fence, laying out vinerows, and installing erosion control measures.

The application consists of the following components, in addition to this narrative:

- The Erosion Control Plan (including a detailed Project narrative) prepared by PPI Engineering;
- A biological assessment prepared by WRA and supplemental response letter;
- A Water Availability Analysis prepared by Richard Slade and Associates;
- A Cultural Resource Survey and accompanying addendum Prepared by Flaherty Cultural Resource Services;
- Hydrologic Analysis prepared by PPI Engineering;
- Soil Loss Analysis prepared by PPI Engineering;
- An “Infeasibility Analysis” concerning the avoidance of oak woodlands;
- A proposed Preservation Area exhibit; and
- Supplemental Project information as needed.

This document sets forth the general narrative of the Project, in addition to the required technical narrative included in the ECP. We appreciate your consideration of these requests. Please advise us as to any additional information you require to process this application.

I. DETAILED PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

1. PROJECT OVERVIEW

The proposed vineyard Project will total 13.1 net acres (16.7 gross acres). The total acreage of the parcel is 53.7 acres. The Property serves as the full-time residence of the Boisset-Gallo family. As such, the development of the vineyard is also anticipated to mitigate potential future fire damage to the Property and improve defensible space. By developing the vineyard and clearing brush and trees, particularly at the property perimeter and along the driveway to the house, the family expects that a secondary benefit of the vineyard will be to increase protection to the residence and their children from fire damage. The proposed vineyard will also provide for additional revenue to fund ongoing monitoring and management of the oak woodlands for overall habitat values and health.

The Project consists of the planting of ten (10) strategically arranged vineyard blocks, with an average slope of 26% between all blocks. Block 1B is planned to be closest to the residence. The Project has been designed to meet the 2 to 1 oak woodland retention General Plan Policy CON-24 goal, resulting in a balanced mix agriculture and native habitats in keeping with the General Plan's policies supporting both agriculture and conservation.

2. PROPERTY DESCRIPTION

The Property sits along Wappo Hill Road on the west side of Silverado Trail. It is generally surrounded by vineyards, and adjacent to the Realm winery and vineyards. Because of the topography of the Property, it is subject to increased wildfire challenges that can be mitigated due to the sloped nature also providing for an ideal planting environment for various types of grapes, particularly Stag's Leap District Cabernet Sauvignon.

The Property is zoned AP, which allows for agriculture without a use permit, and is designated AR under the General Plan. Though sited on a large hill, the Property is not in the Agricultural Watershed ("AW") district and is therefore not subject to the Conservation Regulations' AW provisions for canopy retention. Portions of the property are steep, particularly the western portion, which are avoided by the Project. It has elevations ranging from approximately 110 to 656 feet. All vineyard blocks are located outside of the required stream setbacks to protect water quality. The vineyard blocks have also been designed so as to reduce existing erosion on the property.

3. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

In addition to the special Project components described below, this Project is designed to minimize impacts on the environment. As shown by the reports and studies submitted with this application, the Project is specifically designed to comply with all relevant General Plan Goals and Policies. A brief summary of each of the operative environmental considerations is provided below.

Aesthetics

Vineyard development has generally not been considered to be an impact on aesthetics, as vineyard views are considered attractive. The Property is already largely surrounded by vineyards. The Project will largely preserve the existing outward appearance of the Property, with vineyards developed either adjacent to existing vineyards, or screened by retained tree cover.

Agriculture and Forest Resources

The property is zoned AP with a General Plan designation of Agricultural Resource. It has historically been used for livestock grazing and is surrounded by Prime Farmland.

It is compliant with the 2:1 Oak Woodlands preservation General Plan policy.¹ CON-24(c) provides:

Provide replacement of lost oak woodlands or preservation of like habitat at a 2:1 ratio when retention of existing vegetation is found to be infeasible. Removal of oak species limited in distribution shall be avoided to the maximum extent feasible.

The Project has been designed to avoid Oak Woodlands as much as feasible,² while fulfilling the dual aims of the Project of developing a premier vineyard while increasing fire protection to the home.

