

ATTACHMENT

For Item

3

Wednesday,
December 4, 2013

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Distributed: 12/02/13

From: De La Rosa, Michael A
Sent: Monday, December 02, 2013 11:11 AM
To: FGG-DL, LSDOCS
Subject: FW: Agenda Item 3, December 4, 2013 - PACE Program
Attachments: EHL-PACE-BoS-12.4.13.pdf

From: Dan Silver [<mailto:dsilverla@me.com>]
Sent: Sunday, December 01, 2013 12:42 PM
To: Cox, Greg; Jacob, Dianne; Roberts, Dave; Ron-Roberts; Horn, Bill; De La Rosa, Michael A; Wilson, Adam; Kohatsu, Sachiko; Gutierrez, Gabriel; Sprecco, Edward
Cc: Aghassi, Sarah; Wardlaw, Mark; Gretler, Darren M; Snyder, Todd; Schneider, Matthew; Eric Larson
Subject: Agenda Item 3, December 4, 2013 - PACE Program

December 1, 2013

VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL ONLY

The Hon Greg Cox, Chair
San Diego County Board of Supervisors
1600 Pacific Highway, Room 335
San Diego, CA 92101

Dear Chairman Cox and Members of the Board:

Please find written testimony from EHL on the PACE program, in which we argue for continuing annual appropriations. I regret I will not be able to testify in person on this important matter, but please be in contact if more information would be helpful.

Thank you very much for considering our views,
Dan

Dan Silver, Executive Director
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ENDANGERED HABITATS LEAGUE

DEDICATED TO ECOSYSTEM PROTECTION AND SUSTAINABLE LAND USE



December 1, 2013

VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL

The Hon Greg Cox, Chair
Board of Supervisors, San Diego County
1600 Pacific Highway, Room 1311
San Diego, CA 92101

**RE: Purchase of Agricultural Conservation Easement (PACE) Program
(Agenda Item 3, December 4, 2013) - SUPPORT**

Dear Chairman Cox and Members of the Board:

The Endangered Habitats League *supports* staff's recommendation for FY 2013-2014 but wishes to provide additional input on the future direction of the PACE program.

We commend the County for the successful start up of this program. The pilot project has gone well. It was implemented with transparent and defensible criteria and has secured excellent properties. It makes complete sense to wrap up the 16 properties "in the pipeline" using the leftover funds plus a modest increment of additional funding.

We anticipate that there will be continued demand from farmers and ranchers for the PACE option. EHL strongly supports continuing the program on an ongoing basis for two reasons:

- 1) Ensuring the viability of local agriculture is a compelling public interest. Food security through local sources, a variety of consumer choices, economic diversity for the region, and "sense of place" are all tied to local agriculture.
- 2) As an "equity mechanism" for downplanned agricultural properties, the PACE program is an integral part of the "package" of General Plan outcomes. EHL wishes to keep faith with the stakeholders involved.

We urge the Board to renew and institutionalize the PACE program in *two* complementary but different ways:

- 1) Continued *annual* appropriation of General Fund monies (perhaps along the lines of the pilot program, which seemed to roughly fit ongoing need).
- 2) Initiation of an *in lieu* fee program for the mitigation of impacts to agriculture, with the fees supporting additional PACE acquisitions. This also would provide streamlined environmental compliance for those converting agricultural land to other uses.

We emphasize that an ongoing General Fund allocation is *essential* for a well functioning program because it provides the *stability and reliability* needed by landowners making business decisions. The mitigation fee adds value, and should be implemented, but we do not know how much income it will generate, or when, and it will fluctuate, at best.

Thank you for considering our views.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dan Silver". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "D" and "S".

Dan Silver, MD
Executive Director

cc: San Diego County Farm Bureau