



County of Sonoma  
Permit & Resource Management Department

## Sonoma County Board of Zoning Adjustments **STAFF REPORT**

**FILE:** Silver Cloud Winery; UPE14-0088

**DATE:** May 13, 2021

**TIME:** At or after 1:05 pm

**STAFF:** Crystal Acker, Project Planner

### **SUMMARY**

<b>Property Owner:</b>	McQuown Enterprises, LP – Silver Cloud Winery
<b>Applicant:</b>	Tammy Martin, Steve Martin Associates, Inc.
<b>Address:</b>	5700 Cavedale Road, Glen Ellen
<b>Supervisoral District(s):</b>	District 1
<b>APN:</b>	053-051-029
<b>Description:</b>	Request for a Use Permit for a new 2,000-case winery within existing buildings, tasting by appointment only, and 8 annual visitor serving activities with a 50-person maximum attendance on a 160-acre parcel.
<b>CEQA Review:</b>	Statutory Exemption: Section 15270, a project which a public agency rejects or disapproves
<b>General Plan Land Use:</b>	Resources and Rural Development 40-acre density (RRD 40)
<b>Specific/Area Plan Land Use:</b>	None
<b>Ordinance Reference:</b>	26-10-020(g) & (i) – Uses permitted with a use permit 26-10-030 – Permitted building intensity and development criteria 26-63-030 – Local area development guidelines 26-64-020 – Community separators and scenic landscape units 26-65-040 – Riparian Corridor Allowed land uses, activities and permit requirements 26-90-120 – Taylor/Sonoma/Mayacamas Mountains (MTN)
<b>Zoning:</b>	Resources and Rural Development 40-acre density; Local Guidelines Taylor/Sonoma/Mayacamas Mountains, Riparian Corridor 50-foot Development Setback, Scenic Resources – Scenic Landscape Unit (RRD B6 40, LG/MTN, RC50/50, SR)



## **RECOMMENDATION**

The Permit Resource and Management Department (Permit Sonoma) recommends that the Board of Zoning Adjustments deny the Use Permit, based on the project's proposed intensification of land uses in a high wildfire risk area that has been subject to recent and historic wildfires, and its potential to expose people, including the public visiting the facility, and structures to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving wildland fires.

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The applicant requests approval of a new small estate winery with a maximum annual production of 2,000 cases, a new, appointment-only tasting room, and eight annual agricultural promotional events with a maximum of 50 persons per event. All proposed facilities would be located within existing barns, converted to serve the proposed uses. Proposed hours of operation for the winery are 7:00 am to 6:00 pm Monday – Friday, with extended hours of 6:00 am to 10:00 pm daily during harvest. Proposed hours of operation for the tasting room and winery events are 11:00 am to 5:00 pm (6:00 pm for events) daily, year-round, except during a National Weather Service Red Flag Warning when the winery would be closed to all visitor-serving uses. Transportation to the winery for all visitor-serving uses would be by professional driver from downtown Sonoma, pre-arranged as part of the tasting appointment or event registration. The proposed operation would have a maximum of two full-time employees, with up to three additional seasonal employees (5 total) during harvest, bottling, and events.

Staff is recommending a summary denial because:

- The project parcel is located in an area subject to historic wildfires, is within a Very High Wildland Fire Hazard Severity Zone, and has all the characteristics associated with a Very High Wildland Fire Hazard area, including steep or mixed topography, vegetation characterized by densely forested land, and hot, dry summers.
- The General Plan Public Safety Element recommends limiting the types and intensities of land uses in wildfire-prone areas, stating development should be most restricted where natural fire hazards are high, fire protection is limited, and road access prevents timely response by firefighting personnel and rapid evacuation by residents.
- The project is located in wildfire prone area and includes intensification beyond the existing residential and agricultural land uses (three dwelling units and 18 acres of vineyards) to include winery production and visitor-serving uses (adding 2-5 winery employees, daily tasting appointments, and 8 events with up to 50 persons per event), increasing the human population in the area during business hours and potentially exposing people to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving wildland fires.
- The project includes converting existing agricultural barns to a winery production facility and a tasting room, increasing the value of the built environment on the property, and potentially exposing to the property to a significant structural loss involving wildland fires.
- Access to the project site is from Trinity Road and Cavedale Road- both narrow, winding, slow-speed, roadways with hairpin curves; Cavedale Road is one-lane throughout its entire length, although it serves two-way traffic by forcing opposing drivers to pull over into driveways or road shoulders in order to pass. These road conditions have significant potential to impede timely response by firefighting personnel and rapid evacuation by residents during an emergency. The applicant has proposed



improvements to reduce potentially significant road safety impacts, including advisory signage and turnouts, which require further evaluation for feasibility and efficacy.

At the May 18, 2017, Hearing, the BZA continued the item, and directed staff to prepare environmental documentation for a possible approval. The May 2017 hearing pre-dated the 2017 Sonoma Complex Fire; Commissioner discussion at that time was focused on road safety impacts, and did not specifically consider the project's potential wildfire risk. In addition, the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) guidelines were modified in 2019 to include evaluation of impacts related to Wildfire. As there are not yet established CEQA thresholds for what constitutes a significant wildfire impact, and given the project site's potential wildfire risk, staff cannot make an impact determination without first presenting new information and seeking further direction from the BZA. Although the applicant has incorporated project revisions and safety measures to address the potential wildfire risk and unsafe road conditions, the proposed project would increase land use intensity by bringing employees and visitor-serving uses to an area with a high risk of natural fire hazard, served by limited fire protection resources via a single, winding, slow-speed primary access route - Trinity Road, and a constrained, one-lane, winding, slow-speed primary evacuation route via Cavedale Road. For these reasons, Permit Sonoma is not able to support approval of the project without further direction from the BZA.

## **PROJECT SITE AND CONTEXT**

### ***Background***

This item was first considered by the BZA at its meeting on May 18, 2017. The project was recommended for denial based on potentially significant road safety impacts associated with Cavedale Road, a constrained one-lane roadway serving two-way traffic that may not be able to safely accommodate the addition of visitor-serving traffic. The BZA did not take action on the project, but, continued the item and directed staff to provide additional information related to vehicle traffic and circulation along Cavedale Road and to prepare environmental documentation for a possible approval. The previous staff report and minutes from that meeting are provided as Attachments 4 and 5.

The project site was within the burn perimeter of the Sonoma Complex Fire of October 2017. Since that time, multiple additional wildfires have impacted Sonoma County, resulting in a heightened awareness of potential wildfire impacts related to increased development intensity in wildfire-prone areas, and an increased responsibility on permitting authorities to consider wildfire impacts before approving discretionary projects.

In response to wildfire concerns, the applicant has revised the visitor-serving component of their project to suspend all tasting appointments and agricultural promotional events during any Red Flag Warning issued by the National Weather Service. The National Weather Service issues Red Flag Warnings & Fire Weather Watches to alert fire departments and the public of the onset, or possible onset, of critical weather and dry conditions that could lead to rapid or dramatic increases in wildfire activity. A Red Flag Warning is the highest alert, issued for weather events which may result in extreme fire behavior within the next 24 hours. A Fire Weather Watch is one level below a warning, issued when weather conditions could exist in the next 12-72 hours.

The applicant has responded to all County requests for additional information to address traffic and wildfire concerns, resulting in submission of several new technical studies, including a Focused Traffic Study (W-Trans 10/1/2018) and Addendum (W-Trans 1/8/2020), a Technical Memorandum related to road safety improvement recommendations (W-Trans 4/27/2020), and a Fire Safety & Evacuation Plan (SMA 2/25/2020), all of which are described in and attached to this staff report.



### ***Area Context and Surrounding Land Uses***

Direction	Land Uses
<b>North</b>	Scattered residential development in Resources and Rural Development zoning; predominantly undeveloped oak woodland with some vineyards in clearings; parcels range in size from 20 to almost 100 acres; parcel is less than half a mile from the Napa County line to the north and east
<b>South</b>	Scattered residential development in Resources and Rural Development zoning; predominantly undeveloped oak woodland with some vineyards in clearings; parcels range in size from 2.5 to over 100 acres; Sonoma Valley is about 2.5 aerial miles to the south
<b>East</b>	Scattered residential development in Resources and Rural Development zoning; predominantly undeveloped oak woodland with some vineyards in clearings; parcels range in size from 1.5 to over 100 acres; parcel is less than half a mile from the Napa County line to the north and east
<b>West</b>	Scattered residential development in Resources and Rural Development zoning; predominantly undeveloped oak woodland with some vineyards in clearings; parcels range in size from 20 to almost 300 acres; Sonoma Valley is about 2 aerial miles to the west

See also Figure 2. Aerial Map, Figure 3. Aerial Blow UP, Figure 4. Land Use Map, and Figure 5. Zoning Map.

### ***Access***

Site access is from Cavedale Road on the east side of the property. The parcel driveway is located approximately 6 miles driving distance up Cavedale from Highway 12. Cavedale Road is a one-lane public road for its entire length from Highway 12 to Trinity Road. This means that to pass vehicles coming in the opposite direction, drivers are forced to find a driveway or "turn out," sometimes resulting in one car needing to back up for a distance. Passing a large vehicle (garbage truck, propane truck, delivery truck, etc.) requires potentially unsafe maneuvering on this narrow roadway. Cavedale Road has signage warning that it is a one-lane winding road not suitable for large vehicles at its intersection with Highway 12 reading: "Winding One Lane Road – RVs & Trailers Not Recommended." There is no posted speed limit on Cavedale Road; however, a traffic study conducted for the project concluded 20 mph was the highest speed for vehicle travel due to roadway design, with 15 mph being the more typical travel speed.

The site can also be accessed via Trinity Road to Cavedale Road, although there is no way to access the site without using Cavedale for part of the trip (the project driveway is about 1.5 miles from the intersection with Trinity Road). Trinity Road is a wider and somewhat more improved roadway than Cavedale; however, it too is steep and winding with some hairpin curves. Trinity Road has a prohibition on large trucks with signs on Highway 12 just prior to the intersection stating "No Semis over 38 feet kingpin to rear axle." Trinity Road also has no posted speed limit; however, a single speed survey location about a mile from the intersection with Cavedale indicates a travel speed of 25 mph.

### ***Wildfire Risk***

The parcel is within the burn perimeter of the Sonoma Complex Fire of October 2017 (Nuns Fire), and is also within or near the footprints of three additional historic wildfires (Cavedale Fire 1966; Nuns Canyon Fire 1964; Cavedale Fire 1925).

The site is within a Very High Wildland Fire Hazard Severity Zone in a State Responsibility Area, as designated by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CalFIRE). Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones are typically characterized by forested areas where fire in tree crowns (portions of trees above the trunks) is likely;

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areas with high vegetation density and fuel continuity, allowing flame to spread over much of the area with little impediment from non-burnable surfaces; steep or mixed topography; and seasonally extreme conditions of strong winds and dry fuel moistures. The highest fire hazard is found in mountainous areas with dry summers, plenty of fuel, and steep slopes.

The parcel is located fairly high up in the Mayacamas Mountains; the proposed winery area is roughly 1,820 feet above sea level. The terrain in this area is rugged with steep hillsides covered in chaparral or hardwoods and firs, though the project site itself is in a relatively flat area with about 300 feet of elevation change from the east side of the property to the west. The project site is densely forested with native mixed hardwood and conifer woodland and chaparral scrub throughout much of its 160 acres, as are surrounding parcels. Clearings in the tree canopy for vineyards (18 acres currently planted on-site) and residential development can act as fire breaks. However, the site has all the characteristics of a Very High Wildland Fire Hazard area, and is located in an area subject to historic wildfires.

### ***Water/Wastewater/Utilities***

Water for winery processing, domestic use, and landscape irrigation will be supplied by an onsite well. A new Class 1 well was drilled in 2013.

Process wastewater from the proposed winery facility will be collected in a plumbing system separate from the sanitary wastewater. Initial treatment will occur via screening, settling tanks and final treatment will occur in a combined onsite sanitary and process wastewater pressure distribution system.

Sanitary sewage will be treated in a septic tank and disposed of in the onsite combined sanitary and process wastewater system (with expansion). An existing septic system serves the existing primary residence.

Agricultural waste from the winery, including pomace, seeds, and stems, will be composted on-site and spread in the vineyard as a soil conditioner and supplemental nutrient source and disked under on a routine basis.

Primary electrical power will be supplied by a new service off the existing overhead high voltage lines along the northern property line. The new electrical line to the winery building will be routed underground.

Propane gas will be used at the facility and supplied by an onsite tank.

### ***Other Environmental Conditions***

There is an existing unnamed creek on the parcel with a designated riparian corridor setback of 50 feet. All proposed development is greater than 50 feet from the creek.

## **PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

### ***Existing Facility***

This 160-acre parcel is currently developed with a single-family dwelling, caretaker unit, accessory dwelling unit, several agricultural structures, and other outbuildings.

Eighteen acres of wine grapes are planted on-site. Wine from that estate vineyard is currently produced off-site at a custom crush facility on 8<sup>th</sup> Street East in Sonoma. Wine-tasting is currently offered at EDGE, the owner's restaurant at 139 East Napa Street in downtown Sonoma.



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### **Proposed Project**

The proposed 2,000-case winery would be housed in an existing 1,950-square-foot tractor barn, converted to support the new winery use. The winery would be primarily owner-operated, producing wine from grapes grown on-site. The estate vineyard is 18 acres; all of the grapes grown on the property would be processed on the property under the proposed project. The proposed winery operation would have a maximum of two full-time employees, with up to three additional seasonal employees (5 total) during harvest and bottling. Proposed hours of operation for the winery are 7:00 am to 6:00 pm Monday – Friday, with extended hours of 6:00 am to 10:00 pm daily during harvest.

Tasting and retail sales would be by appointment only, and would be located within a portion of a second 2,648-square-foot existing barn, converted to support the tasting room and visitor-serving uses. Tasting appointments are anticipated to average around five per day and peak at ten per day. Eight annual agricultural promotional events are requested, ranging in size from 20 to 50 persons per event as detailed in Table 1.

**Table 1. Proposed Winery Events**

Activity Description	Quantity (maximum)	Date & Time Period	Attendees (maximum)
Winemaker Tastings & Luncheons	4	January – December 11:00 am to 6:00 pm Daily*	20
Collector & Friends Luncheons	4	March - October 11:00 am to 6:00 pm Daily *	30 – 50
Tasting Room Appointments	N/A	11:00 am to 5:00 pm Daily*	Anticipated maximum of 10 per day
<b>*All visitor-serving uses would be suspended during any National Weather Service Red Flag Warning.</b>			

No amplified sound would be utilized at any winery event. Participation in industry-wide events is not proposed. Visitor-serving uses would be primarily staffed by the owners and winery staff, assisted by up to five employees during winery events. Transportation to the winery for all visitor-serving uses would be by professional driver from the owner's restaurant in downtown Sonoma (EDGE), pre-arranged as part of the tasting appointment or event registration. Drivers would use Trinity Road to Cavedale Road as the primary route, limiting miles travelled on Cavedale to the 1.5-mile section of road between the project site and the Trinity intersection.

The project proposes 13 parking spaces: 12 improved gravel, including 2 EVA charging stations + 1 paved ADA. Additional construction would include minor driveway improvements, mostly within existing gravel areas; expansion of the existing sanitary septic system; construction of a new process wastewater treatment system; storm water management improvements; installation of fire protection water storage tank(s); extension of utilities (electric and propane lines); and associated grading and landscape improvements.



### **Project History**

Table 2 below summarizes key project milestones and events.

**Table 2. Project History**

Date	Project Event/Milestone
<b>10/30/2014</b>	Application Submission
<b>11/17/2014</b>	Referral to appropriate agencies
<b>11/17/2014</b>	Early Neighborhood Notification
<b>8/14/2015</b>	Application Complete for Processing
<b>5/5/2017</b>	Notice of Public Hearing
<b>5/18/2017</b>	BZA Hearing - No action taken - request for additional traffic information
<b>5/14/2020</b>	Application Complete for Processing – all requested information submitted
	Notice of Public Hearing

### **Prior Review**

This item was first considered by the BZA at its meeting on May 18, 2017; however, no action was taken at that time.

### **General Plan and Area Plans**

The following General Plan policies are applicable to the project:

#### **LAND USE ELEMENT**

The overall purpose and definition for the Resources and Rural Development land use category is to allow very low density residential development and agricultural production activities, compatible with the primary goal of protecting lands used for timber, geothermal and mineral resource production, and for natural resource conservation. No specific resource policies are applicable to the proposed project. However, the following Planning Area Objective for Sonoma Valley is applicable.

Objective LU-20.5: Limit recreation and visitor serving uses in resource areas to low intensity or outdoor uses.

#### **AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES ELEMENT**

Policy AR-6a: Permit visitor serving uses in agricultural categories that promote agricultural production in the County, such as tasting rooms, sales and promotion of products grown or processed in the County, educational activities and tours, incidental sales of items related to local area agricultural products, and promotional events that support and are secondary and incidental to local agricultural production. [...]

Policy AR-6d: Follow these guidelines for approval of visitor serving uses in agricultural areas:

- (1) *The use promotes and markets only agricultural products grown or processed in the local area.*
- (2) *The use is compatible with and secondary and incidental to agricultural production activities in the area.*



(3) *The use will not require the extension of sewer and water.*

(4) *The use is compatible with existing uses in the area.*

(5) *Hotels, motels, resorts, and similar lodging are not allowed.*

(6) *Activities that promote and market agricultural products such as tasting rooms, sales and promotion of products grown or processed in the County, educational activities and tours, incidental sales of items related to local area agricultural products are allowed.*

(7) *Special events on agricultural lands or agriculture related events on other lands in the Sonoma Valley Planning Area will be subject to a pilot event coordination program which includes tracking and monitoring of visitor serving activities and schedule management, as necessary, to reduce cumulative impacts.*

#### OPEN SPACE AND RESOURCE CONSERVATION ELEMENT

Policy OSRC-2b: *Avoid commercial or industrial uses in Scenic Landscape Units other than those that are permitted by the agricultural or resource land use categories.*

Policy OSRC-8e: *Prohibit, except as otherwise allowed by Policy OSRC-8d, grading, vegetation removal, agricultural cultivation, structures, roads, utility lines, and parking lots within any streamside conservation area. Consider an exception to this prohibition if [...]*

#### WATER RESOURCES ELEMENT

Policy WR-2e (formerly RC-3h): *Require proof of groundwater with a sufficient yield and quality to support proposed uses in Class 3 and 4 water areas. Require test wells or the establishment of community water systems in Class 4 water areas. Test wells may be required in Class 3 areas. Deny discretionary applications in Class 3 and 4 areas unless a hydrogeologic report establishes that groundwater quality and quantity are adequate and will not be adversely impacted by the cumulative amount of development and uses allowed in the area, so that the proposed use will not cause or exacerbate an overdraft condition in a groundwater basin or subbasin. Procedures for proving adequate groundwater should consider groundwater overdraft, land subsidence, saltwater intrusion, and the expense of such study in relation to the water needs of the project.*

#### PUBLIC SAFETY ELEMENT

Policy PS-3b: *Consider the severity of natural fire hazards, potential damage from wildland and structural fires, adequacy of fire protection and mitigation measures consistent with the Public Safety Element in the review of projects.*

Policy PS-3d: *Refer projects and code revisions to the County Department of Fire and Emergency Services and responsible fire protection agencies for their review and comment.*

#### CIRCULATION AND TRANSIT ELEMENT

Policy CT-7nn: *Require a traffic analysis and consider cumulative weekend traffic impacts in the review of discretionary projects throughout the Sonoma Valley Planning Area.*

The project is not subject to an area or specific plan.



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**Zoning**

Table 3 below summarizes: 1) the development standards that apply to the site as outlined in the Sonoma County Zoning Ordinance, 2) the existing condition, 3) the proposed project condition, and 4) whether the project is consistent with the Zoning Ordinance.

**Table 3. Zoning Consistency**

<b>Standard</b>	<b>Ordinance Requirement</b>	<b>Existing Condition</b>	<b>Proposed Project</b>
<b>Land Use</b>	Resources and Rural Development (RRD)	Single Family Dwelling, caretaker unit, ADU, barns, vineyard, ag reservoir	Winery, tasting room & events allowed with Use Permit under Sec. 26-10-020(g), (i) & (ee)
<b>Residential Density</b>	1 primary unit/40 acres	1 primary unit	No Change
<b>Lot Area</b>	20-acre minimum	160 acres	No Change
<b>Lot Width</b>	125 ft minimum	> 125 ft	No Change
<b>Building Height</b>	35 ft maximum	Winery/tractor barn – 25 ft; Tasting/barn – 26 ft	No Change
<b>Lot Coverage %</b>	5 % maximum (348,480 sq ft; 8 acres)	12,578 sq ft; 0.3 acre	No Change
<b>Front Setback</b>	30 ft / 55 ft rd centerline	> 325 ft fr proposed winery (existing tractor barn)	No Change
<b>Side Setback</b>	10 ft	> 1,200 ft fr proposed tasting room (existing barn)	No Change
<b>Rear Setback</b>	20 ft	> 2,100 ft fr proposed tasting room (existing barn)	No Change
<b>Parking Spaces</b>	8 for Winery & Tasting Room + 20 for Events = 28	6 gravel spaces	13 - see parking discussion**
<b>Riparian Corridor Protection</b>	Prohibit development within 50 feet of stream bank; except by Use Permit	Stream > 50 ft from all proposed development	No Change
<b>NO ZONING INCONSISTENCIES HAVE BEEN IDENTIFIED</b>			

\*\*The project proposes 13 parking spaces: 12 improved gravel, including 2 EVA charging stations + 1 paved ADA. Because transportation for all visitor-serving uses (tasting appointments and events) would be provided by professional driver, less parking is required for special events than the County's standard requirement of 1 space per 2.5 attendees. The proposed 13 spaces was determined in consultation with staff as adequate to support the proposed use while also minimizing new grading impacts to construct parking that isn't needed.

**ANALYSIS*****Consistency with General Plan***

The project parcel has a Resources and Rural Development (RRD) land use designation in the Sonoma County General Plan. RRD is not an agricultural land use designation; however, it allows agricultural activities. Previous



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approvals by the Board of Zoning Adjustments have relied on compliance with Agricultural Resource Policies AR-6a and AR-6d to approve agricultural processing and visitor-serving activities in RRD. These policies permit tasting rooms and events that: promote agricultural products grown or processed in the local area; are secondary and incidental to local agricultural production; do not require extension of sewer and water; and are compatible with existing uses in the area.

The proposed winery would produce wine from grapes grown on-site. Tasting would be by appointment only. A limited number of events (eight per year) are proposed to promote and sell the wine produced on the site. No extension of water or sewer is required to support the proposed low intensity use. Neighborhood compatibility with residential uses is further discussed in the Neighborhood/Public Comments section below; however, the proposed project appears to be compatible with surrounding land uses. The project, as proposed, appears consistent with past project approvals for wineries with tasting rooms and events in the RRD land use designation.

Applicability and compliance with specific policies requiring protection of scenic resources (Policy OSRC-2b), protection of riparian streamside conservation areas (Policy OSRC-8e), proof of adequate groundwater (Policy WR-2e), consideration of wildfire impacts (Policy PS-3b; Policy PS-3d), and traffic analysis for discretionary approvals (Policy CT-7nn) are discussed separately in the Scenic Landscape Unit, Riparian Corridor, Groundwater, Traffic, and Wildfire Environmental Analysis sections below.

### ***Environmental Analysis***

#### Scenic Landscape Unit

The project area is within the designated Sonoma Valley/Mayacamas Mountains Scenic Landscape Unit. This unit was designated to protect views of the mountains that provide a backdrop to the valley. The proposed winery and tasting room buildings are not visible from the Sonoma Valley floor and are only minimally visible from Cavedale Road due to existing vegetation topography, and intervening parcels. In addition, because the project proposes to reuse existing structures, remodeled to retain their existing agrarian character, views from Cavedale Road would be virtually unchanged.

#### Riparian Corridor

An unnamed stream, which is a designated Riparian Corridor with a 50-foot Streamside Conservation Area setback occurs near the southern parcel boundary. The stream channel, and a small unmapped tributary, are both greater than 50 feet from the proposed tasting room parking area (the nearest project component), estimated from aerial at approximately 250 feet from the designated channel and approximately 58 feet from the undesignated tributary. The project's compliance with the riparian corridor setback and implementation of standard drainage and stormwater control measures would likely adequately protect on-site riparian resources; however, a detailed analysis of riparian and other biological resources was not conducted at this time.

#### Groundwater

The property is located in a Zone 3 Marginal Groundwater Area. A groundwater study prepared (E. H. Boudreau, August 2014) determined the proposed 2,000-case winery and visitor-serving uses would use approximately 16,300 gallons per year, and concluded that there is adequate water to support the project with no adverse effects on the neighboring properties' wells. The report was reviewed by the PRMD Natural Resources geologist, who concurred with the determination that the site has an adequately sized well located in an aquifer with



ample existing reserves and recharge so that there would be no lowering of the local groundwater table as a result of the proposed project.

### Wildfire

The project parcel is located in an area subject to historic wildfires, and is within a Very High Wildland Fire Hazard Severity Zone due to the mountainous topography, high vegetation density, and fuel continuity. Although clearings in the tree canopy for vineyards (18 acres currently planted on-site), the irrigation reservoir, and residential development can act as fire breaks, the risk of future wildfire damage remains very high.

In addition, the access road to the parcel, Cavedale Road, is a one-lane roadway with potentially significant safety constraints. A designated evacuation map has been issued for the Cavedale/Trinity community by the Department of Emergency Management. The designated primary evacuation route for all properties on Cavedale Road is down Cavedale towards Highway 12 in order to leave Trinity Road open to first responders (Attachment 10).

The project site is served by the Sonoma Valley Fire & Rescue Authority, who provide primary fire protection service to an area of approximately 55.5 square miles, including the City of Sonoma, Temelec, and most of Sonoma Valley and the adjacent mountains north of Sonoma to the intersection of Dunbar Road with Highway 12 between Glen Ellen and Kenwood. The main fire station is located in downtown Sonoma on 2nd Street West, approximately 12 vehicle miles and 30 minutes driving time (during non-emergency conditions) via Highway 12, Trinity Road, and Cavedale Road. There are two axillary unmanned stations within approximately 2 miles travel distance from the project site: Station 8 near the intersection of Cavedale Road and Trinity Road, and Station 9 at 4601 Cavedale Road.

In response to wildfire concerns, the applicant has revised the visitor-serving component of their project to suspend all tasting appointments and agricultural promotional events during any Red Flag Warning issued by the National Weather Service. The winery would continue to operate during Red Flag Warnings.

The applicant has also prepared a Fire Safety & Evacuation Plan (SMA 2/25/2020; Attachment 9) which outlines the following safety measures and procedures:

- Creation and maintenance of defensible space around buildings;
- Maintenance of the emergency water supply system consisting of a dedicated water tank for fire suppression and infrastructure to obtain water from an existing 3-acre-foot irrigation reservoir, including regular inspection of equipment necessary to run the well and fire pump during a power outage;
- Maintenance of an emergency survival kit with adequate supplies for employees and visitors; and
- Employee training on both shelter in place and evacuation procedures.

In addition to the above, all existing structures proposed for project use would be upgraded during the remodel to meet or exceed fire safety standards.

The General Plan Public Safety Element states in Section 4.2 under Land Use Planning: *In order to reduce the risk of fire damage in rural areas, the types and intensities of land uses should be limited. [...] Rural development*



*should be most restricted where natural fire hazards are high, fire protection is limited, and road access prevents timely response by firefighting personnel and rapid evacuation by residents.*

Notwithstanding the above project revisions and safety measures to address the potential wildfire risk, the proposed project would increase land use intensity by bringing employees and visitor-serving uses to an area with a high risk of natural fire hazard, served by limited fire protection resources via a single, winding, slow-speed primary access route - Trinity Road, and a constrained, one-lane, winding, slow-speed primary evacuation route via Cavedale Road. For these reasons, Permit Sonoma is not able to support approval of the project.

#### Traffic/Roadway Suitability

Trip Generation. A Focused Traffic Study (W-Trans 10/1/2018; Attachment 6) and Addendum (W-Trans 1/8/2020; Attachment 7) have been prepared for the project. The 2018 study calculated that the proposed winery and tasting room would generate an average of 13 new daily trips for employees, deliveries, and wine tasting appointments, including 3 trips during the week day pm peak hour and 3 trips during the weekend (Saturday) midday peak hour. This level of additional trip generation would not be anticipated to noticeably affect existing traffic patterns in the area. Trinity Road already carries over 1,000 vehicles per day on average (week day traffic counts from May 2012 and July 2016 were 1,040 & 1,080, respectively). Traffic counts taken at the project driveway over four days from Thursday, July 13 through Sunday, July 16, 2017 indicated the highest volume on Cavedale occurs on Fridays, with 92 vehicles recorded, including a peak of 12 vehicles in the afternoon between 3:00 to 4:00 pm.