The available undeveloped, non-Oak Woodland on the property that is outside of ephemeral or intermittent stream setbacks was allocated to the Project first. Accordingly, non-native grassland is developed to the extent feasible while preserving the required aquatic protective setbacks (see BRRS Figures A-3, A-4.)

The study area consisted of 44.41 acres of Coast Live Oak Woodland. To be in compliance with the 2:1 retention requirement, up to 14.8 acres of Oak Woodland could be included in the Project. However, only 13.27 acres of Oak Woodland is proposed to be included in the Project, already reducing the potential impact by approximately 9%. As such, more than 70% of Oak Woodlands on the Property will be retained and is avoided by the Project.

¹ As noted above, it is not subject to the AW Zone retention or slope limitation provisions in the Conservation Regulations.

² "'Feasible' means capable of being accomplished in a successful manner within a reasonable period of time, taking into account economic, environmental, legal, social, and technological factors." (CEQA Guidelines §15364.) The accompanying "Infeasibility Analysis" further discusses this element.

The Oak Woodland to be developed by the Project is located to the extent feasible and practical in the flatter portions of the property, along its perimeter, and/or along the existing driveway. (Id. Figure A-4.) Although the property is already largely fenced by its neighbors (see ECP Figure 2), the design still preserves multiple Oak Woodland corridors crisscrossing the property. Deer fencing will be installed with large enough gaps to allow for unrestricted movement by smaller animals.

While the Property is not subject to the Conservation Regulations § 18.108.020 (D) provisions regarding slope ranges for preservation, applicant has balanced the interests of developing the vineyard with preservation of the Oak Woodlands. Approximately 26.6 acres will be preserved, and those areas will preserve the wooded nature of the property, largely screen the new vineyards from any visibility, and maintain the wooded nature of the ephemeral or intermittent channels.

Air Quality

The Project will be developed to minimize impacts on air quality. It plans to avoid burning during construction and will be operated as a premium hand-farmed vineyard. Any farming equipment acquired for the property will use alternative fuels or be all-electric.

Biological Resources

The Project is intentionally sited to avoid all sensitive aquatic resources. The property has no permanent flowing watercourses. Setbacks are maintained from the few ephemeral or intermittent drainage channels that provide flow of runoff during rain events.

No special status plant species are present at the property as identified in the Biological Resource Reconnaissance Survey. The BRRS proposes mitigation measures to address the potential for special status bat, bird, or amphibian species which could, but have not been documented to, be present on the property, as well as to protect aquatic resources.

Cultural Resources

The accompanying Cultural Resources Report prepared by Flaherty Cultural Resource Services indicates no cultural resources within the Project Area. The report discusses mitigation measures in the event of a discovery of cultural resources during construction.

Geology and Soils

The ECP as well as the accompanying hydrologic and soil loss analyses prepared by PPI Engineering demonstrate that the Project will prevent, and indeed reduce, soil loss by installation of the vineyard and its accompanying erosion control infrastructure.

GHG Emissions

The Project will be a hand-farmed premium vineyard which will minimize operational GHG emissions. Construction GHG avoidance measures will be undertaken, including preserving on site removed vegetation through the use of “biochar” or other conservation methods to reduce GHG emissions from clearing and vineyard installation. Additional on and off-site mechanisms will be employed to mitigate any GHG impact.

Farming will incorporate “carbon farming” best practices that enhance soil carbon sequestration. The vineyard will be enrolled in the Napa Green Vineyard certification program to obtain and maintain that certification. Vineyard equipment will use alternative fuels or be all electric, and an electric vehicle charger will be installed for passenger or farm vehicle use.

Hazards and Hazardous Materials

Vineyards are widely recognized for their potential to act as firebreaks, and a significant purpose of the Project is to manage the existing fire risk to the residence on the Property. The Project will be developed with the environment and residents’ health in mind. It will be organically and biodynamically farmed, minimizing the use of synthetic herbicides or pesticides.

Hydrology and Water Quality

The ECP as well as the accompanying hydrologic and soil loss analyses prepared by PPI Engineering demonstrate that the Project will prevent, and indeed reduce, soil loss by installation of the vineyard and its accompanying erosion control infrastructure. There are no perennial watercourses on the property, and the Project is designed to be only on slopes leading away from the Napa River (which is more than 1,500 feet from the Project). The Project also avoids the ephemeral or intermittent drainages, generally well-above the required 35’ setbacks. (See ECP p.36, Plan Sheet 2.)

