



Court Rules in Favor of Tejon Ranch and Kern County Regarding Re-Approval of Grapevine at Tejon Ranch Master Planned Community

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TEJON RANCH, Calif.--(BUSINESS WIRE)--Jan. 22, 2021-- Kern County Superior Court Judge Kenneth C. Twisselman today rejected, in its entirety, the most recent lawsuit filed by the Center for Biological Diversity (CBD), a Tucson, Arizona-based extremist environmental organization, that challenged Kern County's December 2019 re-approval of Grapevine at Tejon Ranch, a master planned mixed use residential community.

In December 2016, the Kern County Board of Supervisors unanimously approved Grapevine. CBD sued the following year, and subsequently lost six of the seven issues it raised regarding the sufficiency of the project's environmental impact report. On the seventh issue—the court ruled that there was a deficiency regarding the internal capture rate used in the traffic study—and ordered the County to submit a revised environmental impact report reflecting the court-ordered additional work – but upheld the remainder of the environmental impact report.

The supplemental re-circulated environmental impact report showing the changes to the internal capture rate analysis was subject to a full public review and comment process and was ultimately re-approved unanimously by the Kern County Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors in 2019. The County's approval was challenged yet again by CBD, first in a late-hit letter filed one day before the Board of Supervisors met to consider the project, and then again in court.

In today's ruling, the court rejected CBD's attempt to re-litigate issues it had already sued on and lost. It also determined that the County's supplemental analysis of the internal capture rate, as ordered by the court, was complete and in full compliance with the court's earlier ruling. The court also expressly rejected each of CBD's new claims, including those that attempted to re-litigate earlier claims that CBD had itself assured the court in writing that CBD would not-re-litigate.

"We are extremely pleased the court thoughtfully and thoroughly considered the issues, found that we had satisfied the court's original ruling and decided to rule against the claims in this latest lawsuit," said Hugh F. McMahon, Executive VP of real estate at Tejon Ranch Co. "Once again CBD tried to hijack and abuse the California Environmental Quality Act in their continued attempts to prevent any and all thoughtful and responsible real estate development in California."

The lawsuit was the 12th legal action filed by CBD against Tejon Ranch and its interests since 2003. CBD's concerted efforts to likewise delay Tejon Ranch's Centennial and Mountain Village master-planned communities, which together with Grapevine will provide 35,000 new homes for Californians, only serve to worsen California's housing shortage and drive home costs ever higher. The lawsuit comes a month after CBD lost yet another lawsuit challenging Tejon Mountain Village.

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