The 2020 study calculated that the largest proposed winery event (50 persons- 4 times per year) would generate 10 new employee trips and, using the County's standard rate of 2.5 attendees per car for events, 40 new attendee trips on event days (20 inbound at the start and 20 outbound at the end of the event). However, the 2020 study also noted that because attendees would be transported to the winery by professional driver, the vehicle occupancy would likely equal or exceed five persons per vehicle, potentially resulting in fewer trips depending on vehicle size, and would also be split between inbound and outbound as the drivers drop off and pick up passengers (i.e., 10 inbound and 10 outbound at the event start and at the event end for a 5-person vehicle; fewer trips for a larger vehicle). While event trip generation might be noticeable in the area on event days, the infrequency of events (four 50-person and four 20-person events per year) would not substantially affect existing traffic patterns in the area.

Roadway Suitability. Concern was expressed by staff and the public at the previous hearing that introducing a regular flow of new drivers to Cavedale Road who are unfamiliar with its severe constraints, including road width, contours, passing distance, and lack of turnouts, is a significant public safety issue both for those new users and also for existing users of Cavedale Road. This concern is exacerbated when those drivers may also be impaired after a wine tasting. While Trinity Road is less constrained than Cavedale Road, it too is winding and presents navigation challenges to those unfamiliar with it.

The applicant has reduced this potential impact by revising the visitor-serving component of their project to always include transportation by professional drivers, for both tasting appointments and events, to avoid introducing unfamiliar or potentially impaired drivers to the road. The project has always proposed that winery visitors would be encouraged to use Trinity Road as the primary route to limit travel on Cavedale Road; however, that direction can be better monitored and enforced through the use of contracted professional drivers.



To address roadway suitability concerns, the 2018 study included an analysis of sight distance at the project driveway and curves on Cavedale Road between the project site and its intersection with Trinity Road 1.5 miles to the west. The analysis also considered collision history along Cavedale Road.

Cavedale Road is a winding, one-lane road varying in width between 10 and 16 feet, with a 2-to-5-foot shoulder on at least one side. The roadway is not posted for a specific speed limit, though the traffic analysis concluded 20 mph was the highest speed for vehicle travel due to roadway design, with 15 mph being the more typical travel speed.

The study determined the driveway would require widening and reconfiguration to improve sight distance for vehicles entering and exiting the property, and also identified and evaluated ten curves with restricted sight distance between the project site and Trinity Road, concluding that nine of those curves could be expected to be safely travelled coming to and leaving the project site. One of the curves (Curve 10 in the study, and closest to the project site) was determined to be too narrow to allow vehicles to pass one another. Therefore, signage was recommended to be installed at both ends of this curve with advisory speeds posted at 10 mph, the speed for which there is adequate sight distance, to warn drivers to navigate more carefully. In addition to recommended signage at Curve 10, the study indicated the applicant has voluntarily proposed installing 15-mph speed advisory signs on the upper 1.5-mile segment of Cavedale Road, and has voluntarily proposed installing one to two new turnouts, although locations for turnouts were not identified in the study.

Staff requested additional information on the necessity and recommended locations of proposed turnouts, and to support the study's conclusion that the remaining nine sight-distance-impaired curves on the upper 1.5 miles of Cavedale could support project traffic safely without improvement. Staff also requested a site distance evaluation of the lower 5.9 miles of Cavedale Road from the project site to Highway 12, as the designated primary wildfire emergency evacuation route for employees and visitors.

A technical memorandum was prepared to address these additional staff requests (W-Trans 4/27/2020; Attachment 8). The memo states that at all curves, with the exception of Curve 10, the existing roadway and shoulder widths provide sufficient space for two oncoming opposing drivers to pass, and further states that the other nine curves have clear sight distances ranging from 85 to 140 feet, which is adequate for a 15-mph design speed; therefore, improvements for these curves were not recommended.

The memo identifies the east side of the roadway at Curve 10 as a recommended location for widening, although feasibility to do so was not investigated. A turnout at that location would enable northbound traffic to move aside to allow a vehicle to pass in the opposing southbound direction.

Staff believe that the feasibility and efficacy of road safety improvements, including advisory signage and turnouts, should be further evaluated before Permit Sonoma can make a road suitability determination.

To address suitability of lower Cavedale to support emergency evacuation by employees and visitors, 19 curves with restricted sight distance were identified and evaluated. The memo states that all 19 curves have 80 to 140 feet of clear sight distance available and are located on segments of Cavedale Road that have turnouts at or near the curves, and concludes that the roadway is adequate to provide safe one-way evacuation travel at the 15-mph design speed. It was further noted that because traffic would be south-bound one-way, the need for sight distance is less critical as there would be no opposing traffic and no potential passing conflicts.

**Collision History.** There were three collisions reported at the intersection of Trinity and Cavedale during a nine-year period from 2008 to 2016, and one fatal accident on Cavedale Road, itself, about five miles south of the



project site. No collisions were reported over the nine-year period on Cavedale Road between Trinity Road and project driveway.

#### CEQA Determination

The proposed project was determined to be Statutorily Exemption from the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act Guidelines pursuant to the Provisions of Title 14 of the California Administrative Code, Section 15270, as a project which a public agency rejects or disapproves.

#### **NEIGHBORHOOD/PUBLIC COMMENTS**

The neighborhood is considered rural with dwellings widely scattered amid mixed hardwood and conifer forest on steep hills. There are limited agricultural uses with vineyard plantings and at least one olive orchard scattered throughout. A winery would not be expected to conflict with the majority of allowed uses in the vicinity unless large scale conversions from timber land to vineyards were proposed as well, which is not the case.

The proposed winery is small at only 2,000 cases per year. Proposed appointment-only tasting and the relatively small number of promotional events (eight) hosting between 20 and 50 people per event with no amplified sound would be unlikely to have negative neighborhood impacts once visitors are on-site. The tasting room and events would be located in the interior of a large (160 acre) parcel which would provide noise mitigation simply through distance to adjoining uses. Minimal noise is expected from the winery itself. Because wine would only be produced from grapes grown on-site, no trucks importing grapes on public roads would be involved. The period of highest noise impact would occur during “crush” (August – October). However, all processing equipment would be inside the winery building, aiding in attenuating potential noise impacts.

However, the roadways serving the project site are the primary issue for neighborhood compatibility because there are potentially significant public safety concerns due to the unsafe road conditions. As described above, access to the area is provided by narrow, steep, and winding paved roads serving two-way traffic. While Trinity Road is a two-lane road with a center stripe, Cavedale Road does not have a center line or fog strip because it is a one-lane road. Neighbors have raised concerns that a winery with tasting is not a compatible use for the area, particularly because of the roadways.

Staff conducted a search of permit records on Cavedale Road to determine whether any other wineries with public tasting have been approved and identified the following permit history:

- 5420 Cavedale Road: Korbin Kameron Vineyard has a Home Occupation Zoning Permit (ZPE13-0140) for a wholesale wine business, which does not allow on-site wine production, retail sales, or public tastings.
- 2990/3030 Cavedale Road: Mountain Terraces Winery and Vineyard (formerly Schaefer-Sonoma Valley Vineyards) has a Use Permit (UPE02-0006) for a 20,000-case winery without public tasting or events. A previous application (UPE00-0120) for a 2,000-case winery with tasting by appointment and no events was withdrawn.
- 990 Cavedale Road: Petroni Vineyards has a Use Permit (UPE01-0064) for a 4,200-case winery with no public tasting or events. UPE10-0073 allowed expansion of the barrel storage area with no increase in production, no public tasting, and no events. Multiple applications have been submitted to try to add public tasting and/or events (UPE09-0055/UPE10-0072/UPE16-0104); all have been withdrawn.



While some public comments have been received in opposition of the project expressing concern about traffic and road safety, others have been submitted in support of the project, praising the sustainable design of the proposed facility and the environmental stewardship of the landowner, and expressing appreciation that road safety improvements proposed to be installed by the project (i.e., advisory signage and turnouts) would be a benefit to the community.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

### ***Staff Recommendation***

Staff recommends that the Board of Zoning Adjustments deny the Use Permit, based on the project's proposed intensification of land uses in a high wildfire risk area that has been subject to recent and historic wildfires, and its potential to expose people and structures to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving wildland fires.

## **ATTACHMENTS**

1. Draft Resolution
2. Figures: 1. Vicinity Map; 2. Aerial Map; 3. Aerial Blow Up; 4. Land Use Map; 5. Zoning Map; 6. Site Plans
3. Proposal Statement, 1/21/2021
4. BZA Staff Report, 5/18/2017
5. BZA Minutes, 5/18/2017
6. Focused Traffic Study, W-Trans 10/1/2018
7. Addendum to the Focused Traffic Study, W-Trans 1/8/2020
8. Technical Memo on Road Improvements, W-Trans 4/27/2020
9. Fire Safety & Evacuation Plan, Steve Martin Associates 2/25/2020
10. Cavedale-Trinity Community Evacuation Map
11. Public Comments



## **Attachment 1. Draft Resolution**

Resolution Number 21-

County of Sonoma  
Santa Rosa, California

May 13, 2021  
UPE14-0088 Crystal Acker

RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF ZONING ADJUSTMENTS, COUNTY OF SONOMA, STATE OF CALIFORNIA, DENYING A USE PERMIT TO MCQUOWN ENTERPRISES, LP FOR PROPERTY LOCATED AT 5700 CAVEALE ROAD, GLEN ELLEN, CA 95442; APN 053-051-029.

WHEREAS, the applicant, Tammy Martin, representing McQuown Enterprises, LP, filed a Use Permit application with the Sonoma County Permit and Resource Management Department for a new 2,000-case winery and tasting room with agricultural promotional events located on a 160-acre parcel located at 5700 Cavedale Road, Glen Ellen, CA 95552; APN 053-051-029; Zoned Resources and Rural Development (RRD) 40-acre density (B6 40), Local Guidelines Taylor/Sonoma/Mayacamas Mountains (LG/MTN), Riparian Corridor 50-foot Development Setback (RC50/25), Scenic Resources – Scenic Landscape Unit (SR); Supervisorial District No 1; and

WHEREAS, this project is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (“CEQA”) pursuant to Section 15270 of the CEQA Guidelines as a project which a public agency rejects or disapproves; and

WHEREAS, in accordance with applicable provisions of law, the Board of Zoning Adjustments held a public hearing on May 13, 2021, at which time the Board of Zoning Adjustments heard and received all relevant testimony and evidence presented orally or in writing regarding the project and all interested persons were given an opportunity to hear and be heard; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Zoning Adjustments has had an opportunity to review this Resolution and finds that it accurately sets forth the intentions of the Board regarding the Project.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Zoning Adjustments makes the following findings:

1. The project parcel is located in an area subject to historic wildfires (Nuns Fire 2017; Cavedale Fire 1966; Nuns Canyon Fire 1964; Cavedale Fire 1925), is within a Very High Wildland Fire Hazard Severity Zone, and has all the characteristics associated with a Very High Wildland Fire Hazard area, including steep or variable topography, vegetation characterized by densely forested land, and hot, dry summers.
2. Access to the project site is from Trinity Road and Cavedale Road- both narrow, winding, slow-speed roadways with hairpin curves. The project driveway is located on Cavedale Road, which is one-lane throughout its entire length, varying in width from 10 to 16 feet, with a 2-to-5-foot shoulder on at least one side. Cavedale Road serves two-way traffic by forcing opposing drivers to pull over into driveways or road shoulders in order to pass. These road conditions have

significant potential to impede timely response by firefighting personnel and rapid evacuation by residents during an emergency.

3. The proposed project would increase land use intensity by bringing employees and visitor-serving uses to an area with a high risk of natural fire hazard and highly constrained road access, thereby exposing people and structures to a potentially significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving wildland fires.
4. The project is not consistent with Sonoma County General Plan Public Safety goals or policies protecting people and structures from unnecessary exposure to wildland fires, and therefore, Permit Sonoma cannot support approval of the project.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board of Zoning Adjustments hereby denies Use Permit UPE14-0088.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board of Zoning Adjustments designates the Secretary as the custodian of the documents and other material which constitute the record of proceedings upon which the Board's decision herein is based. These documents may be found at the office of the Sonoma County Permit and Resource Management Department, 2550 Ventura Avenue, Santa Rosa, CA 95403.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board of Zoning Adjustments' action shall be final on the 11<sup>th</sup> day after the date of the Resolution unless an appeal is taken.

THE FOREGOING RESOLUTION was introduced by Commissioner \_\_\_\_\_, who moved its adoption, seconded by Commissioner \_\_\_\_\_, and adopted on roll call by the following vote:

Commissioner  
Commissioner  
Commissioner  
Commissioner  
Commissioner

Ayes: \_\_\_\_\_ Noes: \_\_\_\_\_ Absent: \_\_\_\_\_ Abstain: \_\_\_\_\_

WHEREUPON, the Chair declared the above and foregoing Resolution duly adopted; and

SO ORDERED.

**Figure 1. Vicinity Map**

**Figure 2. Aerial Map**

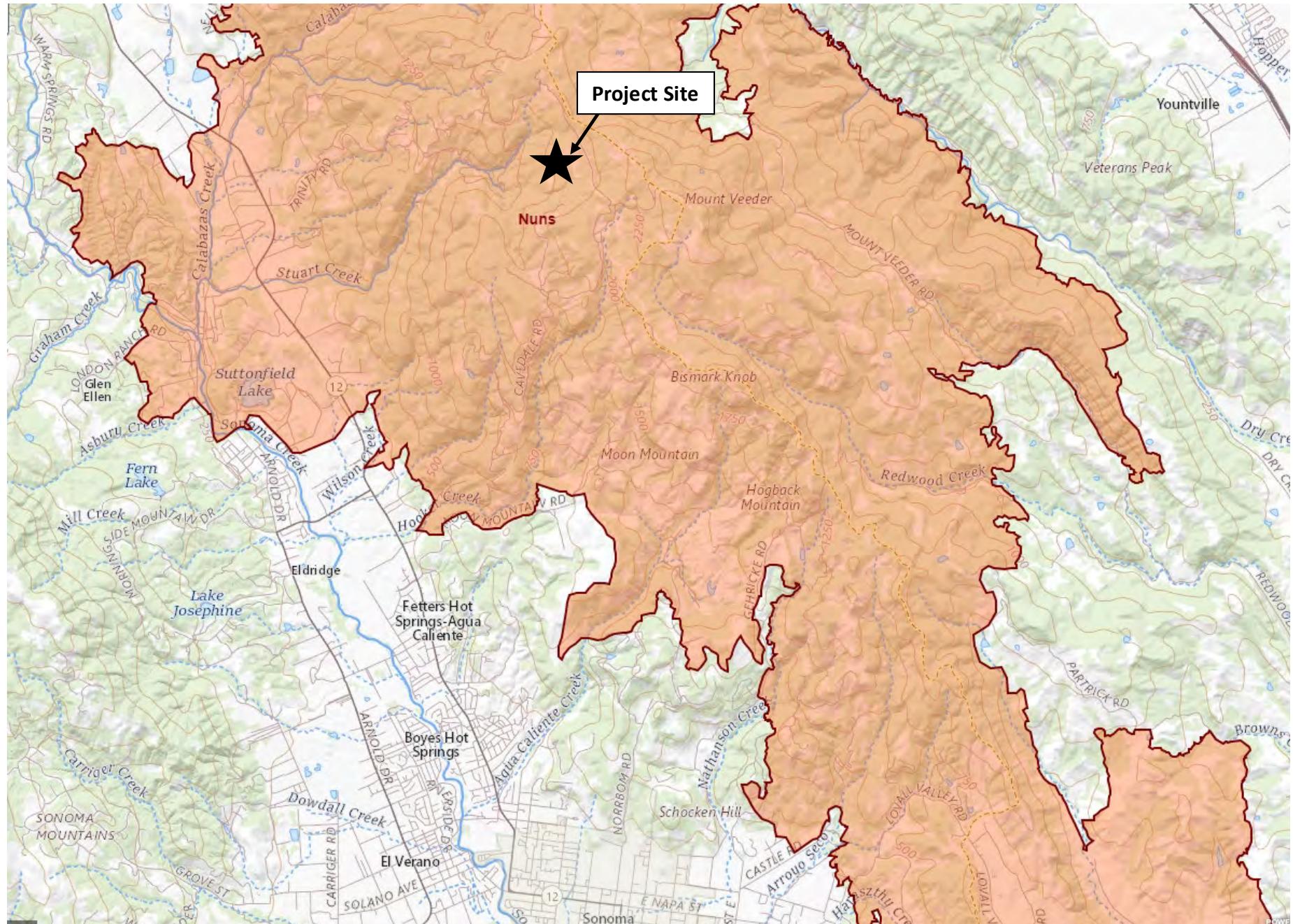
**Figure 3. Aerial Blow Up**

**Figure 4. Land Use Map**

**Figure 5. Zoning Map**

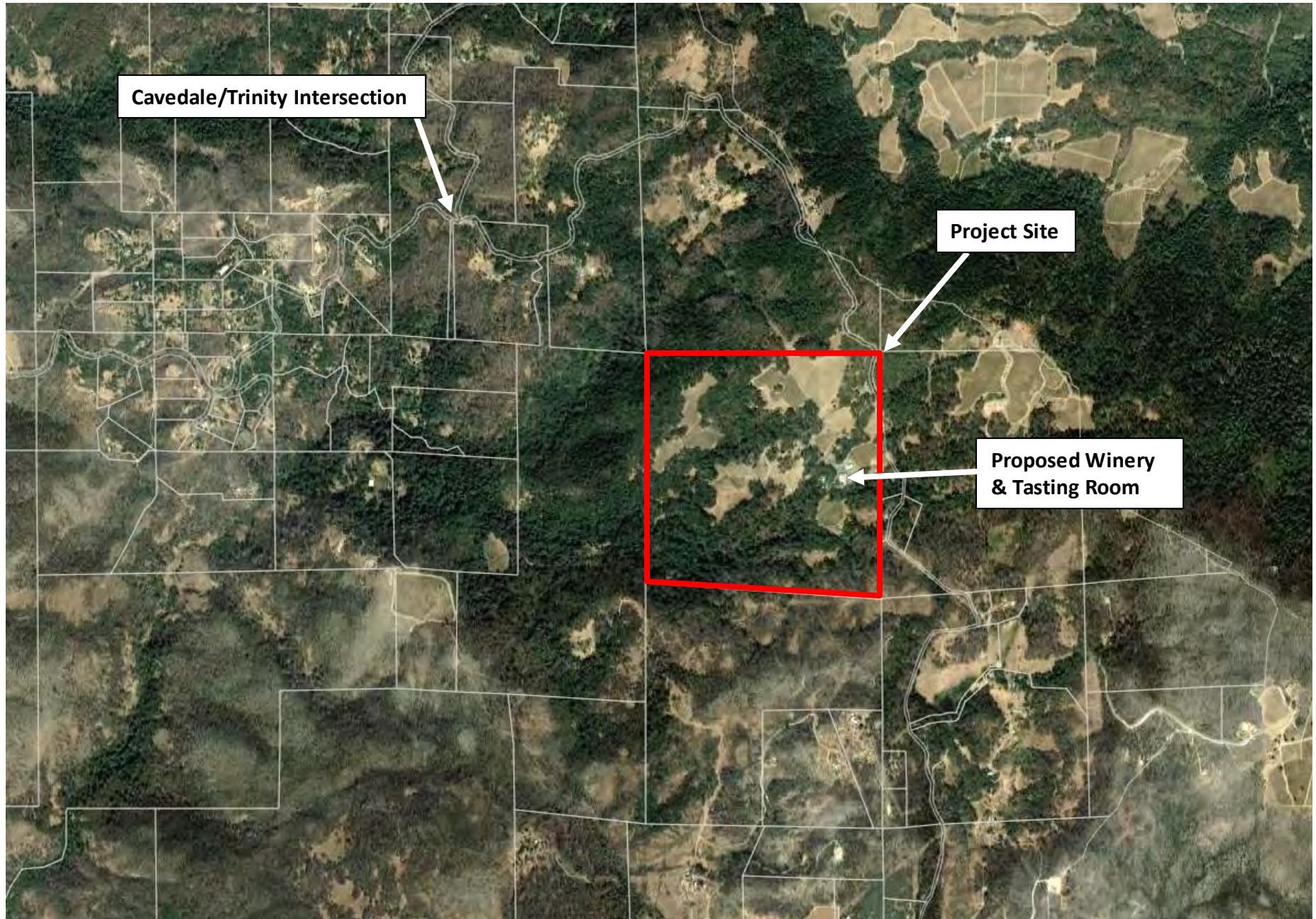
**Figure 6. Site Plans**

**Attachment 2. Figures**



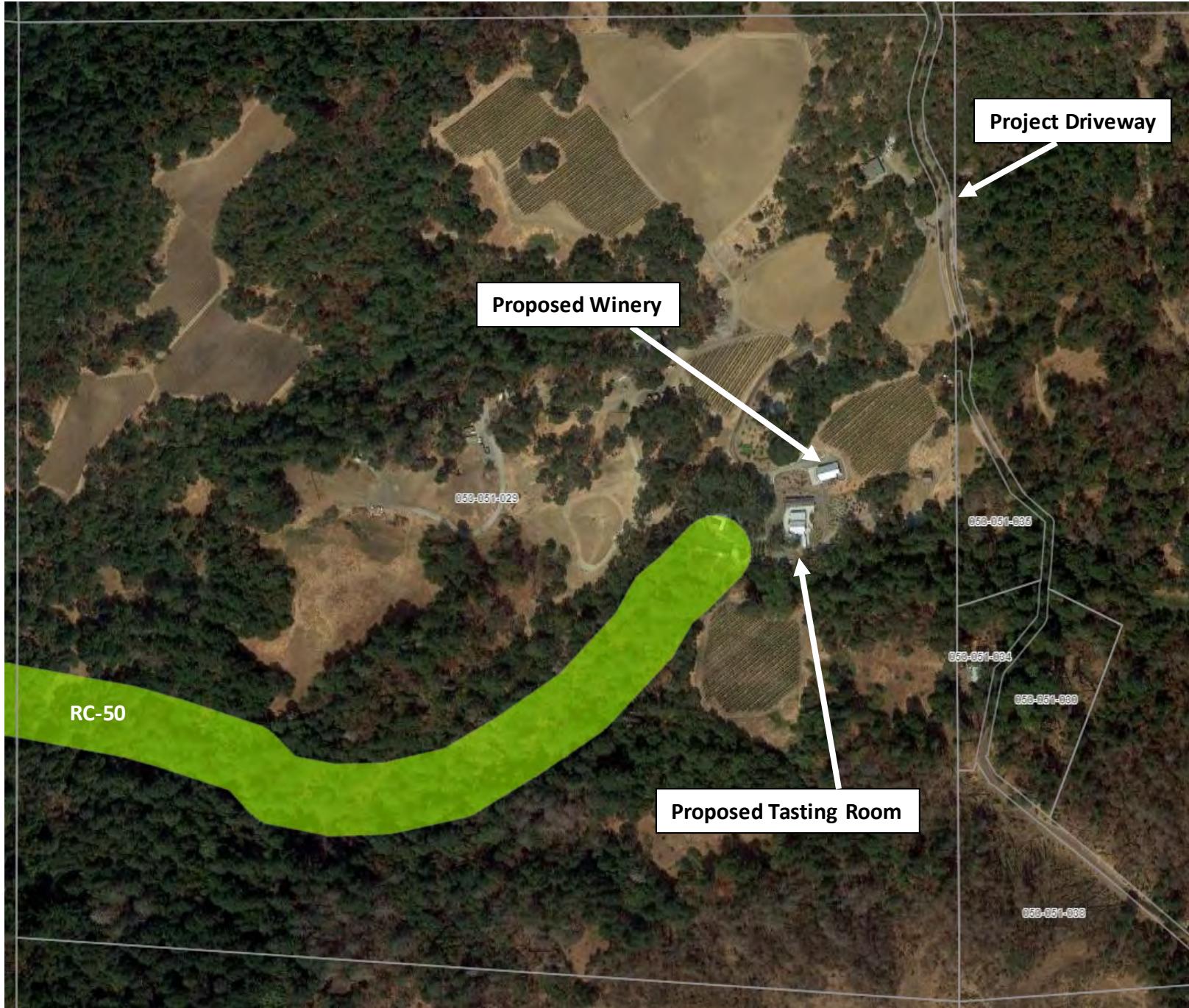
5700 Cavedale Road, Glen Ellen  
UPE14-0088 Silver Cloud Winery

Figure 1.  
Vicinity Map



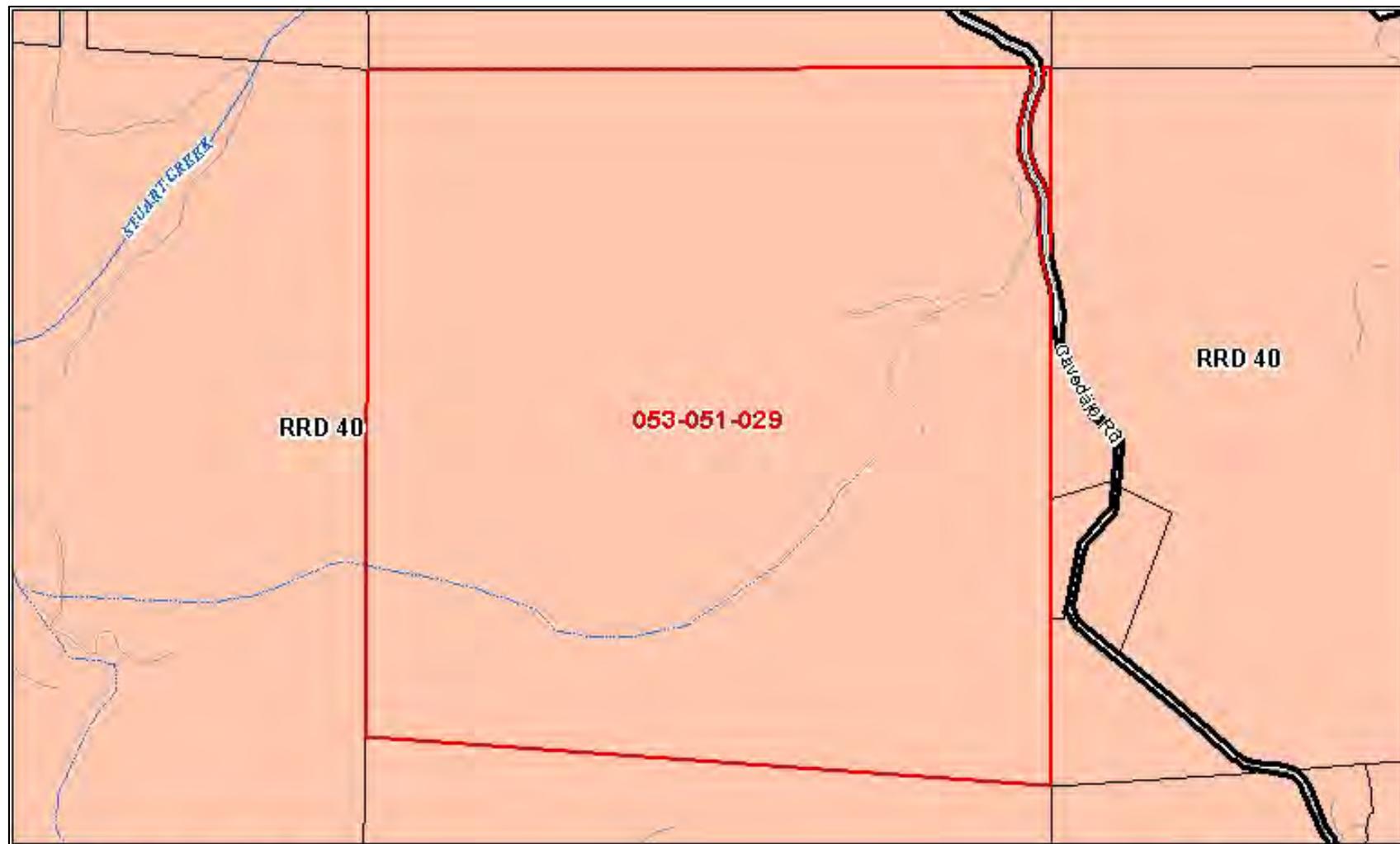
5700 Cavedale Road, Glen Ellen  
UPE14-0088 Silver Cloud Winery

Figure 2.  
Aerial Map



5700 Cavedale Road, Glen Ellen  
UPE14-0088 Silver Cloud Winery

Figure 3.  
Aerial Blow Up



**General Plan Land Use**

Resources & Rural Development

**Base Map Data**

Parcel

Street

Perennial Stream

Intermediate Stream



0 175 350 525 700

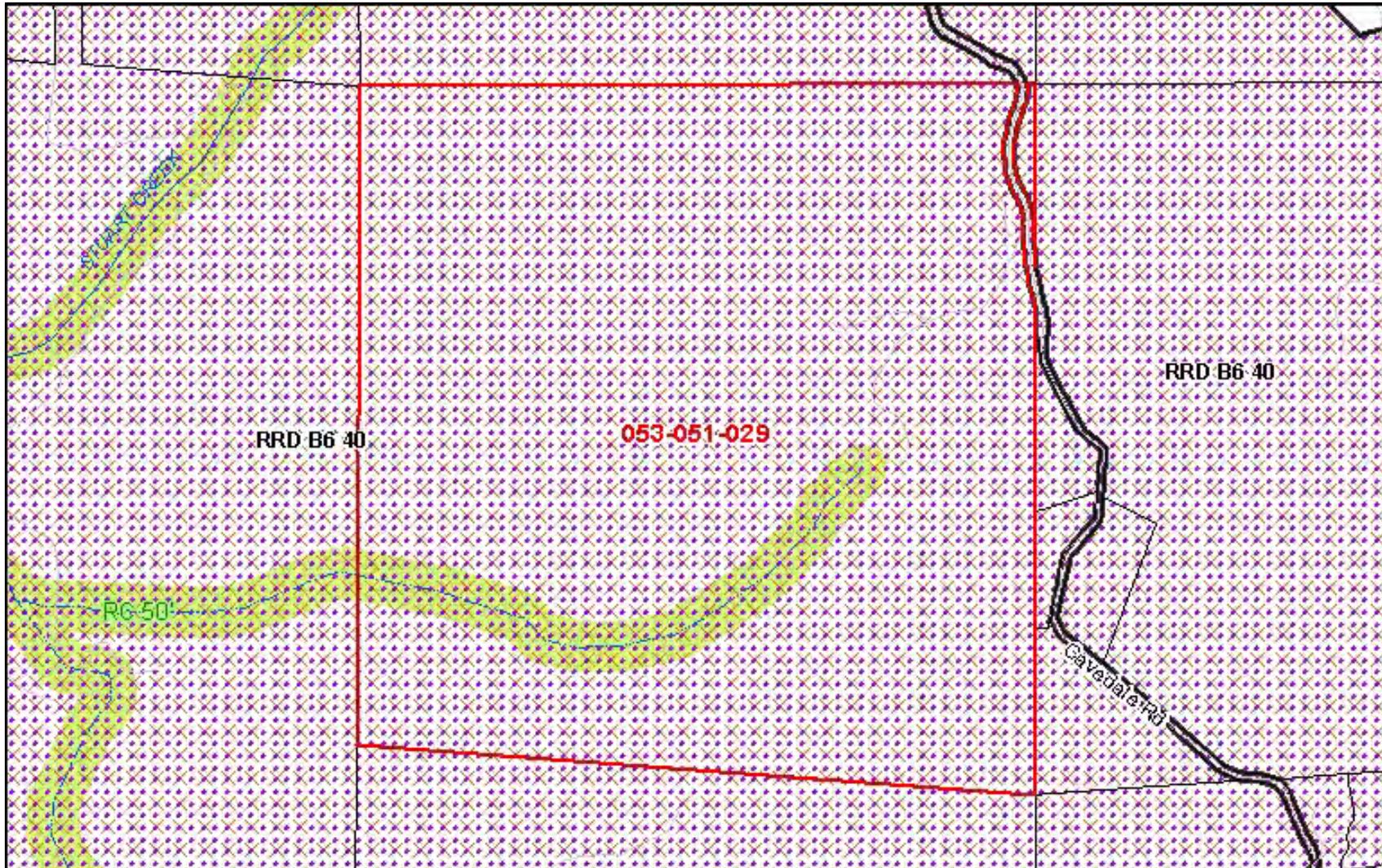
Feet

1 inch equals 667 feet

Numbers on map indicate maximum density  
in Acres/Unit, except Urban Residential  
where numbers indicate Units/Acre.