As discussed in the accompanying Water Availability Analysis prepared by RCS, water usage will be from a dedicated on-site well, and below the parcel-specific allocation. The property is not within the DWR-defined Napa Valley groundwater basin. There are no neighboring wells impacted by the Project’s well. The well is also not within the “significant stream” buffer area, which includes the “public trust” area. As such, Tier 2 and Tier 3 analysis is not implicated.

As a Napa Green certified vineyard, the project will receive periodic irrigation assessments to optimize water use.

Land Use and Planning

The Property is zoned AP with a General Plan land use designation AR. Agriculture is the highest and best use of the Property and the primary land use in Napa County. Agriculture is allowed without a use permit.

Mineral Resources

The Project will not impact mineral resources.

Noise

The Property is a family residence, and thus will be highly conscious of minimizing noise impacts. It is already surrounded by vineyards and bordered by a winery. As such, the vineyards proposed by the Project will have no impact on noise.

Population and Housing

The Project will support the local economy and jobs and will likely result in a small increase in permanent employees; however, it will have no significant impact on population or housing. It will be farmed under direction of the Boisset Collection's existing farm management.

Public Services

The Project will not impact public services.

Recreation

The Project will not impact recreation.

Transportation

The Project will not impact transportation. The Property entrance already has a left-turn lane on Silverado Trail. An electric vehicle charger will be installed to charge electric passenger and farm equipment.

Tribal Cultural Resources

The accompanying Cultural Resources Report prepared by Flaherty Cultural Resource Services indicates no tribal cultural resources were identified within the Project Area. The report discusses mitigation measures in the event of a discovery of tribal cultural resources during construction.

Utilities and Service Systems

The Project will not impact utilities or service systems. As described above, the Project will be served by a dedicated on-site well. The property is not within the DWR-defined Napa Valley groundwater basin. There are no neighboring wells impacted by the Project's well.

Wildfire

The Project, as a secondary benefit, will decrease wildfire potential of the Property. Fire management on the Property includes increased management of the existing Oak Woodlands on the Property. As a result, the Project will not increase wildfire risk.

4. SPECIAL PROJECT COMPONENTS – SUSTAINABILITY AND BIODIVERSITY

Promoting sustainable vineyard practices and biodiversity are key components of this Project. Not only does the proposed vineyard Project include the planting of the vineyard blocks, the Project consists of other features that set examples for low-impact, organic and biodynamic farming practices for agriculture in the Napa Valley.

Installation will be as low impact as feasible, and vineyard will be installed on a 1-meter x 1-meter spacing dictating hand farming will be required. Operational GHG impacts will thus be minimized. The Project also includes the following voluntary components which will promote the biodiversity of the landscape, including: honeybee hives will be placed on the property; songbird habitat on the property will be protected; wildflower areas will not be moved or cut until all seeds are entirely set, and will be actively managed and reseeded annually; any pollinator forage will be protected and planted; bat boxes will be placed on the property; and owl and raptor habitats will be maintained.

The landscape managers for the property rely on the Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservation in order to promote the most sustainable methods of pest management, habitat management, and pollinator management in and around the vineyard.

The vineyard will use organic fertilizers and pest management, and no herbicides will be used. To promote the health of the land, sheep grazing will be used for weed management which will include pasture rotations. In addition, any landscape waste will be incorporated on-site by composting, mulching, chipping and/or use as livestock feed. Any disturbances to the property will be mitigated with straw and seed with native grass mix.

To the greatest extent possible, burning will be avoided, and instead smokeless-biochar or other GHG and air-quality protective methodologies will be employed. The vineyard will be enrolled in the Napa Green Vineyard certification program, which provides, among other benefits, Carbon Farm Plans and prohibitions and restrictions on pesticides.

II. CONCLUSION

As demonstrated above, this application should be approved by the County as it is a model for future vineyard development that promotes sustainable agriculture in the County. The Boisset-Gallo family appreciates the County's consideration of this application and looks forward to working with the County through approval of the ECP.