

RCT Lands LP  
86 Monterey Salinas Highway  
Salinas, CA 93908

831 455 1096

March 2016

**PROJECT NAME:**

**Petition to Cancel Williamson Act designated as “Land Conservation Contract Agricultural Preserve No. 73-009” established pursuant to Monterey County Board of Supervisors’ Resolution No. 73-34-9.**

Purpose of cancellation: Cancellation is consistent with the Williamson Act

The subject Williamson Act contract applies to the property known as the “Vanoli Ranch” which is 173 acres in size. The Ranch is situated in Monterey County, east of and adjacent to Highway 101 southeasterly of the City of Greenfield’s current boundary within the City’s adopted Sphere of Influence. The purpose of the cancellation is to remove 121.4 acres from the ranch to allow their annexation as part of the City of Greenfield’s “South End Annexation” project. Such annexation is consistent with the “Greater Greenfield Area Memorandum of Agreement” between the City of Greenfield, the County of Monterey and LAFCO dated June, 2013. The 121.4 acres are being separated as part of an application for a two parcel subdivision, which has been submitted to and is pending before the County. The subdivision is also included as part of the overall project description in the Supplemental Environmental Impact Report (SEIR) under preparation for the “South End Annexation” project by the City of Greenfield.

**DRAFT FINDINGS:**

***Finding #1: This Cancellation can be accomplished via the Williamson Act Cancellation:***

Cancellation on land for which has a “Notice of Nonrenewal” has been filed.

Date of filing: A “Notice of Partial Non-Renewal of Land Conservation Contract (Agricultural Preserve No. 73-009)” was filed with the County of Monterey on August 28, 2006 and recorded at the Monterey County Recorder’s on September 14, 2006 (Document #2006080679).

Date of Exit: December 31, 2023

*Ex 4*

***Finding #2: Adjacent Land is not likely to be removed from agricultural use:***

The specific and unique nature of these 121.4 acres was the reason they were included in the “Greater Greenfield Area Memorandum of Agreement” and are part of the City of Greenfield’s “South End Annexation” proposal. The remaining 51.6 acres of the Vanoli Ranch located adjacent to and easterly of the 121.4 acres proposed for removal, are located outside the adopted Sphere of Influence, will remain under the jurisdiction of Monterey County. The 51.6 acres may be placed under a new/amended Williamson Act contract and will be placed in an Agricultural Conservation Easement with the Agricultural Land Trust of Monterey County. The property immediately to the north (Scheid Parcel) is also included in the City’s Sphere of Influence and included in the “Greater Greenfield Area Memorandum of Agreement” and is also a part of the City of Greenfield’s “South End Annexation” proposal. The area further to the north is already urbanized and located within the City of Greenfield. Adjacent agricultural land to the east and across Espinosa Road to the south is located within Monterey County and is not in the adopted Sphere of Influence. These areas will remain under active agricultural production. Ag Land Easement through the Williamson Act Exchange which will protect that immediate bordering property for the future.

*Exhibits 5 & 6; Exhibit 2 Sec A, B*

***Finding #3: The cancellation is an alternative use which is consistent with applicable provisions of the county or city general plan:***

The 121.4 acres of the Vanoli Ranch that are proposed for removal from the Williamson Act contract are being subdivided to accomplish their annexation into the City of Greenfield. The 121.4 acres are “specific” acreage that have been included in the City’s Memorandum of Agreement with Monterey County and LAFCO in 2013 and the City of Greenfield’s established Sphere of Influence (SOI). These 121.4 acres have been included in the SOI because of their immediate proximity to Highway 101 and the city’s southern boundary. Further their soil quality provides poorer agricultural growing environment due to the abundant existence of “Greenfield Potatoes” (local term for river rock of potato size) which make farming a less desirable and more expensive endeavor due to wear and tear on farm equipment and extra labor necessary to clear the field of these rocks before and after plantings. These acres also provide many harvesting issues due to the rocks.

