



CALIFORNIA FARM BUREAU FEDERATION
NATURAL RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENTAL DIVISION

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November 10, 2009

Via Email

CEQA.Rulemaking@resources.ca.gov

Christopher Calfee, Special Counsel
Attn: CEQA Guidelines
California Natural Resources Agency
1017 L Street, #2223
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: Comments on the Proposed CEQA Guideline Amendments for Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Dear Mr. Calfee:

The California Farm Bureau Federation (“Farm Bureau”) is a non-governmental, non-profit, voluntary membership California corporation whose purpose is to protect and promote agricultural interests throughout the state of California and to find solutions to the problems of the farm, the farm home and the rural community. Farm Bureau is California’s largest farm organization, comprised of 53 county Farm Bureaus currently representing approximately 85,000 members in 56 counties. Farm Bureau strives to protect and improve the ability of farmers and ranchers engaged in production agriculture to provide a reliable supply of food and fiber through responsible stewardship of California’s resources.

Wine Institute is the public policy advocacy association of California wineries. Wine Institute brings together the resources of 1,000 wineries and affiliated businesses to support legislative and regulatory advocacy, international market development, media

relations, scientific research, and education programs that benefit the entire California wine industry.

Both organizations are committed to sound public policy at all levels of government and jointly submit these comments to on the Proposed Amendments to the California Environmental Quality Act (“CEQA”) Guidelines for Greenhouse Gas Emissions (“GHG”).¹ Although guidance on the analysis and mitigation of the potential effects of GHG emissions under CEQA are needed, Farm Bureau and Wine Institute have concerns over the proposed amendments. As previously requested, prior to any final rulemaking decisions, Farm Bureau and Wine Institute urge the Natural Resources Agency to reevaluate and revise Section II of the Environmental Checklist Form (“Appendix G”).²

By placing the forest land conversion amendments into Section II of Appendix G, the original purpose of Section II (originally “Agriculture Resources”) has been distorted from protecting Agriculture resources to specifically targeting the establishment of such resources for extensive and unnecessary analysis above and beyond what is already legally required. We find that the newly proposed Section VII (“Greenhouse Gas Emissions”) already adequately addresses any significant impact a project may have on greenhouse gas emissions. Therefore, we recommend removing all proposed changes to Section II.

As currently proposed, the revisions and additions to Section II of the Appendix G lose sight of the intent and purpose of the Legislature’s directive in Public Resources Code section 21083.05 (enacted as part of SB 97). The Legislature directed the Office of Planning and Research and the Natural Resources Agency to develop “guidelines for the mitigation of greenhouse gas emissions or the effects of greenhouse gas emissions as required by this division, including, but not limited to, effects associated with transportation or energy consumption.” (Pub. Resources Code, § 21093.05(a).) The proposed amendments to Section II do not further the directive or intent of SB 97, and rather, unfairly attack and burden all types of agriculture, both crop lands and forest lands.

Given that none of the proposed changes in Section II are mandated by SB 97 and are highly onerous to the State’s agricultural industry, an industry that not only provides necessary food and fiber but also protects the environment, we urge the Natural Resources Agency to carefully examine the impacts that the proposed language will have

¹ Farm Bureau and Wine Institute’s comments relate to all proposed changes to Section II of the Environmental Checklist Form (“Appendix G”), including the October 2009 text revisions adding timberland zoned as Timberland Production.

² Farm Bureau incorporates by reference previous concerns raised in comment letters submitted in February 2009 and August 2009 on the proposed CEQA Guidelines amendments.

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on the entire agricultural industry prior to any final rulemaking decisions. In addition, we urge the Resources Agency to stick to the directive and intent of SB 97, thereby returning to the prior language of the Checklist as it relates to Agricultural Resources or embracing the concept that the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land *is only significant* when it results in a *non-agricultural use*. We look forward to working with you further on future revisions to the CEQA Guidelines.

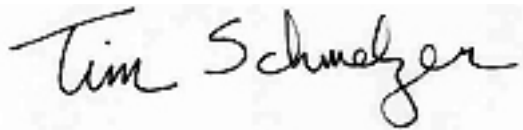
Sincerely,

CALIFORNIA FARM BUREAU FEDERATION



Kari E. Fisher
Associate Counsel

WINE INSTITUTE



Tim Schmelzer
Legislative and Regulatory Representative

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