5700 Cavedale Road, Glen Ellen  
UPE14-0088 Silver Cloud Winery

**Figure 4.**  
Land Use Map



#### Zoning and Combining Districts

<input type="checkbox"/> Zoning by Area	<input type="checkbox"/> RC Riparian Corridor
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> LG Local Guidelines	Width
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SR Scenic Resource	50'
	100'
	200'

#### Base Map Data

<input type="checkbox"/> Parcel
<input type="checkbox"/> Street
<input type="checkbox"/> Perennial Stream
<input type="checkbox"/> Intermittent Stream

0 175 350 700  
Feet  
1 inch equals 667 feet

5700 Cavedale Road, Glen Ellen  
UPE14-0088 Silver Cloud Winery

Figure 5.  
Zoning Map

SMA

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© Martin Associates, Inc.

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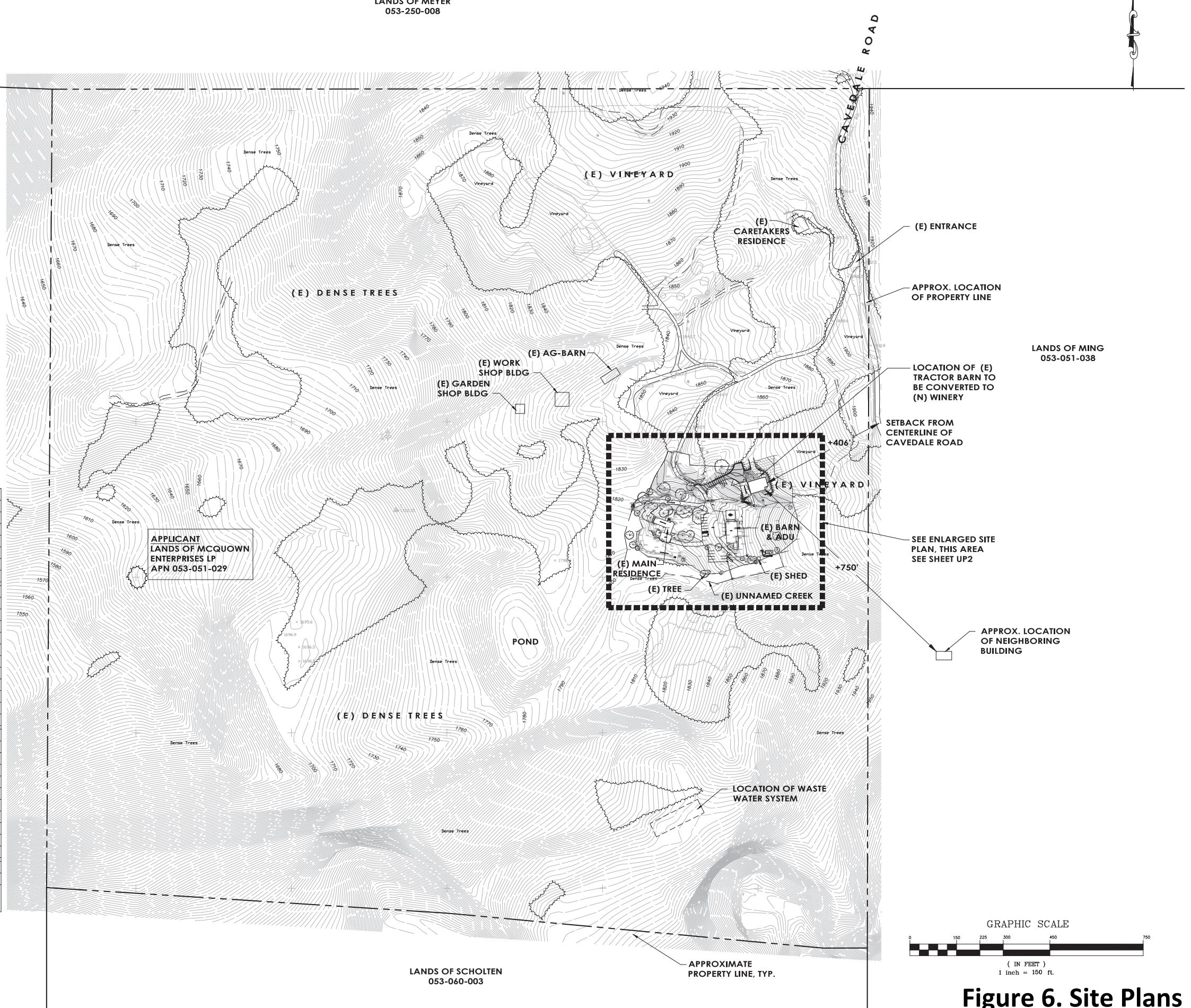
## OVERALL SITE PLAN

**SILVER CLOUD VINEYARDS**  
New Winery Facility  
5700 Cave Dale Road  
Glen Ellen, CA 95442  
**AP# 053-051-029**

OB NO. SMA 2013-014  
DATE June 1, 2019  
DRAWN SF CHKD SM  
FILE NO. 1314-USE PERMIT  
SHEET

JP1

## Figure 6. Site Plans





**Attachment 3. Silver Cloud Proposal Statement,  
1/21/2021**

9-11-14  
Revised 3-17-15  
Revised 2-13-19  
Revised 12-19-19  
Revised 1-20-2020  
Revised 1-21-2021

SMA

## SILVER CLOUD VINEYARDS

### NEW WINERY

#### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposed new winery at Silver Cloud Vineyards involves the development of a small winemaking facility utilizing existing buildings on the 160 acre parcel located at 5700 Cavedale Road in Glen Ellen, California. The small winery will be owner-operated and dedicated to the production of ultra premium wines. The existing vineyard is now fully developed at 18 acres total.

The winery will consist of the conversion of an existing tractor building into the new winery. An existing barn that currently has an ADU located in the south end of it is proposed to convert the northern end to a technical tasting use. The ADU in the existing barn will remain as a residential use, not associated with the winery. These existing buildings are not visible from Cavedale Road or surrounding properties. Access to the facility will be from the existing paved entrance and gravel driveway off Cavedale Road. It is the owner's desire to have a very quiet operation and winemaking facility.

1. A new winery facility located within existing buildings with a maximum production of 2,000 cases
2. Tasting and retail sales strictly by appointment only
3. 8 agricultural visitor serving activities per year with 50 persons maximum

<u>Activity</u>	<u>Quantity</u>	<u>Date &amp; Time</u> <u>Period</u>	<u>Attendees</u> <u>(maximum)</u>
Wine Maker Tastings & Luncheons	4	January - December	20
Collector & Friends Luncheon	4	March - October	30 - 50

Notes

- a) Collector & Friends luncheon will include Pick-up Weekend, Harvest Celebration, or other marketing visitor serving activities to support and build the Collector & Friends list.
  - b) Weddings and rehearsals are not proposed with this Use Permit Application
  - c) Amplified sound is not requested with the promotional gatherings.
  - d) Participation in Industry Wide Events is not planned nor requested.
4. Conversion of an existing single level tractor building & conversion of a portion of an existing barn to winery space.
    - a. 1,168 SF wine production & tank and barrel area (existing tractor building)
    - b. 156 SF administration office space (existing tractor building)
    - c. 156 SF tax paid storage space (existing tractor building)
    - d. 91 SF restroom space (existing tractor building)
    - e. 91 SF storage space (existing tractor building)
    - f. 288 SF mechanical area (existing tractor building)

Revised 3-17-15

Revised 2-13-19

Revised 12-19-19

Revised 1-20-2020

Revised 1-21-2021

- g. 773 SF conference & technical tasting room (existing barn)
- h. 835 SF kitchen/break room (existing barn)
5. Infrastructure includes minor improvements to the existing entrance on Cavedale Road and driveway, new paved driveway off existing gravel access road, and delineated parking area within existing gravel maneuvering area, expansion of existing sanitary wastewater leach field system, process wastewater treatment system, storm water management improvements, fire protection water storage, utilities and associated grading and landscape improvements.
6. 2 full-time employees during non-harvest & 5 full-time employees during the harvest season and bottling.
7. Tasting room visitors will be strictly by appointment and are anticipated to be on the order of 5 for an average day and 10 for a peak day.
8. Operating hours shall be 7 AM to 6 PM Monday through Friday off harvest and 6 AM to 10 PM Monday through Sunday during harvest season.
  - a. Tasting Room Appointments: 11 AM to 5 PM Monday through Sunday with the exception of during Red Flag Events.
  - b. Wine Maker Tastings & Luncheons as well as the Collector & Friends Activities: 11 AM to 6 PM Monday through Sunday (daylight hours) with the exception of during Red Flag Events.
9. Wine produced from the estate vineyard on site.
10. Traffic projection of an average of 13 daily trips at ultimate capacity of 2,000 cases per the final Focused Traffic Study by Wtrans dated October 1, 2018.
  - a. To ensure the safety of all passengers on Cavedale Road, all visitors (tasting room as well as event visitors) will meet at the owner's local Sonoma restaurant Edge and be privately chauffeured by a professional driver to the project site in passenger cars or small vans or shuttles. No limousines or busses will be utilized.

**Attachment 4. BZA Staff Report, 5/18/2017**



**Sonoma County Board of Zoning Adjustments  
S T A F F   R E P O R T**

Sonoma County Permit and Resource Management Department

2550 Ventura Avenue, Santa Rosa, CA 95403  
(707) 565-1900 FAX (707) 565-1103

**FILE:** UPE14-0088  
**DATE:** May 18, 2017  
**TIME:** 1:05 PM  
**STAFF:** Melinda Grosch, Project Planner

**Appeal Period: 10 calendar days**

## **SUMMARY**

<u>Applicant:</u>	Steve Martin Associates Incorporated
<u>Owner:</u>	McQuown Enterprises LP - Silver Cloud Winery
<u>Location:</u>	5700 Cavedale Road, Sonoma APN: 053-051-029
	Supervisorial District No.: 1
<u>Subject:</u>	Request for a Use Permit for a new winery and tasting room with events.
<u>PROPOSAL:</u>	Request for a Use Permit for a new winery with a maximum annual production of 2,000 cases within existing buildings, tasting by appointment only, and eight agricultural promotional events with a maximum attendance of 50 people per event on a 160 acre parcel.
<u>Environmental Determination:</u>	Exempt for the purposes of denial. Public Resources Code (CEQA) Section 21080(b)(5)
<u>General Plan:</u>	Resources and Rural Development 40 acre density
<u>Specific/Area Plan:</u>	None
<u>Land Use:</u>	
<u>Ord. Reference:</u>	Sec. 26-10-020(g) and (i)
<u>Zoning:</u>	RRD (Resources and Rural Development) 40 acres per dwelling, SR (Scenic Resources}, RC 50/50 (Riparian Corridor), LG/MTN (Local Guidelines - Sonoma I Taylor I Mayacamas Mountains)
<u>Land Conservation Contract:</u>	No
<u>Application Complete for Processing:</u>	November 15, 2014

**RECOMMENDATION:** Declare the project exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) for the purposes of denial and deny the requested Use Permit.

## **ANALYSIS**

### **Project Description:**

The applicant requests a Use Permit for a new 2,000 case per year winery on a 160 acre parcel. The proposed location for the winery is within existing buildings, with tasting by appointment only and eight agricultural promotional events per year. Event attendance is proposed to range from 20 to 50 people per event as detailed in the following table:

Event Description	Quantity	Date & Time	Attendees (maximum)
Winemaker Tastings & Luncheons	4	January - December	20
Collector & Friends Event	4	March - October 11:00 am to 6:00 pm (daylight hours)	30 - 50
Tasting Room Appointments	N/A	11:00 am to 5:00 pm Mon - Sun	Average of 5 per day

The project does not include amplified music or other sound and it is proposed that events will be held inside the winery structures. The project does not propose participation in Industry-Wide Events.

### **Site Characteristics:**

The parcel is located fairly high up in the Mayacamas Mountains between Sonoma and Napa Counties near the intersection of Cavedale and Trinity Road. The terrain in this area is rugged with steep hillsides covered in chaparral or hardwoods and firs, though the site itself is in a relatively flat area with about 300 feet of elevation change from the east side of the property to the west. This site is currently developed with a single family dwelling and several agricultural structures and other outbuildings. The site is currently planted with 12 acres of vineyard and the remainder is native mixed hardwood and conifer woodland and chaparral scrub. The developed area is roughly 1,820 feet above sea level and there is less than 20 feet of elevation change in the area where the buildings are located. The site is accessed by a private drive directly off of Cavedale Road and is served by private well and septic system.

### **Surrounding Land Use and Zoning:**

The project is located in the Mayacamas Mountains near the County Line between Sonoma and Napa Counties. The area is comprised of steep hills covered in trees, some timber, some mixed hardwoods (oak and madrone mixed with fir). The lower elevations are covered in chaparral changing to open oak grasslands as you reach the valley floor. The land is mostly held in large parcels some used for vineyards and others left in a natural state. Some parcels are used for grazing horses or cattle.

Zoning for the surrounding areas is:

North: RRD 86 40, LG/MTN, RC 50/50, SR. The land is uncultivated with scattered dwellings. Parcels range in size from 20 acres to almost 100 acres. There are only a couple of parcels between the subject parcel and Napa County.

East: RRD 86 40, LG/MTN, RC 50/50, SR. The land is uncultivated with scattered dwellings. Parcels range in size from 1.5 acres to over 100 acres. Again there are only a few parcels between the subject property and Napa County.

South: Parcels immediately to the south have the same zoning as the subject property. A little further to the south the zoning changes to RRD B 6 100 BH (Biotic Habitat) or RC 50/50, LG/MTN, SR. The land is mostly uncultivated with scattered dwellings and a couple of vineyard areas. Parcel sizes range from 2.5 to over 100 acres.

West: RRD B6 40, LG/MTN, RC 50/50, SR. The land is mostly uncultivated with scattered dwellings and a couple of vineyard areas. Parcel sizes range from roughly 20 acres to well over 100 acres in size.

The area is served by private wells and septic systems and the only access is via Cavedale or Trinity Roads, both narrow winding roadways. Trinity Road crosses the Mayacamas into Napa County, providing access directly between the two counties although not the primary access.

## **DISCUSSION OF ISSUES**

### **Issue #1:** General Plan Consistency

The property has a General Plan designation of Resources and Rural Development with a density of 40 acres per dwelling unit. The General Plan provides this "Purposes and Definition" statement:

*Purposes and Definition. This category allows very low density residential development and also is intended to:*

- (1) *Protect timberlands needed for commercial timber production under the California Timberland Productivity Act,*
- (2) *Protect lands needed for geothermal resource production,*
- (3) *Protect lands for aggregate resource production as identified in the Aggregate Resources Management Plan,*
- (4) *Protect natural resource lands including, but not limited to watershed, fish and wildlife habitat and biotic areas,*
- (5) *Protect against intensive development of lands constrained by geologic hazards, steep slopes, poor soils or water, fire and flood prone areas, biotic and scenic areas, and other constraints,*
- (6) *Accommodate agricultural production activities but limit such activities on timberland, or*
- (7) *Protection of county residents from proliferation of growth in areas where there are inadequate public services and infrastructure, including water supply and safe wastewater disposal. It is further the intent of this category that public services and facilities not be extensively provided in these areas and that development have the minimum adverse impact on the environment.*

The proposed project would make use of existing buildings on a property already developed with vineyards and there is no proposal to provide additional services such as sewer or water or improve any of the roadways. Therefore, the proposed project does not conflict with these stated purposes and definitions.

### **Issue #2:** Zoning Consistency

The property has a Zoning Designation of RRD (Resources and Rural Development) with 40 acres per dwelling unit density. The district allows wineries and tasting rooms with a Use Permit (Section 26-10-20

(g)) and processing is also allowed with a Use Permit (Section 26-10-20(i)). Since the RRD district is not an agricultural district, many of the policies intended to protect existing and potential agricultural use in the three Agricultural Districts (LIA, LEA, and DA) do not apply, and findings required by those policies are not required. This district allows many different resource development uses such as geothermal exploration and development, timber harvesting, mining, oil and gas wells, etc. Therefore, there is not an expectation that the adjoining land will be devoted to agriculture uses which might be affected by tourist activities associated with tasting rooms.

#### **Issue #3:** Roadway Suitability

Cavedale Road, a public road, is a one-lane road for its entire length from Highway 12 to Trinity Road. This means that to pass vehicles coming in the opposite direction drivers are forced to find a driveway or "turn out," sometimes resulting in one car needing to back up for a stretch. Passing a large vehicle (garbage truck, propane truck, delivery truck, etc.) requires more unsafe negotiation on this narrow roadway. Cavedale Road has signage warning that it is a one-lane winding road not suitable for large vehicles. One sign each side of Cavedale Road at its intersection with Highway 12 reading: "Winding One Lane Road – Not Suitable for R.V.s and trailers." See Exhibit F.

The site can also be accessed via Trinity Road to Cavedale although there is no way to actually access the site without using Cavedale for part of the trip. Although Trinity Road is a wider and somewhat more improved roadway than Cavedale, it too is steep and winding with some hairpin curves. The roadway has a prohibition on large trucks with signs on Highway 12 just prior to the intersection stating "No Semis over 38 feet kingpin to rear axle." See Exhibit G. There is also a sign at the beginning of Trinity Road reading "Warning: This road will not accommodate buses, R.V.'s, or stretch limos. You will get stuck!!" See Exhibit H.

The addition of the winery and tasting room would increase the traffic load to near what it might be if the subject property was developed out to its residential density (4 dwellings at 10 trips per day = 40 trips per day). The applicant is proposing to use small commuter vans and carpooling to reduce the number of trips for events. The applicant has also proposed a Zone Change to reduce the potential for subdivision in the future or development of the property to its full build out to the density of four dwelling units. However, these measures do not fully address the impacts of adding commercial and visitor winery traffic to Cavedale and Trinity Roads, because the traffic safety issues arise in large part from introducing a regular stream of new roadway users who would be unfamiliar with the severe constraints of the access roads. Residential users making repeated daily trips would not present the same safety impacts. Cavedale Road from Highway 12 to the site should not be used for winery/tasting room/event access under any circumstances, even with reduced residential trips.

#### **Issue #4:** Environmental Determination

An Initial Study was prepared for the project. Although the roadway system is inadequate and a recommendation is being made for denial, the Initial Study identified other potentially significant impacts that would require mitigation measures to be developed and implemented. Impacts with the greatest potential significance are discussed below.

#### **Issue #5:** Hydrology

The property is located in a Marginal Groundwater Area - Zone 3. A groundwater study was prepared by E. H. Boudreau, which concluded that there is adequate water to support the project and that there would be no adverse effects on the neighboring properties. The report was reviewed by the Permit and Resource Management Department's Project Review Health Specialist, who concurs in the determination that the site has an adequately sized well and is located in an aquifer with ample existing reserves and recharge so that there will be no draw down of existing wells.

**Issue #6:** Traffic

Since both public roads accessing the site are narrow, winding country roads, any increase in traffic has the potential to result in safety issues (see Issue #3 above). Cavedale Road is a one-lane road throughout its length with many curves and steep sections. Although it is one-lane it serves two-way traffic requiring extreme attention on the part of the driver even in a small passenger car. The average road width is 12 feet or less.

Traffic generated by the proposed winery is fairly limited with an estimated 8 to 22 passenger vehicles per day and less than one truck per month. Estimated vehicle trips are as follows:

Employees: Average trips per employee are 3 trip ends per day.

2 Employees during non-harvest = 6 trips per day.

5 Employees during harvest = 15 trips per day.

Visitors: Average 2 trip ends per vehicle. Visitors average 2.5 people/car, by appointment only.

5 Visitors per day average = 2 vehicles = 4 trips

10 visitors on a Peak Day = 4 vehicles = 8 trips

Events: Four marketing events are proposed.

4 Events for up to 20 people = 8 vehicles = 16 trips

Business Visitors, Distributors, etc.: 1 per week = 2 trips

Grape Transport: All grapes will come from on-site – No trips generated from off-site sourcing.

Shipping & receiving: Case goods storage and distribution, and on-site bottling via a bottling truck.

1,300 cases/truck

2,000 cases/year / 1,300 cases/truck = 1.5 trucks/year = 3 trips. Averages less than 1 trip per month.

Barrel Delivery: 18–24 month barrel program.

24 cases/barrel and 40 barrels per truck

2,000 cases/year / 24 cases/barrel (40 barrels/truck) = 2.1 trucks per year = 4 trips. Averages less than 1 trip per month.

Miscellaneous Deliveries of paper supplies, winery supplies, etc.:

3 vehicles per month = 6 trips per month = 0.2 trips per day.

**Total Trips per day:** 8 to 22 passenger vehicles and less than one truck per month.

Potential mitigation measures were considered by staff including: requiring all winery traffic be routed from Trinity Road; limits on the maximum size of vehicles that can access the site; and require the use of carpools and passenger vans for agricultural promotional events. However, these do not reduce the safety impacts of additional traffic on a very marginal roadway to an acceptable level.

**Issue #7:** Neighborhood Compatibility

The neighborhood is considered rural with dwellings widely scattered amid mixed hardwood and conifer forest on steep hills. There are limited agricultural uses with vineyard plantings and at least one olive orchard scattered throughout. Access to the area is provided by narrow, steep, and winding paved roads serving two-way traffic. While Trinity Road is a two-lane road with a center stripe, Cavedale Road does not have a center line or fog strip because it is a one-lane road. Neighbors have raised concerns that a winery with tasting is not a compatible use for the area, particularly because of the roadways. Although this rural area does have many residences scattered throughout, the RRD zoning designation accurately reflects land uses for the area. A winery would not be expected to conflict with the majority of allowed uses in the vicinity unless large scale conversions from timber land to vineyards were proposed as well.

The proposed winery is small at only 2,000 cases per year and the relatively small number of promotional (eight) events hosting between 20 and 50 people per event with no amplified sound may not have negative neighborhood impacts once customers are on-site. The tasting room and events would be located towards the center of a large (160 acre) parcel which would provide noise mitigation simply through distance to adjoining uses. As reported in the Geology and Ground Water Potential report prepared by E. H. Boudreau, the site has an adequately sized well and is located in an aquifer with ample existing reserves and recharge so that there will be no draw down of adjoining wells.

However, the roadways serving the project site are the primary issue for neighborhood compatibility because there are significant public safety concerns due to the unsafe road conditions.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

Declare the project exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) for the purposes of denial and deny the requested Use Permit.

**FINDINGS FOR RECOMMENDED ACTION**

1. The Board of Zoning Adjustments denies this project based on significant project impacts to road safety due to the existing one-lane access road serving the site. Introducing a regular flow of new drivers to Cavedale Road who are unfamiliar with its severe constraints, including road width, contours, passing distance and lack of turnouts, is a significant public safety issue both for those new users and also for existing users of Cavedale Road.
2. CEQA does not apply to projects that a public agency rejects or disapproves. (Public Resources Code, section 21080, subdivision (b)(5).)
3. The establishment, maintenance or operation of the use for which application is made will, under the circumstances of this particular case, be detrimental to the health, safety, peace, comfort, and general welfare of persons residing or working in the neighborhood of such use, and will be detrimental or injurious to property and improvements in the neighborhood or the general welfare of the area. The particular circumstances in this case are: 1) The project site is located on a constrained one-lane roadway serving two-way traffic that cannot safely accommodate the addition of visitor traffic.

**LIST OF ATTACHMENTS**

EXHIBIT A: Proposal Statement

EXHIBIT B: Zoning Map

- EXHIBIT C: Site Plan – 2 pages
- EXHIBIT D: Photos of Cavedale Road taken by Sonoma County Dept. of Transportation & Public Works – 4 pages
- EXHIBIT E: Google Maps photo of Warning Signs on Cavedale Road at Highway 12
- EXHIBIT F: Google Maps photo of Vehicle Class Prohibition Signs on Highway 12 at Trinity Road
- EXHIBIT G: Google Maps photo of Warning Signs on Trinity Road
- EXHIBIT H: Draft Resolution
-

**SMA Steve Martin Associates, Inc.**

130 South Main Street, Suite 201  
Sebastopol, CA 95472  
707-824-9730  
707-824-9707 (fax)

606 Alamo Pintada Road #3-221  
Solvang, CA 93463  
805-541-9730

June 11, 2015

Sonoma County Permit & Resource  
Management Department  
2550 Ventura Avenue  
Santa Rosa, CA 95403

Attention: Melinda Grosch

Re: Silver Cloud Vineyards  
5700 Cavedale Road  
UPE14-0088  
Project No. 2013014

Dear Melinda:

Thank you for meeting on May 27, 2015 to review the above-referenced project. This letter is to confirm the project completeness and items discussed, and to address additional questions you raised during the meeting.