These acres are also located directly adjacent to Highway 101 North Espinosa Road exit from State Highway 101, which makes them easily accessed by the traffic on Highway 101 N adding unencumbered accessibility to their uniqueness. This access also makes them more attractive to develop into commercial property that would benefit the City of Greenfield and all the other cities in south Monterey County.

The 121.4 acres when annexed as part of the “South End Annexation” proposal will be designated for commercial (60 acres immediately adjacent to highway 101) and industrial for the remaining of the parcel. Due to the easy access from the highway the City of Greenfield is planning on encouraging business growth in the form of a travel plaza, hotel(s) and restaurants. This would provide services for travelers and encourage visitors to come to visit the Pinnacles National Park and the River Road Wine Trail. Increased tourism in this area would provide economic growth and revenues to the City of Greenfield and provide jobs for local residents.

Since the SOI of Greenfield, is contiguous with the city limits being expanded in a manner that reflects the General Plan and future growth that has been addressed by Monterey County, the annexation of the 121 acres of the Vanoli Ranch will maintain a consistent growth pattern because it is immediately adjacent to current land that is either currently in the city limits or being annexed concurrently into the city limits with these acres.

*Exhibit 2 Sec A,B; Exhibit 10 pp 2; Exhibit 3 pp 3 table 2-2 & pp 5*

***Finding #4: The cancellation will not result in discontinuous patterns of urban development.***

The 121.4 acres subject to the cancellation are located within the City of Greenfield’s Sphere of Influence (SOI) approved by LAFCO. The SOI was delineated taking into account factors critical for orderly growth and economic development as required by applicable legislation. The City’s boundary and the SOI limit growth in the area surrounding the City protecting land Agricultural land now and in the future.

The land that is to be annexed into the City of Greenfield although considered prime, has the added cost of growing and harvesting due to the soil type (abundant and reoccurring “Greenfield Potatoes”); and the value that it will add to the City of Greenfield because of its location and accessibility outweighs the agricultural benefit that it currently offers. These are the findings of Monterey County, LAFCO and the City of Greenfield through their Memorandum of Agreement. *Ex 10 pp 1; Ex 14 pp 10*

The only adjacent properties that would be involved the annexation process are also included in the City’s General Plan, the MOA and the SOI. Any future City growth that might involve agricultural land would be in accordance with Monterey County General Plan, City of Greenfield, SOI, LAFCO and Ag Land Trust approval.

The 51.6 acres remaining in the parcel are scheduled for Ag Easement Conservation placement in conjunction with the annexation and cancellation of WA from the 121.4 acres. Therefore this designation on the 51.6 acres will prevent any chance that it will be removed from Ag Land and developed in the future.

Since the SOI of Greenfield, is contiguous with the city limits being expanded in a manner that reflects the General Plan and future growth that has been addressed by Monterey

County, the annexation of the 121 acres of the Vanoli Ranch will maintain a consistent growth pattern because it is immediately adjacent to current land that is either currently in the city limits or being annexed concurrently into the city limits with these acres.

*Exhibit 15 pp 23; Exhibit 2 pp 2; Exhibit 2 sec A,B,D*

***Finding #5: That there is no proximate non contracted land which is both available and suitable for the use to which it is proposed the contract land be put or, that the development of the contracted land would provide more contiguous patterns of urban development of proximate non contracted land.***

City and County general plans, City/County/LAFCO MOA. Greenfield General Plan Figures 2-3 and 2-5 show the city's land use pattern. One of the proposed uses, heavy industrial, is in support of the agricultural industry and is designated nowhere else on the land use diagram. This makes the proposed cancellation land the only land available for industrial purpose. There are other highway commercial properties available north of Apple Avenue but they are encumbered by ownership and residential proximity that would limit their traveler friendliness. There is also a Mixed Use overlay which is not compatible with the proposed commercial use. Therefore there is no proximate non-contracted land available for this purpose.

