



Director Regulations and Rulings Division
Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau
Attn Notice No. 71
P.O. Box 14412
Washington DC 20044-4412
Fax # 202 927 8525

February 22, 2007

Comments regarding Paso Robles Westside Petition

My family owns a 160 acre vineyard and small winery in Paso Robles that is 6 miles east of the Salinas River and 5 miles south of Route 46. The area collectively known in the Petition as the "Eastside".

My home rests on a knoll 150 feet in elevation above my vineyard, and all I can see from that knoll in any direction are rolling hills along the Huer Huero Riverbed. The portion of Paso Robles where we live is clearly not "Flat as a billiard table" as quoted from the unidentified wine writer in the petition. The petitioners own table shows the east side being 56% hills and mountains.

The petitioner identifies the Salinas River which runs north and south, as a historical geographical reference for many reasons that are true, but have no viticultural significance.

The petitioner acknowledges the significance of the maritime influence, which is a west to east influence without any evidence that the cooling influence stops at the Salinas River. The cooling influence of the ocean breezes coming through the "Templeton Gap" extend to my vineyard, which routinely has a summer temperature difference over 50 degrees between the high and low of the day. The cooling influence is also reduced as you move north or south of the gap, in addition to moving far to the east.

In summary, the petition is an over simplification of a very diverse viticulture area. A more thorough study of the viticulturally significant areas with better scientific support is required to gain the benefits that are intended when a new AVA is established.

I would ask that this petition be denied.

Respectfully

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Steph Cass". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Stephen Cass
Cass Vineyards & Winery