1. The At-Cost Project Reimbursement Form and Agreement was submitted for your file on 5-21-15.
2. No additional structures are to be constructed with the subject Use Permit application; therefore, a Biotic Resource Study will not be required.
3. Since existing buildings will be converted to winery structures, no soil will be disturbed. Therefore an archaeological study will not be required. The existing buildings were built within the last 20 years and have no historical significance.
4. The funds submitted with the initial deposit for review of two technical studies may be utilized for processing of the subject Use Permit.
5. We have enclosed a Project Description with minor revisions to give further detail of the type and reduced hours of promotional agricultural gatherings. These revisions further reduce traffic related to the small winery facility. The respective changes are shown in "red" as follows:

Event Description	Quantity	Date & Time	Attendees (maximum)
Winemaker Tastings & <del>Late</del> Luncheons <sup>1</sup>	4	January – December	20
<del>Wine Club Members</del> Collector & Friends Event	4	March - October 11:00 am to <del>9:00 pm</del> 6:00 pm (daylight hours)	30 - 50
Tasting Room Appointments	N/A	<del>10:30 am</del> 11:00 am to 5:00 pm Mon - Sun	Average of 5 per day

<sup>1</sup> Notes: All agricultural promotional gatherings shall receive a notice for mandatory carpooling and carpool vans (for 50% of the guests) shall be required for gatherings over 20 attendees.

In the updated Project Description, we have also summarized the traffic information for Silver Cloud Winery which indicates the average projected vehicle trips are 8 per day and the peak vehicle trips with an agricultural promotional gathering to be 22 per day. For comparison, the standard traffic projection for one 3-bedroom residence (not including a granny unit) is 10 trips per day.

Additionally, the owner is voluntarily working with the Sonoma County DTPW for road improvements as a good neighbor, separate from the winery Use Permit application.

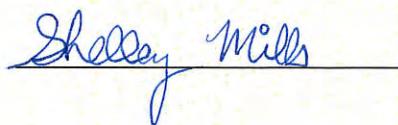
Also, the owner plans to further mitigate traffic by rezoning the property to prohibit subdivision of the parcel. The parcel is 160 acres and is currently zoned 40 acre density which has the potential of subdividing into 4 parcels. The applicant will rezone the parcel to 85 or 100 acre density which would not allow for any further subdivision of the subject parcel. The rezone application would be required as a condition of approval and later presented to the Board of Supervisors for their administrative approval. This voluntary rezone will reduce the allowed development of the property and correspondingly eliminate a minimum of 60 additional vehicle trips (20/additional parcel).

6. Concerning water usage, the winery is projected to use an average of 111 GPD at ultimate production capacity. This is less than a one bedroom residence. The owner will incorporate water conservation measures into the project by capturing rainwater off of all winery building roofs for reuse in landscape irrigation. The winery wastewater will be discharged into a subsurface leachfield where it will be naturally treated by the soil and disposed of (or reused for) through evapotranspiration and percolation into the aquifer.

I trust this information will be helpful to you in finalizing your environmental review and that you will be able to schedule Silver Cloud for hearing before the Board of Zoning Adjustments in the near future. Thank you and if you need anything further, please feel free to contact me.

Very truly yours,

Shelley Mills, Planner



Steve Martin, P.E.



Enclosure

cc: Mac Mcquown

## SILVER CLOUD VINEYARDS

### NEW WINERY

#### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposed new winery at Silver Cloud Vineyards involves the development of a small winemaking facility utilizing existing buildings on the 160 acre parcel located at 5700 Cavedale Road in Glen Ellen, California. The small winery will be owner-operated and dedicated to the production of ultra premium wines. The property currently has 12 acres of vines with 6 acres to be planted for a total of 18 acres.

The winery will consist of the conversion of a tractor building (under construction) into the new winery and conversion of a portion of an existing barn to technical tasting use. These existing buildings are not visible from Cavedale Road or surrounding properties. Access to the facility will be from the existing paved entrance and gravel driveway off Cavedale Road. It is the owner's desire to have a very quiet operation and winemaking facility.

1. A new winery facility located within existing buildings with an ultimate production of 2,000 cases
2. Tasting and retail sales strictly by appointment only
3. 8 agricultural promotional gatherings per year with 50 persons maximum

<u>Event Description</u>	<u>Quantity</u>	<u>Date &amp; Time Period</u>	<u>Attendees (maximum)</u>
Wine Maker Tastings & Luncheons	4	January - December	20
Collector & Friends Event <sup>1</sup>	4	March - October	30 - 50

#### Notes

1. Collector & Friends event will include Pick-up Weekend, Harvest Celebration, or other marketing activities to support and build the Collector & Friends list.
2. Weddings and rehearsals are not proposed with this Use Permit Application
3. Amplified sound is not planned to occur with the promotional gatherings.
4. Participation in Industry Wide Events is not planned nor requested.
4. Conversion of single level tractor building & conversion of a portion of an existing barn to winery space.
  - a. 1,168 SF wine production & tank and barrel area (existing tractor building)
  - b. 156 administration office space (existing tractor building)
  - c. 156 tax paid storage space (existing tractor building)
  - d. 91 sf restroom space (existing tractor building)
  - e. 91 sf storage space (existing tractor building)
  - f. 120 SF mechanical area (existing tractor building)
  - g. 773 SF conference & technical tasting room (existing barn)
  - h. 835 SF kitchen/break room (existing barn)

- i. architectural design will have a modern and agrarian style with finishes tying into the existing farmstead buildings.
5. Infrastructure includes minor improvements to the existing entrance on Cavedale Road and driveway, new paved driveway off existing gravel access road, and delineated parking area within existing gravel maneuvering area, expansion of existing sanitary wastewater leach field system, process wastewater treatment system, storm water management improvements, fire protection water storage, utilities and associated grading and landscape improvements.
6. 2 full-time employees during non-harvest & 5 full-time employees during the harvest season and bottling.
7. Tasting room visitors will be strictly by appointment and are anticipated to be on the order of 5 for an average day and 10 for a peak day.
8. Operating hours shall be 7 AM to 6 PM Monday through Friday off harvest and 6 AM to 10 PM Monday through Sunday during harvest season.
  - a. Tasting Room Appointments: 11 AM to 5 PM Monday through Sunday
  - b. Collector & Friends Events: 11 AM to 6 PM Monday through Sunday (daylight hours)
9. Wine produced from the estate vineyard on site.
10. Traffic projection at ultimate capacity of 2,000 cases per year is as follows:

**Silver Cloud Winery**  
**Traffic Summary Information**

Trip Type	Unit	Daily		Unit	Peak w/ Ag Event	
		Rate	Trips		Rate	Trips
<b><u>Proposed</u></b>						
Winery Employees (2 ave, 5 harvest)	2	3	6	5	3	15
Truck Traffic (Grapes 8, Casegoods 1.5 Barrels 2.1)	n/a	n/a	0	n/a	n/a	0
Tasting Visitors (5 average, 10 peak)	5	0.4	2	5	0.4	2
Event Visitors (20 to 50 max) 10p Vans	n/a	n/a	0	n/a	n/a	5
<b>Total Proposed Trips</b>			<b>8</b>			<b>22</b>

**Comparison - Standard traffic projection for a 3-bedroom residence is 10 trips/day.**

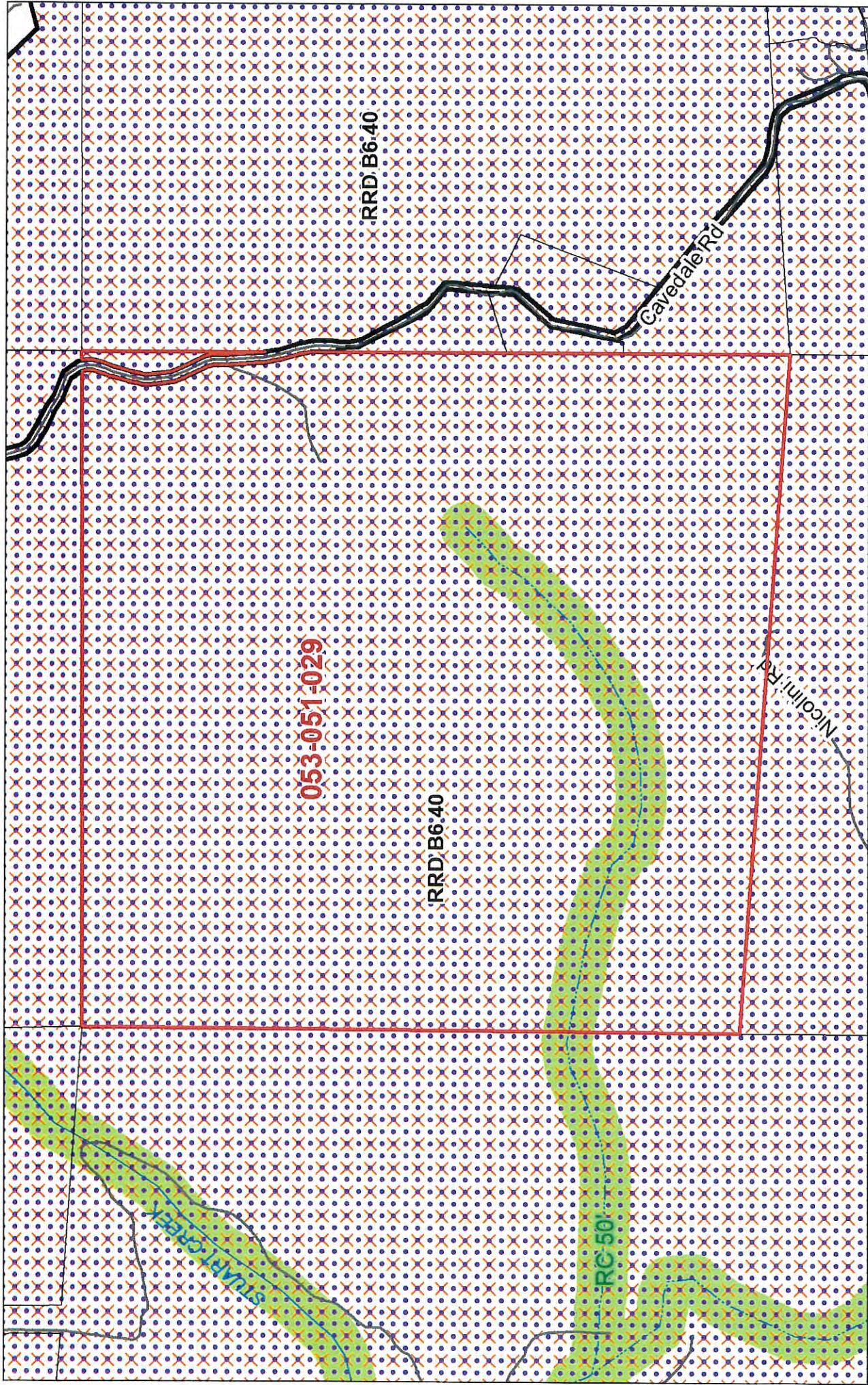
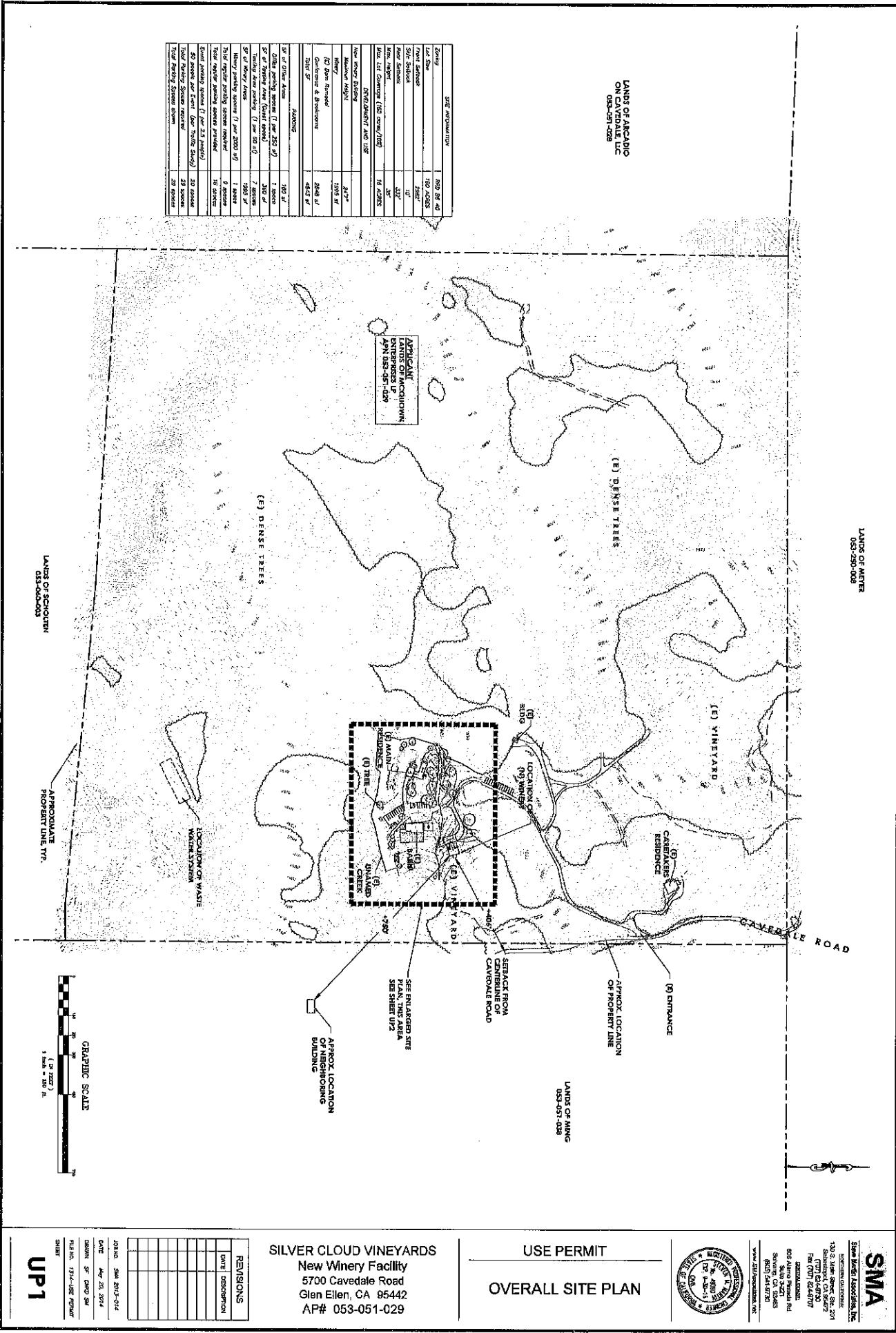
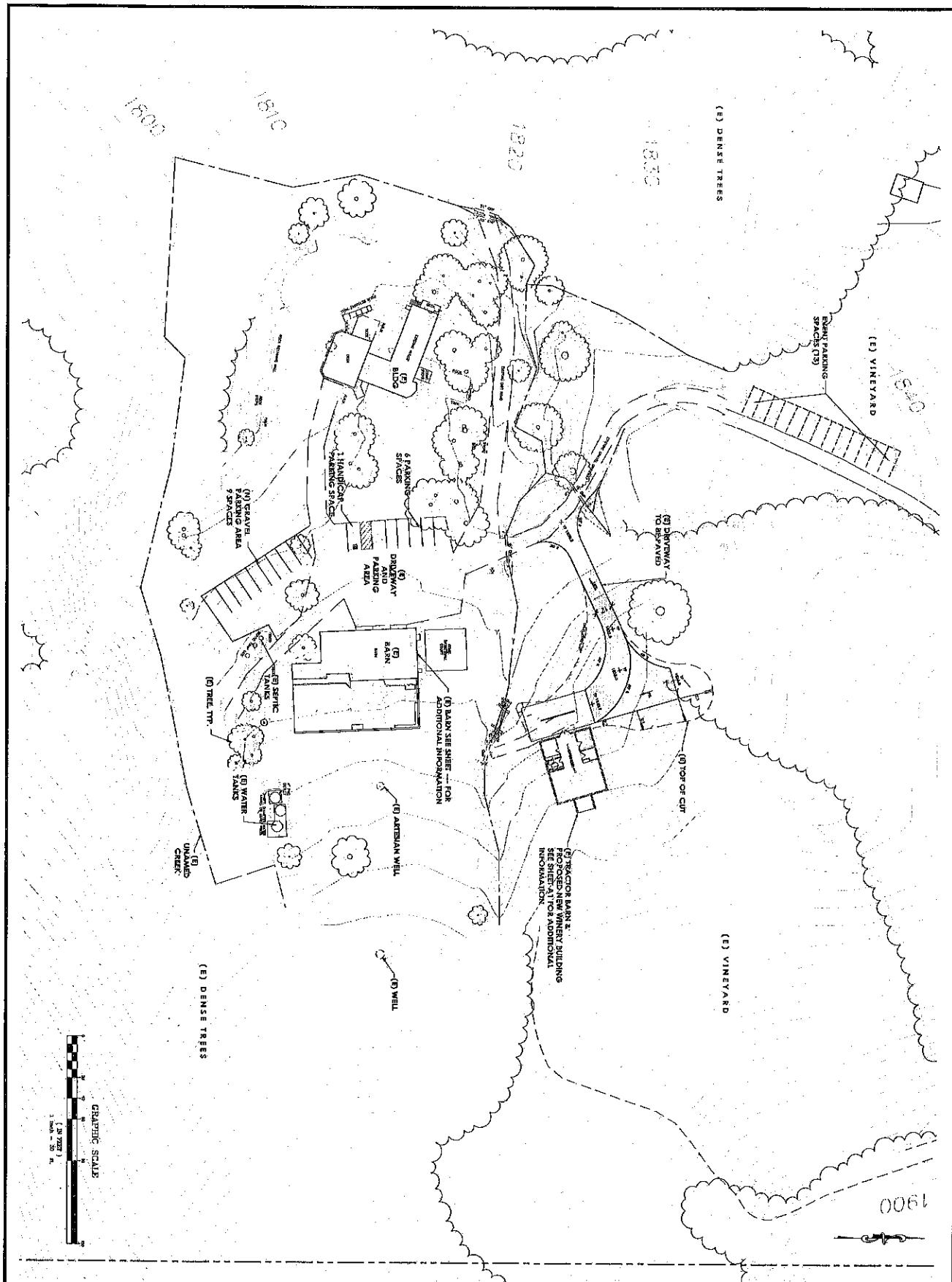


Exhibit B



## Exhibit C



**SILVER CLOUD VINEYARDS**  
New Winery Facility  
5700 Cavedale Road  
Glen Ellen, CA 95442  
AP# 053-051-029

**USE PERMIT**

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610

CP2

UPE14-0088

DECEMBER 10, 2014

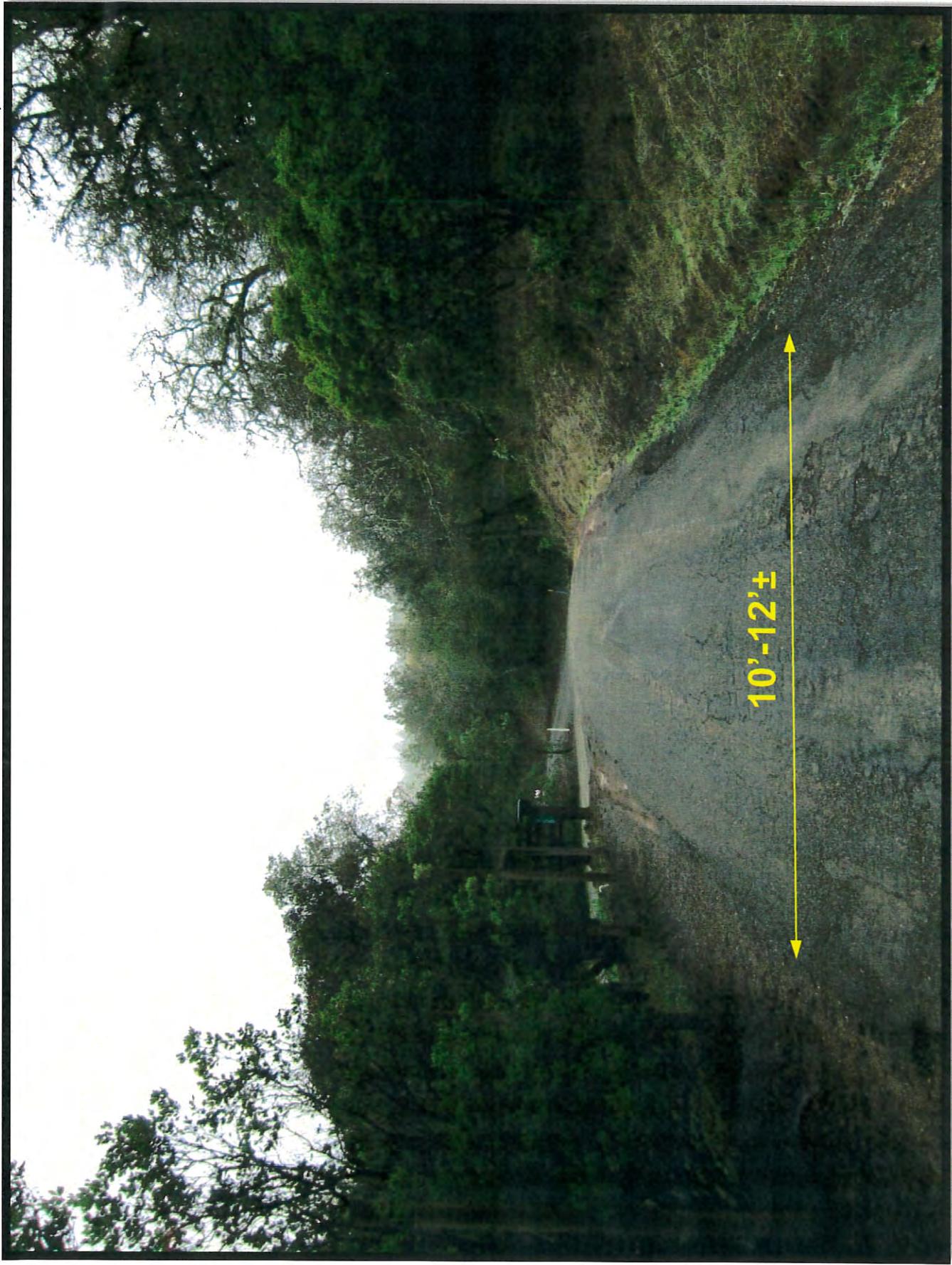


Exhibit D

CAVEDALE APPROACH TO THE APPLICANT'S DRIVEWAY

UPE14-0088

DECEMBER 10, 2014



THE APPLICANT'S EXISTING ENTRANCE ON CAVEDALE ROAD

UPE14-0088

DECEMBER 10, 2014



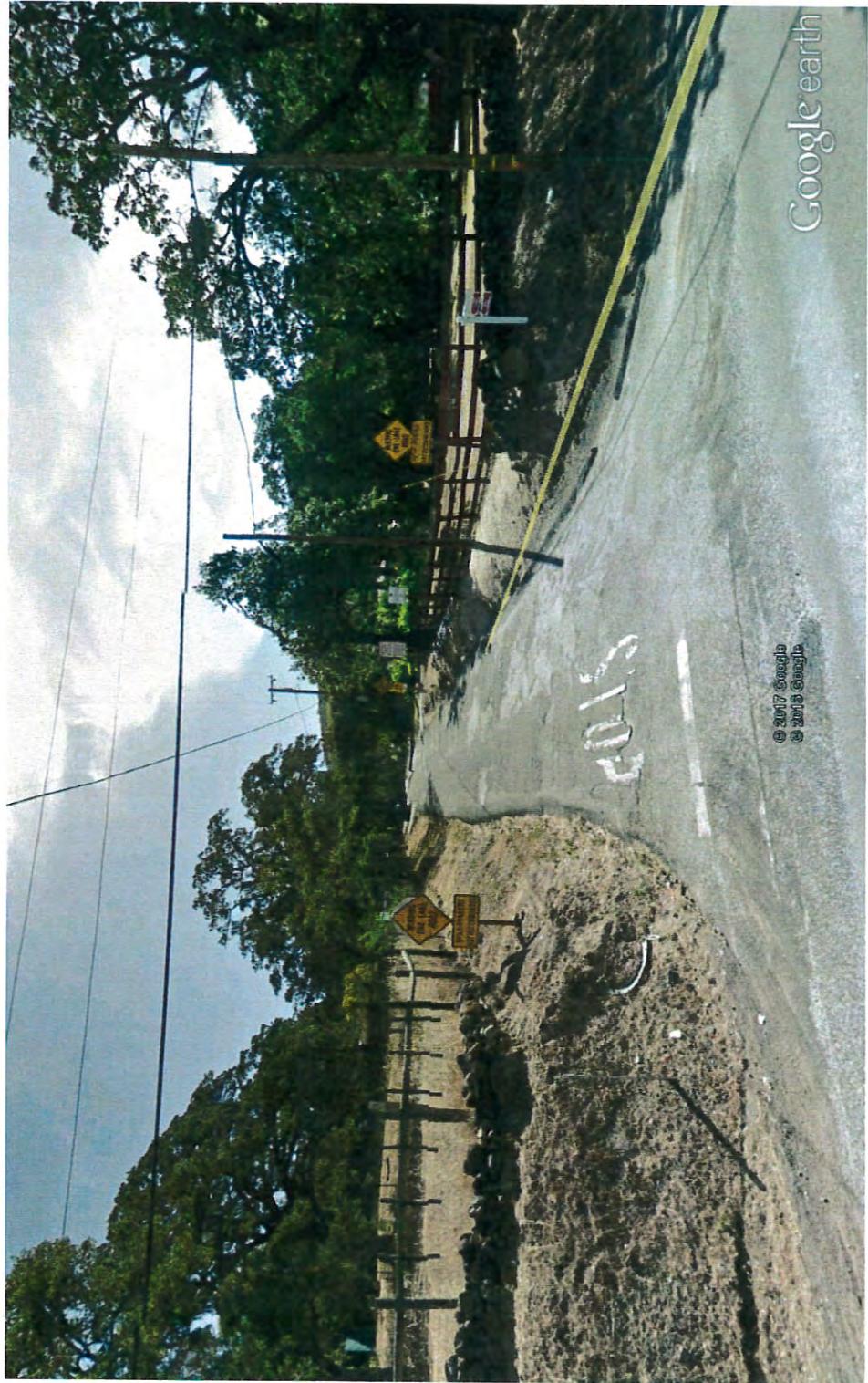
SIGHT DISTANCE NORTHWESTERLY FROM THE APPLICANT'S ENTRANCE IS IMPACTED BY VEGETATION.

UPE14-0088

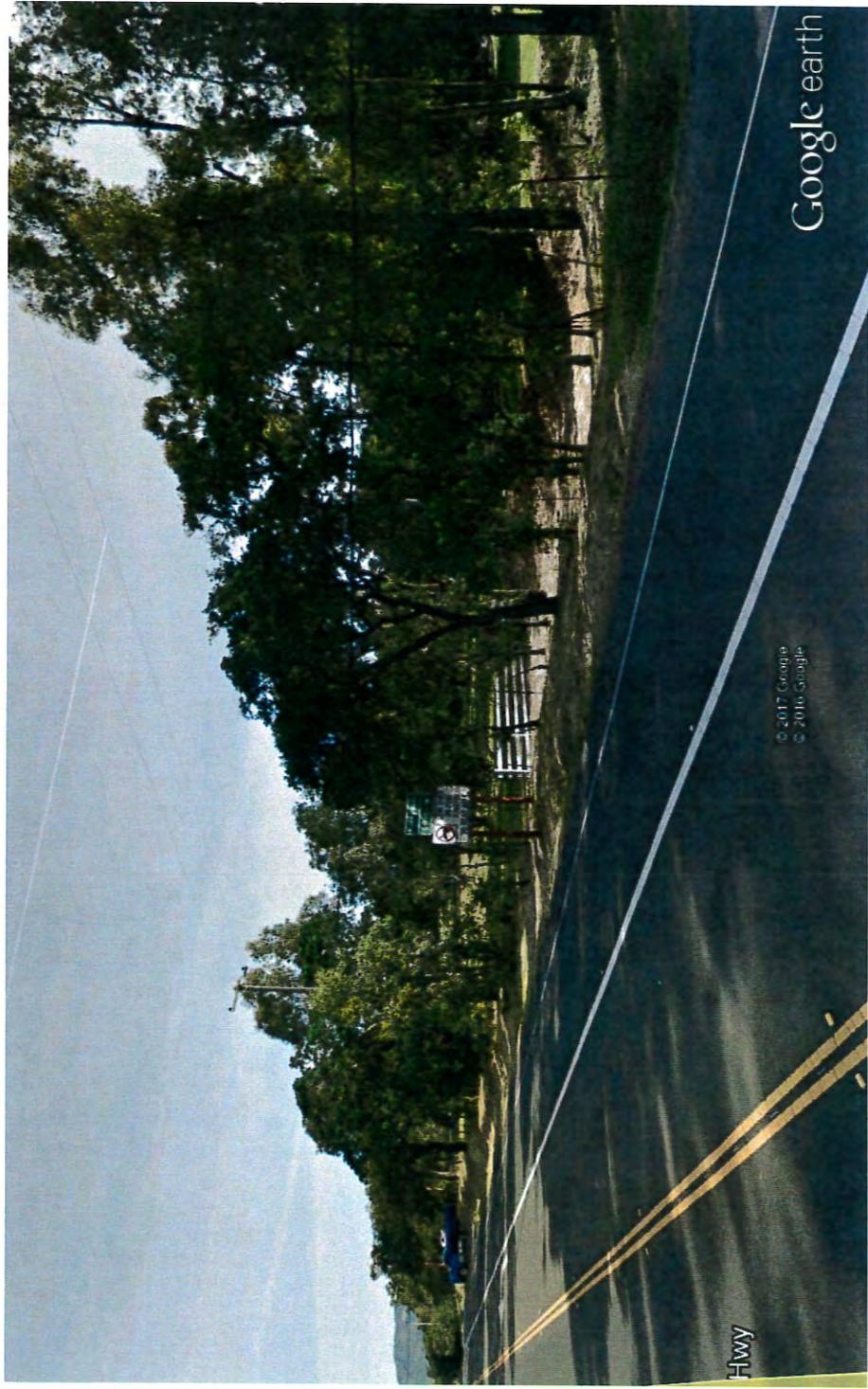
DECEMBER 10, 2014



SIGHT DISTANCE SOUTHERLY FROM THE APPLICANT'S ENTRANCE EXCEEDS 300'.



