

Zoning Permit Statements – 1576/1578 Dry Creek Family Farm Dwelling Permit

Proposal Statement: No changes to plan submitted for pending Williamson Act and Farmstay permits.

Affidavit Statement: The existing agricultural uses include farming of 10 acres of chardonnay and sauvignon blanc wine grapes. The existing family farm dwelling is currently occupied by the owners and will continue to be occupied by the owners and their family.

Owner's Signatures:

Simone Gros-Balthazard

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "SR Gros-Balthazard".

Philip Jensen

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Philip Jensen".

11/10/2024

This is a Project Proposal Statement for the requested conservation contract at 1576/1578 Dry Creek.

The subject property includes approximately 10 acres of grape vines, approximately 2 acres of open/riparian space on and around Dry Creek, and approximately a third of an acre of residence/residential garden space.

Agricultural operations include approximately 3.5 acres of Sauvignon Blanc vines and 6.5 acres of Chardonnay vines. The Sauvignon Blanc grapes have been contracted to Ferarri Carano (now Foley Family wines) as part of an ongoing evergreen contract for 10+ years. The Chardonnay grapes are currently in the second year of a three year contract with Foley Family wines, and have been sold to a variety of local wineries over the past 15 years.

Due to the position of the vineyard at a bend in Dry Creek and a proliferation of invasive Himalayan blackberry that provides habitat for Sharpshooter bugs, there is significant pressure from Pierce's disease. Additionally, the vineyard trellising is an older style, and not suitable for automated picking, so harvest is performed using hand-picking.

The riparian areas around Dry Creek that are part of the property are subject to an access easement provided to the Sonoma County water agency for habitat maintenance and fish monitoring in Dry Creek, as part of a habitat restoration project which was completed in 2021.

The expected use is to continue the existing use. Significant amounts of invasive blackberry foliage was removed as part of the fish habitat restoration, which should help lower future incidence of Pierce's disease. Owners are also pursuing an Agricultural Farmstay application simultaneously with this conservation application, which would ramp up farmstay operations as the owner's children graduate from high school over the next 6-7 years.