

COMMENTS

RESPONSES

Ehsan, Beth

From: Debbie O'Neill <doneill@catlover.com>
Sent: Saturday, June 13, 2015 6:34 PM
To: Sibbet, David; Ehsan, Beth; Loy, Maggie A; Blackson, Kristin; Wardlaw, Mark
Cc: Fitzpatrick, Lisa; Cox, Greg; Jacob, Dianne; Roberts, Dave; Ron-Roberts; Horn, Bill; bruce.bettyliska@gmail.com; douglas.dill@att.net
Subject: Valiano Draft Environmental Impact Report: PDS2013-SP-13-001, PDS2013-GPA-13-001, PDS2013-REZ-13-001, PDS2013-TM-5575, PDS2014-MUP-14-019, PDS2013-STP-13-003, PDS2013-ER-13-08-002

Dear County Planning and Development Services Staff,

CB-1

I would like to voice my opposition to the above referenced DEIR and the proposed development known as Valiano as it is currently proposed. I am not opposed to development of our valley but would like the development to be in keeping with the community and county plan of keeping Elfin Forest, Eden Valley, and Harmony Grove rural. There are many reasons to oppose the DEIR as currently proposed but I will only give you my two most pressing concerns.

CB-2

First, the DEIR does not adequately address the fire danger present in our valley, and how the county plans on evacuating the residents on our few country roads in a fire emergency. During the most recent Coco's fire, my husband and I had to evacuate our animals quickly after the winds turned and the fire quickly raced down the hillside towards our house. I drove out past 10-20 foot flames that were coming up the hill from the Harmony Grove Spiritualist Association. We were lucky. Although we were blocked from leaving on Country Club at Kauana Loa due to fire being fought on that road, we were able to leave on Harmony Grove because there weren't that many of us in the valley. It is my understanding that those people who lived in San Elijo Hills were caught in a traffic jam and could not evacuate quickly. And they have wider roads and more lanes than we do. Luckily the fire did not reach them. My neighborhood was not as lucky. Most of the Spiritualists, and several of my neighbors on Country Club lost everything. If they had gotten caught in the kind of traffic that will be here if Valiano goes through as proposed, they most likely would have died trying to get out. I have lived in Harmony Grove for 14 years, and have been evacuated due to fire three times. Twice for the Cedar fire (which passed us but the next day after we returned, it sparked back up at Del Dios and came back up the hill), and once for the Coco's fire. If Valiano is built as proposed, we will have to shelter in place. This does not sound safe to me.

CB-3

Secondly, I believe the DEIR does not adequately address the destruction of the flora and fauna of our valley. We are fortunate to have some of the little remaining Coastal Sage Scrub and Mixed Chapparal that exists in San Diego County. The Valiano project intends to leave pockets of this unique vegetation for animal habitat. Unfortunately studies have found that leaving pockets of a biome is not effective. Animals need connected parcels of the vegetation that they are adapted to in order to survive and prosper. On our parcel of land (3 acres) we have encouraged and planted native vegetation in order to promote the native animal species to stay on our land. What has been remarkable about that as a person who grew up in the suburbs, is that I have learned to appreciate our native plants and animals. The chapparal has something blooming almost every part of the year which allows the native animals to have food throughout the year. When I walk out in my yard, I see and hear birds, coyotes, rabbits, snakes, lizards, and many other animals. Now that the new Harmony Grove Village has been built, I sometimes walk on the walking paths and it is remarkable what an environmental desert has been created. I see very few animals over there but as soon as I cross Harmony Grove Road back to the rural area, there are lots of animals. I'm sure eventually animals will move into the area. However, they most likely will not be the native species, or the native species will be out of balance. Only the animals that can survive on the non-native plants which have been planted by the developer (and later the residents) will thrive. This is an area that really can't be fixed by buying mitigation property somewhere else. The animals and plants of our valley need land here in our valley.

CB-1

The comment is introductory and requests that the Project be in keeping with the Community and General Plans. See Responses I-7 and I-8 for how the Project preserves rural character. Please see responses to specific comments, below.

CB-2

The comment is concerned with evacuation. See Topical Response: Fire/Evacuations.

CB-3

The commenter is concerned for the loss of native habitat. See Response BC-8 regarding conservation planning for the area, Response K-32 regarding habitat connectivity and wildlife movement, and K-128 regarding consistency with the EFHGCP direction on mitigation location.