In additions these 121.4 acres are "specific and unique" to the Sphere of Influence, MOA which have already been approved by Monterey County, LAFCO, City of Greenfield.

*Exhibit 2 sec A,B,D*

**OTHER DOCUMENTATION AND DATA SUBMITTED IN SUPPORT OF PETITION PER THE “ADVICE FOR SUBMISSION OF PETITIONS” FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION**

**DESCRIPTION OF ALTERNATIVE USE OF THE LAND**

The 121.4 Acres of the Vanoli Ranch will be annexed into the City of Greenfield as part of the City’s “South End Annexation” project. This process is concurrently being accomplished with the County of Monterey. After the South End Annexation is complete the area will be developed under the jurisdiction of the City of Greenfield subject to land use, zoning and other pertinent regulations. The City of Greenfield therefore will decide what changes in zoning and development shall be allowed on this property.

The current “proposed zoning change” will be the most westerly 60 acres situated adjacent to Highway 101 N will be zoned commercial and the 61 acres situated north of Espinosa Road and east on the subdivision will be zoned industrial. The changes in the zoning will allow business growth on the 60 acres of commercial zoning which may include a travel center with convenient food restaurants, reputable chain restaurants, hotel(s), “anchor store” with other shops related to the local agriculture and wine industry.

The industrial zoning of the 61 easterly acres could provide property for Agricultural processing and/or storage facilities related to the row crop farming or wine grape growing industries whose close proximity to this property and easy access on and off Highway 101 would make it ideal.

*Exhibit 3 pp 3 table 2-2*

**EXTENT OF CANCELLATION - partial**

This request is for cancellation on 121.4 acres of the 173-acre Vanoli Ranch. The 121.4 acres are part of a two parcel subdivision proposal that has been submitted to the County. The processing and approval of the subdivision are pending the completion and adoptions of the Supplemental Environmental Impact Report (SEIR) for the “South End Annexation” proposal under preparation by the City of Greenfield. The SEIR will be reviewed by the County and used to support CEQA findings required for the subdivision (which is completed but not final till CEQA doc is also accepted).

There is 173 acres in the Vanoli Ranch: 51.6 acres are to remain under Williamson Act protection and 121.4 acres are to be cancelled. The 51.6 acres that are remaining as agricultural land will be placed in in a conservation easement with the Ag Land Trust in perpetuity as mitigation with the County of Monterey for the removal of the 121.4 acres from Ag Land and any fees associated therewith. *Exhibit 8*

**COPY OF CONTRACT AND CONTRACT NUMBER**

**Contract No.: 73-009-0000000**

Non- renewal filed

Exit Date: 12/31/2023

*Exhibit 4*

**AGRICULTURAL PRESERVE (NUMBER OR NAME):**

“Land Conservation Contract Agricultural Preserve No. **73-009** established pursuant to Monterey County Board of Supervisors’ Resolution No. **73-34-9**.”

**LANDOWNERS**

RCT Lands LLP

86 Monterey Salinas Highway

Salinas, CA 93908

Contact: Kathy Francioni, representative, (831) 320- 5597, kfransci@yahoo.com

**APPLICANTS**

RCT Lands LLP

Ray Francioni, Carli Francioni Chasen, Teresa Francioni

**TOTAL EXISTING CONTRACT ACRES**

173 acres

*Exhibit 8*

**CANCELLATION ACREAGE PROPOSED and ASSESSOR’S PARCEL NUMBER**

121.4 acres

APN 221-011-017 (portion of 173 acres associated with this APN)

*Exhibit 8*

## **EXISTING AGRICULTURAL CONDITIONS IN THE COUNTY AND REGION**

Currently the County of Monterey and City of Greenfield and surrounding area have agricultural land that covers most of the Salinas Valley and adjacent foothills except for the areas where urban development has been created. The cities in the Salinas Valley that are situated on or near Highway 101 and their immediate adjacent areas have been guided through the General Plan to limit urban growth to their immediate areas consistent with LAFCO policies and recently have been requested to restrict urban growth to the east side of Highway 101.