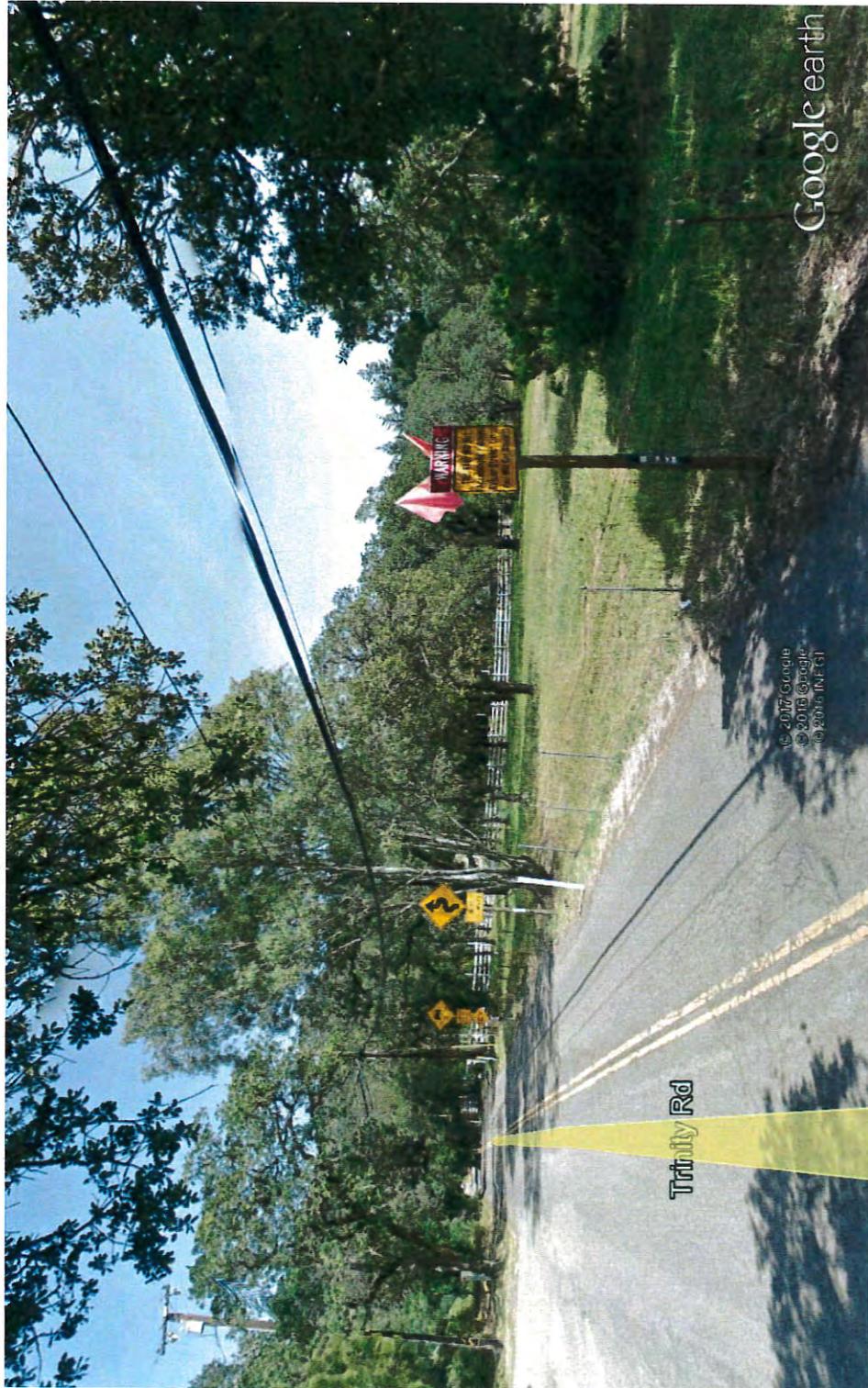
**TITLE**



Google earth

LS-2017 Google  
© 2015 Google  
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Trinity Rd



Resolution Number  
County of Sonoma  
Santa Rosa, California

May 18, 2017  
UPE14-0088                    Melinda Grosch

RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF ZONING ADJUSTMENTS,  
COUNTY OF SONOMA, STATE OF CALIFORNIA, EXEMPTING THE  
PROJECT FROM THE CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY  
ACT FOR PURPOSES OF DENIAL AND DENYING A USE PERMIT  
FOR A WINERY AND TASTING ROOM WITH A MAXIMUM ANNUAL  
PRODUCTION CAPACITY OF 2,000 CASES, EIGHT  
AGRICULTURAL PROMOTIONAL EVENTS, AND TASTING BY  
APPOINTMENT ONLY ON PROPERTY LOCATED AT 5700  
CAVEDALE ROAD, SONOMA; APN 053-051-029

WHEREAS, the applicant, Steve Martin and Associates, Incorporated for owner McQuown Enterprises LP - Silver Cloud Winery, filed a Use Permit application with the Sonoma County Permit and Resource Management Department for a winery with a maximum annual production capacity of 2,000 cases, with public tasting by appointment only and eight agricultural promotional events annually (the "Project") on property located at 5700 Cavedale Road, Sonoma (the "Project Site"); APN 053-051-029; Zoned RRD (Resources and Rural Development) 40 acres per dwelling, SR (Scenic Resources), RC 50/50 (Riparian Corridor 50 foot setback for structures/SO foot setback for agriculture), LG/MTN (Local Guidelines – Sonoma / Taylor / Mayacamas Mountains); Supervisorial District No 1; and

WHEREAS, in accordance with the provisions of law, the Board of Zoning Adjustments held a duly noticed public hearing on May 18, 2017, at which time the Board of Zoning Adjustments heard and received all relevant testimony and evidence presented orally or in writing regarding the Project. All interested persons were given an opportunity to hear and be heard regarding the Project; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Zoning Adjustments has had an opportunity to review this Resolution and finds that it accurately sets forth the intentions of the Board in denying the request for a Use Permit for the Project.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Zoning Adjustments (sometimes referred to hereafter as the "Board") makes the following findings:

1. General Use Permit Findings. Wineries and tasting rooms are permitted within the Resources and Rural Development (RRD) Zone, subject to approval of a use permit, provided the Board of Zoning Adjustments finds that the establishment, maintenance or operation of the use applied for will not, under the circumstances of this particular case, be detrimental to the health, safety, peace, comfort, and general welfare of persons residing or working in the neighborhood of such use, and will not be detrimental or injurious to property and improvements in the neighborhood or the general welfare of the area. The required General Plan findings cannot be made because of the particular circumstances of this case which are: 1) The project site is located on a one-lane roadway serving two-way traffic which cannot safely accommodate the addition of visitor traffic. The proposed use would be detrimental to the health, safety, peace, comfort, and general welfare of persons residing or working in the neighborhood of such use, and would be detrimental or injurious to property and improvements in the neighborhood or the general welfare of the area.

2. Traffic/Roadway Safety: Traffic associated with the Project would jeopardize the safety of motorists, pedestrians, and bicyclists along Cavedale Road. Cavedale Road is a narrow, one-lane road that requires vehicles to pull out at wide spots or driveways when passing each other. Since there are no formal pull outs vehicles often have to back-up to the nearest wide area to allow passing. Traffic generated by the proposed winery would pose a potential safety hazard to winery employees, customers, bicyclists, and other motorists along Cavedale Road by introducing a regular flow of new drivers to Cavedale Road who are unfamiliar with its severe constraints, including road width, contours, passing distance and lack of turnouts.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board of Zoning Adjustments hereby finds that the project is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act ("CEQA") pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21080(b)(5).

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board of Zoning Adjustments hereby denies the requested Use Permit.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board of Zoning Adjustments designates the Secretary as the custodian of the documents and other material which constitute the record of proceedings upon which the Board's decision herein is based. These documents may be found at the office of the Sonoma County Permit and Resource Management Department, 2550 Ventura Avenue, Santa Rosa, CA 95403.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board of Zoning Adjustments' action shall be final on the 10th day after the date of the Resolution unless an appeal is taken.

THE FOREGOING RESOLUTION was introduced by Commissioner , who moved its adoption, seconded by Commissioner , and adopted on roll call by the following vote:

Commissioner  
Commissioner  
Commissioner  
Commissioner  
Commissioner

Ayes:                  Noes:                  Absent:                  Abstain:

WHEREUPON, the Chair declared the above and foregoing Resolution duly adopted; and

SO ORDERED.

**Attachment 5. BZA Minutes, 5/18/2017**



# Sonoma County Board of Zoning Adjustments

## MINUTES

Sonoma County Permit and Resource Management Department  
2550 Ventura Avenue, Santa Rosa, CA 95403  
(707) 565-1900 FAX (707) 565-1103

Date: May 18, 2017  
Meeting No.: 17-05

### ROLL CALL

Larry Reed  
Paula Cook  
Willie Lamberson  
John Lowry  
Dick Fogg, Chair

### STAFF MEMBERS

Jennifer Barrett  
Melinda Grosch  
Vanessa Starr  
Danielle Letourneau, Secretary  
Leslie Thomsen, County Counsel

1:03 pm Call to order and Pledge of Allegiance

## BOARD OF ZONING ADJUSTMENTS REGULAR CALENDAR

Item No.: 1  
Time: 1:05 PM  
File: UPE14-0088  
Applicant: Steve Martin Associates, Inc.  
Owner: McQuown Enterprises LP – Silver Cloud Winery  
Cont. from: N/A  
Staff: Melinda Grosch  
Env. Doc: Exempt for the purposes of denial. Public Resources Code (CEQA) Section 21080(b)(5)  
Proposal: Request for a Use Permit for a new winery with a maximum annual production of 2,000 cases within existing buildings, tasting by appointment only, and eight agricultural promotional events with a maximum attendance of 50 people per event on a 160 acre parcel.  
Location: 5700 Cavedale Road, Sonoma  
APN: 053-051-029  
District: 1  
Zoning: RRD (Resources and Rural Development) 40 acres per dwelling, SR (Scenic Resources), RC 50/50 (Riparian Corridor), LG/MTN (Local Guidelines - Sonoma I Taylor I Mayacamas Mountains)

Staff Presentation

Commissioner Questions:

Commissioners Fogg and Lowry asked Staff Grosch to point out additional points of interest on the road. Commissioner Lowry asked if the policy contains a list of criteria that would alert us about road issues. Deputy

Sonoma County Board of Zoning Adjustments Minutes

Date: May 18, 2017

Page 2

Director Barrett commented that the minimum width is 18 feet for roads with two-way traffic. That has not yet been adopted but the General Plan calls out road conflicts as issues. The Board has denied tasting room and winery events in the past when roads are not safe for traffic. Commissioner Fogg wanted to hear the results of the discussion between the applicant and the Fire Chief. The safety of the road was discussed at length.

Public Hearing opened at 1:25 p.m.

Matt McQuown, applicant, has lived on Carriger Road for 16 years. They purchased the winery property in 2012 because they wanted more wine capacity. They were going to sell wines directly to consumers instead of wholesale distribution. Originally a farmer from Illinois, they do organic farming. He was formerly a naval officer, and served on the Board of the Scripps Institute of Oceanography for 15 years. They practice earth sciences at their winery. McQuown is a concerned environmentalist and has been involved in wine production of fine wines for a long time. They have incorporated extreme measures to conserve water. They are in the process of building a microgrid, will move energy production from the utility grid. They make their own hydrogen to use for fuel. Visiting would be by appointment only, not open on Sundays. Approximately 50% of the guests will be driven up to the winery by limousine drivers.

Steve Martin, representing the McQuowns, provided a traffic impact report for the commissioners. The main production is done off site. 300 cases of white wine will be produced on site, using existing buildings. They will use the wells located on site for the winery, and the expected use is 110 gallons per day. Visiting will be by appointment only, maximum 5-10 guests per day. They are asking for four luncheons per year with 20 attendees per event. There are four weekend harvest parties proposed with 30-50 attendees. 80% of the visitors will be driven up by the hydrogen car they have on site by staff or hired professional drivers. Martin disagreed the staff report analysis regarding traffic. The owner agreed to restrict further subdivision of the property.

Steve Coturri, Sonoma, supported Silver Cloud winery because of their organic stance and water conservation policies.

Laura Zimmerman, Sonoma, said that the applicants add to the community through their efforts in sustainable agriculture.

David Pier, Sonoma, Executive Director of Hospital Foundations, also commended the applicant for his contributions to the Valley, and to Sonoma Valley Hospital in particular.

Michael Woods, Sonoma, Attorney for Matt McQuown, read letter that is included in the staff report exhibits.

Mike Haney, Director of Sonoma Wine Company, noted the applicant's accomplishments Sonoma County, commending their philanthropic efforts and community engagement.

Maureen Cottingham, Executive Director - Sonoma County Vintners and Growers Alliance, Sonoma, Paul Favaro, Sonoma -President of Sonoma Splash, and Ann Hancock, Center for Climate Protection. Santa Rosa, spoke in support of the applicants and their commitment to sustainability.

Catherine Dale, spouse of the assistant Fire Chief of Sonoma Valley, opposed the project because of issues with the road. There have been issues with buses and limos. She owns 80 acres, and is concerned because there is already a lot of traffic.

Steve Martin stated that neighborhood meetings had been conducted, and the majority of neighbors were in support of the project. A couple of people had concerns over the road conditions, so the applicant came up with the idea of only using professional drivers to mitigate the traffic concerns. The traffic summary shows that a typical day will have eight trips to the winery, and during peak periods there will be 22 trips a day. Small cars holding six passengers will be used to reduce the traffic impact. The owner has offered to donate a sizable amount of money to the Department of Transportation and Public Works to deal with road issues.

Commissioner Cook suggested making the visiting by appointment only to control traffic. Mr. Martin said that the owners are willing to do this, and added that many members of the Fire Department supports this project.

Sonoma County Board of Zoning Adjustments Minutes

Date: May 18, 2017

Page 3

Commissioner Lowry asked why the applicant wants the winery at this particular location. Mr. Martin stated that the majority of wine marketing events occur at the Edge Restaurant in the town of Sonoma. There would only be a few events at the site so attendees could see the vineyards. The site is gated with a code and visitors without appointment can't get in. Commissioner Lowry suggested having a designated driver at night. Commissioner Lowry acknowledged the willingness to contribute to road improvements, and expressed concern about incorporating turnouts to accommodate the number of blind spots. Mr. Martin acknowledged that sight distance is a concern, and that Public Works has included many conditions to the project.

Commissioner Lamberson asked for clarification about the number of cases to be produced. Mr. Martin stated that the applicant requested 2,000, but reduced the number to 300 when the recommendation for denial came through. Mr. Martin said the owner was aware that there would be issues with the road. The proposal will result in less traffic on Cavedale than it would if both residences were occupied.

Public Hearing closed at 2:18

Commissioner Discussion:

Deputy Director Barrett explained that what was before the BZA today is a summary denial, and there are no draft conditions available. If the commission would like to approve it, they would need to continue the item, prepare a CEQA document, prepare conditions and bring it back for review.

Commissioner Reed asked how we got here when there were conditions and a Use Permit.

Staff Grosch commented that she had prepared an initial study with mitigations, but the management team concurred that concerns over the roadway could not be addressed. It is a one-lane, two-way road, and road safety would be challenging. This was discussed with the applicant. It all came down to being unable to justify safety with existing roadway conditions.

Commissioner Fogg commented that the project is in his district, is relatively small, utilizes current buildings, and has no septic or water issues. It is consistent with the General Plan and zoning consistency. He asked why no environmental document was provided. Deputy Director Barrett indicated that staff was unable to get to a mitigated negative declaration. Commissioner Fogg noted that the applicant has been very cooperative, but the problem is the road condition, which does not serve two way traffic very well. It does not meet the minimum requirement of 18 feet width. Commissioner Fogg expressed reluctance to approve the request because public safety is the BZA's priority. He did not take his decision lightly. The applicant can appeal the BZA decision to the Board of Supervisors if the project is denied by the BZA. Commissioner Fogg suggested that the item be continued so staff could prepare a CEQA document and Public Works will be involved.

Commissioner Cook said she was compelled by the offer of 100% prohibition of other drivers, and asked for the process if the owner of the property were to subdivide. Staff Grosch said that it would go to Project Review and Advisory Committee, and a mitigated negative declaration would have to be done to assess all the lots to assure that each one has enough water, septic, fire access, etc. Commissioner Cook stated that it was no small thing that the applicant has offered to prohibit other drivers, and we don't often see recommendations for denial. She asked for staff's thoughts on working with Public Works and using private funds for the public road. Deputy Director Barrett indicated that it is not uncommon to require, as a condition of approval, that a road be improved.

Commissioner Reed concurred with comments made by fellow commissioners, adding that it is a compelling project and the applicant is willing to work to mitigate issues that were raised. He suggested asking Public works for their minimum requirements and incorporating measures into the mitigated negative declaration to see if the impacts can be reduced.

Commissioner Lamberson remarked that while traffic may be reduced, the locals are more of a problem than visitors. There are dangers on the road, and the idea of mitigating the problems on the road with professional drivers is not a resolution. The road speaks for itself. He did not support continuation of the project.

Commissioner Cook suggested looking for ideas to reduce the amount of traffic by choosing events or wine tasting, and selecting vans that hold several attendees.

Sonoma County Board of Zoning Adjustments Minutes

Date: May 18, 2017

Page 4

Action: Commissioner Fogg motioned to continue the Use Permit off calendar to a date uncertain and complete environmental review for possible approval. Seconded by Commissioner Lowry and passed with a 4-1 vote.

Appeal Deadline: N/A  
Resolution No.: N/A

**Vote:**

Commissioner Reed	Aye
Commissioner Cook	Aye
Commissioner Lamberson	No
Commissioner Lowry	Aye
Commissioner Fogg	Aye

Ayes:	4
Noes:	1
Absent:	0
Abstain:	0

---

Item No.:	2
Time:	1:15 PM
File:	ZPE17-0008
Appellant:	Barry Swain
Applicant:	Ali Tabibian
Owner:	Tabibian-Akichika Family Trust
Cont. from:	N/A
Staff:	Vanessa Starr
Env. Doc:	Statutorily exempt from CEQA as a ministerial project (Pub. Resources Code, § 21080(b)(1); CEQA Guidelines §§ 15268(a), 15002(i)(1) )
Proposal:	Appeal of a zoning permit for use of an existing single-family home as a vacation rental.
Location:	3380 Vigilante Road, Glen Ellen
APN:	054-110-047
District:	1
Zoning:	DA (Diverse Agriculture) B6 10 (10 acre density) LG/MTN (Local Guidelines Taylor/Sonoma/Mayacamas Mountains) RC50/50 (Riparian Corridor) SR (Scenic Resource)

Staff Presentation

Commissioner Questions:

Commissioner Reed asked to see the exclusion zone indicated on the ordinance. Staff Starr pulled up a map and pointed out the vacation rental exclusion area. Commissioner Reed had attempted to visit the site, but the access was gated. Staff Starr stated that the road is private and is locked at both ends. Commissioner Reed asked who had jurisdiction over the road, and Staff Starr responded that neighbors have easements.

Commissioner Lamberson asked if garbage trucks were mentioned, and Staff Starr said no, the garbage issue was concerning the receptacles.

Public Hearing open at 3:07 p.m.

Rose Zoya, Attorney, Santa Rosa, stated that one purpose of the vacation rental ordinance is to require standards for vacation rentals for community. A vacation rental at this site is incompatible with the ordinance. Three videos were shown to illustrate the dangers of the road. Zoya asked for clarification of the parking.

Commissioner Lamberson asked how many houses on either side of the vacation rental, and Barry Swain, applicant, stated that in addition to the two people that live at the beginning of Vigilante Road, there are eight homes on the road. Commissioner Lamberson asked if there is garbage service. Applicant Swain confirmed



October 1, 2018

Ms. Tammy Martin  
Steve Martin Associates, Inc.  
130 South Main Street, Suite 201  
Sebastopol, CA 95472

## Focused Traffic Study for the Silver Cloud Vineyards

Dear Ms. Martin;

As requested, W-Trans has prepared a traffic analysis relative to the proposed winery to be located at 5700 Cavedale Road in the County of Sonoma. The purpose of this letter is to address the increase in traffic on Cavedale Road and provide an analysis of sight distance at the curves on Cavedale Road between Trinity Road and the project site.

### Existing Conditions

The study area consists of a 1.5-mile stretch of Cavedale Road from Trinity Road to the project side. Cavedale Road is a winding road varying in width between 10 and 16 feet, with a two- to five-foot shoulder on at least one side. There is no posted speed limit and an insufficient number of vehicles to conduct a speed survey, but it was determined that 20 miles per hour (mph) is the highest speed the narrow road and curves generally allow. It was found that 15 mph is typically a more comfortable driving speed.

Vehicle counts were obtained near the project driveway for a period of four days from Thursday, July 13 to Sunday, July 16, 2017. The highest volume over the four days was experienced on Friday, with 92 vehicles recorded for the day. The peak hour on Friday was from 3:00 to 4:00 p.m. with 12 vehicles recorded in that hour.

### Collision History

The collision history for the study area was reviewed and evaluated to determine if there are any existing critical safety issues. Generally collision records are examined for a five-year period, but given the guidelines concerning acceptable risk levels for Very Low-Volume Local Roads which states, "for rural facilities, an acceptable safety risk is represented by an action or proposed action that is expected to result in no more than one additional traffic crash per mile of roadway every six to nine years," a nine-year period from January 1, 2008 to December 31, 2016 was reviewed (this was the most current data available when this report was prepared in August 2017). There were three collisions reported at the intersection of Trinity Road/ Cavedale Road, but no collisions reported over the nine-year period on Cavedale Road between Trinity Road and the project driveway. It should be noted there was a fatality on Cavedale Road, but it occurred on the segment of Cavedale Road between the project site and SR 12, approximately five miles from the project site. The project applicant is proposing to access Cavedale Road via Trinity Road, so project-generated traffic would not be routed along the segment where the fatal crash occurred.

### Project Description

The proposed Silver Cloud Winery would be located at 5700 Cavedale Road in the County of Sonoma. The project, as proposed, includes production of 2,000 cases, tasting and retail sales by appointment only, and eight special events per year. The site would have two employees. The project applicant is proposing to shuttle visitors to and from the winery so as to not add unfamiliar drivers to Cavedale Road.

## Trip Generation

Sonoma County's Winery Trip Generation form was used to determine the potential trip generation for the proposed conditions. Although professional drivers would be used to shuttle visitors to the winery, so appointments would likely be set for larger groups at one time, per County policy it was assumed that visitors would arrive at an average occupancy of 2.5 persons per vehicle. At this rate the winery would generate an average of six visitor trip ends daily for the seven visitors on an average day. For the purpose of estimating peak hour traffic on a typical day, it was assumed that 10 percent of visitor traffic would occur during the weekday p.m. peak hour and 12 percent would occur during the weekend peak hour.

The County of Sonoma's Winery Traffic Information/Trip Generation Sheet does not include guidance on inbound versus outbound trips, so it was assumed that two-thirds would be outbound during the weekday p.m. peak hour as employees and customers leave at closure of the winery. For the weekend midday peak hour it was assumed that inbound and outbound trips would be evenly split. The winery is expected to generate less than one-half a truck trip on a daily basis; however one daily truck trip was used for the analysis.

Based on application of these assumptions, the proposed project would be expected to generate an average of 13 trips on a daily basis with three trips during the evening peak hour and three trips during the Saturday midday peak hour.

These results are summarized in Table 1.

**Table 1 – Trip Generation Summary**

Units	Daily		PM Peak Hour			MD Peak Hour		
	Rate	Trips	Trips	In	Out	Trips	In	Out
<b>Proposed Winery (Typical Operation)</b>								
Winery Employees	2	3	6	2	0	2	2	1
Winery Visitors	7	0.8	6	1	0	1	1	0
Truck Traffic	1	n/a	1	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Proposed Project Total</b>		<b>13</b>		<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Potential Development</b>								
Single Family Dwelling	4	9.52	38	4	3	1	4	2
Granny Unit	4	6.65	27	2	2	0	2	1
Ag Employee Unit	4	5.81	23	2	1	1	2	1
<b>Potential Development Total</b>		<b>88</b>		<b>8</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Difference (Potential versus Proposed)</b>		<b>75</b>		<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>-1</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2</b>

Note: Trip Generation does not include special events.

It should be noted that this property could be split into four separate lots with one single family dwelling, one "granny unit" or accessory unit, and one ag employee unit each. The anticipated trip generation for the potential development was estimated using standard rates published by the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) in *Trip Generation Manual, 9<sup>th</sup> Edition, 2012*. For the proposed uses, the rates for Single Family Dwelling (LU #210), Apartment (LU #220), and Residential Condominium (LU #230) were applied to the single-family homes, granny units, and ag employee units respectively. The weekday p.m. peak hour rates were used for the Saturday midday peak hour trips, except a 50/50 split was applied to the inbound and outbound trips. The property has the

potential of generating 88 daily trips, or nearly seven times the number of trips the project site is expected to generate developed as a winery. Further, if split into four lots, there is a potential for this parcel to double the daily traffic on Cavedale Road. These results are also shown in Table 1.

## **Site Access**

Access to the Silver Cloud Winery along Cavedale Road was evaluated based upon design standards published by the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) in *Guidelines for Geometric Design of Very Low-Volume Local Roads*, which is intended for streets with an average daily traffic (ADT) of 400 vehicles per day or less. This guide is intended to supplement AASHTO's *A Policy on Geometric Design of Highways and Streets*. The section of Cavedale Road near the site currently meets this low-volume criterion and would continue to do so upon adding the 13 daily trips that the project is expected to generate.

As discussed above, the study segment of Cavedale Road does not have a posted speed limit. Considering the narrow, winding configuration, a design speed of 15 mph was used for analysis purposes.

The primary access concern is the narrow width and horizontal curves of Cavedale Road that lead to the project driveway. Further, the road lacks shoulders in some areas, restricting the opportunity for a driver to pull over to allow a driver in the opposing direction to pass. Because of this, it is necessary for two oncoming opposing drivers to have adequate sight lines to see the opposing driver and come to a full stop to avoid a collision. For a design speed of 15 mph, a stopping sight distance of 65 feet is recommended by AASHTO for "low risk locations" on roads with an ADT of 100 to 250. For 20 mph, the stopping sight distance recommended is 90 feet. Since both drivers need to be able to react and come to a stop, these distances are doubled on one-lane roads, resulting in 130 feet for 15 mph and 180 feet for 20 mph.

