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Diane K. Noda  
Acting Field Supervisor  
United States Fish and Wildlife Service  
Ventura Fish and Wildlife Office  
2493 Portola Road, Suite B  
Ventura, CA 93003

Re: Santa Margarita Ranch  
San Luis Obispo County

Dear Ms. Noda:

I represent the owners of Santa Margarita Ranch (the "Ranch"), which is located in San Luis Obispo County, California. This letter will acknowledge and respond to your June 17, 1999 letter regarding the planned agricultural activities on the Ranch.

As you know, the Ranch owners are planning to plant vineyards on approximately 3,000 acres of historically cultivated and grazed areas outside of the riparian zone. All work will be accomplished in accordance with County ordinances that require sedimentation devices to prevent siltation of mapped creeks or streams on the Ranch.

The Ranch owners are familiar with the requirements of sections 7, 9 and 10 of the federal Endangered Species Act, and they appreciated receiving your perspective on these provisions. There is no reason to believe at this time that the planting or operation of the vineyards will cause a prohibited "take" of any endangered or threatened fish or wildlife species. Moreover, there does not appear to be any federal authorization that would trigger a section 7 consultation. The Ranch owners will, of course, continually monitor their legal responsibilities.

If you have any questions regarding this matter, please feel free to contact me at the telephone number and address above.

Very truly yours,

Paul P. Spaulding, III

EXHIBIT

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