Although urban growth is happening in the City of Greenfield at this time, this process has taken about 10 years to get to this place. The reason that it has taken this long is because every step of the process has been reviewed and scrutinized to make sure that this annexation and city growth will NOT adversely affect other agricultural land in the neighboring area or Monterey County. Through the “Greater Greenfield Area Memorandum of Agreement” and the adoption of the City of Greenfield’s Sphere of Influence, the County of Monterey, the City of Greenfield and LAFCO have concurred that this annexation will be economically beneficial for the City of Greenfield and although the quality of farmland that is being annexed is listed as “prime” by the State of California Department of Conservation, the loss of these 121.4 acres as agricultural land will be offset by the value that its annexation will provide to the City of Greenfield by offering potential and continuous tax revenue to this economically depressed area. Additionally, the loss will be mitigated through the placing of other lands controlled by the property owners under Williamson Act contracts through the Williamson Act Easement Exchange Program.

*Ex 14 pp 7,8*

Per the provisions of the “Greater Greenfield Area Memorandum of Agreement” between the City of Greenfield, County of Monterey and LAFCO, the 51.6 acres of the Vanoli Ranch that will remain in the County will be placed under an Agricultural conservation Easement with AG Land Trust. Per the MOA this will mitigate property and/or fee requirements associated with the loss of the 121.4 acres for the County of Monterey and LAFCO.

RCT Lands is also offering approximately 380 acres of two Ranches; Redding (317 acres) and Somavia ( 66 acres) to be placed in Ag Land Easement Trust via Williamson Act Easement Exchange program. This offering is being made to mitigate the loss of the 121.4 acres of “prime” Ag Land that is being removed from the Williamson Act (Vanoli split) and offset the cancellation fee that is being assessed for this cancellation by the State of California Department of Conservation.

*Ex 15, 16, 17 pp 6*

## EXISTING AGRICULTURAL USE ON THE PROJECT SITE AND ADJACENT AREAS

The Vanoli Ranch is currently being farmed. The crops being grown vary: lettuce, romaine, broccoli, celery.

Yields for these crops can be found in the Ag Production Report by Frank Pierce, Lee and Pierce Inc. Historical yields for crops grown on this land have been average (median) cartons per acre. As stated previously the cost of growing is “high” on this acreage due to the constant infestation of “Greenfield Potatoes” (rocks that have similar appearance to potatoes). These rocks are brought up when the soil is worked prior to planting. Due to the numerous quantity and continuous appearance they have to be “hand gleaned” from the property to decrease the “wear and tear” they have on agricultural equipment. The extra labor cost for removing the rocks before each planting and the abuse the rocks have on equipment combine to make farming less cost effective on the western portion of the 173 acres.

The rocks are less frequent as you move east on the Vanoli Ranch making the 51.6 acres that are designated Ag Land Trust Easement more cost effective and productive.

Adjacent agricultural land is all under row crop and/or small vineyard production. The property immediately adjacent to the north of the Vanoli Ranch (Scheid Property) is also included the Sphere Of Influence of the City of Greenfield and the “South End Annexation “ project, and is part “Greater Greenfield Area Memorandum of Agreement” between the City, the County and LAFCO. The land located on the north east corner of Patrica Lane and Espinosa Road (LA Hearne) is also included in the SOI and will be annexed into the City of Greenfield. All other bordering or adjacent properties are not included in the SOI or MOA that is currently being processed or in the Monterey County General Plan for future municipal growth and will remain agricultural land in the future.