During a field visit, ten curves with restricted sight distance were identified on Cavedale Road between Trinity Road and the project site. Sight distance restrictions are due to a combination of horizontal and vertical curves as well as trees and other vegetation adjacent to the road. Most curves have 85 to 140 feet of clear sight distance available and are located on the stretch of Cavedale Road that has room for two cars to pass each other, between the paved road width and unpaved shoulder areas. However, extra signage at the curve closest to the project site could benefit drivers. Curve number 10 as identified on the enclosed aerial has sight distance limited to about 85 feet due to a small-radius horizontal curve; vegetation on the inside of the curve further blocks sight lines. The vegetation is located outside the public right-of-way, so trimming it is not an option without the owner's permission. Because the narrow width of the road does not allow two vehicles to pass one another, signage at both ends of this curve with advisory speeds posted at 10 mph, or the speed for which there is adequate sight distance, would warn drivers to navigate more carefully.

Major reconstruction of portions of Cavedale Road would be necessary to improve sight distance. AASHTO identifies that while designing a new street to full standards is ideal, modification to existing sub-optimal streets may not be feasible or necessary, as described below:

*Given the geometry of stopping sight distance on horizontal and crest vertical curves, the cost for even marginal or incremental improvements make reconstruction of very low-volume local roads to increase stopping sight distance not cost-effective except in unusual cases...Because sight distance improvements are unlikely to be cost-effective under most circumstances, the existing sight distance on a very low-volume local road may be allowed to remain in place unless there is evidence of site-specific safety problem attributed to inadequate sight distance.*

A few large turn-outs are available on Cavedale Road between Trinity Road and the project site along with several areas with shoulders that permit a driver to partially pull off the road. Nearly all of the curves with limited sight distance have at least a small shoulder or driveway adjacent to the curve. While it is always desirable to provide

as many turn outs as possible, it is understood that any additional road construction would potentially have an adverse impact on the environment due to the effect on heritage trees as well as the amount of cut and fill that would be required due to the steep slopes on either side of the road at some locations.

### Conclusions and Recommendations

- The project as proposed would generate an average of 13 daily trips, including three trips during the weekday p.m. peak hour and three trips during the weekend midday peak hour.
- If developed at its maximum potential, the project site could be broken into four parcels, with a single-family dwelling, granny unit, and ag employee unit developed on each parcel. Under this maximum development scenario, the project site has the potential to generate an average of 88 daily trips, including eight trips during the weekday p.m. peak hour and eight trips during the weekend midday peak hour. This higher-intensity development scenario would add a sufficient number of trips to double the daily volume on Cavedale Road and have a substantially greater traffic impact than the proposed project.
- Cavedale Road from Trinity Road to the project site is generally wide enough for two cars to pass one another. The curve closest to the project site could benefit from 10 mph advisory speed signs posted as sight distance is currently limited to about 85 feet at that location, blocked somewhat by vegetation located in the private right-of-way.

Thank you for giving W-Trans the opportunity to provide these services. Please call if you have any questions.

Sincerely,



Dalene J. Whitlock, PE, PTOE  
Principal

DJW/lgd/SOX561.L1



Enclosures: Winery Trip Generation Form  
Sight Distance Exhibit and Notes

## Winery Trip Generation

**Winery: Silver Cloud Vineyards**  
**Location:** 5700 Cavedale Rd, County of Sonoma  
**Annual Full Production:** 2000 cases

### WINERY OPERATIONS

#### Employee traffic using passenger vehicles, in average ADT

Item Description	Employees				Trips			
	Existing	Proposed (year round)	Proposed (harvest period)	Proposed (bottling period)	Existing	Proposed (year round)	Proposed (harvest period)	Proposed (bottling period)
Winery Production	0	2	5	--	0	6	15	--
	0	0	0	--	0	0	0	--
	0	0	0	--	0	0	0	--
	0	0	0	--	0	0	0	--
	0	0	--	0	0	0	--	0
					0	0	0	0
<b>Totals</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>0</b>

#### Truck traffic associated with winery operations (average ADT during period of activity)

Item Description	Existing	Average	Harvest
Grape Importation			
Truck loads per year:	-3.22; -3.22 truck(s) at 12 tons/truck	0.00	0.00
Dates of Activity:	August through October		-0.07
Juice Importation			
Truck loads per year:	None	0.00	0.00
Dates of Activity:			
Juice/Fruit Exportation			
Truck loads per year:	3.25 truck(s) at 0 gallons per truck	0.00	0.00
Dates of Activity:	August through October		0.00
Pomace Disposal			
Truck loads per year:	0; and 0 truck(s) at 0 tons/truck	0.00	0.00
Dates of Activity:	N/A through		0.00
Disposed:			
Bottle Delivery			
Truck loads per year:	0	0.00	0.00
Dates of Activity:	N/A through		
Barrel Delivery			
Truck loads per year:	0.4 truck(s) at 50 barrels/truck	0.00	0.02
Dates of Activity:	June through July		0.00
Finished Wine Transportation to storage/sales			
Truck loads per year:	0	0.00	0.00
Dates of Activity:	N/A through		
Less Backhauls			
Truck loads per year:	0	0.00	0.00
Dates of Activity:			
Miscellaneous trips			
Truck loads per year:	47.81 trucks	0.00	0.38
Dates of Activity:	January through December		0.38
<b>Totals</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.40</b>	<b>0.31</b>

### VINEYARD OPERATIONS

#### Employee trips associated with vineyard operations (in average ADT)

Item Description	Employees		Trips		
	Existing	Proposed	Existing	Average	Harvest
Vineyard Maintenance: Year Round	0	0	0	0	
Vineyard Maintenance: Peak Season	0	0			0
<b>Totals</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

## Winery Trip Generation

### TASTING ROOM OPERATIONS

Item Description	Persons			Trips		
	Existing	Average	Harvest	Existing	Average	Harvest
Tasting Room Visitors	0	7	10	0	6	8
Tasting Room Employees	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Totals</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>8</b>

	Tasting Room			Production		
	Existing	Average	Harvest	Existing	Average	Harvest
Months of Operation	0	Year Round	Year Round	0	Year Round	0
Days of Operation	12:00 AM	Daily	Daily	12:00 AM	Monday - Friday	Daily
Hours of Operation	12:00 AM	10:30am-5pm	10:30am-5pm	12:00 AM	7am-6pm	6am-10pm

### MISCELLANEOUS OTHER TRAFFIC GENERATORS

Item Description	Existing	Average	Harvest
Event Traffic	0	1	1
Enter Event Information on Schedule Tab			
Other Trips (If Applicable)			
None			
<b>Totals</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>

### SUMMARY

Item Description	Existing	Average	Harvest
Winery Operations (employees)	0	6	15
Winery Operations (truck traffic)	0	0	0
Tasting Room Traffic (employees and visitors)	0	6	8
Miscellaneous other traffic generators	0	0	0
<b>Totals</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>23</b>

#### Variation in ADT during the course of a typical full production year (Proposed Project Trips)

Generator	January	February	March	April	May	June
Employees	6	6	6	6	6	6
Visitors	4	4	5	5	6	6
Trucks	0.38	0.38	0.38	0.38	0.38	0.40
<b>Total Trips</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>12</b>

Month	July	August	September	October	November	December
Employees	6	<b>15</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>15</b>	6	6
Visitors	8	8	6	6	5	4
Trucks	0.40	<b>0.38</b>	<b>0.38</b>	<b>0.38</b>	0.38	0.38
<b>Total Trips</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>10</b>

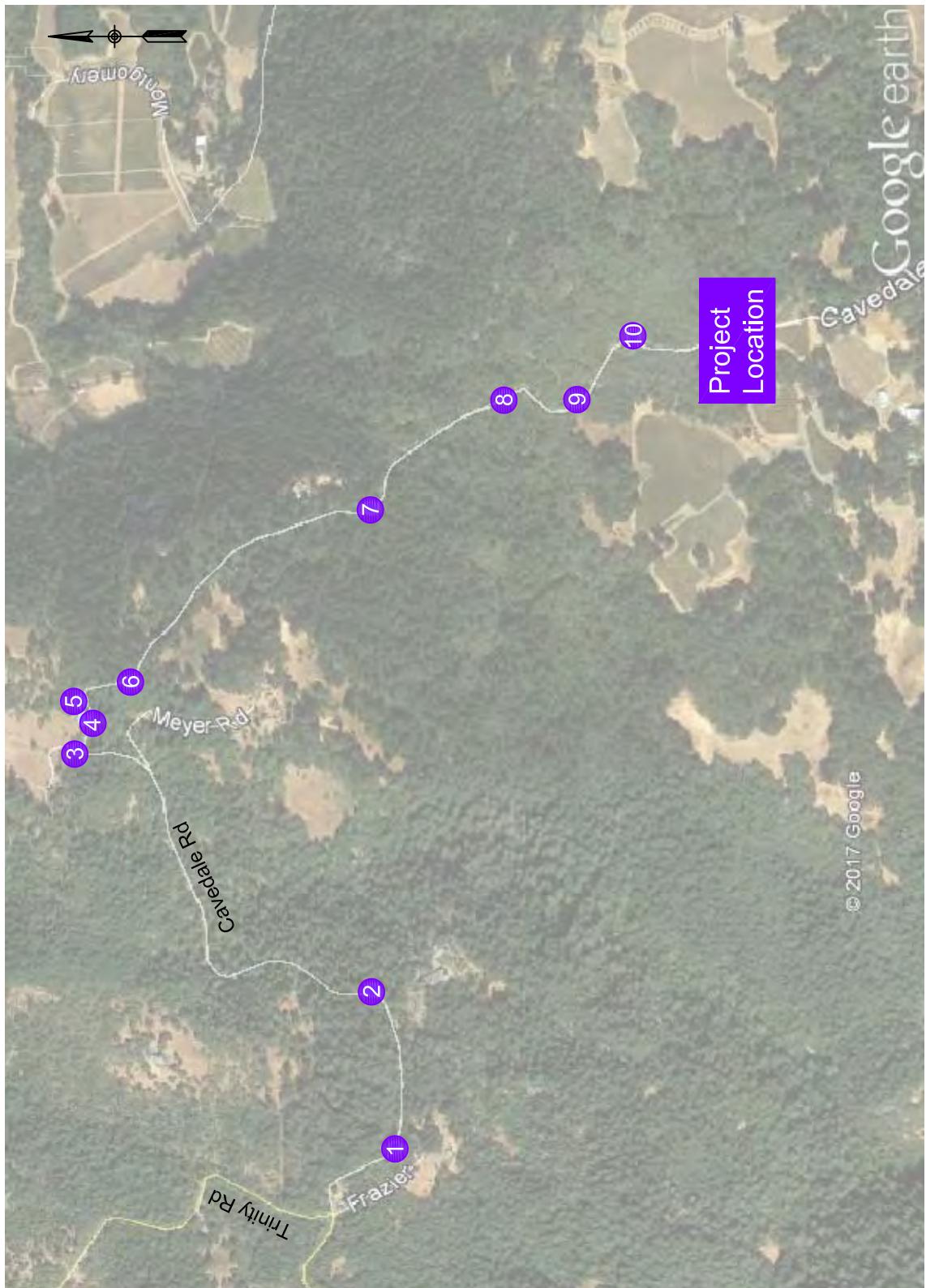
Notes:

Total may not equal sum of trips for individual generators due to rounding.

Employees - Assume 3 ADT per employee

Visitors - Assume 2.5 person per vehicle occupancy

Months indicated in **bold** represent harvest season.



<b>Whitlock &amp; Weinberger Transportation, Inc</b> 490 Mendocino Ave, Suite 201 Santa Rosa, CA (707)542-9500 Fax (707)542-9590	DRAWN: DESIGN: SHEET 1 OF 1	SCALE: DATE: JOB NO. SOX561
<b>Silver Cloud Winery</b> Limited Sight Distance Locations	© 2017 Google	



Report Image Number	GPS Curve Number	Minimum Measured Sight Distance (ft)	Roadway Width (ft)	Shoulder Width (ft)	Reason for Blocked Sight Lines	Turnout at/near curve?	Notes
1	122	110	15	5	Hillside	Y	
2	123	140	14	6	Hillside	Y	6450 Cavedale Rd.
3	124	85	15	9	Hillside	Y	6130 Cavedale Rd. Cars may see each other through vegetation inside of curve.
4	125	100	11	6	Hillside	Y	
5	126	85	16	10	Hillside	Y	
6	127	100	14	7	Hillside	Y	5800 Cavedale Rd.
7	128	90	12	4	Hillside	Y	
8	129	90	10	8	Hillside	Y	
9	130	140	12	2	Hillside and vegetation	Y	5500 Cavedale Rd.
10	131	85	12	2	Hillside and vegetation	N	Curve advisory 10 mph. Vegetation blocking sight lines is not in public ROW
11	132	120				Y	Project Driveway - to/from North
12	132	200+					Project Driveway - to/from South

**Attachment 7. Traffic Impact Addendum, 1/8/2020**



January 8, 2020

Ms. Tammy Martin  
Steve Martin Associates, Inc.  
130 South Main Street, Suite 201  
Sebastopol, CA 95472

## **Addendum to the Focused Traffic Study for the Silver Cloud Vineyards**

Dear Ms. Martin;

As requested, we have prepared this addendum to the *Focused Traffic Study for the Silver Cloud Vineyards* (FTS), dated October 1, 2018, based on comments received from County Staff. Specifically, the County has requested an analysis of project events, which include four events with up to 20 attendees and four with up to 50 attendees. Therefore, the project's event trip generation was estimated and added to the trip generation section of the FTS. This new text is added to the trip generation and conclusions sections in the traffic study.

### **Trip Generation**

#### **Event Trip Generation**

In addition to typical daily operations, the anticipated trip generation for the largest proposed event, one with 50 guests, was also estimated. It is noted that events are scheduled to occur between the hours of 11:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. and the winery tasting room would be closed on event days. Additionally, all attendees would be chauffeured to the site from the applicant's local restaurant, Edge, by a professional driver in either a standard passenger car or a small van/shuttle. In either case, the occupancy of the vehicle would exceed the rate of 2.5 persons per vehicle which is the rate published by the County. However, to provide the most conservative analysis, the County's standard vehicle occupancy rate was applied.

At 2.5 persons per vehicle, a 50-person event would be expected to generate 20 vehicle trips inbound at the start of the event and 20 outbound at its conclusion. A total of five employees would staff the 50-person event. Given that employees would be on-site before and after the event to set up and clean up, their trips are not included in the peak-hour trip generation. Similarly, any trucks associated with events would be expected to arrive at and depart from the site outside peak hours or even days before and after the event. These results are summarized in Table 1 and supplement the typical daily trip generation information provided in Table 1 in the FTS.

**Table 1 – Trip Generation Summary for 50-Person Events**

Trip Generator	Units	Daily		PM Peak Hour			MD Peak Hour		
		Rate	Trips	Trips	In	Out	Trips	In	Out
Employees	5	2.0	10	0	0	0	0	0	0
Event Visitors	50	0.8	40	20	20	0	20	20	0
<b>50-Person Event Total</b>			<b>44</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>0</b>

It is noted that for transportation via shuttle, because occupancy would likely equal or exceed five persons per vehicle, the total number of trips generated would be the same; however, rather than all being inbound they would be evenly divided between inbound and outbound as the driver(s) returned to the pick-up point after dropping passengers off or picking them up. In this case the traffic impact is lessened by spreading the trips out over different routes.

## Conclusions

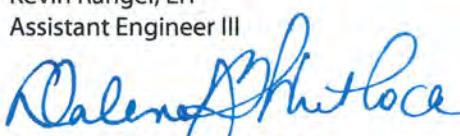
- The largest proposed event would have 50 attendees and would be conservatively expected to generate 20 trip-ends before and after the event. As travel via a chauffeured vehicle is anticipated, these trips would be evenly split between inbound and outbound during both peak hours.

Please contact me if you have any further questions about this analysis. Thank you for giving us the opportunity to provide these services.

Sincerely,



Kevin Rangel, EIT  
Assistant Engineer III



Dalene J. Whitlock, PE, PTOE  
Senior Principal



DJW/kr/SOX561-1.L1

**Attachment 8. Technical Memorandum on Road  
Improvements, 4/27/2020**



## Memorandum

**Date:** April 27, 2020                    **Project:** SOX561-1

**To:** Ms. Tammy Martin  
Steve Martin Associates, Inc.  
130 South Main Street, Suite 201  
Sebastopol, CA 95472

**From:** Dalene J. Whitlock  
[dwhitlock@w-trans.com](mailto:dwhitlock@w-trans.com)  
Kevin Rangel  
[krangel@w-trans.com](mailto:krangel@w-trans.com)

**Subject:** Response to Comments on the *Focused Traffic Study for the Silver Cloud Vineyards*

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We are in receipt of Tennis Wick's comments on the *Focused Traffic Study for the Silver Cloud Vineyard* (FTS) dated October 1, 2018 as contained in an e-mail forwarded to you on February 25, 2020 by Crystal Acker. The following information is provided in response to these comments. The comments are shown in *italics*.

*1 – The TIS does not provide a strong conclusion that only the recommendations for curve 10 are needed (advisory sign/veg management). I recognize that the additional signage and turnouts are proposed voluntarily by the owner, and not required by the TIS, but there is no discussion as to why only 1-2 turnouts are proposed, where they are located, or whether that is all that is actually needed to support added commercial traffic on the upper 1.5 miles of Cavedale Road. I believe it's just a lack of information/disconnect between the study results analyzing 10 curve locations and the proposed safety improvements- not that the County necessarily thinks more improvements are necessary, but that we don't have enough information to support a finding that improvements are not needed.*

Sight distance along Cavedale Road from the Silver Cloud Vineyards driveway to SR 12 was evaluated based on sight distance criteria contained in *Guidelines for Geometric Design of Very Low-Volume Local Roads*. This guide is intended to supplement AASHTO's *A Policy on Geometric Design of Highways and Streets*. As discussed above, Cavedale Road does not have a posted speed limit; however, there is an advisory speed of 15 mph posted on Cavedale Road near SR 12. Considering the narrow, winding configuration, a design speed of 15 to 20 mph was used for analysis purposes.

As discussed in paragraph four of the "Site Access" section of the FTS, the AASHTO recommended stopping sight distances for "low risk locations" on roads with an ADT of 100 to 250 are 65 feet and 90 feet for 15-mph and 20-mph design speeds, respectively. These stopping sight distances are doubled on one-lane roads to allocate adequate sight distance to drivers approaching in opposite directions, resulting in minimum sight lines of 130 feet for 15 mph and 180 feet for 20 mph. At all curves, with the exception of curve number 10, the existing roadway and shoulder widths provide sufficient space for two oncoming opposing drivers to pass. Given that curves number 1 through 9 have clear sight distances ranging from 85 to 140 feet, all of these curves have adequate sight lines for a 15-mph design speed; therefore, improvements for these curves were not recommended.

As mentioned, the applicant has voluntarily proposed installing 15-mph speed advisory signs on the study segment of Cavedale Road. As recommended in the TIS and as proposed by the applicant, because the narrow width of the road along curve number 10 does not allow vehicles to pass one another, signage at both ends of this curve with advisory speeds posted at 10 mph, or the speed for which there is adequate sight distance, should be installed to warn drivers to navigate more carefully. These should be W1-1a signs as specified in the CA MUTCD.

As noted, the applicant has voluntarily proposed installing one to two new turnouts on the study segment of Cavedale Road. Per the sight distance notes included in the TIS as an enclosure, the adequacy of existing turnouts was noted for all curves, except curve number 10. Given that the installation of one or two new turnouts has been voluntarily proposed and because curve 10 does not already have an existing turnout, one of the turnouts could be constructed at curve 10 to further address this issue, if that location is feasible for widening. The turnout should be located along the east side of Cavedale Road at the location depicted in Plate 1, enabling northbound traffic to move aside to allow a vehicle to pass in the opposing southbound direction.

*2 – Now, the bigger issue: The wildfire evacuation plan for the area requires all evacuation traffic to exit the area down Cavedale Road towards Hwy 12, so that emergency vehicles can have full access to Trinity Road. Even if normal winery operations require visitors to use Trinity to Cavedale, the designated evacuation route down 5.9 miles of Cavedale from the site to Hwy 12 must also be evaluated as the required emergency evacuation route for employees and visitors.*

Using the same sight distance criteria discussed above, Cavedale Road was evaluated as a one-way emergency evacuation route from the site to SR 12. For a design speed of 15 mph, a stopping sight distance of 65 feet is recommended by AASHTO for “all locations” on roads with an ADT of 250 to 400. For 20 mph, the stopping sight distance recommended is 95 feet.

During a field visit, 19 curves with restricted sight distance were identified on Cavedale Road between SR 12 and the project site. An aerial of the 19 curves in relation to the project site is attached. Sight distance restrictions are due to a combination of horizontal and vertical curves as well as trees and other vegetation adjacent to the road. The identified curves have 80 to 140 feet of clear sight distance available and are located on segments of Cavedale Road that have turnouts at or near the curves; therefore, sight distances at all curves are adequate for a 15-mph design speed.

It is noted that because traffic would be directed to travel south along this segment, the need for sight distance is less critical as there would be no opposing traffic, so no potential conflict. To ensure that traffic would not enter Cavedale Road from SR 12 during an evacuation emergency, a “Road Closed” sign should be placed at the intersection prohibiting entry; this signing could be of the type that folds in the middle and locks closed; it would only be open during an evacuation. The lock should be of a type that can be opened by local fire agencies so they can implement the closure in the case of an emergency.

Because such evacuations would typically only occur during warm weather when a combination of high winds, low humidity and dry conditions combine to result in higher chances for a large wildfire, it is additionally recommended that the applicant prohibit visitation to the winery during “red flag” days. Such conditions are typically anticipated days in advance, so winery staff would have adequate notice to cancel any planned visitations and post the closure notice on their webpage.

Please feel free to contact me if there are any questions regarding this information.



**Plate 1: Curve 10**







Report Image Number	Minimum Measured Sight Distance (ft)	Roadway Width (ft)	Reason for Blocked Sight Lines	Turnout at/near curve?	Notes
11	115	12	Embankment	Y	
12	80	12	Vegetation (Trees)	Y	4756 Cavedale Rd.
13	120	10	Vegetation	N	
14	115	10	Hillside/Embankment	N	3905 Cavedale Rd.
15	130	12	Embankment	N	
16	100	15	Hillside/Embankment	Y	
17	100	12	Hillside/Embankment	Y	
18	110	11	Hillside/Embankment	Y	
19	85	16	Vegetation/Embankment	Y	
20	130	14	Vegetation/Embankment	Y	
21	110	12	Vegetation	Y	
22	95	13	Vegetation	Y	
23	95	12	Hillside/Embankment	Y	
24	110	15	Hillside/Embankment	Y	
25	100	22	Hillside/Embankment	Y	990 Cavedale Rd. Driveway to Petroni Vineyards is along the outside of the curve.
26	120	12	Hillside/Embankment	Y	
27	140	12	Hillside/Embankment	Y	655 Cavedale Rd.
28	130	13	Hillside/Embankment	N	
29	100	15	Private Residence Fence	N	130 Cavedale Rd.

**Attachment 9. Fire Safety Evacuation Plan, 2/25/2020**

**SILVER CLOUD WINERY  
FIRE SAFETY & EVACUATION PLAN**

5700 Cavedale Road  
Glen Ellen, California  
Updated 2/25/20

**Overview:**

The purpose of this document is to identify conditions under which an evacuation would be necessary, designate a clear chain of command, and determine appropriate evacuation procedures. The following plan applies to a number of emergencies, both man-made and natural, which would require the facility to be evacuated, such as fires, explosions, earthquakes, toxic materials releases and any other hazardous situation.

While natural disasters such as earthquakes or fire cannot necessarily be prevented, there are measures that can be taken to reduce the risks and to be prepared.

**Defensible Space:**

The area around all buildings shall include defensible space. Flammable vegetation shall be removed around all structures and tree branches shall be trimmed such that they are located at least six feet from the ground and ten feet from any chimney. Remove all dead vegetation a minimum of 100 feet from buildings. Flammable vegetation shall be removed at least 10 feet from roadways to allow safe exit during an evacuation. Tree branches shall not be overhanging roofs. Trim trees regularly to keep branches 10 feet away from other trees. Create a separation between trees, scrubs and items that could catch fire, such as patio furniture etc. Weeds and dead grasses shall be cut four inches or shorter. Woodpiles shall be stacked a minimum of 30 feet from any structure, and should be surrounded by bare dirt, (around and under), and or gravel. LPG tanks should also be located on bare dirt or gravel and be located a minimum of 30 feet from the following: any structure, dry or dead material, or anything flammable. Vent openings shall be covered with 1/8" to 1/4" metal mesh to protect from flying embers, and dead leaves shall be cleaned out of gutters regularly. Fire safe landscaping shall be installed and maintained, see attached Guides to Fire Safe Landscaping for Brushland, Grassland, and Timberland, all of which exist on the Silver Cloud Winery parcel.

**Emergency Water Supply:**

Maintain the emergency water supply by inspecting regularly and having a functioning and fueled generator ready to operate the well and fire pump in the event of a power outage.

**Emergency Survival Kit:**

Store an emergency survival kit in the designated onsite emergency control center location. The emergency survival kit shall include, at a minimum, the following items:

- First Aid Kit
- One gallon per day of drinking water per person, per day, for 3 days
- Freeze dried and canned food (check expiration dates annually and replace as needed)
- Flashlights with extra batteries, candles and box of wooden matches
- Battery operated radio with extra batteries
- N95 mask should be available for every employee, with extras available for visitors
- Non-electric telephone with cord for land line communication during a power outage and a satellite phone in the event of a large scale event that results in downed communication lines.
- Plastic sheeting, plastic garbage bags, and duct tape for shelter in place situations.
- Emergency blankets or fire shelter blankets shall be provided for every employee, with extras available for visitors

### **Evacuation vs. Shelter in Place:**

Conditions under which an evacuation would be necessary may differ from the conditions under which it may be better to shelter in place. A clear chain of command and designation of the person in the business authorized to order an evacuation of the building, evacuation of the building and the site, or shelter in place shutdown shall be in place. It is critical that all employees know who this emergency commander is and understand that this person has the authority to make decisions during emergencies. The emergency commander should be responsible for assessing the situation to determine whether the emergency that exists requires activation of the emergency procedures, overseeing emergency procedures, notifying and coordinating with outside emergency services, and directing shutdown of utilities if necessary. An alternate emergency commander shall also be designated in the event of absence or incapacity of the primary emergency commander. When emergency officials, such as the local fire department respond to the emergency, they will assume responsibility for the building occupants and have the authority to make decisions regarding evacuation and whatever actions are necessary to protect life and property.

### **Evacuation Procedures:**

Exit routes from the building shall be:

- Clearly marked and well lit
- Wide enough to accommodate the number of evacuating personnel
- Unobstructed and clear of debris or furniture at all times, and
- Unlikely to expose evacuating personnel or visitors to additional hazards

Exit routes from the site:

- If evacuation from the site is required, several exits from the site exist. The Department of Emergency Management has designated the following route as the Primary Evacuation Route for the Silver Cloud Winery (See Cavedale/Trinity Community Evacuation Map attached):
  - Primary route to SR 12: turn right onto Cavedale Drive, proceed to SR 12
  - Secondary route to SR 12: turn left onto Cavedale Drive, turn left onto Trinity Road, proceed to SR 12
  - Alternate route to SR 29: turn left onto Cavedale Drive, turn right onto Trinity Road, proceed onto Dry Creek Road, turn left onto Oakville Grade, proceed to SR 29
  - In the event that an exit from the property is not advisable, a helicopter evacuation may be requested. The coordinates of the helicopter landing site (Latitude: 38.384511, Longitude: -122.465424) on the subject property shall be given to the local fire departments to keep on file as well as clearly posted on the evacuation plan, which shall be posted in key locations within the building.
- The driveway from the winery to the public road shall have the exit route clearly marked
- The driveway from the winery shall remain clear of debris or obstacles at all times.
- The designated helicopter landing site shall remain clear of debris or obstacles at all times.

Employer shall implement the following:

- Keep fire exits unlocked during business hours
- Test regularly all back-up and safety systems, such as fire extinguishers, emergency lighting and communication systems, and repair as needed
- Post evacuation plan in key locations, and review it periodically to ensure its effectiveness
  - Provide a laminated, easy to read, 1-page document with bullet points on when and how to evacuate or shelter in place
- Post emergency contact numbers in key locations
- Conduct emergency evacuation drills periodically
- Establish designated meeting locations outside the buildings for employees to gather following an evacuation and establish a protocol for taking a head count after the evacuation
- Identify personnel with special needs or disabilities who may need help evacuating and assign one or more people, including back-up personnel, to help them
- Post emergency numbers, including 911, near telephones

- Designate the emergency commander and alternate emergency commanders, both of whom shall be required to:
  - sign up for NIXLE alerts for the Trinity/Cavedale Area, and
  - familiarize themselves with a Red Flag event and a
  - Sign up for PG&E alerts of a Public Safety Power Shutoff (PSPS)
  - follow the National Weather Service and Cal Fire on social media for advance warning of a PSPS

Employees shall:

- Be familiar with the work site's emergency evacuation plan
- Know the pathway to at least two alternative exits from the workplace
- Recognize the sound/signaling method of fire/evacuation alarms
- Know who to contact in an emergency and how to contact them
- Know the layout of the workspace so they can escape in the dark if necessary
- Know where the fire/evacuation alarms are located and know how to use them
- Report damaged or malfunction safety systems and back-up systems
- Know the procedures for assisting visitors on site:
  - Check offices, bathrooms and other spaces before being the last person to exit an area
  - Guide visitors out of the building through the emergency exits and to the nearest designated meeting location
  - If evacuation from the site is required, assist employees and visitors with the evacuation of the site via vehicle or helicopter.

