

BEAR VALLEY VINEYARDS  
68102 Slack Canyon Road  
San Miguel, CA 93451

April 20, 2007

VIA FACSIMILE

Mr. Frank Foote  
Director, Regulations and Rulings Division  
Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau  
Attn: Notice No. 71  
P.O. Box 14412  
Washington, DC 20044-4412

Re: Opposition to Proposed Paso Robles Westside AVA

Dear Mr. Foote:

I am writing in opposition to the proposed Paso Robles Westside AVA. I strongly believe the petition does not meet the regulatory requirements for the establishment of an American Viticultural Area because (1) the proposed area extends far beyond what is locally known by the name Paso Robles Westside; and (2) the area does not possess the climate, soil and other physical features that distinguish it viticulturally from surrounding areas.

My family has farmed and ranched in the north San Luis Obispo County area since 1867 and I represent the fifth generation to do so. Our operation includes wine grapes. I also have a California Real Estate Brokers license and been a general partner in a Paso Robles real estate company.

Based upon my lifetime of experience as an agriculturalist and as a real estate broker in north San Luis Obispo County, as well as the knowledge of my family history, the proposed name of Paso Robles Westside has never been applied as broadly as petitioners suggest. Specifically, the term "Westside" does not apply to the northernmost portion of the proposed AVA west of San Miguel or the southern half of the proposed AVA from Atascadero south to Santa Margarita. The reason the term "Westside" does not apply to these areas is because it has never been used as such. The name evidence does not rise to the level to meet regulatory requirements.

The proposed Paso Robles Westside AVA does not capture an area of viticultural distinctiveness within the Paso Robles AVA. Instead, the proposed Paso Robles Westside AVA lumps together viticultural regions. The climate contains some of the hottest and driest and the coldest and wettest regions within the Paso Robles AVA. Donald Schukraft's comments in #122 reflect what I have observed in my lifetime of

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living in the area. I agree with the comments of Dr. Thomas Rice in #94 and #129 that also reflect how the science has not been properly applied in the Paso Robles Westside petition, as it is related to the soils. The distinction of the soils are not unique within the proposed petition and do not establish viticultural distinctiveness.

The name evidence is wrong and the science is wrong.

Respectfully submitted,



Kevin Kester, Owner  
Bear Valley Vineyards