



Protecting Marin Since 1934

Wade Holland, Chair  
Marin County Planning Commission  
3501 Civic Center Drive  
San Rafael, CA 94903

May 22, 2013

**Re: Balestreri Use Permit 13-1, photovoltaic solar facility**

Dear Chair and Commissioners:

The Marin Conservation League (MCL) recognizes the need to reduce our reliance on fossil fuels and promotes the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions through a wide variety of land use, energy efficiency, transportation, conservation measures and alternative forms of electrical power generation. We supported the creation of the Marin Energy Authority and Marin Clean Energy. We also support an increase in the amount of local power generation by a variety of “green energy” facilities. Nonetheless, all forms of energy production have environmental impacts that need to be addressed. The Wind Energy ordinance was implemented for this purpose. MCL strongly recommends that a similar approach be taken with land-based solar installations. A standard set of criteria that give potential applicants some framework prior to application could help avoid the case-by-case review of issues inevitably arising from the affected communities. The community would be involved in identifying the criteria in the ordinance.

The Balestreri facility is visually very prominent, is on the edge of a viable wetland and is in the middle of lands acquired for marsh preservation and restoration. The energy being produced is not for the use of the nursery on which it is built, but for sale. These issues are important elements of an ordinance that should be developed before projects such as this are permitted.

MCL strongly recommends that an ordinance on Land Based Photovoltaic Solar Facilities be established before processing a precedent setting facility.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'David Schnapf', is written over a light blue circular stamp.

David Schnapf  
President

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