#### **Shelter in Place Procedures:**

Emergency Commander or designee shall:

- Close the business and ask all visitors and employees to stay and not leave the premises
- Ensure no one drives or walks outdoors
- Quickly lock exterior doors and close windows, air vents, & fireplace dampers
- Turn off all fans, heating, air conditioning systems, air exchange systems, and clothes dryers.
- If there is a danger of explosion, close the window shades, blinds, or curtains
- Seal all windows, doors, and vents with plastic sheeting and duct tape
- Unless there is an imminent threat, ask employees and visitors to call their emergency contact to let them know where they are and that they are safe

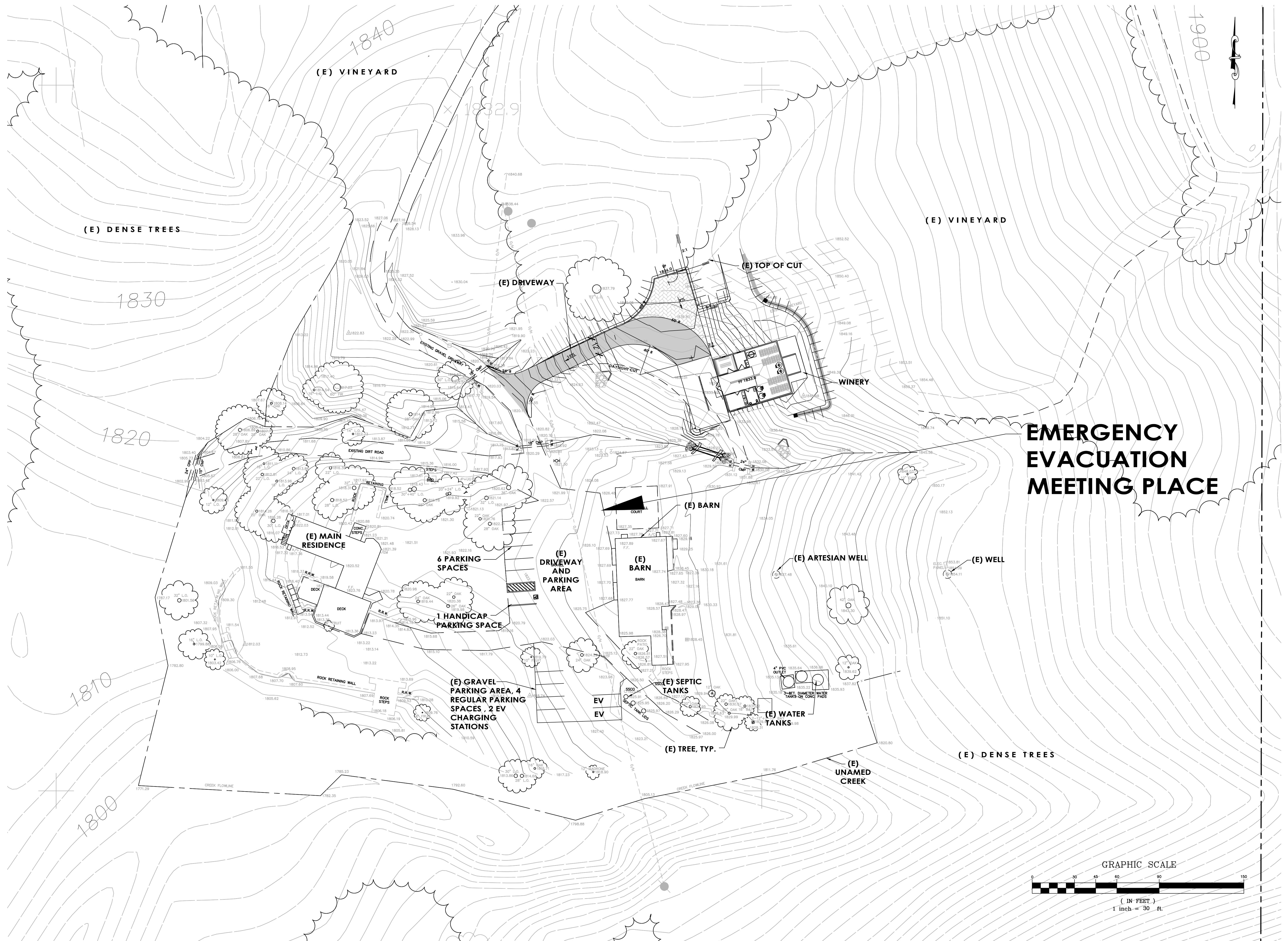


## SAFETY &amp; EVACUATION PLAN

## FACILITY SITE PLAN

SILVER CLOUD VINEYARDS  
 New Winery Facility  
 5700 Cavedale Road  
 Glen Ellen, CA 95442  
 AP# 053-051-029

# EMERGENCY EVACUATION MEETING PLACE



REVISIONS	
DATE	DESCRIPTION
8.1.19	UPDATED
8.6.19	UPDATED
2.25.20	UPDATED
1.19.21	UPDATED

JOB NO. SMA 2013-014  
 DATE June 1, 2019  
 DRAWN TAM  
 FILE NO. 1314-USE PERMIT  
 SHEET

EP2

## **Attachment 10. Cavedale-Trinity Community Evacuation Map**

## READY

Clear a defensible space around your home.

Prepare an evacuation checklist of things to bring, including a Go Bag, important documents and animals.

Have an escape plan.

## SET

Make a plan.

Build a kit.

Have a communications plan.

## GO

Residents may be notified by phone or siren that evacuation is necessary.

Notify neighbors if possible.

Take your pre-made Go Bag and any pets or animals.

Safely make your way out of the area  
(see map other side).

### Most importantly:

If you feel unsafe  
Do Not Wait. Get Out.



### If you are unable to evacuate:

#### In your home:

- Stay inside until fire passes with windows and doors closed but unlocked
- Keep family together and remain calm
- Remember if it is hot in your house it will be hotter outside

#### In your car:

- Park away from vegetation
- Roll up windows
- Cover mouth with dry cloth to protect airway
- Cover yourself with a blanket or jacket
- Stay in car until fire passes
- If car catches fire exit only after fire passes

#### On foot:

- Find an area away from vegetation
- Lie face down
- Cover mouth with dry cloth to protect airway

### Returning home:

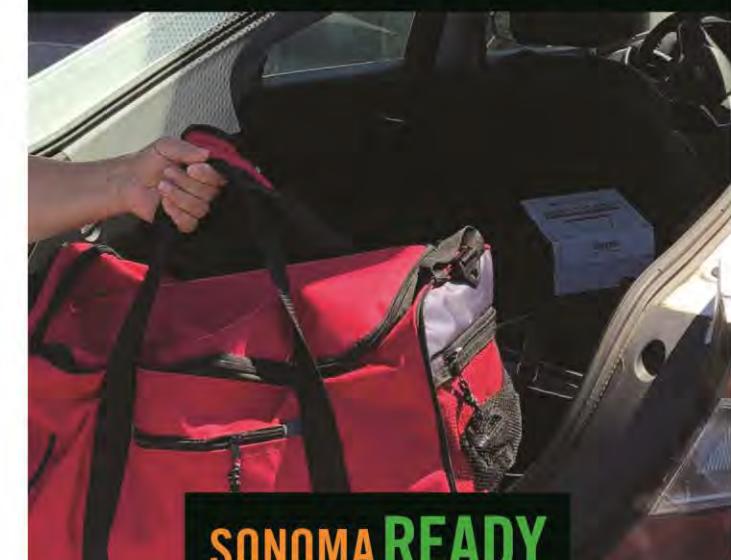
You will not be permitted to return home until a safety inspection has been conducted for residual fires, downed power line and other hazards.

Information will be available through the media, at road blocks and shelters.

**BE READY TOGETHER**



# Don't Wait EVACUATE



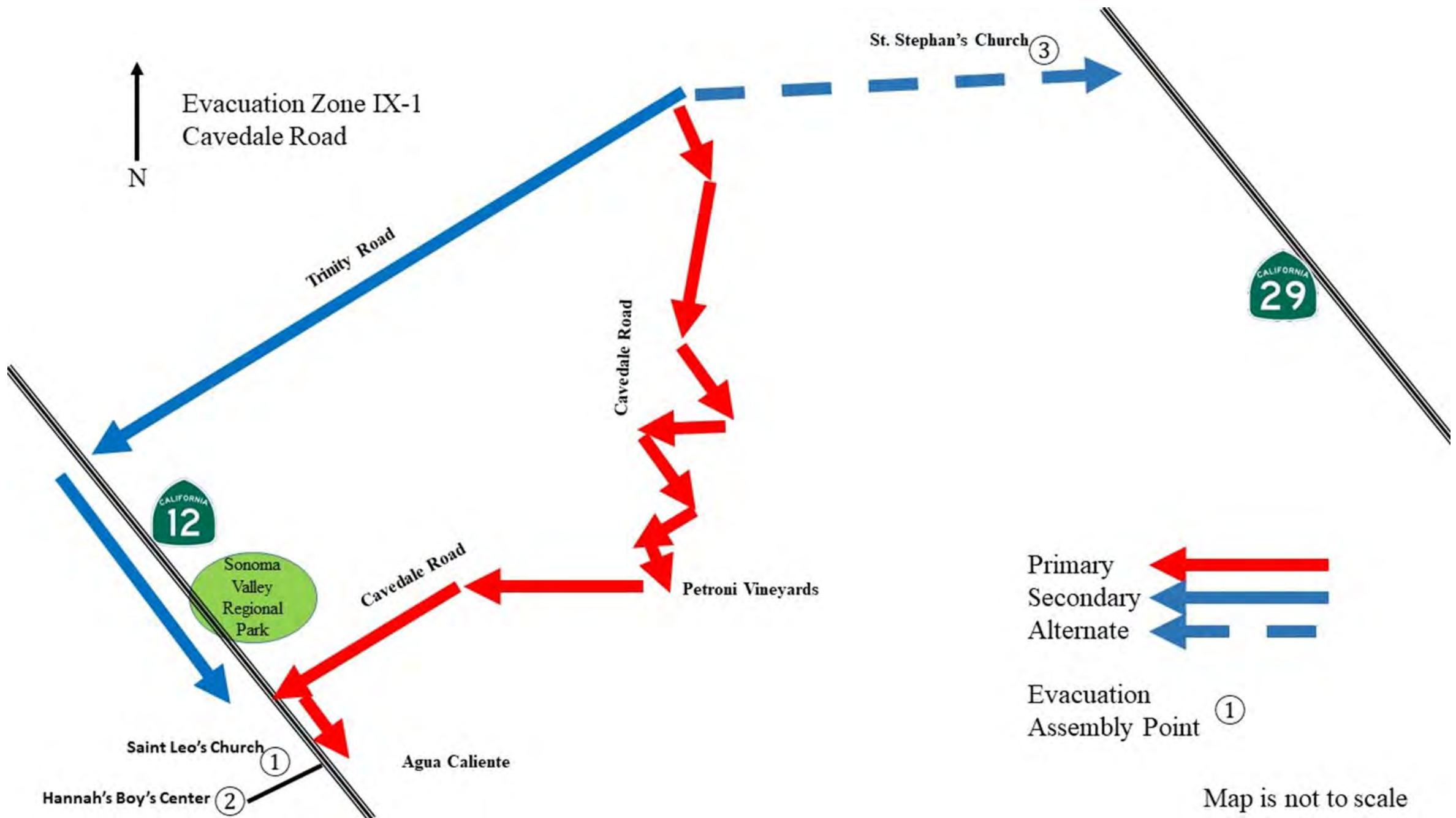
**SONOMA READY  
SONOMA STRONG**

Cavedale/Trinity Community  
Evacuation Map

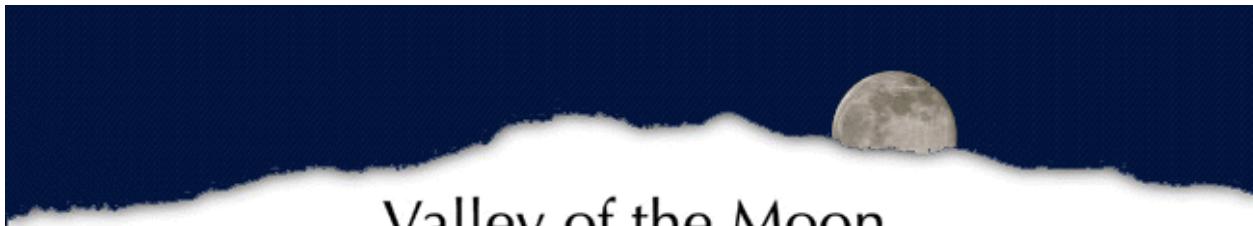


DEPARTMENT OF  
**EMERGENCY  
MANAGEMENT**  
SONOMA COUNTY

## Cavedale/Trinity Community Evacuation Map



## **Attachment 11. Public Comments**



## Valley of the Moon Alliance

Melinda Grosch

December 5, 2014

Sonoma County PRMD

2550 Ventura Ave.

Santa Rosa, Ca. 95403

Sent via email

Re: UPE14-0088 5700 Cavedale Road Sonoma

Melinda,

Please accept and add to the above file the following comments from the Valley of The Moon Alliance; an organization that believes is preserving and protecting the rural character of Sonoma Valley.

The application is a request for a use permit for a new winery with max production of 2,000 cases with tasting by appointment and 8 special events with max attendance of 50 people on a 160 acre parcel.

We feel the location of this winery/tasting room with events is not compatible with providing health and safety to the public who visit or the neighbors who live there. Cavedale Road is a steep, narrow, winding and often times single lane roadway that is not conducive to driving after a visit to taste alcohol. It looks from Google maps that the main directions would point you from highway 12 up Trinity Rd to Cavedale, a trip of about 4.6 miles. A trip over Trinity Road is not for the faint hearted or those that suffer from motion sickness. The other option of taking Cavedale Road from highway 12 is 5.9 miles of even worst road conditions, including hairpin turns. This is not the place to approve another winery/tasting room with events.

Since these narrow, winding roadways are county roads, where does the responsibility for public safety come into consideration? Where does the line of county responsibility come with approving a use permit that could be harmful to the public health and safety because of the location and roadway to serve this project? Could a case be made that the county should consider this more fully with the news that there will be a suit filed against the Belden Barns project on Sonoma Mountain Road, another inadequate roadway for the project?

Please consider denying this application because of its location and inadequate infrastructure.

Thank you for any serious consideration.

Kathy Pons

Valley of the Moon Alliance

Board of Directors

Cc: Susan Gorin

Greg Carr

Dick Fogg

## Melinda Grosch

---

**From:** jennifer o'mahony [sonomajom@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** December 17, 2014 10:05 AM  
**To:** Melinda Grosch  
**Subject:** File UPE 14-0088

Melinda,

We are residents of Cavedale Road in Sonoma and recently received a card from you regarding the above file #.

We are contacting you to discuss and better understand what measures are planned and might be put in place to mitigate potential issues and accidents as a result of the increase in traffic on the road as a result of the above application.

While I welcome a production winery to the area and support the growth of the industry locally I have the following concerns:

- Cavedale Road is a single lane road unsuited to heavy traffic;
- As a result of requests from the fire department and others the county recently installed a sign at the intersection of Trinity Road (which leads to Cavedale) and Highway 12 reminding drivers that limos and buses are advised not to use the road;
- the portion of the road adjacent to the winery is a particularly narrow and twisty portion with highly restricted sight lines for oncoming traffic;
- a recent audit in Napa Valley showed that almost 50% of wineries did not honor their usage permits. I don't know if similar audits exist in Sonoma but one has to believe that results would be somewhat similar ([http://napavalleyregister.com/news/local/winery-audit-finds-almost-half-didn-t-comply-with-use/article\\_d2ff2109-bb31-57fb-a7fa-dc46007b119b.html](http://napavalleyregister.com/news/local/winery-audit-finds-almost-half-didn-t-comply-with-use/article_d2ff2109-bb31-57fb-a7fa-dc46007b119b.html))
- the road is heavily used by cyclists and increasing the vehicular traffic creates increased risk of accidents;
- the road is in poor repair and we all know county budget for road maintenance and repair is very limited;
- how would the proposed up to 400 people annually be transported to and from events given the above challenges, in addition to assuring safe road conditions for visitors by appointment?

While I support winery work I am concerned that the overall scope of this project may exceed the ability of its location to support all of the related requests.

I look forward to an opportunity to understand next steps  
Kind regards

J O'Mahony

**Melinda Grosch**

---

**From:** cpplants@aol.com  
**Sent:** December 30, 2014 11:35 AM  
**To:** Melinda Grosch  
**Subject:** File No. UPE14-0088, 5700 Cavedale Road  
**Attachments:** letter\_to\_county-12302014.pdf

Dear Ms. Grosch,

We oppose the proposed new winery on Cavedale Road that is the subject of a use permit application under your consideration. We are mailing a letter to you stating our reasons. A copy of that letter is attached to this email.

(please disregard a draft email mistakenly sent to you from my account at [barbphelan@aol.com](mailto:barbphelan@aol.com). The letter presents a full statement of our concerns.)

Barbara Phelan  
Janet Niehoff

December 30, 2014

VIA mail and email

Melinda Grosch  
Project Planner  
County of Sonoma Permit and Resource Management Dept.  
2550 Ventura Avenue  
Santa Rosa, CA 95403-2829

Re: File No. UPE14-0088, 5700 Cavedale Road

Dear Ms. Grosch,

We are writing in opposition to the proposed use permit for a new winery on Cavedale Road. We live on Cavedale Road, a short distance from the proposed project. The proposed winery, with on-site wine tasting and member events, would have substantial negative impacts on our community.

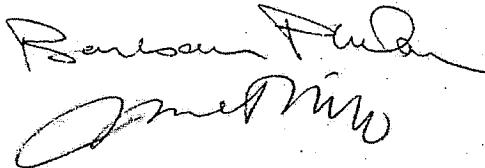
First, the proposed use threatens public safety by increasing traffic on a poorly conditioned road with inadequate services. Cavedale Road is a narrow, winding, rutted, one-lane mountain road that already has a high volume of traffic from residents, vineyard workers, existing wineries, and bicyclists. The road is ill-suited for increased traffic. There are no overhead street lights, visibility is restricted by heavy forest cover along a winding road, there is snow and ice in winter, and there are few places in the road wide-enough to allow one car to pull over when another car approaches from the opposite direction (a motorist has to back up for hundreds of feet around blind corners). The approach to Cavedale Road along Trinity Road is little better. Trinity Road itself is a winding mountain road upon which buses, trucks and even limousines are prohibited. There have been a number of vehicle and bicycle accidents on Trinity and Cavedale roads, including a recent vehicular fatality on Cavedale Road. Our first-responders to medical emergencies and traffic accidents are limited to a handful of local volunteer firefighters who would be overburdened by the increased traffic. The burden is even greater when one considers that the people attending the wine tastings will have consumed alcohol before hazarding their way down a treacherous road.

Second, the proposed use will negatively impact the natural environment by increasing noise and disturbance in a quiet, forested enclave. Cavedale Road is a treasure in Sonoma County, gifted with towering forests and vibrant wildlife. We and our neighbors came to the mountain for peace and quiet and the increasingly rare opportunity to enjoy undisturbed nature. There are mountain lion, bobcat, gray fox, and almost 100 species of birds that live on the mountain. The land is a botanical paradise with many rare trees and plants. Sonoma County has few wild places left, and this is one of them.

The landowner's wish to host wine tasting and other events is best fulfilled by operating a wine-tasting room in the towns of Glen Ellen or Sonoma, as others have done, rather than holding events on-site in a remote rural location ill-suited to the use. The proposed use is incompatible with public safety and the county's goal to preserve woodlands and wildlife.

We urge you to deny the use permit outright. Alternatively, we ask that the developer be required to submit an environmental impact study in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). A study will reveal in detail the negative impacts from the project that preclude its approval.

Please keep us informed of all further actions in connection with the permit application. We learned of the proposed winery from a neighbor who received a post card from your office - no notice was mailed to us. Please add us to the mailing list for future notices.



Barbara Phelan  
Janet Niehoff  
PO Box 2043  
Glen Ellen, CA 95442  
[cpplants@aol.com](mailto:cpplants@aol.com)

**Melinda Grosch**

---

**From:** Kathy Pons [282kpons@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** December 05, 2014 11:42 AM  
**To:** Melinda Grosch  
**Cc:** Susan Gorin; Gregory N Carr; Sonomafogg  
**Subject:** UPE14-0088 - 5700 Cavedale Road, Sonoma  
**Attachments:** UPE14-0088 cavedale tasting room.docx

Re: UPE14-0088 5700 Cavedale Road Sonoma

Melinda,

Please accept and add to the above file the following comments from the Valley of The Moon Alliance; an organization that believes is preserving and protecting the rural character of Sonoma Valley.

The application is a request for a use permit for a new winery with max production of 2,000 cases with tasting by appointment and 8 special events with max attendance of 50 people on a 160 acre parcel.

We feel the location of this winery/tasting room with events is not compatible with providing health and safety to the public who visit or the neighbors who live there. Cavedale Road is a steep, narrow, windy and often times single lane roadway that is not conducive to driving after a visit to taste alcohol. It looks from Google maps that the main directions would point you from highway 12 up Trinity Rd to Cavedale, a trip of about 4.6 miles. A trip over Trinity Road is not for the faint hearted or those that suffer from motion sickness. The other option of taking Cavedale Road from highway 12 is 5.9 miles of even worst road conditions, including hairpin turns. This is not the place to approve another winery/tasting room with events.

Since these narrow, windy roadways are county roads, where does the responsibility for public safety come into consideration? Where does the line of county responsibility come with approving a use permit that could be harmful to the public health and safety because of the location and roadway to serve this project? Could a case be made that the county should consider this more fully with the news that there will be a suit filed against the Belden Barns project on Sonoma Mountain Road, another inadequate roadway for the project?

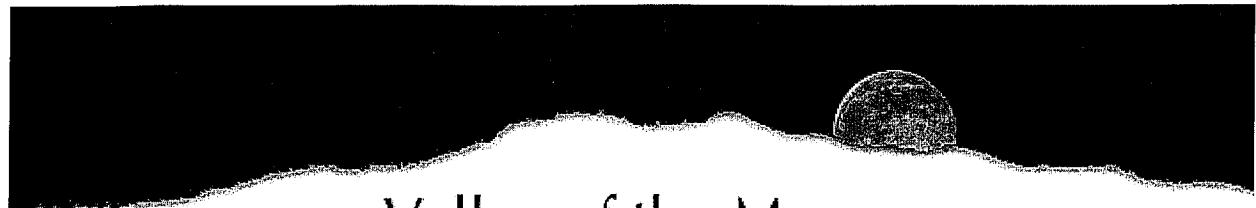
Please consider denying this application because of its location and inadequate infrastructure.

Thank you for any serious consideration.

Kathy Pons

Valley of the Moon Alliance

Board of Directors



## Valley of the Moon Alliance

Melinda Grosch

December 5, 2014

Sonoma County PRMD

2550 Ventura Ave.

Santa Rosa, Ca. 95403

Sent via email

Re: UPE14-0088 5700 Cavedale Road Sonoma

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Please consider denying this application because of its location and inadequate infrastructure.

Thank you for any serious consideration.

Kathy Pons

Valley of the Moon Alliance

Board of Directors

Cc: Susan Gorin

Greg Carr

Dick Fogg

**SMA Steve Martin Associates, Inc.**

130 South Main Street, Suite 201  
Sebastopol, CA 95472  
707-824-9730  
707-824-9707 (fax)

606 Alamo Pintada Road #3-221  
Solvang, CA 93463  
805-541-9730

January 7, 2015

Dear Neighbor,

On Monday, January 19, 2015, we are hosting a general information reception at 5700 Cavedale Road in Glen Ellen to provide an overview of the owner's plans to build a new small winery facility. Please join us for some wine and hors d'oeuvres and to learn more about the small winery, the owner's vision and future plans.

Details regarding the reception are as follows:

Date: Monday, January 19, 2015  
Time: 6:30 – 7:30 pm  
Place: 5700 Cavedale Road, Glen Ellen

If you cannot attend the meeting and would like to learn more about our project, please contact our office at 707-824-9730.

Regards,

Steve Martin, P.E.

cc: Mac McQuown

To Pat Gilardi and the  
Sonoma Valley Citizens Advisory Committee:

I am writing in support of the proposed Silver Clouds Stone Edge Farm) Winery on Cavedale Road. I am a long time resident of this road and have seen it grow through many changes in 40 years. Mac McQuown recently invited the neighbors to a gathering on the proposed winery property to describe this proposed project. There were several of their staff in attendance including Steve Martin, the architect for this project.. My husband and I were familiar with some of the staff and with other projects with which Jeff Baker and Phil Coturri have been involved in the past. We were also familiar with all but two of the neighbors in attendance. The presentation seemed very informative and was graciously presented. The main concern of the neighbors was an increase of traffic, especially vehicles being driven by people who have been drinking. Because it is inevitable that the property will be used by any owners to try to recoup their investment, I am stating my support for this project. The presentation was mainly concerned with minimally impacting the environment, both the ecology and the neighbors. There were many details included that were thoughtfully responsible. It is always a question, however, that if details are not included with the permit, they may never happen. For this reason I am requesting that the permit stipulate that when the special events or any scheduled wine tasting ("by appointment only") occur, the patrons are transported by private 16 passenger (or smaller) vans that are driven by professionals. This was stated by he architect and repeated by the owner but is, nevertheless, important to have in writing. Thank you for consideration of this project, Linda States

**From:** [jasper Malcolmson](#)  
**To:** [Melinda Grosch](#)  
**Subject:** 5700 Cavedale Permit  
**Date:** May 07, 2017 11:15:35 AM

---

Melinda -

I received the notice regarding the proposed project at 5700 Cavedale Road. I'm the owner at 4614 Cavedale - and want to provide my input on the proposal. As context, I'm quite close to 5700 Cavedale - just a few minutes away.

First, I want to say that, from my observation, the overall undertaking at Stone Edge is a noble one - a very small production, extreme high quality winery with a focus its environmental impact - represents the best of what the wine industry brings to Sonoma. I've observed a classy, thoughtful, highly professional effort that represents the best of what Sonoma wine can be about.

They've taken care of their property, their impact on the local environment, and had nothing but a positive impact on the area. To be honest, I just wish that other properties in the area maintained the standards of Stone Edge as neighbors.

I've heard that the county might have concerns about traffic on the Cavedale road between Trinity and the Stone Edge property. I believe that if you lived in the area, you'd find that the issue isn't traffic - but the maintenance of the road. I understand that Stone Edge has made the offer to provide some funds for the maintenance of the road. I would be very disappointed if the county didn't take them up on that offer. Maintenance of that road is what is going to make the difference for the local residence like me.

Overall, I'm supportive of the Stone Edge project, and this proposal. I think Stone Edge is the kind of project I want in my neighborhood. I would not want to take the chance that Stone Edge went away, and was replaced with another neighbor that did not maintain their standards.

Thank-you for hearing the views of the local residences.

Best,

Jasper Malcolmson  
4614 Cavedale

**From:** [Danielle Letourneau](#)  
**To:** [Melinda Grosch](#)  
**Subject:** FW: UPE14-0088; 5700 Cavedale Rd., Glen Ellen-Notice of Hearing  
**Date:** May 08, 2017 8:59:29 AM

---

FYI

Danielle Letourneau  
Planning Secretary  
Permit & Resource Management Department  
2550 Ventura Avenue  
Santa Rosa, CA 95403  
(707) 565-1935

---

**From:** Linda Kay Hale [mailto:[lindakayhale@gmail.com](mailto:lindakayhale@gmail.com)]  
**Sent:** Thursday, May 04, 2017 10:49 AM  
**To:** Danielle Letourneau  
**Cc:** Ryan@s-sonedge2.sonoma-county.org; Lely@s-sonedge2.sonoma-county.org; Valley of the Moon Alliance  
**Subject:** Re: UPE14-0088; 5700 Cavedale Rd., Glen Ellen-Notice of Hearing

GPS takes you up Trinity Road because Cavedale is unsafe.  
I know, I used to live on that road. Wineries with events should not be permitted.

