

April 4, 2007

San Luis Obispo County
Board of Supervisors
County Government Center, Room D-430
San Luis Obispo, CA 92349

Re: Proposed Sale of the La Grande Tract to the California State Parks

Honorable Board Members,

This letter is in support of the proposed sale of the La Grande Tract to California State Parks for continued use for camping and OHV recreation. Based on the extensive legal analysis documented in the Friends of Oceano Dunes Appeal, it is obvious that the sale is consistent with the General Plan.

The real issues are:

1. SLO corrections to maps were inadvertently deferred due to “other priorities”.
2. Those opposed to the ODSVRA see the map confusion as a tool for strangling the park size.
3. A few homeowners, who consciously bought their properties adjacent to obvious vehicle beach-use, now want the beach closed for their personal privacy. Not all Strand home owners agree with them.
4. Opponents to the sale/long term lease, with the objective of shrinking the park, offer no credible economic alternative to the millions spent annually.
5. As the biggest attraction in the County, with 2 ½ times the attendance at Hearst Castle, can the County realistically expect to attract, or be able to invest in more Hearst Castle size attractions to replace the revenue?
6. Realistically would local environmentalists support another entry which would be destructive to habitat as indicated in the Second, and most recent, Alternative Access Study?
7. Does the County desire to take on the many costs identified by State Parks, associated with re-interpreting erroneous maps? New HCP, opening accesses to private lots, policing fence lines, growing attention to species protections?
8. Lest we forget, of the 18,000 acres of the Guadalupe-Nipomo Dunes, only 1500 acres are used by vehicles in the ODSVRA.

In conclusion, the decision must be an economic one. The 2 million visitors to the ODSVRA spend in excess of \$200m annually. The Economic Impact analysis proves that the ODSVRA visitors are leaving the beach frequently to buy goods and services in town. Their attraction is in the dunes, going to town is for a purpose.....spending and returning!

I urge each Board member to not be influenced by the short term objectives of opponents of the Park and instead be guided by the vision of the future of the County economy driven by tourist dollars.

The town of Guadalupe would no doubt cherish the thought of so many tourists spending in their community.

Respectfully,