



Laurie Hutchison
Coordinator

Lake County Fire Safe Council

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Date May 12, 2020

To: Lake County Board of Supervisors

Re: Support of Major Use Permit (UP 19-05) and Mitigated Negative Declaration based on Initial Study (IS 19-09), Scotts Valley Band of Pomo Indians Red Hills Rd BioEnergy/BioChar production facility

From: Laurie Hutchison, Lake Co. Fire Safe Council Coordinator

Lake County evolved with fire, and fire will continue to shape the landscape. Residents are all too familiar with the repercussions and reality of wildfire; they understand that it is not a question of *if* a wildfire will occur, but rather *when* and how large. The challenge is how to proactively prepare our homes, neighborhoods, communities, and wildlands for coexisting with wildfire instead of reacting to it.

The Lake County Fire Safe Council (LCFSC) consists of members from all local Fire Protection Districts, local Fire Safe Councils, CalFire, Homeowners Associations, community members, and more. LCFSC staff are funded through the Lake County Resource Conservation District (LCRCD) which is a "special district" of the state of California. As a locally governed agency with their own locally appointed or elected independent boards of directors, RCDs help private landowners conserve soil and water and manage their resources sustainably. They also act as a focal point for local conservation efforts, function as leaders in the conservation community, and sponsor educational efforts to teach children and adults alike the importance of conserving natural resources.

As part of the LCRCD, the LCFSC convenes monthly with stakeholders whose job or interest is protection of Lake County lands and homes from the threat of wildfire, which

exact a devastating toll on lands, residents, businesses, governments, and the community as a whole.

We support the BioEnergy/BioChar facility Major Use Permit on Red Hills Road at Highway 29. This location is centrally located within Lake County making it easily accessible to agencies, contractors, and others who are performing hazardous vegetation abatement to mitigate the effects of wildfire in our County.

The creation of BioChar as a byproduct of energy production is a benefit, and can be utilized as an amendment to retain soil moisture, which also may help to lessen the threat of wildland fire. This small facility will be a much-needed tool added to our toolbox to help prevent catastrophic wildfires in Lake County, as it will also reduce the need for permitted open pile burning, which can and has, in the past, escaped to become much larger wildland fires.

Again, the Lake County Fire Safe Council fully supports this project at this location.

Thank you,

Laurie Hutchison, LCFSC Coordinator



May 13, 2020

County of Lake
Board of Supervisors
255 N. Forbes Street
Lakeport, CA 95453

Re: Support of Major Use Permit (UP 19-05) and Mitigated Negative Declaration based on Initial Study (IS 19-09), Scotts Valley Band of Pomo Indians Red Hills Rd BioEnergy/BioChar production facility

Dear Supervisors:

Seigler Springs Community Redevelopment Association (SSCRA) strongly urges support for the above-named project. SSCRA focuses on community-building, working with neighborhoods and communities to tap their own strengths and develop or increase their collective capacity to improve their area's health, economy, sustainability, and resilience. The core of this work is backed by whole-systems thinking and field theories in ecology, community organizing, sacred architecture, integral healing, intentional community and group process as the most advanced community development practices today.

Through our Cobb Area Community Based Fuel Reduction Project, SSCRA is helping private residents in the Cobb Area clear defensible space around their homes and along access routes (driveways and property roads) through a three-year Fire Prevention grant from the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (Cal Fire) under the 2018 California Climate Investment Fire Protection Grant Program. The grant supports the formation of neighborhood organizations known as Firewise Communities by providing financial incentives for residential lot-clearing, sponsoring one of the local, semi-annual community fire safety workshops, and supporting local adaptation of the homeowner's guide, Living with Wildfire.

Both as area residents and as a mission-driven organization, we are very interested in projects that can help landowners remove these mitigated hazardous fuels and transform into useful BioChar what would have been waste material requiring landfill resources or causing damage to air quality.

A centrally-located bioenergy facility that could utilize some of this mitigated biomass gleaned from larger property owners in the Cobb area and that would be easily accessible on Red Hills Rd is an ideal location for our community, as we continue to recover economically and for long-term resilience in an area at very high risk for wildfire.



(Support for UP 19-05, IS 19-09, AB 20-01, p.2)

And there is added benefit for BioChar, a premium soil amendment, to be utilized to restore lands devastated by previous fires, where the runoff can impair the water quality of Clear Lake via Kelsey Creek, as well as Sacramento River via Putah Creek.

SSCRA has reviewed the appellant's filing as well as the measures that SVBPI has taken. We believe that SVBPI has mitigated all concerns in the Initial Study and those concerns of nearby properties, and therefore we again urge full support of this project at the Red Hills Road location.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, which appears to read "Eliot Hurwitz".

Eliot Hurwitz
Executive Director
on behalf of the SSCRA Board of Directors



July 23, 2020

To: Lake County Board of Supervisors

From: Will Evans, Executive Director, Clear Lake Environmental Research Center (CLERC)

Re: Support for Major Use Permit (UP 19-05) and Mitigated Negative Declaration based on Initial Study (IS 19-09), Scotts Valley Band of Pomo Indians Red Hills Rd BioEnergy/BioChar production facility

As you are all aware, Lake County has been particularly impacted by large and devastating wildfires with nearly three quarters of the land in Lake County impacted by fires in the last five years. The Clear Lake Environmental Research Center (CLERC) is coordinating projects throughout Lake County to help combat the impacts of wildfire, promote positive regeneration of burned areas, and manage the forest and woodlands that have not been destroyed by fire to create a fire resilient state. Along with state, federal and community partners, CLERC is working towards creating a more fire resilient landscape.

In March 2020, CLERC was awarded a \$3M grant from CAL FIRE through the Fire Prevention Program for the Lake County Hazardous Fuel Reduction Project Phase 1, and we are partnering with the Scotts Valley Band of Pomo Indians (SVBPI) to utilize their proposed BioEnergy/BioChar facility on Red Hills Rd which is centrally located to our project area. The facility will provide an alternative to pile burning and on-site disposal for the hazardous vegetation removed as part of our project. The Red Hills site is ideally located for the first bioenergy plant in Lake County as it is in close proximity to the State Highway and PG&E transmission lines. Bioenergy production can add value to otherwise worthless slash and hazardous fuel, which could provide stable, ongoing revenue to support fuel reduction activities throughout our community on a long-term basis.

CLERC's staff have over twenty years of combined experience preparing and evaluating CEQA Initial Studies. CLERC fully supports this project at this location, and believes that SVBPI has mitigated all concerns in the Initial Study and those concerns of nearby properties.

Thank you,

Will Evans, Executive Director
Clear Lake Environmental Research Center (CLERC)

