Jim Steele, Public Comment at Lake County Board of Supervisors Appeal Hearing on Monte Cristo Permit (December 13, 2022) with timestamp.

"3:51:00

supervisors and staff for the record Jim Steele I've got a extensive letter on 3:51:06

file and I hope you've all read written it or read it I've written it you read it

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this this project you know is one that's very similar to just about 6 000 secret 3:51:19

documents that I've read when I was professionally employed to do so and I've seen all of the different

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misdirections that actually come up they're misdirections not on purpose but 3:51:32

for not the purpose of the actual analysis on the key items and therefore 3:51:37

we've come up with cumulative effects evaluations which have been missed because there's been all of this other

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noise in the system I've tried to be very specific to one item and that's the water 3:51:49

Lake county is in an intercoastal range aquifer system with three different 3:51:54

aquifers that occur here and you need to know something about each individual 3:51:59

aquifer type and then where the aquifer occurs and then something about the particular 3:52:07

recharge rate how it might affect other people which is not straight line and is 3:52:12

not by elevation one of the things that I heard were some credentials and I thought maybe it's important to review

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some of mine just to throw them out there obviously I was a former elected County 3:52:25

supervisor but before that I was a consultant to the the County under Lake under aquatic resources I'm a retired

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Chief The Aquatic biologists for Department of Fish and Game a forced 3:52:37

ecology for them as well uh California registered professional Forester and a 3:52:43

California Association professional scientist a freshwater ecosystem consultant even today and a former

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Adjunct professor for freshwater ecology at Sac State and I taught with regard to freshwater ecology groundwater

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and groundwater has a very specific role within freshwater ecology whether it's 3:53:02

on the surface water if somebody's using it pulling it out the same kind of analyzes that I saw here were the kinds

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of analyzes I saw used in the Central Valley in order for one farmer to say I'm not affecting your farm on the other

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side all of this showed that the wells were not affecting each other while the entire system collapsed

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and that was a big lesson for everybody and you can look into Professor yacht's work at UC Davis and all of that but

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over the years as when I was the president of the American Fisher Society we had these people come in to actually

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give those kinds of analyzes saying look you guys have got to look at your groundwater differently because it

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affects the surface water and it affects the livelihood of a lot of surface species but people don't seem to

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understand it so here there is some misunderstanding to what I'm hearing based on what I know it's not

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necessarily that I'm an expert or know enough to say but I do know there's not enough information to be able to say

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that this is not going to be harming the groundwater so let's put that on the table a little bit

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the um first off as far as downslope

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if we're in the same aquifer I believe we are I have watched the well that we

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have downslope of the High Valley go from Artesian style well where we went

down 300 feet to actually hit a confined aquifer and the water came back up the well came back up the well to within a

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few feet of the top we had very low pumping pressures and that was nice over the years as the drought progressed and

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as High Valley progressed with the implanting of grapes and Vineyards and

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all these folks coming in here I've watched that Artesian effect go right on

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down and it's just almost I mean you can't believe how much it's had an effect I was a stunned we have an

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Artesian well on the property next door they used to flow all the time I was on Spring Valley Road and so it was a

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spring and it's an Artesian style it doesn't flow anymore and this is just just kind of the classic thing that

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happens over drought and overuse that these things start to dry down now one of the we're not we're having

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plenty of water we're okay but I'm looking at this I'm thinking we're not necessarily going to be okay in all of

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the conditions and we have a climate change scenario right now where we're not guaranteed the same kind of

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replenishment we have in the past and so the last few years has been a little bit 3:55:30

of a surprise and a wake-up call for everybody and if you look at the history of climate here in this and we're really

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in a desert region if you look at that there was seven uh about a thousand years ago extreme drought in this

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particular area and where the native tribes actually had to change their conditions so with all that said uh

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there's cumulative effects is one of the issues within Lake County and we're not

addressing it properly I would really like to see us go back and say look we 3:56:02

don't have the ability to actually address some of these these water issues 3:56:07

and if we did I think that we would start pulling back a on some of the

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projects and I'm not just talking about the Cannabis project I believe these people but here's the thing if you're

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going to do this you've got to divorce yourself from all of the emotion and all of the appeals to uh

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appeals to a motion that is going on here but you've got to do this you've got to say 3:56:32

the grapes the area the community all that needs to be looked at as primary and these people

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are coming in an increase in or making an effect to the folks that are already here or else you're going to have a

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significant effect going forward and I don't want it to be in our area I don't want it to be in our County and our

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county is unique amongst all counties so with that if I come back up later and somebody asks me a question I've got

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lots here and I hope you read it and I was hoping for questions about what I put in because there's some significant

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issues going on not just with this project and a lesson for having a project you're trying to do something it's with the county and this particular

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region is extremely sensitive to water and downslope is just as sensitive if

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not more so than upslope because there they see it we're going to get it we're never going to have a recovery so that's

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that's the problem with it so I would say this one needs to be denied and go back to planning and fix some of these

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issues just because it should be done that way in the county thank you

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so um let's see I have to is there someone else in the chambers or should I go on to the zoom

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briefly I'll do it okay

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yeah so thank you for that point and I know that uh Jim did you want to

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come up and yeah I didn't quite finish with a couple of points I missed over him I forgot him

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anyways we're talking about the three cumulative effects factors in Lake County uh two of them have already met

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us and one of them is the lake and so the lake has gone South on us and now we're spending millions of dollars trying to restore the Wetland and then

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the other one is fire everybody knows about the fires they didn't understand about you know fire ecology that sort of thing and the third one is a Statewide

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problem not just here and as groundwater and this is a special kind of groundwater here because it's a it's a

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intercoastal range groundwater and there's I have personally when I was on the board and before that and after it

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I've heard people tell me about their dry Wells I said why don't you put that on the records so that people will know

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about that we understand that Wells are going dry and the reason they don't want to diminish their property

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values so they don't say anything a lot of times what they'll do is try to go through until the wells kind of come back or they'll have water shipped in or

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they will sell the property and they get out as soon as the water comes back into the well and whatever it is there are

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drywall cells in there so there's something to look at on this dry water some of one of the things that causes that is counter depression and over

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pumping that sort of thing and it's low transfer of water through the type substrate there's also a lowering of the

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water level and particular types of um of Wells but there's three uh types of

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um aquifers that we have to look at that see alluvial plane aquifer and the volcanic field aquifer and a fractured

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Rock aquifer which this one is and it's the least known aquifer of all of them within this coastal range and our

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coastal range type of water regime at least that can be known uh so yeah I

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think one more thing to say and that is it's very difficult to note anything about fractured Rock aguifers from just

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Wells there's a it's one of the things that really has a problem with being studied I don't want us to be in the

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same kind of situation for kiln 2 impacts on Wells and groundwater so notwithstanding they are in the area

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that has the most types or overdrawn groundwater in the in the entire Lake 4:43:53

County that's in that High Valley area and from two of the three of those that 4:43:59

I mentioned and the third one is the fractured Rock aquifer which nobody knows anything about so thank you thank