*Exhibit 10 pp 2; Exhibit 14 pp 10*

### MAPS

#### LOCATION MAPS OF PROJECT SITE

City of Greenfield Annexation Map	<i>Ex 5</i>
Annexation Map with Ag Land Easment	<i>Ex 6</i>
Aerial Annexation Map	<i>Ex 7</i>
Vanoli Ranch (tentative) Subdivision Map	<i>Ex 8</i>

*Several maps are included in Exhibit 2, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17*

## ACRES OF PRIME AND NON PRIME WILLIAMSON ACT LAND

The map found on this link <http://maps.conservation.ca.gov/ciff/ciff.html> shows 121.4 acres that are being annexed into the City of Greenfield are considered “prime”. This designation is based upon production and soils type without consideration for “cost of production.” Considering the extra labor necessary to make this particular piece of property ready for planting and also the equipment wear and tear for growing and harvesting the crops along with the extra labor costs involved in removal of the considerable amount of “potato sized” rocks that remain a constant in this property on the western portion more than the soils and production should be considered when labeling it “prime.” *Ex 14 pp 10*

The 51.6 acres of the Vanoli subdivision that are being placed in an Agricultural Conservation with the Agricultural Land Trust via the Williamson Act Exchange are also “prime.” These acres will remain in Ag Land Trust for perpetuity to offset the loss of the 121.4 acres being annexed.

The Redding Ranch (318 acres) is prime farmland that will also be placed in Ag Land Trust for perpetuity to offset the 121.4 acres being removed.

The Somavia Ranch (66 acres) which is farmland of statewide importance will also be placed in Ag Land Trust for perpetuity to offset the 121.4 acres being removed.

Frank Pierce, Lee and Pierce Engineers states in his report; “The Ag Land potential growing capabilities and production value for farming are basically equal among the Vanoli, Redding and Somavia Ranches.”

“It is my opinion that the conversion of the properties to permanent agricultural land easement is appropriate.” *Ex 10 pp 2*

### SOILS

Vanoli Ranch	121.4 acres	27% 2s	73% 3s		<i>Ex 14 pp 10</i>
Vanoli Ranch	51.6 acres	95% 2s	5% 3s		<i>Ex 15 pp 20</i>
Redding Ranch	318 acres	99% 2s	1% 3s		<i>Ex 16 pp 19</i>
Somavia Ranch	66 acres	32 % 2s	49% 3s	19% 4s	<i>Ex 17 pp 20</i>

Examining the above comparison chart of the soil quality of the ranches that are involved in the annexation and exchange under the Williamson Act the 121.4 acres of the Vanoli which are being annexed into the City of Greenfield and hopefully removed from the

Williamson Act comprise lower quality soil percentage wise than the 51.6 acres that are remaining in the County of Monterey and being offered for Ag Land Easement for mitigation purposes with LAFCO and Monterey County.

The Redding Ranch which is also being offered as property mitigation to the State of California DOC is virtually all 2s which is considered high quality farming soil. The Redding and Vanoli Ranches are considered to be Prime Farmland and while the Somavia's soil quality is mostly 3s this Ranch is still considered "Farmland of Statewide Importance" re:

<http://maps.conservation.ca.gov/ciff/ciff.html>.

## **WATER**

Vanoli Ranch 121.4 acres

Contains one groundwater irrigation well with underground high pressure plastic pipe.

*Ex 14 pp 11*

This well provides adequate irrigation to produce average or better crop production.

*Ex 14 pp11, 40*

*When removal of the Williamson Act encumbrance and annexation has been completed new water systems are anticipated for this parcel to accommodate future use.*

Vanoli Ranch 51.6 acres

There is 1 irrigation well with high pressure underground plastic pipe delivery system.

*Ex 15 pp 19*

This well provides adequate irrigation to produce average or better crop production.

*Ex 14 pp 40*

Redding Ranch 318 acres

There are 3 irrigation wells: (1) Row crop (1) Vineyard (1) other

Irrigation system has underground high pressure plastic pipe delivery

These wells provide adequate irrigation to produce average or better crop production.

*Ex 16 pp 19, Add. Well photo*

Somavia Ranch 66 acres

There is 1 irrigation well with underground high pressure plastic pipe delivery. *Ex 17 pp 19*

This well provides adequate irrigation to produce average or better crop production.

*Ex 17 pp 19, Add. Well photos*