

RCT Lands LP

March 2016

86 Monterey Salinas Hwy

Salinas, CA 93908

John Lowrie, Assistant Director

Division of Land Resource Protection

801 K street MS 14-15

Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Mr. Lowrie:

We are petitioning the State of California Department of Conservation to cancel an existing Williamson Act contract on 121.4 acres of farmland in the Greenfield area of Monterey County. The proposed cancellation is on a portion of the 173 acre Vanoli Ranch, owned by RCT Lands (APN 221-011-017). This cancellation is being proposed as a step toward placing other lands under permanent agricultural conservation easements in the near future through the Williamson Act Easement Exchange Program, as discussed below.

RCT Lands filed a non-renewal notice on the entire 173 acres of the Vanoli Ranch in (2004, recorded in 2006). Per the nonrenewal notice, the existing contract expires on December 31, 2023. It is our hope this cancellation can be accomplished now to make it possible for development on this parcel sooner to help provide economic activity, jobs and revenues which are needed and will benefit Greenfield now.

The 173 acre Vanoli property is currently in the process of being subdivided into two parcels (121.4 acres and 51.6 acres) by the County of Monterey planning department as follows:

121.4 acres (the area of the proposed contract cancellation) to be annexed to the City of Greenfield for future development. The 121.4 acres are part of the City of Greenfield's Sphere of Influence, as designated by LAFCO of Monterey County in 2013, and soon to be proposed for annexation into the city. This parcel will be developed with commercial and Industrial land uses per the City of Greenfield's land use planning documents once the annexation is complete.

51.6 acres to remain in productive agricultural use in perpetuity, under a new permanent conservation easement to be placed on the 51.6 acre parcel, in addition to proposed conservation easements on other nearby lands as discussed below.

Mitigated Properties Table

		Value	
Vanoli Ranch (APN 221-011-017)	51.6 acres	\$.3 M	Ag Easement
Redding Ranch (APN 221-011-040)	318 acres	\$1 M	Ag Easement
Somavia Ranch (APN 137-151-009)	66 acres	\$.2 M	Ag Easement
Vanoli Ranch (APN 221-011-017)	121.4 acres	\$ 3.6 M	Mitigated

The above table lists the 435 acres of Prime and Farmland of Statewide Importance, with their values, which will be placed into permanent agricultural conservation easement to compensate/mitigate for the 121.4 acres which will be removed from agricultural production if the proposed contract cancellation is approved.

These properties are: 318 acres of the Redding property, 66 acres of the Somavia property and 51.6 acres of the Vanoli property preserved in perpetuity in coordination with Ag Land Trust of Monterey County located in Salinas California and managed by Sherwood Darington.

The conservation easements to be placed on these three properties are proposed to mitigate the removal of the 121.4 acres of Vanoli property from agricultural production. A portion of the overall acreage to be placed under permanent conservation easements on the properties shown above will be proposed to satisfy the Department of Conservation's Williamson Act Easement Exchange Program requirements. The remainder of the acreage will be proposed to satisfy local mitigation policy requirements of the County of Monterey and LAFCO of Monterey County.

This generous offer will be more than 1:1 land compensation and many dollars more of land value for any cancellation fees due. Additionally the Ag Easement designation will devalue the properties being offered for permanent Ag Land Trust by more than \$1.5 M. RCT Lands (Ray Franscioni family) has been farming in the Salinas Valley since the early 1900s showing their continued commitment to preserving farmland for the future, we are offering this mitigation to assure the City of Greenfield, County of Monterey and State of California we are committed to agricultural land conservation for generations to come.

It is our hope that the Department of Conservation will see that RCT Lands LP does not take the removal of the 121.4 acres lightly. We have been working with City of Greenfield, Monterey County and LAFCO since 2005 on this project, which has cost thousands of hours of work and more than a million dollars to date, to make sure that the annexation of this parcel into the city will be of more value to Greenfield and its growth and development than the loss is to agriculture.

The current plan for the Commercial acreage is a travel plaza that would include: gas station, fast food facilities and shops; hotels (Choice and Best Western); restaurants of higher caliber and possibly wine and hiking related facilities that would attract travelers to "Pinnacles National Park" and the "River Road Wine Trail." This type of growth would bring more visitors to the area and provide services for those travelers and locals as well.

The future plans for the Heavy Industrial parcel will be related to agriculture. It could be a processing plant, wine storage facility, fabrication or equipment repair are also possibilities all these businesses would assist in securing the continuation of agricultural production in the local area. These businesses would contribute much needed jobs and revenues to the City of Greenfield but also provide services for all of the south Monterey County cities; Gonzales, Soledad and King City.

We are certain that with the revenues derived from the commercial development of this property the City of Greenfield will have the ability to provide its residents better emergency services, make repairs to city property and enhance the appearance and overall appeal of the city which would encourage visitors to south Monterey County benefitting the wine and tourist industries in that area.

Therefore we have compiled the following support evidence and are urging the Department of Conservation to allow the Williamson Act to be cancelled from the 121.4 acres of Vanoli Ranch at this time instead of waiting seven plus years for the contract to expire. This cancellation will begin the development process immediately and bring positive economic urban growth to the City of Greenfield in the near future.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration.

Respectfully,

RCT Lands LP

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