Linda Hale

Sent from my iPhone

On May 4, 2017, at 9:33 AM, Danielle Letourneau <[Danielle.Letourneau@sonoma-county.org](mailto:Danielle.Letourneau@sonoma-county.org)> wrote:

Hello,

Please see the attached notice of Public Hearing for the file listed above.

Please direct any questions to the project planner at [Melinda.Grosch@sonoma-county.org](mailto:Melinda.Grosch@sonoma-county.org)

Thank you,

Danielle Letourneau  
Planning Secretary  
Permit & Resource Management Department

**From:** [Marc Schwager](#)  
**To:** [Melinda Grosch](#)  
**Cc:** [Allison](#); [Susan Gorin](#); [Jennifer Gray](#)  
**Subject:** 5700 Cavedale Input  
**Date:** May 12, 2017 5:04:44 PM

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Hi Melinda,

I am actually writing in support of the Silvercloud project at 5700 Cavedale. We have seen lots of development up here, and the Silvercloud team is taking a sensitive and thoughtful approach to their project. The scope is very restrained and they have endeavored to solicit neighborhood opinion. I also believe their traffic mitigation plan will work fine.

BTW, I also believe that the county should not hold up land use permits because of the condition of the road. I have heard this suggested, and I hope it is not a hinderance to their permits. It is the counties job to keep the roads in good shape, and curtailing someones land use because the county maintenance is inadequate just seems wrong.

In summary I support their application for a use permit for the facility. I think they have proven to be an excellent addition to the neighborhood.

Marc Schwager  
3200 Cavedale Road

**From:** [Barb Phelan](#)  
**To:** [Melinda Grosch](#)  
**Subject:** PRMD File No. UPE14-0088 Use Permit for Winery at 5700 Cavedale  
**Date:** May 12, 2017 12:46:35 PM

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We are writing in opposition to the proposed use permit.

We live on Cavedale Road a short distance from the proposed new winery. Our neighborhood is a remote mountain community composed mainly of residences and vineyards. A winery with 50-people events and wine-tasting is inappropriate. The project site is accessible only by Cavedale Road, which is the lone access for all of us in this neighborhood and our only evacuation route in the event of a wild land fire or other emergency. The road is a narrow one-lane winding track that has no lighting, shoulder guards or pull-outs. The road cannot safely accommodate the proposed use. Events and wine-tasting will bring increased traffic and drivers unfamiliar with mountain roads who have consumed alcohol.

Apart from public safety, I am also concerned that commercializing this area will remove one of the few remaining refuges in Sonoma County where residents can enjoy quiet and solitude and where wildlife survives. Our wildlife includes mountain lions, bobcats, mountain quail and numerous other species that have died out in other parts of Sonoma County. We should try to preserve some natural places.

Please deny the proposed use permit.

Barbara Phelan  
Janet Niehoff  
PO Box 2043  
Glen Ellen, CA 95442

**From:** [Korbin Ming](#)  
**To:** [Melinda Grosch](#)  
**Cc:** [Richard Idell](#)  
**Subject:** Regarding the Silver Cloud project  
**Date:** May 15, 2017 7:54:17 AM

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Hi Melinda,

I will not be present at the BZA meeting Thursday, May 18th at 1pm, but still wanted to express my support for the project proposed by Mac McQuown. I am a nearby neighbor (5420 Cavedale Rd.) and have seen the positive impacts that have occurred at Silver Cloud since 2012. Mac is genuine in his desire to improve the ecological surroundings through organic farming, water reduction, and now through energy conservation.

Until recently, sustainable wineries were not economically feasible, thus their scarcity. Going "green" did not do much good because it did not inspire others to do the same. This is no longer the case and this proposal would reduce traffic on Cavedale and be a source of motivation. Mac's status as an industry leader will go a long way in community improvement.

Thank you for your time.

--  
Korbin Ming  
UC Davis V&E Masters Candidate  
Korbin Kameron Wines  
korbinkameron.com  
General Manager  
m: 415.699.9817

# STONE EDGE FARM

May 12, 2017

Commissioners, Board of Zoning Adjustments  
County of Sonoma  
Permit and Resource Management Department  
2550 Ventura Avenue  
Santa Rosa, CA 95403

Re: UPE14-0088 – Request for Conditional Use Permit  
5700 Cavedale Road, Glen Ellen

Dear Commissioners:

I'm Mac McQuown. My wife, Leslie, and I reside at Stone Edge Farm on Carriger Road in Sonoma, where we have lived for 21 years. We purchased the 160-acre property at 5700 Cavedale Road in Glen Ellen, known as Silver Cloud, in 2012. We are seeking a use permit for a tiny winery at Silver Cloud.

I grew up working summers on my uncle's farm in Illinois. Although he farmed organically, he would not have recognized that term. We grew everything for the table, wasted nothing, and had no garbage. Later, as an officer on a U.S. Navy destroyer, I observed ocean and atmospheric pollution first-hand. Ever since, my awareness of environmental issues has expanded in a various ways, including serving on the board of the Scripps Institution of Oceanography for the past 15 years. Organic, sustainable agriculture and the environment – more specifically, the reduction of carbon emissions – are foremost among my concerns and pursuits.

While I have made my living in financial services, I have also been in the wine industry for almost 50 years. In 1970, I co-founded the Chalone Wine Group and served on its board for 25 years. In 1980, I co-founded Carmenet Winery, now Repris Wines, partnering with winemaker Jeff Baker. In 2004, Jeff, Phil Coturri, the renowned organic viticulturist, and I co-founded Stone Edge Farm Estate Vineyards & Winery. Phil and Jeff have excelled in grape growing and winemaking primarily on the hillsides of Sonoma Valley for five decades.



POST OFFICE BOX 487 • SONOMA CA 95476 • 707.935.6520 • FAX 707.996.7230 • WWW.STONEEDGEFARM.COM

As I mentioned, Stone Edge Farm (SEF) is a residence – actually, three households – set amid 16-acres of sustainably and organically grown vegetables (over 100 heirloom varieties), fruit trees, olive groves, herb and ornamental beds, chicken coops and beehives. Over four acres are planted to Bordeaux red wine grape varieties, and less than half an acre to Sauvignon Blanc.

Stone Edge Farm has functioned as a living laboratory for developing best practices in soil, water, and energy conservation. Using cover crops and composting to increase soil health, and by applying technology and careful monitoring, we have cut our water use by half. Employing solar arrays to generate electricity and storing it in a variety of batteries or as hydrogen for use in fuel cells, our farm's MicroGrid has made us self-sufficient with cheap, clean energy. We are demonstrating how far below zero carbon emissions it is possible to go.

We make two first-growth Bordeaux-style red wines: a Cabernet Sauvignon (\$95 per bottle) and a Bordeaux blend called "Surround" (\$55 per bottle). Our wine club, Collectors Cellar, consists of over 500 serious "case buyers" of fine wines located around the country. Our business plan caps production at 3,500 cases, and over 90% of that total consists of red wines made at our dedicated facility on Eighth Street East in Sonoma. We showcase our wines at our culinary center for Collectors, EDGE, located just off the Sonoma plaza, where our chef prepares meals with produce fresh from Stone Edge Farm.

At Silver Cloud, there are 12 acres of vines, including two devoted to white grapes – Sauvignon Blanc and Semillon. We plan to add eight to ten acres of red varieties. Our goal is to replicate cutting edge concepts honed at Stone Edge Farm so that **Silver Cloud is a blueprint of soil, water, habitat, and energy conservation that demonstrates best practices from vine to finished wine.**

Our winery permit application requests 2,000 cases. In reality, we will produce only one white wine, a Bordeaux-style Sauvignon Blanc/Semillon blend, and only 300 cases a year, primarily to serve at meals. Like the premier Bordeaux chateaux, we want to separate production of red and white wine.

Our extremely modest production is indicative of the low impact of Silver Cloud. Below are some key examples:

**Visitors:** An average of five visitors per day, with up to ten on a peak day, will visit strictly by appointment only between 11:00 am and 5:00 pm for a vineyard/winery tour and tasting. We carefully vet serious wine consumers through a network of concierges, sommeliers, and high-end winery colleagues.

**Events:** There will be eight small events annually: four winemaker luncheon tastings with up to 20 guests and four Collectors Cellar seasonal events with from 30 to 50 attendees in March through October. There will no evening events, no industry-wide events, no weddings – just eight small daytime functions per year.

**Transportation:** Most of our guests will be driven by professionals in four-, six-, and ten-passenger vehicles, including Honda Clarity zero emission fuel cell cars, to minimize traffic. We will transport them from EDGE in Sonoma. Our land use will actually reduce traffic over alternative uses. Nonetheless, Leslie and I are prepared to contribute \$75,000 under an approved use permit for the County's Transportation and Public Works Department to make improvements to Cavedale Road between Trinity Road and our property.

**Noise, lights, parking:** The closest structure to Cavedale Road is set back over 330 feet. No building is visible from the road. Parking is farther away and occupies a small footprint. There will be no amplified sound. All eight annual events will be held during daylight hours.

**Harvest:** Two employees will work part-time in the winery, with three more assisting briefly during harvest.

**Residents:** The 1910-era former residence is unoccupied. A caretaker does reside elsewhere on the property.

**Water use:** A one-bedroom house uses, on average, 150 gallons per day. This winery's daily use will be approximately 111 gallons. With best organic cultural practices, our vineyards will be mostly dry farmed.

**Land use:** Including the vineyards, approximately 30 to 35 acres of land out of 160 will be improved or under cultivation with vegetable beds, fruit trees, and native plant landscaping.

New vines will be planted in a century-old, man-made meadow that has been thoroughly mitigated for run-off and erosion with addition of a sediment basin and drain pipes in swales that mimic the natural movement of water through soil. This is a “poster child” example of soil and water conservation.

Before Leslie and I acquired it, Silver Cloud was offered for sale as an ideal property for minor subdivision. I’m told that standard traffic projection for a three-bedroom home is ten vehicle trips per day, perhaps more with a teenager or two in residence. Even a simple subdivision into four 40-acre parcels with a single home (and possibly a guest house) on each would have meant traffic far in excess of our small volume.

Finally, we plan to use solar arrays and advanced electrical storage technologies successfully deployed at Stone Edge Farm to create a simple NanoGrid. Not only will this make Silver Cloud energy self-sufficient, it would also provide an independent source of power in time of emergency or natural disaster.

We respectfully request approval of this use permit. Thank you for your kind consideration.

Sincerely,



John A. (Mac) McQuown

# center for climate protection

## *Our mission*

To inspire, align, and mobilize action in response to the climate crisis. We work with business, government, youth and the broader community to advance practical, science-based solutions for significant greenhouse gas emission reductions.

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## *Contact*

[www.climateprotection.org](http://www.climateprotection.org)  
P.O. Box 3785, Santa Rosa, CA 95402  
707-525-1665

Date: May 12, 2017

To: Members of the Sonoma County Board of Zoning Adjustment

Cc: Jennifer Barrett, Melinda Gorsch

From: Ann Hancock, Executive Director

Subject: UPE14-0088 – Silver Cloud Winery

Dear Members of the Sonoma County Board of Zoning Adjustment,

I write regarding the requested use permit for Silver Cloud Winery – maximum annual production of 2,000 cases within existing buildings, tasting by appointment only, and eight agricultural promotional events with a maximum attendance of 50 people. Eighty percent of the property will be preserved in perpetuity.

Normally we do not weigh in on individual land use matters such as the requested use permit for Silver Cloud. We do so now because of the extraordinary commitment and contribution to sustainability and climate protection of owners Mac and Leslie McQuown. They plan to make Silver Cloud a model micro-winery that demonstrates sustainable best practices from vine to finished wine.

The McQuowns have experience with such endeavors. They developed a world-class farm and microgrid project at their home at Stone Edge Farm, Sonoma, California. Their prime directive for this farm is achieving as far below zero carbon as possible, meaning to remove more greenhouse gas as a result of their practices than they produce. Stone Edge Farm models energy, water, soil, and habitat best practices. The Center for Climate Protection has organized many tours of the farm to educate and inspire visitors about what the future can be.

I encourage you to take these factors into consideration and to approve the McQuown's request for a use permit for Silver Cloud Winery. Sonoma County needs inspiring examples like this to inspire and encourage its advance toward sustainability.

Sincerely,



## **Brandt-Hawley Law Group**

Chauvet House • PO Box 1659  
Glen Ellen, California 95442  
707.938.3900 • fax 707.938.3200  
[preservationlawyers.com](http://preservationlawyers.com)

May 18, 2017

Dick Fogg, Chair  
Members of the Sonoma County BZA  
via email

Subject: May 18 Agenda, Item 1  
UPE14-0088  
Silver Cloud Winery, 5700 Cavedale Road

Dear Chair Fogg and Boardmembers:

My husband Bill Hawley and I write in full support of the use permit requested for this small winery on Cavedale Road. We had hoped to attend today's hearing and regret that we cannot.

I have not appeared before the BZA for many years and so by way of introduction I will mention that I have practiced law from my office in Glen Ellen since 1979. Early on, my general practice included a few CEQA cases and within a few years that became my sole focus, including a wide range of environmental cases in Sonoma County. I now work throughout California representing environmental petitioner groups ("Friends of" ... etc.) in cases involving CEQA enforcement.

I mention my professional background because it is frankly unusual for me to support a project when a lead agency's environmental staff recommends denial of a conditional use permit based on environmental concerns.

Here is why: Bill and I have lived 4 miles up Cavedale Road from Highway 12 since 1981 and raised our sons here. Bill is a winegrower and pioneered our Random Ridge vineyard. I have driven up and down the mountain almost every day for decades, usually via Trinity Road driving right past the subject property on Cavedale. Both Bill and I are extremely aware of the problematic road conditions and constraints. We nonetheless fully support this project because we have known Mac McQuown since 1982 when Bill worked as vineyard manager at Carmenet, and know him to be a man of great integrity and vision. We have no doubt that what Mac has explained to the County will be done at Silver Cloud will indeed occur, and that it will be a benefit to the community and the County.

Letter to Sonoma BZA

May 18, 2017

Page 2

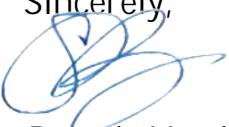
I reviewed the staff report and understand that the project is consistent with the general plan and zoning and that there are no environmental concerns save one: the expected "regular flow of new drivers to Cavedale Road who are unfamiliar with its severe constraints" that may result in "significant public safety concerns due to the unsafe road conditions." (Staff Report, page 6.)

This concern is understandable, but the project as proposed can safely accommodate the proposed use. There are to be only 8 events per year, plus winetasting by appointment. Conditions could limit access to the site on Cavedale via Trinity Road only, with visitors solely transported by Silver Cloud drivers. Cavedale residents will easily discern if that does not occur.

A project of this value surely should not be exempted from CEQA for purposes of denial. Before making a decision, please require a public CEQA process to fully assess the viability of a mitigated negative declaration.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Susan Brandt-Hawley

cc: Melinda Grosch

**From:** [Allison Ash](#)  
**To:** [DANIEL GUSTAFSON](#); [Philippe Thibault](#)  
**Cc:** [Melinda Grosch](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Silver Cloud use permit  
**Date:** May 15, 2017 8:54:53 AM

---

Daniel,

I wanted to make you, Philippe and Melinda aware of my input to Sup. Gorin.

Best of luck!

A

Allison Ash  
415-717-6653 cell  
707-933-8876 home

---

**From:** Allison Ash <[asha@elarra.com](mailto:asha@elarra.com)>  
**Date:** Monday, May 15, 2017 at 8:39 AM  
**To:** Susan Gorin <[Susan.Gorin@sonoma-county.org](mailto:Susan.Gorin@sonoma-county.org)>  
**Cc:** "[marcs@elarra.com](mailto:marcs@elarra.com)" <[marcs@elarra.com](mailto:marcs@elarra.com)>  
**Subject:** Silver Cloud use permit

Susan,

I hope you are doing well. I was planning to attend the hearing this Thursday regarding the use permit for Silver Cloud at 5700 Cavedale, unfortunately our circumstances changed yesterday with some family schedules. Our daughter is due with our first grandchild and she is due any day. Though I'm thrilled about that... I really did want to show support of the Silver Cloud project (SCP). I'll share a few of my thoughts with you here:

1. The land conservation associated with this project is important to me. As you know, we put a conservation easement with SLT on 60 of our 80 acres. The more land in the Mayacamas that is conserved, the bigger footprint wildlife will have. The whole area is keenly aware of wildlife corridors right now because of Quentin Martin's Mountain Lion trap/collar/track project.
2. The road issues of Trinity of Cavedale will not change whether this project is approved or not. The estimate of use by the SCP are very conservative and they are very, very conscientious of the issues. Not allowing their permit does not stop the public --who drive too fast --from using the roads... at least you know for certain that the SCP folks would drive responsibly.
3. Some have made an argument that 'sure the SCP folks are responsible, but what if a big wine conglomerate buys them'. This is a misguided fear. First, your use permit will allow enforcement for the prescript use, and second, I can not imagine someone buying their operation and "licking their lips" at what a great location they have (I think any future buyer would think that location is too expensive to run a public operation —a boat anchor as it were :-)... its is a place only a wildlife lover would love!).

Thanks for your consideration and good luck with the hearing.

Best Regards!

A

Allison Ash  
415-717-6653 cell  
707-933-8876 home

**From:** [DANIEL GUSTAFSON](#)  
**To:** [Crystal Acker](#)  
**Subject:** Silver Cloud Permit Hearing Letter  
**Date:** April 21, 2021 2:13:03 PM  
**Attachments:** [Malcolmson Letter.docx](#)

---

[REDACTED]

Dear Ms. Acker,

Mr. Malcolmson emailed the attached letter to me to forward to you regarding the May 13 Silver Cloud hearing. If you want to verify with him, his email address is [jasper@skylight.com](mailto:jasper@skylight.com) and his phone, (415) 763-7560. Thank you!

Best,

Dan Gustafson  
(707) 363-0963

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April 21, 2021

ATTN: Crystal Acker, M.S.  
Sonoma County Planner III

RE: Silver Cloud Winery  
5700 Cavedale Road  
Glen Ellen, CA  
APN 053-051-029  
UPE 14-0088  
Project No. 2013014

Dear Ms. Acker,

I understand that there is a Board of Zoning Adjustment hearing on May 13 regarding the Silver Cloud Winery permit for 5700 Cavedale Road. I'm a neighbor, just a few minutes away at 4614 Cavedale Road, and I want to provide my input on the project.

From my observation, the Silver Cloud undertaking is a noble one with a very small production, very high quality winery in an existing building with a focus on environmental impact. This is a very thoughtful, highly professional project that represents the best of what Sonoma wine can be about.

They have had a totally positive impact on this area, including making safety a priority and expending great effort on fire prevention, thinning dead and dying trees, controlling stump growth, removing debris, and reducing undergrowth. They created a million-gallon irrigation pond. They have four wells with back-up generators and pumps, and an automated sprinkler system with sprinklers near buildings and on perimeters, as well as hydrants available for fire department use.

They are constructing a second-generation microgrid with solar-generated electricity stored with state-of-the-art technology to make this property energy independent with a net-zero carbon footprint. Their original microgrid at Stone Edge Farm in Sonoma operated the evacuated 16-acre property automatically amid power outages, smoke, and ash for ten days during the 2017 wildfires, receiving international acclaim.

I have heard that the county may have concerns about traffic on Cavedale Road between Trinity Road and Silver Cloud. Living in the area, I found that the issue isn't traffic, but road maintenance. With help from Silver Cloud, the road has been improved. And this winery project will produce minimal traffic.

I am supportive of this permit. Silver Cloud is the type of project I want in my neighborhood. Thank you for considering the views of a local resident.

Best,

Jasper Malcolmson  
4614 Cavedale Road



**From:** [Korbin Ming](#)  
**To:** [Crystal Acker](#)  
**Subject:** Regarding UPE 14-0088  
**Date:** April 22, 2021 7:20:52 AM

---

[REDACTED]

**Regarding:**  
Silver Cloud Winery  
5700 Cavedale Road  
Glen Ellen, CA  
APN 053-051-029, UPE 14-0088  
Project No. 2013014

Dear Ms. Acker:

I am writing to express my support for the Silver Cloud Winery Use Permit. They have set a great precedent with holistic farming practices, conscious water use and responsible forest management. They are true stewards of the land and their renewable energy initiatives are inspirational and a bright spot for the local industry. I have seen first hand the efforts made by Silver Cloud for the past decade being their adjacent neighbors on Cavedale Rd.

Would you please convey my message to the commissioners prior to the May 13 BZA hearing? Thank you.

--  
Korbin Ming  
Korbin Kameron Wines  
korbinkameron.com  
m: 415.699.9817

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**From:** [Brandi Yahoo](#)  
**To:** [Crystal Acker](#)  
**Subject:** Silver Cloud Winery Use Permit  
**Date:** April 25, 2021 10:06:28 AM

---

[REDACTED]

Hello Ms Acker, hope this email finds you well,

We are writing to express our support for the Silver Cloud Winery Use Permit. We especially appreciate the net-zero carbon, energy independent model of land stewardship and fire prevention that they created this space to be. It seems increasingly important for our severely fire impacted area to support any and all who can responsibly rebuild and create spaces of joy for us all to be in. We are all also dependent on the tourism of this area and are excited to welcome in responsible business owners who can help us both nurture and preserve the land and help bring others back into our area. Would you please convey my message to the commissioners prior to the May 13th BZA hearing?

Thank you,  
Brandi and Damion Asker  
3888 Cavedale Rd  
Glen Ellen, Ca 95442

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**From:** [Ann Hancock](#)  
**To:** [Crystal Acker](#)  
**Cc:** [DANIEL GUSTAFSON](#); [Mac McQuown](#)  
**Subject:** Crystal - Silver Cloud Permit Hearing - support letter  
**Date:** April 27, 2021 5:21:48 PM  
**Attachments:** [Letter\\_Silver Cloud support April 27, 2021.pdf](#)

---

EXTERNAL

Hi Crystal -

Attached please find my letter of support for the Silver Cloud use permit.

Please feel free to contact me - 415-298-1224 - mobile.

Thank you!

Ann Hancock (writing as a private resident, not in my non-profit capacity)

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**A N N   H A N C O C K**  
**329 S. BRUSH STREET, GRATON, CA 95444**  
**(415) 298-1224**

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Date: April 27, 2021  
To: Crystal Ackerman, M.S., Planner III, Permit Sonoma  
Via email: [Crystal.Acker@sonoma-county.org](mailto:Crystal.Acker@sonoma-county.org)  
CC: Dan Gustafson, Mac McQuown

Subject: **SUPPORT:** Silver Cloud Winery  
5700 Cavedale Road, Glen Ellen, CA  
APN 053-051-029, UPE 14-0088  
Project No. 2013014

Dear Ms. Acker,

I write as a private member of this community to express my support for the Silver Cloud Winery Use Permit. I would appreciate you conveying this message to the commissioners prior to the May 13 BZA hearing. I sent a similar support letter for the project dated May 12, 2017.

As a climate advocate for two decades, I will address the energy and fire aspects of the permit, aspects with which I am most familiar.

**ENERGY:** Silver Cloud has a second-generation microgrid, scheduled for completion within the year, in which solar arrays generate electricity stored with state-of-the-art technology to make the property energy independent with a net-zero carbon footprint. The prototype microgrid at Stone Edge Farm in Sonoma gained worldwide acclaim when it ran the evacuated 16-acre property for ten days while surrounded by power outages during the 2017 wildfires. The microgrid generated, stored, and distributed electricity despite smoke and ash. It powered the lighting, computer systems, appliances, and irrigation pumps which were all controlled remotely by cell phone from the East Bay.

**FIRE:** Silver Cloud has invested in fire prevention measures, including thinning the forest, removing dead or dying trees, controlling stump growth, removing debris, and deploying a herd of goats to reduce undergrowth, all to reduce potential wildfire laddering and crowning. As a result, in the 2017 wildfires only one outbuilding on the property was burned.

I encourage you to take into consideration these factors as well as the extraordinary commitment and contribution to sustainability and climate protection of Silver Cloud owners Mac and Leslie McQuown, and to approve their request for a use permit for Silver Cloud Winery. Sonoma County needs examples like this to inspire and encourage advancing toward a sustainable future – including in the wine industry.

Thank you.



Ann Hancock

**From:** [Marc Schwager](#)  
**To:** [Crystal Acker](#)  
**Cc:** [DANIEL GUSTAFSON](#); [Allison Ash](#)  
**Subject:** Silver Cloud Use Permit, May 13 BZA Hearing  
**Date:** April 30, 2021 10:38:32 AM

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EXTERNAL

RE: Silver Cloud Use Permit, May 13 BZA Hearing  
APN 053-051-029, UPE 14-0088  
Project No. 2013014

Dear Ms. Acker,

I am writing in support of the Silver Cloud project at 5700 Cavedale and their hearing for a use permit. We have seen lots of development up here, and the Silver Cloud team is taking a sensitive and thoughtful approach to their project. The scope is very restrained and they have endeavored to solicit neighborhood opinion.

Much has been said about the condition and safety of Cavedale Road in the discussions that I have been privy to over the years with respect to this application. My 10 years as a board member of the Mayacamas Volunteer Fire Department has convinced me that both the wear and tear, and the most dangerous traffic on the road, are due to construction traffic, and the heavy trucks involved.

The operation of the small wine making facility on the property will actually lower the heavy truck traffic on the road, as they will not have to transport grapes elsewhere for processing. The small number of visitors traversing Cavedale from Trinity road will have little material impact.

In summary I support their application for a use permit for the facility. I think they have proven to be an excellent addition to the neighborhood.

Please convey my message to the commissioners prior to the May 13 BZA hearing

Thank you,

Marc

Marc Schwager  
3200 Cavedale Road  
Contact Information:  
1-707-299-9940 cell  
Marcs@elarra.com email

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**From:** [Allison Ash](#)  
**To:** [Crystal Acker](#)  
**Cc:** [marcs@elarra.com](mailto:marcs@elarra.com); [DANIEL GUSTAFSON](#)  
**Subject:** BZA hearing on May 13 re: Silver Cloud  
**Date:** May 03, 2021 8:31:52 AM

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[REDACTED]

Dear Ms Acker,

I am writing in reference to the BZA hearing on May 13 regarding the Silver Cloud Project (SCP). I am a neighbor and longtime resident and I am very supportive of the SCP for many reasons, here are a few of them:

1. The land conservation associated with this project is important to me. As you may know, we put a conservation easement with Sonoma Land Trust (SLT) on 60 of our 80 acres. The more land in the Mayacamas that is conserved, the bigger footprint wildlife will have to thrive. The whole area is keenly aware of wildlife corridors right now because of the Audubon Canyon Ranch mountain lion project.
2. The road issues of Trinity and Cavedale will not change whether this project is approved or not. The estimated road use by the SCP are very conservative and they are very, very conscientious of the issues. Not allowing their permit does not stop the public from using the roads inappropriately ... and you will know *for certain* that the SCP folks would drive responsibly.
3. Some have made an argument that 'sure the SCP folks are responsible, but what if a big wine conglomerate buys them'. This is a misguided fear. First, your use permit will allow enforcement for its prescribed use, second, I cannot imagine someone buying their operation and thinking 'what a great location they have'. I believe any future buyer would think that location is too expensive to run a public operation. This location is a place only a wildlife lover would love.

I have found Mac McQuown, and the entire Silver Cloud operation, to be excellent stewards of their property, excellent neighbors, and entirely informed and appreciative of the ecology and use limitations of their location.

Please contact me if you would like further information. My address, email and cell are noted below.

Regards,

A

Allison Ash

3200 Cavedale Road

Glen Ellen, CA 95442

[asha@elarra.com](mailto:asha@elarra.com)

415-717-6653

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**From:** [Maggie Haywood](#)  
**To:** [Crystal Acker](#)  
**Subject:** UPE14-0088  
**Date:** May 04, 2021 12:56:44 PM

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EXTERNAL

Hi Crystal,

A winery on Cavedale Road is a terrible idea. The rural hills and mountainous areas in Sonoma County are at great risk for fires year round; we are in a megadrought! Any event at such a location is courting disaster. I live in the hills and grow grapes north and east of Sonoma, and the idea of a winery and events in the backcountry on our road is incomprehensible. How do 50 people get out if there is a raging fire, as there will be, in these hills? We had 90 mile per hour winds and evacuations in 2017 and 2018. What about employees, what about water use, what about impact on the roads for neighbors who may need to get out in a hurry?

I urge the county to reject this use permit.

Sincerely,

Maggie Salenger Haywood

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